INFLUENCES ON THE DEVELOPMENT

OF INFORMAL TEACHER LEADERS
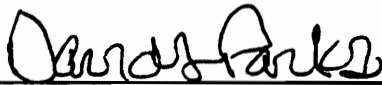
by

Christopher Corallo

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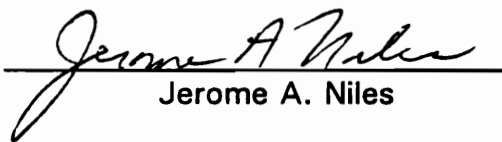in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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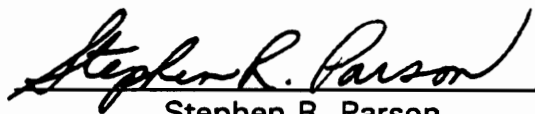in

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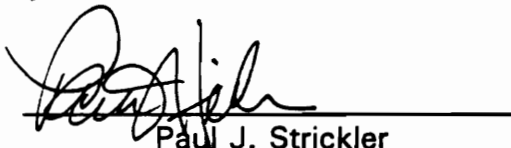
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Educational Administration

(ABSTRACT)

The purpose of this study was to determine the influences on the development of informal teacher leaders. An informal teacher leader is a classroom teacher who has the ability to influence other teachers because of specific characteristics and behaviors. While the informal teacher leader may have held such leadership roles as committee chairperson or team leader, these have been short term responsibilities and have not involved any release from regular classroom responsibilities.

The research included demographic surveys and extensive interviews of three teachers identified by their peers as informal leaders. An identification instrument developed from generally accepted characteristics of teacher leaders was used to select the three participants for the study. Teachers identified as informal leaders displayed a mastery of teaching skills, strong collaboration skills, a willingness to take risks, and involvement in continuous professional growth.

Once the teachers were selected for the study, a survey was completed to gather demographic information and data on their experiences.

Extensive interviews then focused on the personal and professional life experiences influencing the development of the identified informal teacher leaders. Case studies were developed from the demographic survey and the interviews. Data were analyzed using a multicase, cross-case method. Two informed readers and each of the teacher participants reviewed the case summaries to verify the findings and conclusions.

The results indicated the following influences in the development of informal teacher leaders: (1) Family background is an influence in the development of leadership characteristics. (2) Success in early leadership endeavors encourages the individual to seek additional leadership roles. (3) Mentor teachers, who have the characteristics of informal teacher leaders, are influential in the development of these characteristics in new teachers. (4) Professional growth activities help teachers gain expertise for which they are recognized by their peers. (5) Central office administrators and principals play a key role in facilitating the development of informal teacher leaders by developing a culture in which teacher leadership can flourish.

nights she spent sharing her wordprocessing expertise. Just as valuable to me was her willingness to keep me organized and provide kind words of encouragement.

I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to be a part of the Virginia Tech Roanoke Area Doctoral Program. The professors and students with whom I had the opportunity to work were truly an inspiration. My association with the people in the program mark a period of personal and professional growth unequalled in my educational career.

I particularly want to thank my family for their love, patience, and support throughout my studies. To my parents and my mother and father in-law I am grateful for their faith in my ability to successfully complete this program. They have been a strong force in my success.

I thank my sons Tim and Brad for their understanding of the time commitment involved in this project. To them I make a promise of more family time together in the near future! Lastly, I would like to thank my wife Elizabeth for carrying more than her share of the work to keep family commitments. I would not have been able to complete this project without her help.

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The Study in Perspective

There have been a string of reports concluding that, because of the quality of its education system, America will soon find it difficult to compete in the world market place (Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986; Holmes Group, 1986; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The reports have generated a sense of urgency to improve today's schools thus putting them under tremendous pressure to reform. Many schools are moving away from the 19th century model of schools as factories with principals as managers, teachers as workers, students as the raw material, and all decisions made in a rigid top down fashion. As the restructuring of America's schools gathers momentum, it is imperative that educators, parents, students, and other constituencies within the community be involved in the discussion of change. The involvement of teachers as leaders in the discussion will be crucial as they will bear the brunt of carrying out the changes (Hynes & Summers, 1990).

While much is made of the visionary leadership of the principal in the school change process, more lasting change comes from a collaborative culture where teachers are actively involved in focusing the vision (Fullan, 1992). Teachers must take an active role in any discussion of change in

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schools because they are most frequently involved in the implementation of reforms (Fullan, 1993; Shanker, 1986).

Two major reports, <u>Teachers for the 21st Century</u> (Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986) and <u>Tomorrow's Teachers</u> (Holmes Group, 1986), have highlighted the importance of teacher leadership as part of the change process in any reform. Teachers with experience, ability, and the respect of their peers can lead the way in meaningful change in schools (Huffman, 1991).

Purpose of the Study

There have been recent studies about the effect of formal teacher leader roles on school reform (Appendix A). The researchers have investigated the types of formal teacher leadership roles currently used in schools (Fay, 1991; Wasley, 1992), the skills needed for these leadership roles (Fullan, 1993; Packard & Bas, 1988), the acceptance of teacher leaders by their peers (Kilcher, 1992; Wilson, 1993), and the context in which teacher leaders work (Smylie & Denny, 1990; Little, 1982). The studies have focused on formal leadership roles that took teachers out of the classroom for either part or all of the school day to carry out other responsibilities.

No studies could be found on informal teacher leaders and the factors influencing their development. An informal teacher leader is a classroom

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teacher who has the ability to influence others because of specific characteristics and behaviors. While the informal teacher leader may have held such specific leadership roles as committee chairperson or team leader, these have been short term responsibilities and have not involved any release from regular classroom responsibilities (Smylie & Denny, 1990).

The existence of informal teacher leaders in schools has long been recognized (Smylie & Denny, 1990). Currently, one could walk into any school and find at least one teacher who is a leader in educational reform. These teachers are implementing change in their educational settings and influencing other teachers without a formal leadership role (Vance, 1991). In their study of staff development and school change, McLaughlin and Marsh (1979) found that "some teachers are eager to change and learn new things and some are simply not" (p.72). In order for meaningful school reform to take hold, more informal teacher leaders must be developed. These informal leaders will exert influence over those teachers simply not eager to change and learn new things.

The purpose of this study was to identify the influences in the development of informal teacher leaders. The findings from this study can be used to identify potential teacher leaders and those conditions important to their development.

Research Questions

The following questions were used to guide the reserach:

1. How is the development of informal teacher leaders influenced by their life experiences?

2. How is the development of informal teacher leaders influenced by their teacher preservice preparation?

3. How is the development of informal teacher leaders influenced by their inservice and professional growth activities?

4. How is the development of informal teacher leaders influenced by their association with others involved in the teaching profession?

5. How is the development of informal teacher leaders influenced by their association with others outside of the teaching profession?

6. How is the development of informal teacher leaders influenced by the contextual conditions of their work place?

Methodology

Case studies of three teachers identified by their peers as informal teacher leaders were conducted. The teachers used for the study were selected from a single school division because of its expectation of teacher involvement in decision making and planning through both formal and informal leadership roles.   The school division selected serves 6,500

students in eleven elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school. It is located in a rural county of southwestern Virginia. The superintendent of schools believes strongly in site-based management and has required all schools to have an organizational structure in place which involves teachers in the decision making process.

The teachers for each case study were drawn from three elementary schools selected because of their enrollment: the largest elementary school in the division with 426 students, an average size school with 298 students, and the smallest school in the division with 154 students.

Case Selection

In order to select teachers for the study, a review of the literature was done to determine commonly recognized characteristics of teacher leaders (see Appendices A and B for listed studies and matrix of characteristics). The characteristics used for the study were mastery of teaching skills, strong collaboration skills, involvement in continuous professional growth, and a willingness to take risks. These characteristics were used to develop an identification instrument which included a description of how each characteristic might be manifested in teacher behavior (Appendix C). Teachers in each of the schools selected for the study completed the instrument during a faculty meeting. The directions

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were read to the teachers by the researcher and time was provided at the meeting to complete and return the identification instrument.

Through the directions, teachers were instructed to read each description and write the name of a teacher they perceived as displaying the described behaviors. Participants were informed that they could list more than one name for each description and use any name more than once as they considered each of the four descriptions.

In reviewing the returned responses any teacher whose name appeared at least twice for each of the descriptions of an informal teacher leader was taken as a possible participant. From these, the teacher whose name appeared most frequently on the identification instrument was selected as the participant from that school.

Prior to the administration of the identification instrument in the schools selected for the study, a pilot administration was conducted in an elementary school not involved in the study. Through the pilot of the instrument a teacher leader was identified. To validate the instrument, two additional teachers (drawn at random) and the building principal were interviewed to determine if the teacher identified through use of the instrument was indeed a teacher leader. The interviews affirmed that the teacher identified through the use of the instrument was a leader in the school.

Gathering Data

The teachers selected for the study completed a survey of demographic information and data on their experiences (Appendix D). The areas of commonality were used as possible indicators of influences to be explored when gathering further data.

Following review of the demographic survey data, extensive individual interviews were conducted with each of the teachers selected for the study (Appendix E). The prompts used in the interviews were based on the study's six research questions. The prompts were open-ended to elicit responses from the participants without leading them in any way. Follow-up questions were used when needed for clarification or to elicit further response to the prompt. Two of the three cases required two interviews with one telephone follow-up conversation, and the third case required three interviews in order to gather the necessary data. All interviews were audiotaped.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using a multicase, cross-case method (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990; Yin, 1989). Interview data were transcribed and read case by case. Themes in each case were identified using the research questions as a framework from which to start.

Serendipitous findings were also noted as possible themes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The themes that emerged from the initial review of each case were assigned specific color codes. The transcripts of each case were read again, and all text relevant to the themes was coded with the assigned color. Text segments were then reorganized under theme headings to establish patterns and derive meaning.

Each case was read by two informed readers to verify the themes and meanings derived. The readers were selected because of their work as graduate students in research methods and their experience with interpreting qualitative data. In addition, a summary of the case was shared with each of the three teachers participating in the study to verify the conclusions. All reviewers were in agreement with the findings of each of the three cases.

Following this, the themes and coded text were analyzed across the cases for similarities and differences. To assist in this process a matrices was designed to show frequency of responses around the identified themes for each case (Appendix F).

The Case Studies

Following are summaries of the three case studies. Each summary includes a narrative of the teacher interview. The narrative is organized around major influences on the development of the individual teacher. Supporting quotations directly from the transcript are found in boxes throughout the narrative. Following the narrative is an interpretation of the data organized around the six research questions.

The Case of B.B.

The Narrative

B.B. is a 34 year old, white, female teacher. She has been teaching for eight years, five of those in the school to which she is currently assigned. She has taught a variety of grades, but is now a reading and math resource teacher. In this position she works with children at

> "I think probably a lot of what might be perceived by my peers comes from the fact that I am in a couple of leadership roles that are pretty high profile in the school like the school improvement chairperson and then the new position in the primary coordinating the parallel schedule."

all grade levels. B.B. credited her peers' identification of her as an informal teacher leader to the fact that she is in two high profile leadership roles.

Family background. B.B. grew up in a small town in what she described as a very close family. She lived with her mother (a housewife),

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her father (an insurance salesman), two sisters, and a brother. She was the youngest child. B.B. was also very close to her extended family.

> "Two of my aunts were educators, and they were both very big influences on me; one in particular who I grew up beside. She was an assistant principal when I was young, and then she went to a central office position and now she is the director of the Virginia School of the Arts. So I've always been very impressed by her career."

Two of her aunts were teachers, and B.B. credited them with influencing her development as a teacher.

B.B. described her parents as very supportive of her education. Because she was the youngest child, she got a lot of

> "At the time there was no kindergarten in Campbell County so my mother really worked with me up until the time I was ready for first grade, and I knew basically how to read and write before I started school."

attention and was well prepared when she started school.

B.B. got her love of music from her mother. She started to play the piano in the first grade and took lessons all through college. Her music led to some early leadership experiences as she was the pianist for her church and directed the youth choir as a teenager. She also gave piano lessons to young children.

> "She [my mother] played piano mostly by ear. She had never had any formal training, but she could play the piano and she loved to sing. She sang in the choir at church, and so she probably influenced me in terms of wanting to learn piano and take lessons."

B.B.'s father held several leadership positions in the community. He was a member of the local school board and was on the board of supervisors

for twelve years. B.B. reported that

he was also elected to the Virginia

House of Delegates on a platform

supporting education.

> "I was able to go and watch him [my father] and spend time with him in his office and see what the whole role was about, and that influenced me a lot."

B.B. cited her father's formal leadership role as an influence. She is

currently enrolled in a masters degree program for school leadership and

hopes to be a school principal in the future. She is striving for a more formal

leadership role.

In speaking of her sisters and

brother, B.B. described a nurturing

relationship. They took care of her

> "They [brother and sisters] nurtured me and...were the care takers."

and acted as protectors all through high school.

In fact, she described helping

and nurturing as family values

instilled in her. She credited this for

influencing how she works with

others.

> "As I grew up I was always trained to share and to help and that type of thing....I feel like I'm a very nurturing person. Sometimes it's to the point of getting on people's nerves because I want to take care of people....I would expect that that's probably part of the reason that I do things rather than delegate or wait for somebody else to say, 'I'll do it,' because I'm trying to take care of everybody."

B.B. was successful in school. She began taking leadership roles as

early as the fourth grade when she

was elected class president. She

> "There was a lot of opportunities for me, and through some of those I was able to be a student representative for the high school on the school board."

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recalls being in leadership roles every year after that. B.B. was involved in many clubs and activities, including cheerleading, student council, and editor of the yearbook.

Of her teachers, B.B. remembers two high school English teachers who were influential in her development. She was impressed by their use of positive reinforcement to help her improve and prepare for college.

> "They [English teachers] were two people that would work with you outside of their regular teaching hours. They were really involved in the school."

She was also impressed by their dedication to the students at school.

In her senior year B.B.'s father became very sick and eventually died. This influenced the type of experiences she would have in college.

The college years. B.B. received a scholarship in music to attend a small liberal arts college near her hometown. She had applied to other schools, but, because of her father's illness and the financial support provided by the college, she selected her hometown college.

B.B. was emotionally devastated by the death of her father. After a high school experience where she had many leadership roles, B.B. "laid back" in college because of this.

B.B. started out at college as a music performance major but switched

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to teacher education when she
became frustrated with her progress
as a musician. Teaching had
always been something she
considered, and in her junior year

> "I really laid back [in college], and I think it was, I mean as I look back now, I didn't realize it at the time but it was very traumatic when my father got sick. He was extremely ill in the hospital for three months, and it was a big strain on the family and on me especially because I was a real daddy's girl....I never had any counseling or anything like that, and at the time I didn't reflect on it, but I didn't let myself get involved in college life because I felt the obligation to help out at home, to be there for my mother."

she switched to elementary education as a major.

In talking about her education at her college B.B. stated that she
received a good education.
Because of the small size of the
school, she feels she got more
attention than she would have at a
larger school. She cited the

> "There was not a whole lot of change for me in terms of the number of students in my classes and the willingness of the professors to work with students one on one. I had some professors for more than one class throughout my four years there, and it was a closeness that was very similar to what I had felt in high school....It was a very personal educational experience."

availability of the professors and their willingness to spend extra time with
students as very helpful.

In fact, B.B. spoke of a faculty advisor with whom she is still in close
contact. The more personal type of
education at her college is
demonstrated in this relationship.
Dr. W. helped B.B. make decisions

> "I keep close contact with Dr. W., and he really has done a lot for me in terms of pushing me in the right direction....I have a great respect for Dr. W. and a lot of trust in what he tells me."

all through her college career, and he still advises her today on career
decisions. B.B. cited Dr. W. as an influence on her development.

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While she felt that she got a good education at college, she did not

feel her teacher preparation program was

particularly influential in her development. She

did, however, have the opportunity to do short

school based internships early in the program

that were beneficial.

> "I don't feel like the course work [for teacher preparation] that I took was as practical as it could have been; maybe as it was at other colleges or universities at the time."

B.B. did her student teaching in a county school and was disappointed

with the experience. She did not like the student management system

employed at the school, and while she stated that she did learn from her

cooperating teacher, it was not the type of classroom she wanted to

establish, nor was it the type of school in which she wanted to work.

In addition to being

unhappy in the school to

which she was assigned,

she also felt very

restricted by the rigors of

> "My student teaching experience was not what I had hoped it would be. I didn't agree with the philosophy in the building in terms of student discipline. It was not what I had learned it should be like."
> "I was not prepared for that full day where, when you walked into the classroom until the time you left in the afternoon, your time was not your own."

the classroom teacher's schedule. The lack of control over her time made

B.B. evaluate whether or not she wanted to teach.

Job and career experiences. Following her unhappy student teaching

experience, B.B. decided not to seek a teaching position. Instead, she went

into the business world. She started out playing piano and bartending in the

restaurant of a Hilton Hotel. Two

years later she took a job working

at a wellness and fitness center

selling memberships. Her

> "When I was hired [at the health club] they were just looking for me to sell memberships....My manager was right there in the office behind me so I guess she observed some things that I was able to do that some employees couldn't or didn't....I was able to pick up many things real quick." "

supervisor saw her potential and almost immediately moved her to the

position of assistant administrator and program director. In this position she

was working to set up business partnerships, develop programs, and teach

classes.

Around this time, B.B. got married and eventually had a daughter.

B.B. credited the birth of her

daughter with drawing her back to

teaching. She realized how

important her daughter's

> "I had a child of my own, and within four years she would be ready for school, and I really thought about the experiences that I wanted her to have -- those experiences not just for her, but for children in general."

educational experiences were going

to be and wanted to be part of making those experiences good for all

children. She became especially interested in working with young children to

give them a strong foundation for their learning.

Five years after graduating from college B.B. took her first teaching

job in a small school in a rural county. She team taught sixth grade with

Mrs. P., whom she described as a master teacher. From Mrs. P., B.B.

gained many teaching skills. She described this master teacher as having

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good ideas about teaching and a willingness to share with everyone.

Mrs. P. was an informal leader in her building. B.B. described her as having strong teaching skills as well as a willingness to try new things and continue to learn and share with others. However, Mrs. P. did not wish to take any high profile formal leadership roles.

> "She [the master teacher] was a support person all the way around, from management to curriculum to where to sit at faculty meetings. I mean she really took me under her wing and showed me the ropes."
> "I am hoping that I have transferred some of her behavior and personality and willingness to share. I would like to think that I am becoming what she was."

> "Teachers saw Mrs. P. as a model, a master teacher. She did not take a high leadership role....She was really happy in the building and did not want to divert her time or energies into other areas."

Because of the need to relocate for her husband's job, the next year B.B. worked in a city school teaching fifth grade science and language arts. Here she encountered many of the problems characteristic of working with an

> "Most of the children were from terrible situations, and that was probably the first time in my life that I was exposed to things like drugs with children or incest and all the issues we dread or hate to talk about but are actually real."

urban population. She was very moved by the hardships the children lived with and came to realize that by fifth grade many of the problems were too ingrained for her to make a difference in their lives. B.B. decided that she could better impact children by teaching at the primary level.

Because of another job move by her husband, B.B. took a position

teaching first grade in the school at which she is currently employed. This position put her back in a small rural elementary school teaching a grade level at which she felt she could have some impact.

B.B. cited many influences on her development from her associations at this school, her first being her teaching partner, Ms. C. B.B. described her as a mentor and a leader with whom she developed a close working relationship. Ms. C. now teaches in another school in the same division, but they continue to collaborate on projects. While at this school, B.B. became very involved in the school improvement planning committee and site-based management initiative. She was asked by her fellow teachers to be chairperson of

> "Ms. C. was truly a mentor because she shared everything with me....We had really developed a good working relationship as well as a friendship."

> "The whole [school improvement chairperson] process has been a wonderful learning experience for me and because of the fact that I have been willing, I think, to stay in the position, and there has been no opposition to that. Nobody on the faculty wanted the position, so I just continued to do what I was doing."

the school improvement committee at the beginning of her second year at this school, and she has been in this position for the past four years. In that time, there has been no opposition to her maintaining this position as no one else wants to take the responsibility or spend the time necessary for the job.

The position of chairperson has provided B.B. with many opportunities

to be involved in professional development and to network with other professionals in the field. She has also been directly involved in the development of several new initiatives at the school.

Through her committee work, B.B. has been directly involved in bringing to the school more extensive hands-on science instruction, science and math integration programs, an innovative primary level reading and language arts program, and a new report card.

Because of her experiences in these projects, specifically in the area of reading and language arts, B.B. was asked to participate at the state level in the drafting of the new state Standards of Learning (S.O.L.'s). In this forum B.B.

> "I was in a 3-5 group, and we were responsible for developing a continuum of grades 3,4 and 5 SOL's at that original first draft workshop....And as the day went on the leadership role came toward us [Ms. C. and B.B.]...probably because I'm very outspoken when it comes to things like that [teaching reading]...and probably, too, because of the fact we had already done some of this type of preliminary work at our schools [in the area of reading language objectives] and that was evident to the people [in the 3-5 group]."

again took on a leadership role as others recognized her experience and success in the S.O.L. area being developed.

B.B. cited her building principal as a major influence in her development. She credited him with helping her understand what it means to be child centered and claimed to use this

> "I try to always be on an issue that's child focused because I feel like that's the best way to get anything done, and I think my school is really a child centered school....He [the principal] talks a lot about this."

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in working with other teachers in trying to reach consensus on issues of

instruction and management. She stated that looking at what is best for the

child may not always be the most convenient thing for the teacher, but it

puts a focus on the decision making process.

B.B. spoke of how the principal gives out articles to the faculty and

works diligently to educate parents about what the school is trying to do.

He has set the tone for the building that decisions must be based on what's

good for children.

The principal has

facilitated opportunities for

B.B. to be involved in

leadership roles at the school.

> "I am given jobs because the principal probably knows that I can do it. Not that other people on the staff can't do it. And he is also aware that there are people who are not willing to put in the extra time when those people are approached, or if they are approached and say "no," it will come back to somebody like me who is willing."

He recognizes B.B.'s ability to get things done as well as her willingness to

spend the time.

In addition, the principal has taken a personal interest in developing

B.B.'s leadership skills. He

encourages her to take

leadership roles and counsels

her on how to deal with

specific situations.

> "He [the principal] has been a big influence as well. He has opened up his job enough so that I can see what takes place in an administrator's day....He has taken time to share things with me and council with me on how to deal with a situation, or who to talk to....Even the assistant superintendent and superintendent are willing listeners. I feel that they want to develop leaders and strong teachers and people that have ownership in the building."

B.B. cited the culture of the school division as influencing her

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development. The leadership of the school division is very interested in teachers taking leadership roles, and while there are no formal teacher leader positions established in the division, there is the recognition that teachers can be strong leaders.

Lastly, B.B. cited her husband as facilitating her development as an informal teacher leader because of his understanding of the time commitment she has made to her career. Her activities at her school are very time consuming but seem to be a factor in her being recognized by her peers as a teacher leader. B.B.'s strong interest in leadership has encouraged her to get a masters degree in school leadership and eventually seek a school administrative position.

Interpretations

Following is an interpretation of the narrative organized around the six research questions.

1. The influences of life experiences. B.B. had several life experiences that influenced her development as an informal teacher leader. Among these were her early educational experiences, her relationships with her parents and members of her extended family, and her early leadership experiences.

B.B. grew up in a family that was very supportive of education. Early on her parents worked to prepare her for school. They continued to be

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supportive throughout her school years.

B.B.'s father was involved in education as a member of the school board and eventually as a delegate to state government. As a child B.B. had the opportunity to observe her father in his work in the insurance business and in various community and state level leadership roles. B.B. saw the importance of working closely with others and developing networks in order to get things done. In addition she had two aunts who were teachers. One of the aunts went on to a formal leadership role in education. B.B. saw these aunts as role models as she pursued her career in education.

Beginning in the fourth grade and on through school B.B. was successful in various leadership roles. Her success served as encouragement to continue to seek other leadership opportunities.

2. The influences of teacher preservice preparation. There is no evidence that B.B.'s preservice preparation influenced her development as an informal teacher leader. In fact, her disappointment with her student teaching experience was one factor in her decision not to pursue a teaching position following graduation from college.

A positive influence from her college experience was the size of the school she selected. B.B. stated that the size of the college and the small number of students in her classes contributed to her academic development

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because of the amount of individual attention provided.

3. The influences of professional growth activities. There is evidence that professional growth experiences contributed to the development of B.B. as an informal leader. Such projects as developing a hands-on, integrated math and science program and a primary block program improved B.B.'s mastery of teaching skills. These opportunities led her to become involved in trying new things, including the implementation of a new report card for her school.

B.B.'s involvement in these various inservice projects resulted in invitations to participate in other projects such as the development of the state Standards of Learning (S.O.L.'s). Her past inservice experiences and subsequent projects earned her a leadership role in the S.O.L. development project. Through the project, B.B. expanded her network of professional contacts because she worked with teachers from across the state.

4. The influences of others in the teaching profession. B.B. cited five educators with whom she has worked as influencing her development. These included her college advisor, two "master teachers", the principal of her school, and the superintendent of schools in the county of her current employment.

B.B. reported that Dr. W., her college advisor, keeps up with what is

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happening in the education field and that she still goes to him for advice on her career. This has helped B.B. see the importance of networks.

B.B. had two mentors whom she described as "master teachers." Mrs. P. and Ms. C. worked closely with B.B., sharing many ideas about teaching children. These teachers were model informal leaders and helped B.B. develop her skills.

The school building and division administration, including the principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent, were also cited by B.B. as influential in her development. The administration has developed a culture in which professional growth activities and risktaking behaviors are encouraged. The administration provided opportunities for her to learn and outlets to try new things.

5. The influences of those outside the teaching profession. There is evidence that B.B.'s development was influenced by her husband, her daughter, and her father.

Her husband is understanding of the time B.B. takes to be involved in her career. Without his support it would be difficult for her to be involved in many of the activities that have fostered her development.

B.B.'s daughter was influential in that her birth brought B.B. to the decision to go back to teaching. She realized the importance of a good education and wanted to be part of providing the best experience possible.

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B.B.'s father was also an influence in her development as a teacher leader. B.B. had opportunities to observe him in many of his leadership roles. The roles in which he was involved were formal in nature. B.B. tends more toward formal leadership roles. Her desire to get her masters degree in educational leadership and become a school principal is evidence of this.

6. The influences of other contextual conditions. There is evidence that the school in which B.B. works influenced her development. The school practices site-based management and employs a structure which allows teachers to be involved in the decision making process. It allows teachers to be involved in the design and implementation of inservice opportunities according to set goals. B.B. was very involved in this process and credited it for the opportunities she has had. Her consistent involvement has been facilitated by other teachers not wishing to spend the time needed to carry out the various roles.

B.B. gave much credit to the building principal for developing a culture in which teachers are encouraged to be involved in professional growth and to try new things. In her particular case the principal offered opportunities for leadership and much encouragement.

The Case of V.O.

The Narrative

V.O. is a 46 year old, white, female teacher. She has been teaching for 17 years, all at the school of her current employment. She teaches fourth grade and has taught at the upper elementary level all of her

> "I was shocked actually [that I was identified by my peers as a teacher leader]."
> "I see myself as just one of the gang; one of the gang who's a little more concerned than some of the others, a little more dedicated."

career. While V.O. is recognized by her peers as having characteristics of an informal teacher leader, she does not see herself in that way.

Family background. V.O. described the town in which she grew up as small. She lived with her mother (a housewife), her father (a business owner), and one brother. V.O.'s mother was a high school graduate. Her father dropped out of

> "I'm not sure Daddy thought college was very important....Being successful without it, I think he had his mind set that it really wasn't important."

high school. Despite this he ran a successful business. There was not a lot of emphasis placed on education in the home. V.O. attributes this to two factors. First, her father was successful in his business without a high school or college degree. Second, her brother had some learning problems and consequently did very poorly in school, eventually dropping out.

> "I think the problem was that my brother was in such turmoil and such a poor student and in trouble at school that he became the focus, and 'V is doing okay so it's B. we need to worry about.'"

The focus of the home as far as support in academic matters was on V.O.'s brother.

V.O. did have two aunts who were teachers, and they influenced her career choice. Even as a child V.O. recalled hearing them talk about teaching, and both portrayed it as a "noble profession."

> "I had two aunts who were teachers. I thought that was kind of neat and I heard them talk and sometimes they would give me old teachers' manuals to play with and I would play school when I was a kid."
> My aunts felt like it was such a noble, respected profession and that kind of inspired me."

V.O. grew up in the 1960's around the turmoil of the civil rights era and the Kennedy administration. She was very influenced by the notion of service to society and saw teaching as a way to help others.

> "I grew up and went to high school in the 60's, the time of the civil rights issues and Kennedy saying, 'Ask not what your country can do for you.' I think that had a big effect as far as choosing a career that would be geared to helping others."

V.O. described herself growing up as shy and introverted. This description held true throughout her school and college years.

> "I was kind of an introvert. I have come a long way."

Early school experiences. Of her school days V.O. talked of little that was influential in her development as an informal leader. She was in a few activities in high school, mostly service clubs, which she joined because her

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friends were involved. She was

very involved as a library worker

and for a time considered going into

library science rather than teaching.

> "I just loved reading, being around books and broadening my horizons. I just needed lots of knowledge. I didn't get much of a base of knowledge at home maybe."

V.O. was drawn to the library because she loved reading and had a desire to

"broaden her horizons."

V.O. went to a high school with an enrollment of approximately 1,000

students. She was involved

with peers who were all in

college bound classes. This

became an influence on her to

continue her education and go to

> "We [peers] were all in college bound classes, and when we talked about going to college, it sounded fun and, you know, a way to get away from home. It was a way to get away, I think, and have fun and see the world. I hung around with kids who were going to go to college so, you know, 'They're going to do it so I'm going to do it too.'"

college. In addition, V.O. had decided she wanted to be a teacher, and this

required her to go on to college.

V.O. had to be independent about her decision to go to college

because during her last years of high school her father became very ill, and

the family's energy was consumed with the grueling schedule of his medical

treatments. V.O.'s brother was continuing to have trouble in school and

finally dropped out against his mother's wishes.

V.O. did go on to college, but her father died in her freshman year.

She almost decided to leave school at this point, but remained at her

mother's insistence and with a new
realization that a teaching career
could afford her some
independence.

> "My dad died when I was a freshman in college, and I was more than anxious to quit and come home and stay with mom. She said, 'No, you need to finish and have a career,' so that if something happens like to her, well, she thought it was important that I pursue college and some training to take care of myself."

   The college years. In making a decision about college V.O. looked at
two schools, one large university and one small, religiously affiliated college.
She chose the small college because it had a teacher education program, and
she felt the setting was less intimidating than the large university. In
addition, the sister of a friend attended the college, offering the promise of
transportation between home and school on vacations.

   V.O. stated that she got a good foundation from her college
experience. She credited the size of
the school with giving her a little
extra confidence. Her classes were
small, giving her more opportunities

> "Well, being small [the college], I guess it gave me more self-confidence that I didn't have to compete with as many people. And you had more attention from your professors."

to be involved and providing extra attention from her professors.

   She described her
education program professors as
gentle and compassionate
towards children and felt they

> "We had such sweet, gentle professors who were kind and compassionate toward children. I can't help but think that I kind of picked up on that."
> [In talking about how other teachers see her] "I think maybe they have an image of me as being more mild mannered and gentle. They see me as kind and caring [toward children]."

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were an influence on how she deals with children today. In fact, in her current teaching situation she felt this is her strength.

V.O. remembered her preservice coursework as "all sorts of odds and ends" and referred to some as "a little ridiculous." Her student teaching experience was short, but she recalled her supervising teacher as being "wonderful." Two weeks into her student teaching experience the supervising teacher took ill and V.O. finished out the school year without her, thus limiting the experience. However, in the short time she worked with the supervising teacher she recalled that the teacher had developed a caring, comfortable, child-centered classroom atmosphere. V.O. stated that

> "I think the children knew that she [the supervising teacher] liked them and so they liked her, and, you know, that's a real comfortable feeling. And there wasn't any strain or stress."
>
> "I saw her being what I thought was a good teacher, and I tried to, I guess, model myself after her."

she tried to model herself after this teacher.

Job and career experience. V.O. got married in her junior year of college and had a child shortly after graduating. She decided that she wanted to stay home with her son until he was in school. V.O. felt that this was a

> "I never regretted it [staying home with my son] for a minute....I saw this little baby developing and saw how you could nurture and read and play and do all these neat things and watch him grow up, and then go as a teacher and say, 'Okay, now my own son did this and this and here's kind of a developmental process.'"

good experience in that it helped her to better understand how to work with children. Watching her own child grow and develop gave her an added sensitivity to the needs of children.

While she was at home with her son, V.O.'s husband was teaching in a local school. V.O. would substitute teach in this school on occasion and stated that her husband was an example for her of

> "I saw him [my husband] as being the kind of teacher that I did not want to be....He would have this paddle and he'd slap himself on the leg as he walked down the hall trying to look like the big bad teacher."

what a teacher should not be. She felt he was intimidating to the children and did not put in the extra effort needed to do the job properly.

After her son started school, V.O. took her first teaching position in the school at which she currently works. Through her teaching position, V.O. bloomed as a person. She found that she could communicate with the children and

> "I think being in control of this group of little people [in the classroom] that look up to you and you have to talk to them all day long...and then of course, the more you get used to that, I guess you branch out, talk to other people and what not."

eventually found the confidence to branch out to other people. V.O. stated that even her mother was fascinated by how teaching helped her overcome her shyness.

In talking about her first teaching assignment, V.O. referred to a colleague, who helped her learn a lot of the "tricks" of teaching, as

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influential. When she first started

teaching, this colleague helped

V.O. develop the necessary

> "I perceived her to be a really good teacher. She taught me how to manage the class at this and that, and she was always very calm and soft spoken."

classroom management skills. V.O. perceived her to be a "really good

teacher" who had an influence on her development of classroom

management skills.

V.O. felt success in her job and confidence that she could do well.

She gained a sense of independence

through her success in teaching, an

independence that ultimately led to

her divorce from her first husband.

> "[Through the job], I felt like I had become my own person. Up until then I was somebody's wife, and they're going to take care of me and tell me what to do."

The superintendent of the county in which V.O. was employed

arranged for a masters degree

program in curriculum to be offered

in the area. According to V.O., he

strongly encouraged teachers to

> "They [leadership roles] started when I got involved in the masters program. That made me think, 'Hey, I can do this. I can teach, and I can work on these classes, and I can do this and this.'"

become involved. She decided to enroll in the program and again was

successful, thus spurring her on to be involved in more professional growth

activities.

Around this time, V.O. was in her second marriage, and she described

it as "already horrible." The masters program and various roles she took at

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her school became an outlet for her. She eventually divorced a second time.

> "The masters program gave me the little push and again realizing you're on your own and maybe it takes your mind off other stuff such as the situation at home."

V.O. increasingly took on leadership roles in her school. She became chairperson for the school site-based management team and was involved in several division level committees representing her school. She also actively

> "I don't mind volunteering for things. If there is something to be done, whether it is a committee or for instance SAC [Superintendents Advisory Council], so many people say, 'I don't want to do this, pass it on, pass it on. Let's ask V.O.' And I don't mind that. I kind of like being involved and part of things."

sought out professional growth activities and looked for opportunities to share what she had learned with her colleagues. Many of these opportunities came to V.O. because she was willing to spend the time doing the work.

Of her school, V.O. identified the principal as key to her success and involvement in various projects. She has worked with several principals

> "I want him [the principal] to be supportive and cooperative and maybe work, feel like you're on a team. He needs to be the glue that sticks us all together. But you don't want to be so stuck to the leader that you don't experiment. We've had some that did that and others that didn't."

over her years at her school and cited them as influential in the overall productivity of the teachers in school initiatives.

V.O. has been and is currently very involved in the County Education

Association (CEA). In this organization, she has met many people and taken on a variety of responsibilities. She has been in

> " I think involvement in the CEA makes you a more well rounded, active educator, more than just this little square classroom that you focus all your attention just there and don't look at the broader picture."
>
> "I get inspired by my colleagues that I see through the CEA because they're all so involved in everything."

leadership roles with the organization where she needed to develop strong communication and collaboration skills. She has also met many educators who have been an influence because of their level of involvement and commitment to education. V.O. stated that she strives to be like them.

V.O. stays involved in her school and in education in general because, in her words, "You feel like you are accomplishing something. You're helping somebody. You're doing something worthwhile."

Interpretations

Following is an interpretation of the narrative organized around the six research questions.

1. The influences of life experiences. There are five life experiences that influenced V.O.'s development as an informal teacher leader. These include her relationships and experiences with her immediate family, her association with two members of her extended family, the college setting she selected, her first teaching position, and her relationships with her two husbands.

There was not strong support for V.O.'s education in her family.

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Because of his success in business without high school or college degrees, V.O.'s father did not see a need for her to go to college. Most of the attention and energy was directed at V.O.'s brother who was struggling in school. The family was happy that V.O. could be self-sufficient in school. These dynamics created a negative influence on V.O.'s development, as the encouragement to excel, succeed, and lead was lacking.

This did change when V.O.'s father died and her mother gained, through first hand experience, an understanding of the importance of V.O. getting an education and having a career. This encouragement came at a crucial time when V.O. was considering leaving college.

Two members of V.O.'s extended family seemed to be positive influences on her decision to enter a career in teaching. Two of V.O.'s aunts were teachers. From them she gained a respect for the importance of this career. Coupled with the culture of the times in which she grew up (the Kennedy era), the influence of her two aunts convinced her that teaching was a way to help others.

V.O. selected a small college in which to prepare for her teaching career. She had a good college experience in that she modeled her style for working with children after her professors and her supervising teacher. In addition, the small size of the college and her classes enabled her to be more involved in her education and gave her some confidence.

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Up until V.O. took her first teaching position, she described herself as shy and introverted. When she started teaching, she became confident that she could be successful. This confidence was reinforced as she began to branch out and work with other people. The more she saw herself as successful, the more involved in her career she became.

The divorce from her first husband reinforced her development of independence in that she felt capable of taking care of herself. The divorce from her second husband pushed her to be further involved in school to fill a void in her life. Her subsequent enrollment in the masters degree program and her continued success in these roles reinforced her involvement in professional growth and leadership roles.

2. The influences of teacher preservice preparation. There were two influences in V.O.'s development as an informal teacher leader from her teacher preservice program. These included the professors with whom V.O. worked and her student teaching experience.

V.O. described the professors as gentle and kind toward children. She described her supervising teacher from her student teaching experience in the same terms. In identifying V.O. as an informal teacher leader, her peers characterized her as a master teacher. V.O. feels that this is because they see her as kind, gentle and someone who can handle difficult children.

V.O. recognized a relationship between her preservice program and her current teaching style. However, she felt that her preservice program curriculum was not well structured, and she stated that her student teaching experience was limited by the illness of her supervising teacher.

3. The influences of professional growth activities. V.O.'s enrollment in the graduate program in curriculum was a benchmark in her development as an informal teacher leader. From her experience in the program, she discovered that she could be successful. This spurred her to become involved in professional growth opportunities and to take on leadership roles in her school.

4. The influences of others in the teaching profession. There are a number of people associated with the teaching profession who influenced V.O.'s development as an informal teacher leader. These include other teachers, principals, and central office personnel.

When V.O. first started teaching, she was taken under the wing of a mentor teacher. This colleague helped V.O. develop classroom management skills. Later in her career, V.O. became very involved with the County Education Association (CEA). Through this affiliation, she met colleagues whom she admired for their dedication to teaching and their ability to stay active and be involved. She followed the example of these

colleagues and stayed active as a leader in her school division.

Even though V.O. has been at the same school all of her career, she has had the opportunity to work with several different principals. There is evidence that some facilitated her growth. She cited the importance of having a supportive principal who encourages teachers to experiment and who fosters the development of teacher leaders.

Another influence in V.O.'s development was the superintendent of the county in which she works. V.O. credited him with bringing in a masters degree program and encouraging teachers to be involved. This program was one of the major benchmarks in V.O.'s development.

5. The influences of those outside the profession. There is no evidence that V.O. was positively influenced by anyone outside of the teaching profession.

6. The influences of other contextual conditions. One factor in V.O.'s worksetting has influenced her development as an informal teacher leader: In her school there are teachers who are not willing to take the time to be involved in leadership roles and educational initiatives. V.O.'s willingness to give the extra time and effort has opened many opportunities to her. The more she is involved, the more confidence she develops. This encourages her to share her new knowledge with her colleagues, thus

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causing them to see her as a teacher leader.

The Case of M.C.

<u>The Narrative</u>

M.C. is a 47 year old, white, female teacher. She has been a teacher

for 23 years. Twenty one of those

years have been in the county of

her current employment. She

currently teaches second grade, but

has taught a variety of elementary

levels throughout her career. She is

> [On being perceived as a teacher leader] "It comes mostly from the past five or six years being CSIP chair for a few years. It comes from having a big mouth! It comes from being self-assured enough not to be afraid to speak. It comes from being experienced enough to know that you can make a mistake and it won't destroy your career. It comes from basically being friendly; to be the one that I would want to be a mentor or sounding board."

recognized by her peers as having the characteristics of an informal teacher

leader. M.C. thinks her friendly, self-assured manner and her experience are

the reasons her peers see her in this way.

<u>Family background.</u> M.C. grew up in a small, rural village with a

population of about 200. She lived

with her mother (a school teacher),

her father (an electrician), and her

> "And I grew up thinking that teaching was a real important thing and that it was accepted in our family circle and that it was something to aspire to."

two sisters, one younger than she and one older. M.C.'s immediate and

extended family had many people who had chosen teaching as a career,

including her mother, several aunts and uncles, and a cousin. All had good

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experiences in the field and helped to form M.C.'s view that this was a

career choice to be considered.

M.C. cited her mother as having a

major influence on her. Her mother

was a risktaker, "a rebel", as M.C.

described her. She spoke of her

> "My mother was a rebel long before ladies could be rebels.... I think the strength to be a woman leader, if that's what I am, has come from watching my mother."

mother as someone with convictions and a belief that if you feel something

is the right thing to do, you should do it no matter what others say.

M.C. described her father as warm and personable. He held a

leadership position in the electric

company in their town. He was

also a leader in the church. Despite

his leadership positions, M.C.

described him as "not your typical

> "I think I learned from Dad an awful lot of seeing how the power structures work, trying to use those to your advantage, not necessarily being the one out front. I have been out in front, and it is not a role I particularly enjoy. I feel the burden of it more than the excitement. But I am also the one who doesn't like to see things not get done, and if it requires going to the forefront to do it, I will do that too."

spokesperson, but a behind the scenes worker, someone who could get the

job done in a quiet but efficient manner." M.C. was influenced by her father

in how she uses power structures to get things done in an organization and

to get people working together.

Of her two sisters M.C.

spoke of a fierce competitive spirit.

She recalled how they would fight

> "All of us had enough ambition that we were determined that we were going to do well."

and be jealous of one another's accomplishments. Yet, this competition

would drive each of them on to succeed.

M. C. described her parents as facilitators in her development. M.C.

and her sisters were required to be

involved in certain things such as

music lessons and church for set

amounts of time in order to give

> "'You must do this up to a certain age and then after that you can choose, but you will get the background from which to make a choice [Mother and Dad to M.C.]'. And I think that may have a whole lot to do with how we [sisters and M.C.] look at life."

them a strong background from which to make choices later. This had an

influence on how M.C. makes decisions today in that she first wants to learn

all about the issue, think about it, and then decide if it is right for her.

This influence is clearly shown in that, as a teacher, M.C. has always

involved herself in inservice

programs and professional growth

activities to learn about the issues

in education. She listed

participation on committees and

various training programs such as

Math Their Way and High Scope as

some of these opportunities. Early

> "It's part of this personality of mine that I want to be part of what I may be called to do later on. I want to have my say so right from the beginning. And I want to understand it. I don't do really well with something that someone else has written in another language than I'm speaking, translating that into my own language. I want to be there when all the argument is going on. I want to know what was the basis for it. Sometimes the final word doesn't say what was going on in the background....I think Mr. H. [principal] recognized real soon that I was the one who would come back and ask, 'Why? Why are we doing this?' And I think he decided real quickly that to let me be in on the ground floor when all this was being developed will save him a lot of headaches in the future."

on in her elementary school teaching career M.C. was asked to represent her

school in a divisionwide project to develop student academic standards. She

was selected to participate in this project because of her desire to learn more about instruction and make informed choices for her classroom. She was interested in seeking new approaches to teaching.

Early school experiences. M.C. recalled one teacher in her elementary school years that had an influence over her career choice. She described her third grade teacher as someone who, with a very soft

"I will never forget her [the third grade teacher] standing up there saying, 'You are a people person. You belong with people. I know when you grow up you will do something that has to do with people.' There was no option. Mrs. M. said I was a people person and will work with people. That's the way my life was going to be."

spoken manner, made the children strive to do their very best, someone who despite her age and small stature was the final word for M.C.

M.C. attended a small high school. She was active in school, joining clubs and participating in sports and cheerleading. M.C. was very involved with her social group and was elected to class office. In spite of this, she does not describe herself as popular, but as "accepted" as one of the group. She credited her involvement in

"There were only one hundred and twenty kids [in high school], and that was grades eight through twelve. So for those of us with any kind of push to be ahead, there were many chances to be ahead. There probably were kids who would have gotten those offices more than I had they been willing to try. I was willing to put myself on the block and run for an office.....I wanted to do well. I wanted to be respected, but I didn't particularly necessarily want to be the one who was recognized."

many activities to the fact that the school was small and anyone with ambition could be involved. M.C. was in leadership roles during her high school years because she was "willing to try" while others were not.

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However, she did not particularly strive for recognition.

M.C. was successful in high school. Her early leadership experiences
led her to believe that she
could try things and be
successful, thus
reinforcing her willingness
to be a risktaker.

> "It probably had something to do with forming my personality to
> know that whatever I tried I did O.K. at. There weren't any
> particularly great failures. I don't know what would have happened
> if there had been something I had tried and totally bombed out on.
> That may have made a real big impact, but it didn't happen! But
> I could try a whole lot of things and be O.K. It probably had a
> whole lot to do with the way I am now to know that I am a good
> student."

The college years. M.C. attended a small college. She described her
college education in general as "the very best of an education as is available
today." The classes were
small, thus forcing students
to be involved in their
learning. As in high school,
the size of this educational
setting seems to have worked

> "There were only 350 [students at the college] at the time I
> was there. It's about 500 now. But I came from a high
> school of 100, so this was a big jump for me! This was big
> time stuff, but I was in so many classes where there was me
> and one other kid and a professor, and nowhere to hide. No
> way to pretend. No way to B.S. your way through it because
> it was just kind of give and take, and you were challenged on
> everything. Most of my classes had six or eight kids."

to M.C.'s advantage in that she was given the opportunity to take leadership
roles. She was a leader in class discussion and activities because there were
so few students and, again, she was willing. This seemed to set a pattern
for involvement which continues in her worksetting today.

While her general college education was meaningful to M.C.'s

development, her teacher

preparation was not. There was no

education major at her college. The

teacher preparation program was a group of elective courses which she took

outside of the coursework for her major field. In fact, the semester she did

her student teaching she was carrying eighteen credit hours, which included

several other courses.

M.C. did credit her supervising teacher from her student teaching

assignment with

influencing the type of

school setting in which she

eventually chose to work.

Miss M. was an uncertified

teacher teaching a special

education class of severely

"Mr. H. at the time was personnel director, and he started taking me from school to school. At the time they were getting ready to open a new school and there were positions in the town school, and he took me to a rural school. And the first thing he said was, 'Now this is a school in a part of the county where we are having trouble getting teachers to go. Nobody wants to go out there. The children in this section are not as economically advantaged as some. The parents don't have the educational level as some. There's a bigger majority of black children than you'll find in any other school. But I know deep down that that's where you want to be.' And he gave me four choices, and that's the school I was drawn to. I could see Miss M [from student teaching]. I just knew that's where she would be. And I think I was right. I think in the long scheme of things, it was right."

behaviorally involved students. M.C. described her as "being put on this

earth to do that job" because of the special rapport she had with the children

that, according to M.C., nobody else wanted. It would be three years before

M.C. would realize the impact of her association with Miss M. for, in being

given a choice of several teaching positions, she consciously chose to work

in a school where there were children with whom nobody wanted to work.

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Job and career experiences. Following her graduation from college, M.C. took a middle school teaching position in a wealthy suburban setting. She was part of a team of five teachers of varying levels of experience. This was M.C.'s first

> "From this experience [in the suburban school] I take a sensitivity, I think, um, that not everybody has the same values that I do. Children and families may not perceive what I say the way I thought it was so perfectly clear that there would be no way to misunderstand."

exposure to a suburban setting, and she was unaccustomed to the multicultural environment, the effect of economic affluence on children, and the lack of a sense of community. This experience later served to help her work more effectively with other people because she developed skills as a communicator.

From the team of teachers with whom she worked there is some evidence that M.C. was influenced by the way one of the teachers worked with groups of

> "Mrs. W. was the one who, when we couldn't quite get it all together, when we couldn't quite come to an agreement on how to do things, would find a way to say something really softly and melt down all the tensions and get everybody focused on something else so we could move on from there."

people and facilitated collaboration. Mrs. W. was the most experienced teacher on the middle school team to which M.C. was assigned. M.C. recognized the skill with which Mrs. W. could get the group working together.

Mrs. W's approach to getting the group to move forward in a problem

solving session is similar

to the tactics M.C. uses

today in her work with

groups in her school

setting.

> "I guess at the time of conflict I become the facilitator. Sometimes I become the inserter of humor. I become the one who says, 'it's time for a Coke. It's time to move on. We can come back to this later.'"

M.C. left this teaching job after the first year to return to her college

as the assistant dean of women and

eventually took the position of dean

of women when it became

> "I found [as dean of women] that my personality wasn't cut to be an authority figure over others my own age."

available. In these positions she worked with the women attending the

college on issues of college life. She also served on academic committees

and was the spokesperson for women's issues on campus. Because she

was so close in age to many of the students, M.C. found this a difficult role

to play. She still had many friends at the school and was drawn to them at

the expense of her working relationship with the other students.

After two years in this position she learned that she did not enjoy

being in a role of authority over

people her own age, and she

wanted to get back to teaching

children. M.C. recalled this

> "I don't think that I would be any better at taking friendship, those kind of things, and turning them around and looking at them from some other way, and so I don't want to be an administrator."

experience when discussing why she has never taken a more formal leadership role in education.

Following her tenure as dean of women, M.C. took a teaching position in the county of her current employment; a rural county featuring many small community-based elementary schools. In her first teaching position in the county

"Mrs. B. and her daughter, who was helping, came down the hall and just popped in and said, 'We've already put away our books, why don't we help you put away your books.' And I thought, 'Oh boy! We put away books first.' But while we were doing those sort of things she would rattle on. She would never say to me directly, 'You need to', she would say things like 'Well, I guess I had better get back to my room and start putting students names in the books.' Well, I picked right up that we needed to do these things, and so I was able to follow along pretty well."

she met a teacher whom M.C. identified as a type of mentor. Mrs. B. had been at the school for a number of years and was an experienced teacher. On the first teacher work day, M.C. recalls how Mrs. B. came to her room and subtly got her started on the tasks she would need to have completed when the students arrived. In a very unassuming way, Mrs. B. helped M.C. develop as a teacher.

As M.C. describes Mrs. B., one gets the picture of an informal leader. M.C.

"She [Mrs. B.] was a leader in the school, but I don't think she would have been the chairperson on the CSIP committee. She was the one who made certain that things got going and done. She was a quiet leader. She wasn't constantly complaining about 13 more meetings, and I've got all this work to do!"

seemed to be influenced by Mrs. B.'s style of quiet, behind the scenes leadership.

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Another teacher identified by M.C. as having an influence on her development as a teacher of children and an informal leader of other teachers is C.W. She came to the school shortly after M.C., and they are still working together. C.W.'s

"C.W. has all the qualities everyone wishes every teacher had. That quiet, calm sense of, 'every child has dignity and I would never do anything to disturb it.'...I don't think anyone would ever fear if you needed a mentor, if you were having a problem, if you said, 'C.W. would you come and watch what I'm doing.'...I try more and more to be like her and to find a way to say what I need to say to a child in a way that they will feel like I do."

influence has helped M.C. develop her teaching skills as well as her communication skills with other teachers.

While at this school M.C. took on some leadership roles including working on a school division project to develop academic standards. The principal, recognizing M.C.'s need to be involved, asked if she would represent the school.

"Mr. H. [the principal] recognized real soon that I was one who would come back and ask why....I think he decided real quickly that to let me be in on the ground floor when all this was being developed [the academic standards] would save him a lot of headaches in the future."

M.C. also quickly became involved in a leadership position with the County Education Association (CEA). She felt she needed to know what was going on

"I think that all of that [work with CEA] has helped me become aware that we're not just a little faculty at my current school. We are not just a faculty in this county. And that things that happen in California really do have an effect on us."

in other schools and in the profession in general. Through her association

with the CEA, M.C. was able to take different types of leadership roles and
build a network in the educational community. M.C.'s work in leadership
and communicator roles
for the CEA also helped
develop her skills for

> "I think my experience with the CEA has made me a lot more aware that it's okay to question and that there's a right and a wrong way to ask a question. That you can ask why without making the person of whom you're asking it become totally defensive."

working as a member of a group.

After eight years at her school, M.C. was moved to another
elementary school in the county where she currently teaches second grade.
At this school, M.C. has had several opportunities to develop her skills as an
informal leader. Since her move, the school division has implemented site-
based management. M.C. acts as chairperson for the school management
team called the Comprehensive School Improvement Planning (CSIP) Team.
She is in this position because she willingly spends the time needed to do
the job while others are not able to. Through her involvement with the CSIP
she has helped develop and implement new programs for the school and has
participated in inservice training programs.

She credited the atmosphere at the school, one of respect for one
another, as the reason for
her success in much of
what she has tried to do.
She feels she is allowed

> [In talking about developing a school culture] "That's where the school principal comes in. And he doesn't have full control of it, but he has been very careful to foster the feeling of respect for one another. And, as far as he can, sees to it that the personnel that are there are people who can come with that in mind."

the freedom to disagree and to try new things. M.C. gave credit to the school principal for developing a culture that has allowed teachers to work well together.

M.C. talked of the principal's influence on the development of her knowledge base by providing resources and professional growth opportunities to teachers.

> "The school principal encourages us to take classes, go to conferences, read, work on committees, and do outside things. He is constantly putting little articles of research on new ways to look at this or that [in the mailbox]. Constantly saying, 'If any of this strikes a chord, give it a try.' "

M.C. continues to work at this elementary school where she is recognized by her peers as an instructional leader. She takes this informal

> "I know as the kids come back as parents remembering their childhood to me, those things they remember from those early years are not always the things I want them to remember. Some of them are....But it all brings back that everything we do is going to have a kind of an influence down the line and that is an influence on me."

leadership role because she is very conscious of the influence that teachers have on children and wishes for this to be a positive influence.

Interpretations

Following is an intrepretation of the narrative organized around the six research questions:

1. The influences of life experiences. Several of M.C.'s life experiences have influenced her development as an informal teacher leader.

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These influences include her family background and relationship with her parents, the high school and college she attended, and her various job experiences.

M.C. has strong ties to her family. Her mother is a risktaker in her own way. From her M.C. learned that if you believe something is the right thing to do, you should do it, no matter what people say. M.C. is also characterized as a risktaker who willingly tries new things in her classroom. M.C.'s father modeled a collaborative, quiet style of leadership which depended on developing networks and using the power structure. This is a style that M.C. is comfortable with today.

M.C.'s parents created an educational atmosphere in their home which encouraged their children to learn about many things in order to make better decisions later in life. Throughout her career M.C. has taken advantage of professional growth opportunities in order to make better decisions about what instructional approaches to use in the classroom.

M.C.'s school experiences also played a role in her development. Both her high school and college had small student enrollments. The small settings provided M.C. with successful early leadership opportunities. These successes encouraged M.C. to continue to take leadership roles.

Two of M.C.'s early jobs provided her with experiences that helped her develop as an informal leader. Her position in a suburban middle school

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setting helped her learn to communicate with people of diverse backgrounds, a skill she uses today in her worksetting. In serving as dean of women M.C. came to realize that she did not like being in a formal supervisory role over people close enough in age to be considered peers. This has kept her satisfied to remain in an informal leadership role in her school.

2. The influences of teacher preservice. M.C. reported that her teacher preservice education had no influence on her development. She stated that her actual teaching experiences were her preparation.

3. The influences of professional growth activities. M.C. has been involved in opportunities for professional growth as a means of understanding what approaches might best be used in her classroom. What is not clear is whether the inservice influenced her development as an informal teacher leader or if, because she already was a teacher leader, M.C. became involved in professional growth. What is clear is that M.C. uses these opportunities to gain knowledge from which to make decisions about appropriate classroom practices.

4. The influences of others in the teaching profession. M.C. cited six people in the teaching profession who had an influence on her development. Among them are three educators from her past teaching experiences,

including her preservice cooperating teacher, one of the teachers from her middle school teaching experience, and a teacher from her first elementary school position. Two educators cited by M.C. are from the school in which she currently works. One of the educators influencing M.C. was her third grade teacher.

When M.C. was in the third grade, her teacher told her that she would be a "people person." M.C. had a strong respect for this teacher. Her comment and confidence in M.C.'s skills led her to seek roles where she could interact with people.

During her student teaching experience, M.C. was impressed by her cooperating teacher's willingness to work with the children that nobody else wanted. M.C. found herself reflecting on this when choosing her first elementary school position and to this day prefers to work with this type of student.

In her first teaching position, M.C. had the opportunity to work with a team of teachers in a middle school setting. One of the more experienced teachers, Mrs. W., is described by M.C. as skilled at getting the team moving along successfully when conflict arises. M.C. cited this skill as an influence and described how she now uses similar strategies when working with groups.

Upon taking a position teaching at the elementary level, M.C. met a

type of mentor teacher. Mrs. B. helped M.C. get established in her new school. She shared materials with M.C. and helped her with issues of instruction and management. M.C. was impressed by Mrs. B.'s quiet, "behind the scenes" type of leadership in the school. From this, M.C. found that she did not always have to be "out in front" to be a leader.

At the school where she currently works, M.C. talked of a fellow teacher with whom she is impressed. C.W. has been a model in how to work with children in a way that allows for correction and behavioral change but still preserves the dignity of the child. M.C. stated that she strives to be like C.W. when working with children.

Also of influence at her school was the building principal. M.C. credited him with providing teachers the freedom to try new things, thus facilitating her risktaking. He encouraged her to take workshops and to read about trends in education.

5. The influences of those outside the profession. Only one person outside of the teaching profession seems to have had an influence on the development of M.C. as an informal teacher leader: her father. Through his leadership position in his company, he moved quietly behind the scenes and used the power structure to get things done. He also displayed this style of leadership in his other roles in the community. M.C. cited this as an influence on how she works as a leader. In fact her style is very similar in

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that she prefers to work behind the scenes.

6. The influences of other contextual conditions. There are two contextual conditions that have influenced the development of M.C. as an informal teacher leader. These include the system of site-based management used in the school division and the school culture established by the building principal with whom she works.

As a teacher, M.C. has played a leadership role for a number of years. Over the past eight years, however, site-based management has been employed in the county in which she works. This has opened up more avenues for teacher leadership and professional growth. M.C. has taken advantage of these opportunities.

Within the school there is evidence that the principal facilitated the development of M.C. through the opportunities he provided and the school culture he established. M.C. cited the principal as an influence because he has provided teachers with the freedom to be risktakers. He has also encouraged teachers to be involved in professional growth activities. The climate of the school is one of trust and collaboration because of the expectations set by the principal.

Cross-case Analysis

Following is an analysis of the similarities and differences across the three cases of this study. These data are organized around the six research questions. Figure 1 is a summary of the findings of this cross-case analysis.

The Influences of Life Experiences

There are three life experiences that seem to have influenced the development of leadership characteristics in all of the teachers studied. These include the influence of immediate and extended family members, early leadership experiences, and the college they attended for their undergraduate degree.

Family Influences

The three teachers in the case studies come from different family backgrounds. However, they all had members of their immediate or extended families who were educators. All three cited these family members as influential in their decision to become teachers.

In B.B.'s case an aunt, whom she cited as most influential, is currently in a formal leadership role as an administrator. There may be some relationship between this influence and B.B.'s aspiration to be a principal. She is currently enrolled in a masters degree program for school leadership. In M.C.'s case the most influential educator was her mother, whom she

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Life Experiences
- Family Background
  - Educational support by family
  - Family examples of leadership
  - Family values
- Early Life Experiences
  - Peer relationships
  - Schools attended
  - Academic success
- Later Life Experiences
  - Job opportunities
  - Spousal relationships
  - Children

Leadership Success
- Early Leadership:
  - Success in school leadership roles and in class
- Leadership in Career:
  - Opportunities for leadership
- Committee Participation

Others in Education
- Mentors
  - Set tone for collaboration
  - Share expertise
- Principals
  - Facilitate culture for development of teacher leaders

Professional Growth Activities
- Inservice activities
- Coursework
- Committee participation
- Sharing of expertise with others

Contextual Conditions
- Site-based management
- Opportunities for leadership
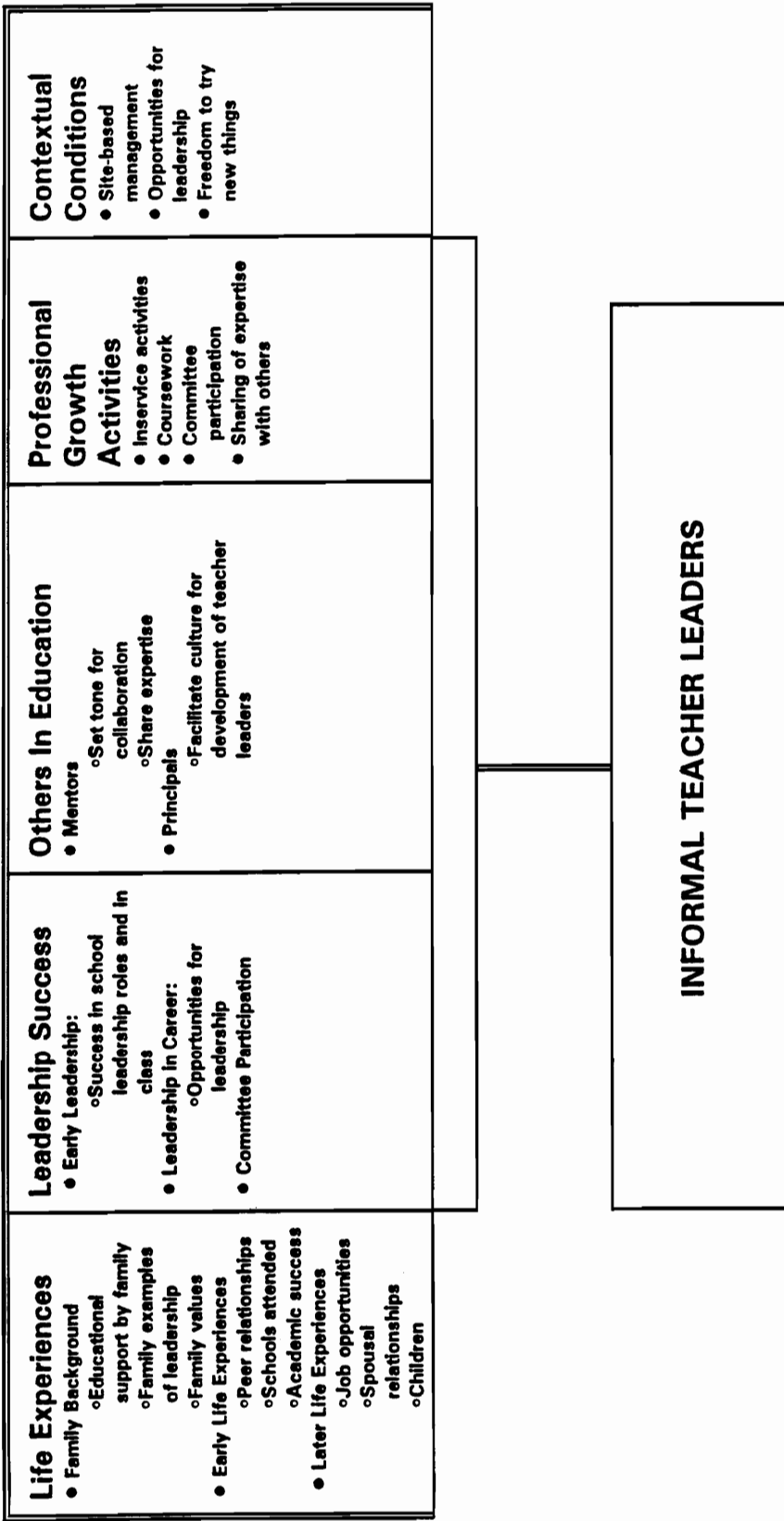- Freedom to try new things

INFORMAL TEACHER LEADERS

Figure 1. Influences in the development of informal teacher leaders.

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described as a risktaker. This influence can be seen in M.C. in that she is also a risktaker. She willingly tries new things in her classroom if she believes they will help children. V.O. had two aunts who were educators, and from them she got a sense that teaching was a noble profession. This influenced her to select teaching as a way to fulfill her desire to help others.

In addition to the educators in the family, there is evidence that family values toward education played a role in the development of these teacher leaders. Both M.C. and B.B. had parents who valued education and instilled in their children a desire to learn. V.O.'s father dropped out of high school and, because of his success in the business world, did not feel that formal education was necessary. While educational expectations for B.B. and M.C. were high, it was acceptable for V.O. to be "average."

There may be some relationship between parental expectations, academic success, and the early emergence of the leadership of the teachers in the study. Both M.C. and B.B. had leadership experiences early in school and in their careers. V.O. did not take any leadership roles or develop the characteristics of a leader until later in her career.

Early Leadership Experiences

Both M.C. and B.B recalled having successful leadership experiences while growing up. They were both extensively involved in school activities and clubs, which gave them many opportunities to take leadership roles.

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B.B. recalls being in leadership positions as far back as the fourth grade, and M.C. took leadership roles in high school. As they found success in their endeavors, they became recognized as leaders and were given more opportunities for leadership. This has been a pattern that continues today in their worksettings.

V.O. was not involved in leadership roles in school and described herself as introverted and more of a follower. She was not involved in many school activities and did not seek leadership roles. She started taking leadership roles later in her career than the other two teachers studied.

Several early studies found that leadership in school was predictive of leadership later in life (Shannon, 1929, Courtney, 1938, Williams & Harrell, 1964). A study by Gibb (1988) revealed that extracurricular activities helped develop effective communication, time management, goal setting, systematic planning skills and the ability to manage people, all skills needed for leadership.

Selection of a College

All three teachers elected to attend small colleges and stated that the small class size of their colleges allowed them more individual attention. There were references made by all three teachers that class size contributed to their increased involvement in their education as well as the ability of the

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professors to take more time with them.

The more intensely students are involved in their education, the more likely they will be to persist in their learning throughout their lives (National Institute of Education, 1984). This continuous learning and growth is a characteristic of an informal teacher leader. The small schools attended by all three participants allowed for this involvement.

<u>The Influence of Preservice Preparation</u>

In two of the three cases there seems to be little relationship between the preservice program and development of the characteristics of an informal teacher leader. M.C. stated that, with the exception of the influence of her supervising teacher, she learned about teaching through her job experiences. B.B.'s experiences seemed to negatively influence her development as she decided not to go into teaching after her student teaching experience. However, V.O. indicated that her development as a teacher was influenced by the professors in her education program. She stated that her manner and approach to working with children are very similar to those of her professors.

All three participants stated that their programs were not as practical as they could have been. The effectiveness of teacher preservice programs has been questioned for many years (Association of Teacher Educators, 1991). The debate about reform of preservice teacher education programs has led to few changes. In fact, reviews of teacher education programs have indicated that the structure and content have changed little over the past fifty years (Goodlad, 1990; Lasley & Watras, 1991). The structure and

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curriculum should better reflect more recent findings on teaching and learning (Goodlad, 1990).

There has been some progress in the development of more effective clinical experiences as part of teacher education programs (Copeland, 1986; Koehler, 1986). This is important because surveys of practicing teachers reveal that the clinical parts of their teacher education programs (student teaching and field experiences) were the most important parts of their coursework.

In spite of this, V.O. cited her student teaching experience as particularly influential in her development. B.B.'s experience seemed to have a negative influence in that she decided not to seek employment as a teacher. In her case this may be attributed to poor field placement selection. She was placed in a school that had a different philosophy on student discipline than she had developed through her teacher preparation coursework. Studies indicate that there is often disparity between the goals of the field placement schools and those of the teacher education college (Association of Teacher Educators, 1991).

The Influence of Professional Growth Activities.

All three teachers were very involved with professional growth activities and directly attributed this to further opportunities for leadership. V.O. and B.B. became involved in school leadership as chairperson of their

site-based school improvement committees. Both saw their appointment to this position as having filled a void in leadership at the school. No other teachers wanted to invest the time to do this particular job. M.C. became involved in school leadership before the inception of site-based management. She was asked to be on a division-level committee representing her school. She attributes her appointment to this committee to her recognized need to "be on the ground floor" of new initiatives. She also stated that she maintains these leadership roles because others in the school are not able to make the commitment.

Committee positions opened the door for all three teachers to be involved in various inservice opportunities, both in their individual schools and division wide. These opportunities allowed them to develop networks outside their schools and try new things in their classrooms. This in turn helped them to be perceived as knowledgeable and a source from whom other teachers could get information and ideas.

Continuing professional growth and educational leadership are connected. Teachers involved in professional growth activities will extend their learning beyond their classrooms. They reach out to other faculty members and share their experiences through inservice programs and other projects (Isenberg, Raines, Hoffman, & Lamme, 1990). In all three cases, involvement in professional growth and the subsequent sharing of their learning contributed to these teachers being seen by their peers as leaders.

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The Influence of Others in Education.

All three teachers cited mentor teachers and school principals as influencing their development into informal teacher leaders. Two of the three also cited their involvement with the local education association as influential.

Influence of Mentor Teachers

All three were influenced by informal mentor teachers in the early years of their careers. In all three cases the mentor teachers helped the new teachers learn the routine of the school and classroom management skills. In the cases of M.C. and B.B. the mentors also helped them develop strong instructional skills by sharing ideas and materials. These teachers were identified by M.C. and B.B. as models of informal leadership.

Teacher mentor programs have become a more common way of initiating new teachers (Odell, 1990; Little, 1990). However, this was not the case at the time the three teachers in this study began their teaching. Yet, they all were influenced by one of their peers. This is contradictory to the findings of Little (1990) and Gehrke & Kay (1984) that teachers do not typically identify their peers as significant in their development. M.C., B.B., and their informal mentors fit the description of the protege and mentor. The protege is described as people oriented, enthusiastic, flexible, willing to work, and independent. The mentor is consistent, informed, and willing to share (Gehrke & Kay, 1984). M.C. and B.B. had what Hardcastle (1988)

referred to in her studies of mentors as a "significant mentor-protege relationship" (p.201). They developed strong personal relationships with their mentors, which greatly affected their careers.

At the time V.O. was first employed she had not yet developed the characteristics of a "protege," nor did her mentor fit the description identified in the study by Gehrke and Kay (1984). V.O.'s relationship with her mentor was limited to classroom management and did not have a strong effect on her development as a teacher leader.

The Influence of School Principals

M.C., B.B., and V.O. all made reference to the role of the principal in their development. The role was that of facilitating their involvement in professional growth activities and encouraging their leadership in the school. In addition all three stated that the principal's encouragement or, at the very least, willingness to allow the teachers to try new things gave them the freedom to be leaders.

The principal's support of teachers in leadership roles can ensure success (Rollins, 1988). The needed support can be given by providing a structure and resources which allow teacher leadership to flourish and by encouraging each teacher's professional growth (Garter & Valentine, 1989). There is evidence that this occurred with all three teachers in this study.

The Influence of the Local Education Association.

M.C. and V.O. were very active with the local education association in

various leadership roles. They both cited their involvement as helping them develop a broader sense of what is happening in education. Their association with other educators helped them develop a network from which they could learn about trends in education. They also had the opportunity to observe other teacher leaders and to develop their leadership skills as they took on more organizational roles.

Influences of Those Outside of Education

In all three cases the father influenced development of leadership characteristics. M.C. and B.B. remember their fathers as leaders in the community. V.O.'s father did not take any leadership role other than running his own business. M.C.'s father was much more of an informal leader in that he did not like to be out in front but preferred to work behind the scenes. B.B.'s father was more of a formal leader as he took an active role on the local school board and eventually was elected to state government.

There is a relationship between the example set by the fathers and the type of leadership practiced by the three teachers. Just like her father, M.C. does not like to be "out in front" but prefers to work behind the scenes. B.B.'s tendency toward formal leadership roles is evident in her desire to become a school administrator. This is in line with the type of leadership roles in which she observed her father. V.O. does not, even now, see herself as a leader and was surprised to be identified by her peers as such. She had no leadership examples in the home.

Being that all three teachers in this study are women, the influence of the father is not an unusual finding. Fathers play an important role in the development of leadership characteristics in their daughters (Astin & Leland, 1991). Fathers who stress the importance of education, act as role models, and cultivate a sense of competence lead their daughters to success in life. Women who do not get this positive support from their fathers may meander through life and "back into success" (Murdock, 1992, p. 104).

In two of the three cases, spouses and children were an influence on the development of informal teacher leaders. Both B.B. and V.O. stated that they made a conscious choice to go back to teaching after the birth of their first child. They realized the importance of a good education for their child and wanted to make it a meaningful experience for all children.

B.B. stated that her development was facilitated by her husband's understanding of the amount of time needed for her career development. He took an active interest in her work and encouraged her to take leadership roles if she so desired.

V.O.'s growth as a leader was a result of her divorce. She realized the need for independence and thus began to put an emphasis on her career. According to Singleton (1974), this is typical of women after divorce. Becoming involved in important work which uses the individual's talents helps to develop a sense of satisfaction and independence.

The Influences of Other Contextual Conditions

There are several contextual conditions that influenced the development of all three informal teacher leaders. These include the use of site-based management in the school division, the support of the school and division-level administration for teacher leadership, and the lack of willingness of others in the school to take on leadership responsibilities.

Site-based Management

The county in which the three teachers work employs various strategies for site-based management. All three work in schools where there are committees to plan and monitor school improvement and to make decisions. This structure has allowed the teachers to take leadership roles and be involved in professional growth activities. As they shared their knowledge from these activities with other teachers and implemented new strategies in the classroom, they were perceived as leaders. This led to further opportunities for leadership.

Since the 1980s teacher leadership has been a part of site-based management in many schools. This provides teachers the opportunity to be involved in decision making, promotes collegiality, and stimulates professional growth (Wallace, 1990; Hynes & Summers, 1990). The three participants in this study cited their involvement in site-based management as a factor in their development as informal teacher leaders.

<u>Administrative Support</u>

All three teachers cited the central office administration as influencing their development because of its support for professional growth and encouragement of teachers to be involved in the school decision making process. Each teacher also cited the school principal as influential because of his leadership in developing a culture in the school in which teachers are encouraged to try new things, share ideas, and be involved in professional growth. The principals are cited in each of the three cases as being responsible for facilitating these teachers being placed in leadership roles in the school.

Central office and school administrators must establish a culture of support for teacher leadership and shared decision making to foster school improvement. Their support of teacher leadership will increase teachers' professional growth (David, 1989; Rollins, 1988; Vick, 1971). This has been the case with all three of the teachers in this study.

<u>Leadership of Other Teachers in the School</u>

All three cited the lack of willingness or inability of other teachers to put in the time required to fill leadership roles in the school as influential in their development. The teachers in this study are filling a void in their school because they are willing to give the extra time and effort to take leadership positions when others are not. This is a typical pattern in female leaders in that they will assume leadership roles because there is a leadership void, and

they want to see results. Additional leadership roles come to them because they are seen as willing to spend the time and handle the organizational details to get the job done (Owens, 1986).

Conclusions and Implications for Practice

The data from these three cases highlight five findings related to the development of informal teacher leaders.

1.   In these specific cases, it was found that family background and early life experiences do influence the development of teacher leaders, specifically the type and style of leadership. However, events later in life can also be influential for those not receiving family support for leadership roles early in their development.

The implications of these findings for practice are that there will be teachers who, because of their family background or early life experiences, will be more predisposed to leadership roles. Administrators should seek out these teachers for leadership roles. When hiring teachers, administrators should delve more deeply into the background experiences of candidates by asking about types of early leadership experiences, influences in their decision to choose a career in education, and family background history.

However, given time and appropriate opportunities, leadership skills can be developed in spite of negative influences from family or lack of early leadership experiences. Therefore, no teacher should be

overlooked as facilitation of leadership roles occurs in the school. Administrators should give leadership opportunities to any teacher willing to give the time to accomplish the task.

2. It was found in this study that success in leadership endeavors encourages teachers to continue to seek out leadership roles. There is evidence that this occurs whether the experiences are at an early age or later in the career.

     The implication of this finding for practice is that to develop teacher leaders, teachers need to be encouraged to take leadership roles, and their success in the role must be facilitated as much as possible by the administrator. The administrator must be prepared to monitor the progress of the teacher leader on a given project and lend assistance when needed. This should include providing necessary materials and resources, including time, to successfully complete the task.

3. Mentor teachers were significant in the development of two of the teachers in this study. Their sharing of ideas, instructional strategies, and materials set a tone of collaboration for these teachers. The mentors also assisted in the development of the strong teaching skills for which these informal teacher leaders are recognized.

     The implication of this finding for practice is that the association of new teachers with informal teacher leaders should be facilitated by

the school administrator. The experienced teacher will be a model for the new teacher and will help in the development of leadership skills. To accompish this, the administrator should ask the experienced teacher to work on a project with the new teacher. This would allow the experienced teacher to model leadership skills for the new teacher. Another approach would be to develop a formal mentor program using the experienced teacher leaders as mentors for new teachers.

4.   In the three cases, it was found that professional growth opportunities can help teachers develop the skills of an informal teacher leader. These opportunities help teachers gain expertise for which they are recognized by their peers. Professional growth opportunities also serve to broaden the participant's view of education and give them a sense of what others in the field are doing.

The implication of this finding is that administrators should facilitate teacher involvement in professional growth opportunities. These should include opportunities where teachers learn a new skill and share it with others in their school. Administrators should give teachers freedom to experiment with the new learning and provide a forum for the expertise to be shared. Also important to the development of leadership skills are opportunities for teachers to interact with others in the profession. This helps them develop a network of contacts to share information and expertise.

5. The contextual conditions that influenced the development of the

    teachers in this study included opportunities for leadership through

    site-based management, administrators who allow teachers freedom to

    experiment, and a void in teacher leadership in the buildings.

    The implications of these findings for practice are that central

office administrators and school principals have a major role in setting

the conditions in the building where teacher leadership can thrive.

This can best be accomplished by establishing committees which

involve teachers in school decisions and leadership of curriculum and

instruction.

Recommendations for Further Study

This was a small preliminary study yielding limited data. Further study

of identified informal teacher leaders should be conducted to add to these

findings. A larger number of cases should be used to verify the findings.

Informal teacher leaders to be studied should be selected from a wider range

of school settings. These should include urban and suburban settings, larger

schools, and middle and secondary schools. Also, because all of the teacher

participants in this study were female, efforts should be made to study male

informal teacher leaders.

There are several specific findings that warrant further study. Two of

the three participants in this study were influenced by the leadership styles

modeled by their fathers. Future studies should investigate the influence of

paternal leadership models on the development of female informal teacher leaders. Also of interest is whether this relationship is evident in the development of male informal teacher leaders. The role of the mother in the development of informal teacher leaders should also be explored.

All three participants in this study cited their building principals as influential in their development as informal teacher leaders. In all three cases the principals were male. Future studies should investigate whether a female principal would have the same influence.

The principals in all three cases are credited with developing a culture in the school where teacher leadership can flourish. Further studies should explore the specific practices principals employ to develop this culture.

Summary

Teacher leadership is an important part of educational reform. This study of three teachers provides evidence that there are many influences in the development of informal teacher leaders. Some of these influences such as involvement with mentors, participation in professional growth activities, opportunities for successful leadership, and administrative support can be facilitated by division-level and school administrators. Others such as life experiences and family background are out of their control.

Because teachers are most often involved in the implementation of school reform, they must take an active role in the discussion of change. In order to do this most effectively teachers must work to develop leadership skills. Administrators should do all they can to influence the development of

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teacher leaders. The ideal is described by Schlechty (as cited by Packard &

Bas, 1988, p.5)

> "Every leader, a teacher
>
> Every teacher, a leader
>
> Every student, a success."

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Appendix A
Reference List of Studies on Teacher Leaders

Following are the studies used in the initial research to identify characteristics of teacher leaders. The characteristics were used to develop an identification instrument to select the teachers to be used in this study.

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Fung, A.C. (1992). <u>Management of educational innovations: The "Six-A" process model.</u> Paper presented at the Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 345 590)

Kilcher, A. (1992). The first year experience of five teacher leaders. In C. Livingston (Ed.), <u>Teachers as leaders</u> (pp.91-115). Washington, DC: National Education Association.

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Vance, P. (1991). <u>The initiating-extended role teacher: Exploring facets of teacher leadership.</u> Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.

Walters, S., & Guthro, C. (1992). Leading, learning, leaving. In C. Livingston (Ed.), Teachers as leaders (pp.131-159). Washington, DC: National Education Association.

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Appendix B
Matrix of Characteristics of Teacher Leaders as
Cited in Studies on Teacher Leadership

		Characteristics of Teacher Leaders			
		Mastery of Teaching Skills	Collaboration Skills	Interest in Professional Growth	Risk-Taker
STUDIES ON TEACHER LEADERSHIP	Barth, R.S. (1990)	X		X	
	Brownlee, G.D. (1979)			X	X
	Fay, C. (1992)	X	X		
	Fullan, M.G. (1993)	X	X	X	X
	Fung, A.C. (1992)	X	X		
	Kilcher, A. (1992)		X	X	X
	Lieberman, A., Saxl, E.R., & Miles, M.B. (1988)	X	X	X	X
	Lieberman, A. (1992)	X	X	X	X
	Little, J.W. (1982)	X	X	X	
	Little, J.W. (1988)	X	X	X	
	Mclaughlin, M.W., & Marsh, D.D. (1979)	X	X		

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	Characteristics of Teacher Leaders			
STUDIES ON TEACHER LEADERSHIP	Miles, M.B., Saxl, E.R., & Lieberman, A. (1988)	X	X		X
	Miller, L. (1992)		X	X	X
	Nias, J. (1984)		X	X	X
	Packard, R.B., & Bas, I.E. (1988)	X		X	X
	Rosenholtz, S.J. (1989)	X	X	X	
	Sarason, S.B. (1982)	X		X	
	Troen, V., & Boles, K.C. (1992)	X			
	Vance, P. (1991)		X	X	
	Walters, S., & Guthro, C. (1992)		X	X	
	Wasley, P.A. (1992)		X	X	
	Wasley, P.A. (1991)		X	X	
	Wiggington, E. (1992)			X	
	Wilson, M. (1993)		X		

Appendix C
Instrument for Identification of Informal Teacher Leaders

Below are descriptions of teacher behaviors. Please read each description and write the name of a teacher you perceive as displaying the described behaviors. You may list more than one name for a single description. You may also use any name more than once as you consider the four descriptions.

DESCRIPTION #1:

The teacher described here has a mastery of teaching skills, including planning, instructional delivery, assessment, and classroom management. The teacher motivates students to learn. Student achievement is high in the classroom as measured by standardized tests, teacher made tests, performance tasks, and report card grades.

Teacher's Name(s) _____

DESCRIPTION #2:

The teacher described here is consistently engaged in professional growth activities, including professional reading, attending workshops, taking courses, and visiting other instructional settings. The teacher examines practice and makes changes to improve based on principles of continuous learning. The teacher will often ask for ideas and advice from colleagues and supervisors.

Teacher's Name(s) _____

DESCRIPTION #3:

The teacher described here is a risk-taker and initiates new programs and instructional approaches. The teacher will often seek out new approaches that may have promising results for students.

Teacher's Name(s) _____

DESCRIPTION #4:

The teacher described here displays strong communication skills and has an understanding of group process thus allowing this teacher to be a leader of collaboration for the school. The teacher will often establish networks for collaboration both in the school and the larger education community. These networks may include regular formal grade or department meetings and meetings of professional organizations, or they may simply be for communication with other educators in and outside the school when there is a need.

Teacher's Name(s) _____

Appendix D
Survey of Demographic Information on
Teachers Selected as Informal Leaders

1. **NAME:** _____
            (First)   **(Middle)**   **(Last)**

2. **DATE OF BIRTH:** ____/____/____
              Mo. Day Yr.

3. **PLACE OF BIRTH:** _____
            (City)   **(County)**   **(State)**

4. **CURRENT HOME ADDRESS:** _____

    _____

5. **Please list the number of years of teaching experience.** _____

6. **List your current teaching assignment.** _____

7. **List all other previous teaching assignments and schools by school year.**

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

8. **Please indicate (with a check) your highest level of education attained.**

    _____ **College graduate (please specify degree)** _____
    _____ **Some graduate school**
    _____ **Graduate degree (please specify degree)** _____

9. **Please provide the following information about the college/university attended for your undergraduate degree:**

Name: _____

Location: _____

Approximate total student enrollment at the time of your attendance:

_____

10. Please describe your undergraduate institution. Please take into consideration the type of curriculum program(s) offered and the student body.

_____

_____

_____

11. Please list any special activities, clubs or organizations with which you were involved in college. _____

_____

_____

12. List the areas in which you are endorsed: _____

_____

13. Please list any professional organizations/associations to which you belong.

_____

_____

_____

14. Please list any committee assignments you have had in the last five years relating to your work as an educator.

_____

_____

_____

15. Please list any educational projects or initiatives in which you have been involved in the last five years.

_____

_____

_____

16. Please list any community organizations or projects in which you have been involved.

_____

_____

_____

_____

17. Please indicate your marital status below by checking the appropriate indicator.

_____ Single (never married)
_____ Married
_____ Remarried
_____ Separated
_____ Divorced
_____ Widowed

18. Below, please list the age and gender of any children you have. If you have no children, please indicate by writing "none".

Gender   Age

_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____
_____   _____

19. Please indicate (with a check) the highest level of education attained by your current spouse/partner.

_____ Less than high school
_____ High school graduate
_____ Some college
_____ College graduate (please specify degree) _____
_____ Advanced degree (please specify) _____

20. Please list the occupation of your present spouse/partner.

_____

_____

_____

21. Please list your interests and hobbies.

_____

_____

_____

_____

22. Please check the description(s) which best indicates the type of community in which you grew up.

_____ Farm or country setting
_____ Town or village with population of less than 10,000

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_____ Town with a population of 10,000 - 49,999
_____ Small city with a population of 50,000 - 99,999
Suburb or central city of metropolitan area
_____ With a population of 100,000 - 499,000
_____ With a population of 500,000 or more

23. Please check the number of times your family moved geographically from place to place before you went to college.
_____ None
_____ Once
_____ Twice
_____ Three Times
_____ Four or more times

24. Please indicate (with a check) the highest level of education attained by your parents.

Mother   Father

_____   _____ Elementary school
_____   _____ Some high school
_____   _____ High school graduate
_____   _____ Some college or trade/technical school
_____   _____ College graduate
_____   _____ Some graduate school
_____   _____ Graduate or professional degree

25. Please list your father's principal occupation.
_____

26. Please list your mother's principal occupation.
_____

27. Please indicate number of siblings.

Brother(s) _____ Sister(s) _____

28. Please indicate (with a check) your birth order position.

_____ Only child
_____ First born
_____ Second born
_____ Last born
_____ Other

29. Please list the following information about the high school from which you graduated:

Name: _____

Location: _____

Size of your graduating class: _____

30. Please list clubs and activities in which you were involved in high school (grades 9-12).

_____

_____

_____

_____

Interview Protocol for Study of
Influences on Informal Teacher Leaders

There was a minimum of two open-ended interviews with each of the three informal teacher leaders. The first interview focused on the teacher's professional life and experiences. The second interview allowed for follow-up questions generated from the analysis of the first interview transcript. The second interview also focused on the personal histories of each of the teachers. All interviews were audiotaped.

Interview #1

Focus: Influences of teacher preparation programs and professional practice on the development of informal teacher leaders

- Establishe how the teacher views herself in relation to leadership
- Focus on professional activities that influenced development of the teacher as a leader
- Identify individuals who, through professional associations, have influenced the development of the teacher as a leader

- **Examine how the school organization and culture influenced and facilitated the development of the teacher's leadership**

- **Explore the role of the teacher's preparation program on her development as a leader**

Interview prompt

" As you know, you have been identified by your peers as an informal leader in your school. Talk to me about your practice at this school and its relationship to your peers' perceptions of you as a leader."

Follow-up prompts

"What do you think you do that makes other teachers see you as a leader?" (If needed, direct toward identified leader behaviors.)

"Talk to me about some of the things in which you are involved as a professional, both in your school and in the larger educational community." (If needed, direct toward specific types of professional growth activities and professional associations.)

"Talk to me about the professionals with whom you work."

"Talk to me about the people with whom you come in contact through professional associations."

"Talk to me about the school in which you work."

"Talk to me about your teacher preparation program." (If needed, direct toward specific program structure and courses.)

Interview #2

Focus: Influences of personal history on the development of informal teacher leaders

- Ascertain relationships in personal life significant to the teacher's development as a leader

- Establish possible historical and familial links to the teacher's development as a leader

- Elicit personal experiences that were influential in shaping the development of the teacher as a leader

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Interview prompt

"We have spent time exploring your work as a leader and your professional life in general. I am interested in knowing about your personal history."

Follow-up prompts

" Talk to me about some of the people in your life." (If needed, direct toward those people who influenced the teacher leader's work.)

" Tell me about your family when you were growing up." (If needed, direct toward specific influences the family had on selection of career as well as interests and activities in which the teacher leader was involved.)

"Talk to me about your involvement with peers as you were growing up." (If needed, direct toward specific settings such as school, church, activities, circle of friends.)

"Talk to me about how you decided to go into teaching." (If needed, direct toward specific experiences and events in life that may have influenced the decision.)

"Talk to me about those things that you feel had the greatest influence on you as a teacher leader."

Appendix F

Matrices of Citations by Page and Line Number from the
Interview Transcripts for the Influences on the Development
of Informal Teacher Leaders

Citations from the Interview Transcripts for the Influence of Others in Teaching

Influences	Principal		Mentor		Franklin County Education Association		Other Teachers		Affirmation from School Authorities	
	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line
Case Study: B.B.	2	35	16	28			4	34	13	11
	7	48	21	24			8	27	31	13
	15	41	22	44			8	46	16	10
	7	30	23	7			7	3	2	34
			23	36			9	23	7	30
			24	1						
Case Study: M.C.	4	36	21	35	15	18	21	28	4	44
	5	21	24	1			28	21	6	34
	6	34					22	48	14	23
	14	23					23	30		
	27	20					32	23		
							24	7		
							28	32		
							21	35		
							23	27		
							24	1		
							28	1		
Case Study: V.O.	22	47	20	13	5	14	2	8	1	51
	23	39	20	38	7	31	8	24	4	43
	15	28			12	22			7	46
					12	43			12	20
					14	1				
					13	28				
					11	21				

Influences	Family Values		Teacher In Family		College Attended		Early Leadership Experience		Family Leadership Models		Service To Others		Influences of Friends	
	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line
Case Study: B.B.	3	5	1	36	10	10	3	2	1	6	5	30	8	3
	3	30	2	18	2	12	4	6	4	25	11	2		
	5	8	11	30	2	27	8	3	5	8	6	5		
	5	30					4	40	4	46	9	30		
	11	2					5	4	1	23	1	46		
	11	24					1	24	1	16				
							4	37	1	30				
							9	37	1	46				
Case Study: M.C.	2	40	30	36	31	10	11	10	7	15	28	19	9	3
	4	40	1	10	25	38	12	38	27	7	26	23	11	30
	15	38	8	28	25	46	15	28	1	36	28	17	13	42
	2	18			27	11	18	8	5	44				
	3	7					18	20	6	9				
	3	40					27	4	15	28				
	7	45							16	4				
	14	10												
	14	38												
	15	28												
Case Study: V.O.	2	16	16	14	14	20	7	10	3	8	1	19	4	28
	2	38	11	23	14	40			8	24	13	28	11	20
	3	11	1	14	14	44			19	35	1	34	4	28
	5	26	1	34	16	12			2	38	2	30	6	15
	7	12	8	24	10	8			3	11			11	11
			19	35	15	3			3	38				
									10	20				

Citations from the Interview Transcripts for Miscellaneous Influences

Influences	Preservice Preparation		Professional Growth		People Outside of Profession (Including Parents)		Desire for Control		Church Affiliation	
	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line
Case Study: B.B.	18	7	1	21	3	5	19	37		
	7	19	2	18	3	30				
	3	46	12	44	5	8				
			31	13	5	30				
			6	23	11	2				
			6	40	11	24				
					7	18				
Case Study: M.C.	25	20	5	28	2	40	14	24	31	8
	26	14	15	7	4	40	11	45		
	26	40	19	38	15	38				
	28	32	22	6	2	18				
	28	21			3	7				
	28	19			3	40				
					7	45				
					14	10				
					14	38				
					15	28				
Case Study: V.O.	17	24	6	15	2	16	11	21	14	20
	16	48	7	28	2	38	13	46		
	19	16	17	20	3	11	14	6		
			21	3	5	26				
					7	12				

Citations from the Interview Transcripts for the Influence of Contextual Conditions

Influences	Principal		Fill A Void		School Culture	
	Page	Line	Page	Line	Page	Line
Case Study: B.B.	2	35	2	17	6	18
	7	48	8	8	7	48
	15	41	7	35	8	46
	7	30			15	41
					19	11
Case Study: M.C.	4	45	14	10	14	23
	5	21			20	23
	6	34			27	20
	14	23				
	27	20				
Case Study: V.O.	22	47	12	2	16	All
	23	39	13	11	17	23
	15	28	1	31	22	47
			13	8		

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Master of Science, Music Education, Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York, 1982

Bachelor of Science, Music Education, Hartwick College, Oneonta, New York, 1978

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Principal, Benjamin Franklin Middle School, Franklin County, Virginia 1994-Present

Principal, Ferrum Elementary School, Franklin County, Virginia, ... 1990-1994

Director of Special Services, Whitney Point Schools, Whitney Point, New York   .1988-1990

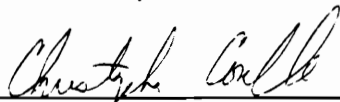Administrator, Whitney Point Intermediate School, Whitney Point, New York . . 1978-1985

Music Teacher, Grades 6-12, Whitney Point Schools, Whitney Point, New York. 1978-1985

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Phi Delta Kappa

Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development

National Association of Secondary School Principals

Christopher Corallo