

2017

Understanding Rural Appalachian Ohio Educators' Perceptions of Students of Poverty

Angela Dawn Hicks
Walden University

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Walden University

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Angela Hicks

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University

2017

Abstract

Understanding Rural Appalachian Ohio Educators' Perceptions of Students of Poverty

by

Angela Dawn Hicks

MA, Marygrove University, MI, 2002

BS, West Liberty State College, WV, 1998

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

October 2017

Abstract

In a rural elementary school, characterized by high poverty levels in Appalachian Ohio, school personnel were concerned that student literacy and math proficiency levels remained low during 2005-2015 and teachers had not been able to close the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged students and non-economically disadvantaged students despite a focus on literacy and math professional development (PD) provided by the district. Administrators were concerned that teachers' perceptions, and beliefs about students of poverty might contribute to students' underachievement. The purpose of this study was to understand teachers' perceptions of students living in poverty. Guided by Gorski's equity literacy theory, research questions focused on discovering teachers' dispositions of teaching students of poverty, PD experiences and strategies used to teach the target student population. The purposeful sample included 9 elementary teachers at the target site and data were collected through semi-structured interviews. Data analysis consisted of an inductive phenomenological process to identify codes and sub-codes of the interview data to derive themes. Themes supporting the findings indicated perceptions that aligned with Gorski's stereotyped socially identified norms including; education is of low priority, poor people are lazy, poor people abuse drugs or alcohol and poor people are ineffective parents. The findings indicated the development of PD focused on equity literacy to support change in teacher perceptions and the use of equity literacy informed pedagogy. The project will promote social change by increasing teachers' capacity to challenge students educationally, resulting in improved academic outcomes by their students living in poverty.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my family and friends that became family, the Folwer, Hicks, and McFadden families. My parents have always encouraged me as I set goals and completed the journey. But this goal of completing an EdD was the last goal my daddy ever knew I set as he now rests with our Lord. Therefore, I had to complete the journey. With the constant support, love, and encouragement from my mommy, Amy, Jr, Uncle Jimmy, Aunt Carol, Patty, Steve, and Gina you gave me the needed confidence during the challenging times. To my dear husband and best friend, Anthony, you were my rock. Thank you for the hugs when I needed them and for being here to wipe away my tears when I cried them. This journey started as my goal and grew into our dream. And to my McFadden family, I hope that my research will help continue to carry on Brad's vision for equitable education.

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I want to thank the Walden University for offering a platform that allowed me to pursue my dream that can lead to social change. To my supportive and encouraging committee, I truly thank you for believing in my research and me. To my Chair, Dr. Szecsy, you were always available for my panicked phone calls or e-mail when I was confused. Thank you, I was confused often. Dr. Dressler, 1st methodologist, thank you for each critic that helped me move through the methodology section. Dr. White, 2nd methodologist, thank you for the critical feedback that made my dissertation flow for the reader. Dr. Seymour, URR thank you for your patience and time. And to Dr. Kate thank you for believing in me from semester one. Finally, I thank each professor I encountered during the EdD process as you each gave me pieces of knowledge needed to complete my research and dissertation.

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB; 2001) gave all students, by federal law, the right to access high-quality education. As of the 2005-2006 school year, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) required that all core teachers be highly qualified or be a highly qualified teacher (HQT) to be in compliance with NCLB. President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law on December 10, 2015 (S. Res. 114, 2015). The ESSA replaced the NCLB during the 2017-2018 school year. Gorski (2013) suggested that classrooms and schools populated with students of poverty often lack sufficient resources and quality teachers as opposed to classrooms and schools that high-income families experienced. This disparity in the students' placement intentional or unintentional, but at its core, may be deeply rooted in beliefs, ideas, or perceptions of the teachers about their students and the families of which they are a part.

The intent of this qualitative case study was to understand teachers' embedded perceptions and beliefs and to explore with the participants' how the perceptions and beliefs may influence how these teachers work with students who live in poverty. I used the phenomenological method as teachers reported their experiences. A thorough depiction of perceptions did emerge during the process.

In Section 1, I detailed the problem at the local and regional levels, presented the rationale for the research, and explained the significance the research provided, stated the research questions, gave supporting literature, and described the history of relevant legislation. Based on local problem and the professional literature the conceptual

framework emerged. An alignment of the problem and research questions created the pathway to the project (Appendix A), a 4-day professional development on Equitable Literacy.

Definition of the Problem

Administrators in a low-income, rural Appalachian school district in a Southern Ohio County considered achievement of all students a high priority (CCIP 2015). However, on September 16, 2015, the Building Leadership Team (BLT) in the local school identified a discrepancy in achievement between the all students group and the economically disadvantaged subgroup. As shown in Table 1, the ODE (2015) released report card information, which identified an achievement gap between all students and economically disadvantaged with the gap increasing in Reading and Math rather than decreasing at the elementary grade levels. These report card data also identified the local school as receiving an F rating in gap closing between the all students group and the economically disadvantaged (ED) subgroup (Appendix B).

The problem was that the difference or gap in achievement between the all students group and the ED subgroup increased even when educators were bound to the NCLB (2001) requirements of high-quality instruction and equal access to the universal curriculum. What was not known was the extent to which teachers understand or misunderstand academic barriers of students living in poverty in this rural Appalachia district and the degree to which any misunderstanding might contribute to the achievement gap. Teachers' perceptions might influence their instructional practices, which might, in turn, impact the academic achievement of all students in this setting. This

research was an effort to understand local teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and understandings of students that live in poverty, and to bring to light any practice that, maybe unintentionally creating different expectations among student groups of socioeconomic status.

Table 1

District Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) FY 2015

AMO Reading		# Proficient	% Proficient	Gap
All Students	<i>n</i> =902	715	79.3	
Ec. Disadvantaged	<i>n</i> =532	396	74.4	4.9%
AMO Math		# Proficient	% Proficient	Gap
All Students	<i>n</i> =903	649	71.9	
Ec. Disadvantaged	<i>n</i> =532	355	66.7	5.2%

Note: Data taken from the 2015 District Report Card based on students tested.

Gorski (2010, 2012), Marquis-Hobbs (2014), and Wrigley (2013) suggested that teachers in this setting may have deeply-rooted dispositions and beliefs that create a deficit in thinking about students living in poverty, based on an earlier line of thinking identified by Lewis (1966). The terms and behaviors associated with poverty became embedded in a social culture, creating social classism, and ultimately forming the understanding that people of poverty became identified as lazy, stupid, drug or alcohol abusing, and sexually involved (Gorski, 2010).

Some teachers whose childhood or impressionable years took place from 1960 to 1980 became exposed to the political terms associated with Lewis (1966). Teachers, who

embrace Lewis style ideals, may lower expectations and adverse students' educational outcome would prevail. Teachers' misguided perceptions and beliefs of students living in poverty continue to exist in today's education system (Hendrickson, 2012; Reardon, 2011, 2013). Both Hendrickson (2012) and Reardon's (2011; 2013) assertions applied to the local district as the student populations were considered an area of poverty (TDDA, 2014).

The county had a declining population at the rate of 2.4% between 2010 and 2013 and a per capita income of \$22,151 (Census, Quick Facts, 2013). The local school district experienced a nearly 50% decline in student population over the past 2 decades with the free and reduced-price lunch rate increasing from approximately 25% to 63% as of the 2015 Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP). Based on the Teacher Distribution Data Analysis (TDDA, 2014), the ODE considered the school district an area of poverty. Since 2005, reported homeless students and unaccompanied youth increased 210% in this Ohio school district serving an economically disadvantaged community in rural Appalachia (BOE, 2014).

The region suffered from economic decline with the coal mine and steel mills shutting down. The elimination of jobs led to the students' population decline of 50% over the past 2 decades as families had to move in search of stable employment. Mader's (2016) trend research indicated the loss in funding to rural schools due to declining enrollment. The percentage of students receiving a free or reduced-priced lunch increased from approximately 25% to 63% over 20 years between 1995 and 2015. As the student population changed in the local school district, the teacher populations remained

consistent at 100% with at least a 4-year degree, over 50% with a master's degree, and over 90% are from the local area (C.B Ted, personal communication, October 28, 2015). The significance in the student population changing while the teachers remained the same may have created an unbalanced education system as the teachers have not lived the life of poverty and have middle-class beliefs.

The teachers of this local public school district were 99%, White, from the middle-class, and earned either a bachelor's or master's degree. Trinette (2014) and Gorski (2013) both suggested that these characteristics led to educators teaching in a middle-class system with a blurred view of people living in poverty. Both Hendrickson (2012) and Reardon (2011, 2013) suggested that the perceptions and dispositions held by the middle-class teachers might have created an unintentional classism within the education system. The middle-class views, perceptions, and dispositions held by the teachers may interfere with the learning of the 63% of students living in poverty as the teachers may exhibit "in-group bias" (Gorski, 2013, p.57). Lower expectations lead to lowered educational attainment, therefore prolonging or repeating the current downward academic achievement trend for students of poverty.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

District teachers who were children during the 1960s through the 1980s might have low expectations for their ED students because their formative experiences took place during a time when a deficit model of understanding students of poverty prevailed. An equitable pedagogy now prevails at a policy level, and the deficit model has been

challenged; however, the same may not apply in the classroom. Students living in poverty continued to perform at a lower level than their more affluent peers because of vestiges of the old thinking that still resided in educators' thinking, perceptions, and dispositions. Powered by the Lewis (1966) led perceptions of poverty, teachers' limitations in reaching students living in poverty yielded unintended consequences for students, including lower expectations that result in lower outcomes for students' in poverty than their more affluent peers. This possibility aligned with Reardon's (2011) research on the academic achievement gaps between students based on socioeconomic status.

Reardon (2011) suggested that students from high-income families performed better than students from low-income households. Gorski (2013) suggested that the achievement gap should be considered an opportunity gap, as poor students had less opportunity than their more affluent counterparts. Accordingly, data in this local district reflected the same increase in the achievement gap between the students of high-income families and students from low-income families. Students in this local district identified as the ED, had an overall reading score of 76.8% while the all student group scored 82.3% (ODE, 2015). Reardon (2013) supported this finding as the achievement gap started to grow with the tested students in the mid to late 1970s and continues to increase as of 2015.

The teachers' need assessment data (2015) in the local district identified the need for assistance in instructional strategies for a diverse classroom with subgroups such as ED. Professional development was scheduled for the district in-service day held on November 11, 2015 as identified by the Building Leadership Team (BLT). The topic was

addressed by the administration and during a BLT meeting, held on September 16, 2015. Gorski (2012) suggested that to educate best, the teachers must first understand their ideals, bias, perceptions, and dispositions. In this local district, it was not clear that the teachers were completely aware of any ideals, biases, perceptions, or dispositions they held that contributed to instructional practices that resulted in poor outcomes for students who live in poverty.

According to NCLB (2001), all students had the equal right to access the same high-quality curriculum and instruction. With standardized curriculum and differentiated instruction in place in this school district, administrative and community stakeholders expected to see gaps in achievement to decrease, not increase. The increasing achievement gap in this local setting indicated a need for this research to understand the teachers' dispositions and perceptions of students living in poverty in this rural Appalachian school district. This research was useful for stakeholders to provide the impetus for appropriate in-service and professional development to support the teachers continued learning.

This research also had implications for preservice teacher education. Some preservice teacher candidates perceived themselves as not being prepared to educate students in diverse cultural situations (Gorski, Davis, & Reiter, 2012). If colleges and universities in this local region are not providing curriculum to preservice teachers about diverse learning needs, including such students, as those living in poverty, then teachers outside of that cultural background would have limited knowledge and understanding of poverty. Once teachers enter the workforce either unprepared to educate students from

different cultural backgrounds or embodying dispositions and perceptions that unintentionally create personal bias, the local leadership must be prepared to provide appropriate professional development (Shure et al., 2015). The purpose of this study was to understand the teacher perceptions of students that live in poverty.

Evidence of the Problem From the Professional Literature

This study was of teachers' social norms, perceptions, and dispositions of rural, Ohio teachers in 2016, who were adolescents between 1960-1980. During the 1960s Lewis (1966) identified the culture of poverty as a social condition that stereotyped poor people as lazy, addicted to drugs or alcohol, not willing to work and other negative characteristics (Lewis, 1966). On the political campaign, President Regan tried to capitalize on the welfare queen during many speeches bringing the stereotyped negative spotlight of poverty to the forefront during the 1976 campaign (Gorski, 2012b). As a result of the social norms of people living in poverty during 1960-1980, those who were not in the poverty in-group would have created a negative attitude and believe of the poor. As the adolescents ultimately grow into adults and become teachers, Payne (2003) addressed them with the negative lenses of poverty when she released her framework of poverty.

Economic status was one of the strongest indicators of rural education outcomes (Chandler, 2014). Rural students are at risk of having a higher percentage of living in poverty as compared to their counterpart groups (Chandler, 2014). Both Gorski (2012b) and Chandler (2014) suggested that teachers in rural areas are from middle class and have experienced life differently than those of rural poor people. Chandler reported that the

majority of rural teachers lived experiences aligned with middle-class values and behaviors. The lived experiences, values, and practices accepted as norms within the middle-class in-group developed the teachers' perceptions and dispositions (Gorski, 2012b).

I sought to identify any perceptions and dispositions that were developed according to social norms yet created a perceived negative outlook of people that live in poverty. The perceptions and dispositions may or may not affect the expectations that rural teachers exposed students of poverty. Results identified a need for further research in teachers' perceptions, dispositions and understanding of cultural awareness that could lead to either pre-service training alignment or increased professional development at the local level.

Definitions of Terms

Appalachia: This refers to a region where geographical boundaries exist because of based on the shared history, culture, and environment of mountain people in eastern North America, rather than on legal boundaries (www.theallianceforappalachia.org, n.d.).

Core teachers: Core academic subjects, as defined in Section 9101 of NCLB, include English, language arts, reading, science, mathematics, arts (includes music, visual arts, dance and drama), foreign language, government and civics, history, economics and geography (NCLB: 9101, 2001).

Culturally Responsive Education: Practices that “link curriculum, instruction, and assessment to the students' experiences, language, and culture-in other words, to their prior knowledge” (Gregory & Kaufeldt, 2015, p. 86).

Funds of Knowledge: Information and skills learned through experience (Cutri, Manning, & Chun, 2011; Rios-Aguilar, Kiyama, Grvitt, & Moll, 2011).

In-group: Social groups that share both social and moral norms and values (Pagliaro, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2011).

In-Group Bias: “Phenomenon based on the tendency to see our social and identity groups more favorably overall than groups with which we do not associate” (Gorski, 2013, p. 57).

Lived Experience: Dewey (1897) believed that education should be a connection to a student's lived experience or every day life. Education was a social experience and the teacher should make learning relevant to the lived experience for authentic learning.

Out-Group: Social group not understood or accepted by the “in-group” (Pagliaro et al., 2011) a more negative and stereotyped accepted norm (Gorski, 2012b)

Resources: “Can exchange for food, clothing, lodging, and healthcare” (Gorski, 2013, p. 7).

Poor: People who live in poverty (Gorski, 2013, p. 8).

Poverty: A financial condition in which an individual or family cannot afford the basic human necessities including food, clothing, housing, healthcare, childcare, and education (quoted from Children’s Defense Fund [CDF, 2008] Gorski, pp. 8, 2013)

Poverty Line: The poverty line is set by a calculation between income and the family size and family (Jacobsen, Lee, & Pollard, 2013). As of January 1, 2014 the United States poverty line was \$23,850 for a family of four (Health and Human Services Department [HHSD], 2014)

Resources: “Can exchange for food, clothing, lodging, and healthcare” (Gorski, 2013, p. 7).

Socioeconomic Status: “Students’ or families’ access to financial resources” (Gorski, 2013, p. 7).

Stress: Feeling of overwhelming, distress, caused by a psychosocial event (Lefmann & Combs-Orme, 2014).

Significance of the Study

This study was significant as teachers’ perceptions were explored and how social norms affected strategies within the classroom. Educators in rural Appalachia do not fully understand culturally responsive pedagogy or how to respond to the needs of students in rural Appalachia (Cleveland et al., 2011, p. 40). Gorski (2010) suggested that educators must understand the institutionalization of repression before he or she realizes the effect it has had on society. It would be with this understanding then that educators could begin to change the oppression that exists with classism. This research had implications for teachers’ identification of an instructional gap due to embedded perceptions and dispositions in this rural Appalachian, Ohio school district with the students they educate. Future researchers could clarify this difference in practice; as both educators and students will benefit from programs developed to fill the void.

The research questions exposed the lived experiences of the teachers in a rural Appalachian school district in Southeastern Ohio. The experiences established perceptions, dispositions and behaviors within the teachers that created unintentional or misrepresented beliefs about students that live in poverty. The purpose of this research

was to understand the teachers' perceptions of students living in poverty. This research lead to needed local professional development for educators to establish accurate knowledge of students that live in poverty,

Research Questions

Federal mandates required that all students have equal access to high-quality education. Local education agencies (LEA's) have requirements in the NCLB (2001) and ESSA (2015) that mandated the academic gap between subgroups be addressed. The problem was that the ED subgroup in this local area continued to increase, as did the achievement gap. To identify any teacher ideals, beliefs, and dispositions that may have influenced perceptions of students that live in poverty the research questions were as follows:

1. What dispositions are reflected in participants' reports about teaching students living in poverty in rural Appalachia Ohio?
2. What are the participants' experiences with professional development for teaching students who live in poverty?
3. In rural Appalachian Ohio, what educational strategies do participants' report using to meet the needs of students who live in poverty?

Review of the Literature

The Walden University library database offered the most significant source of literature for this review. I also searched ProQuest, Google Scholar, the Internet, and traditional library searches. The key terms searched for the review were: *poverty*, *dispositions*, *rural*, *education*, *Appalachia*, *teacher perceptions*, and *culture awareness*.

Most of the articles are within a 5-year timeframe and considered current. However, to create a better knowledge base, some older literature was also included. I reviewed the articles' reference list to identify any additional resources that may benefit the literature review. I purchased several books from authors such as Gorski, Jensen, Marzano, and Yin to help gain an understanding of both content and process. Finally, I joined the ASCD to have quick access to current and relevant books on the intended research.

The literature review will build from the concept that sparked the idea of the proposed research into the supporting literature that shows evidence that such research should be completed. The literature in the review encompassed evidence of the problem, legislation, regional effects, poverty, teacher expectations, local information, implications, and a summary of the reviewed literature.

Organization of Literature Review

The following section begins with an overview of the development of dispositions based on Lewis lead beliefs during the war on poverty. Although the war on poverty started in 1960, the misguided views remain in today's society and are accepted by many. A subsection will include the history of governing legislation that generated policy that mandated equitable education for all students including students of poverty. Subsequent sections will continue onto the regional than local information on the effects of poverty. Following is an overview of the definition of poverty and information on situations experiences during poverty. The final two sections reflect information about to expectations. Expectation development will be explained followed by the description of teacher expectation of student of poverty.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework guiding this study are the decades of research compiled by Gorski on the opportunity gap created in society for students and families of poverty. Gorski (2013) highlighted the misconception that “education is the great equalizer” (p. 1) and attempted to debunk the stereotype views of those who live in poverty. Gorski (2008) listed myths about the culture of poverty as people being unmotivated, lower work values, low parent involvement, and little value in education, language deficient, and drug and alcohol addicts. The long-standing stereotype view of students and families of poverty has become embedded in society and accepted even in the structure of school systems (Gorski, 2013).

While families of poverty may not have the means to participate in school-based involvement activities, Gorski (2012b) suggested that the home-based activities are engaging and frequent. There is evidence that poor people often work two or three jobs, which does not indicate lazy or little work ethics (Gorski, 2012b). Gorski also debunked the myth of substance abuse as research suggested abuse as comparable between economic groups. Subsequently, Gorski addressed the language discrepancy as lack of an opportunity to programs and not an absence of ability. The accepted English language is the stereotype superior and inferior standard (Gorski, 2012b, p. 311).

Educators must be able to understand that each student comes from varying backgrounds and have different lived experiences. Gorski stated (2013), “we tend to filter information through our existing belief system” (p. 38). Teachers who have embedded assumptions that reflect the socially accepted norms inherently lower academic

expectations for students of poverty (Gorski, 2013). It is Gorski's belief that educators must remove all bias and deficit views to create an educational environment that is equitable for all students regardless of the economic background from which they come. Gorski said equity literacy is

The skills and dispositions that enable us to recognize, respond to, and redress conditions that deny some students access to the educational opportunities enjoyed by their peers and, in doing so, sustain equitable learning environments for all students and families. (Gorski, 2013, p. 19)

The conceptual framework guiding this study allowed me to use phenomenological methods (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The study focused on the educators' dispositions and perception of students living in poverty and the academic boundaries their students encounter making the study a qualitative case study grounded in phenomenology philosophy (Merriam, 2009). The purpose of the study was to understand the teachers' perceptions of students living in poverty.

Belonging to a Group

Many elements influence personality factors, including experiences during early childhood such as parenting, environment, and mental issues (Dai et al., 2012). Adolescence is when social norms and social groups are developed based on perceived moral values and accepted behaviors (Pagliaro et al., 2011). At a young age, groups separate into in-groups and out-groups based on shared cultural influences creating common belief systems and common attitudes (Pagliaro et al., 2011).

Belonging to a group gives a person a sense of commonplace, familiarity, and meaning. However, when a person encounters someone from the out-group, they are often facing an individual with which they have no or very little understanding. Gorski (2012b) suggested that when a person encounters a situation, he or she is unfamiliar; the gap of knowledge is replaced with the stereotype knowledge accepted by the in-group often called the in-group bias.

The purpose of this research was to understand the teachers' perceptions of students living on poverty. The local school district has an average of approximately 62% students receiving free or reduced-priced lunches. The intent of the literature review was to outline what current research identified as the reason that may influence teachers understanding, beliefs, and disposition of students that live in poverty.

A History of Governing Legislation on Education of Students in Poverty

Educators enter the field of education for many, different personal reasons. However, as dictated by federal law, The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, 1965), signed into law by President Johnson, bound educators to a set of accountability standards that impact curriculum, instruction, assessment, and evaluations (educationpost). The Johnson administration initiated the ESEA to combat the war on poverty set into high gear based on Lewis's trend the "Culture of Poverty" (Gorski, 2012b).

The federal law ESEA was intended to filter funding into local education agencies (LEA's) or school districts that served impoverished or students that were poor. The implications of the law were to level the academic playing field for those districts with a

lower income base or students living in poverty compared to districts with higher tax basis. If the law were to have been implemented fully and with fidelity, the students living in poverty would have gained federally funded resources such as supplemental curriculum, books, and interventions.

Several decades and many laws later in 2001, NCLB reauthorized the ESEA with additional stipulations for any school and district that received federal funding (ESSA, 2015). One of the significant additions to the reauthorization was the HQT component. The HQT component required that 100% of all core teachers provided evidence of their content qualification in addition to certification by the 2005-2006 school year. The HQT requirement was intended to guarantee that all students, no matter of economic status, be educated by a highly qualified teacher (Yettick, Baker, Wickersham, & Hupfeld, 2014).

A new law introduced in Congress and on December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law. This act included many of the accountability requirements outlined in the NCLB but gave more flexibility at the state and local levels (Capitol Connection, 2016). As in the original ESEA federal law 1965, the new ESSA will continue to funnel federal funds into districts with students of poverty among other qualifying subgroups.

The timeframe between President Johnson's campaign and the Obama Presidency was not only highlighted with educational laws that allotted federal funds to low-income schools, but also an entire movement to eliminate poverty from the United States swept the country. On March 16, 1964, President Johnson addressed Congress and declared war on poverty with the intent to eliminate the troubles of the poor (ushistory.org, 2016).

During President Johnson's speech to Congress, Johnson identified the poor, in terms consistent with the Lewis led definitions underprivileged, in need of skill, and in need of education (Halsall, 1998). Although many programs were put into place and remain in place today, such as food stamps, Section 8, and Supplemental Security Income, when asked, citizens view the war on poverty with a negative lens (Jencks, 2015).

Regional Effects on Poverty

President Johnson's war on poverty started in 1964 and services remain in place today (ushistory.org, 2016). However, the rural areas in the United States may have an obscene view of the war on poverty as, "poverty remains a challenge in rural areas" (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA], 2015, p. 3). The employment gap between the metro and rural areas has widened from 2010 and 2015 (USDA, 2015). According to the United States Census Bureau, a rural area was a geographical space that "encompasses all population, housing, and territory not included within an urban area" (rural classification, para 2).

Rural poverty affects all ages. However, rural poverty has the greatest effect on children. Although childhood poverty depends on the family make-up such as the number of children, parents, or multiple family homes, employment, and education, as of 2014 the percent of rural children living in poverty was 25.2% (USDA, 2015, p. 3). No two families or people live the same experience nor have the same family composition, employment or abilities; but, each does have a lack of some resource that inhibits them from meeting some basic human needs while living in poverty (Gorski, 2013). A basic

human need may consist of food, water, clothing, housing, childcare, or healthcare (Gorski, 2013).

The economy and geographic boundaries affect poverty differently among regions. A region known as the Appalachian Region consists of 42% “rural, compared with 20 percent of the nation’s” (ARC Ex. Summary, 2015, p. 2). The term, named by Indians, Appalachia means endless mountain range (Appalachian Regional Ministry, 2016). The Appalachian Region, which is situated along the Appalachian Mountain Range and stretches from New York to Mississippi. The region consists of 13 states with many peaks, valleys, rivers, ponds, and many geographical variations in between (ARC Ex. Summary, 2015). Economically, the Appalachian region was negatively affected during both the 1980s and the 1990s during the national recession and currently exhibits an employment gap increase over the last decade (ARC Ex. Summary, 2015).

The region has the claim to many natural resources, and the land has tremendous energy value as demonstrated by the coal, gas, and oil industry (OOGEEP Energy Benefits, 2013). Historically, the region’s people depended on the land for resources to help support families and communities causing the people to be considerable laborers. With the geographic barriers such as mountains, rivers, and miles between towns, many individuals and communities became isolated from the influences of the most industrialized communities or outlanders (Appalachian Regional Ministry, 2016).

People, place, and hard work were of great value to the people of Appalachia (Andreescu, Shutt, & Vito, 2011). To outsiders, stereotypes such as hillbilly, backwoods, poor, or uneducated were the predominate view of people who lived in the region.

Whether it was the historical depictions showed during political campaigns during the fight against poverty or the television show *Buckwild*, an obscure and distorted view of rural Appalachian people has been depicted (Winter, 2013).

Poverty

Poverty had such a dynamic and sophisticated phenomenon that many theories and definitions existed; yet there was no one true example that adequately explained the term poverty. Jensen (2009) listed six types of poverty: situational, generational, absolute, relative, urban, and rural poverty. Each term of poverty included people or families that exhibited the lack of resources. Gorski (2013) suggested that resources are anything that can be exchanged for “food, clothing, lodging, and healthcare” (p. 7). The lack of any one of the resources would add emotional stress to individuals or families. Many times, families living in poverty experienced a lack of many or all resources at a single time.

Some theories such as individualism, social structuralism, the culture of poverty, and fatalism, in addition to poverty terms, existed to try to explain the origin or reason that poverty existed (Seccombe, 2011). Individualism gave hope to all poor people that they would make it out of poverty based on hard work. Social structuralism suggested that social issues caused poverty (Seccombe, 2011). Lewis introduced the culture of poverty, in 1961 when he identified traits that are found in people of poverty such as poor work ethic, drug and alcohol use, low education value, and violence (Gorski, 2013; Seccombe, 2011). Fatalism indicated that a chain of events or random situations that are out of one’s control caused poverty (Seccombe, 2011, p. 9).

All of the identified poverty definitions and theories listed have a common thread. The common thread was that people that live in poverty have the lack of basic needed resources. According to Maslow's (as cited by Gregory & Kaufeldt, 2015) basic needs and choice theory, many of the basic needs identified by both definitions and theories of poverty, was not being met with those living in poverty. "Food, water, shelter" are a few of the physiological needs not being met for people living in poverty (Gregory & Kaufeldt, 2015, p. 19). The other needs according to Maslow (as cited by Gregory & Kaufeldt, 2015) are, "Safety needs, Belongingness and love, Self-esteem, and Self-actualization" (p. 19). While people endured the affects of poverty causing adverse effects to individuals and families, many of the identified traits within the Maslow Hierarchy are not met.

The loss of any basic human need may alter a person's tendencies. When individuals experienced a lack of or loss of basic needs, the "Seeking System" of the brain became engaged (Gregory & Kaufeldt, 2015, p. 36). Of all the emotional systems in the brain, the seeking system was considered the "granddaddy" of the systems as it controlled the behaviors that one needs for survival (Gregory & Kaufeldt, 2015, p. 37). However, the fight, flight, or freeze system initiated with sustained stress such as low or no food for days, poor housing, single parent homes or on-going violence. The sustained stress caused the lack of higher thinking ability, making survival the primary goal (Gregory & Kaufeldt, 2015).

The effects of the loss of basic need causing stress were determined to be at different intensity. The stress can be termed *acute stress*, which "refers to severe, intense

stress resulting from exposure to such trauma as abuse, or violence, whereas chronic stress refers to high stress sustained over time,” (Jensen, 2013, p. 17). Students that live in poverty tend to have a higher rate of the stress factors in their lives that create the fight, flight, or freeze system or the acute stress situation. The effect of the stressors presented in the students as signs of helplessness, shyness, laziness, and other behaviors. However, the perceived behaviors maybe an indication of stress disorders even posttraumatic stress disorder (Jensen, 2013). Other medical diagnoses have been associated with exposure to such stressors such as ADHD, anger disorders, and many other brain disorders, due to, long-term exposure (Adem, “pseudonym” personal communication, January 12, 2016).

Living in poverty brought about, many different circumstances that caused individuals and families immense difficulties (Cettina, 2015). With the percentage of people living in poverty in the United States and at a greater rate in the local rural Appalachian region, the teachers should be aware of the circumstances that surround the students they educate. However, educators may not know how to identify the signs of poverty or how to address the needs of those students or families living in poverty (Marquis-Hobbs, 2014). The worst outcome would be when educators have incomplete information or bias and beliefs of those who live in poverty and allow their beliefs or dispositions to influence personal behaviors (Gorski, 2013).

Expectations

A person’s experience or their social norms influence expectations that someone holds concerning a person, a group, or a subgroup (Pagliaro et al., 2011). Expectations or knowledge were characterized as “a set of dispositions through which the world is

perceived, understood, and evaluated” (Rios-Aguilar, Kiyama, Grvitt, & Moll, 2011, p. 166). Teachers are no different than any others who developed dispositions and belief through their life. Teachers too are exposed to social norms and are “influenced by societal perceptions regarding those most affected by poverty” (Andrew & Rollin, 2015, p. 51).

Teachers should be scrutinized as they were too influenced by social norms. Most teachers were “predominantly white, middle-class teaching workforce” (Mundy & Leko, 2015, para 1). Accepted middle-class norms and socially accepted ideals that portray the poor in a negative view might be characteristic of some middle-class teachers. Gorski (2013) suggested that teachers tend to have a deficit thinking of those living in poverty based on their long-lived belief system and embedded behaviors. The embedded beliefs or dispositions’ do effect the very thought process that teachers had while making decisions in an educational setting, ultimately affecting a student’s academic outcome (Gorski, 2013).

Although there are laws that required a public school to offer free, public, and equal education for all students, societal norms placed poor students at a deficit (Sharma & Portelli, 2014). Teachers of middle-class ideals often believed students of poverty to have lower capacity in school that unintentionally created lower expectations for poor students. The lowered expectations, due to stereotyped norms, perpetuate a cycle of lowered requirements of poor students, resulting in decreased performance (Sharma & Portelli, 2014). Teacher imposed beliefs and dispositions ultimately confirmed the poor begets poor belief (Gorski, 2013).

Teacher Expectation of Students of Poverty

Teacher expectations had an influence on student performance and academic outcomes. Hattie (2003) completed a meta-analysis and suggested that teachers' expectations for students maintain one of the highest sources of influence on students' outcomes. Hattie suggested that high expectations for all students should yield greater outcomes for all students than all other influences. Hattie reported a 1.44 effect size for the influence that student expectations had and ranked first on the importance on student outcomes.

When it came to teachers' expectations of students that live in poverty, a very different outcome would be realized. Gorski (2012, 2013) suggested that teachers have a deficit understanding of students of poverty, which created an unintended lowered set of expectations for those students. Teachers may possess the socially formed view that families of poverty are unmotivated, uneducated, abuse drugs, and do not care about education. The deficit thinking has brought the socially established bias and stereotype belief system into the education system (Gorski, 2008, 2013).

A negative stereotype or belief system affected the attitudes and perceptions teachers have of students of poverty. If the stereotype belief system existed, it may have a profound impact on student achievement as "teachers' perceptions can predict student achievement even in the face of poverty" (Dell'Angelo, 2016, p. 246). Although poverty had no all-inclusive term as no two persons have the same lived experiences, poverty did consider a lack or lowered means of necessities. Necessities meant be the lack of health

care, food, proper housing, or clean clothes, not a lower standard intelligence (Gorski, 2013).

Implications

The final project was created based on the data gained through this study that will help teachers in this rural Appalachian Ohio region develop an equitable teaching belief system. The project focused on the Gorski (2013) developed theory of Equitable Literacy that debunks the socially accepted normed stereotypes of people that live in poverty. The project will benefit the teachers as they will learn the ten principals of Equitable Literacy and the value of eliminating the deficit thinking created by stereotypes. Teachers will gain knowledge of research based educational strategies that work in the classroom for all students including those of poverty.

What was unclear was the degree to which teachers are aware of their deeply held perceptions and beliefs of current students and how perceptions and beliefs have influenced student achievement. Their under-examined assumptions may, in turn, have unintentionally contributed to limitations in teachers' ability to reach many of their students' needs that live in poverty. This possibility aligns with Reardon's (2011) research on academic achievement gaps between students based on socio-economic status. Students from high-income families perform better than students from low-income families. Data in this local district reflect the same achievement gap between the students of high-income families and students of poverty families (ODE 2015).

There was a gap in culture understanding among teachers, in this region, creating an issue needing attention through Professional Development at the teacher level in rural

Appalachian Ohio schools. At the completion of this research, a project direction for this study presentation of findings will be in the form of white paper. The white paper would inform the local board of education, curriculum director, teachers, and local education service center administrators of the needed PD. An in-depth explanation of a PD plan would be presented to the Board of Education, Curriculum Committee, and professional development advisor. The PD has a potential of changing teachers' teaching strategies that create an equitable educational environment. An equitable educational environment consequently would have higher expectations for students of poverty creating a needed social change.

Summary

There was a gap in teachers' understanding of students of poverty in the rural Appalachian Ohio school. Additionally, Reardon specifically determined an achievement gap between students from different economic strata (2011). The purpose of the study was to understand the teachers' perception of students of poverty. Teachers' perceptions and beliefs do affect student achievement (Gorski, 2013). Therefore, the need was to create a PD that would reduce the teachers' knowledge gap, and provide strategies that work for all students. Society has unfairly placed a stereotype belief system into the education system that impacted the educational outcomes of some students. Due to a historically classist belief system embedded in many educators, students by no fault of their own live in poverty and are viewed with skewed beliefs (Gorski, 2013). Those teachers who hold such beliefs ultimately set forth lower expectations for poor students and created lower achieving people. Using the Gorski (2013) framework the PD was

created to provide the education for teachers to help reduce the deficit thinking that poor people are in any way inferior to any other people.

The following methodology section frames the methods that I completed in the research. I detail the methods on gaining access to the participants, the selection process, and how I increased both validity and credibility in this qualitative case study.

Professional and ethical consideration was applied to each process of this completed research.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

The ESEA was initiated by the Johnson administration to combat the war on poverty that reflected the culture of poverty theory of Lewis during the early 1960's (Gorski, 2012b). Although the war on poverty had been ongoing for many decades, Americans consistently and compellingly viewed the war on poverty as flawed (Jenkins, 2015). As poverty remained a challenge across the United States, rural areas experienced a higher rate of poverty than the counterpart suburban area (USDA, 2015, p. 3). Gorski (2013) suggested that education should be the great equalizer for people living in poverty, as a good education should create opportunity. Gorski also stated that in reality, the common social views of people living in poverty, was due to their own devices. The common deficit thinking had been shared even among the teachers who should offer the students the great equalizer of high expectations that resulted in better opportunities. Gorski (2010) suggested that the deficit thinking has been socially normed and culturally accepted; therefore, dispositions and behaviors were created based on the normed belief system (2013). Understanding the degree to which teachers' dispositions, beliefs, and perceptions of students that lived in poverty that reflected in prevailing research was the basis of this qualitative case study.

Yin (2014) and Merriam (2009) explained that a qualitative case study focused on the lived experience is known as a phenomenological approach. In this section, I outlined the research design and the rationale for the chosen data collection and interpretive methods. Following is the explanation of the research questions, data collection tools and

inventory protocol, population and setting, ethical consideration for the participants and the role of the researcher.

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

This study was a qualitative case study, as a thick description of emergent themes was depicted. Yin (2014) supported a case study method, as case studies are a preferred method in the education field. According to Merriam (2009), a case study occurred when the “what” was explored can be bounded. The bound case was rural elementary teachers in a southeastern Ohio school district. Qualitative research was applied, as it was one of interpreting experiences of how individuals understand the world around them (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010).

Examination of the research problem was guided by these questions:

1. What perceptions are reflected in participants’ reports about teaching students living in poverty in rural Appalachia Ohio?
2. What are the participants’ experiences with professional development for teaching students who live in poverty?
3. In rural Appalachian Ohio, what educational strategies do participants’ report using to meet the needs of students who live in poverty?

The qualitative design elicited a textually thick description of the teacher’s lived experience they encountered while growing up. The explanation of the teachers’ youth helped me to interpret the teachers’ cultural background and family lifestyle the teachers were exposed to while formulating their dispositions, beliefs, perceptions, and behaviors. I questioned the teachers about their educational practices as they pertained to their

current students. The educational practices disclosed are considered teachers behaviors influenced by their earlier learned beliefs, disposition, and opinions. For me to understand the human experience, face-to-face interviews with open-ended questions were used to draw out the information needed from the participants (Creswell, 2014). The overall goal of the research was to interpret the teachers' perceptions, dispositions, and behaviors in their everyday lived experience within their classroom. Through this exploration, I attempted to understand the influence on teachers' perceptions and expectations of students living in poverty (Merriam, 2009).

The phenomenological method allowed me to dig deep into the teachers' perceptions of their dispositions and perceptions as they elaborated during the open-ended semi-structured interview process. Each participant was asked questions based on the researcher made protocol. The research question about their view of students from poverty gave the teachers an opportunity to think about their perceptions, behaviors, and dispositions in a manner that they may not have before.

The case was a single rural Appalachian Ohio school district. The local school district had shown an increase in poverty for approximately 20 consecutive years. The case study allowed me to sample the population purposefully and explore the meaning or interpretation of a phenomenon, teachers' perceptions and behaviors, based on human understanding (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Specifically, the teachers' perceptions, dispositions, and behaviors of students living in poverty were explored. The participants were elementary level teachers in a high-poverty school. The teachers were identified as novice (0 to 5 year of experience), provisional (6 to 10 years of experience), or

professional (more than 10 years of experience. The teachers who expressed they were in the district for many consecutive years observed the increase in the changing student population.

Ethnography and grounded theory were the two other qualitative research methods considered to understand teachers' dispositions and perceptions of students living in poverty. While the ethnography research would have allowed for a rich and thick description of a lived experience, I would have needed to emerge myself into a culture for a lengthy amount of time. I did not intend to research a culture; therefore, the time requirement and lack of culture eliminated the ethnography research option (Yin, 2014).

The grounded theory method had a substantial observation component for data collection. My research weighed heavily on deep rich data only gained from in-depth interviews (Yin, 2014). The grounded theory observations would not have been appropriate to gain an understanding of the intended phenomenon of teachers' dispositions.

Participants

Setting

The study encompassed a southeast Ohio county, located in the Appalachian Region along the Ohio River. The local school district spans 130 square miles and is considered a rural district. According to the United States Census, the average poverty rate in the United States was 14.8% and a per capita income rate of \$28,555. However, in the local county, the poverty rate was 20% with a per capita income rate of \$22,291

(Quick Facts Census, 2016). The county had a declining population at the rate of 2.4% between 2010 and 2013 (Census, Quick Facts, 2013). The local school district had experienced a nearly 50% decline in student population over the past 2 decades with the free and reduced-price lunch rates increasing from approximately 25% to 63% as of the 2015 Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP). Based on the Teacher Distribution Data Analysis (TDDA, 2014), the ODE considered the school district, a district of poverty.

According to the census report, the average United States percent of persons with a bachelor's degree or higher was 29.3%. This county was significantly lower at the rate of 15.2 % (Quick Facts Census, 2016). On the other hand, every teacher in the local school district had earned either a bachelor's or a master's degree and 100% of the teachers were considered an HQT according to the Ohio Department of Education (TDDA, 2014). Sixty-three teachers (43%) hold a bachelor's degree while 83 teachers (57%) had earned a master's degree, 93% (136) of the teachers were from the immediate area (EMIS Degree Level Report [EMIS DGRLevel], 2016).

Population and Sampling

A qualitative case study required a nonrandom or “purposeful sampling” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 73). The purposeful sampling was an inductive process that guaranteed the participant had an understanding of the phenomenon being investigated (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). For this research, teachers from a southeastern Appalachian, Ohio school district were the participants. The school district had a high rate of poverty

as identified by the ODE and all elementary teachers had either a bachelor's or master's degree.

Criteria for Selecting Participants

Creswell (2014) suggested to keep the sample size small in qualitative research but to dig deep in the description and details. The small sample size was considered a strength in qualitative research as rich data were elicited. For this purpose, the initial sample size was nine. The sample provided an opportunity for me to identify themes and complete the coding process (Creswell, 2014). I accepted all possible candidates in an effort to maximize the likelihood of teachers with a range of perceptions related to impoverished students. I focused on the primary level teachers who were from the Appalachian region.

Participant Characteristics

For the intent of the findings, participants were identified by n 1-9. The participants do not know the number assigned to them as all protocol numbers were initially listed in order of interview. Once interviews transcripts were checked for accuracy, I reordered all transcripts to maintain confidentiality. Only I retained the copy of participants' number.

In addition to the given n in the Table 2: Participants Characteristics identified years of teaching experience per teacher. Teachers described as Novice had 0-5 years experience, Provisional 6-10 year's experience, and Professional 11 or more years of teaching experience. For this research, the Participant's College or University Level and Region were evaluated. The region was identified as Local Appalachian; Not Local was

identified as Not Appalachian. Participants' education level was indicated as, Bachelors (BA), Masters (MA), Masters plus 15 hr. above (MA+15). Finally, the expressed childhood family make-up identified was Single Parent Home (SPH), Double Parent Home (DPH), and Broken Home (BH). For this research, BH was a loss of home due to tragedy and included SPH.

Table 2

Participant Characteristics (N=9)

<i>N</i>	Years Teaching	Region	Level	Family Make-Up
1	Professional Teacher	Local U	BA	SPH
2	Novice Teacher	Local U	BA	DPH
3	Professional Teacher	Local U	MA+15	DPH
4	Professional Teacher	Local U	MA	DPH
5	Professional Teacher	Local U	MA+15	DPH
6	Provisional Teacher	Local U	MA	BH
7	Professional Teacher	Local U	MA+15	DPH
8	Professional Teacher	Local U	MA	DPH
9	Provisional Teacher	Local U	BA	BH

Note: Data were taken from the participants' response to protocol and personnel file.

Participant Access

Accessing participants from elementary level teachers, in a rural Appalachian Ohio school was essential. I gained permission from a gatekeeper who granted permission for access to the site and participants (Creswell, 2014). For this research, I gained permission from the district superintendent as suggested by the Board of Education Policy. Once access was obtained, a memo with a full description of the research was distributed to the all-qualifying teachers. The description included possible benefits, risk, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw at any time. The full explanation of the research ensured that each participant had informed consent (web-based training

course, 2015). Before the interview, I provided possible participants the interview protocol that described the participants' rights including confidentiality and the right to withdraw (Lodico et al., 2010).

A letter of intent, with the stated approval of the gatekeeper, indicated the purpose of the study and explained both benefits and risks were provided to potential participants. Participants gave expressed written consent of their understanding of intent and purpose of the research. The letters of intent and the consent forms were distributed to the participants in hard copy and digital format if requested.

Methods for Ethical Protection of Participants

On June 10, 2015 I completed the National Institutes of Health (NIH) course "Protecting Human Research Participants". The certification was a requirement to be completed before research could be initiated. Additionally, I applied to the Walden University to participate in research. The Institute Review Board (IRB) approved my application on November 8, 2016 that allowed me to initiate my research. Finally, I tried to place all bias aside and interpret the participants' intentions as close to their true reality as possible.

I was bound to all of the ethical rules and laws that have preceded the social research. All participant rights and confidentiality must be protected at all times with no misleading or misguiding intentions that would alter results of the research or create a risk to the participants. I also maintained a professional manner with participants and place a value on the right to withdraw at any time. I tried to create an environment for the

participants so that the participants knew they were the center of the interview process and their experience was the essence of the research.

Participant Recruitment

The IRB notified me of the approval to conduct the research on November 8, 2016. Included with the IRB approval was the consent to participate forms to be sent to possible participants. The superintendent of the school district was considered the gatekeeper and signed an agreement for me to gain access to potential participants and gave access to the faculty directory (Merriam, 2009). The faculty directory was considered a public record as it only contained directory information and can be requested per public records request or found in any public record such as a telephone book or on a directory web-site.

I used the faculty directory to generate a nonrandom or purposeful sample of 20 qualifying participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Qualifying participants included elementary teachers from a southeastern rural Appalachian Ohio school district. I identified the home address to the 20 qualifying participants, addressed envelopes, and then mailed an invitation to each for possible participation in the research study. The invitation included a short description of the research, the name of Walden University, and my contact information. I sent an invitation via the United States Postal Service to the identified qualifying participants. This process was used to keep all invitations and possible participants confidential. The potential participants only contacted me by e-mail, phone call, or a return response via the United States Postal Service, if they were interested in participating in the proposed research.

Thirteen possible participants contacted me as interested in the proposed research. According to their availability and comfort, I set up the informal meetings to review the approved Consent Form to gain expressed consent (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). During the informal meetings, I explained the research was a qualitative case study to gain an understanding of Rural Appalachian Ohio educators' perceptions of students of poverty. The possible participants also read each of the three research questions, read the consent form, understood the risk and benefits', the right to privacy, understood the right to withdraw, and were given a chance to ask any clarifying questions (Yin, 2014). Nine of the 13 possible participants signed expressed consent as obtained on the consent form to participate in the research study. Together we set the date and time of the formal, one-phase, open-ended semi-structured interview (Yin, 2014). Within 2 weeks of the informal meeting, in the order of gained signed consent interviews were conducted.

Researcher-Participant Relationship

I completed my undergraduate and master's degree, and principal and superintendent credential programs in predominately rural regions. All of my teaching, principal experience, and 8 years as Director of Federal Programs have been in a rural high-poverty region. I facilitate professional development in the district that I work. Both teachers and administrators consistently ask for PD of strategies to help engaged students. In my years of working in this region, I experience little to no professional development in understanding students of poverty. I sought to understand the possible area of need to add programming in the field of diversity training.

The participants and I all had professional duties within the same Southeastern Ohio County. All participants were classroom level teachers with their direct supervisor being their building principal. I was not responsible for evaluations, hire, or fire of personal in this district. I did not supervise or evaluate the participants. I gave a full disclosure of my qualifications, credentials, and personal interest on the basis for the proposed research. I do hold teaching license Elementary K-8 Multi-subjects, Intervention Specialist K-12 Multi-subjects, Principal Elementary Level, Principals Middle Level, Principal High School Level, Professional Development Supervisor, Curriculum Supervisor, and Superintendent in the State of Ohio.

Once permission to participate was obtained, together, the participant and I chose a time to meet in private either at a home, conference room, or a requested meeting place. Interviews began with an informal meeting to help elevate any stress, anxiety or undue residual effects that the participant may have had about the research or self (Merriam, 2009, p. 231). At that time, the participant and I arranged the date and time for the formal interview. The informal meeting allowed time for a full explanation of the intention of the research and give time for the participant to ask any questions or express concerns. Based on the convenience and comfort of the participant, the time and place was determined for the formal interview. Each interview lasted no more than 1 hour.

Data Collection

I used a phenomenological method, to gain thick descriptions and holistic data generated from interviews, field notes, and documents all with the interviewer being the primary data interpretation tool (Merriam, 2009). I used the phenomenological methods

of Husserl (1859-1938), as he is known to be, the founder of phenomenological research (Husserl, 2015). Husserl's intention of the study was to investigate consciousness, acts, and experiences and to give the participants a voice of expression (Husserl, 2015). Phenomenology researchers try to describe a person lived experience by realizing the participants experience as closely as possible then analyzing the information (Lecture, 2005). Phenomenological research method was applied as it is one of interpreting experiences' and how individuals understand the world around them (Lodico et al., 2010). I investigated teachers' perceptions of students living in poverty. The theoretical framework of phenomenology came from existentialism or from people seeking "meaning from the experiences in their lives" (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 149).

Archival Records

Documentation was reviewed such as personnel records to identify degree and transcript information. Degree and transcript information are considered public records and can be reviewed without formal permission. The records were used to determine the type of preservice training the teachers did or did not have. District PD plans were reviewed to identify trends or gaps in training. I kept a reflective journal of the main emergent themes, decisions, and findings for the audit trail (Merriam, 2009). Personnel files were reviewed between the time of signed consent and the date of the formal interview. I gathered information about degree level such as bachelor's degree, master degree, or higher. I reviewed college and university transcripts to identify any diversity course work and frequency of such coursework. I identified the region in which the participants gained their undergraduate degree. The Appalachian Region being

considered a Local Region and Non-Local as a region outside of the Appalachian Region.

Interviews

The researcher in qualitative case study was the researcher and the tool; therefore, before any data gathering two professional colleagues bracketed me (Merriam, 2009). Each professional colleague signed a letter of cooperation form and research partner prior to the bracketing session. Prior knowledge was exposed and set-aside, as not to allow myself to probe participants in a bias manner making the sessions valuable. Bracketing session number one occurred on November 14, 2016. Bracketing Session Number 2 occurred on November 15, 2016. Each professional colleague did have an understanding of the research and my professional background.

The final step before formal interviews was to complete the pilot study. Using the prepared protocol, I completed a pilot interview with Pilot n 1 and Pilot n 2 on November 16, 2016. I discovered that I needed to become more comfortable with the protocol and that the interview did fall within the 1 hour allotted time frame as proposed. The pilot allowed me time to better review my research questions and supporting questions so that the actual interviews were more like a conversation versus an interview.

My interview strategy relied on the phenomenological approach, which “focuses more on the essence of the human experiences and relies heavily on in-depth interviews as the most unbiased way to understand what the experiences mean to participants” (Lodico, et al., 2010, p. 149). I used face-to-face, open-ended questions or “guided conversation” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 104). Guiding questions were open-ended questions that allowed the participants to give a full thick description of their experience.

Each interview lasted no more than 1 hour unless the participants had additional comments or questions at the conclusion of the interview. Each participant was interviewed one time on a one-on-one basis. I gave the participant the option of place and time of interview for their convenience. If I needed further clarification, I had room on the interview protocol for probing questions (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

The interview protocol was researcher-created (Appendix C) and approved during the IRB application process. There were no fewer than two questions in the protocol for each research question. Four colleagues who were considered professionals in the administration field reviewed the interview protocol. I asked each of the professional colleagues to give critical feedback on the interview protocol to validate the interview protocol. I completed a pilot study with two teachers using the interview protocol of guided questions (Lodico et al., 2010). The two pilot participants gave meaningful feedback on the interview questions and protocol questions ensuring the ability for me to meet the intended goal of the research (Yin, 2014). The protocol was vetted during the pilot creating validity to the tool (Lodico et al., 2010). Both the professional administrators and the pilot participants were able to help strengthen the interview protocol for the larger research giving validity to the research.

The interview began with a “grand tour question” or a question for the participant to introduce them’ or setting (Lodico et al., 2010, p. 126). The grand tour question was a broad general question to allow the participants to gain a comfort in the interview situation while explaining information about a daily situation in their life. For this research, the grand tour question was for the participants to describe the population of

students they work with on a daily basis. The grand tour question was, “Explain the diversity of the population of students that you have worked with over the past few years.”

I audiotaped each interview to ensure an accurate interpretation (Creswell, 2012). The guided conversation allowed the participants to express their thoughts, experiences, and perceptions on a given probe fully. As soon after the interviews were completed, I transcribed and added any reflective notes to the interview log. I also wrote memos such as “Methodological Memo” to gain as much rich detail about the interview as possible (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 167). Method memos contained information such as why I would change the interviews or add more participants if additional research would follow.

Data collection and analysis continued until no new information emerged. I continued to review the participants, documentation, and literature until I felt there was no new information emerging about the research topic. Saturation was established only when the same information continued to repeat itself, and no new information developed (Lodico et al., 2010).

Bracketing

Two colleagues interviewed me to place my bias aside and helped me to bracket my personal experience before any data collection began. The bracketing process allowed for me to expose any possible unknown bias that I may have about poverty, teachers’ behaviors or understanding about poverty. I needed to have any unintentional bias presented so that I became aware, and then placed the thoughts aside so that I could

analyzed the data with a clear eye. I had a colleague that had an understanding on my intended research and one that had an understanding of my personal life interview me to help expose any of my personal bias.

The first bracketing session was held on 11/14/16 at 4:00 pm. This session was to bracket personal feelings, as I was a child of poverty. I was asked questions about how I felt emotionally while in school and if I experienced difficulties due to my economic status. I did recall negative feelings when I could not do things when other students could such as attend birthday parties. The second session was held on 11/15/16 at 4:30 pm with the focus being on the research questions. I was asked how I would be able to remove my feelings and use only the protocol during the interviews. I was also asked if I ask one participant a probing question, would I ask each participant the same probing question. This session made me aware that interview questioning consistency was very important in the research process.

Bracketing helped me see the emerging themes as clear and clean as possible with no bias. The coding process included abbreviations that identified categories and themes (Merriam, 2009). The hierarchical process was used to demonstrate the themes and codes. The hierarchical process was a tree-like example and also identified sub-codes (Creswell, 2012). First, I identified the major themes such as behaviors, experiences, educational background, and what other themes emerged. The major themes were placed on a large branch while the specific behaviors, experiences, and educational backgrounds were then placed on smaller branches off of the major theme in which it fits creating the tree-like code. I coded in the column of each transcribed interview, memos, document,

and a journal. I did not use predetermined codes as the process of coding was emergent in nature (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Although I used no predetermined codes, the research questions may lead to themes such as beliefs, behaviors, and type of educational backgrounds, education status, and personal experience. Initially, I had between 30 and 40 themes that I coded by hand (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). As I determined individual themes, I began to place them into large branches and assign abbreviations.

Credibility

Qualitative research weighed heavily on the credibility and dependability of the data and the research. Both the interview protocol being vetted by administrator professionals and the pilot study established validation (Yin, 2014). Reliability was established through the process of member checking and the audit trail through which triangulation occurred. To protect the integrity of the research, I maintained a high standard of ethics at all times (Merriam, 2009). Triangulation, or “in postmodern research we do not triangulate; we crystallize” (Merriam, 2009, p. 216) with multiple methods of data collection and sources help the readers trust in the research. Checking of transcript accuracy was used, as the participants were asked to review the interview transcripts for the accuracy of the interpretation of their account of events and experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The transcript review also helped ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the research, which is considered the strength of qualitative research (Merriam, 2009). To complete the transcript checking process, the participants and I together reviewed a hard copy of the transcripts. An opportunity to clarify any misinterpretations was given to the participants during the post-interview meeting. If the

participant did identify any misinterpretation in the transcript, I crossed out the transcribed information and hand wrote the corrected information.

Validity and Reliability

Qualitative research weighed heavily on the validity and reliability of the data and the research. To protect the integrity of the research, I maintained a high standard of ethics at all times (Merriam, 2009). Triangulation, with multiple methods of data collection and sources, help the readers trust in the research. Member checking was used to increase credibility. The participants were asked to review a word document of the interview transcripts to affirm the accuracy of my interpretation of their account, within 2 weeks of the interviews, of events and experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The member checking added both credibility and confirmed the accuracy of the data collected.

I also used the audit trail with reflective journals to create triangulation. I logged any emergent themes, major patterns that emerge, turning points and other documents or observations that were important to note during the research process. The reflective journal included the date, time, and location to help ensure accurate data collection. Major changes to the research with reasons were included in memos such as methodological and theoretical memos and logged in the journal.

Audit Trail

As part of the audit trail, a journal with memos was kept to ensure information of critical issues such as barriers, unexpected changes, or insight that I gained at a point in time were maintained (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 167). I also added any information

about body language or expressions that I observed during the interviews that cause pause to a situation. The observational data noted during the interviews, gave additional insight during the data analysis stage.

Summary of Data Collection

I reviewed the participants' college and university transcripts to identify degree levels and any gap in diversity education. The interview protocol was the "Line of Inquiry" to guide each face-to-face interview (Yin, 2014, p. 110). The protocol was a place for me to make little notes that I would observe during the interview, not otherwise recorded by the audio recorder. One such note was that a "participant brought notes to the interview." When asked certain questions, the participant referred to the notes placed on the table. I could not identify the source of the notes, nor did I ask in risk of placing discomfort on the participant. In addition, I made notes of memos identifying participants' requests to attend professional development. Finally, my field notes were maintained in a notebook beginning November 8, 2016 (date of IRB approval) through data collection and analysis. I continued to collect notes as the process continued to change with each reflection, idea, thought, and as the project emerged.

Data Analysis

Introduction

In this section, I outlined the problem, research questions, and the findings according to each research question. Patterns, relationships, and themes did emerge during the data analysis process that aligned the problem and the research questions.

Although there was no one real truth, the themes and codes showed support of patterns that emerged.

The development of the research questions was critical to the case study method. The questions designed to answer “how” or “why” questions were explanatory in method and provided both substance and form (Yin, 2014 p.10-11). Each research question was specifically designed to elicit data from the participants that resulted in themes and codes that lead to an understanding of teachers’ perceptions of students of poverty. Additionally, a review of PD during the interview provided data imperative to demonstrating the knowledge gap the participants explained during the interviews. The use of the protocol was the format I used to begin to gather data, which was the start of data analysis (Yin, 2014). The open-ended questions allowed for the participants to have as much flexibility in their response to ensure they thoroughly detailed the data. As the interviews were transcribed themes and patterns started to emerge. I used the hierarchical process to identify major themes and subsequent sub-codes (Creswell, 2012).

Procedures

I used a process that elicited thorough data concerning participants’ lived experiences. Face-to-face interviews were used with open-ended questions. As I was the researcher and the tool, bracketing occurred before the interviews (Merriam, 2009). Each professional colleague signed a letter of cooperation form as a research partner prior to the bracketing session. These sessions were valuable as some prior knowledge was exposed that I needed to be aware of and set-aside, so as not to allow myself to probe participants in a certain manner. Bracketing session number one occurred on November

14, 2016. Bracketing Session Number 2 occurred on November 15, 2016. Each professional colleague did have an understanding of the proposed research and my professional background.

A pilot study was completed as the final step prior to formal interviews. Qualitative research profoundly relied on validity and ethics (Merriam, 2009). The pilot created a source of validity for this study. Using the approved protocol, I completed a pilot interview with Pilot n 1 and Pilot n 2 on November 16, 2016. I discovered that I needed to become more comfortable with the protocol and that the interview did fall within the one hour allotted time frame as proposed. The pilot allowed me time to review my research questions and supporting questions so that the actual interviews were more like a conversation versus an interview.

I created the protocol, which was approved during the IRB application process. The protocol was vetted during the pilot creating validity to the tool (Lodico et al., 2010). The reader should feel confident with the care and quality of the process of the validity of this research.

An audit trail was used as my field notes were maintained in a notebook beginning November 8, 2016 (date of IRB approval) through data collection and analysis. I continued to collect notes as this process continued to change with each reflection, idea, thought, and as the project emerged. I maintained reflective notes in the journal to be assured all themes or patterns were gathered as they emerged.

Triangulation

Triangulation and validity were obtained with the uses of many sources of documentation and procedures. The first steps of gaining validity from bracketing and completing the pilot created a pathway to the triangulation process. The interview protocol was the line of inquiry to guide each face-to-face interview (Yin, 2014, p. 110). In addition, the protocol was a place for me to make little notes that I would observe during the interview, not otherwise recorded by the audio recorder. One such note was that a “participant brought notes to the interview.” When asked certain questions, the participant referred to the notes placed on the table. I could not identify if the source of the notes, nor did I ask in risk of placing discomfort on the participant.

I transcribed formal interviews within 2 weeks of completion. A hard copy of the word document was presented and checked for accuracy by each participant. The participants had the opportunity to add, change or fixed any error to the transcribed interview during the accuracy check process. Only grammatical changes were made and no content was disrupted.

Data Analysis Results

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand teacher perceptions’ of students living in poverty in a rural Appalachian Ohio school. Information from protocol lead interviews created the data that lead to patterns and themes that established an understanding of the problem. The problem was that the difference in the achievement gap between ED and all students increased even when educators were bound to the NCLB (2001) and ESSA (2015) requirements of high-quality instruction and equal

access to the universal curriculum. What was not known was the extent to which teachers understood or perceived academic barriers of students living in poverty in this rural Appalachia district and the degree to which any misunderstanding contributed to the achievement gap. Teachers' perceptions influenced their instructional practices, which, in turn, impacted the academic achievement of all students in this setting. This research created an understanding of local teachers' perceptions and knowledge of students that live in poverty and brought to light practices that unintentionally created different expectations among student groups of socioeconomic status.

I found that nine out of nine participants did have a distinct understanding that families or students of poverty lack some or many basic needs. Gorski (2013) referred to poverty or low-socioeconomic status as "students' or families' (lack of) access to financial resources. "I am referring to resources they can exchange for food, clothing, lodging, and healthcare" (Gorski, 2013, p. 7). At times, however, the participants crossed over from talking about those of poverty to talking about the working class according to Gorski's definition (Gorski, 2013). Working class people were able to "afford their most basic necessities, but only at the subsistence level" (Gorski, 2013, p. 9). Each participant expressed that the student population in the school currently (2016) was primarily of high free or reduced price lunch rate and living in poverty.

The conceptual framework guiding this study was the decades of research compiled by Gorski (2013) on the opportunity gap created in society for students and families of poverty. Gorski highlighted the misconception that "education is the great equalizer" (2013, p. 1) and attempted to debunk the stereotype views of those who live in

poverty. Gorski (2008) listed myths about the culture of poverty as people being unmotivated, having lower work values, exhibiting low parent involvement, having little value for education, being language deficient, and being drug and alcohol addicts. The long-standing stereotype view of students and families of poverty has become embedded in society and accepted even in the structure of school systems (Gorski, 2013).

The following sections list the findings by each research question, the identifying themes, codes, and supporting conceptual framework. Some participants' responses to the research questions are shared as supporting data. Some themes presented across research questions and subsequent questions.

Findings

This section outlined the summary of the results for each of the three research questions. Phenomenological research based on the data of specific statements created units of meaning (Creswell, 2014). To organize the raw data, I transcribed the interviews into word documents per participant. Additionally, an MS Word document was created for each question that listed each participant's response to the questions. The documents made reading through the data and identifying topics based on common statements and words manageable (Creswell, 2014). Continuous review of the data and topics revealed themes that I compiled according to protocol questions. Each theme had sub-codes that were related to the theme. Lines creating the hierarchical process connected the major theme and sub-codes. Each theme and code was assigned meaning and an abbreviation that the reader would easily understand (Creswell, 2014). Finally, drawing from the literature and conceptual framework (Gorski, 2013) I began to interpret the essence of the

data and created analysis of the findings. After a comprehensive analysis of the data, I found that themes for each of the three research questions emerged. Some themes appeared across questions throughout the interview. Following are the findings as related to each essential research question and the conceptual framework.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1, along with supporting questions were designed to understand the perceptions of teachers of students living in poverty during this single case study. Although perceptions are deep embedded beliefs', attitudes', and understandings', the consequences of perceptions are far reaching. Consequences are either positive or negative and either intended or unintended. (see Table 3)

Table 3

Themes and Codes for Research Question 1

Theme	Code	AB
Causes of poverty	Low education of parents	(UP)
	Substance abuse	(SB)
	Low ethics and laziness	(EL)
	Lack of caring family	(CF)
	Mental illness	(MT)
	Low pay or no job	(JB)
Poverty	Broken home	(BH)
	Income	(IN)
	Lack of basic needs	(BN)
	Lack of attention	(AT)
	Use of federal assistance	(FA)

Causes of poverty theme. The first research question was what perceptions' and beliefs' are reflected in participants' reports about teaching students living in poverty in rural Appalachia Ohio. Responses to interview questions related to this research question yielded a main theme. Using the hierarchical method, one theme that did express as a major theme was "Causes of Poverty." This theme also came out during subsequent questions and while the participants explained situations according to their students. Sub-codes related to causes of poverty included: Education/ Parent (UP), Substance Abuse (SB), Ethics/Laziness (EL), No Caring Family (CF), Mental Illness (MT), and No or Low Jobs (JB).

Definitions for the codes for this theme were identified as (UP) education was not a priority or parents were uneducated, (SB) families use or abuse drugs and alcohol, (EL) no or low work ethic and laziness, (MT) history of family mental illness, and (JB) lack of local jobs or only low paying jobs (Table 3).

Gorski (2013) identified five common stereotypes (misconceptions) that educators tend to perceive families and students of poverty. Three Gorski identified common stereotypes emerged as codes in the first research question. "Stereotype 1: Poor people do not value education, Stereotype 2: Poor people are lazy, Stereotype 3: Poor people are substance abusers" (Gorski, 2013, p. 59-63). The presences of the stereotypes unintentionally created an education environment with lowered expectations for student of poverty. The attitudes educators held toward students influenced the expectations in turn lowering outcomes for those students whose academic gaps are increasing (Gorski, 2013).

Below are several quotes to highlight the theme, “Causes of Poverty”.

Some of it is cyclical. Children see what their family goes through and they feel that’s the only way that they are going to live. I had a student tell me “this is my life and this is what it’s going to be.” I told him “no it isn’t, you are very intelligent... you can be better than this...” Low paying jobs. The lack of education. And they end up in the cycle of hopelessness. It’s just the way it is. That’s what the boy told me. (n 3)

Other participants had related similar comments. Participant 6 said, “I think there are different kinds of poverty. I think there is drug poverty. I think that there is some kids growing up in the system [that] will never know any different. That’s just the situation.” According to n 8, “Not working, not having the work ethic at all. I know a lot of people that don’t have the work ethic. Today drugs play a big role in it. Laziness, accepted laziness.” These comments indicate a certitude regarding students’ futures.

The presence of the identified stereotypes eliminated the possibility for all students to have an equitable education based on the Gorski framework (2013). The educators must first become aware of such inequities and “commit to losing the stereotypes that paint poor people as the problem” (Gorski, 2013, p. 68). Until the educators release the misrepresented thoughts and fully accept the barriers students and families of poverty experience the academic gap continues to increase.

Poverty theme. The participants were asked a Level 2 question (Yin, 2014), about what their general understanding of poverty was, in an attempt to better understand beliefs and dispositions of poverty. The theme that emerged was “Poverty” and the Codes

were Broken Home (BH), Income (IN), Basic Needs (BN), Attention (AT), and Federal Assistance (FA). For this research, the interpretation of the codes as identified by the participants were, (BH) single parent or displaced living, (IN) low income or in poverty, (AT) lack of attention in the home, and (FA) uses federal assistance programs such as HUD, Food Stamps, and clothing vouchers for example.

The code (BN) was in line with Gorski's (2013) description of people living in poverty (2013, p. 8). The basic "human necessities like food, clothing, and healthcare are financial commodities" (Gorski, 2013, p. 7). Consequently, the use of Federal Assistance (FA) made sense to help families bridge the basic need gap on a monthly basis. Therefore a general understanding of the term "Poverty" seemed present during the interview process for the code (BN).

At the same time, however, "Stereotype 5: Poor people are ineffective and inattentive parents" was mentioned eight times during the level two question (Gorski, 2013, p. 67). The participants had a general understanding of what people of poverty lack such as basic needs. Yet a discrepancy in the how or why poverty exists remained as outlined in the stereotype. When incomplete knowledge of a group or situation arises the participants simply rely on the given social norms and assumptions that ultimately affected the students school performance (Gorski, 2012b).

Following are some quotes that outline Stereotype 5:

According to n 2, "I understand that they don't have a lot of support at home."

Participant n 3 stated, “They have a family where parents have no long-term goals. They don’t really have future plans.” In addition, n 6 discussed the complacency toward poverty.

I think that it has been more accepted, it’s less stigmatized. And it’s not only socially more accepted. It’s a lifestyle even more so than when I first started. It’s just what they know. I see less people trying to get out of it. I see multiple generations coming through with the same life style without anyone really trying to pull away from poverty. It might be the area we live in. It might be the different benefits available. Before it used to be, “when I grow up, I’m going to bet this...” Now I don’t see the drive. I also see kind of a culture of you owe me or we owe you becoming more and more popular.

Additional evidence to support this code was n 7’s response:

A lot of the kids that I have live in broken homes. I worry about them in the evenings because I don’t think they are getting anyone to help them, to grow educationally. I’m not saying they don’t care about them; it’s just a different environment than when I was a kid. A lot of them don’t have a lot. I have dealt with issues where those who do have more than others have bullied. Or pick at them or they leave them out. I try not to leave them out here. I just worry about them because I know they don’t have a lot at home, so I try to give them what I can when they are here. I believe it comes from the home. I believe there are people in society that believe they are better than others.

Four of the five Gorski-identified stereotypes emerged as codes during the interview process aligning Research Question 1 to the problem directly. The problem was that there was an achievement gap between economically disadvantaged students and all students in this given rural district. What were not known was what the participants' beliefs, perceptions, or dispositions are, and how they affected student outcomes. The data demonstrated that the participants hold four of the five identified stereotypes that cause lowered expectations of students and this could indicate a reason for a continued academic gap. Gorski stated "So our understanding of and attitudes about people in poverty, even if we don't believe we are applying them to individual students, have an effect on low-income students' school performance" (2013, p. 69). I surmise that the participants' unintentionally lower expectations for students of poverty ultimately lowering academic outcomes.

Discussion. The following outlined the Gorski's (2013) identified stereotypes of people living in poverty. Additionally, there was supporting patterns or themes as reported during the interview process by participants as related to the identified stereotypes'. According to Gorski, "Stereotype 1: Poor People Do Not Value Education" emerged (p. 59). During the participants' interviews, the value of education, lack of education, or un-motivated to be educated were repeated over 20 times. Gorski's position was that "attitudes about the value of education among families in poverty are identical to those among families in other socioeconomic strata" (Gorski, 2013, p. 60).

Participant n 3 outlined the first stereotype of no values in education and continued with the lack of goals. This seemed to be participant n 3's general perception and belief as no evidence or differing supporting quotes from participants was offered.

Lack of education; and they end up in the cycle of hopelessness. They also don't see the value in education, and someone needs to show them that. They have a family where parents have no long-term goals. They don't really have future plans. They also don't see the value in education, and someone needs to show them that.

Additional supporting data came from participants' n 1, n 2 and n 7. Participant n 1 said, "Less focus on their educational need." Participant n 2 said, "They may not be able to do homework because if the parents don't understand the work they can't help their children. (Parents) have no education higher than high school or maybe not even that." Participant n 7 said, "Attention needy, need for extra help for academics. Not only a lack of money but a lack of someone to care for them. Lack of someone to guide them in the right direction." All of these quotes indicate teachers' belief that students were not being helped educationally at home.

In contrast to the lack in value of education when living in poverty, Participants n 1, n 6, and n 9 each reported living either in "the system" or in poverty during their childhood. Additionally, participants n 1, n 6, and n 9 reported education in their statements, suggesting the value and importance of gaining an education. These reports supported Gorski's (2013) impoverished students' "attitudes about the value of education

among families in poverty are identical to those among families in other socioeconomic strata” (p. 60). During the interview, n 1 reported being from a

Single parent family that was in poverty until high school. My mother got a job in the mill. I went to a good school district (local district). There were very caring people. I put myself through college (local college), without parental support.

Participant n 6 indicated the importance of education when their mother went back to school in the middle of poverty. Additionally, the participant went on to earn a masters degree in education. Participant n 9 showed evidence that supported Gorski’s single mother theory that education and children are the mothers’ priority when responding to a protocol probe asking the participant to explain his/her childhood (2013).

Wow. Difficult! I witnessed violence in the home from a very young age; I experienced violence, which eventually caused the breaking up of the family. I was angry for years. But my mom was a strong mom that pushed me in school and also to be independent. I eventually earned my way through college.

Patterns emerged supporting “Stereotype 2: Poor People are Lazy” (Gorski, 2013, p. 62). During the interview and coding process a Theme “Causes of Poverty” emerged and while coding Work Ethic / Laziness (ET) was identified. However, the contrasting theme of “Hard Working” also emerged, at times, reported from the same participant. Gorski (2013) indicated that there is no “indication that poor people are lazier or have weak work ethics” (p. 62).

Additionally, n 3 and n 5 stated they, “Wish they would increase the minimum wage to help them (the poor) out.” For people of low-paying or minimum wage jobs a

5% or less increase would yield a negative pay increase (Lopresti & Mumford, 2016).

The minimum-wage increase would need to surpass the 20% to create a significant wage increase for the low-pay or minimum wage jobs (Lopresti & Mumford, 2016).

Below are listed some supporting data for the Lazy Stereotype supporting quotes coded (ET), then this is contrasted by data stating that parents are Hard Working (HW).

Participant n 2 stated; “Sometimes laziness. Society views as laziness in general.”

Additionally, participant n 8 added, “Not working, not having the work ethic at all. I know a lot of people that don’t have the work ethic. Laziness, accepted laziness.”

In contrast to laziness, Hard Work did emerge as participant n 4 stated, “It would include different things like parents that work really hard and work every day. They were waiting for the dad to get home from work. The dad provided.” Participant n 5 who reported working a second job stated:

Now, the fact that a 30-hour workweek is considered a full-time job, a person on minimum wage cannot make enough to meet their needs. I work with people in retail, and there are times at the end of the week when they have to choose between getting food, getting a tire on their car, or getting a tooth fixed. They just don’t make enough.

The next theme “Stereotype 3: Poor people are Substance Abusers” again developed as a pattern during the interview process (Gorski, 2013, p. 63). However, as Gorski (2013) indicated, poor people may be less likely than their wealthier counterparts to abuse alcohol or drugs. Alcohol and drug use was related to the amount of income a person makes (Gorski, 2013). Participant responses supported the notion that substance

abuse was a reason for poverty. The following responses from n 1, n 3, and n 6 were given as causes of poverty.

Participant n 1 stated “Substance abuse, and mental illness” were causes of poverty. Additionally, n 3 stated “Either mental issue, economic issues, or drug issues.” Participant n 6 stated, “I think there is drug poverty. Are they in a family with drug abuse? But you have the students that have the parents that work, and then you have the students that have parents that are on drugs.”

The Fourth Stereotype listed by Gorski was that “Poor People Are Linguistically Deficient and Poor Communicators” (Gorski, 2013, p. 65). Although no direct pattern about Linguistics was coded, some expressions and phrases developed during the interview. There was supporting data that may lead to a pattern, but more research would need to be conducted. Participant n 2 stated, “They may not be able to do homework because if the parents don’t understand the work they can’t help their children. I have cut back on homework in the last few years.” This suggested that the elementary level work was too difficult for the parents to assist at home, indicating a lack in academic skills. Participant n 3 indicated, “I would say the majority of the students are struggling students. When I ask if they read their story, they tell me no. Student doesn’t even know nursery rhymes anymore.” Finally, participant n 7 commented, “I read with them. I have one that I read with everyday just because I know she doesn’t get the help home and I know that she needs the help.” Each of these statements would indicate a deficit in “proper language” aptitude.

The fifth and final Stereotype listed by Gorski was “Poor People Are Ineffective and Inattentive Parents” (Gorski, 2013, p. 67). This stereotype developed into a pattern and was coded as “No Caring Family” (CR). The first three comments referred to parents’ lack of caring (CR). Participant n 2 said, “I understand that they don’t have a lot of support at home. Parents aren’t getting them up. Participant n 3 said, “They have a family where parents have no long-term goals. They don’t really have future plans.” Finally, Participant n 7 stated:

Lack of someone to care for them. Not only a lack of money but a lack of someone to care for them. They have a lack of someone to guide him or her in the right direction. I worry about them in the evenings because I don’t think they are getting anyone to help them, to grow educationally.

In contrast to making the Fifth Stereotype aligned n 6 and n 9 made a connection with the emotional effects that poverty may or could have on students. Both n 6 and n 9 were self-reported from Single parent home (SPH) and Broken home (BH) during their elementary school years respectively. Their early lived-experiences influenced thoughts and perceptions of students of poverty. Participant n 6 reported, “The family would have a heaviness of the heart, worrying whether you can do something such as pay your bills. Get milk when your federal assistance is low. I think its constant worry.” While participant n 9 stated:

I imagine they feel anxious, maybe even helpless because they (student) cannot help the situation. They probable feel emotional despair, a feeling of failure due to the situation that you and your family are in... In our case it was situational. A

few bad events that happened to a family and suddenly a middle-class family become a single mother on a minimum wage job. That is difficult to swallow. I mean it is difficult emotionally to live through.

After a review of both the interview logs and the hierarchal themes and codes, n 9 was the single participant that did not share any Stereotyped disposition. According to Table 3, n 9 was from a broken home and a self-reported witness to violence while parents were together, which caused the single-parent home situation. More research would be needed to address this phenomenon. However, I would suggest that their early life experience had an effect on n 9's perception possibly due to an understanding of the stresses, emotional hardships, and needs endured by some people living in poverty.

Research Question 2

Research question 2 was developed to understand the depth and breath of professional development the participants experienced about students of poverty. Additional questions established a need or gap in PD at the local level as the participants reported little to no PD on poverty. Following are the codes under the theme PD that emerged to support research question 2.

PD theme. Research Question 2 was, what are the participants' experiences with professional development for teaching students who live in poverty? Research question 2 offered insight to the level of experience or the lack of experience of PD on diversity education. The face-to-face interview and participants' college and university transcripts identified the Theme and Codes for RQ 2. The Theme was Professional Development (PD) and the Codes were Local (LC), College (CO), and PD Needed (ND). For the

purpose of this research (LC) was local in district training, (CO) college course, and (ND) needed professional development. Table 4 lists the participants, the local PD each participant received, types of college training on poverty, and the stated type of needed PD.

(LC). When asked if they had ever had any local PD for dealing with impoverished students the participants had a variety of answers that all summed up to one answer: not really. The following are supporting quotes from the participants for the LC code.

Participant n 1 stated, “I don’t believe that I have had any except life.”

Participant n 5 added, “Homeless awareness video. That’s the only one that really comes to mind for me.” Additionally, n 6 said, “Outside of my undergrad education, not a lot. Never on poverty alone.” Participant n 8 added, “No, none. I can’t even think of any. I’m lucky to get training on things that I seek out. I have not had training on poverty. I don’t know that people care about that in the school system.” Finally, n 9 “Again I just go back to my childhood. I don’t believe we have any here.” Only one participant said they had training regarding supporting impoverished students: n 7 said, “I have taken classes on differentiation that not only talked about academics it talked about students of poverty and different income levels.”

The identified lack of local training again aligned the RQ 2 to the problem. Deficit thinking existed in this rural school, and to eliminate such bias professional development on stereotypes, bias, and assumptions would need to be a priority. The participants would need to “commit to losing the stereotypes that paint poor people as the problem” (Gorski, 2013 p. 68). The commitment could cause an internal struggle with

personal long-term beliefs and practices. The commitment would need to occur before the participants could embody the Ten Principals of Equity Literacy (Gorski, 2013, p. 22-25).

(CO). The participants' interviews and college transcripts showed little to no training on students and families of poverty. Again, leaving the participants with only their pre-existing socially expected norms related to the Lewis (1966) led belief system.

Participant n 3 reported, "We didn't so much stress poverty. I took classes in the 1980's and there really wasn't any poverty, at least not in this area. The mills were working, the mines were working... everyone was working." According to n 5, "No, none. I didn't even have training for students with disabilities in college. That was just a whole different avenue. That's how that has changed." Participant n 6 stated "Nothing poverty-specific." Additionally n 8 thought perhaps they were informed in college and said, "Oh, I'm sure there were some social classes. There was someone that told people what poverty was."

Data in response to RQ 2 identified a lack in PD and college level training on students and families of poverty. This finding explained the continued lack of understanding of the barriers students and families in poverty face. The gap in knowledge opened the door to a specific line of PD project that would fill the gap in knowledge for the participants.

(ND). Subsequently, the participants were asked, what type of professional development they felt was needed. Following are some responses.

Participant n 1 stated “I feel (the need) for psychological (services) more than methodologies or strategies to help them deal with what they are going through.”

According to n 2 it would be good, “if there was anything offered. Just because I don’t have the background in it (poverty).” Empathy training was suggested by n 4. While n 7 recommended PD on “how to deal with those (poverty) kids.”

A clear line was established between the local problem of the achievement gap related to economic strata, participants’ beliefs, perceptions, dispositions, and the lack of accurate PD that would eliminate such stereotyped thoughts. The project of providing PD on the Principles of Equity Literacy has emerged from this study and is located in Appendix A (Gorski, 2013).

Table 4

Participants PD Experience (N=9)

Participants	Local	College	Needed
1	No	Early Ex.	Psychological
2	Homeless	(HESS)	Anything, I have no background
3	No	No	Why things happen
4	No	No	Empathy training
5	Homeless	No	Adjust our teaching
6	No	No	Relevant to us
7	Homeless	Early Ex.	How to deal with those kids
8	No	Maybe	Classes in social work
9	No	Child Dev. and Individualities	Real life situations/stress of poverty

Note: Data were taken from the participants’ response to protocol and personnel file.

Discussion. Research Question 2 and the supporting questions were asked to identify the level of Local PD and preservice courses the participants’ experienced. The final supporting question for RQ 2 was to understand what type of PD the participants

would be interested in due to their level of diversity or poverty understanding. For the purpose of this research, Table 4 above indicated the participants did take part in a Homeless training per the McKinney-Vento Act requirement. Table 4 was listed in an above section while the codes are summarized below that came from the RQ 2, which was: What was the participants' experiences with professional development for teaching students who live in poverty?

(LC). In general the participants identified little to no local professional development concerning students and families of poverty. No participants indicated he or she requested PD on students or families of poverty. This indicated the knowledge gap might be below the service of consciousness of the participants at the time of the research.

(CO). Similar to the local PD, participants experience little to no training on poverty within college courses. As reported, each participant did attend a regional rural college or university. This type of barrier does and has existed in the regions, leaving need for such training at the college level.

(ND). The participants did tend to report needing local PD training on poverty and the barriers students and families may endure. Two participants suggested training on strategies to help "those students" lending to an understanding that there may in deed be a gap in current background knowledge and understanding.

Both the interview of participants and personnel record review revealed very little to no exposure to diversity training and less on poverty explicitly. A common area of reported PD need was related to the emotional affects of poverty, (Psychology, Empathy,

Social, Stresses). The participants expressed a concern that there was a need for PD as the number of students living in poverty has increased over time and their exposure to PD was limited (see Table 4).

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was designed to investigate the participants' understanding of effective strategies for meeting the needs of students of poverty. Based on Gorski (2013), there are several strategies that work and some that are misunderstood and overused. The findings helped in developing the PD project in Appendix A.

Strategies theme. Research question 3 asked, in rural Appalachian Ohio, what educational strategies do participants' report using to meet the needs of students who live in poverty? . The Theme was Strategies, and the Codes were Intervention (TE), Attention (AT), Engagement (EN), and Equality (EQ). For example some teachers felt like they were teaching to increase equality (EQ), while others focused on helping their students be engaged (EN) in the classroom. For this research the meaning of the codes are: (TE) provide interventions such as read to them, (AT) more one-on-one attention, (EN) try to make information meaningful, and (EQ) provide each student with supplies (see Table 5). Following are some participants' comments.

According to n 2, "I'm not sure. I try to connect things to real life situations."
Participant n 3 stated: I try to get to know the students, try to let them know that I care about them. I try to instill in them that education is their way out. I think sometimes if you show them that you care, and that you have their back no matter what... I don't make a big deal about not having a pencil, or not having a book. I know that they may have

needed to take care of a younger brother or sister, or that it was just a bad time this morning. I just try to make them the best that they can be.” According to n 8 they focus on, “Just getting their attention, engagements happen all during the day.”

Table 5

Theme for Research Question 3

Theme	Code	AB
Strategies used	Intervention Attention Engagement Equality	(TE) (AT) (EN) (EQ)

Many of the statements identified individual attention and interventions. While these are with good intentions, Gorski outlined eight additional instructional strategies that work (Gorski, 2013, p. 119). Of all the suggested strategies, n 9 was the only participant to name a Gorski identified effective strategies “I set high expectations for all students”.

1. incorporating music, art, and theater across the curriculum;
2. having and communicating high expectations for all students;
3. adopting higher-order, student-centered, rigorous pedagogies;
4. incorporating movement and exercise into teaching and learning;
5. making curricula relevant to the lives of low-income students;
6. teaching about poverty and class bias;
7. analyzing learning materials for class (and other) bias; and
8. promoting literacy enjoyment.

Research Question 3 aligned with the local problem of the increasing achievement gap. The lack of the participants' poverty knowledge led to the lack of appropriate instructional strategies that works. Therefore implementing strategies that may unintentionally lower academic expectations of student of poverty, leading to lower academic outcomes.

Discussion. Research question 3 was: In rural Appalachian Ohio, what educational strategies do participants' report using to meet the needs of students who live in poverty? Research Question 3 was to understand any strategies the participants use that were aligned with what works or were unintentionally aligned with a deficit view. Gorski's (2013) Chapter 7 "Been There, Done That, Don't Work" was the guiding research that aligned the questions to the problem (p. 108)

As identified in the RQ 1 discussion, some participants viewed their students as struggling or needing extra assistance. This view may unintentionally cause the participants to lower the expectations; therefore, lower the "high-order pedagogies" delivered to the students (Gorski, 2013, p. 108). Lowered expectations result in lowered academic exposure, ultimately resulting in an outcome that is aligned with the socially created lowered norm. The research showed that "low-income students thrive on the same higher-order, deeply engaging, interactive pedagogies usually denied them but enjoyed by their wealthier peers" (Gorski, 2013, p. 108). Following are some data to support the finding that teachers held a deficit view.

Participant n 1 stated, "I have to be more diverse than I use to be in my teaching approach just to keep them engaged." Participant n 5 said, "It would be nice to learn how

to adjust your teaching for those kids, or adjust your expectations. Students of poverty, sometimes I feel that they don't have a way out." The statement "adjust your expectations for those kids" may be highlighting the lower expectations phenomenon for students of poverty. This belief causes an adverse teaching strategy causing lowered expectations.

Salient Data

The purpose of this study was to understand the teachers' perceptions of students living in poverty using open-ended, semi-structured interviews. The interview process allowed the participants to openly discuss their perceptions as they pertained to each research question. Research question 1 revealed that each participant, with the exception of n 9, displayed a degree of a deficit view, according to their perceptions and beliefs' of students and families of poverty. Each of the five Gorski identified stereotypes was explicitly revealed as themes, and several codes emerged as outlined in the Findings portion.

As discussed in the Findings portion, n 9 was the single participant who did not affirm any stereotyped disposition. According to Table 3: Participants Make-Up, n 9 was from a broken home and self-reported witness to violence while parents were together, which caused the single parent home situation. More research would be needed to address this phenomenon. However, I would suggest that the early life experience had an effect on n 9's perceptions to have an understanding of the stresses, emotional hardships, and needs endured by some people living in poverty. Additional support for this assumption came from n 7 "I do believe that some believe that they are better than others because

they have better things. The kids that don't have much, aren't like that, they care more. It is a society issue”

A poverty understanding or knowledge gap was identified with RQ2. The participants reported almost no local or college/university training on diversity and poverty. In fact, n 2 reported “no background on poverty at all, and was oblivious until I started teaching.” Most reports of knowledge of poverty were of the basic need such as food, clothes, and cars. I found very few comments on the emotional needs and the stresses the students and families of poverty endure. As indicated in the “ PD needed” (Table 4), three participants self-reported that the psychology of the students would be of great importance.

Finally, RQ 3 did identify a potential for the participants to lower academic expectations for students of poverty. The lower rigor ultimately resulted in lowered academic outcomes. The lowered rigor and outcomes could potentially reinforce the poverty cycle that education hopes to ameliorate.

Evidence of both Classism and Fixer beliefs were also found during the interview process. Chandler (2014) suggested that rural teachers' beliefs would, in fact, line up with the middle-class value system. The interviews confirmed the findings of both Chandler (2014) and Gorski (2013), in that participants held an unintentional deficit view in this rural Appalachian Ohio School. This supported the need for filling the gap in both PD and the preservice trainings, as the participants have not been exposed to or little diversity or poverty training.

Table 6 lists the codes and frequency which each appeared across the Research Questions. What was not known was if these perceptions are intentional, as perceptions are embedded through lived experiences. No two persons have the same lived experience.

Table 6

Data Summary: Perceptions

Code	Name	Frequency
UP	Education of parents	22
LS	Lifestyle	20
CR	Lack of caring family	17
SH	Steady/broken home	11
HB	Substance abuse	10
JB	No or low paying job	10
ET	Ethics/laziness	7
MT	Mental illness	4

Note: Data were taken from the participants' response to protocol.

Summary of Outcomes

The focus of this qualitative case study was to understand teachers' perceptions of students that live in rural Appalachian poverty. Data were collected through 9 semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. Additionally, the participants' transcripts were reviewed to gain an understanding of the depth of training on diversity. The research questions were aligned to understand the teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and background to interpret if teachers may embody a deficit view or stereotypes' according to the conceptual framework based on Gorski (2013). Stereotypes are reported to be "limited context-specific knowledge" (Gorski, 2013, p. 57). Derived from the Lewis list of stereotypes, Gorski identified five most referenced stereotypes, which I used as a

framework to formulating the interview questions. These stereotypes included (a) poor people do not value education, (b) poor people are lazy, (c) poor people are substance abusers, (d) poor people are linguistically deficient and poor communicators, and (e) poor people are ineffective and inattentive parents (Gorski, 2013). Without disclosing any of the predetermined stereotypes, the open-ended semi-structured interview questions allowed the participants to elaborate on their understandings, beliefs, perceptions, and dispositions.

The research questions identified that eight of the nine participants demonstrated three to five of Gorski listed stereotypes (Gorski, 2013). An outlier was n 9 who demonstrated none of the five stereotypes according to Gorski. The stereotypes were coded across all research question answers as the participants elaborated on their experiences. As discussed in the findings portion, n 9 was the single participant that did not affirm any stereotyped perceptions. More research would be needed to address this phenomenon. However, I would suggest that the early life experience had an effect on n 9's perceptions and had an understanding of the stresses, emotional hardships, and needs endured by some people living in poverty. Additional support for this assumption came from n 7 "I do believe that some believe that they are better than others because they have better things. The kids that don't have much, aren't like that, they care more. It is a society issue."

Answers from participants were used to identify a knowledge gap due to the lack of both local PD and preservice training at the college or university level. Participants indicated some mention of poverty issues but no systematic education on the issue of

impoverished students. All nine participants are from the region and did attend a local college/university in a Rural Appalachian Region. Six of the nine participants reported being from double-parent home, living in a stable, middle-class situation. Chandler (2014) indicated that those of the middle-class would assume a middle-class belief system, which was embedded, in the social norms. The social norms, even today are still aligned with the Lewis lead ideals of the 1960's and the political campaigns of the 1970s (Gorski, 2012b). The reported lack of understanding of poverty and lifetime exposure to the middle-class predominant belief system may have caused unintended dispositions and behaviors that created an opportunity gap for impoverished students within the classroom walls.

Answers to questions within RQ 3 identified a potential for the participants to have lower academic expectations for students of poverty. The lower rigor would ultimately result in lowered academic outcomes. The lower rigor and outcomes could potentially reinforce the poverty cycle that education should be ameliorating. Ultimately, there were data that support the notion that society norms created during the 1960s still exist today in society and in Rural Appalachian Ohio schools.

These findings indicated a direct need for a local PD program that would address the major themes and begin eliminating the deficit view of students of poverty. Possible PD opportunities derived from RQ 1 was causes of poverty, RQ 2 poverty stereotypes, and RQ 3 effective strategies. The PD would fill the knowledge gap and create new accurate knowledge for the participants (Arafeh, 2016). A critical reflection, as a part of the PD, could help reduce the knowledge gap (Moloney & Oguro, 2015). The reduction

in the knowledge gap replaced with new and accurate content consequently could create a positive change in teachers' ability to meet the needs of students of poverty.

Project Deliverable

Each genre of deliverable creates a unique opportunity to impact or add to the education field. With the research findings, the most immediate change would be garnered by a PD plan to be implemented for active teachers in the rural Appalachian Ohio region that the research was conducted. The PD would also be made available for active educators who are continuing their own learning at a graduate level. The curriculum would be no less than a 4-day training and would provide an understanding of rural Appalachian poverty and how it may impact the classroom, as well as strategies to support impoverished children in the classroom.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

This study was designed using Gorski (2013) as the framework to identify any teacher perceptions, dispositions or beliefs that may unintentionally influence educational decisions. In the rural Appalachian Ohio school, the teachers disclosed that there was a gap in both preservice training and PD training at the local level on diversity. The participants explicitly explained the lack of training on poverty and any implications or strategies that are associated with people of poverty. With no formal training all participants, except one, expressed stereotyped views or deficit thinking of students and families of poverty based on personal lived experience. Both Gorski (2012b, 2013) and Chandler (2014) indicated that the deficit thinking was created by socially accepted norms and inherently created lowered academic expectations for students of poverty. The lowered expectations may ultimately lower the academic achievement of students in lower economic strata (Gorski, 2013). The findings indicated a gap in the participants' knowledge of poverty, which may or may not be influenced by a deficit view.

The focus of the project was to eliminate the knowledge gap for teachers in a rural Appalachian Ohio school. The PD design was for the participant to become culturally responsive to the rural students' funds of knowledge, understand the importance of place, and identify personal beliefs, perceptions, or dispositions that may influence educational strategies. The PD will be based on an outcomes model that uses goals and objectives as the scope and sequence (Arafeh, 2016). Universal Design for Learning (UDL) will be used to increase the students centered learning opportunities' (Dinmore & Stokes, 2015).

Rationale

Results from this project study identified deficit thinking and perceptions in the participants of the rural Appalachian Ohio school (Gorski 2013). The perceptions are widely accepted middle-class understandings held by many and acknowledged by most. For example, answers to interview questions for RQ 2 established a lack of the teachers training on diversity education at the local level. Additionally, the participants described little to no training on rural poverty. The participants reported the understanding that the majority of their current students were either on free or reduced-price lunch. This information represented a gap in the participants' background understanding of those students and families currently in their classroom. Other research supported the results of this project as teachers in rural regions often felt they had a lack of both resources and training (Wenger, Dinsmore, & Villagomez, 2012).

Additional researchers stated preservice teachers were unprepared to teach in a rural setting as they expressed having a knowledge gap of poverty (Wenger et al., 2012). Finally, where some of the lowest student achievement exists, teacher quality remains problematic (Barrett, Cowen, Toma, & Troske, 2015). The research lends a way to fill the need in professional development training for teachers who work predominantly in a rural region. Educators with a gap in knowledge due to a lack in appropriate training may not be able to effectively personally critique bias or dispositions that may affect educational strategies. A critical reflection as part of a PD session may allow the teacher to implement change while implementing critical reflective practice, which will reduce the knowledge gap (Moloney & Oguro, 2015).

Two genres were considered as a possible project to address the identified gap: curriculum plan and PD. Professional development at the local level could affect the participants and the teaching strategies implemented currently. A curriculum plan for preservice teachers would not affect students learning for several years until the participants became teachers. The PD option was chosen for more immediate impact on students. The PD was created so underprepared educators would take a critical view of the mostly middle-class, white privilege that has been their lived experience and its effect on their view on education (Mette, Biddle, Mackenzie, & Harris-Smedberg, 2016).

To address the identified knowledge gap, the PD will cover the topics of poverty, family, policy, barriers, demographics, and strategies to effectively educate and communicate. Arafah (2016) stated that a PD curriculum was to provide new knowledge or skill. To gain PD participants baseline knowledge in the 4-day session, the teachers will answer the protocol questions at the outset of the training. The participants will complete the 4-day PD training. At the conclusion of the training, the participants will again answers the protocol and I will compare the pre and post answers as a form of determining acquisition of new knowledge.

The results of this study also identified participant teachers' deficit thinking aligned with Gorski's (2013) longstanding theory. Gorski listed deficit beliefs of families of poverty as being unmotivated, low or no work ethic, low parent involvement, and little value in education (2008). The deficit beliefs perpetuate inequities that exist for students and families of poverty (Anderson, 2013). The PD was developed so the teachers would

self-analyze their social identities, reflect upon the identities, and determine if the social identities affect their own perceptions and beliefs.

Review of Literature

The most significant source of articles came from the Walden University Library searches in the education databases EBSCOhost, Taylor and Francis and, ProQuest. The key terms searched for the review were *rural curriculum*, *professional development*, *poverty*, *perceptions*, *learning outcomes*, and *Appalachian*. Most of the articles were within the 5-years period making them current. I also researched historical documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to gain a historical and political background on human rights (UN General Assembly 1948). Books on student-centered learning, Universal Design for Learning, curriculum development, and engaging students in poverty were also reviewed and added to the development of the literature review.

The literature review builds from the identified problem of the participants' gap in background knowledge. It was related to this project study research data and supported by peer-reviewed articles. The PD outline, reason for PD as project genre, and evaluation plan was included. Implications for the teacher as the learner, and the students they will eventually impact are detailed. The information presented was aligned with Knowles Andragogical Model for adult learning (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2012; McDonough, 2014).

Policy

Attention was placed on rural education and poverty since 1944 when President and Eleanor Roosevelt called to order the first White House Conference on Rural

Education (Dawson & Hubbard, 1944). The peacetime conference brought together 230 of the then top American rural educators who developed a plan to create equitable institutions for rural students. Out of the conference came the Charter of Education for Rural Children that outlined 10 rights of rural students that guided policy and regulations through the modern day (Dawson & Hubbard, 1944). The charter or chart was a declaration of rights stating, “These are the rights of the rural child because they are the rights of every child regardless of race, or color, or situation, wherever he may live under the flag of The United States of America” (Dawson & Hubbard, 1944, p. 12). The charter was the beginning of the forge for equitable education.

Equitable education remained the focus of presidents and educators through the United States history until present day. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the civil rights law, Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) into law in 1965 (U.S. Department of Education, ESEA). The ESEA allowed federal funds to be allocated to sub-groups of populations that were identified as at-risk or high needs. NCLB 2001 increased the accountability system of the federally funded school systems and outlined stringent legal constraints (U.S. Department of Education, NCLB). The President’s intention was to decrease the achievement gap between identified subgroups and all students by increasing teachers credential requirements and regulating the testing system.

On December 10th, 2016, President Obama signed ESSA into law, replacing the ESEA. The ESSA became fully effective during the 2017-2018 school year and gave some flexibility in policy back to the states. However, the accountability system and testing both remained intact (U.S. Department, ESSA). In an attempt to equalize

education, the ESSA continued to federally fund the underserved. Funds for teacher attainment, PD, and supplemental education continued to be distributed based on need.

Federal mandates imparted on educators have long existed. Additional mandates have been placed in action for health care, housing, and even the private sector. President Truman passed The National Housing Act, (1949) in hopes of creating a decent living environment for every American (Grineski, 2014). The good intentions of the act are still confronted today with mounting needs. “Currently 5.8 million housing units are needed to house the country’s low-income families” (Grineski, 2014, p. 205). The impoverished community continues to grow even with mandates and federal requirements (Duncan & Murnane, 2014).

Project

The recruitment process for the PD in Appendix A outlines policies, the results of this research, and supporting research. To create “the need to know” for the teacher participants, a technique call frontloading information will be used (Knowles, et al., 2012, p. 63). Frontloading information about the PD closes any gap in knowledge the possible PD participant may have about the PD (Buehl, 2017). Flyers with the PD agenda will be distributed and contact information will be made available to answer any questions prior to the PD registration. The goal of the PD is for the rural Appalachian Ohio teachers to analyze his or her beliefs and perceptions to determine how beliefs and perceptions might affect their education strategies. This project study research identified that PD for teachers of students of poverty was needed to enhance background knowledge as well as professional capacity (Stosich, 2016). Azano (2014) suggested that

educators must embrace their location, such as rural living, and allow the students to experience true literature and rid the classrooms of the widely accepted stereotypes. However, the lack of cultural courses on the underserved left the teachers unprepared to properly educate all students (Wenger et al., 2012).

Teacher participants will be exposed to Knowles's (2012) adult learning model practices during the 4-day PD session. Knowles suggested that adult learners might be hesitant to participate in PD if they feel another is trying to impose their own ideals (Knowles, et al., 2012). Therefore, the PD was developed to give flexibility and collaboration to accommodate participants' self-directed learning (Knowles et al., 2012; McDonough, 2014).

The project genre was to develop a PD plan that would help reduce the identified problem of deficit thinking, described in the data analysis in Section_2 and outlined by Gorski (2013). The participants expressed little to no college training on poverty or diversity and that no local professional development on poverty had been provided. The active teacher level PD was the chosen genre to help the teacher learn poverty place, policy, and facts vs. stereotypes. I chose this genre as each participant described a lack of knowledge on poverty. A teacher level PD on the phenomenon of educating students of poverty would increase understanding and possibly change the interactions that are aligned with oppression (Bryant, Moss, & Zijdemans, 2015). The conformity of personality or behaviors would suggest that curriculum would replace a deficit view with a positive social change in thinking of poverty (Masland & Lease, 2013).

As identified by the research participants, most of the current elementary students live in rural Appalachian and are from low, social economic families. This research participants' self-reported experiences include minimal or no training on diversity or poverty. Research supported the lack in training as teachers expressed being unprepared to teach in a rural poverty setting (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2015). The research participants will be targeted PD participants as they would be most likely ready to learn the new knowledge based on the identified gap (Knowles, et al., 2012).

The project will provide the rural teachers a PD that addressed the gap in knowledge and of local content of poverty, place, geography, policy, and community (Appendix A). A series of videos of rural poverty will be analyzed and compared, followed by a class debate, thus giving the teachers a reflective opportunity to engage in collegial conversation (Booth & Schwartz, 2012). The instructor will act as a monitor and guide the teachers toward intended knowledge as the teachers learn through reflection experiences (Booth & Schwartz, 2012; Knowles, et al., 2012).

Gorski (2013) gave the framework of deficit thinking for the research while I found common stereotypes among the research participants. All but one of the research participants identified with deficit thinking views of students of poverty as described by Gorski (2013). The research naturally identified the PD outcomes, which are aligned with Guskey beginning with the end in mind (Guskey, 2017). The intended outcomes begin with the participants gaining an understanding of self in reference to his or her perceptions and beliefs' of students who live in poverty. The participants would use reflective change as they compare his or her perceptions to the Gorski (2013) identified

stereotypes. Finally, the participants will return to the classroom with a changed view of poverty, consisting of new accurate knowledge, and Gorski's strategies that will help eliminate the discrepancy of educating the oppressed.

The goal of knowing each student can be accomplished when the educator is committed to putting the students at the center of his or her teaching. The theory of putting the student at the center was based on Dewey's (1902) empirical theories of learning. The theory of student centered learning was also influenced by Knowles's (2012) research, which put experience at the center of all learning. The theory of student-centered learning was also documented and supported in the current literature (Kallick & Zmuda, 2017). The book illustrated how teachers could "learn from experience, communicate their ideas with clarity, listen to others, and open themselves up to being influenced by others' ideas" while putting students at the center (Kallick & Zmuda, 2017, p. 29). The theory of student-centered learning became the framework used during the PD project for the participants as model they could transfer to their classroom (Kallick & Zmuda, 2017, p. 29).

The project PD curriculum will be delivered with participants' experience of the teaching as the fundamental force to move from a traditional teacher-driven approach to student-led learning. More than just attempting to move instruction from teacher-directed to student-driven, the teacher must address, and reflect upon their prior knowledge to make new content relevant (Azano & Stewart, 2015). A critical part of a training program for "rural schools is helping them develop an awareness of how their cultural context shapes their identities and teaching practices" (Azano & Stewart, 2015, p. 2). However,

there was little exposure to rural context during training (White & Kline, 2012). Both teacher training and teacher attainment in the rural place remain a problem (Biddle & Azano, 2016). The project PD was developed so the participant teachers would self-analyze their social identities, reflect upon the identities, and determine if the social identities affected perceptions and beliefs. Researchers support the prevalence of deficit thinking in teachers and their perceptions of students of poverty (Ellis, Thompson, McNicholl, & Thomson, 2016; Gorski 2013). Teachers are challenged with their own views of poverty that may be deeply emotional upon exposing the need to remove a deficit disposition one holds (Gorski, 2013). Additionally, some rural teachers lower student expectations if the students speak non-standard English, known as Appalachian (Brashears, 2014). The project curriculum was created with teachers' possible deficit disposition in mind. The curriculum will bring individual identities to the forefront and create a reflective environment cultivating personal change on poverty beliefs.

Preparing the Teacher

The knowledge of learner is the focus of the project 4-day PD session because the gap was identified in this project study in participants' understanding of their current students (Hollins, 2011, p. 397). Hollins stated, "Perhaps the most important aspect of teaching and learning was how well the teacher knows the learner" (p. 397). The PD was intended for the teacher participants to embrace the inequities and deficit assumptions of poverty to help prepare the teacher to better know their students (Ellis et al., 2016). As identified in the research data, the participants lacked background knowledge in rural Appalachian poverty. There was also a, "lack of explicit information about rural teaching

opportunities to teachers” (White & Kline, 2012, p. 36). Additionally, “Universities have had little to no explicit focus on understanding rural or regional communities in their teacher education program” (White & Kline, 2012, p. 36). The lack of training and experience ultimately creates an unintentional deficit thinking for teachers, and those students of a Rural Appalachian Ohio school. This realization brings to the forefront the possibility that educators may be “taking part in the vicious cycle of the privileged and the oppressed” (Bryant, et al., 2015, p. 13). The PD will immerse the teacher into the rural context, creating an environment of cultural awareness.

Project Curriculum

The PD Project in Appendix A was designed for the active teacher level learner in a rural Ohio region who was likely to become a teacher of students in the lower economic class. In some cases, supporting research data and literature identified either deficit thinking or a lack in background knowledge of teachers in this region. The PD was designed to help eliminate the social injustice in schools as described by Cuervo and Kiddie (Cuervo 2014; Keddie 2014). Keddie (2014) explained that students are not equitably educated or tested in comparison to subgroups such as economic groups. Cuervo (2014) explained a gap in education regarding rural education and community. Both discrepancies could be attributed, at some level, to the underprepared teachers. The intent of the PD project is to be a 4-day learning process about the rural poverty context and community.

To design the PD I first identified learning outcomes that were essential to bridge the gap of knowledge as identified in the research. Guskey (2014) suggested that the end,

or the outcomes, rely a great deal with the beginning of a PD unit. Gusky (2014) considered relevant learning outcomes as improved teaching strategies that would improve student performance. The below learning outcomes that are in-line with the main crucial aspects of learning: teaching and learning activities and assessment (Sridharan, Leitch, & Watty, 2015). The following examples of the learning outcomes were designed with the learning activities and assessment as the focal points (Sridharan, Leitch, & Watty, 2015).

- The teacher will self-evaluate knowledge of the poverty and generate a project on the effects on how personal disposition may or may not impact teaching strategies.
- The teacher will analyze federal, state, and local level policies and law on subgroup distinction and discuss any needed change they would integrate into policies or laws while executing a peer debate.
- The teacher will make inferences and synthesize new knowledge for reflective change.

The PD will be divided into 4-days each with listed outcomes and activities.

Participants use self-reflection, post-protocol comparison to day one protocol, and class discussions. The activities were designed to keep the participants engaged in collaboration and reflection (see Table 7).

Table 7

Four-day PD outcomes and activities (Appendix A)

Day	Expected outcomes	Activities
1	a. Reflective self disposition	a. Reflective self disposition
2	a. Analyze policies and laws b. Analysis of Gorski's identified 5 Stereotypes	a. Videos, class debate c. Gorski (2013)
3	a. Analyze Gorski's 11 Disparities b. Analyze Gorski's 7 Ineffective Strategies c. Analyze Gorski's "What Works"	a. YouTube & Gorski (2013) b. Gorski (2013) c. Class debate
4	a. Class collaboration on the 5 major themes (days 1,2, & 3) b. Self-reflection c. Complete comparative Protocol	a. Final project b. Class discussion c. Protocol

Note. Source: Gorski, P. C. (2013). *Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap*. New York, NY: Teacher College Press.

Outcomes Based

The PD is designed to be outcome-based, as the learner develops new concepts through authentic experiences. Outcomes-based learning intentionally put the learner at the center of the curriculum (Clark, Johal, Sharp, & Quinn, 2016). I first considered what the intended outcomes would be and assessment style when designing the PD (Larkin & Richardson, 2013). For example, the intended outcome "What Works" was integrated with the assessment class debate as indicated in Table 5 above.

As the findings supported, there was a knowledge gap in the rural Appalachian Ohio Region teachers as compared to what students of rural poverty barriers actually

experienced. The alignment between the outcomes or knowledge of the rural Appalachian region coincides with activities, and assessment that very closely aligned with the Biggs model described as “Structure of the Observed Learning Outcomes (SOLO)” (Larkin & Richardson, 2013, p. 194). Additionally, as supported by Dewey, critical reflection will be used and is one of the highest orders of thinking. Several data types will be used to determine the participants’ depth of learning (Guskey, 2017). The assessment portion for the outcomes will consist of a professional portfolio, peer debates, and a personal reflection projects (Toni & Makura, 2015).

The cognitive perception of the learner changes when an experience is critically reflected. Reflection as a learning experience exposes a perception or belief that would impede or enhance future teaching strategies of the PD participant. The removal of deficit thinking will first come from a critical view of one’s self. Self-awareness of how society and cultural aspects create and educational uniqueness should be realized with a critical reflection (Hohr, 2013). This “however, uncomfortable work is essential for growth”(Azano & Stewart, 2015, p. 7). However distressing, taking a critical view of self, is the first step to growth of knowledge.

During the first day of the PD, the teachers will complete a protocol and Poverty Class Awareness Quiz to determine their understanding of poverty and themselves. The protocol was modeled after the research questions in this research. The Poverty Class Awareness Quiz was modeled after the quiz in (Gorski, 2013, p. 35-37). Completion of the protocol and the quiz will be followed by a discussion on how the teachers’ outcomes of the protocol and quiz may or may not influence their teaching strategies. The follow-

up project will be a research project that the participants' will choose as part of UDL and in line with Knowles Adult Learning Theory (Dinmore & Stokes, 2015; Knowles et al., 2012). Adults tend to like the flexibility of choice and appreciate self-directed learning that in turn results in higher level learning outcomes (Knowles et al., 2012).

Universal Design for Learning in Assessments

Universal design for learning (UDL) is a teaching practice that supports an inclusive learning environment by offering several content representations through different modes and different engagement styles (Dinmore & Stokes, 2015 and Dean, Lee-Post, & Hapke, 2017). UDL is based on representing knowledge in many forms, students' choice of assessment, and multiple forms of engagement (Capp, 2017). The UDL style of teaching gives great flexibility in the format of the assessment of the intended outcomes. Barriers are removed by accommodating learners with differentiated output modalities (Flagg-Williams & Bokhorst-Heng, 2016). Outcome modalities can range from low technology such as posters with markers, to a high output mode such as a YouTube video (Williams, Evans, & King, 2012). I, as the PD instructor, will offer detailed learning outcomes at the outset of the PD, giving the participant the latitude of choosing their assessment of learning, hence recognizing the individuality of each learner (Robinson & Wizer, 2016).

Implementation of the PD will be as diverse as the learners. Flexibility in PD presentations such as lectures, peer interviews, media reporting, debates, creating wikis, and off-site visits (along with others) will create a learner-centered learning environment (McGarry, Theobald, Lewis, & Coyer, 2015). Engaging learners by drawing on their

strength and removing barriers embodies the intention of UDL (Salend & Whittaker, 2017). The framework was intended to eliminate any disruptive component of learning and initiate the self-thinking system to create new knowledge (Williams et al., 2012). The framework supports the learners' talents and predispositions aligned with the longstanding theory of Dewey's learner-centered learning (Vlaicu, 2016). Knowles supported Dewey's position that the adult learner excels when placed at the center of their own learning (Knowles, et al., 2012). I will use class discussions that open communication to enhance collaboration among participants (McGarry et al., 2015).

Project Description

Requirements in law have mandated accountability in education for several decades. Teacher quality has been a focal point since the inception of NCLB and expressed by student test scores (Henry, Kershaw, Zulli, & Smith, 2012). Teacher preparation programs are now at the center of reform as those programs produce the teachers that will have an impact on student test scores (Henry et al., 2012). Avidov-Ungar's (2016) description of PD was to "fill in any existing gaps in terms of knowledge" (p. 655). A rural Appalachian PD education program would be a direct reason for the project as a gap in knowledge was identified. The PD was based on the Gorski (2013) framework that outlined strategies that effectively impact students of poverty, erase embedded stereotypes, and create an equitable learning environment.

The difficulty or barrier would be gaining enough interest in an after-school or weekend PD. I believe that providing relevant information prior to the PD would be essential to gaining and maintaining participants interest. The information would include

the data from this research that outlines a real situation in their work environment, and this could create interest (Roseler & Dentzau, 2013). Once the findings are presented to the local district PD committee of the rural Appalachian school, the PD may become a portion of the district's PD plan. Additionally, I will present the PD project to the local education agency that serves seven local districts and helps communicate PD goals.

The PD project is a cultural awareness course. Therefore, not all teachers may find this course appealing or meaningful. A detailed agenda of the 4-day PD will be published to entice teachers by detailing the learning outcomes and listing the assessments as it lends a hand to student-centered learning. Additionally, Gorski identified successful strategies will be listed on the agenda. The flexibility in the published agenda should increase attendance due to expanded awareness of the local interest (Roseler & Dentzau, 2013).

Contact information including e-mail address and phone number will be included on every published agenda. Interested participants will contact me (the PD instructor) to register according to the due date. I will send a confirmation notice via e-mail or US mail to each participant one week prior to the 4-day event.

Project Evaluation Plan

The PD project is outcomes-based and will be evaluated based on the Whole-Part-Whole Learning Model (Knowles et al., 2012). The outcomes-based evaluation may be the most productive for a learner-centered environment and creates a rhythmic-type of learning (Kenny & Desmarais, 2012). Clear learning outcomes given at the outset of the 4-day PD demonstrates information and becomes the first of the Whole in the learning

model (Knowles et al., 2012). The clear outcomes give meaning to the adult learner therefore giving relevance to the information (Knowles et al., 2012). Giving relevance to learning is in line with Knowle's (2012) assumption that "adults need to know why they need to learn something before learning it" (Kroth, 2014, p. 22). To determine PD participants' knowledge growth, the interview protocol will be answered on the first day to obtain the baseline level of knowledge of the participant. The participants will then complete the protocol on the final day of PD and compared the results to the first one. Growth of knowledge will be determined based on participants' diminishing deficit thinking and acquisition of equitable literacy principals. Additionally, growth and learning of outcomes of participants will occur formatively daily during class collaboration. A final class project will culminate in discussions of their perceptions of the learning experience and how his or her new knowledge will affect students (Gartman, 2016, July1).

The goal of the PD is to have the learners experience the knowledge, increasing the retention of aquatinted knowledge, and then synthesizing their new knowledge into real world contexts making the learning immediately relevant and useful (Knowles et al., 2012). Gorski's (2013) 10 Equity Literacy Principals, Poverty Stereotypes, 11 Disparities, and What Works Strategies will be broken down into the Parts section of the learning model (Knowles et al., 2012). Assessment of learned outcomes will be determined with the use of critical relevant feedback, reflective analysis, and comparison data. Feedback will occur daily as it is "one of the most powerful instructional tools

available” (Chan, Konrad, Gonzalez, Peters, & Ressa, 2014, p. 96 and Lenihan, 2016).

The learner will keep a portfolio to reflect upon the process of learning.

The second Whole section of instruction will determine the degree of learning that occurred during the learning experience (Knowles et al., 2012). Participants will complete the interview protocol in writing and compare the results to the day one protocol. The premise of the WPW model was to change the perceptions, beliefs or unintentional deficit thinking of the participants. The WPW model elicits a system the “goes beyond holistic, behavioristic, whole-part-whole learning models. The WPW Learning Model purports that there is a natural whole-part-whole rhythm to learning” (Knowles et al., 2012, p. 254). The immediate meaningful feedback will give the participants the incentive to implement their new knowledge in the classroom.

Project Implications

I will utilize the Local Professional Development Committee membership status that I currently have at the local Education Service Center to present the Professional Development project. During the face-to-face meeting with the Director of Programs, I will detail the findings of my research to establish a need for the PD at the local level (Kroth, 2014). The PD will be cataloged for any in-county districts and I will also offer the PD to the LEA in which this research was conducted free of charge.

The PD will become available once placed in the catalog for in-county districts. The seven districts meet once a month to conduct PD trainings at which time I will present an overview of the PD. I will then begin to set-up trainings for each local district

for the up-coming school year per request by the directors. Continuing Education Units will be offered through the LEA and approved by myself as a licensed PD instructor.

This PD has the potential to expose teachers to the unexplored context of rural poverty, their personal perceptions, and the impact one has on the other (Gorski, 2013). The outcomes of this research indicated that there is deficit thinking in current rural Appalachian teachers who educate students of poverty. The addition of this PD and other impending trainings to the local education agency and State Support Team (SST) catalogs would help reduce the deficit thinking and perceptions by submerging the teachers within the region in an on-going training experience.

Teachers may unintentionally lower academic expectations when they do not fully understand their students (Gorski, 2013). Teachers' perceptions are influenced by his or her lived experiences and social norms of their surroundings. The participants in this research were mostly middle-class with minimal training on the barriers students of poverty experience. Training, such as PD, is a sort of intervention or process that allows for reframing, new learning, and assimilation of new content to alter perceptions and beliefs. Equitable Literacy perceptions and beliefs result when teachers truly understand the phenomena of poverty. Once teachers replace deficit thinking with the Equitable Literacy beliefs, they will be able to use strategies more appropriately matched for students from poverty. Given the new knowledge, the cycle of poverty, in the educational context, and effects are broken or diminished with this reframing and re-education model (see Figure 1).

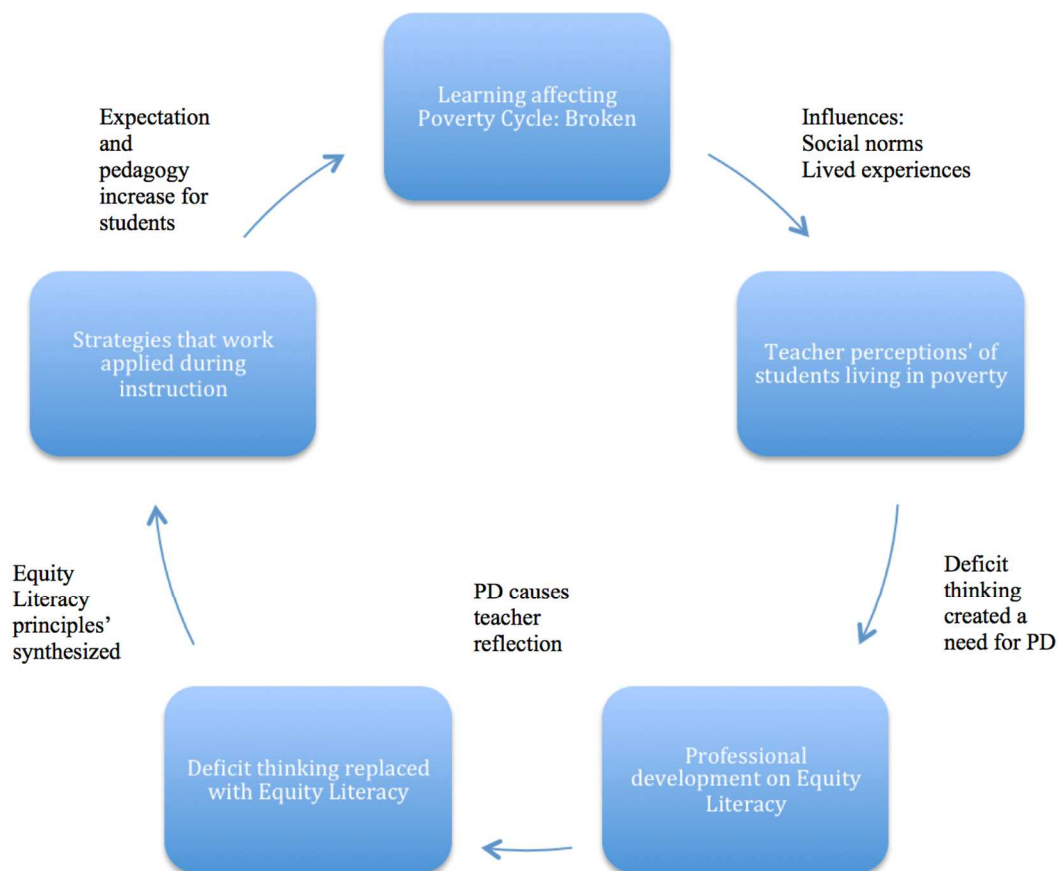


Figure 1. Visual depiction of the re-teaching model to replace deficit thinking with Equity Literacy.

Section 4: Reflection and Conclusion

Introduction

The process of determining that PD would be the project was pensive. Moving from the local problem, through literature, research, and data analysis was intense and caused me to critically reflect. What was once a thought has now matured into an authentic option to change learning-outcomes. Creating a PD that bridges a gap in rural Appalachian education may begin with the adult learner. The PD project placed the active teacher learner at the center of their learning. Using reflection and self-analysis to garner internal transformation were the crucial components to the PD project.

The projects strengths and limitations will be discussed in this section as well as alternative approaches to a project. I will describe my growth as a scholar, practitioner, and a project developer. As education impacts us all, this process caused great reflective practice and challenged my endurance. However, the outcome is a positive opportunity to influence the greater educational community as the educators have the ability to reach countless students.

Project Strengths and Limitations

When implementing a PD, one should inform the learner at the outset of expectations, learning-outcomes, and assessment options as well as distribute a detailed syllabus. Giving the learner the outcomes to be accomplished at the conclusion of the lessons allows the learner to self-direct their learning. PD participants that are self-directed may have learning outcomes success rates that are inherently higher than those who are not.

I selected an outcomes-based PD that will be measured using a Whole-Part-Whole instructional design as suggested by Knowles (2012). The WPW development was based on Knowles's (1984) Adult Learning Theory and was largely influenced by Gestalt theory. Knowles' (2012) theory allowed the learner and professor to work as co-learners and be collegial. The adult can self-select a project based on his or her personal experiences and personal strengths. The teacher, according to Knowles (2012), gains confidence and participation rates increase once flexibility is afforded by self-selection.

To understand rural Appalachian poverty, teachers will be asked to critically reflect on their dispositions and ideals of the low economic group. A self-survey and interview protocol will be used to generate peer conversations that will lead to the first project of self-reflection. The intent of the survey, protocol, and conversations is to identify any disposition or belief that may or may not impact students of a lower economic group in an Appalachian region.

The limitation in this critical self-reflection exercise is that to cause growth, the person may need to face uncomfortable deep-seated beliefs that impact social injustice. Identifying a perception that may be unintentionally culturally biased will be difficult. Making a change in one's self to modify the perception or belief will be challenging. I expect this limitation will cause great debate and even discomfort among the learners.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

A needs assessment might be an alternative approach for a project. While the lack in background knowledge plays a part in unintentionally lowered outcomes in the research, several factors may contribute to the achievement gap. Gorski (2013) said that

education should be the great equalizer. For this to occur differently involves changing the adult behavior so that we expose all students to equitable social, medical, and nutritional options. Although, the federal government has established many social programs, the gap continues to widen. A needs assessment could account for factors other than teachers' deficit models of understanding their low-income students that this project targets.

A comprehensive needs assessment of the local school and its families could be completed to identify the specific needs of the community. Based off the needs assessment, an improvement plan could be developed with community members, business people, civic societies, media outlet, and medical professionals. The improvement plan would include goals, strategies, and action steps. Each goal would have an estimated amount of funding needed with a strategy to obtain the funding. Funding such as grants and donations must be obtained. A campaign for civil and medical partnerships would also begin. Grant writers must be attained to generate funding for needed purchase service and capital outlay to invest in social and medical programs.

Gorski (2013) surmised that students of poverty could achieve as any other student. The students in higher-economic families have more social opportunities; therefore, the normed expected level of knowledge is experienced. The experiences in low-economic families are different and not of the middle-class accepted social norms. Different does not indicate lower IQ. Therefore, poverty does not indicate lower IQ, but rather different opportunity.

Scholarship, Project Development, and Leadership and Change

Qualitative research was an intuitive and natural direction for my personality. Curiosity about the Appalachian region came from having attended school, college, and now working in the region. I experienced the region's economic decline and hardships escalate. I have witnessed teachers speak about children in a derogatory manor based on an identified sub-group such as economically disadvantaged and impoverished. When adults express such beliefs of students, I became increasingly interested about how these thoughts and beliefs affect actions. I also wondered if teachers held the same lowered expectations for me, as I was a child from poverty.

From my curiosity came the interest to complete research on teachers' perceptions of students of poverty. This was a thought born several years before I would actually complete the research. However, I was interested in understanding why adults had a perception and how it was developed. Then I wanted to understand if perceptions and beliefs affected actions or treatment of students. Unknowingly, I had developed my research study in my mind years before I understood the process. As different research designs and methods were presented, I felt an instinctive draw toward qualitative case study that focused on the lived experiences known as a phenomenological approach.

Dewey (1902) was my choice of theoretical framework early on in my literature review process. The student-centered learning by experience was at the center of my review. My thoughts became challenges once I was entrenched in the literature review. I questioned my choice of framework as I started collaborating with my chair and continued to read. I began to feel that the framework should be adult driven and not a

child-centered framework. For this reason, I engaged in literature review based on teacher perceptions. Gorski (2013) immediately became apparent as the framework for my research. Once the change in theory was made, the review seemed to flow and alignment was formed.

By design, the bounded system was a rural Appalachian Ohio elementary school. The participants were purposefully identified. The participants had to work within the bounded system, I had purposely identified. It was during the methods section that research somehow became demystified while working through the process. My lack of clarity turned into eagerness and enthusiasm of what the next step in the research process would entail. I developed a true respect and admiration for every researcher, as it was for their prior work that allowed me to complete my research.

Accepting that as the researcher I was also the data collector, analyzer, and interpreter put into perspective the ethical conditions of qualitative research. I critically reflected on beliefs and dispositions of my own so not to misrepresent the participants' voice. The bracketing session became one of the most valuable portions of the process as it helped set aside any bias. The pilot study assisted in refining the interview protocol and gave me time to develop the type of inquire I used.

Once the research was approved, I was acutely aware of the significance of participants' confidentiality. I was astounded by some of the profoundly intimate information shared with me during the interviews. Genuine feelings of gratitude for the participants and their full disclosure for the sake of research were realized. Once the member checking was complete, the coding commenced.

The hierarchical process was used to identify themes and codes. I underestimated the length of time the coding process takes. However, once I started the process, I was anxious to understand the data. I believe the data analysis portion of the process, although lengthy and intense, was especially engaging. Analyzing data was watching a picture come into frame one stroke of the paintbrush at a time. Once I was finished, the picture was complete with the answers to my research questions.

The teachers' dispositions and stereotyped thinking lead way to the curriculum plan as the project. Determining the curriculum scope and sequence, materials, and assessment came down to my philosophy on education. Putting the learner at the center of education and giving the flexibility to control own outcomes opens confidence and accessibility. Each learner has strength, in part, from his or her individual lived experiences. Therefore, the learner should create an individual learning path, based on identified learning-outcomes. The learning-outcomes based curriculum is best assessed with the use of a rubric made available at the outset of the curriculum.

Analysis of Scholar

The process of completing a research study and the accompanying project has caused a holistic change in my view of scholarship. As a scholar, I no longer simply review an article or book to find an understanding of a topic. I now search for the how, what, and why and then synthesize the information so to analyze and apply in life. Additionally, I am interested in alternative outcomes. I have learned through this experience that there is no one real truth. Through my lived life, I have developed individual views. The individual views and thoughts create unique analysis of

information. Therefore, outcomes may appear unlike or different than others. Each person has a unique lived experience and therefore a unique view or belief. I am more open minded and willing to accept alternatives as opportunities to learn from others.

My voice has changed in how I explain information. I now give a point or information and reference supporting literature. The supporting literature gives strength to my point and tends to sway the audience in a logical manner. The APA style of writing has also strengthened my tone and delivery of information so that the reader may understand information in a systematic fashion.

Analysis of Practitioner

The process of completing a research project gave me a powerful experience in understanding the importance of current research. Now I am able to translate research in my everyday life when practicing teaching. I am better prepared to address the most critical issues in the local area, as I know how to fully research an intended topic. I am more comfortable in my ability to communicate in large groups due to my depth and breath of my knowledge based on my ability to research a given topic. I feel confident now that I can help teachers move from an area of weakness to a solution in a systematic and timely manner.

I am better able to dig deep into data and identify both strengths and area of needs. I am able to communicate to our Improvement Team, in a meaningful manner the need for improvement and move the team through the planning process. Currently I am monitoring a district-wide improvement plan based on the identified needs and the

research that supported the interventions that we implemented. I now have the confidence to provide the team with the supporting research and implement a corresponding plan.

Analysis of Project Development

Developing a project comes out of an identified need or concern. Once such a need or concern was identified, then learning-outcomes were developed. I had to identify the type of curriculum that I would implement with the project. After reviewing several options, I am comfortable with the use of learning outcomes as the outcomes are clearly stated at the outset and are learner driven.

As a result of this research, my educational philosophy has been confirmed that learners are unique to their own exposure to experience. The learning should be tailored to the unique learner and their strengths that place the learner at the center of education. From the learning-outcomes to outcome-assessments I kept my focus of the learner creating a UDL environment.

Giving the learner options in assessment styles allows the learner to direct their own learning. Once the learner takes ownership in their learning, outcomes increase and authentic learning occurs. The project curriculum not only gives the preservice teachers a curriculum that puts them at the center of their learning, it is a model of how they may teach once they become a teacher.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

The relationship between teachers and students may be one of the most critical components of a persons lived life. Hattie (2015) suggested the relationship is very important to academic achievement at .72 effect size, and teacher expected achievement

is at 1.60 effect size. The relationship is supported when a teacher has an understanding of the students and the community that they teach. Accessing the students' prior knowledge and creating a link with the new knowledge will help ensure the learner make a connection and make academic progress. However, if the teacher has no background knowledge or a deficit thinking, a hindrance in a relationship will exist, expectations will be lowered, and outcomes will decrease.

This rural Appalachian teacher perception research exposed a gap in knowledge in current educators, created by social norms and a lack of appropriate PD. A critical review of local PD and regional preservice teacher education training should be completed to ensure this gap in regional education is eliminated. Both the local PD program and regional teacher preparation programs could have a significant change and the impact of achievement could be immense.

Implications, Applications, and Direction for Future Research

The Gorski (2013) framework of removing deficit thinking would be used in this social change model. The literature review identified that preservice teachers do need exposure to the population of students that they would eventually teach. The experience through exposure would help remove stereotyped thinking, replacing it with real world experience. The experiences therefore create background knowledge of students and families whom they will teach.

A recommendation for future research is to complete a longitudinal study in the Appalachian region. It could use 5-years of existing students' achievement data as the baseline data. Then implement the cultural awareness curriculum for preservice teachers

that would eliminate deficit thinking. The research would follow a specified amount of participants as they enter the field of education and educate students with the cultural content knowledge and equitable literacy. The research would compare the existing student achievement data with achievement data of those students whose teachers completed the cultural awareness curriculum.

Conclusion

Every lived experience creates a transfer of knowledge. However, based on background knowledge, perceptions, dispositions, and beliefs, one's transfer of knowledge may present differently than another's. Educators must be aware of the influence they have on students as each movement, word, demand, and action will either hinder or influence change. Educators have the remarkable opportunity to create a learning environment that any learner can strive and achieve if the appropriate deliverables, outcomes, and measurable are presented. Creating such an environment requires the educators to understand those whom they teach only by understanding their own self first.

Critical reflection of the self allows for personal and professional growth. Delving into the research process and accepting some personal change was a significant sign of the increase in my critical thinking. As Newton (1675) suggested, I too see further now. I have a great appreciation for the research process, the researchers before me, and the guidance given.

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Appendix A: Project

Introduction: Schools as the great equalizer or the savage inequalities?

Understand self, reflect and change to impact student achievement. Based on Gorski's framework *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty: Strategies for Erasing the Opportunity Gap* (2013).

Resource: *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty: Strategies for Erasing the Opportunity Gap*

Gorski, P. C. (2013). *Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap*. New York, NY: Teacher College Press.

*A portfolio will be maintained to show growth and identify learning outcomes.

Professional Developments Outcomes:

1. Understand self in reference to dispositions and effects on education.
2. Apply new knowledge as a practitioner
3. Inference and synthesis for reflective change

Topics:

- Reflective experience of self/ dispositions
- Appalachian and rurality local, state and federal law and policy
- Appalachian, rurality, and poverty place and context

- Ten Principles of Equity Literacy

Day 1 Activities:

9:00 Introduction and expectations (by Paul C. Gorski for EdChange *Equity Literacy Principals for Educators of Students Experiencing Poverty* <<http://www.edchange.org>>)

10:00 Complete Protocol as a baseline of participants understanding of poverty

1. Explain the diversity of the population of students that you have worked with over the past few years.
2. What is your general perception of the term poverty?
3. Explain your childhood and school experiences.
4. What do you feel causes poverty?
5. Describe how you understand students that live in poverty
6. How did you come to this understanding
7. Explain any changes that you experienced during your tenure with students of poverty.
8. Describe any professional development that you experienced for diversity education.
9. Elaborate on any course work in any college or university level that you experienced on students of poverty
10. Explain what strategies you implement to engage students of poverty.

11. Explain your interpretations of the specific needs that students of poverty have.

12. Please elaborate on anything that I may have not asked.

*Place in portfolio

10:30 Group discussion on the protocol “Compared to the 10 Principles”

11:00 Definitions Chapter 1 pp 1-13 (Gorski 2013) compare to current students

11:30-12:30 Break and lunch

12:30 Reflect on morning

12:40 *Poverty and Class Awareness Quiz (Gorski 2013, pp 35)*, Class Discussion

Poverty and Class Awareness Quiz

1. According to the Children's Defense Fund (CDF, 2010), how often is a child born into poverty in the United States?
 - a. Every 32 Seconds
 - b. Every 3 minutes and 2 seconds
 - c. Every 32 minutes

2. According to the Center for American Progress (2007), what proportion of U.S. citizens will live at least 1 year of their lives in poverty?
 - a. One-fifth
 - b. One-third
 - c. One-half

3. Most poor people in the United States live (Sherman, 2006):
 - a. In inner cities
 - b. Outside of inner cities

4. Which sorts of areas are seeing the greatest increases in poverty rates (Freeman, 2010)?
 - a. Urban areas
 - b. Rural areas
 - c. Suburban areas

5. One in ten White children in the United States is poor according to the CDF (2008). What portion of Latino children in the United States is poor?
 - a. One in four
 - b. One in six
 - c. One in ten

6. According to a study sponsored by the Pew Research Center (Taylor et al., 2011b), the median wealth of White households in the United States is how many times larger than of African American households?
 - a. Five times larger
 - b. Ten times larger
 - c. Twenty times larger

7. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH, 2009), what proportion of homeless men in the United States are military veterans?

- a. Two in ten
- b. Four in ten
- c. Six in ten

8. According to the wealth analysis group WealthInsight (as referenced by Rushe, 2012), during President Barack Obama's first term in office, the number of millionaires in the United States

- a. decreased by 6,500
- b. decreased by 154,000
- c. increased by 49, 000
- d. increased by 1,1000,000

9. Identify the source of this quote: "We have deluded ourselves into believing the myth that capitalism grew and prospered out of the Protestant ethic of hard work and sacrifices. Capitalism was built on the exploitation of black slaves and continues to thrive on the exploitation of the poor, both black and white, both here and abroad,"

- a. bell hooks, author and educator
- b. Michael Moore, filmmaker
- c. Martin Luther King Jr., civil rights activist
- d. Eleanor Roosevelt, human rights advocate

10. In low-poverty U.S. schools, one of every nine courses is taught by a teacher who is not certified to teach it. In high-poverty schools the proportion is (Almy & Theokas, 2010):

- a. one in nine
- b. one in six
- c. one in four

erasing the opportunity gap. New York, NY: Teacher College Press.

1:15 Discussion on Quiz: Compare to region and current students

1:45 Chapter 2 pp. 14-24 Equity Literacy Abilities

10 Principals of Equity Literacy Comparison activity (Attached) *Portfolio

Equity Literacy Principles for Educators of Students Experiencing Poverty

<u>Ten Principals</u>	<u>Explain how you accommodate</u>
1. The right to equitable educational opportunity is universal.	1.
2. Poverty and class are intersectional in nature.	2.
3. People in poverty are diverse.	3.
4. What we believe about people in poverty, including our biases and prejudices, informs how we teach and relate to people in poverty.	4.
5. We cannot understand the relationship between poverty and education without understanding the biases and	5.

inequities experienced by
people in poverty.

6. Test scores are inadequate
measures of equity. 6.

7. Class disparities in education
are the result of inequities, not
the result of cultures. 7.

8. Equitable educators adopt a
structural rather than a deficit
view of educational disparities. 8.

9. Strategies for bolstering school
engagement and learning must
be based on evidence for what
works. 9.

10. The inalienable right to
equitable educational
opportunity includes the right to
high expectations, higher-order
pedagogies, and engaging
curricula. 10.

Excerpted from Paul C. Gorski's book, *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty: Strategies for Erasing the Opportunity Gap* (Teachers College Press, 2014).

*10 Principals in portfolio

2:15 Commitments of Equity –Literate Educators (attached)

3:15 Review the day's activities, read chapter pp24- 84 (chapter 3-5) for next meeting, and write your philosophy of education. Choose a movie from list and report out on any inequities and how society influenced the inequities (**Motivating & Inspiring Students**

© 2017 Marzano Research • marzanoresearch.com Visit

marzanoresearch.com/reproducible to download this free reproducible.) We will review “The Culture of Poverty” Lewis 1966, “War on poverty Speech” Lyndon B. Johnson, and “Radio Address to the Nation on Welfare Reform” Ronald Reagan

3:30 Adjourn

Day 2

9:00 Review of last meeting information

9:15 Review the *Equity Literacy Principals for Educators of Students Experiencing Poverty*

Compare how the participants accommodate the Principles and identify the commitments the participants must make. Participants will chart the commitments they choose to become an Equity Literate Teacher.

*Portfolio

10:15 Participants Philosophy of Education, review and identify the type. Determine if the philosophy is aligned with the Ten Principals

(http://higher.mheducation.com/sites/0072877723/student_view)

*Portfolio (Will re-write philosophy at conclusion of the PD)

10:45 “How did we get here?” Review: Three groups review each historical event and will report out on the social impact after lunch.

The Culture of Poverty by: Oscar Lewis (1966) Lewis, O. (1966). The culture of poverty
American, 215(4), 19-25.

“War on poverty Speech” Lyndon B. Johnson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3AuStymweQ>

Radio Address to the Nation of Welfare Reform, Ronald Reagan

<https://www.youtub.com/watch?v=MjnTQ8b66yY>

11:30 – 12:30 Break and Lunch

12:30 Group 1 present: Lewis

12:40 Group 2 present: LBJ

12:40 Group 3 present Reagan

What if any social impact did these events have?

1:00 5 Stereotypes: (Gorski 2013 pp 59-68)

- 1. Poor people do not value education
- 2. Poor people are lazy
- 3. Poor people are substance abusers
- 4. Poor people are linguistically deficient and poor communicators
- 5. Poor people are ineffective and inattentive parents

Discuss each stereotype. Have the participants review the answers to the protocol from Day 1. Circle any answers that aligned with a stereotype view or disposition. Number each circled stereotype view or disposition. The participants will choose which of the 10 Principles they will commit to remedy the stereotype view and list.

2:30 *Why the “Achievement Gap” is really an Opportunity Gap* (Gorski, 2013 83-84)

3:00 Report out / hand in report on social justice movie *Portfolio

3:15 Review the day’s information. For next meeting read (Gorski, 2013 pp. 85-141)

Chapters 6-9, Review and be prepared to present on *I Feel Forgotten: A decade of struggle in rural Ohio* by: Kate Lithicum October 27, 2016 (retrieved from

www.newyorker.com/culture/photo-booth/i-feel-forgotten-a-decade-of-struggle-in-rural-ohio).

Day 3 Activities

9:00 Review of last meeting information

9:30-10:30 Present on *I Feel Forgotten: A decade of struggle in rural Ohio* by: Kate Lithicum October 27, 2016 (retrieved from www.newyorker.com/culture/photo-booth/i-feel-forgotten-a-decade-of-struggle-in-rural-ohio). Class discussion on how this is like / not like our community *Portfolio

10:30-11:45 Gorski Chapter 6 discussion: two or three participants collaborate on the 11 disparities in access:

- Preschool
- Well-funded schools
- Adequately resourced schools
- Shadow education
- School support service
- Affirming school environment
- High academic expectations
- Well-paid, certified, experienced teachers
- Student-centered, higher-order curriculum and pedagogies
- Opportunities for family involvement
- Instructional technologies

Each group will report out to the class on the effects of the disparities in access. (max 5 min.)

11:45 – 12:45 Break & Lunch

12:45-1:15 Activity: Students will fist rank order 10 common teaching strategies as found in John Hattie’s (2016) research. The participants will then be provided the rank order list of Hattie’s’ strategies to compare them to how they rank ordered the strategies.

1:15-1:45 Gorski Chapter 7 *Ineffective Strategies*: sample of ineffective strategies

- Direct instruction
- Teaching to the test
- Tracking and Ability Grouping
- Charter Schools

1:45-2:30 Gorski Chapter 8 *What Works*

- Incorporating the arts across the curriculum
- High expectations for all students
- Adopting higher-order, student-centered, rigorous pedagogies
- Add movement and exercise into teaching and learning
- Make curriculum relevant to lives of low-income students
- Teach about poverty and class bias
- Analyze learning material for class and other bias
- Promote literacy enjoyment

Small groups read and analyze Gorski’s *What Works*. Participants will report out on the individual *What Works* (min. 5 min).

2:30-3:15 View *Living in Poverty*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ca6d14hW_j4

3:15-3:30 Review the day's information. Next week write a 12-page paper that compares and contrast the Inequities and the What Works. How you will remove the inequities in your teaching and increase the What Works into your teaching. Read Gorski Chapter 10.

Day 4

9:00-9:15 Review of last meeting information

9:15-10:15 Think, Pair, Share, Participants will pair up and discuss the report they each created on the Inequities and What Works. Pairs will chart the What Works they will implement into their teaching strategies and list and example. The pairs will report out to the group.

10:15-11:00 The participants will group discuss on:

- *Poverty Stereotypes*
- *10 Principles*
- *Equity Literacy Commitments*
- *11 Disparities*
- *What Works*

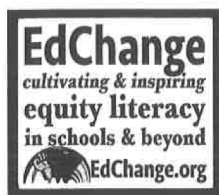
11:00-11:30 Participant will pick an activity for a reflection on how the four days information will affect their teaching and or thinking.

11:30-12:30 Break & Lunch

12:30-2:30 Research and create a reflective project. *Portfolio

2:30-3:00 Participants again complete the Protocol

3:00-3:30 Compare Day one protocol answers with day four protocol answers.



Equity Literacy Principles for Educators of Students Experiencing Poverty

by Paul C. Gorski for EdChange <<http://www.edchange.org>>
Revised December 10, 2015

Equity Literacy is an approach for creating and sustaining equitable classrooms and schools. Unlike the many frameworks that focus on understanding vague and often stereotypical notions of "culture" (such as "cultural competence"), Equity Literacy foregrounds the knowledge and skills that prepare educators to recognize, respond to, and redress the subtle and not-so-subtle biases and inequities that hamper student engagement. The following principles refer to the *knowledge* dimension of Equity Literacy as it pertains to educators' and schools' relationships with families in poverty.

<u>Principle</u>	<u>Commitments of Equity Literate Educators</u>
1. The right to equitable educational opportunity is universal.	Equity literate educators believe that every student has an inalienable right to equitable educational opportunity.
2. Poverty and class are intersectional in nature.	Equity literate educators understand that class is an intersectional experience for students, so we cannot understand how class inequities operate, even in our own classrooms, without also understanding how inequities related to race, gender, language, immigrant status, disability, and other identities operate.
3. People in poverty are diverse.	Equity literate educators recognize that poor and working class people are infinitely diverse, so that studying a singular "culture of poverty" will not help us understand individual low-income students or families better, and might strengthen our stereotypes.
4. What we believe about people in poverty, including our biases and prejudices, informs how we teach and relate to people in poverty.	Equity literate educators know that our teaching philosophies and practices are driven at least in part by our belief systems, so in addition to relying on practical strategies for teaching low-income students, we become equitable educators when we are willing to change fundamentally what we believe about poverty and the families that experience it.
5. We cannot understand the relationship between poverty	Equity literate educators, in addition to changing what we believe about low-income students, are committed to



SCHOOLS AS THE GREAT EQUALIZER OR THE SAVAGE INEQUALITIES?

Based on Gorski's framework *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty: Strategies for Erasing the Opportunity Gap* (2013).

P.D. Outcomes

- **Professional Developments Outcomes:**

- Understand self in reference to dispositions and effects on education.
- Apply new knowledge as a practitioner
- Inference and synthesis for reflective change

-

- **Topics:**

- -Reflective experience of self/ dispositions
- -Appalachian and rurality local, state and federal law and policy
- - Appalachian, rurality, and poverty place and context
- - Ten Principles of Equity Literacy

Equity Literacy Principles for Educators of Students Experiencing Poverty

- by Paul C. Gorski for EdChange <<http://www.edchange.org>>
 - Revised December 10, 2015

Equity Literacy is an approach for creating and sustaining equitable classrooms and schools. Unlike the many frameworks that focus on understanding vague and often stereotypical notions of “culture” (such as “cultural competence”), Equity Literacy foregrounds the knowledge and skills that prepare educators to recognize, respond to, and redress the subtle and not-so-subtle biases and inequities that hamper student engagement. The following principles refer to the knowledge dimension of Equity Literacy as it pertains to educators’ and schools’ relationships with families in poverty.

Principles

- 1. The right to equitable educational opportunity is universal.
- 2. Poverty and class are intersectional in nature.
- 3. People in poverty are diverse.
- 4. What we believe about people in poverty, including our biases and prejudices, informs how we teach and relate to people in poverty.
- 5. We cannot understand the relationship between poverty and education without understanding the biases and inequities experienced by people in poverty.

Continued...

- 6. Test scores are inadequate measures of equity.
- 7. Class disparities in education are the result of inequities, not the result of cultures.
- 8. Equitable educators adopt a structural rather than a deficit view of educational disparities.
- 9. Strategies for bolstering school engagement and learning must be based on evidence for what works.
- 10. The inalienable right to equitable educational opportunity includes the right to high expectations, higher-order pedagogies, and engaging curricula.

Definitions

- Socioeconomic Status
- Poverty
- Working Class
- Middle Class
- Managerial (or “Upper Middle”) Class
- Owing Class
- Income and Wealth

10 Principles of Equity Literacy Comparison

- Principle 1
- Principle 2
- Principle 3
- Principle 4
- Principle 5
- Principle 6
- Principle 7
- Principle 8
- Principle 9
- Principle 10

What do

You do

To accomplish

These

Principles

Commitments of Equity –Literate Educators

Day 1 & 2

- 1. Equity literate educators believe that every student has an inalienable right to equitable educational opportunity.
- 2. Equity literate educators understand that class is an intersectional experience for students, so we cannot understand how class inequities operate, even in our own classrooms, without also understanding how inequities related to race, gender, language, immigrant status, disability, and other identities operate.
- 3. Equity literate educators recognize that poor and working class people are infinitely diverse, so that studying a singular “culture of poverty” will not help us understand individual low-income students or families better, and might strengthen our stereotypes.
- 4. Equity literature educators know that our teaching philosophies and practices are driven at least in part by our belief systems, so in addition to relying on practical strategies for teaching low-income students, we become equitable educators when we are willing to change fundamentally what we believe about poverty and the families that experience it.
- 5. Equity literate educators, in addition to changing what we believe about low-income students, are committed to developing deeper understandings of the biases and inequities faced by low-income families both in and out of school, and how these biases and inequities affect student performance and engagement in school.

Continued...

Day 1 & 2

- 6. Equity literature educators are aware that equity or its absence cannot be captured by standardized test scores because test scores, which in essence measure levels of prior access to educational opportunity, cannot capture student experience. Raising test scores is not the same thing as creating an equitable learning environment.
- 7. Equity literature educators understand that educational outcome disparities are the result, not of cultural conflicts or a deficient “culture of poverty,” but rather from the unequal distribution of access and opportunity, so that eliminating disparities requires us to eliminating inequities rather than changing students’ cultures.
- 8. Equity literate educators recognize and draw upon the resiliencies and other funds of knowledge accumulated by poor and working class communities, reject deficit views that focus on fixing marginalized students rather than fixing the conditions that marginalize students, and understand the structural barriers that cheat some people out of the opportunities enjoyed by other people.
- 9. Equity literature educators, aware of the magnitude of societal bias against economical disadvantaged people, are committed to basing instructional and policy decisions, not on what’s popular or what bias might dictate, but on evidence of what works.
- 10. Equity literate educators demonstrate high expectations for all students, including low-income students, in part by offering them the same sorts of higher-order pedagogies and engaging curricula usually found in classrooms or schools with few or no low-income students.

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Equity Literacy Principals for Educators of Students Experiencing Poverty

- Ten Principals
- How participants accommodate
- Commitment to become an Equity Literate Educator
- Chart

Philosophy on Education

- What philosophy type are you?
- Do you align with the Ten Principles?
- Portfolio

Compare and Contrast

- *The Culture of Poverty by: Oscar Lewis (1966)* Lewis, O. (1966). The culture of poverty. *American*, 215(4), 19-25.
- “War on poverty Speech” Lyndon B. Johnson
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3AuStymweQ>
- Radio Address to the Nation of Welfare Reform, Ronald Reagan <https://www.youtub.com/watch?v=MjnTQ8b66yY>

Stereotype (Gorski 2013)

- 1. Poor people do not value education
- 2. Poor people are lazy
- 3. Poor people are substance abusers
- 4. Poor people are linguistically deficient and poor communicators
- 5. Poor people are ineffective and inattentive parents

ACHIEVEMENT GAP

OR

Opportunity Gap

Opportunity Gap

- Preschool
- Well-funded schools
- Adequately resourced schools
- Shadow education
- School support service
- Affirming school environment
- High academic expectations
- Well-paid, certified, experienced teachers
- Student-centered, higher-order curriculum and pedagogies
- Opportunities for family involvement
- Instructional technologies

John Hattie

- Rank order teaching strategies
- Compare to Hattie (2016) research
- Gorski (2013) Ineffective strategies
 - Direct instruction
 - Teaching to the test
 - Tracking and Ability Grouping
 - Charter Schools

Gorski *What Works*

- Incorporating the arts across the curriculum
- High expectations for all students
- Adopting higher-order, student-centered, rigorous pedagogies
- Add movement and exercise into teaching and learning
- Make curriculum relevant to lives of low-income students
- Teach about poverty and class bias
- Analyze learning material for class and other bias
- Promote literacy enjoyment

Living in Poverty

- view *Living in Poverty*:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ca6d14hW_j4



Will you Reach and Teach those in Poverty

- Inequities –vs- What Works
- ***Poverty Stereotypes***
- ***10 Principles***
- ***Equity Literacy Commitments***
- ***11 Disparities***
- ***What Works***

- ***Has your mindset changed?***

*The greatest thing you can give a
child is Hope*



Appendix B: Report Card

2013 - 2014 Report Card for [Redacted] Elementary School	
<p>SCHOOL GRADE Coming in 2018</p>	
<p>ACHIEVEMENT This grade combines two results for students who took the state tests. The first result answers the question – How many students passed the state test? The second result answers the question – How well did students do on the state test?</p> <p>Performance Index 76.1% C Indicators Met D SS 6%</p>	<p>COMPLEMENT GRADE Coming in 2016</p>
<p>Gap Closing This grade shows how well all students are doing in your district in reading, math, and graduation. It answers the question – Is every student succeeding, regardless of income, race, ethnicity, or disability?</p> <p>Annual Measurable Objectives 65.9% D</p>	<p>COMPLEMENT GRADE Coming in 2016</p>
<p>K-3 Literacy Improvement 63.3% A</p> <p>K-3 Literacy This grade answers the question – Are more students learning to read in Kindergarten through third grade?</p>	<p>COMPLEMENT GRADE Coming in 2016</p>
<p>PROGRESS This is your school's average progress for its students in math and reading, grades 4-8. It looks at how much each student learns in a year. Did the students get a year's worth of growth? Did they get more? Did they get less?</p> <p>Value Added Overall: F Grade: NR Students with Disabilities: F Lower 20% in Achievement: F</p>	<p>COMPLEMENT GRADE Coming in 2016</p>
<p>GRADUATION RATE This grade answers the question – How many ninth graders graduate in four years or five years?</p> <p>Graduation Rate This school is not evaluated for graduation rate because there are not enough students in the graduating class.</p>	<p>COMPLEMENT GRADE Coming in 2016</p>
<p>PREPARED FOR SUCCESS This grade answers the question – Are students who graduate from your district ready for college or a career? There are many ways to show that graduates are prepared.</p>	<p>COMPLEMENT GRADE Coming in 2016</p>

Appendix C: Protocol

A. Overview of the Case Study

1. The goal of this case study is to understand the teachers' dispositions, behaviors, and beliefs of students that live in poverty.
2. The research questions are:

RQ1- What dispositions are reflected in participants' reports about teaching students living in poverty in rural Appalachia Ohio?

RQ2- What are the participants' experiences with professional development for teaching students who live in poverty?

RQ3- In rural Appalachian Ohio, what educational strategies do participants' report using to meet the needs of students who live in poverty?
3. Based on Jensen and Gorski, there may be some unintentional misunderstanding of students that live in poverty. I want to understand if the research literature and actual teachers' dispositions, behaviors, and beliefs are comparable.
4. The protocol will be an open-ended type question to help guide the participants to elaborate completely on the issue of poverty understanding.

B. Data Collection Procedures

1. Angela D. Hicks: EdD. Student, Walden University

2. Open-ended Interviews with 8 to 12 rural Appalachian elementary teachers that have 15 to 40 years of teaching experience. Professional Development Agendas, personnel files may be view.
3. A One-phase approach would be used to identify if the possible participants do meet the qualifying criteria for the research (Yin, 2015).

C. Data Collection Questions

13. Grand tour question: “Explain the diversity of the population of students that you have worked with over the past few years.”
14. RQ1- What dispositions are reflected in participants’ reports about teaching students living in poverty in rural Appalachia Ohio?
 - a. Describe how you understand students that live in poverty
 - b. How did you come to this understanding
 - c. Explain any changes you experienced during your tenure with students of poverty.
15. RQ2- What are the participants’ experiences with professional development for teaching students who live in poverty?
 - a. Describe any professional development that you experienced for diversity education.
 - b. Elaborate on any course work in any college or university level that you experienced on students of poverty
 - c. Explain any possible professional development that you might be interested in with regards to students of poverty. Why?

16. RQ3- In rural Appalachian Ohio, what educational strategies do participants' report using to meet the needs of students who live in poverty?
- a. Explain what strategies you implement to engage students of poverty.
 - b. Explain what strategies you implement to engage students not of poverty.
 - c. Explain your interpretations of the specific needs that students of poverty have.
17. Please elaborate on anything that I may have not asked.

D. Guide for the Case Study Report

1. The local Leadership team, Board of Education, and research participants will be the immediate audience. I will report the research in the form of White Papers with a Theory-Building approach.

*Note this protocol was based from:

Yin, R. K. (2014). Chapter 3. In *Case Study Research: Design and methods* (5th edition ed., pp. 84-85).