LEADERSHIP EFFECTS ON TEACHER MORALE

Stephanie Ann West, Grand Canyon University

ABSTRACT

This integrated reflection examines leadership effects on teacher morale. Leadership styles can have a positive or negative influence on the culture and climate of a classroom, school, or district. Hoyt and Price (2015) stated that leaders need to use their core values and keep in mind their relationships with those that follow them when making decisions that change or affect the organizational climate, culture, vision, and goals. To be effective, leaders must merge their social roles within an organization, along with their ethical core values to build efficient and effective organizations that will be productive and prosperous within their given fields. By aligning these models, Schon's (1983) Reflective Practitioner Model and Dewey's (1909) Reflective Thinking Model, the integrated reflection of this paper will examine the role that leadership styles play in developing a positive school culture that builds up teacher and staff morale and where students of all ages are able to achieve and grow academically. This reflection will show how leadership styles, positive and negative, can affect one individual, how the leadership concepts learned as a doctoral student led me to become a better adjunct professor within the College of Education, and the leadership skills I gained that I plan to take with me as I move forward in my career as an educator and leader.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

There are many forms of leadership styles within the educational system. Berger (2014) stated there are hundreds of different leadership styles and theories, which in turn, make the idea of understanding the complexities of leadership a daunting challenge and task. School leaders take on the leadership style that best suits them, and they build a school culture based on their leadership style. The school's or district's leadership style is the strongest influence on teacher morale more than any other factor within the teaching profession (Allen, Grigsby, & Peters, 2015). The purpose of this paper is to integrate my own experience as a school administrator, show the concepts learned as a doctoral student, and discuss how I applied these learned experiences to my teaching within the College of Education as an adjunct professor. I will also discuss how these experiences influenced my own outlook on my future career paths at the college and K-12 levels.

This integrated reflection will be framed by applying two theoretical models: Schon's (1983) Reflective Practitioner Model and Dewey's (1909) Reflective Thinking Model. Schon (1983) stated as educators fall into a routine, their practice becomes more tacit and spontaneous. The educator then misses opportunities to reflect on what they are doing and trying to accomplish. Educators and practitioners need to reflect on their knowledge within their duties, along with reflecting on practice amid times of turmoil, which results in reflection in action (Schon, 1989). Educators need to think on their feet and learn new methods of

accomplishing tasks, and they need to be ready to invent new methods and strategies that improve student progress and achievement. Using this same concept, school administrators need to be aware of those around them and reflect on how to better the culture where everyone, students and teachers, are achieving and growing as professionals (Nolan, 1989).

Dewey (1909) said reflective thought is an active, persistent, and careful consideration of knowledge and those concepts that support knowledge. As we become reflective thinkers, we can make conclusions and decisions that are best for those around us. Jorgensen (2015) noted Dewey's reflective thinking focuses on critical inquiry and democratic ideals. Dewey's principle context, reflective thinking when developed through the thought processes, leads to formulating moral and ethical judgements within the educational process. Reflective thinking and inquiry into events and situations is essential to an individual's growth and learning (Rodgers, 2002). The central point of Dewey's reflective thinking model is to embrace educational reforms to learn and grow as teachers and leaders, along with building an educational culture that is productive and positive.

By aligning these models, Schon's (1983) Reflective Practitioner Model and Dewey's (1909) Reflective Thinking Model, the integrated reflection of this paper will be able to examine the role that leadership styles play in developing a positive school culture that builds up teacher and staff morale and where students of all ages are able to achieve and grow academically. The purpose of this reflection is to show how leadership styles, positive and negative, can affect one individual, how the leadership concepts learned as a doctoral student led me to become a better adjunct professor within the College of Education, and the leadership skills I gained that I plan to take with me as I move forward in my career as an educator and leader.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

I started out my teaching career in upper elementary grades in a large urban school district in Arizona. After my second year of teaching, my husband and I decided to move to rural Arizona where I got a job as a kindergarten teacher. The school contained grades K-3, and my kindergarten team consisted of three other teachers. My

kindergarten team was great, but the principal was a laissez-faire, absent principal. We did not see him much in our classrooms, and we had faculty meetings once a month where he dictated to us what needed to be done and then closed the meeting. Allen et al. (2015) stated the behavior of a principal is influential in the way teachers view themselves as effective or ineffective, along with the overall work atmosphere. We had few if little interactions as an entire staff, such as eating lunch together, celebrating birthdays, Christmas parties, and so forth. We were all left on our own to do our jobs and evaluated once a year with a written report given afterward with little feedback. He would only step in when something bad would happen, which was not often, and most of the time when students were sent to him for discipline issues he would send them back to us to take care of the situation. This leadership style was laissez-faire and reactive.

After three years of teaching kindergarten, a high school principal asked if I would teach at the high school within the English department and assist in raising the reading and writing state scores. During my time as a kindergarten teacher, I received my first master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction, along with getting my Reading Endorsement. I therefore agreed to move to the high school as a tenth-grade English teacher. This leader was completely different than the previous leader. This principal was engaged within the school, supported the teachers, and was always there to help when needed. Allen et al. (2015) stated principals who positively impact their school climate through the focus on student achievement and teacher support, have a higher level of teacher morale. This principal conducted weekly walk-throughs, and when needed he disciplined students. He was an authentic leader who knew his teachers and all the students in the school.

The climate at this school was more open-door and progressive. We all worked together to improve student achievement, and the teacher morale was the highest I ever experienced. In two years, I would raise student reading and writing scores significantly with the help and encouragement from the entire staff. Allen et al. (2015) found a positive, sustainable school culture encourages the growth and development of students and encourages them to become productive citizens within a democratic society. Hughes et al. (2015) stated good principals

are the school's instructional leaders who encourage a positive culture and climate by providing guidance and support, along with offering instructional support, personal support, and resources that improve everyone within the school. This was a productive climate conducive to learning, along with feeling as though each teacher was valued and honored. Fehr et al. (2015) stated authentic leaders are ethical, honest, trustworthy, fair, and principled decision-makers. It was this principal that saw the leadership potential in me and was the one that directed me toward an administrative position.

After two years at the high school, I moved into a district administrative job as the Curriculum and Federal Programs Director. My job was to oversee the academic programs and assessments across the district of 2,500 students. There was a superintendent and one other director who ran the Special Education Program. The three of us oversaw running the district. This was a job I felt good at doing, and I took on the same leadership style as the high school principal, authentic leadership, along with servant leadership. There were five schools in total and there was one other principal who had the leadership style of authentic and servant leader. There was one principal that was transformational, along with the superintendent, and one that was somewhat laissez-faire and would be absent from time to time from school. The Special Education Director was more transformational, always trying to improve the special education program, which she did over the years we were in these positions together. The principal that I had at the K-3 school had been moved over to be the Career Ladder Director the year previous, but had applied for the job I received.

This former principal, now the Career Ladder Director, was so angry that he did not receive the job as Curriculum Director. He started to pick everything apart that I did. When that did not work, he started writing down everything I did, along with tracking my every move. This led to him stalking me for the next three years. The National Center for Victims of Crime (2017) reports an estimated 15% of women and 6% of men will be stalked sometime during their lifetime. This individual would follow me to meetings, interrupt those meetings, walk in on confidential conversations that included federal program procedures, follow me to lunch, and even drive past my home at night from time to time. He did everything he could to discredit my work.

We shared an office building and he would walk by my door 85 to 100 times a day, and when I would shut my door he would find a way to open it. He would blow up at me from time to time, and by the end of the third year I was done with it. He was laissez-faire within his job, but aggressive when dealing with me. I had talked to the superintendent several times about what he was doing to me, but it took me threatening to quit for the superintendent to finally move this individual to a different location within the district. It did get better after that, but I do not think it ever completely stopped. I considered pressing charges, but it was a small town and this individual was one of the big family names in town. Pressing charges wound have fell on deaf ears so I did not press charges. Being stalked is a terrifying experience, and as part of an administrative team for the next several years, with him on the team, was even harder.

After being in the rural schools for 12 years, my family decided to move back to the Phoenix area. I got a job as an assistant principal at an urban high school. The first year I was there, I worked under a principal who was extremely kind and knew a lot about curriculum and student data—more so then I had seen in the previous years with leaders. Sadly, to say, she left at the end of that year for a much better job. The new principal moved up from one of the middle schools in the district and knew a lot of the district leaders and teachers there at the high school. This principal was a power hungry, dictator who was never wrong and if you ever crossed her, you were done. Everyone from the assistant principals to the teachers and even the parents knew this and did everything they could to stay out of her crosshairs.

Allen et al. (2015) stated an unhealthy culture and climate leads to ineffectiveness from the teachers, leaders, and non-teaching staff. I learned in the middle of the year, she never wanted to keep me on, but was told to by the superintendent that she had to keep me. She took an instant dislike to me and made my life miserable in every way she could. She started picking me apart and nothing I did was good enough. She would add more and more to my plate knowing there was no way for me to get it all done. She would take credit for all the accomplishments I had achieved within the school and even took over presentations I had worked hard

on so that she could get the credit for it. She then had another assistant principal track everything and everywhere I went, much like when I was stalked years earlier.

Our biggest conflict was over student discipline. I wanted to help the students by providing ways to improve their behavior, but her philosophy was to suspend the students and get them out of our school. Her known punishment was when a student did something wrong they were suspended for nine days. For struggling students, this was so hard since they had little help at home and would fall even further behind than they already were. I would confront her about this, especially when I had a student I knew would not survive the year and be successful if we sent them out of school for nine school days. Her reply was that I was not there to help students, I was there to suspend students. This went against every moral bone in my body. I had gone into education to make a difference in the lives of students, not just to suspend them or to hinder their academic success. Hughes et al. (2015) found toxic leadership within the educational environment sees higher levels of absenteeism, declining job performance, and high levels of role conflict and stress.

By the end of April, I crashed. My doctor diagnosed me with severe anxiety and stress, and sleep deprivation. The stress was so bad that I had stopped sleeping and had not slept more than one to two hours a night for two months. A month later, I was then diagnosed with PTSD from being stalked years earlier, since I never really took care of that within my mind. Instead I buried it deep within my sub-conscious.

In close to 20 years, I had seen the best and worst of the educational system. It took me a full six months to feel somewhat normal after the situation at the high school. The influence of leaders and their leadership styles can either be detrimental or positive on the culture, along with the individuals within the school, and I had seen both sides of how that happens. Green and Munoz (2016) stated dissatisfaction within a high-stress job situation includes job withdrawals, along with permanent choices such as high absenteeism, high levels of turn-over, or retirement. High levels of teacher and leadership turn-over affects the sustainability of educational reform efforts at the school and district levels, along with affecting student achievement.

REASONS FOR THE PROBLEM

The years I spent working with the authentic leadership and the transformational leadership were positive and productive. An essential component of an organizational culture is woven into the integrity of the organization's leaders. According Kottke and Pelletier (2013), an organization is productive and prosperous when employees and followers trust their leaders to do the right thing. Teacher morale at those schools were higher than those with the laissez-faire, dictator, or toxic leadership. The good leaders left me feeling better for being part of their team and encouraged us to become better educators and administrators. I felt content and encouraged to do anything I put my mind to. It did not even matter that I was not being paid much for what I was doing, but I knew I was worth something, I was making a difference in the academic success of the students, and that these leaders needed me as part of their teams.

There are several different types of leadership styles seen within schools today. Eboka (2016) stated the leadership style that a principal takes on determines the patterns of behaviors throughout the process of directing the school and the staff. The main leadership styles are transformational, servant, authentic, laissez-faire, ethical, and toxic. Transformational leadership style emphasizes leaders, and staff are united in the common goals of the school and student achievement (Eboka, 2016). Servant leadership style is like ethical leadership where the leaders are united with their staff through fairness, trust, and the ability to serve those around them in a way that not only honors and values each staff member, but also effectively leads their teams forward (Fehr et al., 2015). Authentic leadership style is where the leader is transparent and can act ethically and where honesty is the core of the leader (Eboka, 2016). Ethical leadership style is the embodiment of consideration and justice, facilitating prosocial performance, and fair treatment through their example of what is expected and rewarded (Fehr et al., 2015).

The research conducted by Kottke and Pelletier (2013) found that there is a strong correlation between immediate supervisor integrity and employee attitudes about their jobs and the decision-making process. As immediate supervisors build meaningful relationships with their employees, the employee's perceptions of ethics held by their supervisors

gives way to a stronger organizational commitment and climate. Middlebrooks, Miltenberger, Tweedy, Newman, and Follman (2009) stated that there is a great potential for ethical leaders to influence those that follow them in a positive manner, which in turn will create positive role models, organizational core values, and productive actions to guide decisions.

I felt confused, angry, worthless, and unwanted during the years with the laissez-faire, dictator, and toxic leaders. These leaders were hard to be around, so it made it hard to go to work on those days. During the stalking years, I had a good support system within the rest of the administrative team, but they were not aware of what was going on. During those years, there were times I really wanted to give up. I had so much that I oversaw and I knew I was good at it, but this one individual made my life terrifying. Those three years started at the beginning of the Curriculum Director job, and I felt that all I was doing was putting out fires. Now looking back, there were not that many fires or programs I had to fix, but I was unsettled when I was at work. Then the terror would set in every time I would see this man following me or driving by my house.

The toxic, dictator, and power-hungry high school principal left me feeling impotent and unable to do my job. The stress was constantly there, and she never had a kind word to say to me. I was constantly sick to my stomach, and close to the end I started having horrible nightmares and gave up sleeping all together. I was working with the English and World Languages Departments at that time, and I would escape to their classrooms just to feel of some worth. This principal would even call me at home to tell me what I had done wrong that day or what I needed to do better. If I left before five o'clock at night, after being at the school by 6:30 a.m., she would call me out on it. She was constantly telling me that I had to do what she told me to do since, according to her, she was "golden" at the district and she could do whatever she wanted. It is hard to describe the emotions and level of stress that I was feeling, but it took 10 months for her to beat me down so far to where I broke and had to leave the job unfinished.

Hoyt and Price (2015) stated that positive relationships and social roles within an organization can lead to a willingness within the group to engage in ethical decision making and behavior. This mindset is one of concern for moral values, fairness, and productive behaviors. When a leader has a negative social and intrapersonal role in the organization it will in turn weaken the organization's ethical culture and climate. The leaders and employees within this organization will more than likely engage in unethical behavior since the perception of the leader is one that is disconnected with the organizational climate and culture. Kottke and Pelletier (2013) stated that when leaders engage in dirty practices they encourage unethical behaviors within their organizations, which puts the followers at risk of going against their own personal core values and their beliefs in what is right.

EVALUATION OF REASONS FOR THE PROBLEM

Both situations left me feeling as though I failed the educational world and the students I had been entrusted with. Eboka (2016) stated in today's schools there is the challenge of higher levels of performance in the teachers, the need to increase teacher morale, along with rising student achievement, which calls for a better quality of leadership. Here I was with many years behind me in education and had experienced the best and worst of education and what it did to people. I learned to raise teacher morale, which in the end affected student achievement. Leaders need to be able to put their lust for power to the side and if one cannot do that, then he or she should not be in a leadership position. In the end, it is all about the students, not the titles we reach for or the gain of power. A true educator is one that is authentic, willing to serve those around them, and willing to build a positive school culture where not only are the student needs being met, but the teacher needs are also being met. Positive leadership skills lead to raising teacher morale, student achievement, and an overall job satisfaction within the staff. As seen in the graph below, teacher job satisfaction is dropping each year.
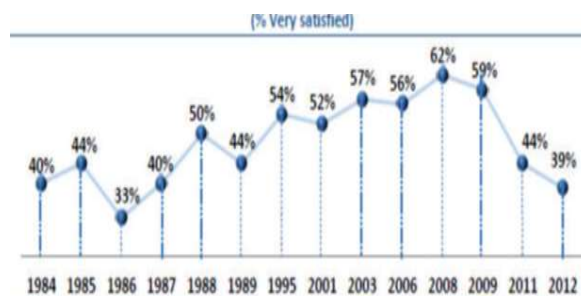

Figure 1. Teacher job satisfaction through the years by percentage who are very satisfied. (Adapted from Blackburn, 2015).

I integrated my experiences as a K-12administrator, doctoral student, and adjunct professor, using Dewey's Reflective Thinking Method (1910) and Schon's (1983) Reflective Practitioner Model to frame my reflections. Through this process and the use of these models, I could research the problem presented in this paper to find solutions. Rodgers (2002) stated Dewey's Reflective Thinking process is essential in an educator's growth and development. Dewey explained that reflection is a multifaceted, demanding, logical, and sensitive under-taking, which takes time to do well (Rodgers, 2002). As I was going through these experiences, many times I would hide from them or bury them deep within my sub-consciousness so that I would not have to face what was really going on. In turn, this made both situations even more difficult in the end to deal with. Schon's (1983) work stated an educator's view on reflection will change within the reality in which they are dealing with. To make sense of the situation we must not only look what the other person or persons involved are contributing, but also what are we contributing (Schon, 1983). As I reflected on each of the proposed reasons, I had to step out of the situations and look at them from the outside to truly understand how these situations could assist in creating within myself a better leader, doctoral student, and adjunct professor.

As a doctoral student, we were taught the importance of being ethical leaders and leaders that had their organization's best interests in the forefront always. The influence of leaders, positive and negative, can have a substantial impact on the organizational culture and climate, especially the influence of immediate supervisors. Middlebrooks et al. (2009) stated the role of leadership is the process of influencing followers toward a common goal or vision. This influence is accomplished explicitly and implicitly with individuals through the organizational systems and culture. Hoyt and Price (2015) stated that leaders need to use their core values, along with keeping in mind their relationships with those that follow them when making decisions that change or affect the organizational climate, culture, vision, and goals. To be effective, leaders must merge their social roles within an organization, along with their ethical core values to build efficient and effective organizations that will be productive and prosperous

within their given fields. Kottke and Pelletier (2013) stated that the perceptions of the followers is the determination of if leaders are being ethical in their decision making and behaviors more so with their immediate supervisors than with the top executives.

Variable	Teacher reports of organizational focus
	b(se)
Constant	31.0 (11.8)
Principal self-reports of leadership (self-report)	-.08 (.30)
Aggregated teacher reports of principle leadership (teacher report)	-.11 (.35)

Figure 2. Linear Regression Results of Organizational Focus on Aggregated Teacher Reports of Leadership and Principal Self-reports of Leadership (Adapted from Green, 2015).

Green (2015) found a significant difference within teacher morale and turnover and principal self-reports of their own leadership abilities and skills. The table above indicates teacher moral will be positive when the aggregated teacher reports are higher than the principal's self-reported leadership. This table shows a lower aggregated teacher report of their principal's leadership, and a lower level of teacher morale. In both figures 1 and figure 2, teacher job satisfaction and teacher morale is declining. By improving the leadership within the schools, this decline may start an incline, but leaders need to be taught positive leadership roles and how they affect their teachers and staff.

Authentic, ethical leaders can influence followers socially, and should be able to manage behaviors and systematic changes. Kottke and Pelletier (2013) stated a leader has an impact on the effectiveness of the organization's ethics and norms, along with the decision-making processes and financial resources. The level of a leader's ethics has a strong correlation on employee's perceptions of ethics and attitudes within the organization. Middlebrooks et al. (2009) stated an ethical leader's influence, effectiveness, and sustainability can be the catalyst to positive change, along with being able to spread that effect to all of those that follow these leaders. In turn, the organizational climate is one of production and a positive place to be involved

in. Organizations need to ensure their leaders are developed and trained in ethics to ensure that the climate and culture is one rooted in strong ethical beliefs and behaviors.

Shu (2015) stated leaders who are authentic in their dealings with those around them are effective in promoting quality work environments. These types of leaders can satisfy employee and team member needs, along with affecting other individuals' worldview and productivity. Effective leaders are individuals with a high level of morality, are ethical in their practices, and are the ones to set an example of being moral and ethical people. These individuals make decisions based on high standards of ethical conduct, along with basing these decisions on their own core values to be truly effective leaders. By being this type of leader, their own credibility with followers rises, and the leader's character is then linked to words such as integrity, justice, and fairness. Building credibility within the team, these leaders build a sense of respect and trust with those they work with, which increases individual and team performance overall (Hannah, Sumanth, Lester, & Cavarretta, 2014). Research has shown that despite their competence level, leaders that have credibility and trust within their team will influence those around them in a positive way that empowers those followers to rise to higher levels of accomplishments and success.

While I was going through the second experience, as an assistant principal, I was in my doctoral program, and the more I learned about what it took to be a good leader, the more I knew what was happening to me was not right. Crites, Dickson, and Lorenz (2015) stated that an effective leader and the best form of leadership need to show a high concern of people and production; one is not higher than the other, but equal emphasis should be placed on both. A strong leader must be concerned with not only the interrelationships of their followers, but what it will take to increase productivity, along with empowering the team toward personal and professional growth. Research has shown that followers' or employees' work performance and work behavior is closely correlated with personal motivation. Hannah et al. (2014) stated leaders need to be active participants in the leadership process and show high levels of efficiency, make positive contributions to the team, contribute to the well-being of its members and

followers, add creativity to the task or product, and provide recommendations and ideas that will benefit the end goal.

DECISION

As I reflected on these situations, I came to realize some of the leaders I worked for had failed me, and worse yet, failed the students they oversaw. If anything, these experiences showed me the importance of being an authentic and servant leader, one that is willing to put my own ambitions aside for the teachers and students, along with being ethical in my doings. Kiersch and Peters (2017) stated authentic and servant leaders provide the skills in developing a working environment to include positive, trust-based, pro-social, and ethical communities. The dimensions of authentic and servant leadership focuses on understanding those who follow us and their values, more self-awareness within our leadership skills, and the humility to listen and collaborate with the individuals within the school.

The following steps were taken throughout the reflection process to get me to my conclusion, which was to become an authentic and servant leader in all that I do. Each are described more fully in the paragraphs proceeding the list:

- Step One: Reevaluate what was important to me as an educator
- Step Two: Continue to be a reflective practitioner as I grow and develop my own leadership skills that will ensure I am staying on the right path, along with building a positive learning community
- Step Three: Become an authentic, servant, and ethical leader
- Step Four: As a doctoral student, continue to grow as an authentic, servant, and ethical Leader
- Step Five: As an adjunct professor, use these leadership traits with my students to assist them in growing academically and to better prepare them to become K-12 educators

Step One: Reevaluate what was important to me as an educator.

Going into the field of education, I knew there was little monetary gain, but the personal gains and rewards would be immense. There is little money in education, but educators are there to grow and assist in the academic progress of students. The greatest teachers and leaders in education know

this, and those are the ones I try to emulate and model my career after. These individuals are the ones that have low attrition rates with their teachers since their teachers are happy to be at the school and are more than willing to implement the initiatives the state and federal governments put forth. These teachers know they are supported by their leaders, are willing to build student achievement, and rarely leave their position for a better school or a better school culture.

Step Two: *Continue to be a reflective practitioner* as I grow and develop my own leadership skills that will ensure I am staying on the right path, along with building a positive learning community. By utilizing Dewey's (1910) Reflective Thinking Model and Schon's Practitioner Reflection Model, I can take these experiences and reflections to guide my current endeavors and my future career path and goals. As a leader, I learned that I need to be authentic where I am willing to put my own ambitions aside for the teachers and students, along with being ethical in everything I do. Ethics are not something the K-12 system often talks about, especially when looking at school improvement plans. Ethics needs to be a bigger part of the K-12 school system, and if I decide to go back into the K-12 system, I will ensure that ethics are a part of my own personal goals as a leader.

Step Three: Becoming an authentic, servant, and ethical leader.

Since integrity and social perceptions of leaders are so important, the question then comes up on how to develop effective and sustainable authentic, servant, and ethical leaders. Hoyt and Price (2015) found that leaders play a critical role in the responsibility of setting the organizational vision and goals and then following through with those goals in an ethical manner. These leaders are the ones that must ensure that the people they lead are accomplishing group objectives and affecting change. Middlebrooks et al. (2009) stated ethical leaders must be able to see the big picture of the organizational culture, along with having the knowledge of the interconnections of the individuals that make up the organization. Ethical leaders can influence followers socially, along with being able to manage behaviors and systematic changes.

Kottke and Pelletier (2013) stated a leader has an impact on the effectiveness of the organization's ethics and norms, along with the decision-making processes and financial resources. The level of a leader's ethics has a strong correlation on employees' perceptions of ethics and attitudes within the organization. Middlebrooks et al. (2009) stated an ethical leader's influence, effectiveness, and sustainability can be the catalyst to positive change, along with being able to spread that effect to all of those that follow these leaders. In turn, the organizational climate is one of production and a positive place to be involved in. Organizations need to ensure their leaders are developed and trained in ethics to ensure that the climate and culture is one rooted in strong ethical beliefs and behaviors.

Step Four: As a doctoral student, continue to grow as an authentic, servant, and ethical leader.

As a doctoral student in the K-12 Leadership Doctoral Program, I have learned how to treat people so that they can grow as professionals and to assist students in growing and developing good citizenship characteristics. By being authentic with teachers, staff, and students, everyone will benefit, and the culture of the school will be positive and productive. As I continue through the review process with my committee for my dissertation, using these skills along with becoming more reflective within my practice, the dissertation process becomes easier and more enriching through each stage of the process.

Step Five: As an adjunct professor, use these leadership traits with my students to assist them in growing academically and to better prepare them to become K-12 educators.

As an adjunct professor, I am using what I learned in the online arena. Even though I do not see my students face-to-face, I am still authentic and ethical with them. I try to put their needs first by getting to know who they are, along with having an open-door policy where they can email, text, or call me when needed. This change has resulted in better attendance online, rich discussion where everyone is actively participating, and well-developed and well-written assignments that shows me they are learning. These experiences, along with utilizing both reflection models, has improved my abilities as a leader, as a doctoral student, and as an adjunct professor.

REFLECTIVE CRITIQUE

Green and Munoz (2016) stated K-12 teachers embody four percent of the U.S. workforce, and almost half of new teachers will leave the teaching profession within the first five years. Eboka (2016) stated teacher morale is essential to the success of any educational organization. Future educational leaders within their educational administration programs need to be taught the different leadership styles. They need to understand what it means to be an effective leader, along with being shown what toxic leaders and those only there to gain power, can do to individuals, their teaching staff, and the students. Kiersch and Peters (2017) stated many university and college leadership programs overemphasize the role of power while underemphasizing the role of ethics. As higher educational institutions review their leadership curriculum, there needs to be an emphasis put on ethics and not power, so the leaders leaving these institutions build positive cultures and climates within their organizations. As educational leaders at higher educational institutions link ethics to leadership abilities, there will be a positive ripple effect within all organizations (Kiersch & Peters, 2017).

A recommendation for further research is to examine the skills taught to future leaders, in all fields, where they know exactly what it takes to build a positive culture through a leadership style, and where employee morale is in the forefront. Understanding how their leadership style affects ultimately the students and individuals they oversee, they will better understand how to be a great leader, one that will meet not only the student needs, but also the teachers' needs. Green and Munoz (2016) stated educational leaders have an important role in building teacher job satisfaction and retention, which can be accomplished through creating a cooperative, supportive work environment.

Another recommendation for future research is studying how these situations can better help teachers within the teacher preparation programs in being prepared to see and deal with the different leadership styles. Ado (2016) stated teacher leaders are the ones supporting the academic growth and critical thinking in schools, along with assisting their colleagues in improving their teaching styles. Some of the strongest teacher candidates will become the leaders. The university and college professors instructing the new teachers need to show these individuals the positive side of leadership to assist them in becoming great leaders in the future. The original idea behind teacher leadership roles was intended to empower teachers to lead in ways in which the students and school would benefit (Ado, 2016). This same idea needs to take root in the current teacher preparation programs at the university and college levels.

Preservice teachers, in their university and college programs, need to be taught the different leadership styles and how these styles can affect teacher morale in a positive or negative way. Understanding these different styles can better prepare teachers with how to deal with their leaders and how to be good teachers within the different cultures they may face in their teaching careers. A new teacher can usually choose the school they want to go to by researching the principal and talking to the current staff. As their careers continue, new principals do come into the school and may be the opposite of what they are used to and will need to understand each of the leadership styles to be able to deal with the new leader.

Leadership issues are not only within education, but are in all areas of the work force. A leader is found in every job and career, such as businesses, religions, and even in the labor force. These same issues that I dealt with could be implemented across all disciplines to better prepare future leaders within each program at the university level. These same leadership styles we use in the educational field could be used across all programs and in all fields. Kiersch and Peters (2017) stated leadership programs within universities and colleges can assist students in understanding the role of leaders within a broader context and with the inclusions of ethics. University level leaders need to not just train these future leaders to be the figure head or the one who exerts power and influence over others, but as authentic and servant leaders who will have a positive impact on the organization.

CONCLUSION

Over the past two decades, I have seen the best and worst in education and it has made me a stronger leader, doctoral student, and educator. I used Dewey's (1910) Reflective Thinking process, which is essential in an educator's growth and development, along with Schon's (1983) work

where an educator's view on reflection will change within the reality in which they are dealing with. To make sense of the situation we must not only look at what the other person or persons involved are contributing, but also what are we contributing (Schon, 1983). Dewey explains that reflection is a multifaceted, demanding, logical, and sensitive under-taking which takes time to do well (Rodgers, 2002).

The two situations mentioned in this paper were hard to get through and left me with a feeling like a failure both times. I took those feelings and used them to become a better leader, doctoral student, and adjunct professor. The final situation at the high school did force me out of the K-12 system, but it has made me a better higher-level educator and doctoral student, where I can help future teachers and leaders to become what they need to be to help the students in today's schools. Diversity is on the rise and many leaders are not willing to move forward with what it takes to be a leader in today's schools and are stuck in doing things the way it has always been done. Terosky and Reitano (2016) stated the 21st century calls for a different type of leadership that keeps in mind the concepts of teacher satisfaction and morale, along the retaining teachers. Educators today need to be willing to be leaders that understand the students, that are willing to go beyond what has always been done to build a positive culture, along with meeting the academic and emotional needs of both the teachers and students. The leadership role in any field is the most influential factor in the success of any organization. The mantel is heavy, but the rewards are immense.

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