Instructional Leadership in Writing: An Exploration of Elementary Principal Efficacy and Identities in a Neglected Subject

by

Jennifer L. VanSlander

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Auburn University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Auburn, Alabama
August 7, 2021

Keywords: principal, identity, writing, self-efficacy, instructional leadership

Approved by

Dr. Victoria Cardullo, Chair, Associate Professor of Curriculum and Teaching
Dr. Sara Demoiny, Co-Chair, Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Teaching
Dr. Chih-hsuan Wang, Associate Professor of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology
Dr. Lucretia Octavia Tripp, Associate Professor of Curriculum and Teaching
Dr. Jason Bryant, Director Truman Pierce Institute, Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology

Abstract

According to National Assessment of Educational Progress data trends spanning the past two decades, student achievement in writing falls below other subjects tested across grade levels. To be prepared for college and the professional workforce, students need to be proficient writers. However, writing is a neglected subject in elementary school. Current studies explore teacher writer identities and efficacy in writing and writing instruction, but similar research with school administrators was absent. This exploratory, mixed-method study extended current writing instruction efficacy research conducted with teachers and filled a gap in existing literature. The study examined principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership, as well as their writer identities.

Four theoretical perspectives provided the framework for the investigation, including self-efficacy theory, social constructionism, writer identities, and instructional leadership. The target population was current elementary principals in the United States. A new, researcher-designed survey instrument, the Principal Efficacy Survey for Writing Leadership, collected quantitative data, and participants (N=103) were identified through random, convenience, and snowball sampling methods. A modified life story semi-structured interview protocol was the primary source for qualitative data, and four elementary principals participated in the process.

Internal consistency for the two constructs on the new survey instrument, Principal Efficacy in Writing and Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership, was strong with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .92 and .94, respectively. Additionally, this study revealed several significant findings. Findings suggest that Principal Efficacy in Writing can predict Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership. Furthermore, several factors significantly influenced Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership, including Gender, Age, and Self-selected Training. The

interviews reviewed current instructional leadership behaviors in writing and examined the writer identities of the participants, Nicole, Ken, Teresa, and Gretchen (pseudonyms). Principals varied in how they identified as writers, and they described several sources and experiences that were instrumental to their writing journey. Moreover, the interviews revealed complexity in their role as instructional leaders in writing, which could be at odds with other job-related responsibilities, including district- and state-level requirements.

Acknowledgments

When there is an ensemble cast with actors of equal importance in television and movies, the star's names are listed alphabetically during the credits. When I look back on my dissertation journey that began in December of 2018, it is an understatement to say it took an ensemble cast to drive me to graduation. No person is more important than another. Therefore, I will take my cue from the entertainment industry and list my dissertation movie star cast in alphabetical order.

My College: I would like to thank the Auburn University College of Education and Elementary Education staff. It was not important that I attained my Ph.D., it was important that I attained my Ph.D. from Auburn University. I wanted to grow as an educator and learn from the best, and I did. War Eagle!

My Committee: My deepest gratitude goes to Dr. Victoria Cardullo, my chair, who has been my cheerleader, teacher, and mentor throughout this grueling process. I did not know where I was going or what I was doing but fully trusted your guidance along the way. Thank you for being my navigation system and for your unwavering support. Dr. Sara Demoiny, my co-chair, thank you for being my opposite. When the words on the page began to spin, and I became bogged down with details, you were the anchor that helped me pause, breathe, and focus on the next step. You do everything with intent and purpose, and I needed your calm during the storms. Dr. Chih-hsuan Wang, my instructor, and methodologist, you are an exceptional teacher. Thank you for guiding me through one of the most intimidating parts of my dissertation, analyzing the quantitative data. And Dr. Lucretia Tripp and Dr. Jason Bryant, thank you for serving on my committee, your feedback, and your time.

My Family: My husband, Benjie, my friend and life partner, I love you. Through tears, joy, disappointment, and success, you have always been there for me. My 28-year long career as

a college student is over, maybe. Mom and dad, I love you so much. God really came through for me when he gave you to me as parents. Shelby and James, thank you for making my life worth living. You may now call me Dr. Mom or just Dr. is fine. I will always love you more.

My Friends: Boo, my hippie best friend, teaching brought us together, but our friendship has kept us together. You are the Thelma to my Louise. Thank you for being a good listener and good friend. Dr. Sara Woods, my dissertation guru, thank you for the road trips, shared rooms, and for answering my panicked calls.

My Participants: Every day, elementary principals work quietly behind the scenes keeping the wheels of school turning. Whether you took 20 minutes to complete the survey or an hour out of your hectic day to talk about your writing life, I thank you for your time and commitment to education.

My Savior: Two bible verses sustain me in life. Romans 8:28, although I have questioned and tested this one many times, I know it to be true. And Matthew 6:34, I am still working on this one. Thank you, Lord, for surrounding me with this fantastic ensemble cast to help me through this blessed life.

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List of Abbreviations

ACT	American College Testing
CCSS	Common Core State Standards
CIA	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
CTE	Collective Teacher Efficacy
GTE	General Teaching Efficacy
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LSES	Leadership Self-Efficacy Scale
MDR	Market Data Retrieval
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Pro
NAESP	National Association for Elementary School Principals
NCES	National Center for Education Statistics
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
NCWAFSC	National Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and College
NCWASC	National Commission on Writing for America's Schools and Colleges
NGACBP	National Governor's Association for Best Practices
NGSES	New General Self-Efficacy Scale
NWP	National Writing Project
PARCC	Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers
PESWL	Principal Efficacy Scale for Writing Leadership
PEW	Principal Efficacy in Writing
PEWL	Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership
PIL	Principal Instructional Leadership

PIMRS	Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale
PSES	Principal Sense of Efficacy Scale
PTE	Personal Teaching Efficacy
SAT	Scholastic Assessment Test
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SRSD	Self-Regulations Strategy Development
STS	Strategy for Teaching Strategies
TCRWP	Teachers College Reading and Writing Project
TES	Teacher Efficacy Scale
TESW	Teacher Efficacy Scale for Writing
TSES	Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey
W4YL	Write 4 Your Life
WOS	Writing Orientation Scale
WWC	What Works Clearinghouse

Definitions of Key Terms

Key terms and phrases relevant to the present study are as follows:

Pre-service Teacher. Students enrolled in an initial educator preparation program, studying to become teachers, but not yet licensed or certified to teach.

In-service Teacher. An individual who possesses all required credentials to teach and is currently practicing and employed as a teacher.

Principal. The person in the highest position of authority in a school.

Professional Development. The Glossary of Education Reform (2013) described professional development as "a wide variety of specialized training, formal education, or advanced professional learning intended to help administrators, teachers, and other educators improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness" (para. 1)

Writer Identity. A person's way of thinking and sense of who they are as a writer (Ivanic, 1998).

Self-Efficacy/Efficacy. An individual's belief in their capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Carey & Forsyth, 2009; Bandura, 1977).

Instructional Leadership. Principal behaviors that contribute to school improvement, including student learning and teacher development (Hallinger, 2017).

Experience/Lived Experience. The state of affairs in which the world is lived, felt, undergone, and made sense of (Schwandt, 2015, p. 103).

Writing. For this study, writing is considered a recursive process of planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, across multiple genres, with composition lengths longer than one paragraph.

Writing Program. For this study, the term writing program referred to any school-wide communicated system of expectations and shared practices to teach writing. Although not required, this may include a published curriculum (i.e., Units of Study in Writing, Writing City, Write Bright).

Chapter 1. Introduction

"Everything rises and falls on leadership."

John C. Maxwell, 1999, xi

In 2002, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) placed a significant focus on reading and math by requiring schools to participate in state assessments and meet adequate yearly progress goals for each subject. The increased accountability for schools in reading and math has decreased instructional time for other subjects, such as science and social studies (Griffith & Scharmann, 2008; Winstead, 2011). Additionally, writing has been pushed aside with as little as 15 minutes a day designated to explicit writing instruction (Brindle et al., 2016; Gilbert & Graham, 2010). The National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges (NCWASC; 2003) recommended:

> That policy should aim to double the amount of time most students spend writing, require a writing plan in every school district, insist that writing be taught in all subjects and at all grade levels, and require successful completion of a course in writing theory and practice as a condition of teacher licensing. (p. 3)

Nearly obscure, but present is the small legion of schools that understand the significance of writing and join leading literacy experts to sound the alarm that writing needs equal attention.

The publication of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2010 placed equal significance on writing as reading and mathematics. According to the CCSS, by the end of fifth-grade students should be able to, "Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices [NGACBP], 2010, W.5.10). Additionally, the CCSS identifies opinion, narrative,

and informative as specific genres to include in writing instruction. Measurable change in practice and implementation has been slow (Brindle et al., 2016; Graham, 2019; Wilcox, 2016) even with the national attention the CCSS gave to writing. Elmore, a renowned researcher of educational leadership behaviors, stated that "efforts to influence basic patterns of instructional practice in American schools on a large scale have never been sustained or deep enough to have an impact beyond the relatively small proportion of schools that are willing adopters of innovation" (2004, p. 7). Elmore suggested that the path to large-scale instructional improvement and reform begins with school leadership. However, it is unclear whether principals have the content knowledge needed to execute the level of instructional leadership needed for transformative school improvement.

In the early years of a child's education, writing identities begin to form and literacy foundations develop. Moreover, student learning takes place in a rich, sociocultural context. Although a few schools and districts have engaged in intentional efforts to provide rigorous writing instruction to meet the standards (Troia & Graham, 2016; Votteler & Miller, 2017; Wilcox et al., 2016), little evidence exists to demonstrate that students engage in sustained writing for any meaningful length of time (Applebee & Langer, 2006; 2011; Gilbert & Graham, 2010). Additionally, students rarely generate compositions longer than a paragraph, as required within the CCSS (Applebee & Langer, 2006; 2011; Gilbert & Graham, 2010). Furthermore, limited data exists to explain why writing is not at the forefront of school reform and why school programs do not reflect research-based instructional practices. However, as leaders of school improvement efforts, elementary school principals are in a unique position of authority and influence to lead teachers in writing instruction reform.

It is important to define the type of writing examined in this study. This study employed the following description of writing described by Myers et al. (2016):

> Writing is a matter of mind, hand, and heart, involving complex cognitive, physical, affective, and social processes. Writing is part of the communications as a whole. There is no one writing process. Writers use multiple skills and strategies as they move through stages of planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, and presentation. People write in many written genres/formats for different audiences and purposes in their daily lives. (p. 312)

The written compositions referenced in the present study are those described within the CCSS, including the development of opinion, informative/explanatory, and narrative texts. As Myers (2016) noted and as outlined by the CCSS, the ability to plan, draft, revise, and edit is necessary for students to be proficient writers.

A teacher's confidence, understanding, and attitudes towards writing determine much of what students learn about writing (Graham & Harris, 2019). Although organizations such as the National Writing Project (NWP) and the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) have experienced success in raising student writing achievement through teacher professional development (Dierking & Fox, 2012; Gallagher et al., 2017; Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2006), all teachers cannot commit to or afford extended summer training. Consequently, principals must possess both the leadership skills and instructional knowledge to provide sustained, in-service writing professional development in ways that give all teachers full access (Calkins et al., 2019; Calkins & Pessah, 2008; National Association of Elementary School Principals [NAESP], 2008; NCWASC, 2003).

To increase school-wide student achievement in writing, school leaders should possess a thorough understanding of best practices in writing instruction, communicate a vision for writing instruction, create systems for continuous improvement, and invest in the training and development of teachers (Calkins et al., 2019; Marzano et al., 2005; NAESP, 2008). The influence, knowledge, and beliefs of principals have been largely unexplored in research as a possible contributing reason for the neglect of writing at the elementary level. In one of the few available studies, McGhee and Lew (2007) examined *teacher* perceptions of elementary principal knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes about writing instruction, but data was not collected directly from school leaders.

General principal leadership efficacy is a burgeoning area of research (Hallinger et al., 2017; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; McGhee & Lew, 2007; Schrik & Wasonga, 2019; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004), but studies have not explicitly examined administrator efficacy in writing instruction. Self-efficacy beliefs can be both generalized and domain-specific (Bandura, 1993; Pajares,1996). Thus, to improve the status of writing instruction in significant ways, it is essential to understand and describe principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership. This mixed-methods study aimed to address the critical gap in research on principal efficacy in writing and the leadership of writing programs with a new, researcher-designed survey instrument, the Principal Efficacy Survey in Writing Leadership (PESWL). Additionally, a narrative inquiry into principals' writing life and writer identities revealed the stories behind the survey responses and leadership behaviors within the domain-specific content area of writing.

Statement of the Problem

Research exists that examines pre-service and in-service teacher efficacy in writing instruction (Graham et al., 2001; Myers et al., 2016), educator identities as writers (Cremin &

Baker, 2014; Norman & Spencer, 2005), general school leadership efficacy (Bobbio & Manganelli, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004), and principal leadership identities (Crow et al., 2017; Mpungose, 2010; Robertson, 2017). However, a review of existing literature exposed a gap in research that examined principal efficacy in writing and the leadership of school-wide writing practices and systems. Furthermore, research was scant that explored principal identities, knowledge, and instructional leadership behaviors related to a specific content area such as writing. If comprehensive transformation is to take place in writing instruction, the research emphasis must shift from teacher to principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership, as substantial work is needed to lift student writing to the level of proficiency required by the CCSS.

Factors managed by educators and educational institutions significantly influence a person's ability to write, access to opportunities, and socially-constructed identities (Ivanic, 1998; Li & Deng, 2019; Norman & Spencer, 2005). Additionally, principals are in a position of responsibility to guide and facilitate ongoing learning opportunities for teachers. By providing professional development and fostering teacher collaboration around instruction, principals directly impact teacher practice, individual teacher efficacy, collective efficacy, and student outcomes (Blase & Blase, 2000; Goddard et al., 2000; Hallinger et al., 2017; McGhee & Lew, 2001; Schrik & Wasonga, 2019; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012; Supovitz et al., 2009). Therefore, the present study suggests that student writing proficiency "rises and falls on leadership" (Maxwell, 1999, p. xi). School leaders must organize efforts to develop teachers and students as writers.

"Children want to write" (Graves, 2003, p. 3). When students enter school, and even earlier, they crave the opportunity to hold writing or drawing instruments in hand, put them to

paper, and place marks on the page that holds personal meaning (Graves, 2003). Similar to music and art, writing has the power to heal, hurt, reveal, inspire, inform, and capture the human spirit and imagination in words. Murray (2004) stated, "The act of writing is the act of thought" (p. 3). Calkins (1994) explained further, "we write to hold our lives in our hands and to make something of them" (p. 8). Whether cuneiform, the oldest known writing system used to record transactions by ancient Mesopotamians, or sending a text message on a cellular phone, human beings strive to record their lives and communicate in written form. However, the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores revealed only 28% of fourth-graders are proficient writers (The Nation's Report Card, n.d.).

While the NAEP assessment provides one measure of student writing achievement, identifying “good” writing can be elusive. A parent or teacher may look at a random string of letters from a young child and deem it good writing. Indeed, the development of the ability to write follows a developmental progression and certain writing behaviors are predictable at various stages. However, the question “What is good writing?” does not have a simple answer. Mora (2019) states, “I don’t think ‘good’ or ‘bad’ writers exist. There are simply writers” (para. 4). Moreover, the judgment of the quality of a piece of writing is typically not made by the author, but by the reader. Although there is “no single definition” of good writing (Mora, 2019, para. 5), there are specific writing skills and qualities required for academic writing.

Poor writing skills become obvious upon college entry, but the pathway to remediation begins in elementary school. Understanding school leadership factors contributing to the start of the trajectory to remediation was the impetus for this study. Too many students entering college require remedial coursework in English, Math, or both, with estimates in some states as high as 60% for two-year institutions and 30% for four-year universities (National Center for Public

Policy and Higher Education and the Southern Regional Education Board, 2010). For example, an examination of a public two-year college in Texas, revealed 60% of students needed remediation in writing (Jimenez et al., 2016). Perhaps the most troublesome is the disproportionate number of low-income and students from underrepresented groups placed in remedial courses (Jimenez et al., 2016). According to Complete College America (n.d) data, 26% of White students need remedial coursework in English upon entering a two-year college, compared to 49% of Black students and 41% of Hispanic students. In four-year institutions, the percentages decrease but are still disproportionate, with only 8% of White students needing remedial English, but 31% of Black students and 15% of Hispanic students.

Many students need remediation in writing to succeed in college, making graduation an expensive and uphill battle for unskilled writers. Those who advocate for increased and improved instruction in composition understand the importance of writing as a life skill needed for success in the workplace. However, when competing for time and attention amongst content heavyweights like reading and math, it is necessary to present an argument to give writing the attention it deserves, and understand the barriers that prevent writing from being of equal importance in school reform.

Writing skills are needed in the professional workplace. Before an applicant ever sets foot in the door for an interview, the applicant must submit a written application. Especially in salaried positions with potential for advancement, proficient writing skills are essential during the application process. Candidates who are not skilled in writing are unlikely to make it to an interview (National Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges [NCWAFSC], 2004). As the NCWAFSC (2004) aptly stated "writing ability could be your ticket in…or it could be your ticket out" (p. 8).

Writing in the professional workplace includes formal reports, email communication, memos, presentations, and other correspondence (NCWAFSC, 2004). However, a college degree does not guarantee proficient writing ability as corporations spend over $3 billion annually to provide additional writing training to employees (NCWAFSC, 2004). In a survey of over 60,000 managers nationwide, 44% identified writing skills as the top deficient hard skill in college graduates (PayScale, 2016). While hourly jobs do not require the same degree of writing as professional organizations, nonprofessional employers report writing responsibilities are still required (NCWAFSC, 2004). If students are to be successful in the workplace, they need to be proficient writers in multiple text types.

It is difficult for schools and districts to make policy, resource, and curriculum decisions without actionable data on student writing performance. The few figures that do exist on student writing achievement are discouraging. While national assessment figures on reading and math are easily accessed and current, writing proficiency data is not as readily available. The Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) provides a written essay examination, but only 10% of universities require it for entry, and that number is on the decline (Sawyer, 2019). The NAEP test assesses writing as a distinct subject, but the most current assessment year for fourth-graders that included reported scores was 2002, with 28% scoring proficient. NAEP data for 8th grade and 12th grade is more current with 27% of both grades identified as proficient writers in 2011 (The Nation's Report Card, n.d.). Data analysis for the 2017 NAEP writing assessment for students in grades 4 and 8 "revealed potentially confounding factors in measuring performance" (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], n.d.). Particularly, 2017 marked the first year fourth-graders completed the writing assessment in a digitally-based format. It is unclear how

factors such as typing speed and student interaction with technology contributed to scores; therefore, further analysis is ongoing (NCES, n.d.).

American College Testing (ACT) separates English Composition (or writing) from Reading, and scores for the graduating class of 2019 revealed a steady decline in the number of students meeting English benchmarks from 64% in 2015 to 59% in 2019 (ACT, 2019). Although a cursory glance at ACT data would indicate that English is the highest scoring subject area, a score of 18 is the English benchmark for proficiency and is the lowest benchmark of all subjects. The ACT college readiness benchmark for reading is 22, math 22, and science 23. One might question the low benchmark required to pass the ACT English assessment and the connection to the high numbers of students entering college in need of remedial coursework in English. Though NAEP assesses fourth-graders, data from 2002 is not an accurate measure of current student writing performance at the elementary level. Undoubtedly, "Writing assessment is a genuine challenge" (NCWASC, 2003).

The scope of remedial college coursework is not surprising given the general lack of writing instruction. Increased time writing has a positive effect on student writing proficiency and is a regular recommendation among researchers to improve student writing (Cutler & Graham, 2008; Graham et al., 2012, 2015; NCWASC, 2003). Research suggests that teachers allocate as little as 15 minutes a day to explicit writing instruction (Brindle et al., 2016; Gilbert & Graham, 2010). Additionally, time spent on writing activities, including writing in other content areas, is alarmingly low with some estimates as little as 30 minutes a school day (Cutler & Graham, 2008). However, increased writing time is not enough to improve student achievement as it must be in the context of effective writing instruction. Teachers report feeling ill-equipped to deliver effective writing instruction for a variety of reasons, including inadequate

undergraduate coursework and insufficient in-service professional development (Graham & Perin, 2007; Grisham & Wolsey, 2011; Myers et al., 2016; Wijekumar et al., 2019).

When teachers receive professional development on the process-writing approach and other research-based methods, student writing improves (Graham & Perin, 2007; Grisham & Wolsey, 2011). However, in-service training and many undergraduate teacher preparation programs do not meet teachers' needs as writing instructors (Graham & Perin, 2007; NCWASC Commission 2003; Myers et al., 2016; Wijekumar et al., 2019). In a national survey of grades 3 through 8 teachers (*N*=483), 20% of participants reported receiving no undergraduate training to teach writing, and another 30% reported participating in only one class solely designated to teaching writing (Troia & Graham, 2016). In another survey (*N*=178), 15% of practicing primary grade teachers reported no job-embedded professional development focused on writing (Cutler & Graham, 2008). Of the responders who reported writing training within the past five years, only 40% reported face-to-face sessions as the mode of delivery (Culter & Graham, 2008). Cutler & Graham (2008) found that 28% of practicing teachers reported that their preparation to teach writing was inadequate, similar to the findings of Troia and Graham (2016). For student achievement in writing to improve, advancing educator preparation to teach writing should be at the forefront of district and school initiatives.

Students cannot wait until middle and high school to learn to write, but the factors that contribute to low writing scores and the absence of explicit writing instruction are complex. School administrators and teachers often rely on authors of published curriculum to provide learning activities grounded in best practices in writing instruction (Graham et al., 2017), but it takes an in-depth knowledge of writing to be a critical consumer of published and packaged programs. To lead writing improvement efforts effectively, principals must possess robust

content knowledge of writing instruction, curriculum, and assessment, in addition to strong efficacy beliefs in writing and writing leadership.

Purpose of the Study

This study had three main objectives. The study sought to create a new survey instrument to measure Principal Efficacy in Writing (PEW) and Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership (PEWL), and examine the relationship between the two constructs. Present survey research instruments measure principal leadership efficacy (Bobbio & Manganelli, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Gereis, 2004) and teacher efficacy in writing (Graham et al., 2001). However, there were no quantitative research instruments that measured principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership. Finally, the investigation examined principals' socially-constructed writer identities as instructional leaders in the elementary school setting, and the expression of that identity related to leadership behaviors such as setting school-wide writing expectations and creating systems for improvement. The researcher hypothesized that a significant, predictive relationship would exist between PEW and PEWL.

Research Questions

This study applied a mixed-method design, including quantitative and qualitative data sources and analyses. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), the goal of mixed-method research "is not to replace either of these approaches but rather to draw from the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both in single research studies and across studies" (p. 15). The research questions addressed in this study were:

1. Is the amount of writing training received related to principal efficacy in writing or principal efficacy in writing leadership?

2. What is the relationship between elementary principal efficacy in writing and elementary principal efficacy in writing leadership?
3. Which personal and school characteristics are related to elementary principal efficacy in writing leadership?
4. In what ways do elementary principals' lived experiences influence their principal identities as writers and leaders of writing instruction?
    a) What are elementary principals' perceptions regarding how their self-efficacy beliefs influence their teachers' and students' performance?

Theoretical Framework

Four theoretical perspectives informed the present study: (a) Self-efficacy Theory, (b) Social Constructionism, (c) Writer Identity, and (d) Instructional Leadership. The study aimed to fill a gap in existing research by exploring elementary principal efficacy in writing and writing instructional leadership. Social identities are related to self-efficacy beliefs (Guan & So, 2016). Burke and Stets (2009) explained identity as "the set of meanings that define who one is when one is an occupant of a particular role in society, a member of a particular group, or claims particular characteristics that identify him or her as a unique person" (p. 3). Studies have examined teacher identities as writers (Cremin & Baker, 2014; Norman & Spencer, 2005; Whitney, 2009; Zoch et al., 2016) and the researcher sought to extend existing research to investigate elementary principal writer identities. Social constructionism was the perspective for understanding the formation of principal writer identities, efficacy beliefs, and instructional leadership behaviors. Finally, instructional leadership behaviors are the observable expressions of a principal's identity and efficacy beliefs. Figure 1 demonstrates how the researcher viewed the interactions among the four perspectives.

Figure 1

Interactions Among Theoretical Perspectives

Social Constructionism

The present study applied social constructionism to understand the formation of writer identities and efficacy beliefs, as related to instructional leadership behaviors. Seminal researchers in social constructionism, Berger and Luckmann (1966) theorized that one's reality is socially constructed and explained, "Identity is, of course, a key element of subjective reality, and like all subjective reality, stands in dialectical relationship with society. Identity is formed by social processes" (p. 173). Berger and Luckman (1966) further examined the relationship between social constructionism and identity. Social constructionism "stresses that all knowledge is historically and culturally specific. Labels, classifications, denotations, and connotations of social identity always are products of their times" (Allen, 2005, p. 37). This study considered principal writer identity a sub-type of social identity, and social constructionism explains how those identities developed through various social constructs, such as family and school environments.

Social constructivism and social constructionism are highly related and relevant to the present study. Social constructivism is concerned with the social conditions that bring about personal knowledge (Hruby,2001). Social constructivism would posit that social interactions

create knowledge of writing. While this is an assumption by the researcher, the generation of writing knowledge was not the primary focus of this study.

Social constructionism is concerned with the nature of reality (Andrews, 2012) and provides a framework for discussing features of writer identity. A lifetime of social interactions and political factors influence one's self-proclaimed identity as a "good" or "bad" writer. Identity is not knowledge, per se, but an understanding of oneself and how one fits into various social relationships. As applied in the present study, social constructionism is to think of writer identity "as existing not within people but between them" (Burr, 1995, p.27). In her book on writer identities, Ivanic (1998) stated, “The social struggles in which the self is implicated through the act of writing are the topic of this book, and they affect the way I am writing it” (pg. 2).

From a social constructionist perspective, the attainment of knowledge and language happens within a community (Bruffee, 1986). Bruffee stated, "Social construction understands reality, knowledge, thought, facts, texts, selves, and so on as community-generated and community-maintained linguistic entities—or, more broadly speaking, symbolic entities—that define or [constitute] the communities that generate them" (p. 774). To understand writer identities, one must first examine the author's life story, the writer, and the writing as situated within social, linguistic, and political contexts. In any given composition, writers make conscious and unconscious choices about what language and content to include (Ivanic, 1998). Social constructionism provides the perspective to understand the life thread that binds writers to their writing and writer identities. Ivanic (1998) stated,

> the writers' unconscious act of selection from alternatives is an important component in the discoursal construction of identity—constrained by social factors, and highly influenced [though not determined] by socio-historically situated conventions as it is.

Both the very idea of selection and the possibilities for selection are socially constructed. (p. 54)

If reality and knowledge are socially constructed and distributed (Berger & Luckman, 1966), school leaders must possess both content knowledge and leadership skills to create a shared body of understanding about writing instruction among a community of like-minded, professional members. One must also acknowledge the role language, literacy, and writing have on issues of power when recognizing identities as socially-constructed (Ivanic, 1998). Social constructionism assumes there is no absolute truth, only one's version of the truth. This epistemological perspective is critical to understanding the development of principal writer identities.

Writing is a tangible production of language and is a person's thoughts on a page. Burr (1995) noted, "the way people think, the very categories and concepts that provide a framework of meaning for them, are provided by the language that they use" (p. 7). Language is a crucial element in social constructionism and identities. Burr (1995) suggested that language is action and that it affects the way we think. The social constructionist views language as the mode to express one's reality and identity to others (Burr, 1995).

Self-Efficacy Theory

Current research on school administrator efficacy applies Bandura's seminal research on self-efficacy as a component of social cognitive theory (Bandura 1977, 1993). In his many works on self-efficacy from the 1970s to the 1990s, Bandura examined cognitive processes that impacted human motivation and behavior to work toward and accomplish goals. "An efficacy expectation is the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the outcomes" (Bandura, 1977, p. 193). In addition to choice in activity and willingness to

initiate a task, self-efficacy beliefs determine how one will cope with and persist when the activity becomes challenging. Bandura (1993) identified four sources that impact efficacy: vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, performance accomplishments, and emotional arousal. A person's self-efficacy beliefs influence a broad range of actions related to motivation, goal-setting, performance, and achievement (Bandura & Jourden, 1991; Graham & Weiner, 1996). While Bandura's initial research represented a cognitive and behavioral psychology perspective, subsequent works made connections to the effects of teacher and student efficacy on academic performance (Bandura, 1993; Caprara et al., 2006; Kim & Seo, 2018).

Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2004) described a principal's sense of efficacy as an assessment of their capacity to create a plan of action that will lead to positive school change. Principal Leadership Efficacy (PLE) is a comparatively new construct that has been examined over the past two decades in terms of job-related expectations, such as creating a vision, distribution of leadership, motivating others, and time management (Bobbio & Manganelli, 2009; Hallinger et al., 2017; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; McGhee & Lew, 2007; Schrik & Wasonga, 2019; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004). Although limited in scope but specific to writing instruction, a study examined teacher perceptions of principal knowledge and beliefs related to educator motivation and performance (McGhee & Lew, 2007). More recently, research has focused on the relationship between efficacy and leadership behaviors, and the impact on student academic outcomes (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Schrik & Wasonga, 2019). Items and formatting of existing efficacy surveys by Graham et al. (2001), Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2004), Bobbio and Manganelli (2009), and Chen et al. (2001) were modified to examine PEW and PEWL in the present study.

Writer Identity

Ouellette (2008) described identity as a broad term used to explain “how we define ourselves, how others define us, and how we represent ourselves to others" (p. 259). Li & Deng (2019) explained identity as positioned within “historical, racial, ethnic, national, institutional, ideological, social, and discoursal perspectives of 'who I am'" (p. 71). Ivanic (1998) situated the more specific concept of writer identity under the perspective of social constructionism. Burgess and Ivanic (2010) defined writer identity as “the sorts of identities that are socially available in academic contexts, and the multiple selves that are constructed by writers’ selection of particular discoursal characteristics in the design of their texts” (p. 235). Ivanic (1998) contended, "Writing is an act of identity in which people align themselves with socio-culturally shaped possibilities for self-hood, playing their part in reproducing or challenging dominant practices and discourses, and the values, beliefs, and interests which they embody (p. 32). Park (2013) suggested that writing is a way of knowing and expressing our identities. According to Ivanic (1998), there are four aspects of writer identity: (a) autobiographical self, (b) discoursal self, (c) self as author, and (d) possibilities for self-hood.

Because of the relevance to life stories, principal identities as writers were examined only in terms of the autobiographical self. The autobiographical self is an aspect of identity that continually changes and includes the lived experiences that have led to specific writing practices and issues of access that have been socially aided or restricted (Ivanic, 1998). It is “who we are" as writers and what we bring to the writing experience, including gender, membership in social groups, accessed discourses, and abilities or disabilities. Writing reveals the self through voice, ideas, opinions, commitments, and literacy practices (Ivanic, 1998).

As described by Ivanic (1998), writer identity has several implications for this study. First, principalship is a position of power and that person has consistently conformed to socially privileged ways of writing throughout experiences in various preparatory institutions and related occupations along the path to school leadership. Next, as Ivanic (1998) suggests, "All our writing is influenced by our life-histories" (p. 181). Our identities as writers are created within social communities, with elementary school being one of the earliest environments. Principals must engage in the leadership practices necessary to create a positive community of teacher and student writers. Students need to be proficient writers to enter the workforce or college; therefore, it is critical to ensure that teachers can provide sufficient writing instruction. These understandings lead to the fourth and final theoretical perspective.

Instructional Leadership

Leithwood et al. (2004) explained, “Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school” (p. 5). In a meta-analysis of school leadership studies, Marzano (2005) declared, “At no time in recent memory has the need for effective and inspired leadership been more pressing than it is today” (p. 123). Although there are many aspects of school leadership, such as resource management and managing relationships, this study focused on instructional leadership in school-wide writing programs. Instructional leadership is a widely known, although ill-defined expectation for school principals. Smith and Andrews (1989) described the principal as an instructional leader as,

> (1) providing the necessary resources so that the school’s academic goals can be achieved; (2) possessing knowledge and skill in curriculum and instructional matters so that teachers perceive that their interaction with the principal leads to improved

> instructional practice; (3) being a skilled communicator in one-on-one, small-group, and large-group settings; and (4) being a visionary who is out and around creating a visible presence for the staff, students, and parents at both the physical and philosophical levels concerning what the school is all about. (p. 23)

In an executive summary that defined professional standards for principals, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) identified the following critical standards among principal's instructional leadership responsibilities: (1) lead student and adult learning; and (2) lead continuous improvement (NAESP, 2008). A recent study by Ozdemir et al. (2020) found a significant relationship between teacher self-efficacy and their perceptions of a principal's exhibition of instructional leadership behaviors.

Marzano et al. (2005) identified an average overall correlation of .25 to represent the influence of principal behaviors on student achievement. *Knowledge* of curriculum, instruction, and assessment (CIA), and *involvement* in CIA are specific principal responsibilities related to instructional leadership with correlations of .25 and .20, respectively (Marzano et al., 2005). Literature has examined the relationship between principal instructional leadership, teacher efficacy, and student achievement (Hallinger et al., 2017; Marzano et al., 2005; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004). This study aimed to examine how efficacy beliefs and writer identities impacted the ability of principals to provide instructional leadership in school-wide writing instruction. A report by the Reform Support Network (2015) identified principals as "the primary drivers of school improvement, and the best long-term investment to ensure effective teaching" (p. 1). Instructional leadership behaviors, including actions and discourse, are an observable expression of identities and efficacy beliefs. Additionally, the nature of writing compounds instructional leadership of writing programs. The act of writing is complex, teaching

another person how to write well is even more complicated, and providing instructional leadership in the reformation of school-wide writing instruction is a significant challenge for elementary principals.

Significance of the Study

This study extended and drew comparisons to existing research that examined teacher efficacy in writing and teacher writer identities (Al-Bataineh et al., 2010; Bruning et al., 2013; Bruning & Kauffman, 2016; Cremin & Baker, 2014; Graham et al., 2001; McKinney & Giorgis, 2009; Street, 2003; Troia & Graham, 2016). However, the investigation focused on the perspective of elementary school principals. The present study was significant in three ways. First, a new survey instrument was piloted that measured PEW and PEWL. Prior to this study, no such measure existed. The collected data on principals' perceived ability to lead writing programs illuminated one potential source that influences student writing achievement. Second, the researcher studied principal identities as writers, a topic not addressed currently in literature. By studying the multiple layers of principal writer identities, findings revealed personal and professional factors that influence how elementary school leaders approach the leadership of school-wide writing programs.

Finally, findings have the potential to enhance existing administrator preparation courses and programs. Most states only require 3-5 years of teaching experience before attaining a principal position (Scott, 2018). Teacher preparation programs that do not equip teachers to be effective writing teachers compound the problem (Cutler & Graham, 2008; Dierking & Fox, 2012; Gilbert & Graham, 2010; Grisham & Wolsey, 2011). Insufficient pre-service teacher preparation, followed by limited in-service writing professional development and training, have

led to principals being inadequately prepared to lead writing initiatives. Future research is needed to build upon the preliminary findings of this study.

Positionality

As a public elementary educator for over 20 years, the researcher acknowledges several aspects of identity and lived experiences that influenced this study. Specifically related to the study are her lived experiences related to writing. As an elementary, middle, and high school student, the researcher perceived herself as a proficient writer, with no adverse interactions with teachers or difficulty completing assignments. Pre-service and in-service teachers note negative feedback from teachers and damaging school experiences with writing as reasons they view themselves as poor writers (Street, 2003). Additionally, as a doctoral student, the researcher has thus far succeeded in conforming to and meeting academic institutions' discoursal expectations.

While the researcher identifies as a "good" writer, she does not engage in writing activities for pleasure, such as journaling. Up to this point, writing activities included work and educational requirements. The researcher was an elementary classroom teacher for nine years, an instructional coach for two years, and an elementary school administrator for ten years. As a teacher, the researcher had experience with Four Square Writing but cannot recall engaging in writing professional development at the school or district level. These experiences are similar to those described by Gilbert and Graham (2010), Troia and Graham (2016), and Grisham and Wolsey (2011).

Later, as a principal of a school in improvement status, a grant provided opportunities to participate in rigorous writing professional development. The researcher had the opportunity to attend Teachers College summer writing institutes on multiple occasions. Summer institutes were week-long examinations of best practices in writing instruction led by literacy experts such

as Lucy Calkins and Mary Ehrenworth. Attendance at the summer institutes significantly and positively impacted the researcher's efficacy in the leadership of school-wide writing programs and providing a vision for writing instruction.

Most recently, as a new elementary principal of a rural school in the south, the researcher observed a lack of writing instruction. Again, this observation reflected the findings of Brindle et al. (2016) and Gilbert and Graham (2010) in that writing was assigned instead of taught. The school district did not provide curriculum resources and writing data was not collected. After purchasing the Units of Study in Writing (Calkins, 2015) for every classroom, and over a span of one and a half years, the researcher as principal, led a series of professional development sessions with teachers on writing instruction. The researcher experienced first-hand how principal content knowledge and high efficacy in writing instruction impacted teacher and student motivation to write. Results from a pilot study conducted during implementation revealed an increase in teacher efficacy in writing instruction, increased implementation of targeted instructional practices, and increased writing time for students. Additionally, writing samples demonstrated students increased in their ability to meet writing standards outlined in the CCSS. One of the researcher's proudest moments as a principal was a personal letter from a fifth-grade student who wrote, "I didn't used to like writing. Now I do." The success with the professional development and pilot study led to the researcher's dissertation topic.

Perhaps most relevant to researcher positionality is her belief that all students should have equitable access to explicit and high-quality instruction that helps them become skilled writers. Moreover, one's writing proficiency should not hinder the ability to enter college or the workforce. While the researcher would not claim to love writing, she does recognize its power. As an abled, White woman with adequate financial resources, she recognizes that her educational

experiences are different from People of Color and people with different linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Additionally, the researcher believes that the ability to write well holds power. When some students leave elementary school prepared for demanding writing tasks, and others do not, there is a critical discrepancy of equity and access only compounded with time and subsequent educational experiences. Therefore, all students should possess the necessary knowledge and skills to wield that power for their benefit or the improvement of society.

Finally, the researcher is committed to the use of bias-free language, but acknowledges she is a life-long learner in this respect. Identifications regarding age, socioeconomic status, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, or sexual orientation used in this study as part of the literature review or works referenced by the researcher, are those used by the authors of the published work. Therefore, they are replicated as in the original work. The publication year of referenced literature may not reflect current understanding of bias-free language. Additionally, any personal identity labels used for the interviews, were used by the interviewees. If labels used by researcher or authors referenced within this study cause offense to any reader, it is unintentional and she invites communication and an opportunity to learn.

Assumptions

The following assumptions applied to this study:

1. Individuals who completed the survey were practicing elementary school principals.
2. Individuals who completed the survey rated their beliefs and practices around writing and writing leadership honestly and accurately.
3. Market Data Retrieval provided a true random sample of elementary principals' public work email addresses.

4. All elementary principals in the United States have a public work email address and internet access, giving them all an equal chance to be selected in the random sample.
5. Elementary principals who received an invitation to complete the survey had the technology and language skills to complete the survey.

Overview of Chapters

Chapter 1 includes an introduction to the topic of study, the theoretical framework, and the purpose and significance of the research. Chapter 2 is a review of literature related to teacher efficacy in writing, writer identities, writing professional development and training for in-service teachers, principal leadership efficacy, and principal preparation programs. Additionally, Chapter 2 examines the problematic state of teacher preparation to teach writing. Chapter 3 describes methods applied in the research design. Chapter 4 summarizes results from the quantitative data analysis procedures, and presents participant narratives. The study concludes with Chapter 5, which includes a summary of findings, interpretations, connections to the theoretical framework, and suggestions for future research. The final chapter also includes implications for school districts and universities regarding principal preparation for writing instruction leadership.

Chapter 2. Review of Literature

"I am what I have written."

Li and Deng, 2019, pg. 70

Introduction

It is a vulnerable act for a person to put their life and self into words and place them on paper for others to read. At times, the author is judged along with the writing. That judgment, whether positive or negative, can have a lasting impact. Consider the following opposing comments shared by two participants in a study by Norman and Spencer (2005) of pre-service teacher beliefs about writing instruction:

> (a) I interpreted the red marks and the comment as an insinuation that I did not possess the gift of writing and that becoming a writer would be a daunting task. From that moment, the dream [of becoming a writer] was over. (p. 34)
>
> (b) Much of this enthusiasm [for writing] was enhanced through my teacher. She did not criticize me for wanting to write a story about a mall. She encouraged me and helped me develop my paper into a complete, exciting story. (p. 30)

Teachers are in a position of influence with children. In the subject of writing, that power can build or limit writers.

One purpose of the literature review is to present an examination of the studies that have been conducted on teacher self-efficacy in writing, writing instruction, and writer identities of teachers. This study reviews the teacher-focused studies as a platform to demonstrate the need for an investigation of the same topics but from the elementary principal's perspective. Research questions examined the connection between principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership, in addition to personal and school factors that contributed to principal efficacy beliefs related to

writing. Additionally, the researcher explored principals' writing life stories to create a narrative portrait of principal writer identities and efficacy beliefs expressed through instructional leadership behaviors.

The literature review addresses five central topics, including the problematic state of educator preparation, elementary writing instruction, self-efficacy, writer identities, and instructional leadership. This chapter begins with a summary of research findings that describe a general lack of educator preparation to teach writing, including pre-service and in-service training. Evidence also shows that programs to prepare principals to lead school-wide writing programs are near nonexistent. The following section summarizes research-based best practices in elementary writing instruction. Next, the researcher examines self-efficacy from three perspectives: (a) teacher efficacy in writing, (b) principal leadership efficacy, and (c) principal efficacy in leading literacy. The review of information on teacher efficacy in writing instruction is significant as it provides the framework and rationale for the present study, which aimed to fill a gap in literature on principal efficacy in writing. Additionally, the leadership and influence of the principalship impact both teachers and students; therefore, the review explores the function of writing identities from multiple perspectives. Finally, the last section concludes with an evaluation of studies that assess the effect of principal leadership on school-wide instructional programs.

EBSCO*host* was the primary database for the online search for related literature, including Academic Search Premier, Education Research Complete, ERIC, and Professional Development Collection. The researchers used the following various combinations of keywords and phrases to discover relevant works: writing, writing instruction, teacher efficacy/self-efficacy, principal efficacy, pre-service, leadership, instructional leadership, identities,

writing/writer identities, teacher identities, principal identities, school improvement, professional development, teacher/ educator preparation, and principal preparation. The additional discovery of relevant literature and significant authors occurred through mining other sources and reference lists. Parameters for the search included peer-reviewed and availability of full-text.

The researcher initiated an inter-library loan request through the Auburn University library if sources were unavailable in full-text through EBSCO*host* or other online sources. All text types were considered for their potential to contribute relevant information to the topic, including books, journals, reports, white papers, literature reviews, dissertations, and practitioner articles. The studies examined represented a variety of research methods, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method. Surveys, scales, and questionnaires were the main data collection instruments for teacher and principal self-efficacy. Conversely, research on teacher and principal identities was interpretive, mainly represented through case studies and narratives, and data collection methods tended to be participant interviews, direct observations, or artifact analysis. The literature review also includes several meta-analyses of studies that identified effective writing practices.

Problematic State of Educator Preparation

Principals do not have any control over their teachers' undergraduate coursework before employment, but they are chiefly responsible for training after graduation. Therefore, principals fall under the designation *teacher educators*. The educator preparation problem has three dimensions; pre-service coursework and field experiences, continued professional development for practicing teachers, and the near absent guidance for principals on how to lead school-wide writing programs and ongoing training for teachers. These issues are relevant to the present study as most states require principals to complete only 3-5 years of classroom experience before

assuming an administrative position (Scott, 2018), although the average number of years a principal spends teaching is closer to 10.5 years (NCES, 1993). A search of studies revealed that educator preparation to teach and lead writing is inadequate (Brindle et al., 2016; Cutler & Graham, 2008; Levine, 2005, 2006; Gilbert & Graham, 2010; Street, 2003; Troia & Graham, 2016; Whitney, 2009). The path to school administration almost always begins in the classroom (NCES, 1993). If educators are not prepared to teach writing during their pre-service experience, then do not receive adequate employee-based training, it is reasonable to predict that principals are ill-equipped to lead writing.

Although organizations such as the NWP and the TCRWP have experienced success in raising student writing achievement through the professional development of teachers (Dierking & Fox, 2012; Gallagher et al., 2017; McCarthey & Geoghegan, 2016; Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2006;) all teachers cannot commit to or afford extended summer institutes. Additionally, the geographical locations of NWP sites and the TCRWP prevent many teachers from attending such workshops. Districts and schools must provide sustained writing professional development at times and in ways that give all teachers full access.

Part of the challenge in teacher preparation is that many students arrive at college or university with a fixed mindset regarding their ability to write, and teachers along the way have intentionally or unintentionally affirmed that notion (Street, 2003). For example, in one study of pre-service teachers' attitudes towards writing, a participant noted a high-school teacher who told her she was not a naturally talented writer (Street, 2003). These damaging mindsets can begin in early childhood. It takes skilled educators to ensure students see themselves as writers and to communicate that writing is a skill that can be learned and developed. Teaching writing well demands a confident teacher with the training, skills, and resources needed to raise student

writing to the CCSS, college, and workplace level. However, pre-service teacher preparation is not enough, as writing is a highly complex activity.

Pre-service Teacher Preparation

Levine (2006) stated "the nation's teacher education programs are not adequately preparing their students in competencies that principals say they need and that schools of education regard as their responsibility to teach" (p. 33). Gilbert and Graham (2010) found that two-thirds of 4th, 5th, and 6th-grade elementary teachers surveyed, reported they received little to no pre-service preparation to teach writing. Troia and Graham (2016) reported comparable findings with their random sample of 482 teachers in grades 3-8. Only 32% of teachers reported receiving undergraduate coursework devoted solely to writing instruction. Similarly, in a survey of 178 teachers in grades 1-3, 28% of teachers indicated their preparation to teach writing was insufficient or inadequate (Cutler & Graham, 2008). Brindle et al. (2016) also found that teachers "received no to minimal preparation to teach writing in college, and rated their preparation to teach writing lower than their preparation to teach reading, math, science, or social studies" (p. 948).

In a mixed-method study that examined the field experiences of teacher candidates, Grisham and Wolsey (2011) discovered that their undergraduate students "were hard-pressed to find an instance of writing instruction to observe" (p. 352). Similarly, as teacher educators, Norman & Spencer (2005) noted that their students did not have opportunities to see writing instruction during field experiences. The researchers reported that teacher candidates observed *assigned* writing instead of explicit writing instruction. It becomes increasingly troublesome to student writing achievement when pre-service teachers do not receive adequate coursework to teach writing or observe quality writing instruction during field placements.

While reading research reviews are more common, Morgan and Pytash (2014) analyzed peer-reviewed literature examining Pre-service Teacher (PST) preparation to teach writing published from 1990-2010. There were four thematic clusters identified through the literature review: PST Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Writing, PST interactions with Student Writers and Writing, Influential Experiences in Methods Courses, and Methods Applied to Writing. Across the literature, PSTs tended to identify as either "good" or "bad" writers, but purposeful activities during required courses could counteract negative mindsets around writing. Field experiences that provided teacher candidates with opportunities to engage with students and observe structures, such as Writing Workshop, contributed to PST's understanding of the writing process and growth as writing teachers. However, this is problematic as few field experiences offer opportunities for PSTs to observe writing instruction (Grisham & Wolsey, 2011; Norman & Spencer, 2005). Further, there were several experiences identified in the research with PSTs as critical to their learning, including writer's notebooks, modeled instruction, genre studies, and time to write.

Myers et al. (2016) conducted a national exploratory study that examined how writing was taught to pre-service teachers in teacher preparation programs at universities. Ten members of a research team, all university-based literacy teacher educators, collaborated to develop a 27-item online survey using a structured, simple descriptive survey design. Survey items collected information about "teacher preparation coursework and state-level writing requirements, respondents' identities as writers, and respondents' responses to a definition of writing" (p. 316). Analysis of the 63 responses showed that practicing teacher educators were just as likely to receive inadequate training to teach writing as pre-service teachers. Only 28% of respondents reported teaching writing as a stand-alone subject, with most (72%) indicating writing integrated

with a reading course. Not surprisingly, time was a theme that emerged as a factor contributing to the lack of explicit writing instruction. The researchers recommended improved policies and practices at the university level to improve the preparation of teacher candidates to teach writing.

Street (2004) looked at pre-service teachers' attitudes towards writing and teaching writing, influences on those attitudes, and the relationship between attitudes and instructional practice during student teaching. Questionnaires and interviews captured data from five pre-service teachers. Following multiple methods of data analysis, Street assigned participants to three categories: reluctant writers (1), developing writers (2), and confident writers (2). Street (2003) observed, "It was interesting to note that how writing was taught to these pre-service teachers had a profound effect on their emerging identities as writers" (p. 42).

All pre-service teacher participants indicated negative school experiences that influenced their beliefs and attitudes towards writing (Street, 2003). One participant identified as a reluctant writer, held the attitude that she did not see herself as a writer and found no value in the act or purpose of writing. The negative attitude was evident during classroom observations, which revealed uninspired and confusing assignments presented as chores to be completed rather than opportunities to find joy in expressing oneself with writing. Another participant, classified as a confident writer, overcame negative school writing experiences because of a family support structure that valued and regularly engaged in writing activities. During her student-teacher placement, she communicated her positive attitude toward writing with students by modeling the writing process with her personal writing. Street (2003) concluded that the two teachers identified as confident writers "could provide students with a passion for writing that the other participants were unable or unwilling to do" (p. 46). Norman and Spencer (2005) made similar discoveries about teachers' influence over pre-service teachers' writer identities and attitudes. If

teachers do not enter the field with a passion for writing, there is little hope of students finding joy and power in writing. For students' benefit, school administrators must ensure that their teachers receive the training and resources necessary to become confident writers.

Limited studies examined if or how limited pre-service training or coursework in writing instruction transfers to practice following employment. However, one such qualitative study by Grossman et al. (2000) followed ten new elementary and secondary teachers from their year of graduation from a master's program to their first two years of full-time employment. At the elementary level, one of the three undergraduate literacy courses was designated solely to teaching writing. The participants' coursework focused on conceptual tools, such as process-writing, scaffolding, and student ownership of writing. The required text for elementary candidates was, *The Art of Teaching Writing* (Calkins, 1994), which emphasized teaching writing as a process through a Writing Workshop framework. Grossman found that instructional scaffolding (i.e., modeling and conferencing) and teaching writing as a process were two of the most prevalent practices mentioned and observed once the candidates were employed. Still, the participants noted a lack of practical tools offered during their methods coursework and therefore relied on additional sources and curriculum materials available at their school site. Grossman concluded by recognizing the importance of school- and district-level professional development opportunities as critical to teachers' continued learning about writing instruction. This suggestion implied that the transfer of conceptual and pedagogical knowledge gained during pre-service preparation depends on the professional development offered once employed. One of the primary responsibilities of principals is to lead adult learning and continuous school improvement (NAESP, 2008). When undergraduate work is insufficient to prepare candidates for teaching writing, this becomes especially important.

Universities that do include pedagogical tools and innovative teaching writing approaches in undergraduate coursework have found success (Colby & Stapleton, 2006; Collier et al., 2013; Grossman et al., 2000). Colby and Stapleton (2006) applied a co-teaching model with pre-service teachers during field placements, who took on revolving roles of teacher, assistant, and observer. While the pre-service teachers reported that writing instruction was challenging, the co-teaching model helped them experience success in working with individuals and small groups of students. In another example, the Write for Your Life (W4YL) project (Collier et al., 2013) integrated "old and new literacies" into writing and social studies instruction. By applying a writing workshop structure within the digital platform Drupal, pre-service teachers completed instructional modules on writing instruction and produced multiple compositions across various genres. Collier et al. (2013) also focused on integrating writing and social studies through informational writing. Although challenges such as technology breakdowns arose during the pilot study, university staff and the participants "agreed that the W4YL project was an innovative attempt to use more social media to encourage the development of writing pedagogy" (Collier et al., 2013, p. 277). Additionally, teacher candidates found the integration of writing and social studies meaningful in a digital platform.

In summary, too many educator preparation programs do not adequately prepare pre-service teachers to teach writing well. Matters compound when students are not proficient writers when they enter teaching programs. Additionally, it is impossible to prepare teacher candidates with the pedagogical tools in every subject to enter the classroom fully prepared to teach effectively. The teacher's role is becoming more challenging with each passing year, and teacher preparation programs continuously change program content to meet the demand.

However, the following literature review demonstrates that in-service training for teachers to teach writing is equally troubling.

In-service Professional Development

In-service professional development can impact instruction and student achievement (Bouwer et al., 2017; Dierking & Fox, 2012; McCarthy & Geoghegan, 2016), but the research that examines writing professional development is limited (McCarthy & Geoghegan, 2016). Also, researchers typically generate research data on writing training from an outside researcher or organization who has partnered with a school or schools as a means to measure the effectiveness of a specific program, instructional practice, or intervention (Bouwer et al., 2017; Traga Philippakos, 2020). When the researcher or organization leaves the school, the training opportunities may cease. Additionally, studies exist that measure the effectiveness of writing training o*utside* of school hours, such as participation in the NWP (Dierking & Fox, 2012). However, data that explicitly measures the influence of principal- or district-sponsored professional development is minimal. In a study by Troia and Graham (2016), over 50% of teachers reported participating in less than two employee-sponsored professional development sessions on teaching writing in the previous five years. However, there are exceptional school and university partnerships that lead to sustained teacher growth in writing instruction.

In a study by Traga Philipakkos (2020) using mixed-method design research, 11 teachers in grades 3-5 and one principal engaged in a series of professional development sessions on genre-based strategy instruction in writing. Although the researcher provided the teacher training, the request for the partnership came from the school principal. The request came after the principal attended a conference and heard Traga Philipakkos speak about a new approach to writing professional development. This relationship is an important example of how school

administrators can demonstrate instructional leadership in writing by seeking out support resources and bringing training opportunities to their teachers. Additionally, the principal modeled a learner's disposition by participating in all training sessions with his teachers.

Traga Philipakkos (2020) designed and delivered a series of writing training modules on strategy instruction across multiple genres, strategies for applying an understanding of genre in the revision of writing, self-evaluation, and integration of reading and writing. The blueprint for all lessons, or the Strategy for Teaching Strategies (STS), was: (a) introduction of a genre via read-aloud, (b) evaluation of good and weak examples, (c) explicit explanation and think-aloud modeling, (d) addressing self-regulation, (e) collaborative practice, (f) guided practice, (g) preparation for peer review, self-evaluation, and peer review, and (h) continuous practice to mastery and independence. At four periods during the school year, trained graduate assistants scored student writing samples in narrative, opinion, and compare-contrast.

The data revealed statistically significant growth in overall student writing scores across all genres between the four data collection periods. Differences in reading achievement were statistically significant as measured by the STAR reading assessment, administered three times throughout the school year. The researcher collected qualitative data through classroom observations, questionnaires, and interviews. Teachers noted immediate, detailed feedback from the researcher as one of the most impactful professional development elements. Moreover, teachers reported feeling more confident in teaching writing and observed student growth as critical to STS's continued success. However, teachers indicated time as a significant challenge in implementing the lessons. One participant noted, "Before you came, we didn't have the time, we tried to find the time. It would've been nice to have the same time every day not when you can squeeze it in" (p. 185). Although the principal initially communicated that participation in

the professional development sessions was optional, it was eventually mandatory for all teachers. The principal also noted time as a limiting factor in writing instruction and the slow nature of change in instructional practices. The study by Traga Philipakkos (2020) demonstrated how one individual can lead school-wide writing training, provide support and feedback structures, and transform writing instruction. University faculty may be limited in their time to make this type of successful partnership the norm. However, with proper training and resources, elementary principals can assume this role. Principals are "best positioned to ensure that teaching and learning are as good as they can be throughout entire schools, especially those with the highest needs" (The Wallace Foundation, 2008, p. 1).

In addition to university partnerships, organizations strive to prepare teachers for the demands of teaching writing. The NWP has set the standard for effective writing training for teachers for over 30 years. Several studies have examined the effectiveness of the NWP (e. g. Gallagher et al., 2017; Lieberman & Wood, 2003; Locke et al., 2011, 2012; McCarthey & Geoghegan, 2016). In one example, Dierking and Fox (2012) investigated how teachers applied knowledge following participation in an NWP event. Four themes emerged through analysis of interviews and observations, including: (a) knowledge can affect teacher power and confidence, (b) teachers' voices can indicate some degree of confidence and empowerment, (c) support and encouragement can strengthen teachers' sense of power, and (d) some forces can disempower teachers' actions. Following participation in literacy academies, a state-supported extension of the NWP, teachers described the empowerment connected to new knowledge gained, confidence, autonomy, and administrative support. Dierking and Fox (2012) further stated, "We suggest that the new trend in education should be sustained professional development, developing communities of experts working together to improve their teaching skills and, in the process,

enhancing education at other levels" (p. 141). It is important to note the researcher's affiliation with the NWP at the time of the study.

The added value of ongoing writing professional development was illustrated in two related studies by Bouwer, Koster, and van den Bergh. In the first study (Bouwer et al., 2017), the researchers examined the effect of a comprehensive, strategy-focused writing program called Tekster. The main goal of Tekster, described as similar to Self-regulated Strategy Development (SRSD), was to teach students a general writing strategy or process, through the study of genre-specific features using a guided release model of instruction. A total of 76 teachers from the Netherlands volunteered to participate in the study and agreed to implement 16 lessons over eight weeks.

Two different students groups received the Tekster intervention at different periods with three assessment events using a switching replication design. During each assessment period, teachers collected student writing samples for descriptive, narrative, and persuasive tasks. During non-implementation weeks, the students and teachers engaged in typical instruction, which was product-focused with minimal student feedback. Teacher training for Tekster consisted of one 4-hour professional development session. In summary, the overall effect of the Tekster was moderately statistically significant, with an effect size of .32 and an even larger effect size of .40 for students who completed all 16 lessons.

In a follow-up study, Bouwer et al. (2018) kept a nearly identical research design but added a train-the-trainer model of professional development. The quasi-experimental results showed that student writing achievement was statistically significant following the Tekster intervention, with an effect size of 0.55. According to the Teacher Efficacy Scale for Writing (TESW; Graham et al., 2001), teachers felt more efficacious to teach writing successfully. The

average number of completed Tekster lessons increased from 10 in the first study to 13 in the follow-up study. The researchers attributed the findings to the mid-implementation, additional professional development sessions. Moreover, mixed-method data collected through observations, interviews, and questionnaires demonstrated that the Tekster intervention program and professional development led to a change in writing instruction mode, from a product- to a process-oriented approach.

Troia et al. (2011) followed six elementary teachers as they participated in a year-long Writer's Workshop professional development experience. The researchers identified Cascadia Elementary (pseudonym) as a study site due to their distinctive, steady upward trend in state writing performance on the writing portion of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning. A non-profit organization provided intensive teacher training which included bi-monthly workshops and weekly coaching and classroom demonstrations, in addition to protected time for planning writing instruction each week. Accordingly, the learning model reflected recommendations by Wei, Darling-Hammond, and Adamson (2010), who suggested professional development for teachers should be subject-specific, part of school-wide reform efforts, engaging, sustained and continuous, and supported by coaching and feedback.

Troia et al. (2011) created a pre-post case study with grounded theory to understand how teachers reflected their epistemologies and beliefs practice. The researchers collected data through multiple observations, four interviews with teachers, and the completion of two rating scales. Studies have used the Teacher Writing Orientation Scale (TWOS; Graham et al., 2002) and the TESW (Graham et al., 2001) in writing efficacy research as a standard measurement since inception nearly two decades ago. Observational data showed that teachers implemented between 70-89% of the professional development components. However, there was significant

variability among the six participants in classroom management practices, such as physical space arrangement and positive and punitive student behavior consequences. Pre-post results on the TWOS demonstrated little change in teacher orientations to writing, with participants maintaining a polytheoretic view of writing instruction. Although two participants showed an increase in self-efficacy on the TESW, self-efficacy beliefs remained largely the same for the group. The researchers highlighted the minimal application of self- or peer-management during Writing Workshop, which they saw as critical to writing success.

As expected in grounded theory, the researchers generated a theoretical model to illustrate the interaction between teacher knowledge, beliefs, values, instructional actions, personal context variables, and professional context variables. When solely considering implementing new writing instructional strategies, the study by Troia et al. (2011) demonstrated the rigorous professional development needed to transform teacher practice on a school-wide level. Quantity and quality of writing training are critical to change writing instruction, as demonstrated by the NWP and previous studies (Traga-Phillapakos, 2020).

In a meta-analysis of writing instruction, Graham & Perin (2007) observed that a writing process approach had a moderate effect on student achievement. However, when professional development was absent, the same approach had only a small effect. In their review of studies on writing professional development, McCarthey and Geoghegan (2016) examined the work by the TCRWP at Columbia University. Similar to the NWP, teachers attended intensive summer institutes on writing instruction. However, once they returned to their school sites, the level of ongoing support was uncertain. McCarthey and Geoghegan concluded, "Overall, the research demonstrates that professional development influences teachers' learning and practices, and there is increasing evidence that these practices have a positive impact on students' writing" (p. 342).

In summary, ongoing professional development provided by school and district administrators should be a primary foundation of school improvement efforts in writing (Wei et al., 2010).

As described, there are exceptional examples of university partnerships and organizations that have demonstrated an ability to transform writing instruction (Dierking & Fox, 2012; Bouwer et al. 2017; Bouwer et al., 2018; McCarthey & Geoghegan, 2016; Traga Phillapakos, 2020; Troia et al., 2016). However, the principal's leadership on teacher preparation to teach writing and student achievement in writing is less evident in the available literature. In one of the few studies on principal leadership in writing that exists, McGhee and Lew (2007) noted,

> Principals who understand and can talk about best writing practices, inform themselves through journals and research, and discourage the use of canned writing approaches, [and] help to create, at least in the minds and opinions of these teachers, a school atmosphere that is more conducive to good writing work. (p. 372)

McGhee and Lew (2007) touched upon how teacher *perception* of principal leadership in writing affects the overall learning environment. The present study sought to expand on this research thread by gaining information directly from principals on writing instructional leadership behaviors, identities, and writing efficacy.

In conclusion, the path to ineffective principal leadership in writing may begin with inadequate teacher candidate training, followed by marginal in-service teacher training opportunities. However, the path may begin even earlier during the elementary school years when identities and mindsets begin to form, which is one reason the present study investigated principal writer identities and efficacy in writing related to instructional leadership. Another potential factor that contributes to the neglect of writing, is the content of principal certification programs.

Principal Preparation

This section of the literature review examines the overall coursework and preparation principals receive as part of administrative licensure or certification programs. As evident from the literature review on pre-service and in-service teacher training systems, most existing structures are not enough to prepare educators to teach writing effectively. If preparation to teach writing has been insufficient, principals may become school leaders without the knowledge and experiences needed to successfully lead school-wide writing programs. When they were teachers, principals may not have received adequate training in writing instruction, and typical principal preparation programs cover managing change, creating a vision, evaluation, and providing teacher feedback (Levine, 2005; Marzano et al., 2005; The Wallace Foundation, 2013) Moreover, administrative certification is a one-size-fits-all approach, meaning once licensed, principals are qualified to lead PreK-12 institutions. A principal with only secondary teaching experience in a specialized subject, may have pedagogical, instructional, and content knowledge gaps at the elementary school level. Furthermore, only recently have school reform efforts focused on school leadership factors (The Wallace Foundation, 2013), and a well-defined connection between the principal role and student achievement continues to evolve in research.

Stein and Nelson (2003) defined leadership content knowledge as a new construct. Although the study's school leaders initially focused on mathematics, the professional development model later applied a coordinated and intentional teacher training design that integrated literacy with mathematics. Additionally, Stein and Nelson (2003) recommended that school and district leaders have thorough knowledge and expertise in at least one school subject. The researchers also suggested, "administrators need substantial experiences of some depth in every subject…and [need to] become familiar with the best instructional methods" (Stein and

Nelson, 2003, p. 443). To lead writing effectively and with any expertise, principals must know pedagogy, standards, curriculum, assessments, instructional practices, and learning progressions of young children.

It is important to situate the preparation of principals for school leadership responsibilities as an extension of the review of teacher preparation programs. Describing school administrator preparation programs, Levine (2005) stated, "The majority of programs range from inadequate to appalling, even at some of the country's leading universities" (p. 23). Levine's report (2005), encompassed various school leadership preparation programs, including degree-granting, non-degree-granting, baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral programs. Levine (2005) pointed to low admission and graduation standards, poorly paid and part-time adjunct university faculty, irrelevant curriculum, and inadequate clinical experiences as contributing factors leading to unprepared principals for school leadership. Additionally, Hayes and Irby (2020) identified five challenges to preparing principals for instructional leadership: (a) teaching instructional leadership via online courses, (b) time in the internship to focus on instructional leadership, (c) instructional leadership mindsets, (d) pedagogical knowledge for use in instructional leadership, and (e) the professor's knowledge/experience in instructional leadership.

In one survey of 925 principals, 67% of principals reported that current programs do not prepare them for the realities of current school leadership expectations (Farkas et al., 2003). In the same survey, 75% of principals reported they are "more focused on the substance of teaching—curriculum, teaching techniques, mentoring and professional development—than ever before" (Frakas et al., 2003, p. 22). According to a report by the Education Commission of the States (Scott, 2018), 37 states require principals to hold a master's degree, and 39 states offer "alternate routes" to administrative certification (Scott, 2018). It is worrisome that most states

require only three years of teaching experience before becoming a principal, with the range between 0-5 years. Therefore, coursework in principal certification programs must focus on developing pedagogical content knowledge and leadership practices to transform instructional practice.

In an examination of nationwide principal preparation courses, Hess and Kelly (2007) analyzed over 31 administrative programs and 210 syllabi, representing 2,434 weeks of instruction. The study included 13 programs identified in the 2004 report by U.S. News & World Report as "elite," 11 institutions that produced the largest number of principal candidates, and seven from a random sample of 450 other programs. An examination of the syllabi revealed that programs typically consisted of five to ten core courses. The researchers identified seven content categories represented in the syllabi : managing for results, managing personnel, technical knowledge, external leadership, norms and values, managing classroom instruction, and leadership and school culture. Investigators coded instructional weeks as *managing classroom instruction* when content included the following terms: curriculum, learning theories, instructional leadership, pedagogy, classroom management, and collaborative learning. Managing classroom instruction comprised 10.9% of instructional time managing classroom instruction, with a low of 8% in typical schools and a high of 12% in large institutions.

In a report based on research commissioned by the Wallace Foundation, an organization dedicated to improved learning systems for disadvantaged students, Darling-Hammond et al. (2007) noted that principals valued programs with content that emphasized instructional leadership strategies for school improvement. The organization identified specific programs as “exemplary”, such as the Bank Street Institute and San Diego's Educational Leadership Development Academy. Darling-Hammond et al. (2007) found that the content of exemplary

principal preparation programs focused on instructional leadership, organizational development, and change management. The highlighted programs had higher recruitment standards based on recommendations and substantial teaching experience. Additionally, the programs,

> share a conception of instructional leadership focused on teaching and learning—one in which principals develop and evaluate curriculum, use data to diagnose the learning needs of students, serve as a coach and mentor to teachers, and plan professional development. (p. 66)

Although ill-defined, instructional leadership has been studied as related to teacher perceptions and student outcomes (Blase & Blase, 1999; McGhee & Lew, 2007; Robertson, 2008). In their survey of 800 teachers, Blase and Blase (1999) identified two themes in teacher responses when discussing the qualities they perceive as effective principal instructional leadership practices: talking with teachers to promote reflection and promoting professional growth. Teachers viewed principal suggestions as influential, including providing professional literature, encouraging risk-taking, and using examples and demonstrations (Blase & Blase, 1999). In a meta-analysis of leadership types, Robinson et al. (2008) found instructional leadership to be the most effective leadership approach, with an effect size nearly three times that of transformational and other leadership types. Robinson et al. (2008) noted, "The leader participates in the learning as leader, learner, or both" (p. 663).

In conclusion, research exists that examines school administrator preparation programs (Farkas et al., 2003; Hess & Kelly, 2007; Levine, 2005) and instructional leadership (Blase & Blasé, 1999; Robinson et al., 2008). However, an extensive search for studies that specifically analyzed principal preparation to lead writing yielded few results (McGhee & Lew, 2007). Research findings suggest a connection between leadership content knowledge, instructional

leadership behaviors, teacher performance and student achievement (Blase & Blasé, 1999; McGhee & Lew, 2007; Robinson et al., 2008; Stein & Nelson, 2003). The present study aimed to contribute to extend this body of knowledge.

Elementary Writing Instruction

Likely the most influential publication on current writing instructional practices is the work of Donald M. Murray. In his ground-breaking text, *A Writer Teaches Writing*, Murray (1968) provided an insider's glimpse into the thought processes and work a writer engages in, and he communicates the intentional and tangible practices all writers employ as they collect ideas, plan, and develop pieces of writing for a variety of purposes. In the second edition, Murray (2004) stated, his book is "a narrative of one writer who attempted to become a teacher of writing in mid-life" (p. xii). Murray's original publication ignited national reform on the teaching of writing, to be studied, expanded, and researched by Donald Graves, Nancy Atwell, and Lucy Calkins, among other literacy leaders. Since then, studies examined various instructional strategies, including the writing process, strategy instruction, self-regulation, and genre study. This section of the literature review summarizes findings from several meta-analyses, as well as singular studies.

Graham and Perin (2007) conducted a meta-analysis of writing instruction for students in grades 4-12, focusing on experimental and quasi-experimental studies. The meta-analysis included 123 studies with 155 reported effect sizes, and a measure of student writing was required for inclusion in the study. A process approach to writing instruction combined with professional development had a weighted medium effect size of 0.32. The average effect size for grammar instruction was -0.32, a concerning discovery as teachers reported writing mechanics as a frequent focus of writing instruction (Simmerman et al., 2012). However, sentence combining

and strategy instruction had large effect sizes of 0.50 and 0.82, respectively. Composing written summaries of reading material, peer editing, and goal-setting all had large effect sizes (0.82, 0.75, and 0.70, respectively). Based on the results of the meta-analysis, Graham and Perin (2007) concluded with the recommendation to "explicitly and systematically teach adolescents the process and strategies involved in writing [including planning, sentence construction, summarizing, and revising]" (p. 463).

In a subsequent meta-analysis, Graham et al. (2012) examined effective instructional practices in writing instruction for elementary students in grades 1-5. The findings were similar to those of Graham and Perin (2007). After examining 115 studies, strategy instruction for planning, drafting, and revising various text types had an average weighted effect size of 1.02. Teaching students self-regulation strategies successfully developed writing skills of struggling students with a weighted effect size of 0.55. Graham et al. (2012) found comparable effect sizes for goal-setting (0.76) and peer-editing (0.89) as in the Graham and Perin (2007) meta-analysis. Pre-writing activities had an effect size of 0.54, and increased time writing had an overall average weighted effect size of 0.55. Still, Graham et al. (2012) illustrated that the number of available true and quasi-experimental studies (*N*=115) is "dwarfed by the number of studies by researchers in areas such as reading" (p. 892). The researchers also noted a gap in studies that examine effective instructional writing strategies for struggling writers.

Graham et al. (2015) studied research-supported practices that help students meet the rigorous expectations outlined in the CCSS in a meta-analysis and meta-synthesis of existing studies. Unlike previous meta-analyses, the study by Graham et al. (2015) included true and quasi-experiments, single-subject design studies, and qualitative studies in grades K-8. The researchers were particularly interested in the writing practices of exceptional literacy teachers.

The data gathered from 20 previous reviews revealed similar findings and effect sizes in previous meta-analyses. For example, goal-setting, using the process approach to writing (including collaborative writing), teaching sentence construction, and strategies for planning, drafting, revising, and editing were all noted as effective practices of exceptional teachers. Additionally, using 21st-century writing tools to support CCSS writing had an effect size of 0.47. The study also noted the importance of teaching handwriting, spelling, and typing to younger students to promote writing fluency later in life (ES=0.55).

Wilcox et al. (2016) applied a multiple case study approach to look at teacher responses to writing expectations in the CCSS. The researchers studied schools that had exceeded predicted writing performance in ELA assessments. All participating schools had a higher than average rate of economically disadvantaged students. The final sample included six "odds-beating" schools and three "typically-performing" schools. Using a priori and open coding, Wilcox et al. (2016) found evidence in teacher practice of many research-based effective practices, such as peer collaboration, planning, drafting, self-regulation, strategy instruction, instruction on text structure, and genre-study. Additionally, teachers reported a generally positive attitude towards the CCSS. Teachers from typically-performing schools tended to have a more negative view of the CCSS, specifically the equal focus on fiction and non-fiction texts and writing, which resulted in decreased student motivation to write.

A significant achievement gap in writing exists between White and underrepresented students. Therefore, principals must enact school improvement plans that include writing practices demonstrated through research to be effective for *all* students. In one of the few studies that examined effective writing practices of one of the most at-risk student populations, Black, male students, Graham, Harris, and Beard (2019) reexamined data from five true experiments

previously conducted by the first two authors. When they analyzed the data of African American males who experienced difficulty learning to write, the researchers found that explicit instruction in planning, revising, self-regulation, goal-setting, sentence construction, spelling, and handwriting were effective practices. Additionally, Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) is a writing instructional approach identified to be effective with nearly all students. Used as an intervention, SRSD supports struggling writers, including students with learning disabilities (Reid et al., 2014; Santangelo et al., 2008; Zumbrunn & Bruning, 2013). In SRSD, students receive explicit writing instruction through a framework based on developing background knowledge, discussion, teaching modeling, mnemonic devices, direct teacher support, and time for students to write independently. What Works Clearinghouse identified SRSD as a potentially effective intervention for writing with students with learning disabilities (WWC, 2017).

Two qualitative studies by Dunn (2011) and Miller et al. (2016) examined teacher perspectives on quality writing instruction. Through focus group interviews with 16 fourth grade teachers, Miller et al. (2016) examined writing instructional practices at Recognized or Exemplary schools, as determined by the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills writing scores. Participating teachers reported widespread use of Writing Workshop/process writing and 6+1 Traits of Writing. One effective approach that emerged from the investigation was the teacher as a leader or guide in the process, meaning they demonstrated a passion for writing and used think-alouds to model instruction for students. Miller et al. (2016) also identified students as authors, and strategy instruction as effective writing instructional practices. Dunn (2011) used grounded theory to examine teacher perception regarding best practice in promoting student writing development. Following semi-structured interviews and classroom observations of

writing instruction, Dunn concluded that teachers employ an eclectic approach to writing skills instruction. Graham et al. (2001) referred to this as a "natural learning methods". Dunn (2011) found that teachers employ a variety of writing instructional strategies, including mnemonic devices, feedback, frequent opportunities to write for various purposes, and learning activities designed to integrate reading and writing. Teachers articulated the need for more resources and time as the main challenges to implementing quality writing programs, especially for struggling students.

In 2018, What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) made four recommendations to improve writing instruction: 1) provide daily time for students to write, 2) teach students to use the writing process for a variety of purposes, 3) teach students to become fluent with handwriting, sentence construction, typing, and word processing, and 4) create an engaged community of writers. However, teachers and administrators have not transferred research and recommendations to practice on a significant scale. At this time, there is little debate about what constitutes effective writing instruction. When considering the limited scope of teacher preparation and professional development, it is not surprising that the effective practices reviewed do not frequently occur in the classroom. Again, principals are in a uniquely qualified position of power to set a direction for school-wide writing programs grounded in research and best practices. However, it is not enough to possess knowledge of best practices in writing. One must also have the self-efficacy needed to succeed in transforming school-wide writing programs.

Self-Efficacy

"Self-efficacy is a domain-specific construct, which means that there can be no all-purpose measure of self-efficacy" (Bruning et al., 2013, p. 27). Research has demonstrated that

student achievement is higher in classrooms of highly efficacious teachers (Hines, 2008). Furthermore, collective teacher efficacy can predict student achievement and is greater influence than any other school demographic factors (Donohoo et al., 2018; Goddard et al., 2000). McCarthy et al. (1985) first examined efficacy in writing and found that college students with higher efficacy wrote compositions of better quality. Although research on self-efficacy in writing and the teaching of writing continues to develop, "advancing writing self-efficacy as a goal for writing instruction can help us help writers become more motivated and resilient" (Bruning & Kauffman, 2016, p. 169).

The present study examined principal efficacy in writing and the leadership of writing as a new area of research. Therefore, the researcher examined self-efficacy from three related perspectives: (a) teacher efficacy in writing, (b) principal leadership efficacy, (c) perceived principal efficacy in leading literacy. Teacher efficacy in writing was essential to review as principals can potentially influence teacher beliefs and attitudes towards writing instruction through quality professional development. Additionally, this investigation extended the literature on general principal leadership efficacy. Because self-efficacy beliefs can be generalized or specific to a subject or task, general leadership efficacy may not associate with positive efficacy in specific content areas, such as writing.

Teacher Efficacy in Writing

A study by Gibson and Dembo (1984) is frequently cited in literature related to teacher efficacy. Gibson and Dembo applied Bandura's work (1977) to self-efficacy in teaching and created a research instrument that established teacher efficacy as a new construct. From the data analysis, two factors emerged on the Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES): 1) Personal Teaching Efficacy, and 2) General Teaching Efficacy. Gibson and Dembo (1984) referred to PTE as “a

belief that one has the skills and abilities to bring about student learning" (p. 573). The researchers described General Teaching Efficacy as a teacher's ability to overcome influences outside of teacher control, such as students' home environment. The overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all 16 items on the TES is .79 and was found to be a reliable survey instrument to measure teacher efficacy.

Graham et al. (2001) understood that "teacher efficacy is a specific rather than a generalized expectancy" (p. 177) and extended the work of Gibson and Dembo (1984) by modifying items on the TES to measure teacher efficacy in writing. A total of 153 teachers in grades 1-3 participated in the Graham et. al. (2001) study. Following analysis of the TESW, the researchers confirmed two the constructs (PTE and GTE) from the study by Gibson and Dembo (1984), but as they applied specifically to teacher efficacy in writing instruction. Participants in the Graham et al. (2001) study also completed the Writing Orientation Scale (WOS), which measured teacher beliefs about correct writing, explicit instruction, and natural learning. To examine whether teachers with high and low efficacy in writing differed in implemented instructional practices, the researchers analyzed the top and bottom 20% of teacher scores from the TESW and WOS. The researchers found that students spent more time composing, engaging in writing process instruction, and using grammar skills in the classrooms of efficacious teachers. Additionally, teachers who valued natural learning methods were more likely to be efficacious in teaching writing. Similarly, this study aimed to examine the relationship between principal efficacy in writing and their ability to lead school-wide writing programs.

In a qualitative study, Al-Bataineh et al. (2010) investigated sources of teacher efficacy. The researchers conducted a study with 21 teachers in grades 1-8 in Illinois. Four sources emerged that contributed to high teacher efficacy, including positive personal writing

experiences, mentor or model teachers, collaboration with colleagues, and teacher attitudes towards writing. Additionally, four sources that contributed negatively to teacher efficacy included negative personal writing experiences, insufficient training for teaching writing, absent or inconsistent guidelines for writing, and pressure from the school environment. Teacher experiences reflected findings from previous studies reviewed, such as limited time to teach writing, and lack of pre-service training, followed by an absence of instruction on how to teach writing from school and district leadership. Al-Bataineh et al. (2020) recommended principal actions to raise teacher efficacy in writing, such as model positive attitudes towards writing and plan ongoing professional development tied to classroom practice.

Although a relatively new area of study, initial findings established a connection between high teacher efficacy in writing and increase frequency of effective writing strategies (Graham et al., 2001). Additionally, according to Bandura (1993), self-efficacy beliefs can be positively influenced by specific activities, such as vicarious experiences. Principals can demonstrate instructional leadership in writing by providing professional development experiences as a means to increase teacher efficacy in writing. Furthermore, self-efficacy can be generalized or domain-specific. Unlike teacher efficacy in writing, principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership have not been studied. However, general principal leadership efficacy has been studied and relevant literature is forthwith reviewed.

Principal Leadership Efficacy

Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2004) noted, "Principals' sense of efficacy has been difficult to capture" (p. 575). Tschannen-Moran and Gareis drew upon earlier works and instruments of other researchers who attempted to measure principal efficacy (Dimmock & Hattie, 1996; Hillman, 1986; Imants & De Bradbander, 1996). In the first of three attempts to

reliably capture a principals' sense of efficacy, data analysis demonstrated poor factor loadings and low item-total correlations. The second endeavor modified another existing instrument that measured collective teacher efficacy (Goddard et al., 2000), but data analysis revealed that the instrument was neither valid nor reliable in measuring principal efficacy.

In their third attempt, the researchers modified another instrument modeled after the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Items were Likert-type and based on principal professional standards at the time. Participants (*N*=544) were public elementary, middle, and high school principals in Virginia. The factor analysis included 18 of the original 50 items. Three factors emerged, including self-efficacy for Management, Instruction, and Moral Leadership. Individual factor loadings for each item were between 0.42 and 0.82. As a result of the study, the researchers established the Principal Sense of Efficacy Scale (PSES) that measured principal leadership efficacy.

Schrik and Wasonga (2019) used the PSES (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004) to gather data from elementary school principals in Illinois using a random sampling procedure. In total, 205 principals completed the online survey. The researchers examined the relationship between PLE, expected outcomes, and actual student outcomes as measured by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PAARC) assessment. Schrik and Wasonga (2019) found that principal self-efficacy and outcome expectation were positively correlated with student achievement but operated independently of each other. Specifically, the impact of outcome expectations on student achievement was statistically significant. Furthermore, principal efficacy in moral leadership was higher than perceived self-efficacy in instructional or management leadership. The researchers concluded that principal outcome expectation needs to be considered in principal self-efficacy research, as it was a predictor of student achievement.

Hallinger et al. (2017) hypothesized that principal self-efficacy could impact teacher and student performance in Iran. A total of 229 schools participated in the study. Principal Self-Efficacy (PSE) was measured by the 50-item Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS; Hallinger et al., 2013), and collective teacher efficacy (CTE) was measured by the 22-item PIMRS Teacher Short Form. The researchers analyzed four constructs including Principal Self-Efficacy (PSE), Collective Teacher Efficacy (CTE), Principal Instructional Leadership (PIL), and Teacher Commitment (TC).

Findings indicated that teachers perceived principals with higher self-efficacy to be more apt to engage in instructional leadership behaviors than principals with low self-efficacy (Hallinger et al., 2017). PSE was also moderately but significantly related to CTE, and PIL and CTE demonstrated the strongest relationship. Hallinger et al. (2017) added, "the affective commitment of teachers is also subject to the instructional leadership provided by the principal as well as the collective sense of the faculty that they can affect positive change in the school and their classroom" (p. 11). The researchers concluded that principals who "lack the confidence that they can make a positive difference in the quality of teaching and learning in their schools are unlikely to do so" (p. 13). As applied to this study, the findings suggest that high principal self-efficacy in writing and possessing the ability to lead school-wide writing programs effectively are essential to transforming writing instruction. Although the societal view of principals in Iran may differ from those in the United States, it is interesting to consider how self-efficacy beliefs may be universal across cultures.

In a recent study by Goddard et al. (2020), principal self-efficacy for instructional leadership predicted collective teacher efficacy and student achievement. In a survey of 95 principals and a review of student achievement results for third graders on the state reading and

mathematics assessment, Goddard et al. (2020) found that "a robust sense of principal self-efficacy for instructional leadership can promote principal behaviors that are experienced by teachers in ways that enhance their sense of collective efficacy" (p. 17). Findings such as this are promising, and the present study intends to contribute to this body of research.

Studying principal efficacy within domain-specific content areas such as writing has the potential to uncover a significant factor that influences teacher performance and student achievement. It is conceivable that a principal with adequate experience and training in writing instruction and high self-efficacy in writing leadership can transform school-wide writing practices. Furthermore, a school led by efficacious leaders and teachers may inspire a whole school of motivated students to write and be writers. However, understanding the role self-efficacy plays in writing is only one piece of the puzzle.

Identities

Writing is a way to communicate one's multiple identities. Speaking of Langston Hughes, Ostrom (1992) wrote, "writing both sustained and endangered him. Writing gave him a life and a voice in circumstances that wanted him as good as dead and silent" (p. 3). Ostrom (1992) added that writing,

> could be a trickster figure in all students' lives. It can give identity and take it away. It can be a ticket to success one day and make them feel stupid the next. The ways in which Langston Hughes wrote to survive and survived to write have helped me help my students cohabitate with the trickster. (p. 8)

As used within the context of the present study, writer identity refers to a person's way of thinking about writing and sense of who they are as a writer (Ivanic, 1998). With the complexity that the act of writing brings to and with the writer, it is essential to understand the layers of

influence that impact authors. If teachers are to teach writing effectively, they must be authors (Gillespie, 1991). If principals are to lead writing programs for a school community, they must be writers. However, binary beliefs about being a "good" or "bad" writer can impede adult and student learning. Understanding how attitudes, beliefs, and writing identities develop is an essential first step in teaching writing well. In their review of literature on preparing pre-service teachers to become teachers of writing, Morgan and Pytash (2014) posited that "writing identities might influence future instruction; therefore, knowing their past experiences, views of themselves as writers, and beliefs about instruction provide insight into how best to prepare them to become writing teachers" (p. 11).

Although this literature review does not explore student writing identities in-depth, it is important to note the influence teachers and principals have on children's developing identities. Dobson (2017) examined ways creative writing opportunities for boys could interrupt and challenge dominant masculinity to create more "equal and imaginative worlds for girls and boys" (p. 90). Garcia and Gaddes (2012) investigated the role of writing in helping 9th grade Latina women discover their cultural and linguistic identities. Principals need to understand how writer identities are formed and influenced, to guide planning and leadership of school-wide writing programs.

Ferdman (1990) studied culture's role in literacy identities, which is vital to consider for students, teachers, and principals. Literacy is a way for us to connect with the world, interact with other human beings, and therefore “the relationship of literacy and culture must be a fundamental component of any analysis of literacy and the individual” (Ferdman, 1990). Ferdman described literacy as a culturally defined construct with close ties to cultural identity. Based on the work of Ferdman (1990) and Ivanic (1998), the researcher would add writer

identity as a distinctive sub-identity under the broader categories of literacy and cultural identity. When there is a divergence between one's cultural identity and the values and discourse of the culture in power, Ferdman stated,

> the individual is faced with making a choice that has implications for his or her acquisition of reading and writing skills and his or her relationship to particular texts and the symbols they contain. The student must either adopt the perspective of the school, at the risk of developing a negative component to his or her cultural identity or else resist these externally imposed activities and meanings, at the risk of becoming alienated from the school; whereas, for majority children, the school's perspective is likely to parallel whatever cultural identity they have. This is less likely for ethnic minorities. (p. 195)

Ferdman (1990) concluded by advocating for more culturally sensitive and inclusive literacy development models where all students feel valued and supported. Culturally relevant teaching in literacy is essential for school leaders to consider when planning school-wide writing programs, as the cultural makeup of the teaching force does not always reflect the growing student diversity experienced in the United States today (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011).

Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) noted that a culturally relevant pedagogy "maintains that teachers need to be non-judgmental and inclusive of the cultural backgrounds of their students in order to be effective facilitators of learning" (p. 66). Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) stated that the principles of culturally relevant pedagogy include a focus on identity and achievement, equity and excellence, developmental appropriateness, teaching the whole child, and student-teacher relationships. However, to be attuned to students' multiple identities, including gender, literacy, writing, and culture, teachers must first be aware of their own identities and how they might differ from their students (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Terrell and Lindsey (2009)

suggested that principals play a critical role in guiding this work. Terrell and Lindsey (2009) provided a framework from which school leaders can examine their own experiences and beliefs through a series of "cultural interviews" and reflective exercises, a sort of cultural auditing or autobiography. Terell and Lindsey (2009) described culturally proficient leadership as being "committed to educating students to high levels…using the students' cultural backgrounds, languages…in a way that all students have access to the benefits of a democratic system" (p. 22). Writing is a highly democratic act; therefore, students should engage in writing activities and instruction that encourages and supports their multiple identities.

The following sections review studies conducted on teacher writer identities and principal identities. While no studies specifically address principal writer identities, the research on general leadership identities provides a foundation for this study.

Teacher Writer Identities

Through the power and influence of their position and practice, elementary teachers can shape writers' identities positively and negatively (Hall, 2010; McKinney & Giorgis, 2009; Norman & Spencer, 2005). Identities are not fixed. They are dynamic, and Zoch et al. (2016) speculated, "the ways teachers see themselves as writers may evolve over time, PD may serve as an activity through which to reconsider writing identities" (p. 3). Therefore, principals should include professional development activities that help teachers recognize their identities as writers and writing teachers, such as writing groups and writer autobiographies.

Zoch et al. (2016) conducted a cross-case analysis of three teachers who participated in a two-week-long summer professional development experience teaching writing. The findings demonstrated that teacher understanding of writing instruction "shifted in response to the construction and enactment of writing identities" (p. 1), meaning that teacher beliefs about

writing instruction changed due to the training experience. District leadership, concerned about student writing and teacher knowledge of writing instruction, asked the researchers to design a series of training sessions on informational writing for K-12 students. Student demographics had recently and quickly shifted from predominately White to majority Latino, with 74% of students receiving free or reduced lunch. Zoch et al. (2016) selected three teachers as representative cases, one elementary, one middle, and one high school teacher.

Meredith, a fourth-grade teacher participant, initially held a negative view of herself as a writer. However, following the professional development, she took on a new, positive identity as a writer and felt it was important to share that with her students. Interestingly, Meredith separated her identity as a writer from her identity as a writing teacher, viewing them as distinct identities. Carla, a middle school teacher, integrated her identity as a writer with her teacher identity. She identified as a "good writer" before the experience but had not considered it related to teaching writing. By the end of the training, Carla saw the importance of publicizing her practices and processes as a writer with her students.

The final participant, Lane, a high school teacher, saw her role as a writing teacher to correct papers and prepare students for assessments. Following the professional development experience, Lane moved to a more student-centered approach, and saw the value in teaching writing as a process and providing feedback through individual writing conferences. Zoch et al. (2016) noted that Lane "shifted from a writing teacher by necessity to a writing teacher by desire" (p. 17). The researchers recommended that teachers' writing professional development should include time to draft, share, discuss, and revise compositions, and to use personal writing experiences to impact writing instruction. The Zoch et al. (2020) findings with in-service teachers were similar to Norman and Spencer's (2005) study with pre-service teachers in which

teacher candidates composed an autobiography of their lives as writers. Norman and Spencer (2005) suggested that leading pre-service teachers to examine their attitudes and beliefs about writing can help them be more effective writing teachers.

In an ethnographic study, Cremin and Baker (2014) studied Elaine's writing identity, an experienced elementary teacher selected as the case study through reputational and theoretical representativeness. The researchers collected data from field notes and classroom observations of writing instruction recorded for later video-stimulated review of five extracts. Writing was a part of Elaine's personal life, and the data analysis showed two identity positions: teacher-writer and writer-teacher. Elaine's behaviors and vocalizations changed as she shifted between the two identities during various writing instruction modes, including whole group demonstration lessons and small group meetings. Cremin and Baker noted the "layered, hybrid, and conflicting nature of the identity work" (2014, p. 51) and recommended continued research with pre-service and practicing teachers to discover how these fluid identities impact writing instruction.

As previously illustrated, the NWP is one of the few organizations with a mission to improve writing instruction by first developing teachers as writers. Whitney (2009) illustrated the struggle teachers can face between their personal and professional writing lives. During an NWP five-week summer institute, Whitney (2009) explored this dichotomy through a case study of one participant, Laura. As a fifth grade teacher, Laura relied on a structured writing approach, "4-Square", but was concerned that the method was stifling student creativity. She struggled with the required daily writing, sharing with peers, participating in writing groups, and feelings of inadequacy as a writer, although she had previously enjoyed personal writing. Laura's experience during the NWP institute helped her become a more fluent and confident writer and

writing teacher. Whitney (2009) noted that Laura became a "competent professional whose insights could help other teachers" (p.248).

Principal Identities

This study sought to uncover how principals describe their writer identity in terms of personal and professional perspectives. Crow et al. (2017) suggested five dimensions of principal identity construction, including narrative, epistemic, emotional, political, historical, and cultural. This investigation examines several of these dimensions within the context of principal writer identities. In constructing identities, principals draw on personal histories, self-efficacy beliefs, and expectations from teachers, supervisors, and other stakeholders (Mpungose, 2010).

Robertson (2017) examined principal identity transformation as related to years of experience. In an exploratory and descriptive study, Robertson conducted a case study involving four principals who had been at their current school for at least four years. One principal, Niall, was chosen as a representative case to provide a thick description of the principal experience, as he had the most years of experience and the most extended length of time at his school site. Five categories surfaced through data analysis and coding, including influence, the thinking self, the feeling self, the acting self, and the believing self (Robertson, 2017). Additionally, three factors supported professional identity transformation: (a) clearly articulated values and beliefs, (b) reflective practice, and (c) role models. Niall's professional identity changed throughout his career, sometimes due to a conscious decision, but at other times the transformation was due to a lived experience. For example, after witnessing a school executive facilitate a meeting through non-confrontational and open dialogue with stakeholders, Niall adopted the same approach in his interactions with staff and community members. Roberston (2017) demonstrated that principal identities are fluid and continuously altered due to various experiences and influences. The

present study aimed to examine principal writer identities as unique but related to other social and professional identities.

Summary

The literature review clarified the type of writing programs and environments principals should strive to create based on research-based best practices. McGhee and Lew (2007) found "evidence that principals who have a strong knowledge of and belief in effective writing practices organize the school and act in ways that help teachers do their best work" (p. 372). Examining the intersection of principal knowledge, life experiences, self-efficacy, instructional leadership behaviors, and writer identities is the impetus for this study. The present investigation applies the same approach as the studies of teacher efficacy and identities, to the perspective of elementary school principals. As an untapped source of information, influence, and power, the researcher aspired to initiate a dialogue about the instructional leadership behaviors needed to expand teacher pedagogical practices in writing instruction and raise student writing achievement. Additionally, the researcher sought to expand previous research that demonstrated strengths and weaknesses in teacher preparation to the role of the elementary principal.

Donald Murray (2004) stated, “It’s time to give away the secret: teaching writing is fun” (p. 1). The researcher would add, based on experience, “Leading writing is fun.” Neglecting writing as a critical subject takes away students' opportunities to learn critical skills and express their thoughts, feelings, aspirations, fears, and identities. Furthermore, *assigning* writing, instead of *teaching* writing, does not prepare students for college or the workforce. This study intended to learn from the top through an examination of the principal's role in writing instructional leadership.

Chapter 3. Methods

"If you want to know me, then you must know my story, for my story defines who I am."

McAdams, 1993, pg. 11

Introduction

One purpose of this exploratory, mixed-methods study was to examine elementary principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership with a new survey instrument. Additionally, principal writer identities were investigated through qualitative measures to provide a detailed description of the writing life stories of elementary principals. The study was exploratory in that it examined an issue for which there is minimal formal literature (Stebbins, 2001; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Stebbins (2001) noted that that flexibility and open-mindedness are necessary researcher orientations in exploratory studies. While the researcher made some conjectures based on existing studies on teacher efficacy in writing (Graham et al., 2001, Kim & Seo, 2018) and teacher writer identities (Cremin & Baker, 2014; Norman & Spencer, 2005; Street, 2003), limited literature existed from the principal perspective. Throughout the study, the researcher maintained a position of discovery to capture the true nature of principal behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes regarding writing and writing leadership. Chapter 3 describes the research design and methods applied to gather data for the research questions listed below.

Research Questions

The research questions investigated in this study were:

1. Is the amount of writing training received related to principal efficacy in writing or principal efficacy in writing leadership?
2. What is the relationship between elementary principal efficacy in writing and elementary principal efficacy in writing leadership?

3. Which personal and school characteristics are related to elementary principal efficacy in writing leadership?
4. In what ways do elementary principal's lived experiences influence their principal identities as writers and leaders of writing instruction?
    a) What are the perceptions of elementary principals regarding how their self-efficacy beliefs influence the performance of their teachers and students?

Research Design

Mixed-Methods

This study applied a mixed-methods approach. Morse and Neihaus (2016) defined mixed-methods as,

> the incorporation of one or more methodological strategies, or techniques drawn from a second method, into a single research study, in order to access some part of the phenomena of interest that cannot be accessed by the use of the first method alone. (p. 9)

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) identified mixed-methods research as a third paradigm in the academy, where the strengths from both quantitative and qualitative methods are applied. Moreover, a mixed-methods research design is well-suited for a topic with limited relevant studies (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The study was sequential in design, as the quantitative data was collected first through an online survey, followed by individual interviews (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Collecting information through the survey provided new data on principal efficacy related to writing. However, the researcher was also interested in the interplay between self-efficacy beliefs, writer identity, and instructional leadership behaviors. Hence, a semi-structured interview protocol was selected as an appropriate method to strengthen the quantitative findings and examine principal writer identities through narrative inquiry, or life

stories related to writing. Applying mixed-methods in this study allowed for data depth versus surface-level information (Watzlawik & Born, 2007).

Quantitative

The researcher modified four existing efficacy scales (Bobbio & Manganelli, 2009; Chen et al., 2001; Graham et al., 2001; Tschannen-Moran & Geries, 2004) to develop a new survey, the Principal Efficacy Survey for Writing Leadership (PESWL). The instrument intended to measure elementary Principal Efficacy in Writing (PEW) and Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership (PEWL). The PESWL also collected information on personal and workplace factors for example, gender, age, race/ethnicity, years of elementary teaching experience, preparation to teach writing, school-type, Title I percentage (the number of students who receive free and reduced lunch), and years of principal experience. A subsequent section describes the process used to construct the PESWL.

Surveys have commonly been used in education to collect data on various dimensions of teacher and principal self-efficacy (see, for example, Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Graham et al., 2001; Tschannen & Gareis, 2004). Aspects of self-efficacy can be generalized or domain-specific (Chen et al., 2001; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Graham et al., 2001; Stein & Nelson, 2003). For example, one may have high efficacy in reading but low efficacy in math, or vice versa. Therefore, the researcher designed the PESWL to study principal efficacy within the specific domain of writing. However, a qualitative measure was required to expand the data on PEW and PEWL and to examine principal writer identities.

Qualitative

Semi-structured interviews and open-ended survey questions were the primary sources for qualitative data. Referring to collecting data on social identities, Watzlawik & Born (2007)

suggested it is like "measuring the unmeasurable" (p. 4) and explained further that identity has both conscious and subconscious aspects. It is difficult, if not impossible, to directly observe a person's identity. However, self-articulated thoughts and reflections on behaviors can shed light on one's identity (Watzlawik & Born, 2007). The PESWL collected supplemental qualitative data on the principal's understanding of effective writing instruction and writer identities through open-ended survey questions. For example, Item 3.2 on the PESWL stated, "The most important people and experiences that have shaped my identity as a leader of writing instruction have been". However, the researcher aimed to provide a thick description of principal writer identities and life stories related to writing. Therefore, the writing life stories of participants were collected to tell the principal's lived experiences behind the quantitative data.

This study utilized narrative inquiry to capture the writing life stories and writer identities of elementary principals. Schwandt (2015) defined narrative inquiry as “a form or genre of presentation organized in story form. Story, in turn, refers to a kind of writing that describes a sequence of actions or events with a plot [a beginning, middle, and end] arranged in a temporal order” (p. 209). McAdams (1993) examined narrative identity, which is uniquely relevant to the subject of this study, and stated, “if *I* want to know *myself*, to gain insight into the meaning of my own life, then I, too, must come to know my own story” (McAdams, 1993, p. 11). Watzlawik and Born (2007) suggested, "If one is concerned with obtaining as accurate and [sic] estimate as possible of an individual participant's identity status, or in describing the experiences of individual subjects, then the interview method is preferred" (p. 10). The researcher modified McAdam's (1993) life story interview protocol for this study (Appendix A). Kim (2016) explained,

> life story narratives develop simultaneously at several levels; the historical, the societal, and the personal. So, we need to pay attention to the various levels that one's life story reveals, while being sensitive to the historical and social layers that the story bears. (p. 132)

In a semi-structured interview, the researcher asks a set of predetermined and open-ended questions, but also has the freedom to ask clarifying or supplementary questions (Ayers, 2008). Atkinson (2012) suggested that a life story interview "is designed to help the storyteller and the listener, as well as readers and scholars, to understand better how life stories serve to facilitate meaning making" (p.115). Platt (2012) suggested every potential participant of a study's target population is someone worth listening to. The researcher was interested in understanding how the writer identities of elementary principals developed and how they manifested in leadership decisions and building-wide writing programs. Therefore, interviews were a meaningful and appropriate qualitative data collection method for the present study that allowed the researcher to examine the writing lived experiences of elementary principals.

Survey Design

Preparation for the study began with a review of available self-efficacy survey instruments. Permissions were attained from authors to adapt items from four existing survey instruments to create the PESWL (Appendix D). First, the researcher altered items from the Teacher Efficacy Scale for Writing (TESW; Graham et al., 2001). Second, items from the instructional leadership section of the Principal Sense of Efficacy Scale (PSES) designed by Tschannon-Moran and Gareis (2004) were modified. Although not designed for school leadership, items on the Leadership Self-Efficacy Scale (LSES; Bobbio & Manganelli, 2009) were relevant to the responsibilities of principals. Therefore, items from the LSES were revised

to measure principal efficacy in the leadership of writing. Finally, items from the New General Self-Efficacy Scale (NGSES; Chen et al., 2001) were changed to measure principal efficacy in writing.

Graham et al. (2001) adapted the Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES) by Gibson and Dembo (1984) to create an instrument that measured teacher efficacy in writing instruction. The Teacher Efficacy Scale for Writing (TESW) measured two constructs in writing: (a) General Teaching Efficacy and (b) Personal Teaching Efficacy. Graham et al. (2001) reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .84 for PTE and .69 for GTE. The PESWL included original language of two items from the TESW: "I enjoy writing" (PESWEL Item 4.1) and "I am good at writing" (PESWL Item 4.2). The researcher modified several TESW items to measure PEW and PEWL. Table 1 displays the TESW to PESWL modifications.

Only one of three sections of the Principal Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannon-Moran & Gareis, 2004) measured principal efficacy for Instructional Leadership. The other two sections, efficacy for Management and efficacy for Moral Leadership, were not considered relevant to the topic of this study. For example, one item on the PSES referred to management's efficacy in coping with job-related stress. While important to the principal's school leadership role, stress level was not directly related to leading school-wide writing programs. The researcher adapted one item from the PSES for the PESWL. PSES Item “Generate enthusiasm for a shared vision for the school” was revised as "I can generate enthusiasm for a shared vision for writing instruction in my school" (PESWL Item 5.6).

Table 1

TESW Survey Item Modifications for the PESWL

TESW Item	Modified PESWL Item
If a student masters a new writing concept quickly, this is because I knew the necessary steps in teaching this concept.	If a teacher masters a new writing instructional strategy quickly, it is because I provided the necessary training and support. If a teacher masters a new writing instructional strategy quickly, it is because I knew the necessary steps to teach this strategy.
When a students' writing performance improves, it is usually because I found better ways of teaching that student.	If a teacher improves in the ability to teach writing, it is usually because I found better ways to support that teacher.
Students in my class understanding of writing change considerably this year.	Teachers in my school show a considerable change in their understanding of how to teach writing. Students in my school show considerable change in their understanding of how to write.
Students in my class make little progress as writers this school year.	Teachers in my school make above average growth in their ability to teach writing well in a typical school year.
If I try really hard, I can help students with the most difficult writing problems.	If I try really hard, I can help any teacher become a better writing teacher.
When a student is having difficulty with a writing assignment, I would have no trouble adjusting it to his or her level.	If a teacher struggled to teach writing, I would have no problem providing them with the right resources and support to be successful.
Students in my class become better writers than other students their same age.	Teachers in my school become better writing teachers than those in similar schools.

Bobbio and Manganelli (2009) designed the LSES to measure leadership self-efficacy. The purpose of their study was to identify critical leadership behaviors, including leading change, choosing group members, managing relationships, self-awareness, confidence, motivating people, and gaining consensus. The scale had an overall Pearson's correlation of ρ=.91. Table 2 shows the original TSES items and the modified language for the PESWL.

Table 2

LSES Survey Item Modifications for the PESWL

LSES Item	Modified PESWL Item
I am able to set a new direction for a group, if the one currently taken doesn't seem correct to me.	I am able to set a new direction for writing instruction for a school if the one currently in place doesn't seem correct to me.
I am confident in my ability to choose group members in order to build up an effective and efficient team.	I am confident in my ability to choose group members in order to build an effective team to improve writing achievement at my school.
With my experience and competence, I can help group members to read the group's targets.	With my experience and competence, I can usually help teachers meet goals for writing instruction.

The fourth and final survey instrument modified for this study was the New General Self Efficacy Survey (NGSES). Chen et al. (2001) created a survey instrument to measure General Self-efficacy (GSE). The researchers reported overall internal consistency reliability of .86 for the NGSES. Whereas the other three instruments were relevant to the construct of PEWL, the NGSES was used to generate items to support PWE. Table 3 displays the modified language of the NGSES.

Table 3

NGSES Survey Item Modifications for the PESWL

NGSE Item	Modified PESWL Item
Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well.	Compared to most people, I can do most writing tasks well.
I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks.	I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different writing tasks.
When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them.	When faced with a challenging writing task, I am confident I will accomplish it.
I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind.	I believe I can succeed at almost any writing task to which I set my mind.

The PESWL included novel survey items and modified items from four existing self-efficacy scales. To generate novel items, the researcher used professional standards outlined for elementary principals by NAESP (2008), the CCSS, and research-based leadership behaviors related to instructional leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Mackey et al., 2006; Marzano et al., 2005; Reform Support Network, 2015). The novel statements for PEW were PESWL items:

4.7 Writing is easy for me.

4.8 I know many strategies to improve my writing.

4.9 I have good handwriting.

4.10 I am proficient at spelling and grammar usage.

4.11 I am good at narrative writing.

4.12 I am good at informational writing.

4.13 I am good at opinion writing.

Novel statements for PEWL were PESWL items:

5.1 I have the knowledge and skills needed to lead school-based writing professional development on my own.

5.10 I am knowledgeable about current best practices in writing instruction.

5.11 I am knowledgeable about many different programs, curriculum, and approaches to teaching writing to elementary students.

5.16 If other support staff (i.e., instructional coach, assistant principal) are not available, I am confident I can provide support to teachers to improve writing instruction.

5.17. Through observations or quick visits, I am confident I can give effective feedback to teachers to improve writing instruction.

5.20 I understand how children learn to write.

The researcher applied a bipolar Likert-type rating scale (Likert, 1932) to measure PEW (13 items) and PEWL (20 items). Krosnick and Fabrigar (1997) stated, "Rating scales are omnipresent in contemporary surveys measuring subjective phenomena such as attitudes and beliefs" (p. 141). The 6-point Likert rating scale allowed for the following participant responses: (1) *Strongly Disagree*, (2) *Moderately Disagree*, (3) *Disagree Slightly*, (4) *Agree Slightly*, (5) *Moderately Agree*, and (6) *Strongly Agree*. Besides the Likert scale items, additional questions gathered information on participant demographics, educational background and writing training, school characteristics, and existing programs and expectations for writing instruction. The complete PESWL is included as Appendix B.

Phase 1: Pilot Study

The purpose of the pilot study was multifaceted. Survey responses for PESWL Sections 4 and 5 were analyzed to examine the preliminary internal validity of items designed to measure two potential constructs, PEW and PEWL. Additionally, participants who completed the online survey provided feedback on the clarity of item language, overall structure, and functionality of the instrument. Furthermore, the researcher conducted a trial interview with one survey participant to ensure the interview protocol gathered pertinent information. The pilot study commenced following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval in November 2020.

Pilot Study Participants

The researcher used convenience sampling during the pilot study to eliminate the possibility of a participant taking the survey twice and causing a sampling error. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling procedure applied when easy accessibility and availability are required (Phua, 2004). Approximately 30 potential participants received an invitation to participate in the pilot study. The participants were retired from or had transitioned

to another role besides that of an elementary school principal. Individuals currently employed as elementary principals were not eligible to participate in the pilot study. Additionally, the principals were within the professional network of or known to the researcher. In total, 10 participants completed the survey with a response rate of 33%. Eight females and two males completed the survey, and all responders were White and from the state of Oregon.

Pilot Study Data Collection

The researcher used Qualtrics, an online survey platform, to host the PESWL. All potential participants (*N*=30) received an email invitation to complete the survey that included a link to the web-based instrument. Upon opening the survey, individuals reviewed a summary of the study and had an opportunity to provide consent to participate. No subject identifier was collected; therefore, the survey responses remained anonymous. The online survey was open for two weeks immediately following IRB approval. Qualtrics survey data was stored in the researcher's university online account, which was password protected.

Due to geographic distance, the interview was conducted via Zoom, a web-based video-conferencing environment. Security features such as the waitroom function, were activated to ensure the virtual environment remained private. The interview was recorded, then transferred to Atlas.ti for transcription and analysis. The pilot interview took approximately 35 minutes. The modified, semi-structured, writing life story interview protocol was used to facilitate the interview (Appendix A).

Pilot Study Data Analysis

The survey records collected in Qualtrics were exported to Excel for organization, then uploaded to Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 for analysis. Because pilot study participants did not represent the target population for the full study, limited data

analysis was conducted during this phase. Internal consistency for the two survey sections that measured two constructs, Principal Efficacy in Writing (PEW) and Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership (PEWL), was determined by calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Cronbach's alpha coefficient determines how responses are consistent across items (Chen & Krauss, 2004). The preliminary Cronbach's alpha coefficient for PESWL Section 4, which measured PEW, was .96. PESWL Section 5 measured PEWL, and the initial Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .95. Constructs with Cronbach alpha coefficients of .70 or higher are generally accepted as reliable (Johnson, 2017). Therefore, initial reliability for the constructs principal efficacy in writing and principal efficacy in writing leadership was high. However, the low number of survey participants (N=10) in the pilot study must be acknowledged when considering these results. Although, the researcher expected adequate reliability for PESWL Sections 4 and 5 as most survey statements were modified from existing surveys with acceptable reliability.

After the pilot survey, participants had the opportunity to submit comments and feedback regarding their experience taking the survey. One responder entered, "One question at the beginning asks about specific training around elementary leadership. In Oregon, many elementary principals have no training or experience as elementary teachers." Although interesting and relevant to the study, the comment did not lead to any changes to the survey items or functionality. Consequently, the PESWL did not change for full study data collection.

The researcher conducted the semi-structured interview with a district administrator known through a previous professional relationship. Although currently a member of district staff, she had previously been an elementary principal for more than ten years. Much was learned during the pilot interview which resulted in significant modifications to the full study interview protocol. During the pilot interview, only questions that were part of the modified life

story protocol were asked. However, to tell a complete writing life story of the participants, and because survey responses were anonymous, it was necessary to ask several of the questions from the PESWL during the interview. For example, to paint a picture of the current writing leadership life of the interviewees, the participant needed to describe their school setting, their path to becoming an elementary school principal, and the state of writing instruction at their site. Therefore, for the full study, the researcher used the PESWL survey questions *and* the writing life story protocol to gather comprehensive background information for each participant.

Phase 2: Full Study

Participants

Multiple sampling methods were applied to reach a target number of 100 participants for the survey. First, an anonymous link to the PESWL was generated in Qualtrics and included in an invitation email sent to a random sample of 1000 elementary principals using contact information purchased from Market Data Retrieval (MDR). At the time of the study, MDR reported 170,806 district administrators representing 53,841 public elementary schools across the United States. To increase the response rate, participants who completed the survey had the opportunity to enter a raffle to win one of five $20 Amazon eGift cards. Dillman (2007) suggested that people choose to participate in surveys based on three factors: rewards, cost, and trust. Building trust through an anonymous survey was unlikely and the cost of the PESWL was in the form of participant's time. Twenty minutes, the estimated time to complete the survey, is a long time in the life of a busy elementary principal. Therefore, the researcher opted to include an incentive as research has shown that incentives increase survey response rates (Birnholtz, 2004).

During the first week of data collection, Qualtrics recorded approximately 20 responses. During the second week, the researcher sent a reminder email which resulted in another 18

responses. Then, the researcher used convenience sampling to invite additional participants. Several school districts in Oregon and Alabama granted permission to send the invitation to their elementary school administrators. The districts were either known to the researcher through prior work experiences or within the researcher's home state. Additionally, using snowball sampling procedure the survey was posted simultaneously on three Facebook groups for school administrators of which the researcher was a member, including The Principal's Desk, Principals with Principles, and Principal Productivity. These additional efforts led to approximately another 50 responses. As the target number of completed surveys was still not met, the researcher purchased another 430 contacts from MDR. After a total data collection period of seven weeks, the target number of responses was reached. After removing incomplete survey data, the final number of survey participants in the quantitative data analysis was 103 (N=103). Cases were excluded from the final data set if the participant indicated they were not a current elementary principal, did not complete all survey items, or indicated they lived outside of the United States. Qualtrics registered 42 partially-recorded surveys, and there were 103 completed survey submissions. Consequently, 71% of survey responses were useable and included in the final data set. Table 4 displays descriptive information for participants, representing elementary principals from 34 states.

The survey took participants an average of approximately 20 minutes to complete (in seconds, M=1158.97, SD=1473.40). Three extreme cases outside of three standard deviations from the mean (cases 38, 40, and 64) were removed from the time calculation. Included in the email invitation and the last page of the PESWL was an invitation to engage in the life story interview. The target number of interviewees was four. Of the 103 completed surveys, seven

elementary principals offered to participate in an interview. From that preliminary group, three administrators, "Teresa", "Ken", and "Gretchen", followed through with final consent to be interviewed. Interviewees were assigned a pseudonym to keep the information anonymous. The other four potential interviewees who expressed initial interest did not reply to subsequent communication from the researcher to confirm participation. Therefore, one additional interviewee was selected using convenience sampling. "Nicole," the fourth and final interviewee, was known to the researcher through a previous working relationship. Unexpectedly, Nicole's email address was included in the random sample of the first 1000 public elementary principal contacts purchased from MDR. When contacted by the researcher about the opportunity to interview, she indicated she had already completed the survey and was willing to be interviewed.

Table 4

PESWL Participant Characteristics

Variable	*f*	%
Gender		
Female	71	68.9
Male	32	31.1
Race/Ethnicity		
Black/African American	16	15.5
White	82	79.6
Asian	1	1
Multi-race/ethnicity	2	1.9
Other	2	1.9
Highest Education Level		
Bachelors	1	1
Masters	56	54.4
Education Specialist	21	20.4
Doctorate	25	24.3
Age		
30-39	9	8.7
40-49	54	52.4
50-59	32	31.1
60+	8	7.8

Variable	*f*	%
School Type		
Rural	42	40.8
Suburban	39	37.9
Urban	22	21.4
Enrollment		
0-150	9	8.7
151-300	29	28.2
301-450	33	32
451-600	16	15.5
600+	16	15.5
Title I Percentage		
0-20	18	17.5
21-40	14	13.6
41-60	12	11.7
61-80	22	21.4
81-100	37	40
Total Years Teaching (Elementary)		
0	18	17.5
1-5	5	4.9
6-10	23	22.3
11-15	23	22.3
16-20	18	17.5
21+	16	15.5
Total Years Elementary Principal		
0-5	40	38.8
6-10	36	34.9
11-15	11	10.6
16-20	14	13.5
21+	2	1.9

Data Collection

The researcher submitted a new IRB application for the full study and received approval in January of 2021. The PESWL was open for data collection in Qualtrics for seven weeks following IRB approval. Elementary principals included in the random and convenience samples received an email invitation from the researcher with an anonymous link to the survey. In addition to the link, the email included information about the study, researcher contact information, raffle details, and potential risks and benefits involved in participation. With

snowball sampling, a brief statement about the study, including the anonymous link, was posted by the researcher in three school administrator Facebook groups. The request to participate was posted twice in each group during the data collection period. When a Facebook group member clicked on the link, they were redirected to the first page of the PESWL survey in Qualtrics, which included identical study content language from the email invitation.

The interviews were conducted through Zoom over three weeks. The researcher coordinated with each participant to identify convenient times to schedule the interview and sent reminders the day before and morning of each session. Principals received a link to the personal Zoom account of the researcher through email. Following brief introductions and an explanation of the context and purpose of the study, the researcher asked each interviewee a series of questions from the PESWL, followed by the modified writing life story interview protocol. The researcher asked the participants periodically throughout the session if they needed to pause or stop the interview. All principals completed the session in one session and three of the interviews lasted approximately one hour or less. The fourth interview lasted approximately an hour and a half. Finally, the recorded sessions were transferred to Atlas.ti for transcription and coding.

Data Analysis

The present mixed-methods study applied quantitative and qualitative data analysis procedures. All PESWL participant data was organized in Excel, followed by data analysis in SPSS version 26. Responses to open-ended survey questions and transcriptions of interviews were organized in Atlas.ti and analyzed through multiple cycles of coding and reflection. Additionally, comprehensive narrative stories were composed for each interview participant. The two subsequent sections describe the quantitative and qualitative data analysis procedures in detail.

Quantitative

Table 4 displays participant demographic information and personal- and school-related information collected in Section 1 of the PESWEL. The means and standard deviations for each item in Section 4 (PEW) and 5 (PEWL) were calculated and are presented in Tables 5 and 6. Reliability for Sections 4 and 5 of the PESWL was analyzed a second time with participant data (N=103) from the full study following the same procedure described for the pilot study. Internal consistency was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Section 4 of the PESWL (13 items) measured PEW and Section 5 of the PESWL (20 items) measured PEWL. Each section used 6-point Likert scale and each rating was assigned a number for data analysis (1=*Strongly Disagree*, 2=*Moderately Disagree*, 3=*Disagree Slightly*, 4=*Agree Slightly*, 5=*Moderately Agree*, 6=*Strongly Agree*). All ratings for the 10 survey items in Section 4 were added to establish a total PEW score, with a score of 52 set as the threshold to determine a participants level of efficacy. A score of 52 represented an average rating of 4 across items in section 4. Scores of 52 or greater were identified as scores representing high principal efficacy in writing, and scores lower than 52 were acknowledged as indicating low efficacy. The same approach was taken to yield a total score for PEWL in Section 5. A score of 80 represented an average rating of 4 across the 20 items in Section 5 of the PESWL. Scores of 80 and above were determined to represent high efficacy in PEWL, and scores below 80 indicated low efficacy.

A multiple regression analysis with stepwise procedure was used to examine Research Question 1. A multiple regression analysis explains the relationship between two or more predictor variables and one dependent variable. The researcher intended to determine if educator preparation influenced PEW and/or PEWL. There were three predictor variables regarding

educator preparation to teach writing: 1) Undergraduate Training (PESWL Item 2.1), 2) Self-Selected Training (PESWL Item 2.2), and 3) School/District Required Training (PESWL Item 2.3). Each of the three survey items asked participants to rate their perception of the amount of training received (None, Minimal, Adequate, or Extensive) for the identified type of educator preparation. A multiple regression analysis with stepwise procedure was conducted to determine if any of three predictor variables were statistically significant ($p \leq .05$) in predicting either Principal Efficacy in Writing or Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership. A *p*-value of .05 or less was used to determine statistical significance, which is typical for hypothesis testing in social science research (Capraro & Yetkiner, 2012).

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine Research Question 2. A simple linear regression examines the relationship between one predictor variable and one dependent variable. The predictor variable was the total score for each participant in Section 4 of the PESWL which measured PEW. The dependent variable was the total score for each participant in Section 5 of the PESWL which measured PEWL. The researcher investigated whether PEW could predict PEWL.

Research Question 3 was examined using a series of one-way ANOVA analyses. An ANOVA compares the significance of means for multiple groups. The total participant score for PEWL was the dependent variable. A one-way ANOVA was conducted for the following independent variables: Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Age, School Type, Title I Percentage, Education Level, Years of Teaching Experience, and Years of Principal Experience. Means and standard deviations for each group are displayed in Table 8.

Qualitative

Research Questions 4 and 4a were explored using qualitative methods. Qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with four participants, as well as open-ended questions on the PESWL. Creswell and Poth (2018) stated that qualitative data analysis "consists of preparing and organizing the data…for analysis; then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes" (p. 183). All interviews and responses to open-ended survey items were uploaded to Atlas.ti for transcription and coding. During the transcription process, the researcher engaged in pre-coding. Pre-coding is a preliminary practice during data collection as a means for the researcher to capture initial thoughts on words or phrases to be used for future reference (Saldaña, 2016). Miles et al. (2020) recommended simultaneous processes of analysis and data collection. Additionally, during interviews and transcription, the researcher highlighted notable quotes shared by participants. Analytic memos were kept throughout the transcription and data analysis process to capture initial thoughts and reflections on the information collected. Additionally, the analytic memos allowed the researcher to consider how positionality, beliefs about writing and writing instruction, and personal writing lived experiences influenced data analysis. Saldaña (2016) described analytic memos as "a place to 'dump your brain' about the participants, phenomenon, or process under investigation by thinking and thus writing and thus thinking even more about them" (p. 44).

The researcher then engaged in a period of reflection, rereading, and working with the writing life stories of the interview participants. Narrative content gathered from life stories interviews is typically analyzed in one of two ways. First, the researcher may "simply summarize the manifest content of the life story interview in order to understand, for example, how the individual describes the chapters of his or her life" (Wells, 2011, pg. 52). Alternatively,

the researcher may compare and contrast the narratives of multiple individuals (Wells, 2011). This study applied a combined approach. Writer identities represent a unique expression of the lived experiences of one person's writing life, and those experiences are impossible to replicate. Therefore, it was necessary to present each participant's writing life story in its entirety to uncover the unique trail of influences and events that led to their current writer identity and approach to leadership in writing instruction. However, it also became evident after repeatedly revisiting their writing life stories, that there were overarching commonalities, or themes, among the interviewees regarding how those identities were formed and influence instructional leadership.

Themes from the writing life story interviews were identified through an inductive and iterative process of thematic analysis. The interviews were printed on paper and analyzed as a text with the researcher going "back and forth repeatedly among data sources" (Chwo et al., 2018, p. 5). Initially, the researcher highlighted the significant "phrases, ideas, or key concepts" (Creswell, 2013, p. 183) that captured the main ideas within each interview and were directly related to Research Question 4 or 4a. Next, the main ideas were assigned to one of two categories: Identity or Instructional Leadership. When an idea overlapped, the phrase was placed under both categories. Finally, viewing the collective interviews as one text, the researcher worked with the ideas until overarching main ideas were formed.

During the first cycle of coding for open-ended PESWL Items 3.1 and 3.2, the researcher identified InVivo codes "using a word or short phrase" (King, 2012, p. 473) taken directly from a section of data. The two open-ended PESWL items coded in this way were:

3.1 In your opinion, what does effective writing instruction look like?

3.2 The most important people and experiences that have shaped my identity as a leader of writing instruction have been.

According to Saldaña (2016), InVivo coding is appropriate for "beginning qualitative researchers learning how to code data, and studies that prioritize and honor the participant's voice" (p. 74). Additionally, this form of inductive coding means the researcher was "open to surprises, to discovering new ideas or fresh insights, which may even challenge the initial research focus" (O'Reilly, 2012, p. 36). InVivo coding also captures the participant's language, including various words specific to culture and identities (Miles et al., 2020).

The researcher applied preliminary Pattern Coding during the second cycle of analysis. Saldaña (2016) explained:

> First cycle coding is a way to initially summarize segments of data. Pattern Coding, as a second cycle method, is a way of grouping those summaries into a smaller number of categories, themes, or concepts...Pattern Codes are explanatory or inferential codes...they pull together a lot of material from first cycle coding into more meaningful and parsimonious units of analysis. (p. 236)

According to Miles et al. (2020), pattern codes usually consist of categories, causes or explanations, relationships, concepts, and theoretical constructs. The researcher engaged in a process to establish inter-coder reliability with the assistance of another trained education researcher. Together, the researchers discussed the definitions of the initial pattern codes to ensure a shared understanding. Then, the researchers engaged in a collaborative dialogue to reach an agreement on the pattern code or codes assigned to each InVivo code in the data sets for PESWL Items 3.1 and 3.2. Pattern codes were added or revised to create the final codebook including the code, definition, and examples (Appendix C).

The final stage of data analysis involved categorizing the data (Saldaña, 2016). The researcher organized the findings into overarching patterns of practice, or themes, related to writing instruction and principal writer identities. The researcher spent time working with the final pattern codes to generate overarching categories for each open-ended survey question. Chapter 4 details the themes for survey Items 3.1 and 3.2. Additionally, Chapter 4 presents the complete writing life stories of the interview participants.

Trustworthiness

Morgan & Ravitch (2018) described trustworthiness as "an overarching concept used in qualitative research to convey the procedures researchers employ to ensure the quality, rigor, and credibility of a study" (p. 1728). In qualitative studies, data is interpreted based on the researcher's judgments, and the researcher's own experiences can influence the interpretation. Therefore, the researcher implemented several practices to establish data and procedural trustworthiness.

Data triangulation was applied in the present study to provide multiple data sources that examined the research topic (Denzin, 2009), mainly the PESWL and semi-structured interviews. The researcher intended to increase the validity of findings by using one data source to support another, and vice versa. A second method employed to increase validity and trustworthiness was member-checking. After completing the first draft of the elementary principal narratives, the researcher allowed the participants to review and provide suggestions for revisions. In this way, participants determined whether the researcher accurately captured the meaning intended in the final interpretation (Sandelowski, 2008). Additionally, some participants remembered additional details or had further reflections after the interview, which were included in the final write-up.

Therefore, member-checking had the added benefit of providing an opportunity for the individual to elaborate or add to their initial interview responses.

Additionally, the researcher engaged in reflexivity to ensure trustworthiness in the findings. Throughout the study, the researcher kept reflexive notes and captured personal reactions, doubts, connections, second thoughts, and initial interpretations related to the research. Saldaña (2016) suggested, "Whenever anything related to and significant about the coding or analysis of the data comes to mind, stop whatever you are doing and write a memo about it immediately" (p. 33). Mainly due to the issues examined in the positionality statement in Chapter 1, it was essential to consider, "the researcher is a central figure who influences, if not actively constructs, the collection, selection and interpretation of the data" (Finlay, 2002).

Finally, another individual trained in qualitative research methods participated in collaborative pattern coding of data sets for PESWL Items 3.1 and 3.2. Inter-coder reliability refers to the level to which two separate researchers agree (Multon & Coleman, 2018). The researchers discussed any differences of interpretation throughout the coding process until they reached an agreement.

Ethics

The pilot and full study were conducted in a manner that limited risk to participants. The researcher attained IRB approval for the pilot and full study before conducting any activities associated with the research. The risk associated with completing the survey was minimal in that identifying information was not collected. Although email addresses of elementary principals included names or partial names, district and/or state information in the domain name, email addresses were not collected or connected to PESWL responses in Qualtrics. Additionally, the

researcher did not believe that completing a survey on principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership would cause mental harm.

The interview participants were at greater risk; therefore, specific measures safeguarded interviewees. Participants implied consent for the interview when they emailed the researcher following the completion of the survey. Additionally, implied consent was apparent when the final interviewees participated in the actual, recorded interview. Identifying information associated with data during transcription and reporting was anonymized by assigning a pseudonym to each elementary principal. Due to geographic location, the interviews were conducted and recorded using Zoom technology. The recording was first stored in the university online account of the researcher, which required double identification through Duo. Additionally, the Zoom account was password protected. The wait-room feature was activated in Zoom to ensure unauthorized persons did not access the interview. All video files were destroyed after transcription.

Regarding ethical considerations for the survey administration, sampling bias can occur when a researcher selects participants who are likely to respond in the desired way (Fowler, 2014). Except for reminder emails and the chance to win an eGift card, the researcher had limited influence on whether an individual volunteered to complete the survey. Additionally, data analysis procedures and results were reviewed by another researcher to ensure reporting accuracy.

Summary

By applying mixed-methods research design, the researcher collected various data on principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership and elementary principal writer identities. Data collection methods from similar studies conducted with teachers (Graham et al., 2001;

Norman & Spencer, 2005; Street, 2003) were considered and modified for the present study's design and purpose. To date, minimal studies have examined the topic of this study. The researcher hopes that the data collected will be a valuable first step in learning more about principal efficacy in writing, leadership behaviors related to writing instruction, and the writer identities of elementary administrators. Additionally, the findings may contribute to existing literature in related fields of study. The study's exploratory nature left the researcher open to surprises in the findings and will ideally lead to subsequent studies with a more refined purpose.

Chapter 4. Findings

"Words are, in my not-so-humble opinion, our most inexhaustible source of magic."

Albus Dumbledore

Introduction

The central purpose of this study was to examine elementary principal efficacy and identities in writing and writing leadership. The following research questions were investigated using a mixed-methods research design,

1. Is the amount of writing training received related to principal efficacy in writing or principal efficacy in writing leadership?
2. What is the relationship between elementary principal efficacy in writing and elementary principal efficacy in writing leadership?
3. Which personal and school characteristics are related to elementary principal efficacy in writing leadership?
4. In what ways do elementary principals' lived experiences influence their principal identities as writers and leaders of writing instruction?
    a) What are elementary principals' perceptions regarding how their self-efficacy beliefs influence their teachers' and students' performance?

Quantitative data was collected using a researcher-designed survey to answer study Research Questions 1, 2, and 3. Qualitative data was collected for Research Questions 4 and 4a through semi-structured interviews using a modified life story interview protocol. Secondary qualitative information was gathered through open-ended survey items. The following sections present study findings.

Item 3.3 PESWL was an open-ended item that allowed participants to respond to the following prompt, "Is there anything else you would like to share about writing instruction or professional development at your school?" A total of 23 survey responders entered remarks, and their comments covered a wide range of matters associated with writing and writing instructional leadership. Their statements are interspersed throughout Chapters 4 and 5 to illustrate certain findings and are indicated by a reference to survey Item 3.3.

Quantitative

Survey

Out of 103 completed surveys, most participants indicated they currently or previously possessed an elementary teaching license (*n*=88, 85%), and 77 (75%) principals attained their teaching degree through a traditional four-year program at a college or university. Additionally, 26 participants (25%) indicated their teaching degree followed graduation from a field other than education as part of a post-baccalaureate program. Furthermore, 41 (40%) responders indicated they had spent at least one year as an elementary assistant principal before becoming a principal. The range of assistant principal experience was 1-13 years. All principals were required to hold a specific license to be a school administrator in their state, and 99 (96%) responders had to take additional coursework to be eligible for a school leadership position. However, only nine (9%) survey responders indicated their school administrator preparation program required a specific class on writing instruction.

Internal consistency for Sections 4 (PEW) and 5 (PEWL) of the PESWL was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Table 5 (PEW) and Table 6 (PEWL) present the PESWL items, means, and standard deviations for Sections 4 and 5. Cronbach's alpha for Principal Efficacy in Writing was .92, and .94 for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership. Both results

establish the PESWL as a potentially reliable instrument to measure the two identified constructs with acceptable reliability higher than .70. Removing specific items did not significantly increase reliability; therefore, the data included all items for each construct.

Table 5

Items, Means, and Standard Deviations for Principal Efficacy in Writing

Items	*M*	*SD*
1. I enjoy writing.	4.96	1.12
2. I am good at writing in general	5.15	0.93
3. Compared to most people, I can do most writing tasks well.	5.29	0.80
4. I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different writing tasks.	5.29	1.01
5. When faced with a challenging writing task, I am confident I will accomplish it.	5.40	0.95
6. I believe I can succeed at almost any writing task to which I set my mind.	5.45	0.88
7. Writing is easy for me.	4.76	1.26
8. I know many strategies to improve my writing.	4.77	1.16
9. I have good handwriting.	4.16	1.60
10. I am proficient at spelling and grammar usage.	4.92	1.29
11. I am good at narrative writing.	4.89	1.11
12. I am good at informational writing.	5.23	0.91
13. I am good at opinion writing.	5.12	0.93

Table 6

Items, Means, and Standard Deviations for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership

Items	*M*	*SD*
1. I have the knowledge and skills needed to lead school-based writing professional development on my own.	4.13	1.33
2. If a teacher masters a new writing instructional strategy quickly, it is because I provided the necessary training and support.	3.34	1.17
3. If a teacher improves in the ability to teach writing, it is usually because I found better ways to support that teacher.	3.77	1.15
4. If a teacher struggled to teach writing, I would have no problem providing them with the right resources and support to be successful.	4.83	1.25
5. I have the ability to create a vision for writing instruction at my school.	4.71	1.19

Items	*M*	*SD*
6. I can generate enthusiasm for a shared vision for writing instruction in my school.	4.89	1.06
7. I am able to set a new direction for writing instruction for a school if the one currently in place doesn't seem correct to me.	4.42	1.41
8. I am confident in my ability to choose group members in order to build an effective team to improve writing achievement at my school.	5.36	0.91
9. With my experience and competence, I can usually help teachers meet goals for writing instruction.	4.83	0.86
10. I am knowledgeable about current best practices in writing instruction.	4.51	1.21
11. I am knowledgeable about many different programs, curriculum, and approaches to teaching writing to elementary students.	4.16	1.28
12. Teachers in my school show a considerable change in their understanding of how to teach writing.	3.98	1.10
13. Teachers in my school make above-average growth in their ability to teach writing well in a typical school year.	3.70	1.24
14. Teachers in my school become better writing teachers than those in similar schools.	3.74	1.21
15. Students in my school show considerable change in their understanding of how to write.	3.83	1.23
16. If other support staff (i.e., instructional coach, assistant principal) are not available, I am confident I can provide support to teachers to improve writing instruction.	4.57	1.19
17. Through observations or quick visits, I am confident I can give effective feedback to teachers to improve writing instruction.	4.90	1.09
18. If a teacher masters a new writing instructional strategy quickly, it is because I knew the necessary steps to teach this strategy.	3.62	1.15
19. If I try really hard, I can help any teacher become a better writing teacher.	4.89	1.13
20. I understand how children learn to write.	4.99	1.04

Total scores for Section 4 of the PESWL, which measured Principal Efficacy in Writing, ranged from 31-78. In total, only ten (10%) principals scored lower than 52 in Section 4, indicating low efficacy in writing, and 93 (90%) participants scored 52 or higher, representing high efficacy in writing. These results are encouraging, as most elementary principals felt confident as writers. Total scores for Section 5 of the PESWL, which measured Principal

Efficacy in Writing Leadership, ranged from 38-113. Fewer principals felt efficacious as leaders of writing, as 28 (27%) elementary principals scored lower than 80 for Section 5, indicating low efficacy in PEWL. Moreover, 75 (73%) administrators scored 80 or higher, representing high efficacy in Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership. Consequently, elementary principals felt more efficacious in writing than in the leadership of writing.

Research Question 1

Three survey items examined Research Question 1. The PESWL required participants to respond using a Likert scale, and each rating was assigned a number for analysis (1=*None*, 2=*Minimal*, 3=*Adequate*, 4=*Extensive*). Table 7 displays the means and standard deviations for the three survey items used to examine Research Question 1. A multiple regression analysis with stepwise procedure was conducted to investigate whether the predictor variables of Undergraduate Training, Self-selected Training, and Required In-service School or District training could predict Principal Efficacy in Writing and/or Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership. The data analysis included 103 survey responses.

Table 7

Items, Means, and Standard Deviations for Preparation to Teach Writing

Item	*M*	*SD*
2.1 The total amount of coursework during my teacher preparation program devoted solely to curriculum and instruction in writing was:	2.13	0.681
2.2 The amount of writing training I have chosen to participate in has been (i.e., self-selected to attend a writing workshop or conference):	2.79	0.762
2.3 While I was a teacher**,** the amount of required school- or district-based writing training I received was:	2.21	0.709

The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.936, which indicated no autocorrelation issue. Casewise diagnostics identified two cases that fell outside of three standard deviations from the

mean, cases 69 and 92, with total Principal Efficacy in Writing scores of 32 and 31, respectively. The scatterplot revealed no violation of the linearity assumption and the Q-Q plot confirmed no violation of the normality assumption. About 9%, R^2=.092, of the total variance of Principal Efficacy in Writing, the first dependent variable, was accounted for by Self-selected Training. The ANOVA analysis revealed the regression model using Self-selected Training to predict principal self-efficacy in writing was a good model, $F(1, 101) = 10.190$, $p = .002$. Therefore, Self-selected Training in writing instruction was a good predictor for Principal Efficacy in Writing, $t(101) = 3.192$, $p = .002$. Undergraduate Training and Required In-Service School or District Training were not significant predictors for PEW ($p = .777$ and $p = .870$, respectively).

A separate multiple regression analysis with stepwise procedure was conducted to determine whether the same predictor variables could predict the second dependent variable, Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership. The Durbin-Watson statistic was 2.031, which indicated a slightly negative autocorrelation. Casewise diagnostics revealed one case outside of three standard deviations from the mean, case 25, with a total Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership score of 38. The scatterplot showed no violation of the linearity assumption and the Q-Q plot revealed no violation of the normality assumption. About 19% of the total variance of Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership was accounted for by Self-selected Training. The ANOVA analysis showed the regression model using Self-selected Training to predict PEWL was a good model, $F(1, 101) = 23.818$, $p < .001$. Self-selected Training in writing instruction was a good predictor for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership, $t(101) = 4.880$, $p < .001$. Undergraduate Training and Required In-Service School or District Training were not significant predictors for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership.

Research Question 2

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between Principal Efficacy in Writing and Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership. The predictor variable was the total score for Principal Efficacy in Writing, whereas the criterion variable was the total score for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership. The results indicated that 21% of the total variance in Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership can be accounted for by Principal Efficacy in Writing, $R^2 = .210$. The ANOVA analysis showed the regression model using Principal Efficacy in Writing to predict Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership was a good model, $F(1, 101) = 28.111$, $p < .001$. Based on the coefficient results, Principal Efficacy in Writing is a good predictor to predict Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership, $t(101) = 5.302$, $p < .001$. The regression model is: Total Principal Leadership in Writing Efficacy = 38.946 + .738 x Total Principal Efficacy in Writing.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 examined the relationship between personal- and school-related factors and PEWL. A series of one-way ANOVA analyses were conducted to compare the effect of the following independent variables on the dependent variable (PEWL): Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Age, School Type, Title I Percentage, Education Level, Years of Elementary Teaching Experience, and Years of Principal Experience. Table 8 displays the means and standard deviations for each variable. The following section describes the one-way ANOVA results for the analysis of each independent variable. Additionally, Table 9 presents the *F* ratios, degrees of freedom, significance, and eta-squared values for each independent variable examined for Research Question 3.

Table 8

Means and Standard Deviations for Personal and School-Related Characteristics

Variable	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Gender			
Female	71	90.45	14.44
Male	32	79.90	16.46
Race/Ethnicity			
Black/African American	16	84.75	10.27
White	82	87.62	16.64
Asian	1	101.00	-
Multi-race/ethnicity	2	76.50	28.99
Other	2	92.00	7.07
Education Level			
Bachelors	1	84.00	-
Masters	56	86.25	15.21
Education Specialist	21	87.14	17.10
Doctorate	25	89.40	16.74
Age			
30-39	9	86.50	9.01
40-49	54	84.47	16.00
50-59	32	93.91	14.32
60+	8	79.00	19.64
School Type			
Rural	42	84.69	18.41
Suburban	39	90.10	12.94
Urban	22	86.73	14.82
Title I Percentage			
0-20	18	86.47	17.20
21-40	14	92.07	12.85
41-60	12	90.75	13.82
61-80	22	85.67	19.40
81-100	37	85.38	13.63
Total Years Teaching (Elementary)			
0	18	88.61	15.24
1-5	5	84.60	10.26
6-10	23	88.09	14.11
11-15	23	83.00	21.07
16-20	18	85.94	15.78
21+	16	92.44	10.83

Variable	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Total Years Elementary Principal			
0-5	40	85.01	16.47
6-10	36	89.00	15.15
11-15	11	94.10	9.86
16-20	14	82.29	18.78
21+	2	92.50	9.19

Note. Means and standard deviations calculated using the total score for PEWL.

Table 9

F Ratios, Degrees of Freedom, Significance, and Eta-Squared for Independent Variables

Independent Variable	*F*	*df*	*p* value	η^2
Gender	10.762	1, 101	.001	.096
Race/Ethnicity	0.503	3, 98	.681	.015
Age	3.524	3, 99	.018	.096
School Type	1.202	2, 100	.305	.023
Title I Percentage	0.647	4, 98	.630	.026
Degree Type	0.336	2, 99	.715	.007
Years Teaching Experience (Elementary)	0.734	5, 97	.600	.036
Years Principal Experience	1.226	4, 98	.305	.048

Gender. All participants selected either Female (*n*=71, 69%) or Male (*n*=32, 31%) from the survey options concerning gender. The Levene's test confirmed homogeneity of variance, $p = .346$. There was a significant effect of Gender on the total score for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership, $F(1,101) = 10.76$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .096$. According to Cohen (1988), this is a medium to large effect size. Females had a higher sense of efficacy in Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership than Males.

Race/Ethnicity. The total number of responses for each group were as follows: Black/African American (*n*=16, 16%), White (*n*=82, 80%), Asian (*n*=1, 1%), Multi-Race/Ethnicity (*n*=2, 2%), Other (*n*=2, 2%). To avoid bias, the data for the participant who indicated "Asian" as their race was not included in the final data set for Race/Ethnicity.

Additionally, removing responses from participants from the data set who selected Multi-Race/Ethnicity and Other did not significantly change the results. Therefore, a total of 102 survey responses were included in the Race/Ethnicity analysis. The Levene's test confirmed homogeneity of variance, $p = .181$. There was no significant effect of Race/Ethnicity on the total score for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership, $F(3, 98) = .503$, $p = .681$.

Age. Participant entries for Age on the survey were assigned to one of the following range categories: 1=30-39 (n=10, 10%), 2=40-49 (n=53, 51%), 3=50-59 (n=32, 31%), 4=60+ (n=8, 8%). The Levene's test confirmed homogeneity of variance, $p = .106$. There was a medium to large effect of Age on the total Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership score, $F(3, 99) = 3.524$, $p = .018$, $\eta^2 = .096$. A Tukey post hoc test revealed that the mean total score for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership for the 50-59 age group was significantly higher than the 40-49 age group, $p = .007$, and significantly higher than participants aged 60+, $p = .015$.

School Type. Participants categorized their school as Rural (n=42, 41%), Suburban (n=39, 38%), or Urban (n=22, 21%). The Levene's test confirmed homogeneity of variance, $p = .071$. There was no significant effect of school type on the total score for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership, $F(2, 100) = 1.202$, $p = .305$.

Title I Percentage. Participant entries for Title I percentage were assigned to one of the following groups: 0-20% (n=18, 17%), 21-40% (n=14, 14%), 41-60% (n=12, 12%), 61-80% (n=22, 21%), 81-100% (n=37, 36%). The Levene's test confirmed homogeneity of variance, $p = .344$. There was no significant effect of Title I percentage on the total score for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership, $F(4, 98) = .647$, $p = .630$. Additionally, it is worth noting that schools with the highest Title I percentage (81-100%) represented 36% of all responses.

Education Level. Participants indicated their highest level of education completed as Bachelor's (*n*=1, 1%), Master's (*n*=56, 54%), Education Specialist (*n*=21, 20%), or Doctorate (*n*=25, 24%). To avoid bias, the data for the participant with a Bachelor's degree (*n*=1, 1%) was not included in the data set, resulting in a total of 102 survey responses in the final data set for Education Level. The Levene's test confirmed homogeneity of variance, $p = .967$. Education Level did not have a significant effect on the total score for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership, $F(2, 99) = .336$, $p = .715$.

Years of Elementary Teaching Experience. Participants entered their total number of years teaching in a general elementary education classroom, grades K-5. Years of experience in other roles (i.e., Special Education teacher) were not included in this survey item. Responses were assigned to the following ranges: 0 Years (*n*=18, 17%), 1-5 years (*n*=5, 5%), 6-10 Years (*n*=23, 22%), 11-15 years (*n*=23, 22%), 16-20 Years (*n*=18, 17%), 21+ Years (*n*=16, 16%). The Levene's test result indicated violation of homogeneity of variance, $p = .050$. Since ANOVA is a robust test, the result can still be interpreted. Years of Elementary Teaching Experience did not have a significant effect on the total score for Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership, $F(5, 97) = .734$, $p = .60$. Furthermore, 18 (17%) of participants had no years of teaching experience at the elementary level.

Years of Elementary Principal Experience. Participants entered their total years of experience as an elementary principal. If a principal was in their first year as a school administrator, survey directions stated to enter "0". Responses were grouped as the following: 0-5 Years (*n*=40, 39%), 6-10 Years (*n*=36, 35%), 11-15 Years (*n*=11, 11%), 16-20 Years (*n*=14, 14%), 21+Years (*n*=2, 2%). The Levene's test confirmed homogeneity of variance, $p = .262$. Years of Elementary Principal Experience did not have a significant effect on the total score for

Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership, $F(4, 98) = 1.226$, $p = .305$. Additionally, the group with the least experience (0-5 Years) represented 39% of all responses.

School-Wide Writing Instruction

Survey participants were able to provide a picture of school-wide writing instruction at their schools. Most principals (n=83, 81%) specified they required writing to be taught explicitly for a certain number of minutes each week. However, the time varied greatly with a range from 0 to over 300 minutes weekly. Prioritizing writing and time were recurrent themes in opne-ended comments from participants on Item 3.3. Remarks included:

- I believe there should be an increased focus on writing skills in early elementary education; however, it often takes a backseat to reading and math.
- We are in desperate need of time in our schedule, not just responding to reading but teaching students the writing process.
- We need it to be more of a priority, and it is not.
- There needs to be a stronger emphasis - district-wide on writing.
- Time, time, time is needed for writing! It is a thoughtful process that takes TIME and feedback for reflection and “fixing”!
- This year we have focused more on math and will be focusing more on writing instruction in the upcoming year. Our plan [is] to implement more writing strategies.

Additionally, 86 (83%) responders required their teachers to collect and analyze student writing samples throughout the year, but 47 (46%) principals disagreed to some degree (Slightly, Moderately, or Strongly) that they had easy access to student writing data. Another PESWL item asked participants to rate the writing performance of their students. Four (n=4, 4%) principals were "Unsure" of the writing performance of their students, seven (n=7, 7%) believed

writing performance was "Above Average," 48 (47%) principals rated student writing performance as "Average," and 44 (43%) participants rated student writing performance as "Below Average."

The amount of funds allocated to writing instruction, including curriculum and other resources such as professional development, also varied greatly with a range from $0-$25,000 in one year. Results were equal (No=47, 46%; Yes=47, 46%; Other=9, 9%) in the number of districts reported to require or not require a student writing sample. More participants responded that their state assessment included a writing component (*n*=81, 77%) than no writing component (*n*=17, 17%). Five participants indicated "Other" and added clarifying comments that while their state assessment required writing, it was in the form of a written response to a text instead of a writing sample for a specific genre. For example, one responder added a comment that the state assessment requires writing, but it was not necessarily considered a writing assessment. Of all participants, 95 (92%) responders indicated they agreed to some degree (Slightly, Moderately, Strongly) that their job as a principal required extensive writing. Concerning training to teach writing, the approximate number of hours designated to professional development on writing instruction within an average school year ranged from 0 to 40 hours. Finally, more than half of the participants (*n*=53, 51%) indicated to some degree that their district had not provided enough training to ensure they have the knowledge needed to facilitate effective writing instruction. Professional development and training to teach writing were recurrent themes in remarks for PESWL Item 3.3. Comments included:

1. The completion of this survey makes me think about the ways we are lacking as far as PD and resources for writing.

2. I would definitely state that we need to put more emphasis, training, and expectations for effective writing.
3. We do district trainings, grade level trainings and follow up with faculty meeting PD. We also encourage writing across the curriculum.
4. Our school does not offer enough PD targeted for specific populations in need of intervention such as ELL's and Sp.Ed.
5. We have recently been reading articles and meeting in collaboration to look at the weaknesses that we see in our writing instruction. We have met with our district level administrators, as well as our instruction[al] coach to speak to this area and have asked for PD in this area. We believe this is a weakness.
6. Our professional development has been heavily focused on LETRS and AMSTI offerings this year.
7. Professional development could be more targeted based on student needs. As a large district this is not always easy to accomplish if you are in charge of one school and do not have a voice in what occurs for the district.
8. I think it's important for students to also know that we are always learners when it comes to writing and the instruction of writing! Our students are often a part of our professional development and we use groups of students to "practice" our skills with small groups!

Although two participants indicated a focus on writing professional development across multiple settings, most responders indicated a need for focused writing training. The stories of the interview participants reveal similar ideas concerning strengths and areas in need of improvement in writing instruction.

Finally, participants identified curriculum and instructional approaches to teach writing utilized in their school by teachers and students. The resources mentioned most often were 6 Traits of Writing (Scholastic), Units of Study in Writing (Heinemann), and writing routines or lessons embedded within reading programs such as Success For All, Sonday System (Windsor Learning), and Wonders (McGraw Hill). The responses varied greatly with several principals indicating "none" or leaving the space blank and others who listed handwriting programs like Handwriting Without Tears (Learning Without Tears) or assessment systems such as iReady (Curriculum Associates). Survey Item 3.3 remarks regarding writing instruction and curriculum included:

1. Our district needs a cohesive approach to writing instruction.
2. Writing is very much infused across curriculum areas throughout our district.
3. There needs to be a stronger emphasis - district-wide on writing.

Qualitative

Research Questions 4 and 4a were examined using qualitative methods, and the results are presented in two main sections. First, data collected from open-ended survey responses are summarized. Second, the researcher presents the writing life stories of the four interview participants. Surveys have been used in previous research to measure teacher self-efficacy in writing and examine writing instruction beliefs, practices, and structures. This study applied a similar approach to measure principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership. Furthermore, efficacy beliefs manifest through communication and behavior. As such, the researcher was interested in expanding on the quantitative data findings of this study with additional evidence gathered through narrative inquiry. Through a modified life story semi-structured interview protocol, principal identities as writers and leaders of writing instruction were also examined.

Writing Instruction

While not a research question, it was important to understand principal knowledge regarding writing instruction to interpret quantitative survey findings. For example, PESWL Item 5.9 measured principal efficacy in writing leadership, "With my experience and competence, I can usually help teachers meet goals for writing instruction." One open-ended question gathered data to describe the principal's understanding of effective writing practices. PESWL Item 3.1 stated, "In your opinion, what does effective writing instruction look like?" Table 10 shows the frequencies of writing instructional practices noted by participants. The codebook, including definitions and examples for each code, is included as Appendix C. The practices that represent the upper 60% of all codes were: Gradual Release, Teacher Feedback, Explicit Instruction, Grammar and Conventions, Writing Process, Integrated Subjects, and Workshop Model.

Table 10

Frequencies of Codes for Writing Instruction

Code	Frequency	%
Gradual Release	38	0.14
Teacher Feedback	27	0.10
Explicit Instruction	27	0.10
Grammar and Conventions	22	0.08
Writing Process	21	0.07
Integrated Subjects	19	0.07
Workshop Model	19	0.07
Authentic Purpose	18	0.06
Time	14	0.05
Practice	14	0.05
Standards-Based	13	0.05
Assessment	11	0.04
Scaffolds and Supports	11	0.04
Peer Collaboration	11	0.04
Mentor Texts	8	0.03
Express	8	0.03
Total	281	1.0

Influences on the Identities of Leaders of Writing

For survey item 3.2, principals identified the most important people and experiences that shaped their identity as a leader of writing instruction. The same approach to coding the responses described in Chapter 3 was applied to analyze participant comments and establish reliability in data interpretation. Table 11 presents the findings, organized into the sources of influence. The codebook, including definitions and examples, is included as Appendix C. The codes that represented at least 60% of the sources identified by participants as influential to their identity as a leader of writing were: N/A or Unsure, Staff, Mentor, Literacy Expert, and District Staff. Chapter 5 examines these findings further and how these findings are represented in the life stories of the interview participants.

Table 11

Frequencies of Codes for Influence on Principal Writer Identity

Code	Frequency	%
N/A or Unsure	19	0.14
Staff	17	0.13
Mentor	16	0.12
Literacy Expert	14	0.11
District Staff	10	0.07
Higher Education Teacher	9	0.07
Writing Activity	8	0.06
Experience	8	0.06
Curriculum or Program	6	0.04
Curriculum Design	4	0.03
Total	134	1.0

Writing Life Stories

Narrative inquiry was chosen as the primary qualitative research method to examine Research Questions 4 and 4a. McAdams's (2008) Life Story Interview Protocol was modified to reveal influential writing episodes experienced by participants. The life story approach by

McAdams was uniquely suited to the purpose of this study as it focuses on understanding one's identity. Furthermore, as learned through the pilot study interview, it was also necessary to review several items from the PESWL to develop a complete picture of the participant's leadership in writing at their school. The researcher attempted to present the writing life stories of each participant as comprehensively as possible.

Nicole

"You can really connect to a person through their writing."

Nicole, an African American female, is the textbook definition of a life-long learner. At 41, she has finished two master's programs, taken and passed the National Board Certification twice, and is well on the way to her doctorate. After 12 years of teaching second and third grade and five years as an assistant principal in elementary and high school, Nicole is now in her third year as the principal of a rural K-5 school in the south. Writing has been a cherished part of her personal life from an early age, but she struggles to find a path to implement effective writing instruction at her current school.

Part of the challenge is the lack of a specific writing curriculum. Nicole identified the 12-year old reading basal program as the only resource her teachers have to teach writing. Regarding creating a framework for writing instruction, she expressed a need for guidance and support from colleagues and district staff. Nicole described her challenge with instructional leadership in writing, "I know the next step is just looking at writing as a whole. As the administrator, it's a daunting task to know even where to start and whom to communicate with to get the resources that you need." She clarified further, "Professionally, as a leader, not even just finding the next step, but the *first* step, and the steps that follow it, to help our teachers to be equipped to educate our students on effective writing." She identified individual teachers at her

school who stand out as proficient writing teachers and sees their leadership as a possible means to impact writing instruction school-wide. Nicole stated, "I'm going to allow that teacher who is doing such a good job to be a leader for us in this process of just allowing more opportunities for kids to express themselves in writing." Nicole described a common issue she has experienced with district leadership.

> Every time that they ask, I don't care what district you're in, and they say, what is the need that you have for PD? And people always say writing. It's almost like it's a bad word because you never really see it come. There's nowhere that I've been that you say, this is an area [of need]. This is how we're going to attack it.

There are no school or district writing samples or assessments administered, teachers do not score student writing, and writing data is not a part of school improvement planning. However, the state assessment does require students to compose a written response to a text. For example, the assessment might expect students to write an essay that compares characters from two texts and provide text evidence to support their claims. However, this is a new testing requirement for the 2020-2021 school year, and student achievement data was not available as of the date of this publication.

When asked to describe effective writing instruction, Nicole continued to return to the idea that writing is a means to express oneself. Additionally, she noted that students should have a choice in their writing and the importance of teaching writing as a process and a craft that can be honed. With one of her masters in counseling, Nicole also saw writing as an outlet for children,

> giving kids the opportunity and an outlet. We were talking earlier about the mental health and things like that, giving them that outlet to be able to put their thoughts and

> feelings down. Otherwise, a lot of times they're holding it in and not communicating it to people verbally. So if you're not communicating it verbally nor being able to get it out [in writing], you have to have some kind of outlet to be able to express your feelings and emotions.

The notion of writing as an outlet for emotions was a theme that revealed itself later when Nicole outlined her personal writing life story. Additionally, she described writing as a rigorous academic task that requires students to think critically and demonstrate learning. She explained, "One of the best ways to communicate your thoughts is to be able to put it in writing. That's a high level of understanding being able to communicate [in writing]." Nicole summarized her concern for students today:

> There is a need as we look at this next generation. With so many shorthand writing devices with text messages and social media, I really, I'm really concerned about the next generation and their abilities to really communicate through writing.

Nicole was also very aware that writing is a critical, missing component in elementary school and succinctly articulated what she viewed as problematic.

> I would definitely say as the shift went from not focusing on the writing, that as a profession altogether, that it has pretty much gone by the wayside of, oh, we have to get proficient readers. But what is a proficient reader when they can't communicate in writing? And you're going to need writing in everything you do in life. ...it's not a huge focus. We say to implement it in with other things, but we all know that when you [incorporate] things in [with other subjects], a lot of times things can get lost in the shuffle. So just the fact that it's not an important, or seen as an important stand-alone…

> it's just as important as reading. To be proficient in reading, you need to be proficient in your writing as well.

Nicole explained a noticeable gap in preparation to teach writing and lead writing instruction as a school administrator. She shared, "We had to *do* a lot of writing, but they didn't do anything about teaching us how to teach writing." Nicole recognized she has work to do with her staff and students around writing instruction, but there is no doubt that she values writing as an essential life skill.

When asked to describe how her beliefs about writing affect her teachers and students, Nicole shared

> I do not feel like my opinions and the value that I see in writing has made an impactful influence just yet. Our school understands that is important and expected, but I do not feel the focus has been placed on it with true follow ups. I believe that the majority of our staff shares in my beliefs on the importance on writing, but sees it as an uphill battle and not clear on where to start. The directions will need to come from my leadership and district level. I believe that many of our students are seeing the value of writing to communicate, but there is still a lot of work to be done in educating them in different forms of writing.

Nicole's true love for writing quickly became evident as the conversation shifted from writing related to work as a school leader to her personal writing life. She shared, "I think I've always loved writing." Nicole added, "I've always had this desire to express myself through writing."

Nicole titled one of the earliest chapters in her writing life as “A Tribute to My Dad”. This chapter in her life revealed the deeply personal nature of writing, its permanence, and the ability for writing to connect people.

> My 6th grade year, when I really found myself expressing myself through writing, that’s when my dad was deployed to Saudi Arabia and my mom was left here with the 6 children. So it was very challenging for her. But I would find myself writing a lot of poems. I would write to my father. Not only did I write poems and letters, but I found myself writing songs that I composed and we would, myself and my younger siblings, would record them on those little small recordings. Even to this day 37 years later, my dad can remember the songs that I wrote for him. I could sing one now. He remembers those songs, and he would say he would be in his bunk at night playing the recording and the other guys would just listen.

Without hesitation, Nicole sang the song she wrote for her dad so many years ago.

> *{Sings}….*
>
> *Mmm….well, well I know a man named Ben.*
>
> *He’s a very, very good friend.*
>
> *He’s a father, he’s a friend, he’s family.*
>
> *Well, well he’s been gone for a very long time.*
>
> *I can’t seem to get him off my mind.*
>
> *He’s a father, he’s a friend, he’s family.*
>
> *I said he’s a father, he’s a friend, he’s family.*

She also wrote a poem for her mother when she was diagnosed with cancer. Nicole shared, “I just remember the flow of my emotions and putting that into writing. It helps you get through

difficult times. It helps you express your joy and joyous times." She made her connection between writing and emotion clear. Nicole stated, "That's one thing that I love about writing, you can always go back and you can feel those same emotions when you're reading what you felt at that time."

Next, Nicole described her experiences with two influential high school teachers, critical to her development as a writer. She titled this chapter in her life "Preparation", and identifies her time with them as a turning point in her writing life.

> The courses were just a place where you could be free and creative. Although they were very hard on us as far as what the expectations were, they had a great balance. Both of the teachers...didn't stifle your creativity in the writing. You know, they would let the thoughts flow and you get everything out, then we would come back and refine it. I think I've always loved writing, but I think that they helped to refine it. ...It wasn't even about the grade. It was about the process. It was about the journey of being able to write. And I still remember that to this day.

This concept of "English" class in high school and college was an interesting one for Nicole to consider. She shared an amusing conversation she had with her son, "My son, in college, he asked me 'Mom, why do they call it English class?' He said, "All I'm doing is writing papers. They should just call it writing!"

Nicole found her ability to express herself advantageous later in life during the National Board Certification process. Nicole shared, "So that process ended up being pretty easy for me and I passed the first time with flying scores just because I was able to articulate what I do." Additionally, the theme of collaboration in writing continued in Nicole's writing story, as she explained how she survived the certification process with several of her peers.

> We would meet up at the coffee shop, even though I don't drink coffee, we would meet up at the coffee shop on Saturday mornings and read each other's writing. So just being able to take your writing and let someone else look at it. You know, a lot of times you may think you're communicating something, ...but if it's not to the readers' understanding, then there's some miscommunication there.

As the conversation came to a close, unsurprisingly, when asked to identify the theme of her writing life, Nicole was quick to say, "Express yourself." Whether conveying her work as a teacher for the National Board Certification or writing a poem to her mother, Nicole uses writing to express her identity and love for others. She sees writing as a way to connect to others. Nicole shared, "It is who you are, and it's going to show. It's so vivid and so personable. You can really connect to a person through their writing."

Teresa

"Am I a writer? Do I have a writing life?"

In her 9th year at a rural elementary school, Teresa's instructional leadership in writing instruction is tangible. Her staff follows the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IBPYP) and a 50/50 bilingual model with instruction in English and Spanish. Using a menu of curriculum resources, teachers plan transdisciplinary units around six themes during the year, weaving language arts, math, social studies, science, and the arts together seamlessly throughout the school day. Teresa, a White female just on the other side of 50, draws on her 14 years of teaching experience from kindergarten to 8th grade and her college major in English to support her teachers as they implement writing instruction.

Teresa shared that while there is no specific district emphasis on writing, it is a focus at her school because "...it is important to me. And it's something that I can understand." She

described intentional work to improve student writing achievement that began at the start of her tenure as principal many years ago:

> Our writing scores when I came in were terrible. So we did a lot of work and made it better...So when I taught 7th and 8th grade, I taught English right? And I taught kids how to analyze their papers against a rubric. So now I've taught this whole school how to do that for their kids and how to set those goals and I think it's something that will carry on because everybody's been a part of the work.

Illustrating the understanding that efficacy beliefs can be content-specific, Teresa identified the challenges in instructional leadership in math. Based on her lived experiences and education background in writing, she sees a path to leading writing instruction at her school but struggles to guide similar improvement in math,

> our math scores are abysmal. Especially compared with our writing scores... But I can't figure out to do the same thing with math. I don't have that background. I don't have that expertise. We've tried to replicate some things like what we do with writing. We've tried for probably four years now.

Writing is a requirement on the state assessment, and students receive a specific score for writing performance. While the test does not require students to write to a prompt for a particular genre, students compose written responses to a text. For example, the assessment might ask students to compare settings from two passages and describe how setting affects the stories. Teresa explained that students engage in this type of "written-response-to-text" extensively throughout the school year, across the transdisciplinary units. She explained that while her staff and students do a lot of work around opinion, narrative, and informational

writing, it is not enough to develop well-rounded writers. Teresa added, "they need to be able to analyze literature. That's something they have to be able to do for the rest of their lives."

Teresa and her staff engage in multiple practices to support writing instruction and student learning. She explained teachers worked intensively in 2015 on articulating writing assessment rubrics that progress logically from kindergarten to 5th grade. Using standards-based grading practices, staff regularly team-score student writing samples, noting growth from pre- to post-assessments following a six-week unit. Students have specific writing goals, self-assess their writing, and engage in the writing process, drafting and revising pieces throughout the unit of instruction. Teachers deliver writing instruction through a workshop model, facilitate daily writing conferences with students, and meet with Teresa periodically during the school year to analyze student data. In addition to developing strong teachers of writing and student writers at her school, she identified the writing demands required for her job and how it impacts her personal writing life.

> I feel that I have so much, so much that happens with work, there's a lot of letters I write constantly for parents, newsletters, and emails and all of those pieces, that I don't necessarily have the mental space for other types of writing.

Teresa sees a direct connection between her efficacy around writing and the performance of her teachers and students. She shared

> I think that having been an accomplished writing teacher, I am confident about writing instruction. I know best practice and have taught these expectations to the educators at my school. We meet regularly (5-6 times per year in grade levels) to discuss writing instruction, student work, and how to help students to set writing goals. Additionally, the act of writing is not scary or worrisome to me. Again, this confidence permeates the

school. Teachers have clarity regarding the writing expectations. Most of our process is written and accessible. Some pieces are passed along through team writing meetings throughout the year. Students write emails to me and they create posters for the school. They are confident writers as well. Their performance on pre and post writing units demonstrates an increase in achievement.

As the conversation moved to Teresa's journey as a writer, she described her intense focus and early love of reading, sometimes feeling at odds with her family. Being born legally blind made playing sports a challenge, so she found comfort in reading. Her earliest memory of writing was the laborious practice and feelings of misery writing spelling words, seemingly millions of times. Not until high school did her memories shift to composing significant writing pieces, and the first detailed recollection was both painful and motivating.

I was in my first honors English class and, I had always skated by and just kind done whatever was the bare minimum for writing papers and things like that. I didn't…it's not that I didn't enjoy it, it's just that I would much rather read other people's stories. I enjoyed that. So a senior in high school and I had an assignment and it was a research assignment and I pretty well blew it off and got an F. And that day…you get your paper back and you have to stand up and you had 15 minutes to present your learning. So it was crappy, and I was like "Ughh"…. So I didn't ever want that to happen again. And so I had to learn how to write really fast. And that teacher was very …I mean she's great. We're Facebook friends at this point. She was a very inspirational teacher because she taught me that I couldn't get away with things that I had always been able to get away with. So then I had to write. And I became really good at, so I had always enjoyed reading fictional stories, but I was really good at researching and then putting

the thesis together and putting the information together and making something really coherent out of a lot of information.

After graduating from college with degrees in English and education, Teresa identified an intermission in her personal writing life. Then she described a turning point in her beliefs about herself as a writing teacher.

> My school wanted me to move from 7th to 8th grade, because the state writing assessment moved from 7th to 8th grade. That was something that they told me, through wanting me to move to 8th grade, that they valued my work and they valued what I did, and they wanted me to continue doing it. And so it was a school where people didn't change grade levels. It was a school where, you are what you are. To move me into the 8th grade to continue working with kids on the writing assessment was a high compliment to me as a teacher and as someone who understands the writing process and how to make other people better at it.

Teresa stated, "I don't really think about myself as a writer." However, she went on to describe multiple, collaborative writing projects. She explained a particularly poignant venture, working on a screenplay with her husband.

> He printed out a copy for both of us, and we both just sat and made all of these notes and went through it page by page in terms of what could be cut, what needed a little more information, what didn't work well. So it was that editing process. And that worked really, really well. And it was…it was inspiring to me because, in working on that together, I mean, we've been married for 28 years, so working on that together over the kitchen table, it was really unique and interesting to see how his perspective and my perspective, where they diverged and where they converged. And you know, how

> easily he accepted suggestions that I had. He didn't say, "No this is my story" or whatever. He wanted my opinion and he wanted me to be a participant in that story. It was just a really, I guess inspiring is the best word I have for it.

In yet another writing endeavor that blurred the lines between personal and professional writing, Teresa discussed a book she is working on with a previous colleague. The book is work-related and a culmination of their collaborative experiences working in an IBPYP school.

> It's kind of a how-to book. It's our stories of how we led our school together and things that we did that were different things that we tried. Like, we do inquiry based PD, and just all kinds of different things that are unique. It's that story. We'll see if it ever becomes. We have our chapters, we've written a couple of them, we know where it's going, but it's been a process for a couple of years. So we'll see if it ever comes to anything real.

The theme of collaboration in writing continued to permeate Teresa's statements throughout the interview. Passing on this wisdom to her children, she explained that writers should have a "...wide community of people who love and appreciate you and want you to be successful, to be there to help you with editing, to help you with really telling your story. Whatever that is."

Looking forward to her writing future, Teresa has big plans. Once retired, which may be very soon, in addition to finishing the book with her colleague, she and her husband intend to continue their shared writing lives.

> My husband and I are going to move away to a quiet beach. We already have a plan. We already have a house, and we're going to write books together and I'll narrate them for

Audible, and he'll turn it into a screenplay, and we'll see where that goes. It's definitely a very creative venture that we're hoping to move towards next.

Still, Teresa is unsure whether or not she identities as a writer. Having a final moment to reflect on the interview process, she noted

> It's interesting because I have been, in the back of my mind I have been kind of thinking about…am I a writer? Do I have a writing life? I know I'm a writing teacher, and I know I can do that. I know that I can help other people to become better writers. It's interesting because I don't really think about myself as a writer. But then, I'm like, but then there's this book, then there's this series that my husband and I are working on, and yeah. So it's kind of interesting. I do have a writing life.

Gretchen

"It's always been easy for me."

Gretchen is the principal of an elementary school that serves the last Indian Reserve in her home state. With an enrollment of approximately 190 students, she describes the setting as "as rural as you can get." Gretchen, a White female who wears double hats as a principal and Special Education Coordinator for the district, recognizes that her life experiences may be unlike those of her students and families and how this impacts her work as a leader.

> I was really blessed in school. And that's what I work with my teachers…those who don't know what it's like to fail in school...don't know what it's like to not be able to read. Don't' know what it's like to not be able to learn. I never had that experience either...

Before her years as a school administrator, she was a teacher for 15 years and taught various grade levels and subjects, including kindergarten and 8th-grade math. Even though she has 25

years of experience as a principal, Gretchen is only in her second year leading her current school. She reflected on the instructional leadership struggle of prioritizing improvement efforts and content instruction:

> So you've got a sixth grade class of 25 kids; 2 of them are on grade level, 18 of them are first or kinder level. The focus has been strictly on reading. Reading, reading, reading, phonics, phonemes....everything, and a real emphasis on that with a slight emphasis on mathematics. So writing really has taken a back seat. As you look at your day, that is the next step of course, is the writing to integrate that, but it really takes a back step and I have not done much of that at all.

With the heavy focus on improving reading scores, no writing curriculum is available, and teachers have not yet received any professional development on writing instruction since Gretchen became principal two years ago. Additionally, instructional time is not designated to explicit writing instruction, students do not complete writing samples, and writing data is not available or used. While the state assessment does indicate a "Writing" component, students are not required to provide a written response to writing on the assessment or respond to a text in writing.

Gretchen views writing as a practice that should be integrated with other content areas. She sees value in having students write in journals and respond to prompts regularly in school. As the school leader, she understood that a focus on everything is a focus on nothing. Therefore, once reading scores improve, she plans to find ways to help her teachers integrate more writing during the school day. She appreciates the strain teachers experience and tries to balance student needs and the workload of her staff.

> I cannot add to my teachers one more thing right now. I just cannot. That's the challenge, you have to focus. You can't do a bunch of things and we're focusing on literacy, the science of reading...the writing aspect takes that back seat because you're still learning about how to teach reading.

In subsequent email correspondence, Gretchen further reflected on the impact her own beliefs and knowledge of writing and writing instruction, impact her instructional leadership decisions.

> I believe my own beliefs do have an impact on writing in our building. However, a knowledge base combined with experience has an impact on writing instruction also. If I as a teacher have had success in the classroom with writing and the impact it has on literacy learning - I am more inclined as a leader to support writing. Also if I have read the research/had training and reviewed data to support writing, again it would influence my decision. (Gretchen, personal communication, April, 7, 2021)

However, Gretchen stopped short of ascribing student success to her instructional leadership behaviors, instead attributing the influence over student achievement directly to classroom teachers.

As the discussion shifted to her writing life, Gretchen showed an ability to separate personal and professional writing, sometimes in humorous ways.

> The need to write…journaling. I don't like it but I think I would benefit greatly from doing it. But I'm very good at writing cards, writing things like that. Currently, in my professional life, writing letters of recommendation and writing things like that is not

a problem at all. Writing newsletters and things like that. But I don't do much writing.

Gretchen states, "I don't do much writing," seemingly referring to her perception of the volume of writing she does that she assigns to her personal life. However, in response to the very next question, "Do you do a lot of writing professionally, as a principal?" She responded, "Oh yeah. Quite a bit." This may suggest that writing identities and self-efficacy beliefs about writing can be further delineated into personal writing identities and professional writing identities, or writing identities may change with specific types of writing. For example, Gretchen felt confident in writing letters of recommendation, even though she disliked writing them. This suggests that one does not have to like something in order to have positive efficacy for it.

Gretchen noted that she "didn't like journaling," she had "absolutely no desire to journal," and thought it would be a waste of her time. However, she described an internal conflict about journaling in her personal life.

> The biggest thing I'm struggling now is you go through life, I should be journaling. I should be journaling. The wisdom involved in that is that I have absolutely no desire to journal. I think it's going to be a waste of my time. Anything you read as far as healthfulness, meditation, all those things, you should journal. I don't understand why I find it such a waste of time and why I don't just do it. I think it would be the whole person…eating healthy, exercising, writing in a journal.

In this manner, Gretchen revealed a struggle between her actual writing practice and her perception of what she believed she should be doing in her personal writing life.

Gretchen is an individual who values the personal quality of handwritten messages, especially when composing cards and notes of appreciation. She also shared several moments in her life when a piece of writing held personal significance for her or others. Her son's fourth-grade teacher recently shared a picture of a framed thank-you note she wrote to him years ago. At one point during the interview, she walked to a wall in her office and pointed to a letter she received from her daughter on Mother's Day, and took a moment to narrate a portion. These personal experiences highlighted the permanence of writing. Words of appreciation spoken between two people can be forgotten soon thereafter. But, words written down on paper can be revisited over and over again by the receiver, the feelings, and message as powerful as the day they were received.

A turning point in Gretchen's writing life was receiving the Golden Apple Award as a 6th-grade teacher. She discussed using writing as a way to communicate her identity as a teacher.

> I just remember a turning point was really just being able to communicate precisely who I am as a teacher in that process. ... And so I remember having to write in there and really describe who I was in a set space in a set time and knowing that I would be judged on that. I would get the award based on what I was able to convey through my writing.

When asked to articulate the theme of her writing life, Gretchen shared that she celebrates its importance, it has always been easy for her, and she sees the need to integrate writing more in her current school. One regret she shared was not finishing her Ph. D. program by writing the dissertation. Life got in the way, and the same was true of instructional leadership. Even though Gretchen values writing and understands the importance of writing instruction, school life has many demands coming from many different agencies. Principals have to find the balance

between those demands, the needs of students, the needs of teachers, and their goals for curriculum and instruction at their school.

Ken

"I didn't see myself as having a writing journey, as much as I had a reading journey."

Ken, a White male in his 32nd year in education, leads a K-5 elementary school in the northeast. While he could retire at any moment, he shows no signs of slowing down and even mentors other new and aspiring principals. Ken spent 14 years as a high school social studies teacher before becoming a school administrator. He jumped around for several years as a middle school and high school assistant principal and middle school principal before ending up as an elementary principal for the past eight years. Ken is coming to the end of his second year as principal of his current school in a suburban community with approximately 421 students.

While Ken shared that he has been moved to struggling schools in the past to turn around student achievement, he was quick to point to other staff members who were critical to the school's success. He stated, "I'm not saying it's just me. I get good people around me. We all do that. I've got this literacy teacher...she's crazy good." But he also identified a focus on effective writing instruction as one of the important elements to improve academic success for his students across multiple school settings.

While Ken did not require a specific number of minutes for explicit writing instruction, it was clear writing was to be included within the school day. He views writing as something that should be integrated across subjects and stated, "My expectation is you don't just teach reading and then just teach writing. You're teaching reading and writing throughout the entire time." He required library, music, and physical education teachers to integrate writing in creative but meaningful ways. For example, he shared this story about his library teacher:

> She's teaching the 4th graders [about] narrative non-fiction and informational non-fiction. So the kids read stories, but then they do a Venn Diagram. I consider that writing...so instead of just teaching them the genres themselves, you have them compare the genres and give them something to write about... [something] as simple as summarizing the information.

In another example of how writing is integrated into all aspects of instruction at his school, Ken described an example from PE, "We play acid river. You're brainstorming how to get from one place in the gym to another place in the gym, and the kids have a clipboard, and they have to write their strategy out." Ken also believes that for teachers to teach writing well, they need to write.

> I try to dabble in writing. So in order to teach writing, I make my teachers write. [At a] faculty meeting, I give them a prompt, and they all have to write in this [note]book. Because [we] don't write. How many of us write? We don't write anymore.

Teachers at his school use several resources to teach writing, including the 6+1 Traits of Writing. Currently, the district has provided substantial training for Jennifer Serravallo's resource, *The Writing Strategies Book* (Serravallo, 2015). He was clearly a fan of the text and promoted the use of it with his staff. Ken remarked, "My other school, I went hard on this [book]. I had them in Podcasts and all that because I said, whatever you need, it's in here, and it's so easy that it's a one-stop-shop." He also explained that his district requires a benchmark for writing and detailed his teachers' process to examine student writing samples. Ken explained that his staff first agree on the language and intent of the rubric, followed by a team-scoring approach. He recognized the subjectiveness of scoring writing as the impetus for team scoring.

> We do it that way because first, teachers, regardless of the rubric, we're very subjective of how we do it. So if we're supposed to be grading kids, it shouldn't matter if they have me or you or you, we should be able to have somewhat similar [scores]...so we try to calibrate ourselves. Because as adults, we have to understand writing. And a lot of times, we think we do. Reading is easy. Math is a lot easier. Writing is so over the top subjective, unless you have that protocol in place.

There is a writing component to the state assessment that requires students to analyze text with a written response, but students do not write a narrative, opinion, or informational composition. Still, Ken's school district provided considerable professional development on writing instruction, and he knows that if his district expects instruction or a resource, they will provide the necessary teacher training.

Ken identified specific strategies to help students improve their writing, such as conferring, setting goals, and providing feedback. He noted during individual writing conferences, "Kids get immediate feedback. Everybody here graduated college. They should be able to teach and tell a 3rd grader how to read and write." Furthermore, he identified his experiences in high school and college as influential to his leadership approach to writing. He even went so far as using specific language from his college English course, such as "focus correction areas," when working with students.

Ken added, "For any type of writing, I think kids need to be engaged in authentic literature." Student choice is also important, as he noted, "I tell people if you want kids to write well, allow them to choose their passion." Additionally, he viewed writing as a process and described the cycle his students work through during each grading period. Students work with a few writing pieces at a time with specific "focus correction areas" and publish one or two pieces

each grading period. Ken clarified, "The writing process is not one and done. It's a continuous effort." Ken is a big fan of peer editing and also believes students should know how to research.

> When you make a statement, the thing I'm so particular [about], you have to back it up with something. The big thing for me is teaching kids to research. If you're going to write about something specific, research....at the same time. That's got to be a part of the writing process.

Ken recognized that many school leaders do not feel as comfortable with leading writing and shared, "Reading is much easier thing to grasp. I'm a high school guy. How many administrators go down to the kindergarten room or the first-grade room and do a writing thing? We go down and read." Ken also acknowledged the role his own efficacy beliefs about writing play in the performance of his teachers and students. He shared that he sees himself as the instructional leader, and therefore directly impacts what is important. Ken is actively involved in instructional decisions, and he believes his teachers see writing as important because he specifically monitors writing instruction. In Ken's words, "What gets monitored gets done." He also declared himself the "Lead Learner" and intentionally engaged in professional development with his staff. Ken openly shares his struggles with writing, what works for him, and writing samples from his scrapbook. When discussing his impact on students, he noted, "All I can say when I help a young person on their writing, and they tell me they do not like writing, after I help, they will usually say they feel better about their work."

As we started talking about his journey to becoming a leader of writing, the word he used to describe his earliest writing experiences was "love." In elementary school, he remembers "...the love of writing stories. Action stories, made-up stories. I loved just writing." His third-grade teacher still holds a special place in his heart, and one event vividly stood out.

> I got to write a story. I wrote a story about me and my friends in elementary school going into another dimension. And the night of [the writing night], she said, I'm going to select a few people, and I'm going to read Ken's story. My parents were like…what? That always stuck, and I can still remember that. I was so proud of that. But along the way, I don't remember being prouder of anything else I did in elementary school that I wrote. But I was so excited to write that story and she was so encouraging. So a lot of times, it's the teacher and the connection they make with the kids that stand out, and I tell people that story.

Ken's love of writing continued in middle school, describing writing during that chapter in his life as one of "fascination".

> I started to fall in love with history, so the research and writing about research was fascinating. I could write about like the Civil War. I could write about Civil Rights. It was fascinating because of the research behind it. I had language arts teachers that loved the grammar, made it come alive. It wasn't boring. We did diagram sentences back then but always thought that was pretty cool. But they used a lot of self-interest. There was a lot of choice...I loved doing whatever I wanted to do. So in middle school, I still had a little bit of that ability to pick and choose.

His description of writing in high school shifted to "confining." Ken described his dislike of writing to a prompt and the lack of choice. He explained, "Everything was confining because it was always formal. The intro, body, conclusion, hypothesis. I'm going to prove this, and this. It was very formulaic." That formulaic writing Ken described became a problem once he got to college. He shared, "My professor in college, [he said] Ken, you write like a monk, very boring, very bland."

In college, his feelings about writing swung between “painful” to “exhilarating”. He first described the painful part.

> Painful was my first history class. My professor refused to grade my first paper because he said it was so bad. It was so awful. He didn’t know how I graduated high school. I was like, oh my god, I’m an honors student! He said you’re too formulaic. You’re confined in your thought process. And it was a history teacher! I had to do a literary critique of a history book. I’m like, that’s absurd! So that was like, painful.

It was clear choice had a powerful influence on Ken's attitude toward writing, as he described the next experience.

> When I did constitutional law, and I got to prove whether the death penalty was appropriate or not, it was exhilarating because, again, choice, research...I could write a 25-page paper by that time because I understood that thought process. I could do a 25-page paper in a week because I knew how to research if it was something I loved.

Ken's freshman English teacher had been critical of his writing, saying it was not creative enough. Therefore, Ken decided to return to two things he loved, history and poetry. Ken wrote a poem about two soldiers in the trenches during WWII using real newspaper accounts and dialogue. He described this pivotal moment in his college life as one that came from collaboration with a friend.

> My roommate, he was a crazy writer. He could write off the top of his head. I’d brainstorm with him, at night, drinking coffee, and we just came up with the idea, and he helped me with some of the words in the poetry. I liked poetry, and he was very good at it. And then [he] gave me literary ideas. That was kind of the first time where you just

> kind of did it yourself, right? The first time I relied on someone else to help me with doing something that was out of my comfort zone. And it was great.

Ken concluded, "I finally realized that writing in this world is something I should never do alone."

Following college, Ken explained his master's thesis and dissertation as "easy" because of his strength in research, choice in topic, and relevance to his work as an educator. Then, as we moved to talking about his adult writing life, Ken became emotional as he shared a vivid memory of his dad.

> My dad's a scientist. I might get choked up because my dad's passed away. He read my dissertation, and he said, 'son, I'm proud.' This is really good. At that moment I was like, he was a really, really good writer. He was very structured. Very critical. Our relationship was good, but when he said...he just sat there real quiet. That's my dad. He said this is really, really good. But he was very proud of how I wrote. At times he was critical, you know, you're not being authentic enough, you're not being structured enough, you're not being analytical enough, you can't be saying that. You have to be more this and this. So when I finished it, he wanted to read it, and I thought he was going to criticize me. In a nice way, but just he's very analytical, science mind. And he did. He got a smile and he said, 'I love it. Loved it. You did really well.' That was one of the greatest moments.

Ken still did not see himself as a good writer, even with all the success and fond memories of writing.

I don’t consider myself a good writer at all. The process is painful for me in the sense that I have to generate ideas. I get frustrated, mental blocks. I don’t know where I’m going. Then I read more, then I look at more, and I think I sound like an idiot sometimes.

Even though he does not view himself as a writer, he has several writing projects planned for the future. He wants to collaborate with colleagues, start a principal advice blog, and write professional articles to share his experiences as a school administrator. His only regret is that he did not start writing professionally earlier in his career. Ken described how isolating the principal role is, the struggles, and the feelings of hopelessness, and how he would have enjoyed sharing his experiences in writing to help others.

Ken described the theme of his writing life as "a constant adventure." He also identified the importance of balance between what he described as the "art and science of putting words down on paper that have meaning." After hearing his writing life story, it is clear why as now as a leader of writing instruction, he understands the importance of helping students learn how to research while maintaining the element of choice and creativity.

Analysis

This section answers Research Questions 4 and 4a. As described in Chapter 3, one way to analyze narratives is to look for patterns across participant stories (Wells, 2011). After sitting with the interviewees' writing and writing leadership stories, three main ideas emerged as important to understanding the writer identities of the participants: the power of other people and experiences, the ambiguous qualities one uses to identify as a writer, and balancing instructional leadership responsibilities. While the first two notions can be generalized to the development of writer identities of most people, they are important to consider within the context of the last idea. The third idea is unique to school leaders as they are responsible for the instructional direction at

their school sites. Therefore, understanding the factors that contribute to their writer identities is important to understand how that identity is expressed through leadership behaviors and ultimately influences school-wide writing instruction.

People and Writing Experiences Have a Lasting and Powerful Influence on Writer Identity

Whether a teacher, parent, or friend, all interviewees described multiple persons throughout their lifetime who impacted how they viewed themselves as writers and how they currently lead writing instruction at their schools. Most often, principals identified teachers as critical to their development as a writer. Those influential people, at times, said or did things to contradict or challenge the writer identities of the participants. For example, Ken identified himself as an "honors student," therefore was dumbfounded when his college history professor told him his writing was terrible. Even the experience of the writing life story interview caused uncertainty with Teresa's writer identity. Until the experience of sitting with the researcher reflecting on her writing life, she did not identify as a writer. Only after the experience did she realize "I am a writer." Participants coming to new realizations or epiphanies about identities can be typical of life story interview experiences (Atkinson, 2012).

The power of external sources as an influence on identities is not an earth-shattering discovery. Studies have examined the role of others in the formation of various identities (Dobson, 2017; Ivanic, 1998; Starfield, 2006; Street, 2003). The main difference is the level of impact a principals' writer identity can affect writing instruction for an entire school, including staff and students. For example, Ken identified as a strong researcher, so he now values developing students as researchers at his elementary school. Nicole described herself as a person who used writing to express her emotions and creativity, especially during challenging life events. As a school leader, she wants her students to have the same outlet to support their mental

health. Gretchen identified as a person who used and valued writing to connect to other people through personal, handwritten letters and words of affirmation. As principal, she wants her teachers and students to experience that same connection through collaborative journaling. Ivanic (1998) explains the connection in this way,

> this identity they bring with them to writing is itself socially constructed and constantly changing as a consequence of their developing life history: it is not some fixed, essential 'real self.' The term also captures the idea that it is not only the events in people's lives, but also their way of representing these experiences to themselves which constitutes their current way of being (p. 24).

Additionally, interview participants identified memorable writing experiences as a source of their writer identities. Nicole spoke of the National Board Certification process and how that experience helped her strengthen her identity as a teacher and writer. Teresa mentioned the negative memories attached to a high school essay, but feelings of intimacy when writing screenplays with her husband. Furthermore, Gretchen identified writing letters of recommendation, and Ken spoke of college essays and his thesis and dissertation. Moreover, several participants referred to writing activities and experiences in PESWL Item 3.2. It is evident from the data that writing products and experiences are influential factors to principal writer identities.

Just Because I Write, Does Not Mean I Identify as a Writer

Although not a specific concept related to school leadership, the participants' criteria to label themselves as a writer or not were ambiguous and unique to the individual. Even though Teresa was writing a book, collaborated with her husband on screenplays, and planned to write mystery novels in retirement, she still wondered at the end of the interview, "Am I a writer?"

Ken repeatedly proclaimed his love for writing and described it as easy, but in the same sitting stated writing was painful and exclaimed, “I think I sound like an idiot sometimes.” It was fascinating to listen to the interviewees' vast writing stories and experiences but then witness hesitation in taking the step to call oneself a writer. However, Nicole was confident in identifying as a writer because she felt she could communicate her thoughts through writing in a way that readers could understand.

All principals indicated their job required an extensive amount of writing, but the quantity of writing did not appear to be a factor considered in writer identity for any of the participants. Additionally, all interviewees proclaimed themselves as generally good writers. However, quality of writing also was not a feature they used as a measure of writer identity. It may be that publication of a book, an article in a professional journal, or an online blog were criteria used to decide whether or not one was a writer. Perhaps providing the dictionary definition of a writer, "one that writes", would have changed the individual's viewpoint during the interview. Nicole identified as a writer because she could convey her thoughts and feelings through writing. Applying these same criteria, the other participants may have identified as writers as well. Ultimately, it is clear that writer identity is multifaceted in that it is not an either/or determination. Furthermore, the criterion for identifying as a writer is as unique as the individual. As with other expressions of one's identity, writer identities are complex, fluid, and continuously evolving (Ivanic, 1998).

Balancing the Writing Self with Instructional Leadership is Complex

All participants expressed their belief that writing was important in their personal or professional lives. The idea of balancing the writing self with instructional leadership responsibilities manifested in two ways. First, Ken and Teresa expressed a desire to write for

reasons outside the principalship scope. Ken yearned to write articles for school leadership magazines and start a blog for aspiring administrators. Teresa wanted to finish a book on her experience leading an IBPYP school that she started years ago with a colleague. Ivanic (1998) refers to this aspect of writer identity as "self as author", meaning "writers see themselves to a greater or lesser extent as authors" (p. 26). Ken and Teresa both saw themselves as authors and possessed an "authoritativeness" on the subject of school leadership (Ivanic, 1998). Yet, the time and energy needed for their role as instructional leaders prevented them from starting or finishing those projects. As Teresa stated, she writes so much for work, "I don't necessarily have the mental space for other types of writing." Only when her role as instructional leader ends does she envision completing personal writing projects. Ken explained further:

> The only regret is that I didn't start writing as an administrator sooner...I've always really wanted to do it. I should have done it when I was in the throes…I have all these great ideas...and I just never did it. Still haven't done it.

Secondly, the stories of Nicole and Gretchen revealed another manner in which instructional leadership expectations were at odds with personal writing beliefs. Nicole sincerely wanted her students to have opportunities to write during the school day to express their feelings and creativity. Teresa wanted her students to journal and write more within other subject areas like math. Even with these desires, writing instruction did not take place at their schools. Both recognized this as problematic, but instructional leaders have to make decisions based on more than personal feelings and wishes. As expressed in her narrative, Teresa's concern for the reading ability of her students and existing work demands on her teachers prevented a focus on writing. Nicole's dilemma came from not knowing where to start. As the school leader, she is expected to set a vision and direction for instruction at her school. However, Nicole was unsure

where to begin finding the needed resources and training for her teachers to implement effective writing instruction.

Teresa and Nicole also acknowledged the role state testing and district leadership influence their behaviors as instructional leaders. School administrators must, at times, sacrifice what they believe to be essential due to directives from outside sources. Even though writing was important to them, they understood the outside stakeholder emphasis on reading and math was problematic to making writing a focus at their schools. As Pederson (2007) stated, "What is measured is treasured" (p. 287). For example, in Nicole's state, the new state reading assessment requires students to complete a written response to a text. Therefore, there has been an increased district emphasis on text-dependent writing instruction during the last school year. However, this emphasis still does not address the state standards related to narrative, opinion, and explanatory written compositions.

Summary

Returning to Research Questions 4 and 4a, the writing life stories revealed many ways participant efficacy and identities in writing were woven into their instructional leadership behaviors and decisions. However, the interview participants were not cognizant of this, and it took the interview experience to bring it to their conscious awareness. In fact, the interview participants were not even aware they had an identity as writer. Additionally, the connection between their efficacy in writing and their identities as writers was even more difficult for participants to make to student and teacher performance. Further investigation is needed to examine this research question in more depth.

Data collected as part of this mixed-methods study provided new and rich information about principal efficacy and identities in writing and leadership in writing. Broadly, principal

efficacy in writing and writing leadership are associated, and personal factors such as age and gender may play a role in leadership efficacy in writing. Additionally, self-selected professional development is a factor that contributes to efficacy beliefs. Finally, elementary administrator writer identities are complex, and their writing efficacy beliefs influence instructional leadership decisions. Chapter 5 discusses the implications of these findings in more detail.

Chapter 5. Discussion

"Writing is the great invention of the world."

-Abraham Lincoln

Introduction

This study applied a mixed-method research design to explore principal efficacy and identities in writing and writing leadership. A new, researcher-designed survey, the Principal Efficacy Survey for Writing Leadership (PESWL), collected quantitative data. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews using a modified version of McAdams's (2008) Life Story Interview protocol to gather primary qualitative data. The PESWL collected supplemental qualitative data through open-ended survey items.

There are two justifications for the use of mixed-method design in this study. Foremost is the idea of complementarity. Greene et al. (1998) explained, "In a complementarity mixed-method study, qualitative and quantitative methods are used to measure overlapping but also different facts of a phenomenon, yielding an enriched, elaborated understanding of that phenomenon" (p. 258). The researcher believed that elementary principal efficacy and identities in writing would intersect to influence writing instructional leadership efficacy and behaviors. Data triangulation was the second reason for the use of mixed-method design. In mixed-methods research, triangulation involves using results from quantitative and qualitative data sources to draw more valid inferences (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). As such, the researcher interpreted data from both data sources, the PESWL, and semi-structured interviews.

Four theoretical perspectives informed this study, including self-efficacy theory, social constructionism, writer identity, and instructional leadership. Figure 1 illustrates the interaction between these perspectives, according to the viewpoint of the researcher. Self-efficacy is one's

belief in their ability to perform a task (Bandura, 1997). This study aimed to understand how efficacy in writing influenced elementary principal leadership in writing instruction. Additionally, the researcher sought to examine PEW and PEWL as two specific constructs. Social constructionism posits that "Human beings are born into a world of social relations, language, norms, and customs and it is this social world that constructs them as recognizable persons" (Burr, 2016, p. 224). The development of elementary principal writer identities and efficacy beliefs were examined through the lens of social constructionism.

Ivanic (1998) described writing as an "act of identity" (p. 32). People construct writing selves within social and institutional contexts while making conscious and unconscious decisions to conform to or contest privileged expectations in writing (Eyres, 2016; Ivanic 1998). This study explored the development of school administrator writer identities and the influence on writing leadership decisions through the life story interview. Finally, the researcher submits instructional leadership as the intersection between efficacy and writer identity. Effectively, the study examined how socially constructed efficacy beliefs and writer identities influenced instructional leadership behaviors in writing. The following sections examine these perspectives within the context of broader study findings.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of major findings, followed by three central ideas derived from this study. Within the explanation of each idea, connections are made to literature, theoretical perspectives, and implications and recommendations for practice are described. The chapter concludes with considerations for future research and study limitations.

Summary of Major Findings

This study had three primary purposes. First, the researcher aimed to design and test a new survey instrument to investigate PEW and PEWL. Although new items were included on

the Principal Efficacy Survey for Writing Leadership (PESWL), most survey prompts were modified from existing surveys on teacher efficacy in writing and leadership efficacy. Following the analysis of 103 survey responses collected using random, convenience, and snowball sampling, Cronbach alpha coefficients confirmed preliminary reliability of the instrument. The survey was found to be reliable in measuring two constructs, Principal Efficacy in Writing (PEW) and Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership (PEWL), with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .92 and .94, respectively.

Second, this study sought to examine factors that contribute to and any association between PEW and PEWL. The findings showed a significant relationship between the two constructs, with PEW predicting PEWL, $p < .001$. In a related study, Graham et al. (2001) reported that teachers with high and low efficacy in personal teaching efficacy in writing differed in their implementation of writing strategies, practices, and routines. Teachers with high efficacy in teaching writing provided more time for students to write and preferred natural learning methods, with less emphasis on correctness. Furthermore, this study identified several factors to be significant to PEW and PEWL. Self-selected Training was significant in predicting PEW and PEWL, $p = .002$ and $p = <.001$, respectively. Moreover, Females were more likely to be efficacious in PEWL than Males, $p = .001$. Lastly, Age was significant in predicting PEWL, with administrators in the 50-59 age group being more efficacious than those in the 40-49 and 60+ age groups, $p =. 007$ and $p = .015$, respectively.

Finally, the researcher was interested in the writing lives of elementary principals and how their lived experiences shaped current writer identities and instructional leadership practices. The narratives presented in Chapter 4 were composed following semi-structured interviews using a modified life-story interview protocol (McAdams, 2008) and items from the

PESWL. The four participants, Nicole, Teresa, Gretchen, and Ken, were all practicing elementary principals and no two writing life stories were the same. However, there were commonalities among their stories and the open-ended responses to PESWL Item 3.2, which asked participants to describe factors that influenced their identities as leaders of writing instruction.

Survey participants and interviewees identified people as a significant source of influence on writing leadership identities. Sources included their staff, district personnel, literacy experts, professional mentors, and K-12 and higher education teachers. Furthermore, writing activities and experiences left a powerful impression on identities, such as curriculum planning and involvement with a National Writing Project association. Additional influential factors included teaching writing, writing professional development, and the types of writing performed in college.

The criteria elementary principals used to identify or not identify as a writer was ambiguous. Although Nicole was aware of her writing life and clearly identified as a writer, the other interviewees were not even aware they had a writing journey. Before the interview, the participants did not have an opportunity to reflect on their lived experiences related to writing, yet they mentioned being very aware of their journey in becoming a reader. The researcher hypothesizes that if a person can read, they would identify as a reader. However, this same line of reasoning does not appear to hold merit in writing. The ability to write and write well did not lead most participants to identify as a writer. A subsequent section examines this as an area of future research.

Lastly, the intersection between a principal's personal beliefs and understanding of the importance of writing was often at odds with other instructional leadership responsibilities. All

interviewees and many PESWL Item 3.3 comments articulated the importance of writing and teaching writing. However, several school, district, and state factors have led to writing being a neglected subject. The need for more instructional time was a repeated theme among participants, and school districts and state assessments prioritized reading and math. Confines of their leadership responsibilities and uninformed knowledge of effective writing instruction and resources were barriers to creating a school-wide focus on writing.

In conclusion, the findings of this study expanded previous examinations of teacher efficacy in writing and writing instruction to the broader instructional leadership responsibilities of elementary principals. Additionally, the PESWL can be a new research instrument to investigate PEW and PEWL further. The writing life stories of the interview participants shed new light on how principal writer identities influenced leadership behaviors in writing instruction. Most importantly, the findings fill a gap in the existing literature on principal efficacy and identities in writing and writing leadership and have meaningful implications for practice, programs, and policy.

Discussion

Elementary Principal Efficacy and Instructional Leadership of Writing

There was both theory and research to support developing a self-efficacy scale designed to measure principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership. Self-efficacy is one's perception of their ability to perform a task and achieve a positive outcome (Bandura, 2006). Certain efficacy perceptions can be generalized such as basic self-management skills (Bandura, 2006). However, "the efficacy belief system is not a global trait but a differentiated set of self-beliefs linked to distinct realms of functioning" (Bandura, 2006, p. 307). Therefore, Bandura recommended creating scales that are specific to a domain. Research exists that measures

general teaching efficacy (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), teacher efficacy in writing (Graham et al., 2001), and teacher efficacy in other subjects such as math and science (Catalano et al., 2019; Flores et al., 2014). Additionally, Tschannon-Moran and Gereis (2004) created a scale to measure general principal leadership efficacy. Even *teacher perceptions* of the impact of principal efficacy in specific content areas have been explored (McGhee & Lew, 2007; Richard, 2013). Given the level of influence school administrators have over the vision and direction of school-wide instructional programs, it is surprising that research has not largely explored elementary principal efficacy within specific content areas.

The PESWL measured two constructs, Principal Efficacy in Writing and Principal Efficacy in Writing Leadership. This study found a predictive relationship between elementary principals' personal writing efficacy and their perceived ability to lead writing instruction. Additionally, 27% of elementary principals expressed low efficacy in writing leadership. Together, these findings have several implications, as work-related standards for principals address instructional leadership. For example, the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL; National Policy Board for Educational Administration [NPBEA], 2015) stated, "Effective educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student's academic success and well-being" (p. 12, Standard 4). The PSEL standards also expect principals to advance the professional knowledge of staff (NPBEA, 2015, Standard 7). In writing instruction, this work is critical as student achievement in writing falls behind national NAEP scores in reading, math, and science across testing years and grade levels (Nation's Report Card, 2021) except for 12th-grade science scores from the year 2015. As already noted, it is especially problematic that the most recent NAEP writing data for 4th graders is nearly two decades old.

Applying Bandura's self-efficacy theory to the findings of this study leads to the notion that principals with high efficacy in writing and writing leadership are more likely to undertake the task of providing instructional leadership in writing instruction at their schools. Consequently, 27% of participants in this study were not efficacious in PEWL. Bandura (1993) explained four sources that contribute to one's efficacy beliefs, including vicarious and mastery experiences, emotional arousal, and social influence. Colleges and school districts that prepare principals to be instructional leaders can improve principal efficacy in writing leadership by focusing on the sources of efficacy identified by Bandura. District leaders can organize vicarious experiences with school site visits where strong writing programs exist, including classroom observations of quality writing instructors. Mastery experiences might require principals to teach writing in an elementary classroom with coaching, and professional development weaved throughout the experience. Finally, as the interviews with participants demonstrated, writing can be an emotional experience, and the involvement in the modified life story interview conjured a variety of emotions and memories. Principal preparation and training should include activities that uncover their journeys to becoming writers and their writer identities to benefit from the emotional arousal source of efficacy beliefs,

Cognitive content mastery is also a source of efficacy beliefs (Gray, 2017; Palmer, 2006; Webb & LoFaro, 2020). Another way to increase principal leadership efficacy in writing is to develop writing and writing instruction content knowledge. This study collected only cursory data on principal knowledge of effective writing practices; therefore, making broad conclusions would be misplaced. However, preliminary data suggest that principals have foundational and missing knowledge about effective writing instructional strategies supported by research. Participants frequently mentioned practices supported by research, such as teaching writing as a

process and teacher feedback (Graham, 2019; Graham & Harris, 2019; MacArthur, 2019; van den Bergh et al., 2016; Wilson, 2019.) However, peer collaboration was noted infrequently, but studies have demonstrated this strategy as highly effective (Graham et al., 2012; 2013; Graham & Perin, 2006). Interview participants noted the importance of collaboration with others on writing as critical to their growth as writers.

Furthermore, only 13 participants mentioned standards-based writing instruction, which is concerning as the CCSS emphasizes writing and articulates expectations for narrative, explanatory, and opinion writing. Additionally, the literature suggests that genre-based instruction effectively raises student achievement in writing (Ferretti & Lewis, 2019; Ferretti & Fan, 2016; Olson & Godfrey, 2019; Rose, 2016). Olson and Godfrey (2019) explained,

> narratives humanize; they promote empathy and insight into the lives of those whose backgrounds and experiences may be vastly different from our own and, at the same time, they encourage self-discovery and the realization of the individual potential residing within each of us. (p. 81-82).

Regarding another genre of writing, “arguments contribute to the development of empathy and cooperation, language, perspective taking, and rule-governed behavior” (Bruner, 1990; Dunn, 1988, as cited in Ferretti & Lewis, 2019; p. 135). The absence of genre-based writing instruction has devastating implications for students, including limited possibilities for self-hood. Ivanic (1998) explained, "These possibilities for self-hood do not exist in a vacuum, but are themselves shaped by individual acts of writing in which people take on particular discoursal identities" (p. 27). Without broad access to various writing genres, students cannot understand, access, or be proficient in the privileged discourses critical to future college and workplace entrance.

Principals are charged with improving teaching and learning, and they should know,

encourage, and focus efforts to promote teacher growth in the area of writing (Stein & Nelson, 2003). Stein and Nelson (2003) suggest that school leaders develop content knowledge by "post-holing" or "conducting in-depth exploration of an important but bounded slice of the subject, how it is learned, and how it is taught" (p. 446). To develop writing cognitive content mastery, principals should be emersed in literature to understand best practices in writing instruction. Without this critical piece of instructional leadership, principals cannot provide a vision, direction, and plan to improve writing instruction.

There is an additional challenge to the leadership efficacy of principals in writing, which is the perceived controllability of the environment. According to Bandura (1993), modifiability of the environment "represents the constraints and opportunities provided by the environment to exercise personal efficacy" (p. 125). Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2004) explained, "low efficacy principals have been found to perceive an inability to control the environment and tend to be less likely to identify appropriate strategies or modify unsuccessful ones" (p. 574). This idea was illustrated in two ways during interviews and supported by comments for PESWL Item 3.3 Principals' leadership of leading writing programs can be restricted or encouraged by their environment, mainly district leadership and state assessments. In their interviews, Nicole and Teresa expressed a significant district focus on reading and math. In a sense, they felt powerless to implement systems for writing instruction even though they valued writing and identified it as critical to student learning. On the other side, Ken and Gretchen communicated a sense of freedom to lead writing, even district-level support to focus on writing instruction.

In order for district professional development efforts to positively influence principal efficacy in writing leadership, there must be clear goals for improvement, supportive working conditions, and principals must perceive the initiatives as relevant to their work and personal

learning (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Louis et al., 2010). Moving beyond district-level direction, the NCWASC (2003) suggested national policy that communicates the importance of writing by,

> developing clear, unambiguous, and comprehensive policies that aim to double the amount of time students spend writing; ensure that every school district has a writing plan; insist that writing be taught at all grade levels and in all subjects, and provide for teacher professional development" (p. 26).

The implication is that principals cannot bear the task of improving writing instruction and student writing achievement on their own. Elementary school administrators must have the guidance and support from their district and state for transformative progress. It would be difficult to find an educator who would advocate for more state testing, but if it is true that "what is measured is treasured" (Pederson, 2007), it may be the only way to give writing the attention it is due. However, it may also lead to diminished student enjoyment of writing, as one participant noted in Item 3.3.

> Unfortunately, writing is a lost art. Partly, I blame technology, and partly, I blame high stakes testing of math and reading (which pushed writing to the background). For years, I reviewed college scholarship applications, and kids with perfect GPA's and SAT scores, were horrible writers. I agree that writing should be brought back to the forefront in education, but for heaven's sake, please never think that the way to do this is to add a writing test. There are far too many tests and assessments already.

During the interviews, all four participants shared an experience in which they associated writing with powerful emotions. Nicole's connection between writing and expressing emotions was an underlying theme throughout her entire life-story interview. Gretchen shared a letter from one of her children and touched it as it hung on her office wall. Ken became emotional as

he spoke of sharing his dissertation with his father. Teresa expressed the closeness she felt with her husband as they collaborated on writing projects. One source of self-efficacy is emotional arousal (Bandura, 1993). An implication of this theme among the interview with elementary principals is that emotional experiences can positively and negatively affect principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership. Furthermore, when students are deprived of opportunities to engage in authentic and personally relevant writing experiences, they cannot access the emotional benefits the act of writing can produce. Both Ken and Nicole shared emotional writing memories from childhood. As it relates to social constructionism, elementary principals have the power, responsibility, and opportunity to create a learning environment where writing is a positive, emotional, social experience for children instead of a childhood scarred by the "red pen."

Other Factors of Influence on Leadership Efficacy in Writing

This study investigated which features influenced elementary principal efficacy in writing leadership and found three significant factors: Age, Gender, and Self-selected Training. Upon examination of the significance of Age, there are two factors to consider in the data analysis. First, sample sizes for the 30-39 and 60+ age groups were small (n=10, 10%; n=8, 8%, respectively) when compared to the 40-49 (n=53, 51%) and 50-59 (n=32, 31%) age groups. Second, the mean difference between the two age groups most represented (40-49, 50-59) was 9.44. Although the mean difference between participants in the 40-49 and 50-59 age group was statistically significant, the means for both groups indicated a high level of efficacy on the PESWL. Age has been studied concerning self-efficacy beliefs (Chyung, 2007), but literature is minimal, especially in the context of education. Therefore, the researcher suggests that age is not a practical factor to consider in data interpretations and recommendations.

Regarding gender as related to writing leadership, based on PESWL data, females were more efficacious in writing leadership, and males demonstrated low efficacy in writing leadership. Females outperformed males at all grade levels on the NAEP writing assessment in 2002, and average scores for females increased at a higher rate than males between 1998 and 2002 (The Nation's Report Card, n.d.). While NAEP writing data is not available for 4th grade after 2002, the pattern continued in 8th grade writing samples in the 2011 assessment year. Although 12% of females were below the basic level of writing, 27% of males were below the basic level in 8th grade. Additionally, more females received proficient and advanced scores than males.

The understanding that females outperform males in writing tasks is based on various scoring methods and tools, and is not in dispute (Cordeiro, 2018; Nation's Report Card, n.d.; Reynolds, 2014). However, ideas about the factors that contribute to this disparity are still developing. Hyde's (2005) gender similarities hypothesis (GSH) suggests that although gender differences may exist in the academic world, females and males are more alike than different, and variances in academic performance between genders are insignificant. However, a study by Reynolds et al. (2014) found writing to be an exception to the GSH. Pajares et al. (1999) reported that self-efficacy beliefs were good predictors of writing performance in elementary grades. When comparing abilities, Pajares et al. (1999) noted, "girls clearly believed themselves better writers than the boys in their class or even in their school" (p. 59). However, when using surveys and other self-reporting measures to measure efficacy beliefs, females and males may use different metrics to report (Pajares, 2002). Cordeiro et al. (2018) identified self-efficacy beliefs and handwriting fluency as potential sources to explain gender differences in writing

performance. In their study, females outperformed males on measures of text quality, length, and spelling.

It is noteworthy and relevant to consider the implications of a gendered discrepancy between female and male PEWL in the context of instructional leadership and writer identities. Elementary principals should be aware of the gender achievement gap in writing and help staff understand and learn various instructional approaches to motivate and engage all learners. Ultimately, as the instructional leaders of a school, principals must ensure equitable access to meaningful learning experiences for all students. Regarding writing, principals should examine instructional content, student writing samples, and teacher-student interactions for potential gender disparities, inclusive of students who do not conform to binary gender labels. Additionally, college and district leaders should give aspiring and practicing principals an opportunity to reflect on their writing lived experiences. Generating self-awareness of potential personally experienced gender bias in writing instruction and learning can help principals recognize and address it in their school setting. Writer identities are socially constructed; therefore, it is critical that instructional leaders examine the social context and environment surrounding student writing experiences and writing instruction. A critical examination of school-wide and individual classroom writing practices should examine the ways in which students of all genders are equitably encouraged to express their ideas, knowledge, and identities.

This study demonstrated that the amount of Self-Selected Training (SST) could predict PEW and PEWL, but the amount of undergraduate coursework and school- or district-required writing were not good predictors of PEW or PEWL. Self-Efficacy Theory suggests that people are more likely to engage in a task if they believe a positive outcome can be achieved (Bandura, 1977). Therefore, the relationship between SST, PEW, and PEWL is reasonable. Principals who

are efficacious in writing and writing leadership choose to participate in writing professional development. However, multiple reasons may explain why elementary principals self-select to participate in writing training, including personal interest and enjoyment of writing. Alternatively, school administrators may seek writing training opportunities independently because their districts do not offer writing professional development. As already noted, 52% of PESWL participants indicated their district had not provided adequate training for writing instruction. Principals may see a need at their school; therefore, they pursue occasions to learn more about writing instruction.

Although principals may self-select additional writing training for a variety of reasons, studies have shown that pre-service and in-service preparation do not adequately prepare educators to teach writing (Graham et al., 2001; Graham & Perin, 2007; Grisham & Wolsey, 2011; Myers et al., 2016; Wijekumar et al., 2019). It is encouraging to discover that many principals self-select to engage in writing professional development because it demonstrates that principals recognize the importance of writing. However, it is disappointing that teachers and school administrators do not receive adequate training in writing instruction as a requirement of undergraduate study or part of their continued development as an educator. As Nicole described, the implication is that school administrators feel unprepared to provide instructional leadership in school-wide writing programs.

Principal Writer Identities

This study asked how the lived experiences of principals influenced their identities as writers and how they perceived their efficacy in writing and writing leadership to affect staff and student performance in writing. The findings of this study provide new information on the topic of elementary principal identities in writing and extend the studies that have investigated teacher

identities in writing (Cremin & Baker, 2014; Norman & Spencer, 2005; 2016: Rubin & Land, 2017; Whitney, 2009; Zoch et al., 2016) and school administrator professional identities (Cruz-Gonzáles et al., 2019; Mpungose, 2010). Studies have shown that teacher identities in writing, content mastery, instructional choices, and judgments of student work can encourage and constrain student identities and achievement as writers (Bourne, 2002; Norman & Spencer, 2009; Ryan & Barton, 2014). Therefore, it is worthwhile to consider how principal writer identities influence the writer identities and performance of their staff and students.

Participants did not realize they had a story to tell about their writing lives. Interviews proved to be mutually beneficial to both the researcher and participants, as they gained self-knowledge, a clearer perspective, or left with a better sense of who they are as a writer (Atkinson, 2012). An implication from this investigation is that principals may adjust instructional leadership behaviors when they participate in experiences designed to help them become conscious of their own writer identities and efficacy in writing and writing leadership. For example, in a comment on the PESWL, one participant articulated that the act of taking the survey made them reconsider the need for and importance of writing professional development for their staff. Additionally, following his interview, Ken sent an email to the researcher saying:

> This interview provided me with some added insights to what has to be done with my school with regard to writing. For example, I have to tell my story and then my staff have to tell their story. It will [be] so powerful because we tell each other our reading stories ex. what you love to read, your struggles etc…and math as well...but rarely if ever 'our writing story'. (personal communication, February 23, 2021)

Even though his school had many structures and resources in place to support effective writing instruction, Ken still considered it essential for teachers to explore their writer identities.

Noticing and generating a self-awareness of how lived experiences shape leadership decisions is a critical component of being intentional as an instructional leader. Gretchen illustrated this when she explained that she worked with her teachers to understand how their schooling experiences may have been vastly different from those of their current students. Identifying as a successful student in school, Gretchen used this self-awareness to guide her staff. Those who support aspiring and practicing principals, including universities and district-level staff, should include activities that help administrators examine their personal and social identities relative to instructional leadership behaviors.

Through social constructionism, the classroom and school environment are critical to the development of writer identities. Zoch et al. (2016) noted:

> An identity framework recognizes that learning is not only about understanding a set of skills and strategies but is also a process in which people construct and negotiate identities in order to become members of particular communities, such as a school. (p. 2)

Although this study provided novel information on principal writer identities, connections can be made to studies examining school leaders' professional identities. Crow et al. (2017) suggested that constructions of leadership identities "are both an emotional and cognitive, values-informed process influenced by biographical, national, and local cultural and policy contexts, which may be subject to change" (p. 273). This notion of constructed identities as context-bound was illustrated during the interviews and aligned with the perspective of social constructionism.

For the participants, the school and district environments were critical to the conversation about their writer identities. Roberston (2017) suggested, "personal and professional identities are interwoven in the self" (p. 776), and that duality can cause conflict. Nicole expressed her love for writing and her desire to provide more writing opportunities for her students but did not

receive guidance or support from her district leadership. For Gretchen, poor student performance on state assessments in reading and math overshadowed her desire for students to engage in journal writing. However, Teresa and Ken felt freedom and support to spend time and resources on writing instruction in their school districts.

The study conducted by Zoch et al. (2016) demonstrated the critical connection between teacher writer identities and engagement in writing instruction professional development experiences. Participants in the Zoch et al. (2016) study identified engagement in the act of writing as critical to their growth as teachers of writing. Furthermore, the influence of writing activities and experiences on writer identities was a repeated theme among interviewees and comments for PESWL item 3.2. The implication in applying the findings of this study is that engagements in writing activities should be a critical component of professional development experiences to develop their identities as writers.

Suggestions for Future Research

As a relatively new area of study, there are several directions for future research on principal efficacy in writing and writing leadership and examining principal writer identities. It would be beneficial to identify schools with strong writing programs, as demonstrated by student achievement data, and closely examine facets of school leadership influence. In addition to using the PESWL and writing life story interviews with participating principals, additional data sources might include student data, classroom observations, school artifacts, curriculum and resource inventories, and interviews with staff, students, parents, and district leadership. A multiple case study approach would produce an instructional framework other school leaders could reference as a guide to improve school-wide writing programs.

This study provided cursory information regarding principal understanding of best practices in writing instruction. Further research could extend this trajectory of study to provide a more comprehensive description of the writing curriculum, instruction, and assessment content knowledge of principals. Given that one of their primary leadership responsibilities is evaluating staff, it would also be worthwhile to explore the quality of feedback school administrators deliver concerning writing instruction, including frequency, mode, and content. Connecting feedback quality to teacher perceptions of principal efficacy in writing would extend the work of McGhee and Lew (2007).

The modified life story interview provided an instrument to examine the writing lived experiences and writer identities of men, women, and non-binary elementary principals. It was unclear what criteria participants used to identify or not identify as a "writer" or a "good" or "bad" writer. Identifying and describing these criteria would deepen understanding and implications of principal writer identities. Additionally, the findings of this study suggest that females are more efficacious than males in writing and writing leadership. Future research can expand the investigation of the writing lives of principals to identify possible divergent patterns or themes in gendered teacher expectations, feedback, and assessment, or student treatment. The examination of the effects of gender on writing achievement and teacher treatment is not new. However, future research would focus on how a lifetime of gendered treatments in writing influences instructional leadership in writing instruction. Moreover, although preliminary findings from this study did not demonstrate statistical significance among survey responses between White and Black/African American participants, the disproportionate number of underrepresented groups assigned to remedial English courses in college (Jimenez, 2016) suggest a likely discrepancy between writing educational experiences and/or identities among people of

different racial and ethnic groups. Future studies will examine the K-12 educational writing experiences of students of various racial and ethnic groups.

Donohoo et al. (2018) submit that collective efficacy has an effect size of 1.57. Collective efficacy, or a staff's shared belief in their ability to influence student achievement (Bandura, 1993), is more powerful than any other factor in predicting student achievement, including socioeconomic status, prior achievement, home environment, and student motivation (Donohoo et al., 2018). Therefore, another avenue of future research is to investigate collective teacher efficacy regarding writing instruction related to student achievement. Areas of discovery include the degree of collective teacher efficacy, how attitudes and beliefs manifest, and how beliefs influence student achievement in writing. Naturally, the influence of the principal on the collective efficacy of their staff in writing instruction would be an essential focus of such an inquiry.

Finally, a critical area of study should examine district-level leadership and policy regarding writing instruction. Like teachers, principals are bound by environmental factors, expectations, and directives from higher-ranking personnel. Transformative change in writing instruction will be challenging without support from district staff and resources. Numerous organizations, researchers, and educational professionals recommend giving writing priority status. However, writing continues to be a generally ignored subject at the elementary level for various reasons. Future research can investigate how district-level leadership and policy influence building-level writing programs. As the first suggestion, it is important to identify districts with strong leadership, expectations, and support for writing instruction to guide other districts seeking to bolster writing programs.

Limitations

One significant limitation of this study is the reliability of data collected from the PESWL. The sample was not a truly random sample, as other sampling methods had to be applied to achieve a participant number significant enough for statistical analysis. In comparison to the overall population, the states of Oregon, Alabama, and New Jersey are overrepresented in the data set due to convenience sampling. Additionally, the number of responders (N=103) may not be sufficient to generalize findings to the target population, and identifying patterns in non-responders was not possible due to the data collection method. Moreover, while initial reliability was determined using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, establishing comprehensive validity and reliability was beyond the scope of this study and the researcher's abilities. Additional studies would need to include a factor analysis of survey items in sections 4 and 5 of the PESWL. Finally, participant responses may include errors caused by question ambiguity, lack of information needed to answer an item, or responding with disingenuous answers to look good (Fowler, 2014).

By their nature, interviews and surveys rely on participant self-reporting. It is possible that participants over-or under-represented their level of efficacy in writing and writing leadership. Without direct observational and artifact reviews to support findings, it was impossible to determine self-reporting and actual practice accuracy. Though, this would be another valuable direction of future research. Additionally, Ken, Gretchen, and Teresa were all selected as interview participants when they notified the researcher of their interest in participating through the PESWL. However, Nicole was known to the researcher through a prior work relationship; therefore, she may have felt more obligated to participate based on the nature of the relationship. Moreover, the researcher had personal knowledge of the district and state

expectations for writing instruction, which may have led to personal assumptions or bias by the researcher. Furthermore, life stories are unique to the lived experiences of one person. While some similarities were found in writing life stories, the narratives are not meant to be generalized to the population.

Finally, the researcher was not satisfied with the quality of data collected for Research Question 4a. In reflection, the limited data collected on this objective did not necessarily contribute significantly to the study's overall findings. However, the subject is worthy of study. Future research can make principal perception of their efficacy beliefs in writing and the effect of those beliefs on teacher and student performance a central focus.

Conclusion

The ultimate measure of principal effectiveness is teacher performance and student achievement. Although the overarching focus of this study was elementary principal instructional leadership in writing, the end goal in any application of the findings of this study is to improve elementary student achievement in writing. Hallinger et al. (2017) clarified, "Implicit in the willingness to be held accountable for student results is the belief that one *can make a difference*, whether as a leader or as a teacher" (p. 12). It was essential to examine instructional leadership in writing and associated efficacy beliefs as potential factors contributing to poor student proficiency in writing across the nation. Additionally, the topic and findings of this study fill a gap in the existing literature and provide a foundation and argument for the need for future research.

Returning to the words of Graves (2003), “Children want to write” (p. 3). When elementary educators deny students an opportunity to engage in meaningful writing experiences, they potentially constrain future access to higher education and the professional workforce. In

the poem *Spelling*, Margaret Atwood stated, “A word, after a word, after a word, is power.” When they do not write, children are deprived of an outlet of expression for feelings, stories, ideas, and opinions. As the NCWASC noted, "At its best, writing has helped transform the world. Revolutions have been started by it. Oppression has been toppled by it. Moreover, it has enlightened the human condition” (2003, p. 10). Writing gives students an occasion to share who they are and what they think about the world, and elementary principals can be critical players in the early development of children's writer identities. Li and Deng (2019) suggested, "student writers need to take advantage of writing to get a better understanding of their self and identity, which can be as important as writing itself" (p. 79). Based on the findings of this study, if "everything rises and falls on leadership" (Maxwell, 1999, p. xi), as one survey participant commented, "we have a long to go”.

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Appendix A

Writing Life Story Interview Protocol

(Modified from Life Story Interview, McAdams, 2008)

Introduction

This is an interview about the writing story of your life. As a social scientist, I am interested in hearing your story, including parts of the past as you remember them and the future as you imagine it. The story is selective; it does not include everything that has ever happened to you. Instead, I will ask you to focus on a few key things in your life – a few key scenes, characters, and ideas. There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. Instead, your task is simply to tell me about some of the most important things that have happened in your life related to writing, and how you imagine your writing life developing in the future. I will guide you through the interview so that we finish it all in about one hour or less.

Please know that my purpose in doing this interview is not to figure out what is wrong with you or to do some kind of deep clinical analysis! Nor should you think of this interview as a "therapy session" of some kind. The interview is for research purposes only, and its main goal is simply to hear your writing story. As a social scientist, I collect people's life stories in order to understand the different ways in which people in our society and in others, live their lives and the different ways in which they understand who they are as writers. Everything you say is voluntary, anonymous, and confidential.

I think you will enjoy the interview. Do you have any questions?

A. Life Chapters

Please begin by thinking about your life as if it were a book or novel. Imagine that the book has a table of contents containing the titles of the main chapters in the story. To begin here, please describe very briefly what the main chapters in the book might be related to writing. Please give each chapter a title, tell me just a little bit about what each chapter is about, and say a word or two about how we get from one chapter to the next. As a storyteller here, what you want to do is give me an overall plot summary of your writing story, going chapter by chapter. You may have as many chapters as you want, but I would suggest having between about two and seven of them. We will want to spend no more than about 20 minutes on this first section of the interview, so please keep your descriptions of the chapters relatively brief.

[Note to interviewer: The interviewer should feel free to ask questions of clarification and elaboration throughout the interview, but especially in this first part. This first section of the interview should run between 15 and 30 minutes.]

B. Key Scenes in the Life Story

Now that you have described the overall plot outline for your writing life, I would like you to focus in on a few key scenes related to writing that stand out in the story. A key scene would be an event or specific incident that took place at a particular time and place related to writing. Consider a key scene to be a moment in your writing life story that stands out for a particular

reason – perhaps because it was especially good or bad, particularly vivid, important, or memorable. For each of the eight key events we will consider, I ask that you describe in detail what happened, when and where it happened, who was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling in the event. In addition, I ask that you tell me why you think this particular scene about writing is important or significant in your life. What does the scene say about you as a person? Please be specific.

1. High Point
Please describe a scene, episode, or moment in your writing life that stands out as an especially positive experience. This might be the high point scene of your entire writing life, or else an especially happy, joyous, exciting, or wonderful moment in the story. Please describe this high point scene in detail. What happened, when and where, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, please say a word or two about why you think this particular writing moment was so good and what the scene may say about who you are as a person.

2. Low Point
The second scene is the opposite of the first. Thinking back over your entire writing life, please identify a scene that stands out as a low point in writing. Even though this event is unpleasant, I would appreciate your providing as much detail as you can about it. What happened in the event, where and when, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, please say a word or two about why you think this particular moment was so bad and what the scene may say about you or your life.

[Interviewer note: If the participant balks at doing this, tell him or her that the event does not really have to be *the* lowest point in the story but merely a very bad experience of some kind.]

3. Turning Point
In looking back over your writing life, it may be possible to identify certain key moments that stand out as turning points -- episodes that marked an important change in you or your writing life story. Please identify a particular episode in your writing life story that you now see as a turning point in your life. If you cannot identify a key turning point that stands out clearly, please describe some event in your life wherein you went through an important change of some kind. Again, for this event please describe what happened, where and when, who was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling. Also, please say a word or two about what you think this event says about you as a writer, person, or about your life.

4. Positive Childhood Memory
The fourth scene is an early memory – from childhood or your teen-aged years – that stands out as especially *positive* in some way. This would be a very positive, happy writing memory from your early years. Please describe this good writing memory in detail. What happened, where and when, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, what does this memory say about you or about your writing life?

5. Negative Childhood Memory
The fifth scene is an early writing memory – from childhood or your teen-aged years – that stands out as especially *negative* in some way. This would be a very negative, unhappy writing

memory from your early years, perhaps entailing sadness, fear, or some other very negative emotional experience. Please describe this bad memory in detail. What happened, where and when, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, what does this memory say about you or your writing life?

6. Vivid Adult Memory
Moving ahead to your adult years, please identify one writing scene that you have not already described in this section (in other words, do not repeat your high point, low point, or turning point scene) that stands out as especially vivid or meaningful. This would be an especially memorable, vivid, or important scene, positive or negative, from your adult years. Please describe this scene in detail, tell what happened, when and where, who was involved, and what you were thinking and feeling. Also, what does this memory say about you or your writing life?

7. Wisdom Event
Please describe an event in your writing life in which you displayed wisdom. The episode might be one in which you acted or interacted in an especially wise way or provided wise counsel or advice, made a wise decision, or otherwise behaved in a particularly wise manner. What happened, where and when, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, what does this memory say about you and your writing life?

Now, we're going to talk about the future.

C. Future Script

1. The Next Chapter
Your writing life story includes key chapters and scenes from your past, as you have described them, and it also includes how you see or imagine your future. Please describe what you see to be the next chapter in your writing life. What is going to come next in your writing life story?

2. Dreams, Hopes, and Plans for the Future
Please describe your plans, dreams, or hopes for the writing future. What do you hope to accomplish in the future in your writing life story?

3. Life Project
Do you have a writing project in life? A writing life project is something that you have been working on and plan to work on in the future chapters of your life story. The writing project might involve your family or your work life, or it might be a hobby, avocation, or pastime. Please describe any writing project that you are currently working on or plan to work on in the future. Tell me what the project is, how you got involved in the project or will get involved in the project, how the project might develop, and why you think this project is important for you and/or for other people.

D. Challenges

This next section considers the various challenges, struggles, and problems you have encountered in your writing life. I will begin with a general challenge, and then I will focus in on three particular areas or issues where many people experience challenges, problems, or crises.

1. Life Challenge

Looking back over your entire writing life, please identify and describe what you now consider to be the greatest single writing challenge you have faced in your life. What is or was the challenge or problem? How did the challenge or problem develop? How did you address or deal with this challenge or problem? What is the significance of this challenge or problem in your own writing life story?

2. Failure, Regret

Everybody experiences failure and regrets in life, even for the happiest and luckiest lives. Looking back over your entire writing life, please identify and describe the greatest failure or regret you have experienced. The writing failure or regret can occur in any area of your life – work, family, friendships, or any other area. Please describe the writing failure or regret and the way in which the failure or regret came to be. How have you coped with this failure or regret? What effect has this failure or regret had on you and your writing life story?

E. Life Theme

Looking back over your entire writing life story with all its chapters, scenes, and challenges, and extending back into the past and ahead into the future, do you discern a central writing theme, message, or idea that runs throughout the story? What is the major theme in your writing life story? Please explain.

F. Reflection

Thank you for this interview. I have just one more question for you. Many of the stories you have told me are about experiences that stand out from the day-to-day. For example, we talked about a high point, a turning point, a scene about your health, etc. Given that most people don't share their life stories in this way on a regular basis, I'm wondering if you might reflect for one last moment about what this interview, here today, has been like for you. What were your thoughts and feelings during the interview? How do you think this interview has affected you? Do you have any other comments about the interview process?

Appendix B

Principal Efficacy Survey for Writing Leadership (PESWL)

Principal Efficacy Survey for Writing Leadership (PESWL)

You are invited to participate in a research study to examine elementary principal efficacy and instructional leadership in writing. The study will be conducted by Jennifer VanSlander, Auburn University Graduate Student, under the direction of Dr. Victoria Cardullo, Associate Professor of Curriculum and Teaching at the Auburn University Department of Curriculum and Teaching. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a currently employed, public elementary school principal in the United States.

What will be involved if you participate? If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to complete an online survey. The survey will be focused on your beliefs about yourself as a writer and as a leader of writing instruction. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, you may choose to be entered in a raffle for one (1) of five (5) $20 Amazon.com eGift cards. As an extension of the survey, you may also choose to send your contact information to participate in an interview with Jenifer VanSlander, which will take approximately one hour. If you are selected for the interview, you will receive a $20 Amazon eGift card in appreciation for the additional time commitment.

Are there any risks or discomforts? At any time, if you experience discomfort while taking the survey you may exit the survey by closing the survey window or your web browser. If you do this, no survey responses will be recorded. Also, at the end of the survey, if you choose be entered into the raffle for an Amazon.com eGift card, your contact information will not be connected to your survey responses.

Are there any benefits to yourself or others? If you participate in this study, you can expect to become more aware of your beliefs about yourself as a writer and a leader of writing instruction. We/I cannot promise you that you will receive any or all of the benefits described.

Will you receive compensation for participating? You will not receive any financial benefit for participating in this study and it is offered at no cost to you. However, if you choose to enter the raffle, you may win one (1) of five (five) $20 Amazon eGift cards. The odds of winning depend on the number of survey participants who enter. If you are selected for the interview, you will receive a $20 Amazon eGift card in appreciation for the additional time commitment.

Are there any costs? There are no costs associated with your participation in this pilot study.

Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. We will protect your privacy and the data you provide by de-identifying data when possible.

If you have questions about this study, contact Jennifer VanSlander at 503-930-8092 or through email at jzv0020@auburn.edu. You may also contact Dr. Victoria Cardullo at vmc0004@auburn.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334)-844-5966 or e-mail at IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.
If you change your mind about participating, you may withdraw during the survey by closing the survey window or web browser, prior to submitting your responses. No identifiable information is collected during the survey; therefore, once your survey is submitted your responses cannot be withdrawn. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University, the Department of Curriculum and Teaching

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

I am currently practicing as a public school elementary principal.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Section 1.

1.1 In which state do you currently hold the title of elementary school principal?

▼ Alabama

1.2 The gender identity with which I most identify is:

- ○ Female
- ○ Male
- ○ Transgender Female
- ○ Transgender Male
- ○ Gender Variant/Non-Conforming
- ○ Prefer Not to Answer

1.3 My age is:

_____

1.4 Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be:

- ☐ White
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Other _____

1.5 The approximate total student enrollment (K-5) for my school is:

_____

1.6 My school can best be described as:

- ○ Rural
- ○ Urban
- ○ Suburban

1.7 The percentage of students who receive free or reduced lunch (Title I) at my school is:

_____

1.8 My highest educational level completed:

- ○ Bachelors
- ○ Masters
- ○ Education Specialist
- ○ Doctorate

1.9 I received my degree in elementary ***teacher*** education...

- ○ through a traditional four-year program at a college or university.
- ○ after receiving my bachelor's degree in a field other than education through a post-baccalaureate program.

1.10 I previously held, or currently hold a state certification or license for ***teaching*** in ***elementary*** grades (K-5).

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

1.11 The total years I was a ***licensed or certified general teacher in*** grades K-5 is *(Note: Please do NOT include any years in a classified (hourly) position, or licensed assignment such as special education, counseling, intervention, etc...):*

_____

1.12 The total years I have been an ***elementary assistant principal*** for grades K-5 is:

_____

1.13 The total years I have been an ***elementary principal*** for grades K-5 is *(Note: If this is your first year as an elementary principal, please enter "0")*:

_____

1.14 The total years I have been the ***elementary principal*** at my ***current*** school is *(Note: If this your first year as principal at your current school, please enter "0"):*

_____

1.15 My state requires principals to hold a specific license or certification to be a school administrator.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

1.16 In order to receive my principal certification or licensure, I was required to take additional college or university coursework *(i.e. credits).*

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

1.17 As part of the additional college or university coursework to be a school administrator I had a specific class on writing.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

1.18 The specific class on writing I had during my college or university coursework to be a school administrator, included information on (check all that apply):

- ☐ Assessment of Writing
- ☐ Writing Curriculum
- ☐ Writing Standards
- ☐ Research-Based Best Practices in Writing Instruction
- ☐ Leadership of Writing Programs
- ☐ Conducting Teacher Observations of Writing Instruction

1.19 My teachers are expected to designate time every day/week on ***explicit writing instruction.***

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

1.20 During an average week, how many minutes are designated to explicit writing instruction:

_____

1.21 About how many hours of ***school-based*** writing professional development do your teachers receive during an average school year?

_____

1.22 My teachers are expected to collect and analyze student writing samples at periodic times during the school year.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

1.23 Please assess the overall writing achievement level of all students in your school.

- ○ Student writing performance at my school is above average.
- ○ Student writing performance at my school is average.
- ○ Student writing performance at my school is below average.
- ○ I am unsure of my student's writing performance.

1.24 To what level do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
I have easy access to individual student writing data at my school.

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Moderately Disagree
- ○ Disagree Slightly
- ○ Agree Slightly
- ○ Moderately Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

1.25 My district requires a district-wide writing assessment.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Other _____

1.26 The state standardized assessment in my state, includes a writing assessment.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Other _____

1.27 During an average year, how much of your available building funds (i.e. local, state, Title I, fundraising) do you spend on writing curriculum or other writing-related activities and resources? ***Note: Please enter your response as a dollar amount, no dollar sign required (Example: 1000).***

_____

1.28 Please identify any curriculum resources, products, or specific approaches to teaching writing used by teachers at your school.

_____

1.29 To what level do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

My job as an elementary principal requires extensive writing.

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Moderately Disagree
- ○ Disagree Slightly
- ○ Agree Slightly
- ○ Moderately Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

1.30 To what level do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

District leadership has provided enough training to ensure I have the knowledge needed to facilitate effective writing instruction at my school.

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Moderately Disagree
- ○ Disagree Slightly
- ○ Agree Slightly
- ○ Moderately Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

Section 2: Writing Training

2.1 The total amount of coursework ***during*** my ***teacher*** preparation program devoted solely to curriculum and instruction in **writing** was:

- ○ None
- ○ Minimal
- ○ Adequate
- ○ Extensive

2.2 The amount of writing training I have ***CHOSEN*** to participate in, has been (i.e. self-selected to attend a writing workshop or conference):

- ○ None
- ○ Minimal
- ○ Adequate
- ○ Extensive

2.3 While I was a ***teacher***, the amount of ***required school- or district-based*** writing training I received was:

- ○ None
- ○ Minimal
- ○ Adequate
- ○ Extensive

Section 3. Open-Ended Questions

3.1 In your opinion, what does effective writing instruction look like?

_____

3.2 The most important people and experiences that have shaped my identity as a ***leader*** of writing instruction have been:

_____

3.3 Is there anything else you would like to share about writing instruction or professional development at your school? *(Note: Please enter "N/A" if you have no additional information to add).*

_____

Section 4. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

My beliefs about my own writing.

4.1. I enjoy writing.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.2. I am good at writing in general.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.3. Compared to most people, I can do most writing tasks well.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.4. I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different writing tasks.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.5. When faced with a challenging writing task, I am confident I will accomplish it.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.6. I believe I can succeed at almost any writing task to which I set my mind.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.7. Writing is easy for me.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.8. I know many strategies to improve my writing.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.9. I have good handwriting.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.10. I am proficient at spelling and grammar usage.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.11. I am good at narrative writing.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.12. I am good at informational writing.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
4.13. I am good at opinion writing.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree

Section 5. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

My beliefs about leading writing programs and professional development

5.1. I have the knowledge and skills needed to lead school-based writing professional development on my own.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.2. If a teacher masters a new writing instructional strategy quickly, it is because I provided the necessary training and support.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.3. If a teacher improves in the ability to teach writing, it is usually because I found better ways to support that teacher.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.4. If a teacher struggled to teach writing, I would have no problem providing them with the right resources and support to be successful.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.5. I have the ability to create a vision for writing instruction at my school.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.6. I can generate enthusiasm for a shared vision for writing instruction in my school.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.7. I am able to set a new direction for writing instruction for a school if the one currently in place doesn't seem correct to me.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.8. I am confident in my ability to choose group members in order to build an effective team to improve writing achievement at my school.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.9. With my experience and competence, I can usually help teachers meet goals for writing instruction.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.10. I am knowledgeable about current best practices in writing instruction.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.11. I am knowledgeable about many different programs, curriculum, and approaches to teaching writing to elementary students.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree

5.12. Teachers in my school show a considerable change in their understanding of how to teach writing.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.13. Teachers in my school make above-average growth in their ability to teach writing well in a typical school year	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.14. Teachers in my school become better writing teachers than those in similar schools.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.15. Students in my school show considerable change in their understanding of how to write.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.16. If other support staff (i.e. instructional coach, assistant principal) are not available, I am confident I can provide support to teachers to improve writing instruction.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.17. Through observations or quick visits, I am confident I can give effective feedback to teachers to improve writing instruction.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.18. If a teacher masters a new writing instructional strategy quickly, it is because I knew the necessary steps to teach this strategy.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.19. If I try really hard, I can help any teacher become a better writing teacher.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree
5.20. I understand how children learn to write.	▼ Strongly Disagree ... Strongly Agree

Thank you for completing the survey! Would you like the chance to receive a $20 Amazon eGift card and/or participate in an interview to expand on responses? If you would like to enter the raffle to win one (1) of five (5) $20 Amazon eGift cards, please send your request in writing with your full name and email address to Jennifer VanSlander at jzv0020@auburn.edu. The information you provide will not be connected to your survey responses.

If you would like to be considered for the one-on-one interview, please send an email indicating your interest and contact information to Jennifer VanSlander at jzv0020@auburn.edu. Your contact information will not be connected to your survey responses. Four participants will be selected to participate in a follow-up interview. At the completion of the interview, each of the four selected participants will receive a $20 Amazon gift card as a thank you for the additional

time commitment. Interview participants will be asked to provide additional consent, but all responses will be anonymized. The interviews may take up to one hour and will be scheduled at a time that is most convenient for you.

Appendix C

Codebook for PESWL Item 3.1

Pattern Code	Definition	In Vivo Examples
TEACHER FEEDBACK:	A teacher gives writing-focused feedback to students, whether through an assessment or conference, including goal-setting.	• conferences with students • feedback from the teacher
PEER COLLABORATION	An opportunity for students to share and collaborate with other students to brainstorm, revise or edit their writing.	• peer evaluation • allowing them to collaborate with others
EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION	Writing instruction that is delivered as a specific subject or content-area.	• explicit instruction and practice • structured direct instruction
WRITING PROCESS	Instruction that is focused on teaching writing as a process, including planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. (Add CRAFT)	• multiple drafts • time for kids to work through the writing process
STANDARDS-BASED	Writing instruction that is based on standards.	• various modes • meet the standards
MENTOR TEXTS	Any published text in print used during writing instruction to show students an example of a writing skill, genre, or structure.	• provides an example • mentor texts
GRADUAL RELEASE	An instructional framework designed to lead students to independent application of skills and strategies, including modeled practice, shared/collaborative practice, and independent practice.	• teacher modeling, shared writing, interactive writing, and independent writing • daily guided practice
GRAMMAR & CONVENTIONS	An instructional focus on the technical aspects of writing, including grammar, conventions, and mechanics	• using correct grammar and punctuation • forming simple and complex sentences
WORKSHOP MODEL	An instructional framework to teach writing that is based on the idea that students write best when they write frequently, for extended periods of time. The framework includes a mini-lesson, independent writing time, and a time for sharing.	• Writer's Workshop model • 10 minute mini-lesson

INTEGRATED SUBJECTS	Writing used or taught as a support skill for other subject areas such as reading, science, math, and social studies.	• taught through other subject areas, not just as a standalone • connected to other subjects
AUTHENTIC PURPOSE	Students write for an authentic purpose or audience,	• authentic based • purposeful writing
TIME	Students spend time writing, including daily.	• opportunities to write on a regular basis • students write daily
EXPRESS	Writing is used as a means to express ideas, knowledge, or feelings.	• expression of students thinking • defend your opinion or thoughts
ASSESSMENT	Writing is assessed, including using a scoring rubric.	• feedback on student writing samples • pre-assessed
SCAFFOLDS & SUPPORTS	A instructional support given to the student during the learning process, including language supports.	• supportive and focused on where students are • scaffolding and supporting students in their own developmental journey as a writer
PRACTICE	Students practice writing.	• high expectation of a high volume of writing • practice everyday

Appendix C

Codebook for PESWL Item 3.2

Pattern Code	Definition	In Vivo Examples
HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHER	An person in an instructional capacity in the higher education setting.	• my college professors • professor who focused on writing
STAFF	Persons under the supersion of the elementary principal at a school site, or fellow teachers while a classroom teacher.	• my teachers • My teachers! I'm new to the site and have loved watching them teach.
WRITING ACTIVITY	Personal engagement in any writing activity or assignment.	• writing papers during my master's program for instructional leadership • the National Boards process
EXPERIENCE	The participant has experience teaching or planning writing learning experiences for students.	• seeing the writing ability of my first graders was an eye opener for me • having been a writing teacher
K-12 TEACHER	An influential teacher in the K-12 school setting.	• form ELA teachers in middle, HS • my 3rd grade elementary teacher
MENTOR	A person one looks to as a role model or for guidance, including building administrators and school-based support staff.	• my parents • past principals and mentors
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	A training experience designed to improve instructional skills, including conferences, workshops, and school-site based training, and collaboration with consultants.	• ASCD conferences and training • Write from the Beginning training
DISTRICT STAFF	A person who works at the district level in a school support role.	• district-wide literacy coach • my former director of curriculum
LITERACY EXPERT	A person who has published curriculum or research in the area of writing.	• Mary Ehrenworth • Lucy Calkins
CURRICULUM OR PROGRAM	A specific curriculum or program designed to teach writing.	• Collins writing training • training in Lucy Calkins curriculum
CURRICULUM DESIGN	Experience designing writing curriculum or assessments.	• curriculum writing process • creating a continuum of our student writing for reference

Appendix D

Permissions to Modify Existing Surveys

William & Mary
School of Education

MEGAN TSCHANNEN-MORAN, PHD
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

July 15, 2020

Jennifer,

You have my permission to use the Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale, which I developed with Chris Gareis, in your research. The best citation to use is:

Tschannen-Moran, M. & Gareis, C. (2004). Principals' sense of efficacy: Assessing a promising construct. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 42, 573-585.

You can find a copy of these measures and scoring directions on my web site at http://wmpeople.wm.edu/site/page/mxtsch . I will also attach directions you can follow to access my password protected web site, where you can find the supporting references for these measures as well as other articles I have written on this and related topics.

All the best,

Megan Tschannen-Moran
William & Mary School of Education

P.O. Box 8795 • Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795 • (757) 221-2187 • mxtsch@wm.edu

Gmail Jennifer VanSlander [redacted]

Efficacy Survey

Steve Graham [redacted] Fri, Jun 5, 2020 at 3:14 PM
To: Jennifer VanSlander [redacted]

Hi Jen

you definitely have my permission to use the scale. [redacted]

steve

From: Jennifer VanSlander <[redacted]
Sent: Friday, June 5, 2020 1:06 PM
To: Steve Graham <[redacted]
Subject: Re: Efficacy Survey

[Quoted text hidden]

Re: Permission Request

From: Andrea Bobbio [redacted]

To: [redacted]

Date: Monday, August 17, 2020, 10:38 AM CDT

Dear Ms. VanSlander,

you have my permission to use and modify the LSE items for the purpose of your (very interesting!) dissertation. [redacted]
Best Regards.

Andrea B.

PsycTESTS

New General Self-Efficacy Scale

PsycTESTS Citation:
Chen, G., Gully, S. M., & Eden, D. (2001). New General Self-Efficacy Scale [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: 10.1037/t08800-000

Test Shown: Full

Test Format:
The measure's 8 items are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Source:
Chen, Gilad, Gully, Stanley M., & Eden, Dov. (2001). Validation of a new general self-efficacy scale. Organizational Research Methods, Vol 4(1), 62-83. doi: 10.1177/109442810141004, © 2001 by SAGE Publications. Reproduced by Permission of SAGE Publications.