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The Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice (JITP) promotes the study, application, and research of invitational theory. It is an online peer reviewed scholarly publication presenting articles to advance invitational learning and living and the foundations that support this theory of practice, particularly self-concept theory and perceptual psychology.

The International Alliance for Invitational Education® (IAIE) is chartered by the State of North Carolina. The IAIE is a not-for-profit group of educators and allied professionals throughout the world, dedicated to the development of positive school, work, and home environments as well as opposed to those forces that demean and defeat human potential. Come learn how to create climates intentionally based on care, optimism, respect, and trust while networking with IAIE members around the world.

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Editorial

As always, the aspiration of the 2020 Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice (JITP) is to advance the tenets of Invitational Education (IE). The research and documented practices within the 2020 JITP exhibit the ease with which IE theory can make better possible when intentionally and diligently put into practice. The interdependent IE framework addresses "the total culture or ecosystem of almost any organization" (Purkey and Siegel, 2013, p. 104) by assessing and monitoring school climate. Rather than suggesting a quick fix, the framework encourages ongoing vigilance before affirming sustained change (Purkey & Siegel, 2013; Strahan & Purkey, 1992). Vigilance is required because changing how a school operates requires transforming its people (Asbill, 1994). School reform requires systemic change, a metamorphosis, based on systemic analysis of the people, places, policies, programs, and processes (the Five Ps). This structural analysis of school climate discerns whether any part of the whole is disinviting (Purkey & Siegel, 2013).

Proponents of IE theory know others are better served by empowering opportunities for achieving one's human potential. Therefore, we should always encourage dialogue that promotes critical thinking and open-mindedness because exhibiting contempt only destroys motivation and incites further division. While many of the realities confronted during 2020 caused frustration, confusion, or disharmony, as champions of IE theory and practices we endeavor to promote intentionality, care, optimism, respect, and trust (I-CORT) in all our educational, leadership, and interpersonal opportunities.

During 2021 we must answer the call to nurture an intentionally inviting stance and promote numerous efforts to encourage the learning for all mission. Let the "direction and purpose for all Invitational thought and action" (Purkey & Novak, 2016, p 11) sustain our successful educational practices. In this pursuit, we thereby strengthen minds, free spirits, and enrich societies.

The JITP editor welcomes all opportunities to promote the study, application, and research of Invitational Theory and Practice (ITP). You and your colleagues are invited to submit scholarly papers that identify how ITP guides reform, sustains success, or reinforces best practices through research. To promote Invitational Theory and Practice to an international audience, scholarly articles within the JITP come from global sources, educational practitioners, organizational leaders, and multidisciplinary researchers. Prospective authors may email manuscripts to: JITPeditor@invitationaleducation.net Authors must follow specific guidelines (p.68) when submitting manuscripts for publication consideration,

Sincerely,

Chris James Anderson, Ed.D.
Editor of the 2020 Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice

Perceptions of School Climate: Views of Teachers, Students, and Parents

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Abstract

It has been widely documented that positive school climate significantly contributes to academic success and student well-being. This study explored teachers, students, and parents' perceptions of school climate as measured by the Inviting School Survey-R (ISS-R). The ISS-R was administered to over 10,000 school community members from over 60 schools across the United States. The ISS-R was used to identify perceptions of school climate between factors such as participants, gender, type of school, size of school, and student age. Results showed there were statistically significant association with self-reported perceptions of school climate and these five factors on the six ISS-R scales. The implications of the results are discussed, and it is concluded that the study's findings will facilitate the development of more inviting schools.

Keywords: Measurement and Evaluation; Invitational Education Theory and Practice; Psychometric Properties; Student, Parent, Teacher Perceptions; Student Well-Being; School Climate

Introduction

Research has shown that school climate is one of the most important contributors to student achievement, success, and psychological well-being (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009; Fan, Williams, & Corkin, 2011; Steyn, 2009; Zullig, Koopman, Patton, & Ubbes, 2010). School climate also heavily influences healthy development as well as effective risk prevention, positive youth development, and increased teacher and student retention (Cohen et al., 2009; Huebner & Diener, 2008). School climate reflects a personal evaluation of the school (Cohen, 2006; Freiberg, 1998). In particular, school climate reflects the perceptions of the social, emotional, and academic experiences of school life by students, administrators, teachers, parents, support staff, and the wider community. In order to make informed decisions regarding school development, it is paramount for school administrators to be aware of perceived school experience (school climate) of the major stakeholders in the school.

At the heart of any student's school experience is the campus culture or climate that can be either inviting or disinviting. Originally found in the literature on organizations (James & Jones, 1974), climate has emerged to help explain the perceptions of not only students but other groups such as patients (Colla, Bracken, Kinney, & Weeks, 2005), business-people (Anderson, 1982), and

even online social networks (Bargh & McKenna, 2004). Many factors have contributed to the inviting or disinviting climate students perceive in schools thereby resulting in over 100 school climate instruments and measurements created and implemented since the 1960s.

There are diverse factors that contribute to school climate. Depending on the type of school stakeholder: Teacher, parent, staff, or student, some factors are experienced differently. As such, it is imperative that all major school stakeholders are invited to express and share their perception of the school environment to reliably assist school administrators in making informed decisions related to the development of an inviting school.

Literature Review

School Climate and School Culture

According to the National School Climate Centre, school climate refers to "the quality and character of school life as it relates to norms and values, interpersonal relations and social interactions, and organizational processes and structures" (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2007, p. 2). In the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's (ASCD) online dictionary called, *A Lexicon of Learning,* school climate and school culture are defined as:

> The sum of the values, cultures, safety practices, and organizational structures within a school that cause it to function and react in particular ways. Some schools are said to have a nurturing environment that recognizes children and treats them as individuals; others may have the feel of authoritarian structures where rules are strictly enforced, and hierarchical control is strong. Teaching practices, diversity, and the relationships among administrators, teachers, parents, and students contribute to school climate. Although the two terms are somewhat interchangeable, *school climate* refers mostly to the school's effects on students, whereas *school culture* refers more to the way teachers and other staff members work together.

During 1990 William Purkey developed a model to change school climate through invitational education research and practice. The "Five-P Relay" identified how a school's 5-Ps: People, Places, Policies, Programs, and Processes, could improve the academic climate to nurture quality teaching, learning, and enhance a student's overall development (Purkey & Stanley, 1991). Purkey and Novak (2016) believed the interrelationship among and between the "5 Ps" of invitational education can improve the quality of academic life, thereby transforming a school in an ongoing manner.

According to Cohen (2006), a school's climate often reflects a student's personal evaluation of a school, from the way they are treated, to the overall quality of the school experience. This perceived quality is reflected in the people the students interact with on campus, the places students go, the policies that nurture or restrict them, the programs they participate in and the processes the school implements to live up to their mission and maintain a supportive nurturing academic climate that is welcoming for students. Invitational theory and practice is a powerful structure for schools to use as a guide to positively enrich the lives of all members of a campus community.

In 2007, Thompson used a case study to investigate ethics of care within an elementary school whose culture had been identified as being highly inviting to students. With Invitational Education as the conceptual framework, Thompson's primary goal was to describe the inviting

characteristics of the school that set them apart from others and identify any obstacles educators faced and how they overcame these during the teaching and learning process. Data was collected from onsite observations, semi-structured interviews, a focus group, and the review of several school documents. The study provided two major findings. First, relationships that valued caring, strived to be invitational, and nurtured a sense of community through intentional actions were critical to success. Second, strong principal leadership with shared decision-making, optimism, and care needed to be present when creating a successfully inviting elementary school culture.

Seymour Sarasin, Professor Emeritus in the department of psychology at Yale University is the author of over forty books and in the words of Carl Glickman is "one of America's seminal thinkers about public education." According to Sarasin (1996), it is difficult to determine the nature of a school's culture because in our own personal experiences and values, we tend to "put blinders on what we look at, choose to change, and evaluate … Because our values and assumptions are usually implicit and 'second nature,' and we proceed as if the way things are is the way things should or could be" (pp.136-137).

Based on Sarasin's seminal work, Hinde (2004) asserted that, "In order for the culture of schools to adjust to allow for change, then power must be wielded in such a way as to allow others to gain a sense of ownership with the goals and process of change. It is often a delicate balance between mandating change and bringing teachers to believe in the need for and efficacy of the reform, so that they feel a sense of ownership. Schools that are successful in this Endeavor will be able to enact lasting and effective change" (p. 10).

According to Freiberg (1998), "The elements that make up school climate are complex, ranging from the quality of interactions in the teachers' lounge to the noise levels in hallways and cafeterias, from the physical structure of the building to the physical comfort levels (involving such factors as heating, cooling, and lighting) of the individuals and how safe they feel. Even the size of the school and the opportunities for students and teachers to interact in small groups both formally and informally, add to and detract from the health of the learning environment. The support staff—cafeteria workers, bus drivers, custodians, and office staff—adds to the multiple dimensions of climate… No single factor determines a school's climate" (p. 22). Freiberg compares school culture to breathing air, and argues that no one pays much attention to it, until it starts to stink.

Invitational Theory and Practice

The Invitational Education (IE) model embraces inviting school practices in all areas of a school. In an effort to intentionally support the positive development of each individual student intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, and morally, IE relies on the following five domains in any school: People, Places, Policies, Programs, and Processes. The most important of these is people because they are responsible for fulfilling the mission of the school. Within the places and through the policies, programs, and processes, it is people who intentionally plan, develop, and implement. As stakeholders, people include but are not limited to academic administrators, faculty, researchers, counsellors, other staff, parents, and students (Purkey & Novak, 2016).

One might argue that processes are the second most important, because they determine how the other "Ps" functions. The framework of Invitational Theory is based on five key assumptions that serve as a guide to help create and maintain an inclusive and inviting campus climate. These systemic assumptions include intentionality, care, optimism, respect, and trust (I-CORT) and should be evident throughout the system's 5-Ps. The acronym I-CORT is used by

Purkey and Novak (2016) to emphasize the need to be intentionally inviting, further stating, "an invitation is an intentional choice someone makes and an intentional chance someone takes" (p.15). The quantitative instrument used in this study is based on the theoretical, five-factor model of invitational theory and practice. In their seminal paper, Purkey and Novak (1993) discussed a method for guiding and maintaining the highest level of invitational performance. This guidance system is called the "Helix," because it spirals through 12-steps of development. Stillion and Siegel advanced the "Helix" in 1994 and advocated for a hierarchy existing within invitational theory.

Aims of the Present Study

The current study seeks to understand if responses to the Inviting School Survey-R are associated with significant educational institutions' factors. Specifically, this study aims to identify if the following factors have a significant association with each of the ISS-R subscales and the Total scale: Type of Participant: Teachers, Students, Parents; Gender, Type of School, Size of School, and Student Age.

The over-arching null hypothesis is there is no statistically significant association between each of the five ISS-R subscales and the total scale with each of the five identified educational domains and factors as listed above.

Methodology

Participants

Between the years 2005-2019 a total of 11,214 major school stakeholders, Teachers, Student, and Parents, from 64 public schools were administered the ISS-R. Following data cleaning: Removing participants who had more than five missing responses and trimming the data of 5% controlling for outliers and inappropriate responses at each end of the highest and the lowest total ISS-R scale; 9,000 participants from 50 public schools remained. Details of demographic variables can be found in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Variables by Type of Participant

Demographic Variables	**Teachers** (N=1344; 14.9%)	**Students** (N=6184; 68.7%)	**Parents** (N=1472; 16.4%)	**Total** (N=9000; 100%)
Gender				
Female	1053 (78.3)	3174 (51.3)	1289 (87.6)	5516 (61.3)
Male	291 (21.7)	3010 (48.7)	183 (12.4)	3484 (38.7)
Type of School				
Elementary	583 (43.4)	1891 (30.6)	938 (63.7)	3412 (37.9)
Middle	462 (34.4)	3070 (49.6)	320 (21.7)	3852 (42.8)
High	299 (22.2)	1223 (19.8)	214 (14.5)	1736 (19.3)
Size of School				
Under 250	52 (3.9)	147 (2.4)	136 (9.2)	335 (3.7)
250-500	270 (20.1)	731 (11.8)	387 (26.3)	1388 (15.4)
Over 500	1022 (76.0)	5306 (85.8)	949 (64.5)	7277 (80.9)
Student Age				
8-11		2209 (35.7)		2209 (35.7)
12-13	N/A	2262 (36.6)	N/A	2262 (36.6)
14-20		1712 (27.7)		1712 (27.7)

Measure

Inviting School Survey-R (ISS-R). The 50-item Inviting Schools Survey Revised (ISS-R), developed by Smith (2005, 2016) was used to measure school climate. The ISS-R is based on Invitational Theory and Practice (Purkey & Novak, 2016), investigating significant school stakeholders' perceptions of the invitingness of their school in the five domains of invitational school climate: People, Places, Processes, Policies, and Programs. Participants are asked to respond to each positively worded item using a 5-point Likert-type response (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree, 0 = Not Applicable is treated as missing if a question is not relevant to the participant's school context).

The ISS-R produces a total composite score and five sub-scale scores of school invitational qualities. The ISS-R is based on the 100-item Inviting School Survey (Purkey & Fuller, 1995) and can be used with fourth grade students and above. The ISS-R demonstrates strong face and content validity aligned with ITP theory (Purkey & Novak, 2016). The ISS-R demonstrates reasonable internal consistency, evaluated by Cronbach's alpha coefficient and Guttman's split-half alpha coefficients (Smith, 2005).

Procedure

With each school principal's approval, invitations to participate in the study were distributed to teachers, students, and parents of students. Once informed consent had been received from parents of students, participants completed an online web-based questionnaire package (Qualtrics, https://www.qualtrics.com) on their personal electronic devices. The questionnaire package was expected to take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete.

Participants were informed that all information they provided would remain confidential and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Data Preparation and Analysis

As per the ISS-R manual, if there are less than six 'N/A' responses these items' scores are replaced by the participant's subscale item mean. As such, questionnaires with more than 5 missing responses are not scored. Additionally, 5% of the data was trimmed on each end of the sort ISS-R Total (lowest to highest) to remove any outliers and inappropriate responses.

All descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted using IBM PASW Statistics 26 (IBM, 2019) and significant levels for the analyses were maintained at $\alpha < .05$.

A series of univariate GLM analysis of variance were conducted to determine if participants' ISS-R average scale scores differed significantly on the basis of Type of Participant, Gender, Type of School, Size of School, and Student Age.

When the ANOVA indicated a statistically significant effect difference, post hoc paired-samples *t* tests were conducted to compare group means. As five of the six main effects have three levels, the LSD method for control of Type I error for pairwise comparisons was utilised. The LSD procedure is a powerful method to control for Type I errors across all pairwise comparisons if a factor has three levels (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019).

To investigate subscale relationships, Pearson's correlation coefficient (Pearson's *r*) was calculated. In order to assess subscale reliability Cronbach's alpha (α) was utilized.

Results

For details of ISS-R scales descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) for each of the main effects refer to Table 2.

Table 2

Inviting School Survey–Revised (ISS-R) Total Scale and Subscales Raw Score Means and Standard Deviations by Main Effects (Type of Participant, Gender, Type of School, Size of School, Student Age)

Main Effect	People (16-80)		Program (7-35)		Process (8-40)		Policy (7-35)		Place (12-60)		ISS-R Total (50-250)	
	M	*SD*	M	*SD*	M	*SD*	M	*SD*	M	*SD*	M	*SD*
All Participants												
	59.65	*11.84*	26.18	*4.54*	29.58	*5.77*	25.99	*5.02*	42.31	*9.64*	183.71	*34.10*
Type of Participant												
Teacher	67.08	*8.43*	27.29	*4.32*	32.32	*4.85*	28.88	*3.58*	47.02	*7.60*	202.59	*26.22*
Student	56.53	*11.65*	25.60	*4.50*	28.19	*5.62*	24.83	*5.03*	39.81	*9.46*	174.96	*33.27*
Parent	65.93	*9.60*	27.56	*4.44*	32.91	*4.78*	28.25	*4.24*	48.54	*7.33*	203.19	*28.38*
Gender												
Female	60.61	*11.82*	26.34	*4.50*	30.06	*5.69*	26.42	*4.91*	43.28	*9.44*	186.71	*33.71*
Male	58.12	*11.72*	25.91	*4.60*	28.82	*5.80*	25.32	*5.12*	40.78	*9.75*	178.96	*34.18*
Type of School												
Elementary	64.74	*9.88*	27.45	*4.47*	32.05	*4.82*	28.17	*4.16*	46.61	*8.22*	199.03	*28.56*
Middle	56.43	*11.31*	25.53	*4.23*	28.16	*5.46*	24.62	*4.88*	39.49	*9.08*	174.24	*32.00*
High	56.76	*13.01*	25.11	*4.79*	27.86	*6.41*	24.76	*5.38*	40.14	*10.36*	174.61	*37.57*
Size of School												
Under 250	68.53	*8.93*	28,79	*4.40*	33.86	*4.60*	29.48	*3.86*	49.18	*8.74*	209.83	*27.82*
250-500	64.78	*9.99*	27.29	*4.75*	32.05	*4.86*	28.14	*4.22*	46.16	*8.13*	198.42	*29.06*
Over 500	58.26	*11.84*	25.84	*4.44*	28.91	*5.76*	25.42	*5.03*	41.27	*9.63*	179.70	*33.96*
Student Age												
8-11	61.67	*10.31*	27.03	*4.37*	30.62	*4.89*	26.98	*4.41*	43.53	*8.78*	189.83	*29.44*
12-13	54.40	*11.13*	25.18	*4.31*	27.28	*5.36*	23.89	*4.92*	38.15	*9.11*	168.89	*31.72*
14-20	52.74	*11.62*	24.33	*4.42*	26.25	*5.74*	23.30	*4.97*	37.21	*9.27*	163.82	*33.08*

Inferential Analyses

The Pearson's *r* intercorrelation coefficients subscales are presented in Table 3. All correlations, ranging from .694 to .964 for the ISS-R Total scale and the 5 subscales, were statistically significant at $p < .001$.

Table 3
Intercorrelations of the Inviting School Survey–Revised (ISS-R) Total Scale and Subscales by Type of Participant

Scale	Program	Process	Policy	Place	ISS-R Total
People					
Teacher	.750	.870	.851	.753	.940
Student	.747	.863	.844	.828	.960
Parent	.820	.892	.899	.813	.961
Total	.754	.883	.870	.843	.964
Program					
Teacher		.754	.728	.741	.859
Student		.731	.700	.694	.823
Parent		.807	.804	.812	.899
Total		.749	.722	.718	.831
Process					
Teacher			.823	.786	.929
Student			.814	.799	.920
Parent			.863	.830	.940
Total			.840	.828	.933
Policy					
Teacher				.751	.900
Student				.768	.897
Parent				.795	.930
Total				.796	.913
Place					
Teacher					.902
Student					.919
Parent					.919
Total					.928

Teachers: $n = 1344$, Students: $n = 6184$, Parents: $n = 1472$, Total: $n = 9000$.
All correlations are statistically significant ($p < .001$).

All of the ISS-R subscales and Total scale Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha reliability coefficients for the total sample were >.7 suggesting that these measures demonstrated acceptable levels of reliability. As depicted in Table 4, subscales showing the greatest reliability ($r > .9$), across all participants were the People subscale and the Total scale.

Table 4
Inviting School Survey–Revised (ISS-R) Total Scale and Subscales Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha by Type of Participant

SCALE	Teachers (N=1344; 14.9%)	Students (N=6184; 68.7%)	Parents (N=1472; 16.4%)	Total (N=9000; 100%)
People (16 items)	.919	.910	.944	.925
Program (7 items)	.790	.743	.852	.771
Process (8 items)	.839	.813	.878	.843
Policy (7 items)	.770	.773	.852	.805
Place (12 items)	.884	.881	.917	.900
ISS-R Total (50 items)	.965	.963	.977	.969

A series of univariate GLM analysis of variance were conducted to determine if participants' ISS-R average scale scores (refer to Table 2) differed significantly on the basis of Type of Participant, Gender, Type of School, Size of School, and Student Age. Table 5 presents the results of the ANOVAs with effect size estimates (partial eta-squared - η_p^2) and power estimates.

As depicted in Table 5 the univariate *F* tests revealed that there were statistically significant main effects scale differences.

Table 5

Inviting School Survey–Revised (ISS-R) Total Scale and Subscales Univariate Analysis of Variance Summary for the Main Effects (Type of Participant, Gender, Type of School, Size of School, Student Age)

Scale/Main Effects	*F*	*p*	η_p^2	Power
People				
Type of Participant	807.73	.000	.15	1.000
Gender	94.94	.000	.01	1.000
Type of School	574.54	.000	.11	1.000
Size of School	292.23	.000	.06	1.000
Student Age	386.23	.000	.11	1.000
Program				
Type of Participant	163.46	.000	.04	1.000
Gender	18.68	.000	.00	0.991
Type of School	231.65	.000	.05	1.000
Size of School	119.80	.000	.03	1.000
Student Age	201.67	.000	.06	1.000
Process				
Type of Participant	663.18	.000	.13	1.000
Gender	100.52	.000	.01	1.000
Type of School	571.77	.000	.11	1.000
Size of School	285.63	.000	.06	1.000
Student Age	380.07	.000	.11	1.000
Policy				
Type of Participant	609.20	.000	.12	1.000
Gender	103.49	.000	.01	1.000
Type of School	585.98	.000	.12	1.000
Size of School	269.17	.000	.06	1.000
Student Age	357.28	.000	.10	1.000
Place				
Type of Participant	796.14	.000	.15	1.000
Gender	146.00	.000	.02	1.000
Type of School	624.74	.000	.12	1.000
Size of School	251.78	.000	.05	1.000
Student Age	296.79	.000	.09	1.000
ISS-R Total				
Type of Participant	759.08	.000	.14	1.000
Gender	111.72	.000	.01	1.000
Type of School	632.57	.000	.12	1.000
Size of School	295.86	.000	.06	1.000
Student Age	399.91	.000	.12	1.000

Type of Participant, Type of School, Size of School $df = 2,8997$; Student Age $df = 2,6181$; Gender $df = 1,8998$

Post Hoc Multiple Pairwise Comparisons

As the ANOVA indicated a statistically significant difference for all main effects, post hoc multiple pairwise comparisons tests were conducted to evaluate pairwise differences.

Results of these post hoc pairwise analyses are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Post Hoc Pairwise Differences in the Inviting School Survey–Revised (ISS-R) Scale Measures by Main Effects

Main Effect	People	Program	Process	Policy	Place	ISS-R Total
Type of Participant						
Teacher vs Parents	T > P	T > P	P > T	T > P	P > T	T > P
Teachers vs Students	T > S	T > S	T > S	T > S	T > S	T > S
Parents vs Students	P > S	P > S	P > S	P > S	P > S	P > S
Gender						
Females vs Males	F > M	F > M	F > M	F > M	F > M	F > M
Type of School						
Elementary vs Middle	E > M	E > M	E > M	E > M	E > H	E > M
Elementary vs High	E > H	E > H	E > H	E > H	E > M	E > H
Middle vs High	M = H	M > H	M = H	M = H	H > M	M = H
Size of School						
Small vs Medium	S > M	S > M	S > M	S > M	S > M	S > M
Small vs Large	S > L	S > L	S > L	S > L	S > L	S > L
Medium vs Large	M > L	M > L	M > L	M > L	M > L	M > L
Student Age						
Group 1 vs Group 2	G1 > G2	G1 > G2	G1 > G2	G1 > G2	G1 > G2	G1 > G2
Group 1 vs Group 3	G1 > G3	G1 > G3	G1 > G3	G1 > G3	G1 > G3	G1 > G3
Group 2 vs Group 3	G2 > G3	G2 > G3	G2 > G3	G2 > G3	G2 > G3	G2 > G3

> denotes statistically significant difference $p < .05$; = denotes non-statistically significant difference $p > .05$.
Small = Under 250; Medium = 250 vs 500; Large = Over 500.
Group 1 = 8-11; Group 2 = 12-13; Group 3 = 14-20.

Discussion

As shown in Table 5 all of the univariate GLM analyses of variance probability results were statistically significant, $p < .001$. That is, these analyses support the assertion that the ISS-R average scale scores (refer to Table 2) differed significantly on the basis of Type of Participant, Gender, Type of School, Size of School, and Student Age.

However, probability results only inform the researcher the direction of the difference. In order to evaluate the how large of a difference requires analysis of effect size, namely the partial eta-squared-η_p^2 (Sullivan & Feinn, 2012).

Reviewing Table 5, according to Cohen (1988), of the six ISS-R scales all but the Program subscale had significant partial eta-squared effects within the major factors. The Program subscale partial eta-squared effects of the educational factors ranged from .00 (Gender) to .06 (Student Age). These effect sizes are very low and are interpreted as non- significant. As such, it can be concluded that the Program subscale scores are not associated with any of the major factors under study.

In addition, Gender and Size of School have very small partial eta-squared effects in all the subscales and the Total scale. The partial eta-squared effects for these two factors ranged from .00 to .06. As such, while probability significant differences are noted, it can be assumed that neither of these factors had any significant association with the ISS-R subscales and Total scale.

The remaining major effects had medium to large partial eta-squared effects sizes (.09 to .15): Type of Participant, Type of School, and Student Age and will be discussed within each relevant ISS-R scale.

People Subscale Scores

Type of Participant differences. The strength of relationship between the People subscale and Type of Participant, as assessed by η_p^2, was large with the Type of Participant factor accounting for 15% of the variance of the People subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that Teachers had statistically higher mean scores than Parents and Students, while Parents had statistically higher mean scores than Students (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Type of School differences. The strength of relationship between the People subscale and Type of School, as assessed by η_p^2, was medium with the Type of School factor accounting for 11% of the variance of the People subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that Elementary schools had statistically higher mean scores than Middle and High schools, while there was no statistically significant mean score difference between Middle and High schools (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Student Age differences. The strength of relationship between the People subscale and Student Age, as assessed by η_p^2, was medium with the Type of Participant factor accounting for 11% of the variance of the People subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that the 8-11 years of age group had statistically higher mean scores than the other two age groups, 12-13 and 14-20; while the 12-13 age group had statistically higher mean scores than the 14-20 age group (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Process Subscale Scores

Type of Participant differences. The strength of relationship between the Process subscale and Type of Participant, as assessed by η_p^2, was large with the Type of Participant factor accounting for 13% of the variance of the Process subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that Teachers had statistically higher mean scores than Students but equal mean scores with Parents, while Parents had statistically higher mean scores than Students (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Type of School differences. The strength of relationship between the Process subscale and Type of School, as assessed by η_p^2, was medium with the Type of School factor accounting for 11% of the variance of the Process subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that Elementary schools had statistically higher mean scores than Middle and High

schools, while there was no statistically significant mean score difference between Middle and High schools (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Student Age differences. The strength of relationship between the Process subscale and Student Age, as assessed by η_p^2, was medium with the Type of Participant factor accounting for 11% of the variance of the Process subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that the 8-11 years of age group had statistically higher mean scores than the other two age groups, 12-13 and 14-20; while the 12-13 age group had statistically higher mean scores than the 14-20 age group (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Policy Subscale Scores

Type of Participant differences. The strength of relationship between the Policy subscale and Type of Participant, as assessed by η_p^2, was large with the Type of Participant factor accounting for 12% of the variance of the Policy subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that Teachers had statistically higher mean scores than Parents and Students, while Parents had statistically higher mean scores than Students (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Type of School differences. The strength of relationship between the Policy subscale and Type of School, as assessed by η_p^2, was large with the Type of School factor accounting for 12% of the variance of the Policy subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that Elementary schools had statistically higher mean scores than Middle and High schools, while there was no statistically significant mean score difference between Middle and High schools (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Student Age differences. The strength of relationship between the Policy subscale and Student Age, as assessed by η_p^2, was medium with the Type of Participant factor accounting for 10% of the variance of the Policy subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that the 8-11 years of age group had statistically higher mean scores than the other two age groups, 12-13 and 14-20; while the 12-13 age group had statistically higher mean scores than the 14-20 age group (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Place Subscale Scores

Type of Participant differences. The strength of relationship between the Place subscale and Type of Participant, as assessed by η_p^2, was large with the Type of Participant factor accounting for 15% of the variance of the Place subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that Teachers had statistically higher mean scores than Parents and Students, while Parents had statistically higher mean scores than Students (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Type of School differences. The strength of relationship between the Place subscale and Type of School, as assessed by η_p^2, was large with the Type of School factor accounting for 12% of the variance of the Place subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that Elementary schools had statistically higher mean scores than Middle and High schools; while High Schools had statistically higher mean scores than Middle Schools (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Student Age differences. The strength of relationship between the Place subscale and Student Age, as assessed by η_p^2, was medium with the Type of Participant factor accounting for 9% of the variance of the Place subscale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that the 8-11 years of age group had statistically higher mean scores than the other two age

groups, 12-13 and 14-20; while the 12-13 age group had statistically higher mean scores than the 14-20 age group (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Total ISS-R Scale Scores

Type of Participant differences. The strength of relationship between the Total Scale and Type of Participant, as assessed by η_p^2, was large with the Type of Participant factor accounting for 14% of the variance of the Total Scale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that Teachers and Parents did not have a statistically higher mean score difference but that both groups had statistically higher mean scores than Students (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Type of School differences. The strength of relationship between the Total Scale and Type of School, as assessed by η_p^2, was large with the Type of School factor accounting for 12% of the variance of the Total Scale. Summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that Elementary schools had statistically higher mean scores than Middle and High schools, while there was no statistically significant mean score difference between Middle and High schools (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Student Age differences. The strength of relationship between the Total Scale and Student Age, as assessed by η_p^2, was large with the Type of Participant factor accounting for 12% of the variance of the Total Scale. Univariate ANOVA (Table 5) and summary of post hoc multiple comparisons in Table 6 show that the 8-11 years of age group had statistically higher mean scores than the other two age groups, 12-13 and 14-20; while the 12-13 age group had statistically higher mean scores than the 14-20 age group (refer to Table 2 for details of mean scores).

Conclusion and Future Direction

The present study has shown that there are significant factors that impact the self-reported perceptions of school climate as measured by the Inviting School Survey-R. These factors include the type of school stakeholder: Teacher, Student, Parent, the type of school: Elementary, Middle, High, and the age of the students, which is highly correlated with the type of school. Gender and size of school did not seem to have a significant impact on self-reported school climate perceptions. The results suggest it is important to consider environmental factors to comprehensively understand and to act on changes to the school environment. Not addressing or acknowledging the impact of these characteristics of the school community has the potential of hindering the development of an inviting school.

The current study extends the wealth of school climate research to demonstrate the importance of understanding individual self-perceptions of school climate in particular contexts. Indeed, perceptions determine an individual's behaviour. As a result, these perceptions are a more reliable indicator of outcomes than objective accounts of school climate (Bandura, 1986, 2001; Fan et al., 2011; Koth, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2008; Purkey & Novak, 2016).

In conclusion, in addition to survey/questionnaires, it is recommended additional information be obtained, such as systematic observations, document analyses, interviews, focus groups, etc. in order to make more informed decisions regarding implementing changes within the school that will influence perceptions of the invitational qualities of the school by the relevant school community members.

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Inviting Success When Implementing Social Emotional Learning into Secondary Suburban Classrooms

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Abstract

Through the lenses of Invitational Education (Purkey & Novak, 2008, 2016) and social emotional learning (SEL) advocated by Elias et al., (2016), the researchers sought to answer an overarching question: 'How can schools create an environment that invites SEL into the suburban classroom?' The analyzed data identified challenges exist when suburban high schools invite social emotional learning into classrooms. Based on the need to mitigate these findings, the authors suggest proper training, consistent communication, and the use of intentionally inviting processes for successful implementation of SEL.

Keywords: Invitational Theory and Practice, Social-Emotional Learning, Suburban Education, Professional Development

Introduction

The ability to navigate through academic material is necessary to be successful in school. However, one's desire for constant improvement and overcoming challenging situations can help students access and traverse the pitfalls of working within the parameters created by society (Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). On top of an ever-changing landscape of standards and increased accountability, teachers are the ones who are working with students to not only be academically proficient but also to be socially and emotionally proficient (Adelman & Taylor, 2011). Many districts and states have implemented programs or policies that added Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) to the current academic standards (Adelman & Taylor, 2011; Dymnicki et al., 2013). For this inquiry, the researchers used the definition of SEL offered by one of the leaders in the promotion of SEL in Schools, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Domitrovich et al., (2015) defined SEL as:

> …the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. (p. 5)

Using this definition, many researchers have argued that focusing only on academic tasks will not bring about the success of a child but might inhibit their ability to engage fully in the

school experience (Dymnicki et al., 2013; Zins, 2004). The successful integration of both academics and SEL through coordinated instruction coupled with a staff equipped to address such skills are necessary for students to generalize required life skills past high school (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2007). Accomplishing these skills occurs by teaching academics along with social and emotional skills (Durlak et al., 2011).

Upon further examination of SEL, and time required implementing a valid program, and the change necessary for an impactful SEL program, these researchers relied on a conceptual framework that not only possesses many facets but also has a model for both change and leadership embedded within it. Invitational education (IE) theory is not only a theory based on the leadership of an organization but has a model allowing an organization to change by being inclusive of people, processes, places, policies, and programs (Egley, 2003; Haigh, 2011; Purkey & Novak, 1996, 2008).

"In many communities, there is less support for and involvement in institutions that foster children's social-emotional development and character" (Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013; pg. 3). It was the purpose of these researchers to examine critical challenges in inviting and implementing comprehensive SEL standards into a suburban high school setting using an invitational theory approach. The following research questions guided this inquiry with the intent to answer the over-arching question: How can schools create an environment that invites SEL into the suburban classroom? Explained further through two sub-questions. *How do schools leverage People, Places, Policies, Programs, and Processes to overcome barriers to embed SEL within the suburban secondary school? How can administrators support SEL in high school settings through changes in policy, processes, and people?*

Conceptual Framework

The basic element that serves as the backbone of the invitational organization is being intentional about the use of all resources (Young & Schoenlein, 2017). The invitational organization relies on the judicious use of resources, so the elements of intentionality, care, optimism, respect, and trust (I-CORT) are evident throughout the system's domains known as the 5-Ps: People, Places, Policies, Programs, and Processes. The acronym I-CORT is used by Purkey and Novak (2016) to emphasize the need to be intentionally inviting, further stating, "an invitation is an intentional choice someone makes and an intentional chance someone takes" (p. 15). Characterized by the matching of personal needs with the required outcomes is care. When paired with optimism, caring is about believing a person will transcend their current position to increase their ability to make a positive difference (Purkey & Novak, 2008). Respect for others and their decision to accept or reject the invitation is paramount to being invitational. To counteract the notion of rejecting the invitation, follow-up comes in the form of trust and holding high expectations to share the workload and trusting others to do their part and is typically displayed with intentionality in the middle with wheel-like spokes to the other four elements (Haigh, 2011; Young & Schoenlein, 2017). In an invitational organization, the use of these elements become evident as the leadership works to deploy the five domains of IE.

Moreover, invitational education utilizes a starfish symbol as an analogy for the emphasis placed on the all-encompassing approach expected of invitational organizations. Known as the five P's, the five domains: People, Places, Policies, Programs, and Processes were also discussed in research by Anderson (2019), Mattison (2015), Mattison and Blader (2013), and Weissberg and Cascarino (2013), which described the effective implementation of learning and social interventions in schools. Domitrovich, et al., (2015) revealed successful SEL requires support

from family and community partnerships, school-wide practice and policies, and curriculum and instruction. Those supports, coupled with teachers and others responsible for delivering instruction, solidify the people and places domains of IE, thereby reinforcing the connection between SEL and IE.

Background

Through a foundational understanding of SEL and IE, one can begin to have a full understanding of this inquiry. There are three foundations of IE and five basic domains to SEL. These components aligned together so organizations can further build toward having a successful integration of SEL (Domitrovich et al., 2015; Purkey & Novak, 2008). Illustrated in Figure 1 are the explanations of the foundations of IE and components of SEL, as the components of SEL are juxtaposed to its matching foundation of IE. Presented are three foundations of IE and five essential domains to SEL. These components aligned so organizations can further build toward having a successful integration of SEL (Domitrovich et al., 2015; Purkey & Novak, 2008).

Foundations of Invitational Education (Purkey & Novak, 2016)	**Components of Social Emotional Learning from CASEL**
Democratic Ethos: the idea that people count and grow through self-governance.	Relationship Skills: the ability to communicate, problem solve, and work with others
	Self-Management: regulation by the individual in a variety of settings and to work toward self-improvement.
Perceptual Tradition: behavior is based on the perception of the individual and their place in the larger community	Responsible Decision Making: making appropriate choices about behavior in a variety of circumstance.
	Social Awareness: examination from a variety of viewpoints and to understand the social and ethical norms
Self–Concept Theory: perception of one's identity.	Self – Awareness: recognition of thoughts and how they impact emotions so that the individual can respond appropriately in a variety of situations.

Figure 1. The alignment of IE and the components of SEL

Significance of the Study

In the adoption of a new program within an organization, there should be a valid model for change used to make the new program successful (Taplin & Clark, 2012). Purkey and Novak (2016) created a double-helix format for graphically exhibiting change within the IE framework. This double helix depicts the cyclical twelve-step process that illustrates how change occurs within an organization. This clear description of the change process reinforced the researchers' selection of IE as the conceptual framework for this study.

The double helix of organizational change has three significant components, occasional interest, systematic application, and pervasive adoption (Purkey & Novak, 2008). Each of the phases has four sub-steps to make the transition to being fully invitational (Purkey & Novak, 2008;

Young & Schoenlein, 2017). The phases are what Purkey and Novak (2016) referred to as knowledge points, which repeatedly follow the order of awareness, understanding, application, and adoption in an ever-spiraling, evolving process that builds upon the previous step.

During Phase One adoption as illustrated by the double helix: Occasional interest, are Steps 1-4: Initial exposure, Structured dialog, General agreement to try, and Uncoordinated use and sharing (Purkey & Novak, 2008, p.44; Young & Schoenlein, 2017). During the Initial exposure step, faculty and school personnel understand what it means to become invitational, as related to the actual goals of working with students. Step two: Structured dialog, includes reviewing plans from other schools, studying how IE has influenced other schools, or hearing a speaker with IE experience and then debriefing that activity with a structured dialog as to how this idea of being invitational improves or builds upon existing systems (Purkey & Novak, 2008). During the Step three of the first phase of IE adoption, stakeholders agree to become inviting and willingly begin testing out ideas or assessing if current practices align with being invitational. Finally, stakeholders begin using some of the views or tactics of IE within their classroom or work area (Young & Schoenlein, 2017). While these Step four activities may appear uncoordinated, the results provide feedback on what systems are working compared to which cause problems in the goal of bring intentionally inviting (Purkey & Novak, 2008).

In its desire to adopt IE principles and assumptions, as the organization's stakeholders progress beyond Phase One: Occasional interest, participants move into Phase Two: "Systematic Application" (Purkey & Novak, 2008, p. 46). Phase Two, Steps 5-8, include Intensive Study, Applied Comprehension, Strand organization, and Systematic incorporation. It is during this phase where the organization begins to organize its five Ps: People, places, policies, processes, and practices to align with the three foundations of IE: democratic ethos, perceptual tradition, and self-concept theory, and the five elements: intentional, caring, optimism, respect, and trust (Purkey & Novak, 2008). Educators accomplish this by studying how groups and scholars apply IE and how the organization will integrate IE theory and practices based on the identified areas of needs (Purkey & Novak, 2008; Young & Schoenlein, 2017).

Once the organization is organized and beginning to incorporate IE theory and practices, stakeholders progress to Phase three: Pervasive Adoption. The organization's stakeholders proceed to Steps 9-12: Developing leaders, In-depth analysis and extension, Confronting significant concerns, and Transforming (Purkey & Novak, 2008, pp. 47-48; Young & Schoenlein, 2017). Each subsequent action requires a deeper understanding of IE and its application to the broader organization (Haigh, 2011). Groups become adept at discerning if a new practice fits into the IE model and confronts significant issues impeding their progress (Purkey & Novak, 2008). Ultimately, the organization is intentionally inviting with caring, optimistic, respectful, and trusting professionals working together to be successful (Purkey & Novak, 2008; Young & Schoenlein, 2017). The illustrative double helix of change ultimately guides an organization's stakeholders toward achieving full transformation and becoming invitational.

Similarly, Elias, Ferrito, and Moceri (2016) detailed a cyclical timetable for adopting social emotional learning (SEL) into a school setting. In theirs seven-step process, the authors outlined the process for adopting SEL as a measured skill on a school's progress reports. The authors of the research at hand believed it to be advantageous to align the three-phase helix model described by Purkey and Novak (2016) with the seven-step timetable advocated by Elias et al. (2016). The result would reinforce the adoption of IE theory and practices when implementing SEL and thereby eliminating barriers for its inclusion in classrooms. The authors believe evaluating an organization's people, places, policies, processes, and practices with an I-CORT mindset will

ensure sustainable implementation and continuation of SEL. By synthesizing change models of IE (Purkey & Novak, 2016) and SEL (Elias et al,2016), school personnel and related stakeholders will have an effective tool for educating the whole child and allowing everyone to reach her or his human potential.

Review of the Literature

The rationale for synthesizing IE and SEL models is apparent as one reviews the literature related to both concepts. Domitrovich et al. (2015) described effective SEL programming as flourishing in environments that have supportive relationships and make learning challenging, engaging, and meaningful. Similarly, Burns and Martin (2010) noted that within the invitational organization, the involvement of people in as many activities requiring cooperation and positive results helps them assimilate into an effective team. The description of involving people in positive groups to cooperate and produce aligns with the overall goals of SEL, whereby children can collaborate and provide despite potential or realized setbacks (Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). The parallels reinforce the use of IE in an examination of SEL.

Methodology

For this examination of the challenges to inviting successful implementation of SEL in suburban high schools, the researchers' utilized a mixed-methods case study (Creswell, 2014) to identify what, if any, obstacles existed in the selected sites. Specifically, using a convergent parallel mixed-methods design Creswell (2016) allowed the researchers to gather simultaneously quantitative and qualitative data. Hanson et al. (2005) highlighted a concurrent design of data gathering whereby both qualitative and quantitative data are simultaneously gathered. In this case, the data collected concurrently was in the form of focus groups, interviews, survey results, document analysis, and observations. Moreover, case studies must be bounded (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). For this study, the boundaries were the five high schools and specific teachers, counselors, social works, and administrators who worked within these five settings.

Population and Sample

Along with demographic information, Table 1 below shows the enrollments of the high schools. The representative data aligns with what one expects when examining Midwest suburban schools and communities (Baldassare,1992). The case study was limited to five high schools in a suburban district that exhibited multiple levels of SEL implementation. None of the five was comprehensive in implementation of SEL. A survey was distributed to all certified staff members at the five high schools (n=550). The return rate of the survey was 14%. Additionally, the sample for the focus groups were 15 teachers in the district. All of them were teaching students at various grade levels and content-areas. Five counselors and five social workers were also included. The interviews were limited to five administrators: One per building selected by the head principal and a district-level administrator overseeing SEL for the district.

Focus Groups

Each of the five focus groups ranged in size from three- to four- participants. Researchers met with each focus group twice. Reliability and face validity for the focus group questions was established by sharing the questions with 15 secondary education teachers not included in the sample. The pilot resulted in no changes to the initial questions. Merriam and Tisdell (2016)

both suggested piloting and establishing face validity to ensure questions not only make sense but would elicit relevant information.

Table 1
Description of Organization Structure of the Participants

	Student		Teacher			Principal	
School	Enrollment	F/R Lunch	Total Teachers	Avg Exp	Advanced Degrees	Years at Site	Highest Degree
A	1787	7.81%	109	18	84.5%	3	Doctorate
B	1568	47.15%	102	10	56.8%	2	Masters
C	1659	26.86%	112	12	62.3%	8	Doctorate
D	1523	27.06%	97	17	64.9%	6	Doctorate
E	1656	42.62%	110	14	73.2%	5	Masters

Note N = 5 interview building-level principals; focus groups, N=15 teachers from 5 school sites,

Interviews

The researchers conducted individual semi-structured interviews with administrators selected based on their position and responsibility for allocating resources, making and enforcing policy, and reinforcing processes to support SEL in the classroom. For this study, the interview participants were building principals (n=5). Additionally, a district-level administrator (n=1) who oversaw the counselors and social workers was interviewed. That individual also managed SEL for the district. After coding the focus groups, conducted was a follow-up interview (Yin, 2014) so the administrator could offer further clarification of barriers to the allocation of resources as well as the comprehensive implementation of SEL Overall, the goal of conducting interviews was to ascertain the importance placed on SEL by decision-makers.

Survey

For the quantitative portion of the research, the researchers administered a survey to individual staff working at each of the selected high schools. The survey was developed by Panorama, a company working with schools to assess SEL in students. The survey measured the teacher's perceptions of school climate, student mindset, faculty growth mindset, grit, educating all students, and demographic questions about the staff member. The researchers used Qualtrics software, which offered the questions in randomized order. The randomized order of items and the ability to see only a few questions at a time helped the researcher feel assured item responses were individualized, which thereby enhanced the quality of the survey (Fink, 2017). To optimize reliability, the researchers utilized a test-retest model (Fink, 2017). This allowed the researchers to establish the overall and topical Cronbach alpha scores for internal reliability. The Cronbach scale measures how the questions relate to one another with a high score of one showing perfect consistency reliability, >.80 is an excellent reliability .70 is considered adequate, and >.60 would be regarded as moderate (Field, 2013). The Cronbach coefficient for survey responses was determined to be α=.77.

Document Analysis

Another source of data came from school or district-based documents that supported or refuted feedback related to the implementation of a comprehensive SEL process. Researchers designed and utilized a document analysis tool to find the audience of the class, the purpose of the class, and synonyms or phrases found in the descriptions of the SEL competencies. The examined documents included mission statements, course catalogs, lesson plans, and faculty meeting agendas.

Observations

The researchers completed a series of formal and informal observations (Creswell, 2016) to gain further insight into how SEL occurred within the classroom setting. Over three weeks the researchers observed randomly selected classrooms. The researchers identified phrases or words similar to or synonyms of the words found in CASEL's five competencies of SEL posted within the setting. A second structured observation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) allowed the researchers to listen to how students and staff interacted. These observations aided the researchers in viewing the phenomenon in its natural setting (Creswell, 2016), possibly revealing SEL being addressed in isolated incidents without one common theme or message aligning to the schools' vision, which further reinforces the case for a comprehensive approach (Adelman &Taylor, 2011).

Data Analysis

To gain perspective related to the barriers of SEL implementation within suburban high school settings, it was necessary to analyze collected qualitative data based on the research questions. It is essential to individually code all collected data collected, then overlay the results to find the patterns or commonalities within the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The qualitative data from the focus group and interviews followed the simultaneous review process advocated by Merriam and Tisdell (2016). Therefore, the researchers progressed through the layers of interviews and focus groups' feedback so the reviewed transcriptions could be reliably codified and themes validly identified.

For the collected quantitative data, reported were the percentages of responses and the underlying statistical calculation of mean and standard deviation. This provided insight into how teachers rated their school in relation to various SEL competencies as well as how connected these were to the school and its activities.

Additionally, document analysis of the vision statement, mission statement, and course descriptions connected the SEL standards with evidence how SEL could be occurring. The researchers coded the documents for synonyms of the ideals of SEL from CASEL, responsibility, efficacy, advocacy, teamwork, collaboration, etc. Following suggestions by Krueger and Casey (2015), the researchers coded the observational notes based on the language found in the vision and mission statement for each school as related to the stated SEL competencies.

Findings

Research Question One

How do schools leverage people, places, policies, programs, and processes to overcome barriers to embed SEL within the suburban secondary school?

People

To examine people inviting SEL into the classroom, the researchers observed randomly selected classrooms. They identified how the classes were organized, and the extent the teacher

was modeling the application of SEL skills to their students. After visiting ten classrooms across the district, the researcher witnessed many teachers, who unbeknownst to them, used SEL in a manner consistent with the document but with no evidence of impact assessment or generalization of skills. At the same time, as evidenced in Table 2 below, the teachers were also not intentionally inviting the application of SEL standards into the classroom through direct actions.

Table 2
Results from the Classroom Observations of the Application of SEL

	N	Witnessed Application of behavior by the adult in the room
Greeting Students	10	5
Interaction at Eye Level	10	3
Red Flag Behavior	10	7
Use of positive praise	10	6
Using students' names	10	8

Note: N=ten observed classrooms

As documented within Table 2, Red Flag Behaviors defined as lack of transitions, use of cynical tone, lack of verbal cues or visual cues, and using group directions or absence of individual connection, were of particular concern. These Red Flag Behaviors occurred in most of the observed classrooms. This clearly indicates a lack of I-CORT mindsets or IE practices in relation to implementation of SEL standards.

Furthering the examination of the intentional invitation of people using and being involved in the integration of SEL standards, the researchers examined the data from interviews and focus groups to help answer who should be included in the planning of the program. Each of the focus group participants, agreed students, teachers, administrators, counselors, and social workers should be involved in the planning. On the other hand, respondents were perplexed when asked about how businesses or other community members could fit in the preparation. During the interview, Principal Five stated, "I don't know how they fit in." Then followed up with "businesses would be good as resources or filling gaps in needs." Only Principal One indicated they would solicit feedback from businesses in relation to student behaviors or habits based on the SEL standards. Principal Two stated, "Parents who might say well you can't tell my kid how to respond to this who then themselves might not appropriately respond professionally to a teacher." Conversely, another stated, "we want parents involved." Overall, there was disagreement among the participants as to who from outside of the school should be involved in the invitation or implementation of SEL.

Places

Observed places included the hallways and central offices of the individual schools and ten randomly selected classrooms. Each of the buildings had its mission statement posted visibly for incoming people, and the staff in the main office were welcoming and helpful. The hallways were bright with light, considering the few windows in most of the buildings. Schools B, C, and D had

mission statement posters and incentive programs for students displayed. There were communication boards in all the high schools, which communicated events and organizations that could involve students.

Classroom poster messaging was similar to the hallways. While the physical organization of furniture may not have been inviting due to arrangement, there was evidence of posters with positive slogans on them. Only four of the classrooms had student models or exemplars hanging on the walls. Most of the walls were decorated with school-based material about procedures for emergencies or posters relating to curriculum or perseverance. Overall, the schools and classrooms' messages related to invitation of SEL were neutral with no obvious intention to disinvite people. However, as to engaging students between the two spaces, not much was observed. Compared to the classrooms, the hallways and main offices generally appeared to present a more invitational approach.

From the analysis of the data regarding the use of People, Places, Policies, Programs, and Processes, no overall effort of intentionality to make an inviting environment occurred. However, there were individuals within each school setting that appeared to demonstrate intentionality to this effort within their own environment. Next, we will discuss policy documents and their explicit impact upon SEL initiatives.

Policies

As noted above, data analysis included exploring and examining documents. The first examined document was the strategic plan of the school district, which individual participating high schools referenced to create their mission statement. Within the strategic plans, the researchers found a district-wide mission statement and expected outcomes of policies or programs. Analysis began with the mission statement:

> The mission of the School District, the bridge to unlimited possibilities yet to be discovered, is to ensure students construct their foundation for success in life's endeavors through relevant, personalized learning experiences orchestrated by talented, compassionate educators and distinguished by an inclusive culture, an engaged community, and robust opportunities that challenge learners to achieve their full potential.

The examination of the mission indicates two objectives align to skills mentioned in the SEL Standards. One objective stated, "Every student will develop and utilize personal resilience while mastering essential competencies that lead to college and career readiness." Another objective stated, "Every student will develop interpersonal skills to be an engaged, empathetic member of the local and global community" (School District Plan, 2019). Utilizing the synonyms of keywords from the CASEL, the researchers examined portions of the mission and objectives, which coincided with the tenants of SEL. From analysis of the mission statements, construct, success, compassionate, inclusive, engaged, and potential, are words synonymous with those found in literature from CASEL and the state standards. From the objectives, resilience, masters, competencies, readiness, interpersonal, engaged, empathetic, and community are words related to the SEL standards. It seemed the high schools obviously constructed their mission statements from these foundations and thus reinforced the basis for how the researchers codified them to verify alignment and consistency in message. Table 3 displays the analysis of the mission statements.

Table 3
Each of the high school's mission statement

School	Published Mission Statement
A	The *School* community works closely together to guide student learning. We have high expectations, provide outstanding instruction, encourage positive relationships, and allow students to build life skills to prepare them for their future.
B	As the staff at *school*, our goal is to provide a world-class education that will develop life-long learners and responsible, globally-conscious citizens through high expectations for student achievement within a caring school environment. *Our school* is a uniquely amazing place where students can be themselves and yet be part of something much larger than themselves - The Tribe. Always remember - "Where Tradition Began…. Excellence Continues" - *SCHOOL* PRIDE!
C	Our *School* CORE serves as a foundation to guide our students' efforts in the classroom & community. We Are… Conscious: Growth-oriented, Curious, Enthusiastic, Intentional Decision Makers On Point Accountable, Present, Punctual, Responsible Respectful of Self, Peers, Adults, Property *School* Kindness Zone Engaged Focused, Aware, Ready to Learn, Actively Involved
D	Our mission is to personalize learning to ensure that ALL students are socially responsible, informed, and productive life-long learners.
E	*The school* establishes and upholds high standards that all students are expected to achieve through the creation of partnerships among teachers, students, parents, and the community that support student achievement in a safe and caring environment.

Note: The italics represent the portion replaced to protect the school/district in the study; also, formatting altered for readability.

As revealed by Table 3, there were different approaches espoused in each of the mission statements. School A differed from the district mission statement in a sense there is permission being granted to students to build lifelong song skills but only on the terms of the school. Whereas schools B, C, and D offered a much more student-centered approach stating the mission of the staff is to act on behalf of students in some manner to promote growth, learning, accountability, caring, productivity, and other values more closely aligned to the values found in the district mission statement. School E attempted to have a student-centered mission statement by leading with the school establishing and upholding values in which to hold students accountable. Overall, as displayed by each of these mission statements, alignment to both IE and SEL components was fragmented as to how the school personnel would seek to develop their students' life skills.

Programs

Building from the district and high schools' mission statements, the researchers sought to learn what programs or classes are offering SEL as a component of their learning outcomes. The researchers examined the course offerings for phrases and words from CASEL's components of SEL. The terms found in the left column of Table 4. Column 2 of Table 3 indicates the number of occurrences of the particular word or phrase, while column three indicates if related to SEL. In addition, column four revealed which class the concept occurred.

Table 4

Analysis of course offerings and their tie to mission statements and SEL

Word/Phrase	Occurrence in Plan	Based in SEL	Category/Class name
Self-Awareness	1	0	
Self-Management	0	0	
Relation Skills	0	0	
Responsible/ity	0	0	
Decision Making			
Relationship Skills	0	0	
Social	67	8	Debate, Social Skills, Cadet Teacher
Emotional	2	2	
Viewpoints	0	0	
Ethics	1	0	Sports Med 3
Self-improvement	0	0	
Teamwork	5	5	Debate, theatre, explore med science
Risk	3	0	
Leadership	40	13	ROTC, Teacher Ed, Debate
Empathy	0	0	
Ethos	0	0	
Community	33	13	ROTC, Marketing, Community Service offered only at one school
Relation	26	7	Debate and Journalism

Note: Data from five high schools

As revealed in Table 4, there is evidence of SEL aligned to some courses. Some of the areas appeared more than once for a specific word or phrase. Classes associated with the debate category exhibited the most frequent tie to SEL skills.

Being consistent with the interpretation of programs in the school setting offered by Young and Schoenlein (2017), the researchers also examined other programs in the buildings whereby students were encouraged to participate. For school D, they have a program labeled *RISE*. Through this program, any student is eligible for recognition as long as he or she meets the quantitative requirements of one or less tardy or unexcused absence, zero discipline referrals, and no failing grades. Beyond those measurable requirements, the student should also be respectful to others, initiate change, show school pride, and be an empowered learner. Those characteristics

make up the mnemonic: *RISE*. Similarly, at School C, there is a program called *CORE*. These students are nominated for monthly recognition by being conscientious, on point, respectful, and engaged in school.

Schools A, C, and D participated in Link Crew. This national program was started in California to enhance the transition experience for ninth-grade students (Boomerang Project, 2011). Through this program, all ninth graders' work is tied to SEL skill development, while selected upper-level students lead them in small group activities. Programs in schools B and E also focused upon implementing elements of the national program called Top 20. Although school E is the only one to have had teachers complete the national training, school B was completing a book study on the program as well as working with faculty from School E.

Processes

Documents including newsletters, enrollment cards, and handbooks for students were assessed to examine how they intentionally invited involvement from stakeholders, parents, students, or teachers. Newsletters and handbooks are sent electronically to parents while the enrollment cards are sent home with the students as well as being available in other formats. However, none of the principals could verify how many parents read the newsletter or handbook so specific data analysis was on the presentation rather than receipt of the intentional invitations. Another aspect of inviting stakeholders to engage in the school was the presence of a site council. The site council is composed of parents, business leaders, and school staff. However, at the current time of this study, the site councils were seen as adding to the direction or development SEL initiatives of SEL within the schools. No agenda items addressed SEL.

Processes examined by the researchers also included classroom and school-based procedures that allowed or encouraged students and other stakeholders to access content, people, or specific places. The invitational environment dictates they should enhance the experience and make engagement inviting and expected (Purkey & Novak, 2016). During the observation of classrooms, based on the organization of the furniture in the room the researchers witnessed some classes that were more inviting. The observational analysis of the classroom was codified through the physical placement of desks, chairs, and tables or by evidence of the clear schedules and routines. Of the ten observed classes, three had desks or tables arranged in a way that invited peer-to-peer interaction. This included desks being clustered for groups of three to four students or that number of students being allocated to one table. One teacher had a full schedule on the board while others had running lists of tasks or upcoming assessments to be completed. Observed teachers mainly relied on the completion of the listed task displayed on the white board to dictate transitions. They then utilized verbal cues for transition to the next item.

Research Question Two

How can administrators support SEL in high school settings through changes in policy, processes, and people?

The researchers relied on results from the questions posed by the S*chool Climate Survey* as a quantitative measure of perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school. Reflected in Table 5 is the overall range and standard deviation of staffs' perceptions of school climate. The range of scores were 19 through 43 with a means of 31.06 and standard deviation (SD) of 4.51.

Table 5
Results from Questions Assessing School Climate

	N	Min.	Max	Mean	SD
School Climate	67	19	43	31.06	4.51

Illustrated within Table 6 below are the means and standard deviations of the nine questions that measured school climate. Given the nine questions had response values ranging from 1 – 5, the total possible score for any single responder was 45. The potential average or mean is 22.5. Based on the staff responses, the overall mean score was 31.06, indicating to the researchers an overall positive view of the school climate.

Table 6
Results from Individual Questions Assessing School Climate

	Min.	Max	Mean	SD
1. On most days, how enthusiastic are the students about being at school?	1	4	2.99	0.6
2. To what extent are teachers trusted to teach in the way they think is best?	1	5	3.75	0.86
3. How positive are the attitudes of your colleagues?	1	5	3.62	0.76
4. How supportive are students in their interactions with each other?	2	5	3.43	0.71
5. How respectful are the relationships between teachers and students?	2	5	3.81	0.69
6. How optimistic are you that your school will improve in the future?	1	5	3.62	0.95
7. How often do you see students helping each other without being prompted?	2	4	2.75	0.6
8. When new initiatives to improve teaching are presented at your school, how supportive are your colleagues?	2	5	3.32	0.74
9. Overall, how positive is the working environment at your school?	1	5	3.8	0.83

Note: N=67

Upon further examination, there were only two respondents below both the calculated mean and the possible mean. These presented total scores of 22 and 21. Even though these were two standard deviations below the computed mean, the answers are only less than 1.5 below the potential mean of the category, indicating a slightly cynical view of school culture for these individuals, but overall a positive view of the school culture for the majority (see Table 6). Questions 2, 3, and 8 focused upon the teachers' sense of trust for making appropriate pedagogical choices in their class and their perception of collegial support to change. These questions align to the idea that trust is required to be have an inviting school climate. The response mean of these three questions was 2- standard deviations above the potential mean, indicating teachers feel empowered to make independent decisions and expect to be supported by their colleagues when implementing these related changes. Analysis of responses indicate the teachers felt, empowered and supported to make intentional pedagogical choices that implemented elements of a Invitational Education theory and practices.

Further extracted from Table 6, two questions, 1 and 7, received no scores of five and a means of less than three, indicating that students were not as enthusiastic about school nor prone to helping others. Conversely, question 4, "How supportive are students in their interactions with each other?" received no scores of one and a means of 3.43. This juxtaposition is interesting because teachers perceived a student more likely to support their peers, but not on academic endeavors, without direction from instructors. Again, this raises the issue of intentionality not consistently demonstrated to the degree that students view their role as one of peer helper with other students.

From the standpoint of having an overall positive culture, the mean score was 3.8, second to the highest mean of 8.1 regarding the respect level shown between staff and students. This reveals that the element of respect is high within the school environments and perhaps lends itself to creating a positive culture. However, a caveat exists regarding the support of colleagues or their positive attitudes that were two of the lower scores, at means of 3.32 and 3.62, respectively. Again, this could denote another area of a lack of consistent intentionality.

Another clear indication of support as perceived from teachers was the support from their administrative teams. Question 2 indicated, with a mean of 3.75, teachers felt trusted to do what is best when it comes to instruction. The overall average of 31.06 out of 45, which is two standard deviations above the mathematical mean of 22.5, suggests that the participating teachers expressed a tendency to view the school culture as generally positive in relation to perceptions of their students versus their negative opinions of colleagues. However, this inconsistency based on perceptions of individuals within the school reveals a tendency for the school environment to be unintentional disinviting at times, depending on who was interacting with whom.

The interview with the district administrator revealed a demonstrated lack of support for SEL by administrators as exhibited by his perception that SEL growth is intangible and thereby not measured. He explicitly stated, "Administrators may think, 'is there some way we measure the value-added to doing this [SEL initiatives]'?" The district administrator further expressed, "It is up to the building leaders to support teachers." He did note, "We recognize the value of every student and work to have places where the student can connect." Additionally, the District level administrator shared the district's work related to exploration of SEL standards with a cadre teachers, social workers, and counselors as to the initiative's' effectiveness. The cadre had been meeting for the last two years. While the cadre members have been examining practices that support SEL inclusion, the cadre's work related to implementation of or support for SEL practices had not been formally shared with the instructional staff. The district administrator's perspective

regarding building level administration level of support seemed to conflict with to the building administrative level, which expressed enthusiasm and support for further embedding SEL initiatives. Specifically, all the participating building administrators were examining ways to include additional SEL initiatives.

Discussion of Findings

Analysis of the data resulted in identification of three significant themes involving utilization of invitational education practices for SEL implementation. The resulting themes were an *unintentional invitation, a lack of dissemination and training on SEL Standards, and the disparity of familiar routines and processes.* By increasing understanding of these themes, the first steps in creating an invitational atmosphere will begin. An intentionally inviting environment will not only encourage SEL initiatives but will also seamlessly integrate them within classrooms seeking to improve students' social and emotional outcomes.

Theme One: The Organization is Unintentionally Inviting

Purkey and Novak (2016) established four levels of invitations whereby an organization can be either intentionally inviting or disinviting compared to unintentionally inviting or disinviting. As expressed in the findings from interviews, observations, document analysis, and surveys, the schools and district at large involved with this study showed no evidence of being fully aware of how inviting they are being related to elements of the organization. As described by Purkey and Novak (2016), professionals being unintentionally inviting relates to natural leadership whereby teachers are unable to explain why they have positive outcomes. Typically, organizations consistently exhibiting unintentional invitations experience success on their best days and struggle when the results become more difficult to attain, while also becoming disorganized, unpredictable, and disoriented (Purkey & Novak, 2016). Adelman and Taylor (2006), Creemers and Kyriakides (2011), and Zins (2004) all found when SEL is examined and implemented; it is offered inconsistently across buildings, cohorts, and classrooms. Previous findings are supported herein based on the expressed level of trust indicated by teachers to do what they believe to be best confounded by the teachers' continued tpessimism related to how students treat each other with care or respect. This analysis indicates the need for the organization to be proficient, consistent, and organized with their approach to implementing SEL. When implementing a new program, an organization operating as unintentionally inviting creates lag due to a lack of proficient organizational processes that emphasis I-CORT. Unfortunately, all five high schools involved in this study continue to use different tools and approaches for teaching SELwhile the district continues to monitor level of success without considering the need for explicit and overt support for the clear SEL goals or an overall approach.

Further analysis of researcher observations and teacher feedback in surveys or through focus groups demonstrated staff's willingness to learn to engage students in SEL material. Still, the lack of intentional invitation for students to be a part of their learning resounds in the teachers' perception of their students' *grit* and *growth mindset*. The researchers believe students and teachers' lack fidelity with the SEL offerings, which serves as an obstacle that needs resolution. The lack of fidelity has to do with the lack of intentional invitation to join in the process as opposed to the students and teachers' apparent willingness to learn more about it.

Further reinforcing this theme of being unintentionally inviting, the data supports teachers and administrators are willing to invite parents and stakeholders into the process of SEL implementation but lack the knowledge or ability to be intentional. This is exacerbated by the disorganization around a focused effort to instruct SEL Standards and the disjointed programs and

policies implemented across the district. Overall, this lack of an intentional invitation concerning SEL across the district leaves schools with a fragmented approach to implementing, teaching, and measuring SEL.

Theme Two: Lack of Dissemination and Training on SEL Standards

For the last two years, there has been a cadre of teachers, social workers, and counselors working to identify the standards being taught within the district. To date, this work seems to occur in a vacuum with no time given to presenting findings to secondary, high-school leaders. Following the first theme of being unintentionally inviting, this theme's lack of dissemination and training on SEL Standards is due to other tasks or initiatives taking priority. Other priorities like diversity training for staff, trauma-informed schools, and exploration of minimum proficiency for core classes are seen as all consuming. By using an invitational approach, addressing two or three of the topics occurs. The lack of knowledge around SEL standards should then come as no surprise as to why itself initiatives are not a priority for implementation within the classroom.

Yet, Williamson, Modecki, and Guerra (2015) cited how researchers found SEL programs increase positive youth outcomes, school participation, social adjustment, and academic achievement. Further, they denoted how these SEL skills are pertinent to other models of prevention, promotion, and recovery. Thus, intentionally inviting SEL skills in a systematic process is essential and efficient.

Unfortunately, administrators admitted to little knowledge of the SEL standards. Only one participating principal, claimed to know SEL standards. As a result, his expectations changed how he disciplined and had conversations with parents about their student. Stating his awareness allowed him to concretely show the SEL standard to parents, demonstrate how their child was not meeting the standard, and then create an improvement plan. While his approach is reflective of an invitational mindset, it does not universally occur in the district due to a lack of knowledge or training as to intentionally inviting others to the SEL conversation.

From observations of responses during the focus groups, it was evident teachers were curious about the SEL standards but felt they lacked time to read, review, or implement them. Some of the focus groups discussed teacher buy-in and the consensus therein was SEL implementation was best for students. Beyond rigor teachers further expressed belief that SEL provided a different way to having them engage with their curriculum. These teachers expressed an interest in leveraging themselves, their classrooms, or their lessons more approachable to students but also making them feel more welcomed. Being welcomed into the process of learning is essential to students (Adelman and Taylor (2011).

Theme Three: Disparity of Common Routines and Processes

Many of the participating staff members recounted how other initiatives had not allowed them sufficient opportunity to explore different ways in which students learned. Consequently, the lack of opportunity or emphasis did not allow them to leverage differences in students to increase the capacity to engage in SEL. This lack of opportunity or emphasis has left many teachers unfocused and searching for consistency. Even though the interview with the district-level administrator revealed there are remnants of many programs around the district that teachers still utilize, their implementation is not necessarily because they are the best, but rather because teachers received training to effectively implement them. Consequently, schools often utilize past strategies in a piecemeal fashion. Or the strategies are exhibited by only one or two staff members. While high school B admitted to using the Top 20 program and leaning on the fully trained staff

from high school E, a fragmented approach to professional development is counter to the change model illustrated in the double helix model advocated by Purkey and Novak (2016). The researchers believe becoming an invitational organization as well as implementing the change model for SEL adoption (Elias et al., 2016) is crucial for sustained success. Specifically, in Purkey and Novak's double helix model, there are progressions toward strand organization and systematic incorporation, which aligns with year two of the adoption model for SEL advocated by Elias et al. (2016). Thus, consistent professional development and common high expectations for implementation promotes sustained success.

Conclusion

As noted by one participating teacher, "SEL is the most important work we do and can dictate [impact] so many other successes in schools." This research sought to identify barriers to dedicated professionals seeking to improve students' SEL skills. While we determined the challenges of inviting SEL into the suburban high school to achieve the project's ultimate goal, this work can arguably generalize to other settings.

Leveraging the five P's of IE and the SEL Standards from CASEL, the researchers identified which organizations within the district were unintentionally inviting, especially concerning SEL initiatives. While the researchers were able to document small pockets of success being made by a few teachers, overall, there is a preponderance of unintentional invitations toward district-wide implemntation of SEL initiatives. Purkey and Novak (2016) explicated the lack of success or indifference resulting from guesswork and inconsistent training, beliefs, and expectations of such organizations. Crucially, district-wide and school leaders seeking sustained success for SEL inititives and improved school climate must willingly embrace the need for consistent application, training, and fidelity to scale the instruction to an extensive, school-wide approach (Adleman & Taylor, 2011; Elias et al., 2016; Zins, 2003). Based on this research, the district has clearly been unintentionally disinviting in regard to effective implementation of district-wide SEL implementation.

The lack of knowledge through appropriate training around SEL standards has led to a more disjointed approach in the application of SEL standards. Overall, principals and the district-level administrator were lacking in their knowledge of and implementation plan of SEL standards or the effective utilization of invitational education theory and practice for improving school climate and learning achievement. The lack of understanding of invitational education theory and the explicit support for high schools regarding SEL implementation iss a barrier that must be overcome (Brackett et al., 2015; and Durlak et al,.2015).

The administrators and teachers of the schools that have been implementing SEL standards make clear that a unified, intentionally inviting message is needed. Their beliefs echo thoughts around the positive impact of an intentionally inviting school advocated by Young and Schoenlien (2017) and Anderson (2019). In this regard, the participating district can do better. The tenets and assumptions of Invitational Education theory and practice (Purkey & Novak, 2016) align well with research by Brackett et al., (2015) that documented an effective action plan for successful SEL implementation. An intergrated approach and intentionally inviting mindset should be embraced.

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Intentional Mergers: Invitational Educational practices and high-stakes expectations

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Abstract

With the addition of the Educative Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) as a high-stakes, consequential standardized examination for teacher licensure, the practice of training new generations of educators using principles of Invitational Education (IE) Theory when making andragogic decisions arrives at an intersection. Teacher preparation programs preparing teacher candidates using methods and philosophies known to promote success in public school classrooms must now also support candidates' development and submission of an edTPA portfolio. Documenting the utilization of IE theory, practices, and strategies the authors describe the impact upon an educator preparation process that institutes a program for success in an intentionally inviting manner.

Keywords: Invitational Theory, assessment, edTPA, teacher preparation, teacher candidates

Introduction

The availability of studies on the impact of Invitational Education (IE) theory are few in relation to teacher preparation but diverse in regard to leadership, school climate, and potential for success. From its conception as a theoretical framework, the authors recognized the potential for IE in relation to optimizing teacher preparation. While empirical research into IE theory as a concept applicable specifically to teacher preparation may be rare, Matyo-Cepero, Varvisotos and Lilienthal (2017) do make a strong argument for its inclusion in higher education as a general approach desired by teacher candidates. Brown (2016) examined the junction of IE theory and constructivist approaches which revealed that the latter may lead teacher candidates to employ more elements of intentionally inviting practices into their own teaching. Thompson (2009) asserts that teacher education is incomplete without intentionally inviting processes aimed at increasing multicultural dispositions. At the elementary level, IE theory supports improved in-service teacher practices (Kitchens and Wenta, (2007), better organizational and leadership

approaches (Steyn, 2009, Schmidt, 2007, Egley & Jones, 2005) and improved inter-relationships between teachers (Russell, 1984). Finally, when it comes to IE theory and assessment, the field needs resources. Pignatelli (2010) expounded upon problems caused by standardization and testing in education. While invitational theory did not emerge as an explicit theme, Pignatelli referenced the courage demanded of educators and moral responsibility, which implicitly supports Invitational Education theory and practices.

For the purposes of this project, the authors considered the nature of high-stakes standardized assessments, now required in teacher preparation, in relation to IE practices that could intentionally create processes for assessment preparation that candidates would view as invitational. The concept of intentionally disinviting, while malicious at its core, implies that the processes and policies resulting from such assessments intentionally result in discouragement or discrimination. The authors herein agree it is *not* the intent of high-stakes assessments such as the edTPA to hurt or harm any teacher candidate or preparation program. In fact, some may argue that the intent is to generally increase benefits to larger systems such as our public schools and the quality of teachers specifically. However, it is not fully known how the quest to satisfy a trailing indicator such as the edTPA impacts policies or processes that may upset the balance of the remaining domains: People, places, and programs.

The purpose of documenting below the IE-based approaches and practices would encourage stakeholders in higher education and specifically professors in teacher preparation programs focus on initiatives that empower teacher candidates to view assessment preparation as intentionally inviting. These documented practices address course structure, authentic projects and seminars. Each was constructed with attention to the domains and elements of IE theory, the demands of the edTPA, and the desired positive impact upon teacher education programs and its candidates.

Review of the Literature

Emerging literature on edTPA preparation practices appear somewhat limited in scope and depth. A search for empirical data on Invitational Education (IE) theory and standardized assessments revealed zero results. A search for IE theory and assessment resulted in a few articles but none related to preparing students for success with standardized assessments. A search for IE theory and teacher education resulted in 13 articles. A search for IE theory and education revealed well over 100 documents. None of these addressed assessment preparation or assessment best-practices for success. Clearly, further research in how to utilize and provide IE theory and practices to support teacher candidates in an intentionally inviting manner for success in a world demanding high-stakes standardized testing is needed. Such research would be beneficial for education preparation programs, their teacher candidates, and their own future students.

The edTPA as Required Evidence of Teacher Candidate Competency

The edTPA was developed and owned by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE). It is administered by Pearson Education Inc. For teacher candidates seeking initial certification, the edTPA is a relatively new addition to the list of exams required by most state education departments in the United States. SCALE reports that approximately 910 educator preparation programs across 44 states use the performance assessment (SCALE, 2018). The edTPA requires the submission of an electronic portfolio comprised of several documents serving as evidence of effective educational planning, teaching, assessing, rapport, and reflecting upon student learning outcomes. Candidates digitally upload their documents and videos to the Pearson

website where trained, paid scorers evaluative the teacher candidate's portfolio using 15-18 rubrics (depending on content area) to arrive at a score that many states use to determine whether a teacher candidate qualifies for an initial teaching license or certification. Successful completion and submission of an edTPA portfolio requires an in-depth understanding of both the large number of rubrics, the commentary prompts, academic language. Expected vocabulary may be unrepresentative of local school settings. The 2018 SCALE executive report reflected a pass rate of 72% among 45,300 preservice teacher candidates that submitted an edTPA portfolio.

As a high-stakes assessment, the edTPA has posed unique challenges for teacher educators who embrace Invitational Education (IE) theory and practices. Peck, Gallucci, and Sloan (2010) suggested that prescriptive state mandates and regulations created demoralizing effects with loss to faculty autonomy. Resulting rote approaches to test preparation have traditionally received criticism in K-12 contexts as being uninviting (Egley & Jones, 2005). Significant micro-political issues include faculty members with dissenting views of the philosophy of edTPA and concerns with Pearson Education Inc as an effective operational partner (Lys et al., 2014). Finally, Ressler et al. (2017) report faculty felt encumbered by an increased workload caused by the edTPA. Teacher candidates who adopt the models they experience to successfully complete the edTPA may find teaching creativity and the implementation of higher order thinking skills inhibited (Sanholtz & Shea, 2012). An extensive study done in New York, (Clayton, 2018) found that 50% of the preservice teacher candidates' responses about the edTPA experiences were coded as subtractive and that candidates generally felt the assessment kept them from trying new teaching strategies within the classroom.

Invitational Education Theory and Practices Impacting the Potential for Student Success

As advocated by Purkey and Novak (1996, 2015), Invitational Education (IE) theory presents as a linear principle and progression that posits certain factors can and do influence human potential. The consideration for, and transformation of, these factors into effective policies, practices, and processes should be invitational and the authors maintain effective implementation is an ethical process. Democratic Ethos, Self-Concept Theory and Perceptual Tradition serve as the foundation of Invitational Theory.

While a Democratic Ethos appears self-evident, Purkey and Novak (2015) note that through IE theory and practices every person's human potential is empowered so as to govern the self and respect one's community. The perceptual tradition purports that one's perceptions of events supersede the events themselves and individuals are shaped by the unique reality of those perceptions. Finally, self-concept theory reasons that individuals hold learned beliefs and ideas about themselves, which influence how and where the individual fits in the world.

The framework of Invitational Education theory is based on five key assumptions that serve as a guide to help create and maintain an inclusive and inviting climate. These systemic assumptions include intentionality, care, optimism, respect, and trust (I-CORT). The acronym I-CORT is used to emphasize the need to be intentionally inviting. Purkey and Novak (2016), further state, "an invitation is an intentional choice someone makes and an intentional chance someone takes" (p.15). Care rises to the top of the list as the most important assumption or element because it alone allows for the meaningful presence in the lives of others, without which, an invitational disposition would be impossible. Trust allows for interdependence and the ability to respond to invitations. Respect refers primarily to its traditional definition but also includes the concepts of equality and equity. Optimism within this theory recognizes that people have unlimited potential and hope always remains motivational. Finally, intentionality, simplified, means to purposefully

act within personal and professional settings in inviting ways. This means acting so that others' potential can increase.

As systemic assumptions, I-CORT should be evident throughout a system's domains known in IE theory as the 5-Ps: People, places, policies, programs, and processes. These 5-Ps, comprise the various environments and systems in which individuals must function. Each of these domains may function in one of five ways that Purkey and Novak (1996, 2015) describe as either intentionally disinviting, unintentionally disinviting, unintentionally inviting, intentionally inviting, or what they call The Plus Factor.

edTPA Impact Upon Institutional and Program Support for Teacher Candidates

Following the publication of A Nation at Risk (1983). educator preparation, and educational institutions in general were blamed for students' dismal assessment results throughout the nation. Standards-based education and the accreditation movement soon followed that required educator preparation programs to produce data on effectiveness and continued improvement. Subsequently, accrediting agencies had a huge impact on programs and required evidence of acceptable teacher candidate preparation. As a high-stakes and consequential assessment, the evolution of the utilization of the Educative Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) now impacts the teacher candidate rather than his or her education preparation program. This shift of purpose for the edTPA requires the institutions and preparation programs to expend resources to support their teacher candidates (Clark-Gareca, 2015; Davis, Mountjoy, & Palmer, 2016).

Research points to the necessity for curriculum mapping and restructuring of courses and content to effectively implement the edTPA as a model of teaching and learning rather than an assessment of diverse education practices (Clark-Gareca, 2015; Davis, Mountjoy, & Palmer, 2016). To prepare for edTPA success, programs have attempted to integrate scaffolding activities in already content-laden courses. For example, courses in lesson planning and pedagogical strategies have become introductions to the edTPA rubrics and commentary expectations (Barron, 2015). Educational technology courses now require instruction in videotaping, editing, compressing, and uploading of e-documents, which has compromised time for established program content (Barron (2015). Some programs have added technology support because many students have reported issues with video editing now bring required as part of their clinical practice experience (Paine, Beal-Alvarez, & Scheetz, 2016).

The P-12 classroom was once a place for gradual and incremental development for teacher candidates whereby significant learning experience for teacher preparation was situated in the clinical practice experience (NCATE Blue Ribbon Report, 2010). Since the edTPA has become consequential, clinical activities now focus on what is expected for edTPA success (Dover & Schultz, 2015). During the edTPA process teacher candidate support remains critical as many developing educators reported feeling overwhelmed with the tasks (Paine, Beal-Alvarez, & Scheetz, 2016) being required during the clinical teaching portion of their educator preparation programs. Due to the to the ethical limitations imposed by SCALE and Pearson in relation to providing direct help in writing edTPA commentaries, Heil and Berg (2017) discovered that teacher candidates felt unsupported during the writing of the edTPA tasks. In addition to feeling lost in the process, candidates have also reported fear associated with the edTPA (Clark-Garcia, 2015) which pointed to the need for additional scaffolding throughout the teacher preparation process requiring further curriculum revisions and provisions of ongoing workshops (Barron, 2015).

Through explicit instruction based on reading rubric prompts, educator preparation programs have found themselves in the position of incorporating structures designed to specifically address the demands of the edTPA in contrast to teaching about methods, theory, and high leverage instructional practices (Barron, 2015; Paine, Beal-Alvarez, & Scheetz, 2016). Dover and Schultz (2015) asserted that the edTPA structure and process required "teaching to the test" through practicing elements of the assessment. The demand for support throughout the edTPA process have moved beyond the university classroom and emerging through websites devoted to successful edTPA completion by providing online examples, YouTube videos, and Pinterest ideas (Dover & Schultz, 2015). This trend is transforming best educational experiences through authentic teaching and learning to consumer-driven activities (Attick & Boyles, 2016).

Adequate support in the areas of both academic language and the language of edTPA have appeared as topics of significant frustration for candidates. Notwithstanding research that questions the efficacy of teaching and measuring academic language acquisition occurring in classrooms (Krashen & Brown, 2007) the concept of academic language remains central to the edTPA. Not only does the concept of academic language reign within the assessment but candidates must receive explicit instruction and support in this area (Lim, Moseley, Son, & Seelke 2014; Davis, Mountjoy & Palmer, 2016). The priority in teaching academic language over more salient content, thereby further reducing curriculum has been questioned by Kuranishi and Oyler (2017). This edTPA emphasis results in formulaic approaches rather than creative pedagogies for deeper concepts promoting critical thinking and social justice. In addition to the need to now teach *about* academic language, education preparation programs must teach the language of the edTPA since candidates find the prompts and handbook guidelines to be confusing (Heil & Berg, 2017). As evident in the work of Kuranishi and Oyler (2017), candidates must understand a language that has transitioned to the national language of edTPA as opposed to local practices and accompanying language as recommended in the framework and principles provided by the National Center on Universal Design and Learning (2017).

While the availability of studies on the effects or use of IE specifically within teacher preparation programs remain limited, those supporting the theory (Thompson, 2009; Brown, 2016; Matyo-Cepero, Varvisotos & Lilienthal, 2017) provide grounds for investigating practices within programs licensing or certifying future educators. Given edTPA preparation has become a major element in teacher preparation programs, the authors determined to focus on applying IE theory and practices from introduction to induction. The following sections explain the process the authors used to increase invitational practices related to candidate preparation respective of the edTPA as a consequential assessment of teacher candidate proficiency.

Creating an Invitational Process for edTPA Success

States that adopted the edTPA assessment as a requirement for a teaching licensure or certification established submission processes and guidance restrictions. Process established by teacher preparation programs or organizations administering the edTPA can easily be perceived by the teacher candidate as intentionally disinviting. The authors' purpose was to build a local internal process that represents an intentionally inviting culture. First, effective change involves a community of stakeholders ready to adopt new practices and simultaneously shift attitudes from the self to a collective understanding of the practicality and need for change (Schien, 1990; Kezar & Eckel, 2002). Ginsberg and Bernstein (2011) noted that the leader for any institutional change effort should possess a clear vision and articulate that vision to successfully lead the organization.

Faculty members must be willing to use the edTPA as the assessment model with a clear understanding of the uninviting process, and then operate on an intentionally inviting level. Lys, L'Esperance, Dobson, & Bullock (2014) recommended a distributed model of leadership that leverages the role of leader, change agents, and facilitators to influence and enact change, but a positive school culture and climate must exist (the element of optimism). Stakeholders must work collaboratively (a democratic ethos) on a framework that uses practices of invitational theory to effectively prepare candidates for the edTPA.

In the remaining section of this paper, the three promising practices: Course Structure, Authentic Projects, and Seminars, developed for effective implementation of leading indicators for success with the edTPA sought to buffer the potentially disinviting nature of the high-stakes, consequential assessments through clear, invitational supports. Based on successful implementation at a regional and national accredited institution located in the Pacific Northwest since 2015, the IE practices were considered applicable to traditional undergraduate and alternative licensing programs. A need was to include collaborative work across departments and program faculty. Thus, the authors began enacting principles of IE theory within their teacher preparation programs.

Given the edTPA focuses upon assessing candidates' proficiency for planning, teaching, and assessing student learning, the authors developed practices that would support strong teaching as required by the edTPA while embracing the elements, domains, and levels of IE theory implementation. Through the following descriptions of each practice, the reader is encouraged to recognize application of I-CORT elements or consideration for the five domains. With an understanding of testing policies typically being perceived as disinviting, the teacher preparation program now implements personal and academic supports with care, optimism, and intentionality that specifically addresses expectations within edTPA handbooks. As noted by Ginsberg and Bernstein (2011), change requires strong leadership and collaborative work across the teacher preparation program.

Course Structure

All coursework should help candidates examine expectations for the performances evaluated by edTPA in meaningful and intentional ways with multiple opportunities for candidates to demonstrate understanding of those expectations. Program courses are structured to infuse content from the handbooks and rubrics so that candidates have opportunities to progress through the edTPA handbooks in low-stress environments, thereby experiencing care, optimism, and intentionally inviting people places, and processes. Candidates are given the edTPA handbook and time to examine the contents very early in their teacher preparation program. Class time is dedicated in early courses for discussing how professors will provide clarity of the expectations throughout the duration of the edTPA process, thereby establishing trust and intentionality. Making changes in course work necessitates an examination of existing content because faculty may need to retire some topics in order to make room for more-effective components of teaching and learning directly assessed by the edTPA.

Given the belief that a democratic ethos promotes respect and community, and that learning happens socially, courses provide ample opportunity for candidates to work together. Students spend time in small groups within the courses discussing the edTPA guidebooks and analyzing the prompts; comparing them to the formative assessment principles they have already learned. This initial utilization of a professional learning community embraces the IE domain whereby people impact perceptions. Recall that Brown (2016) revealed that constructivist approaches in teacher

preparation were most likely to result in new teachers then implementing invitational elements into their future teaching. Because learning happens in community and modeling best practices for teaching allows candidates to adopt them as their own, candidates working in small groups for common purpose increase opportunities for implementing constructivist practices and the intentionality of invitational practices. For example, some edTPA prompts read as a single question, but embed several constructs that candidates must address. Within their small, professional learning groups teacher candidates can analyze the prompts and then make connections to course content and their own edTPA portfolio. As community is created, teacher candidates work together on a common task. The practice also reinforces the best-assessment principles regarding clear questioning. Simultaneously, this approach also deepens understanding of the guidebook prompts. After these activities, candidates can move into content pedagogy courses with a foundation for planning instruction and how to deliver learning, which intentionally invites comfort with the process involved with edTPA programs. The structure of these early courses then supports concepts developed in later courses.

To be intentionally inviting, programs should evaluate their courses and determine when and where to introduce planning, teaching, learning, and assessment practices emphasized by edTPA tasks. Given teaching and learning is a developmental process, content must be introduced, practiced, and mastered (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Candidates need access to edTPA handbooks earlier rather than later so that they have adequate time to review criteria and expectations while gaining confidence efficacy in their knowledge and skills. Optimistic integration of the edTPA handbook requirements with foundational, instructional and assessment courses make the tasks evaluated by the edTPA more accessible for candidates. Therefore, some programs might need to let go of some course content to work in time for instruction directly related to the edTPA. Regardless of the arrangement or mapping of their teacher preparation coursework, it is critical that course or seminar content exist as leading indicators for success as eventually evaluated by the edTPA as a trailing indicator of teacher candidate proficiency and preparation program success. Whenever faculty plans to teach content, rubric expectations, and academic language directly related to edTPA tasks, the course becomes essential and candidates should be intentionally invited to review applicable edTPA handbooks, rubrics, templates, and empowered to seek additional information or clarity on the edTPA portfolio processes. In addition, students working collaboratively feel more empowered and confident when faced with any consequential assessment. Thus, application of an I-CORT mindset throughout course structure allows teacher candidates to experience their human potential through effective people, places, policies, programs, processes.

Authentic Projects

Authentic projects, also known as signature or key assessments in less inviting accreditation terminology, are quite useful for identifying and measuring student outcomes and therefore mapping or planning program course structure. However, without additional support during edTPA seminars these may not always be helpful for completion and submission of a successful edTPA. The supportive potential of edTPA seminars will be described in the next section.

However, authentic projects that mirror the three tasks evaluated by the edTPA tasks provide opportunities to develop solid foundational pedagogical skills. Here, the authors situate the approach in the foundation of self-concept theory and make use of the projects and course work

to build the candidates' beliefs that they can confidently complete and submit a successful edTPA portfolio.

Authentic course projects should be designed to support the tasks evaluated by the edTPA with the detail and specific language used in rubrics (Miller et al., 2015), therefore, seminars remain essential and paramount. While candidates may complete a collaborative project in which they conduct research to identify learning theories, the collaboration utilizes interpersonal care and respect but does not adequately prepare them to justify their educational choices through research or theory when writing responses to related edTPA prompts. Developing effective task-based commentaries need to be part of an authentic project.

Likewise, teacher candidates may work in small groups to become proficient with the process for planning a learning segment. Yet, he or she can still struggle with integrating academic language. Additionally, when it comes to student learning, candidates may excel at finding common errors in student work and even providing excellent feedback, but the ability to create an artifact from the analysis of student learning may underdeveloped and therefore will be insufficient in relation to the expectations of the related edTPA rubric criteria. Therefore, programs must intentionally address potential ambiguity within the edTPA rubrics and create authentic projects that allow teacher candidates to generalize course assignments for successful edTPA portfolios. Thus, the teacher candidates' learning is incremental, developmental, and builds self-concept and efficacy. In short, while authentic projects or formative assessment can intentionally invite development of foundational skills, in and of themselves are not adequate preparation for documenting one's proficiency to complete the three tasks evaluated by the edTPA.

Candidates need opportunities to practice related content evaluated by the edTPA with course assignments that adopt locally developed rubrics that parallel those found in the edTPA guidebooks. When locally developed rubrics are strategically used to formatively assess the planned authentic projects. This intentionality allows teacher candidates to be optimistic about any evaluation of their developing proficiency based on assignments designed to prepare them for success. By creating an intentional process for using formative authentic projects teacher candidates increase trust in their own abilities as well as the improved perceptions of their professor's intentions to prepare them well. Teacher candidates experiencing authentic projects designed to measure proficiency related to tasks assessed by the edTPA learn to utilize academic language and become more aware of the tasks required by the subsequent edTPA. The process intentionally creates a climate filled with care, optimism, respect, and trust.

edTPA Seminars

Candidates attend seminar sessions early in their program and view these as the most important intentionally invitational process in the preparation for successful completion and submission of an edTPA portfolio. The perceptions candidates hold about their ability to succeed carries immense weight and consequence. This part of the teacher preparation program is structured to build confidence and skills in an accessible format. Candidates report that the edTPA seminars provide invaluable support during the stressful time of planning and completing an edTPA portfolio for submission. This support is readily perceived as care exhibited by the teacher preparation programs and its faculty.

The edTPA seminar sessions provide in-depth instruction on the individual tasks within the edTPA handbooks. Teacher candidates again are intentionally provided the opportunity to rely upon their small group of peers for ongoing support both during and outside the actual seminar sessions. Each session focuses on a single task evaluated by the edTPA. Candidates begin working

together to summarize the requirements of each task and then creating a checklist to use against their own work. Once the checklists are completed, teacher candidates share their work in progress and each member of the cohort then provides feedback. Feedback is discussed within the peer group and compared against the edTPA rubrics. This process is repeated for each section of each of the three tasks evaluated by the edTPA. Some groups use peer expertise for advice, mentorship, and writing units of learning when appropriate. Candidates report that the edTPA seminar sessions deepened their understanding of the expectations to exhibit planning, teaching, and assessing proficiency as well as thinking about student engagement. Moreover, critical instruction occurred during the edTPA seminar sessions as prompted by teacher candidate questions, inquiries, and insights.

The edTPA seminars embraced all five domains of Invitational Education (IE) theory. Specifically, as teacher preparation policy, seminars are required of all teacher candidates and embedded within coursework so that they become defensible and consistent for everyone. Crucially edTPA seminar sessions are facilitated by regular faculty who know the students, thereby trust is inherent but also obvious. Embracing the democratic ethos, while collaborative activities are part of the process teacher candidates have choice of where to focus some of their time. The edTPA seminar program is designed as an interactive and engaging time to build confidence and self-concept. As a place established to promote success, the climate exhibits an I-CORT mind set so teacher candidates feel welcomed, relaxed and capable. This strategic practice promotes candidates' understanding while helping them to make connections for collegial analysis and feedback; improving their interpretations with quantitative and qualitative evidence; increasing their critical thinking about instruction; and developing authentic conversations about teaching and learning. Regardless of edTPA requirements, this develops effective, self-reflective educators.

During each edTPA seminar session, teacher candidates work in triads to support each other and to analyze each other's work against the edTPA rubrics that guide their portfolio development and commentaries. Faculty are present to answer specific questions about the prompts, but often act as a guide to assist them to find answers within their designated edTPA handbook. Teacher candidates serve as mentors to each other thus solidifying the professional learning community and sense of belonging through common goals. The triad's true success is evident by deep professional relationships that were developed and the collegial conversations that continue long after successful completion of the edTPA process and graduation. Graduated teacher candidates have commented that they learned more from the professional learning community activities intentionally provided during the edTPA seminars involving teaching and learning as related to the tasks assessed by the edTPA than through any other teacher preparation activity.

Discussion of Findings

Teacher candidates reported that the IE-based model of edTPA seminars and small group collaboration made a significant difference for them in terms of understanding the requirements and making sure all elements of the rubric-assessed tasks were addressed in their edTPA commentaries. As intentionally inviting educators, the authors believe optimizing human potential is our mission. Data revealed that our teacher candidates scored an average well above the minimum requirement for proficiency as evaluated by edTPA scores. The edTPA seminars proved essential to candidate success by providing the 5-Ps and elements of I-CORT. The authors will build upon successes and continue to make improvements to its teacher preparation program

through ongoing monitoring of course structures, utilization of authentic projects, and intentionally inviting edTPA seminars.

Regardless of the success experienced by the authors' teacher preparation programs implementing IE theory and practices to improve student outcomes, conversations around the use of the edTPA as a consequential measure of teacher candidate proficiency and requirement for initial licensure or certification must continue. While owning her bias, Sato (2014) made a strong case for the validity of the edTPA as a reliable evaluation of critical teaching skills. Yes, clear planning, effective delivery of instruction, and reliable assessment of student learning represent the core competencies that should be exhibited by licensed or certified teachers. The authors merely question the prudence, validity, and ethics of any single consequential assessment. Reliance upon a high-stakes, consequential, and commercialized product at the expense and exclusion of educator preparation programs reduces the innovation and choice that historically created better practices for teaching and evaluating teacher candidate skills and dispositions. The ability of its teacher candidates to successfully plan, effectively teach, and reliably assess should always be the hallmark of excellent teacher preparation programs. Unfortunately, in a diverse and expansive discipline accepting and succumbing to the edTPA as a consequential measure of teacher proficiency, educator preparation programs may run the risk of minimization and homogenization rather than elevating the profession through variety, innovation, and a focus on local need.

Finally, given the absence of empirical data related to higher education programs, high-stakes assessment, and the impact of Invitational Education (IE) theory and practices, the authors encourage further research in these interdependent areas. As teacher educators who embraced IE theory, a comparatively minimal amount of effort to intentionally invite positive changes produced great gains. It is easy to wonder about courses in other disciplines that rely upon traditional instructional methods too common in higher education. Research and investigation of those pioneers bringing IE theory and practices into their courses, regardless of modality, would serve to bolster the existing body of literature.

Conclusions

To conclude, the authors have presented an IE-based model of educator preparation believed to enhance the preparation and educational experiences of teacher candidates that will need to satisfy the requirements for proficiency as evaluated by the edTPA. Intentionally designed edTPA seminars, authentic projects, and curriculum mapped course structures merged IE theory and practices with the need to experience success with the consequential edTPA. Using I-CORT and examining its 5Ps allowed reflection of current programming, analysis of its policies and processes, and ongoing conversations with its people to ensure it was a place always seeking continuous improvement. This allowed an honest evaluation of any personal philosophy or approach that failed to align with current need for the educator preparation program and its teacher candidates.

Considerations for Future Practice

Given every educator preparation program and its teacher candidates are unique in demographics and context, such an endeavor needs the systemic structure inherent in IE theory. Invitational Education theory put into practice will encourage interested stakeholders to examine its places, policies, programs, processes, and themselves to determine where I-CORT is deficient. Current and future teacher candidates in the pursuit of their human potential deserve our desire for continuous improvement.

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Personalized Multimodal Instruction:

Positively Impacting Lives Through Invitational Education

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Abstract

This longitudinal qualitative study explored the impact of personalized multimodal instruction in a university literacy methods course for pre-service teachers. Participants discussed their insights from culturally responsive novels in literature circles and created book trailers to introduce their strategic literacy lesson plans for avatars. They collaborated in an intentionally inviting environment while they prepared multimodal projects to personalize learning experiences for avatars and elementary students in grades three to five. When they described the highlights of their class sessions and field experiences, the results of this study aligned with the overarching goals, elements, and domains of Invitational Theory and Practice.

Keywords: Invitational Education, Invitational Theory and Practice, Personalized Learning, Multimodal Instruction.

Introduction

"Lights, camera, action!" This classic phrase may signal the filming of a major motion picture or multimodal instruction in the classroom. Cinematography takes us into another dimension, and multimodal projects convey students to higher levels of learning. When students become cinematographers and create book trailers, they capture the central message of a story in new ways. They are motivated to teach innovatively and gain confidence when they create unique products. As they experience enthusiasm for their new creations, they discover meaningful ways to invite their own students into the learning process and motivate them to explore new ideas.

As multimodal projects bring the cinema into the classroom, students experience a kaleidoscope of learning opportunities. As cinematographers, they are empowered to paint visual pictures and bring culturally responsive novels to life. The digital natives in our twenty-first century classrooms feel quite comfortable with multi-media, and they capture ideas and experiences in ways that are significant to them. This empowers them to invite children to experience compelling and innovative learning activities.

This study focuses on a university literacy methods class in which pre-service teachers discussed culturally responsive novels in literature circles and prepared multimodal projects for personalized instruction with avatars and elementary students in grades three to five. In this university, administrators and faculty members have worked for many years to provide programs and policies to invite students to enjoy higher levels of learning and innovative academic success. The programs and policies of this major university in the Southeast are intentionally designed to

align with the overarching goals, elements, and domains of Invitational Theory and Practice (Purkey & Novak, 1996; Shaw & Siegel, 2010; Shaw, Siegel, & Schoenlein, 2013).

Review of the Literature

Invitational schools encourage students to experience innovation and develop leadership skills in student-centered educational environments. Multimodal projects give students opportunities to make choices and experience higher levels of learning through engagement and active participation in the learning process. Invitational Education (IE) focuses on the positive aspects of learning and the affective side of the people, places, programs, policies, and processes in education (Purkey & Novak, 2016; Shaw & Siegel, 2010; Shaw, Siegel, & Schoenlein, 2013). This aligns well with multimodal projects that combine the power of a story, one of the most meaningful educational tools for generations, with technology, one of our main tools for communication.

Multimodal Projects

A review of the literature demonstrates the remarkable success and the benefits of multimodal projects. Since language is fundamentally multimodal, we communicate in many modalities each day (Frohlich, et al., 2019). Multimodal instruction equips students to capture the essence and the dynamic qualities of learning experiences across the disciplines (Hill, 2014). The meaning-making process inherent in multimodal projects emerges from the sociocultural constructivism of Vygotsky (1978) and social semiotics theory (Hodge & Kress, 1988: Kress, 2010). The multiple literacies or modes of these projects add the spark of ingenuity to convey a message uniquely and effectively. Researchers use scaffolding (Bruner, 1960; Vygotsky, 1978) Wood, et al., 1976) with multimodal opportunities to promote discovery learning and sequential conceptual development (Magana, et al., 2019).

The research literature provides many examples of the impact of multimodal projects in a wide range of contexts. At the university level, researchers (Brenner, et al., 2004; Wang, 2009) have explored the use of multimodal projects for articulation of identity. When two grade three teachers and university researchers collaborated, Ntelioglou et al. (2014) noted the ways an urban multimodal inquiry project increased multilingual students' literacy investment, literacy engagement, and learning. Smith (2019) considered ways to leverage students' multimodal collaborative composing for their academic benefit in the classroom. Additionally, Hafner (2013) described the ways undergraduate students in a university English class in Hong Kong were able to access positions of expertise as they wrote for authentic purposes and used multimodal projects as digital ensembles to appeal to an audience. Invitational Education promotes this type of expertise in the classroom.

Invitational Education

Purkey and Novak (2016, p. vii) described Invitational Education (IE) as a theory of practice "designed to create and enhance human environments that cordially summon people to realize their potential in all areas of worthwhile human endeavor" (Purkey & Novak, 2016, p. vii). IE "is an imaginative act of hope that explains how human potential can be realized. It identifies and changes the forces that defeat and destroy people" (p. vii). IE recognizes five Domains: People, places, policies, programs, and processes, that comprise "everyone and everything in an

organization…(that) will either build or destroy intellectual, social, physical, emotional, and moral potential for stakeholders" (p. vii).

Invitational Theory and Practice

Invitational Theory and Practice (ITP) "is the overarching theory of Invitational Education (IE)" (Shaw, Siegel, & Schoenlein, 2013, p. 30). Invitational Theory and Practice (ITP) "addresses the total culture/environment of an organization to provide a more welcoming, satisfying, and enriching experience for all involved" (p. 34).

Invitational Theory and Practice aligns directly with the comments of pre-service teachers during interviews and focus groups in this study. Throughout their multimodal projects, the course instructor and technology coach used the principles of Invitational Education to encourage students to actualize their potential in creative and meaningful ways.

Methodology

This longitudinal qualitative interview study was designed to determine the impact of creating multimodal projects with groups of pre-service teachers in a university emphasizing Invitational Education. Interviews, focus groups, reflections, class activities, and book trailers were the primary means of data collection, and typological data analysis (Hatch, 2002) was used to codify the overarching themes over these semester-long experiences.

Participants

Pre-service teachers who participated in the project shared their experiences and insights during the interviews and focus groups for this study. The course instructor provided ongoing support and guidance throughout the project, and the technology coach added her expertise. Multimodal projects were completed as part of a university literacy methods course, which is part of a degree program to prepare university students to teach students from third to fifth grade. As students were taking this course, they completed a field experience and participated in courses emphasizing assessment, instruction for English learners, math, and technology from kindergarten to grade five.

For clarity throughout our discussion, the degree-seeking pre-service teachers will be referred to as students. The teacher educators who were guiding the students applied the principles of Invitational Education throughout the program and emphasized the importance of providing a positive nurturing environment for students, particularly during a worldwide pandemic.

Procedures

During the preparatory stage, students explored research-based literacy strategies and the essence of quality lesson planning as they read culturally responsive novels and participated in literature circles. The instructor modeled multimodal procedures for effective lesson planning and guided students as they designed book trailers. As they collaborated on multimodal projects students created storyboards for book trailers in literature circles, prepared lesson plans, and captured the results of their collaboration on a Weebly website.

Pre-service teachers explored culturally responsive novels in literature circles. In class sessions, they used insights from these novels and other examples of quality literature to explore the components of effective stories. They synthesized the ideas they gleaned with graphic organizers, such as story maps and storyboards, to create book trailers to introduce strategic lesson

plans. They used the insights from this collaboration to personalize lesson plans for avatars and elementary students in grades three to five during a field experience. This field experience was modified during this past year because of a worldwide pandemic.

The teacher educator designed the multimodal project so that students could make their own choices, enjoy the process, and experience success She gave them a rubric for major expectations and left aspects of the project open-ended. This gave the students a sense of freedom and autonomy as they created their own lesson plans and book trailers. Then they relaxed and enjoyed the process rather than feeling like they had to just complete a checklist of requirements. Although they were well prepared for the experience, the innovative technology was new to them, and they gained new confidence as they experienced success with the process.

Students designed their multimodal projects in the classroom and online sessions. As they collaborated, they extended their vision of what was possible and experimented as makers of technology rather than just consumers of technology. As they created multimodal projects, the students reflected on what they learned to be prepared to share tips with others and consider procedures for their own future classrooms.

Data Collection

Interview questions and focus group questions served as the basis for data collection. They were designed to encourage participants to freely express their perceptions and feelings about the experience of participating in literature circles and creating multimodal projects. Interviews and focus groups progressed from general "grand tour questions" (Spradley, 2016), such as a description of a typical day to more specific questions about their experiences. Open-ended questions gave participants opportunities to share their feelings in their own words. Focus group questions were designed to corroborate statements from interviews to give participants opportunities to elaborate on certain issues that were emphasized during interviews.

The semi-structured format provided the opportunity to follow leads from statements made by participants (Van Manen, 1990). These follow-up questions elicited rich descriptions and provided a more complete picture of the lived experiences of the participants.

Data Analysis

Hatch's typological model (2002) provided the framework for data analysis from multiple perspectives (Glesne, 2015; Patton, 2014). Initial categorization of the data into typologies was followed by repeated readings, line-by-line analysis, and color-coding of the data using *Microsoft Word*. This analysis was ongoing and utilized the nine steps for data analysis designed by Hatch (2002). According to Hatch (2002) typological analysis should only be used if the categories for analysis are evident. At the beginning of data analysis, it became evident that the data aligned with the assumptions, five elements, and five domains of Invitational Theory and Practice (Purkey & Novak, 2016).

Regularities and common characteristics in the responses of participants quickly emerged in a review of the data pattern analysis. As these semantic relationships emerged, they revealed patterns that were suggested in the research literature. These semantic relationships served as links in the data set and provided elaborations on these ideas from the literature. During this codifying process, charts listing relevant data helped identify the integrating concepts that ran through this data.

Color-coded *Post-it flags* were used to label the patterns within the typologies as they were recorded in relation to the specific codes for the participants. While recording integrating concepts that ran through all of the data, stars were used to highlight powerful quotes to facilitate the selection of specific data to support generalizations from these patterns. Throughout these steps the typological model designed by Hatch (2002) continued to provide the framework that illuminated the process of data analysis.

Discussion and Findings

The findings of this qualitative study illustrate the ways that the teacher educators intentionally invited students to experience success, prepared the process, and guided the students throughout the process. These students conducted their project in a university that emphasized the principles of Invitational Education. Teacher educators and colleagues nurtured and cared for them, and this was reflected in their multimodal projects.

Invitational Education (IE) emphasizes the ways "everyone has the ability and responsibility to function in a personally and professionally inviting manner" (Purkey & Novak, 2016, p. 23). An intentionally inviting level of functioning creates a dependable stance that helps students to feel secure and increases the likelihood that they will consistently accept and act upon the cordial invitation to pursue an inviting educational experience (Purkey & Novak, 2016, p. 24).

Drs. Purkey, Novak, and Siegel have consistently promoted Invitational Theory and Practice as a way of life (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, 2013). As a result, they have made a difference in so many lives. They have emphasized the IE Domains, or powerful '5 Ps,' to promote a warm and inviting atmosphere wherever they go (Purkey & Novak, 2016; Shaw & Siegel, 2010). The arms of a starfish are used in Invitational Education to illustrate these domains. They have used a starfish diagram to illustrate the ways the five Ps of the domains of IE, people, places, policies, programs, and processes, work together to overcome challenges and make a difference in an organization and potentially the world.

This message of overcoming challenges to promoting a positive environment aligns well with "The Starfish Story," originally written by Loren Eiseley (1978), which has been shared in many versions and touched the hearts of people all over the world. We are familiar with the inspiring story in which a man sees a little boy throwing starfish back into the water. Then he asks the boy what he is doing. The boy tells the man he is saving starfish, so they will not dry out in the sun. Then the man laughs and tells him there is no way he can save so many starfish. After the boy listens politely, he says, "It made a difference to that one." This story is often shared to demonstrate the difference one caring person can make. The creators of Invitational Theory and Practice emphasized the importance of each person.

When everyone in a group truly values each individual, the power and impact of one person is multiplied in amazing ways. Drs. Purkey, Siegel, Novak, and many leaders of Invitational Education remind us of the power of one as well as the impact of collaboration that leads to systemic change and makes life better for so many. They have accomplished so much, yet they have always been quick to give credit to those who collaboratively experienced success with them. As they have honored collaborators, they have often noted "that if you see a turtle on a fencepost, you know it didn't get there alone" (Purkey & Siegel, 2013, p. xi). As Margaret Mead stated, "a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world" (Lutkehaus, 2008, p. 261).

The starfish in the diagram for Invitational Education is in a healthy environment which flows naturally and comfortably. Invitational leaders provide a safe, secure environment where

people flourish comfortably. Then the invitation is given. In this scenario, the leader provides a meaningful environment where the learning process is appealing, and students have opportunities to choose paths to optimal learning. As Fretz (2015) noted, "Invitational Education provides educators with a systematic way of communicating positive messages that develop potential as well as identifying and changing those forces that defeat and destroy potential" (p. 28). "This understanding of the depth and breadth of messages is used to develop environments and ways of life that are anchored in attitudes of respect, care, and civility and that encourage the realization of democratic goals" (Purkey & Novak, 1996, p. 4). When each individual is deeply appreciated, as inclusiveness and collaboration are promoted, the entire system is influenced, and learning is maximized.

As they were developing Invitational Theory and Practice (ITP), Drs. Purkey, Siegel, and Novak shared their life goals for the benefit of educators and students. For instance, as a university president for 25 years, Dr. Betty Siegel consistently worked to make the university a collaborative welcoming environment (Purkey & Siegel, 2003, 2013). As president, she promoted the principles of Invitational Education through university programs and policies, consistently touching the lives of students, faculty, and friends in meaningful ways. The campus is filled with concentric circles showing the impact of her inclusive policies of Invitational Education, and her legacy reverberates most profoundly in the Dr. Betty Siegel Fitness Center.

The students in this study were impacted by the emphasis on Invitational Education promoted by the presidency and ongoing influence of Dr. Betty Seigel. Her ongoing legacy emphasizes the best of human potential. Analyzing and improving each of the five Domains of IE: People, places, policies, programs, and processes, "within a framework of the five elements of IE: Intentionality, care, optimism, respect, and trust (I-CORT), systemically transforms the whole school (Purkey & Novak, 2016, p. 22). The results of the study aligned with the domains and elements of Invitational Theory and Practice as teacher educators collaborated to ensure students' comfort, appropriate challenges, and success with multimodal projects.

Results of the Study

This section describes specific ways in which students' experiences in creating collaborative multimodal projects at a major university in the Southeast aligned with the overarching assumptions, elements, and domains of Invitational Theory and Practice (Purkey, & Novak. 2016; Shaw & Siegel, 2010; Shaw, Siegel, & Schoenlein, 2013). These results reflect patterns identified across the study's interviews and focus group sessions. The interviews and focus groups of this study consistently demonstrated the ways students designed multimodal projects that reflected their experiences in a welcoming, supportive environment. Invitational Theory and Practice "focuses on increasing the authentically personal and professional verbal and non-verbal messages that seek to bring forth the best of human potential through, trust, respect, optimism, care, and intentionality" (Shaw, Siegel, and Schoenlein, 2013, p. 34). Throughout the interviews of this study there were many links between these elements of Invitational Education and the comments made by students as they discussed their collaborative multimodal projects.

Overarching Goals of Invitational Education

Implementation of Invitational Theory and Practice authentically creates and sustains welcoming learning environments. The systemic framework promotes intentionality, care,

optimism, respect, and trust (I-CORT). The goal is to promote "increased learning outcomes and personal growth" (Shaw, Siegel, & Schoenlein, 2013, p. 33).

It was highly evident the approach of the faculty member and technology coach who orchestrated this project aligned with Invitational Theory and Practice. They collaborated carefully and consistently to guide and encourage students as they completed their digital stories in the framework of the program. They shared innovations to enhance success as they opened opportunities within and beyond the classroom.

The results of this study demonstrated the impact of multimodal projects that combine the power of a story with technology as well as the alignment between experiences of students in literature circles and the five Domains and five elements of IE. The elements of Invitational Education intensify the power and significance of each domain (Shaw, Siegel, & Schoenlein, 2013). The next section will highlight results of the study and discuss the impact of alignment with Invitational Theory and Practice.

Intentionality

"Intentionality is the keyword of Invitational Theory" (Haigh, 2011, p. 300). Invitational environments are both created and sustained by intentionality. As a process for defining school climate, Invitational Education encourages a Democratic Ethos to feature "collaborative and cooperative procedures and continuous networking stakeholders" (Purkey & Novak, 2016, p. 22). Intentionality in the design of these processes emphasizes the value and boundless potential of each individual (Novak, Rocca, & DiBiase, 2006).

Systemic processes intentionally reflect care, optimism, respect, and trust (I-CORT) to actualize the fullest potential of a collaborative atmosphere. These intentional processes encourage ongoing development of cooperative procedures with reciprocal benefits. The teacher educator worked intentionally with the technology coach to provide relevant and meaningful experiences within the students' comfort zone, thereby promoting success without undue stress (Vygotsky, 1978). She used multimodal projects, featuring literature circles, book trailers, Weebly website building, and strategic innovative lesson plans to make reading an adventure for her students. It was evident that this goal was achieved when a student stated:

> From your class, I have learned many things. One thing that has stuck out to me the entire semester is when we talked about making reading an adventure. I feel that as I grew up, no one ever really made reading fun. I think that reading should always be looked at as an adventure no matter the content.

The multimodal projects in this literacy course were intentionally designed to provide students with tools to increase enthusiasm for learning in grades three to five. Literature circles laid the foundation for this process. A student emphasized the value of literature circles.

> Literature circles are a fantastic and incredible way of getting students to not just read the books that they are assigned, but to truly enjoy them and understand them. Knowing how to read is more than merely understanding the words on the page, but also how to truly experience the book as one would experience life. I want to give the students that I will have in my classroom the same fun and awesome experience I had while participating in literature circles.

Care

Invitational Education focuses on people and the importance of each individual for a successful educational experience (Purkey & Novak, 2016). Students participating in this study chose culturally responsive novels to read in literature circles at the beginning of the project. The

education program is designed to help students maximize their cultural awareness, connect with various cultures, and develop empathy in meaningful ways. At the end of the project, students said they were more aware of the importance of cultural connections and books that promote cultural insights, and they wanted to emphasize them in their own teaching. A student noted, "Everything I have learned in literature circles has taught me the relevance of promoting cultural awareness and literacy in my future classroom as well."

During our class sessions, we emphasized the importance of each individual, and students prepared lessons with differentiated instruction to personalize the learning experience. A student described what she has learned about personalizing instruction through class sessions, multimodal projects, and her field experience:

> I have learned how to encourage and engage students, how to create a classroom of learners who are comfortable as individuals, and how to modify lessons for specific students. These are all important because, to me, they not only teach how to teach, but teach how to create learners. These are all backed by positive attitudes from you, and readings that encourage the most effective teaching for individuals.

Optimism

The optimism of each individual helps to make a school inviting as it encourages everyone involved. Programs that embrace Invitational Education Theory and Practice can be "formal or informal, curricular, or extra-curricular. It is important for educators to ensure that all of the school's programs work for the benefit of everyone and that they encourage active engagement with significant content" (Purkey & Novak, 2016, p. 21).

Optimism and enthusiasm were highly evident during this project. The teacher educators and students in the literacy methods class consistently conveyed an optimistic perspective. When students discussed plans and chose roles for the multimodal project during their collaboration, they considered the assets of each student and promoted the development of those assets using creativity and attention to details.

As a teacher educator taught the course on teaching reading and writing in grades 3-5, she provided scaffolding to promote confidence and optimism when they began the multimodal projects. After analyzing quality literature, creating storyboards with ideas for book trailers, and discussing possibilities collaboratively, students gained more confidence in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. A student noted:

> Throughout this semester I have learned not only specific learning techniques but also what it means to be a teacher. I honestly have learned a lot of that from you personally. You always show up to class with a smile, a greeting, and a positive attitude which makes this class so much less stressful in such a stressful time."

Respect

Invitational Education emphasizes the importance of documenting policies and emphasizing consistency for the benefit of everyone in the program. Purkey and Novak (2016) described policies as "critical semantic webs that influence the deep-seated structure of any school" (p. 21). Students in the literacy methods class were collaborating in a university in which those "critical semantic webs" reflected the structure of a respectful environment in which their ideas were honored and appreciated by their colleagues and teacher educators. Policies and procedures were intentionally designed to promote respect, and meaningful collaboration was valued for promotion and tenure. A student in the literacy methods class reflected:

> I am never afraid to ask questions in your class because I know that you are very understanding and helpful through all circumstances, and I am very grateful! This has created a classroom culture that I would like to emulate in my future classroom.

Trust

Invitational Education highlights the importance of providing a pleasant, comfortable, and aesthetic learning environment which nurtures growth and promotes trust (Purkey & Novak, 2016). When leaders establish trustworthy patterns of interaction, schools augment the benefits of this pleasant environment. Reliability, genuineness, truthfulness, competence, and knowledge are keys for establishing this type of environment (Arceneaux, 1994; Purkey & Novak, 2016). The teacher educators worked from the beginning to establish trust and a pleasant rapport with students. The university itself is a safe, pleasant, and caring environment in which students feel comfortable. The education program is an extension of that atmosphere of trust, extending the basic needs for a safe and caring environment to the next level (Maslow, 1943).

The literacy methods course was intentionally planned to build trust and help students to feel that they were in a comfort zone, even in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. Class sessions were designed to provide encouragement, and students were able to thrive in a nurturing environment. A student commented, "I never once doubted your love for us." Another student stated, "I want to thank you for being very sweet and cheering us along the way."

Students built trusting relationships as they explored culturally responsive novels in literature circles. They consistently commented on the encouragement they experienced through these close relationships. Students emphasized the ways they were able to depend on each other as they divided up sections of assignments and discussed their multimodal projects. Their collaboration took their learning to the next level, particularly as they saw how much could be accomplished in an online virtual environment. A student noted:

> Each group member was very engaging and participated in the meetings, allowing us as a group to accomplish much more than we thought we could. The impact of this experience was very eye-opening and allowed me to see how to collaborate as groups in a virtual setting. We accomplished more together as a group than we would have individually. In addition, our book involved different cultures from a fifth grader's perspective, which helped explain how the environment and our lifestyles can affect our perspectives.

Overarching Comments

Students consistently said they would use literature circles and multimodal projects with their own classes. They were quite pleased with their accomplishments. Students noted that this project made them want to be more creative in their own classrooms. As they summarized the experience, many students shared variations of these statements:

- "Throughout this semester, I have learned a lot of great methods for effective teaching in reading and writing courses for third, fourth, and fifth graders."
- "I definitely plan to use literature circles in my future classroom. I think that this was such a fun experience and a great way for students to have the opportunity to grow and love a book."
- "I thoroughly enjoyed creating the book trailer as a way to engage the students."
- "I will utilize strategies from this class to promote engagement, comprehension, and writing."

- "I want to thank you for this beneficial experience. This class has let me really understand the importance of having students build a strong relationship with reading and writing."
- "I plan to do anything in my power to differentiate for the students and create their least restrictive environment."
- "I have thoroughly enjoyed this semester and course with you and my classmates. I have learned many things that I plan to utilize in the future."
- "I now have a better understanding of how to teach language arts to young minds, and thanks to this class I have a variety of ways to teach them to best fit their needs."

When students described the benefits of their multimodal projects, they mentioned the ways they would use these projects to inspire their own students and spark their imaginations in creative ways. A student commented:

> I loved talking about book talks and book trailers, and this is something I honestly didn't think about ever implementing in the classroom. Now it is something I will definitely try to implement every year. This is such a fun way for students to be creative and use their imaginations when showing what they have learned.

Students were enthusiastic about the knowledge they gained from their class sessions and multimodal projects. A student noted:

> Everything I have learned from this class will play a big role in my future. It is so important for teachers to enter their classrooms with excited attitudes about reading and have plans on how to exert that to the students. Now that I have all of this knowledge, I feel more prepared and ready to teach my future students! I will go into my classroom and bring in specific activities that I have learned about and practiced. Overall, this semester benefited me greatly. I'm so grateful I had you as a professor and mentor throughout this time! Thank you for everything!

Multimodal projects made students more aware of the kaleidoscope of possibilities for creating adventures and inviting their own students to explore literacy with innovations that promote exuberance for learning. A student reflected:

> I will also use a variety of anchor charts, group activities, literature circles, etc. to create a fun, effective, and engaging learning environment for my students. Language arts provides so much space for individuality and creativity, so I will use the activities I have learned about and practiced in this class when I am in my future classroom.

Conclusion

When students gain confidence with multimodal projects, they develop leadership skills and feel like they have an opportunity to make a difference in the world. A cycle of success results as teachers provide multimodal instruction, share innovative strategies in their own classrooms, and invite their students to generate their own multimodal projects.

Students enter the world of cinematography and create new memoires of successful achievement in the classroom as they say, "Lights, camera, action!" Innovative multimodal experiences inspire creativity and highlight the importance of culturally responsive literature. During multimodal projects, pre-service teachers discovered a kaleidoscope of opportunities to convey content innovatively and equip their future students to explore culturally responsive literature in meaningful ways. This experience prepared them to creatively invite their own

students into the learning process, maximize academic potential with multimodal instruction, and multiply the impact of learning.

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The Journal for Invitational Theory and Practice (JITP) (ISSN-1060-6041) publishes once a year and promotes the tenets of invitational theory and practice, self-concept theory, and perceptual psychology. First published in 1992, the JITP is currently indexed in the ERIC and EBSCO databases.

The JITP seeks to publish articles under two priorities: research and practice. First, manuscripts are encouraged that report research that examines and expands the theory and practice of invitational learning and development, investigates the efficacy of invitational practices, relates invitational theory to other theories of human development and behavior, or focuses on theories that are compatible with invitational theory and practice. Second, manuscripts will be considered that are more focused on the practice of invitational theory. These articles are less data-oriented and could describe authors' attempts to apply invitational theory to a variety of settings or activities related to invitational theory. The editorial board will also consider book reviews of professional books related to invitational or other related theories.

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