

EDUCATORS AND THEIR ROLE IN CONTRIBUTING TO THE SELF-ESTEEM OF ADOLESCENT MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Garnita L Pleas, Grand Canyon University

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to explore how educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. It was not known how educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. The theoretical framework for this study was the Transformational Leadership Theory, which is an inspirational and motivational theory, promoting encouragement and trust. The research question for this study was “How do educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls.” A purposeful sampling approach was used to recruit participants for this study. Data was collected through the use of an online questionnaire and one-on-one interviews. The sample size for this study was 25 participants for the online questionnaire and 10 participants for the one-on-one interviews. Four themes emerged from the analysis supported by the data sources: (a) Educators engage in building relationships through communication, the foundation of building, (b) Educators empower through affirmations, inspiration, empathy, and compassion, (c) Educators enhance self-esteem through programming, helping adolescent girls work through challenges, and (d) Educators encourage through leadership practices of being a role model, mentor, or supporter. The study findings revealed strategies that educators use with adolescent middle school girls in contributing to their self-esteem and align with the tenets of transformational leadership.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, educators, self-esteem, adolescent girls, middle school

EDUCATORS AND THEIR ROLE IN CONTRIBUTING TO THE SELF-ESTEEM OF ADOLESCENT MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

First introduced by William James (1890), self-esteem is an important psychological construct centered on the confidence or feeling of satisfaction people have in their abilities and their global evaluation of their worth (Cribb & Haase, 2016; Mruk, 2006; Steiger et al., 2014). It often comes with the thought of having the feeling of being *good enough*, which is a fundamental facet of human nature (Leary, 1999; Orth & Robins, 2014). Self-esteem is a key factor in adolescent development,

occurring at a critical time when adolescents are forming views of themselves; this self-esteem can increase or decrease between adolescence and middle adulthood (Cribb & Haase, 2016; Orth & Robins, 2014).

Scholars have suggested areas where additional research is needed on strategies to strengthen the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. According to Torres-Arcadia et al. (2018), the educator’s role is important in changing the lives of students through their interactions and practices. Studies recognize the need for educators to offer programs of social support and self-esteem (Cakar

& Tagay, 2017; Cribb & Haase, 2016; Taylor et al., 2017). Studies also recognize that educators are important in strengthening not only the academic skills of adolescents but also their ability to make social and mental health adjustments (Gerard & Booth, 2015; Liang et al., 2016; Moksnes & Reidunsdatter, 2019; Torres-Arcadia et al., 2018). Therefore, further research would help to identify how educators describe the strategies they use to contribute to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls.

The school environment plays a significant role in the lives of adolescents and the shaping of their self-esteem (Cribb & Haase, 2016; Schwartz et al., 2013). The school environment, furthermore, should be a place that promotes the well-being of students by offering resources and support, providing opportunities through supportive networks, and continually enhancing their development by strengthening academic performance and fostering friendships, thereby building confidence and improving self-esteem (Cribb & Haase, 2016; Gerard & Booth, 2015). Although there has been research on the impact of the school environment on the self-esteem of middle school girls, lacking is research on how the interactions between educators and adolescent middle school girls impact the self-esteem of these girls (Cakar & Tagay, 2017; Cribb & Haase, 2016; Gerard & Booth, 2015; Liang et al., 2016; Moksnes & Reidunsdatter, 2019; Taylor et al., 2017; Torres-Arcadia et al., 2018).

Adolescents face many challenges, and in light of these challenges, feelings of low self-esteem have been known to occur (Marshall et al., 2014). Not being good enough, not having enough friends or being liked by peers, having anxiety, facing depression—these factors all contribute to adolescents experiencing low self-esteem (Maldonado et al., 2013; Marshall et al., 2014). Because of low self-esteem, social concerns begin to develop during adolescence (Galeotti, 2015). Societal changes, role demands, and concerns with self-image are social concerns that overwhelm adolescents during this time of development (Maldonado et al., 2013). This study offers plans and suggestions for researchers and educators in the middle-school setting working with adolescent girls.

Background of the Study

Self-esteem can be defined as the feelings of

satisfaction people have in themselves and their abilities, and body image also factors into this definition (Cribb & Haase, 2016). For adolescent girls, self-esteem is an important topic and a critical factor in their development (Marshall et al., 2014). During this time, adolescents form views about themselves and the world around them (Cribb & Haase, 2016). This period in their life comes at a time with many changes and challenges, which may impact their self-esteem positively or negatively (Galeotti, 2015). According to Galeotti (2015), having positive self-esteem will help adolescents become more positive and healthy, and they will strive towards greatness throughout their lives. To address the issue of assisting adolescents to have positive self-esteem, research to date has focused on adolescents building positive relationships with parents, teachers, administrators, mentors, and peers, which all help to create a sense of purpose in an adolescents' life, strengthening them to be empowered and increasing their self-esteem (Blattner et al., 2013). By developing positive relationships, adolescents may combat the many changes and challenges faced during this time.

The school environment is defined as the educational setting that supports students, parents, guardians, and school personnel in learning and working together to create a safer, more supportive, and engaging environment (Thapa et al., 2013). Cribb and Haase (2016) conducted a quantitative study on adolescent girls to measure their socio-cultural attitudes within the school environment regarding their appearance, social support, and self-esteem and found that the school environment is influential, relating directly to self-esteem. Gerard and Booth (2015) conducted a quantitative longitudinal investigation study on adolescents to examine the relationship between family and school climate and connectedness on the adolescents' mental adjustment in middle school. They found that student hopefulness and their academic aspirations significantly related to parental support and school climate and connectedness. Understanding the roles that educators in the middle school environment play in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls may aid in their social development and school connectedness.

Research has focused on how principals,

assistant principals, and teachers within the school setting have focused their leadership skills on student academic achievement and advocacy (Ford & Nelson, 2007; Fox et al., 2015; McGuigan & Hoy, 2006). Though research has focused primarily on the connection between school leadership and academic achievement, scholars have noted the need to explore how educators describe the strategies they use to contribute to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls (Cakar & Tagay, 2017; Cribb & Haase, 2016; Gerard & Booth, 2015; Liang et al., 2016; Moksnes & Reidunsdatter, 2019; Taylor et al., 2017; Torres-Arcadia et al., 2018). This current study thus explores educators in this role to fill the gap in the literature relating to educators and their contribution to adolescent self-esteem. This information is important for educators to understand how their specific role and their strategies are vital factors in the academic achievement and self-esteem development of adolescent middle school girls.

Problem Statement

Current literature has not been clear on how educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. The problem, as it manifests in the real world, is that the adolescent years can be a difficult time for girls developing their self-esteem (Marshall et al., 2014; Olsson et al., 2016) as they face thoughts regarding their body image, peer relationships, drugs, violence, and family issues (Galeotti, 2015; Marshall et al., 2014). As girls reach the developmental stage of adolescence, many begin to suffer from anxiety, depression, poor eating habits, loneliness, and low life satisfaction (Chubb et al., 1997; Cribb & Haase, 2016; Orth & Robins, 2014). Societal concerns relating to social media, advertising, and current events all begin to shape people especially in their adolescence (Galeotti, 2015). Adolescents are faced with thoughts regarding their body image, peer relationships, drugs, violence, and family issues (Galeotti, 2015; Marshall et al., 2014). When adolescent girls increase their use of social media where messages portray glorified alternative realities, adolescent girls become preoccupied with thinness and body dissatisfaction (Cribb & Haase, 2016; Galeotti, 2015; Marshall et al., 2014). Adolescents are spending more and more time using social media, which impacts their

psycho-social well-being (Best et al., 2014).

For this study, educators are defined as those who hold the position of principal, assistant principal, classroom teacher, counselor, or any other educator who works with students in the middle school setting. Previous research has found that the school environment, as well as the guidance and support from educators in the middle school setting, plays a vital role in the healthy development, identity, and psycho-social development of adolescent middle school girls (Cribb & Haase, 2016; Gerard & Booth, 2015; Schwartz et al., 2013). The social support in the middle school setting acts as a buffer of protection for adolescents from the many sources of stress (Cakar & Tagay, 2017; Cribb & Haase, 2016; Taylor et al., 2017).

Methodology

This study uses a qualitative methodology. Qualitative research refers to methodical scientific practices focusing on the nature of experiences or actions, including social processes (Levitt et al., 2017; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). It contributes to the social understanding of a phenomenon while giving attention to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions (Berg, 2004).

The qualitative process centralizes the process in which data is collected and analyzed, and the meanings of this data are generalized (Levitt et al., 2017). Qualitative research answers the ‘how and why’ of a phenomenon, which helps gain a clearer picture of the process (Srivastava & Thomson, 2009). Qualitative research starts with the assumption that individuals play an active role in constructing social reality, and the research method that can fully capture this process is necessary (Morrow, 2005). In contrast to quantitative methodology, which obtains knowledge from larger, random samples of individuals, qualitative methodology lends itself to various kinds of knowledge gathered from very few individuals. (Morrow, 2005). Qualitative studies’ sample size is usually smaller but large enough to answer the research questions sufficiently.

Qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting where participants and researchers can have face-to-face interactions, usually through one-on-one interviews. Conducting research in a natural setting allows the researcher to build a

holistic picture by reporting details of participants. In qualitative research, purposeful sampling is used to identify and select individuals or groups of individuals with knowledge or experience with the phenomenon being studied (Palinkas et al., 2015). Another form of data collection in qualitative studies is the use of questionnaires, which allow participants to give their thoughts and views through open-ended questions, which in turn allow the researcher to gain rich narrative data from the participants' responses (Morrow, 2005).

Theoretical Foundations

Research has been conducted on ways to improve adolescent self-esteem (Maldonado et al., 2013). This study in particular uses the Transformational Leadership Theory. According to Bass and Riggio (2006), the transformational leader empowers others by giving attention to their individual needs and development. According to Zimmerman (1995), leaders who use an approach of empowerment can redefine the roles and relationships with followers. Offering this support through a transformational process may help adolescent girls improve self-esteem (Zimmerman, 1995).

Transformational Leadership Theory is a theory regarding leadership that creates a positive change in followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders stimulate and inspire followers to grow and develop through an empowering environment (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders strive to develop successful relationships with followers, building trust and a sense of belonging through motivation and working towards shared goals (Rolfe, 2011). Having supportive relationships with educators may positively affect one's academic performance and emotional well-being, helping adolescents in particular gain the confidence they need and improve self-esteem (Gerard & Booth, 2015). Through the principles of transformational leadership, educators should strive for genuineness in their relationships with adolescents. Being genuine in their interactions with adolescents allows them to be accepted and to recognize their voice (Ruzek et al., 2016). Creating the right environment is imperative for educators in their work with adolescents. Transformational Leadership Theory provides an understanding of individuals to regulate and encourage healthy

behaviors, which is a crucial component in developing self-esteem (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Research Question

This qualitative descriptive study explores how educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. Research has been conducted on leadership in the school environment (Cribb & Haase, 2016; Gerard & Booth, 2015), but research conducted on how the educators within the middle school setting describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls has been limited. The work done in previous studies, as well as the literature gap made apparent by these studies, has helped to develop the research question for this study.

The following research question has guided this qualitative study:

RQ: How do educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls?

This study seeks to determine how educators' interactions with adolescent middle school girls contribute to their self-esteem. The theory of transformational leadership describes the importance of interpersonal relationships. This theory seeks to change attitudes and beliefs people have about themselves through inspiration and motivation, transforming followers into leaders. Gathering data on participants' behaviors and strategies offered the researcher the opportunity to compare findings with theoretical characteristics. By exploring this phenomenon and attempting to answer the research question above, educators in the middle school setting will potentially help empower adolescent girls to improve their self-esteem during these years.

This study uses a qualitative descriptive design. This design allows the researcher to obtain information on the individual's experiences from the participants' perspective, relating to real events and issues (Percy et al., 2015). This study uses data collected through an online questionnaire and one-on-one interviews with educators in the middle school setting to answer the research question. The researcher implemented an online questionnaire consisting of closed and open-ended questions through the online source Google Forms. The data collected from the questionnaire and interviews

underscores the significance of this study.

Population and Sample Selection

This study explores how educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. The target population comprises educators in the middle school setting in a Midwestern city in the United States. The sample size was 35 educators in the middle school setting, 25 participants for the online questionnaire and ten participants for the interview process derived from the target population.

According to Magilvy and Thomas (2009), the typical size of a qualitative descriptive sample is from three to five participants, though a sample size can be as high as 20 participants. Patton (2002) states that a qualitative study's sample size should depend on what the researcher wants to know, on the usefulness of the data, and on whether this data will have credibility. Sandelowski (2000) notes that the sample size should be large enough to collect as much data needed to capture all of the elements of the event that helps it come together. This study's sample size consists of 35 participants, 25 participants for the questionnaire and ten participants for the one-on-one interviews. The sample size was selected in accordance with the average sample sizes in similar qualitative descriptive research studies, between ten and 70 participants (Granger et al., 2009; Rissanen et al., 2008). The sample size is large enough to account for attrition and to complete the study (Burmeister & Aitken, 2012). Sandelowski (2001) argues that fewer participants are needed depending on how usable the data collected from each participant is.

For this research study, purposeful sampling was used, which allowed the researcher to obtain information-rich cases for the study (Suri, 2011). Purposeful sampling also enabled the researcher to select individuals who were willing to participate in the research study and understood the phenomenon of the study (Palinkas et al., 2015). Within the sample of educators, the researcher hoped to gain a mixture of educators who held various positions within the middle school setting.

The researcher issued a study invitation to potential participants via email. The questionnaire link was given if they agreed to the criteria and provided consent to participate in the study. A second informed consent was needed after the

questionnaire was complete, asking if participants wished to be considered for the interview process. All consent forms, parts one and two, were electronically marked by users selecting "yes" or "no" to participate in the study before the study begins. The informed consent form for the interview process was sent separately to each participant chosen to move forward in the interview process. The informed consent form required a signature, which needed to be scanned and emailed to the researcher. A statement describing opting out of the study was provided on the consent forms.

After educators agreed to participate in the questionnaire portion of the study, they were then prompted to answer the following question: "What is your position within the middle school?" The choices were Principal/Assistant Principal, Counselor, Classroom Teacher, and other. Of the 25 participants who completed the questionnaire, 4% were Principal/Assistant Principal, 20% were Counselors, 56% were Classroom Teachers, and 20% were other educators. The interview process gathered data from ten participants who completed the questionnaire. The demographics of the interview participants were 50% Counselors, 40% Classroom Teachers, and 10% other educators.

Sources of Data

For this qualitative descriptive study, two data sources were used. The data sources used were the online questionnaire and semi-structured one-on-one interviews. This study sought to explore how educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. Triangulation of this data was drawn using different sources and different people. The use of different sources and different people ensured the data was valid (Flick, 2014).

QUESTIONNAIRE

To obtain data from the educators in the middle school setting, the first data source was an online questionnaire created by the researcher. Questionnaires seek to understand how people experience events in their life (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016). Furthermore, questionnaires are a good source of data collection in qualitative studies, and they can provide helpful insights into processes, values, and interpretations (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016).

The questionnaire focused on the practices

of educators within the middle school setting. An expert panel of doctorate level professionals reviewed the questionnaire. Questionnaires are widely used to collect information from a represented sample population to infer the results to a larger population. They can be easily administered and analyzed (Rattray & Jones, 2007).

INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured one-on-one interviews served as the second source of data. These interviews were conducted with the educators in the middle school setting to determine how their first-hand experience might contribute to findings relating to the research question. The research used open-ended questions, providing prompts and probes, based on the initial research question. Responses based on these open-ended interview questions provided firsthand knowledge of how educators see their role in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. Goodrick and Rogers (2015) emphasize that semi-structured interviews at times could combine closed and open-ended questions, followed by “how” and “why” questions for clarity. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, interviews took place via Zoom conferencing during non-clock hours. Interviews were audio recorded using two recording devices to have a back-up for recording purposes.

Leech (2002) maintains that in the interview process, building rapport with participants lets them know that the interviewer is interested in their thoughts and that the interviewer is listening. Conducting interviews can create dialogue around the research study’s topics, making the interview free flowing, which allows participants to be relaxed and engaging. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) argue that interviews are the best avenue to gain rich data from participants when behaviors and past events cannot be observed. The interview questions were semi-structured and designed to allow educators to elaborate on the strategies they used to build the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls.

Data from the interviews was transcribed, coded, and analyzed to help explain the phenomenon. The researcher used transcript reviewing with participants to ensure that responses were interpreted correctly. Using these two data sources gave the researcher instruments that yielded rich data to

answer the research question.

Data Collection and Management

The researcher developed two data sources to answer the research question. The data collection methods an online questionnaire and semi-structured one-on-one interviews. The questions asked educators to describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. The target population comprised educators in the middle school setting in a Midwestern city in the United States. The sample size was 35 educators from middle schools derived from the target population. The questionnaire was given to 25 participants, and interviews conducted with ten participants.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to explore how educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls in midwestern Missouri. This study included the research question:

RQ: How do educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls?

The research question guided the data collection and data analysis of this study. The researcher explored the questions through themes that developed from the data collected in the study. Data was collected through an online questionnaire and one-on-one interviews.

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) affirm that data analysis makes sense of the data, which is consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what participants have said. In qualitative data analysis, triangulation is used to reduce bias and add depth to data collected through multiple sources of data (Fusch et al., 2018). This supports the link between triangulation and data saturation (Fusch et al., 2018). Saturation of the data occurred when responses were repeated, and no new answers are being given.

For this study, each source of data was analyzed separately, and results from each source were compared and analyzed together. The questionnaire for this study evaluated how educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. The questionnaire

was uploaded into a Google Form document for completion. For the questionnaire portion of this study, the data analysis was analyzed and coded by hand, where the researcher recognized themes and patterns within the data. Data was sorted, sifted, and analyzed using manual codes to identify key themes (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016).

For the questionnaire and one-on-one interviews, the data was transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed manually with all data summarized. After reading the transcripts, the researcher labeled relevant words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. The researcher decided which codes were most important and created categories or themes, possibly bringing some codes together. The categories or themes were labeled to identify how they are connected. The connection was described in the study's results portion. According to Basit (2003), electronic methods of coding are increasingly being used. The researcher continued to create the categories and coding, marking up, cutting, sorting, reorganizing, and collecting the data (Basit, 2003).

The researcher conducted a thematic data analysis. The thematic analysis method is a foundation in qualitative analysis and follows a step-by-step analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step method for thematic analysis includes preparing and becoming familiar with the data, deconstructing the data by identifying initial codes, reconstructing the data by organizing the codes into themes, reviewing the themes, finalizing the themes, and drafting a report of the analysis. This process offered flexibility and was a systematic method for identifying, organizing, and understanding the patterns of themes within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis allows the researcher to see and make sense of participants' experiences. The researcher recorded and transcribed all interview data in preparation for data analysis. Thematic analysis was suitable for this study because discovering themes in the data will address the research question.

The inductive reasoning approach, used in qualitative research, applied to this study. This approach developed a general conclusion from specific observations of the phenomenon and allowed the emergence of themes and categories from the

data through careful examination and comparison (Thorne, 2000). The inductive approach is appropriate for creating and examining in qualitative research. It is essential in the thematic analysis, where creating and finding themes is done (Rudnick, 2014).

For the trustworthiness and quality of this study, the concept of data saturation was used. According to Guest et al. (2006), data saturation is the point in data collection where no new data, themes, or coding are present to those already observed. To achieve this data saturation, the researcher looked for codes that began to overlap. The researcher knew that saturation was achieved when the answers to the interview questions became familiar and no new answers emerged. Fusch and Ness (2015) argue that interviews are one method to reach data saturation and that a small study will reach saturation quicker than a larger study. Interview questions should be structured to ask multiple participants the same questions. This study utilized a small group of participants and used one-on-one interviews as one data collection component.

DATA TRIANGULATION

Fusch et al. (2018) maintain that triangulation, using multiple sources of data, helps to promote social change and reduce bias. It also allows the researcher to gain a clearer picture of when data saturation is reached. Anney (2014) argues that triangulation is useful to examine the honesty of the participants' responses. Data triangulation was used to process the multiple data sources about strategies educators use in their work with adolescent middle school girls and their self-esteem. To address the research question, participants were asked about the strategies used to contribute to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls.

Data from both sources were coded and categorized separately, and then the codes and categories were combined. Codes were created by looking at the data and recognizing words or phrases that were repeated creating primary codes and categories. The themes were generated from the combined analysis of both data sources from the categories created by the initial codes and were used to analyze and answer the research question. This process allowed the intersection of the findings from both sources of data used in this

study. Through combining the data from both data sources, the researcher was able to gain the perspectives of the participants more accurately. The results section shows the findings gathered through themes from the analysis of the combined data.

Ethical Considerations

This study maintained confidentiality and the rights of participants. According to Health and Human Services (1979) and Gabriele (2003), three ethical principles should be adhered to in a research study: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Ensuring that participants were treated with respect, their best interest was top priority, and the benefits and burdens of the research are distributed fairly was adhered to in this research process. The researcher placed no pressure on participants to participate in this study, and participants were free to ask questions before, during, and after the study was complete. Furthermore, ethical standards for gathering and analyzing questionnaire and interview data were observed. This study centered on indirect interaction through the completion of the online questionnaire and direct interaction through Zoom conferencing with human subjects through the interviewing process.

All participants received an electronic copy of their Informed Consent form with their agreement pages and electronic signature. Participants' names and all other identifying information was deleted from forms electronically or manually. Identifying personal identification codes were given to protect participants' identity and privacy. Data collected for this study was strictly accessible only by the researcher. The complete set of interview data collected was stored in a locked file cabinet and will be destroyed three years after the completion of the study through a secure shredding facility. Data collected in digital form was stored on the researcher's computer with a secure password and ID only known to the researcher. The researcher is the sole person to have access to the stored data.

Results

This section presents the results of the analysis for the data collected for this qualitative descriptive study. The present study explored how educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls in the midwestern region of the United States. Data sources used in this study included an online

questionnaire and one-on-one interviews and were used to collect data in answering the research question, providing a detailed view of the research. Participants in the questionnaire portion were anonymous, and their identity could not be recognized. Participants in the interview portion of this study were assigned identification codes and were referenced by their codes in all documentation throughout the study. Findings developed through the categories and themes within the data answered the research question in this study. The analysis of data collected in this study showed that educators use multiple strategies in their work with adolescent middle school girls contributing to their self-esteem. Through the questionnaire and interview process, participants described a variety of strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. The data analysis generated four themes that emerged from the questionnaire and interview data.

THEME 1: EDUCATORS ENGAGE IN BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH COMMUNICATION, THE FOUNDATION FOR BUILDING TRUST

This theme pertains to the importance of building relationships with students. Educators described the necessity of effective communication with girls, which helped in their building those relationships. Trust in the educator/adolescent relationship is built over time. This theme was discovered throughout the findings, but this theme was particularly present in the questionnaire and interview questions on strategies for instilling confidence, on educators' interactions with girls, and on methods educators used to promote growth. This theme aligns with the Transformational Leadership Theory by highlighting encouragement, innovation, and trust. The following are examples of educator responses from the questionnaire and interviews regarding communication through building relationships and trust (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).

Figure 1. Theme 1. Engage in building relationships through communication, building trust.

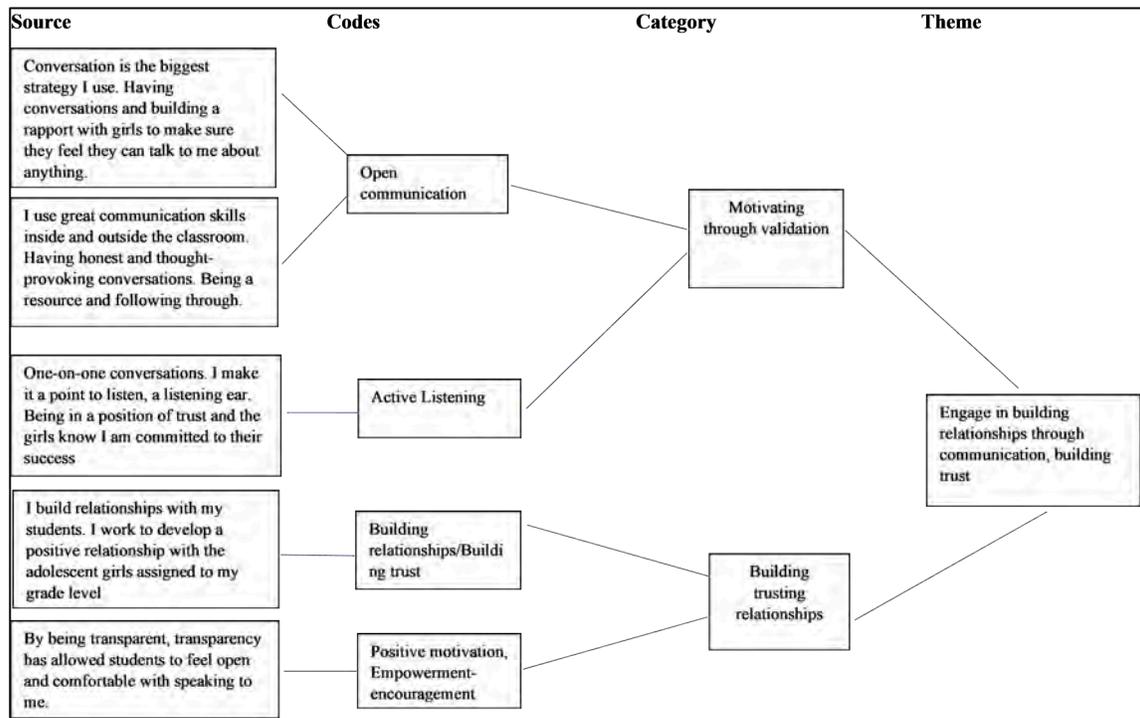
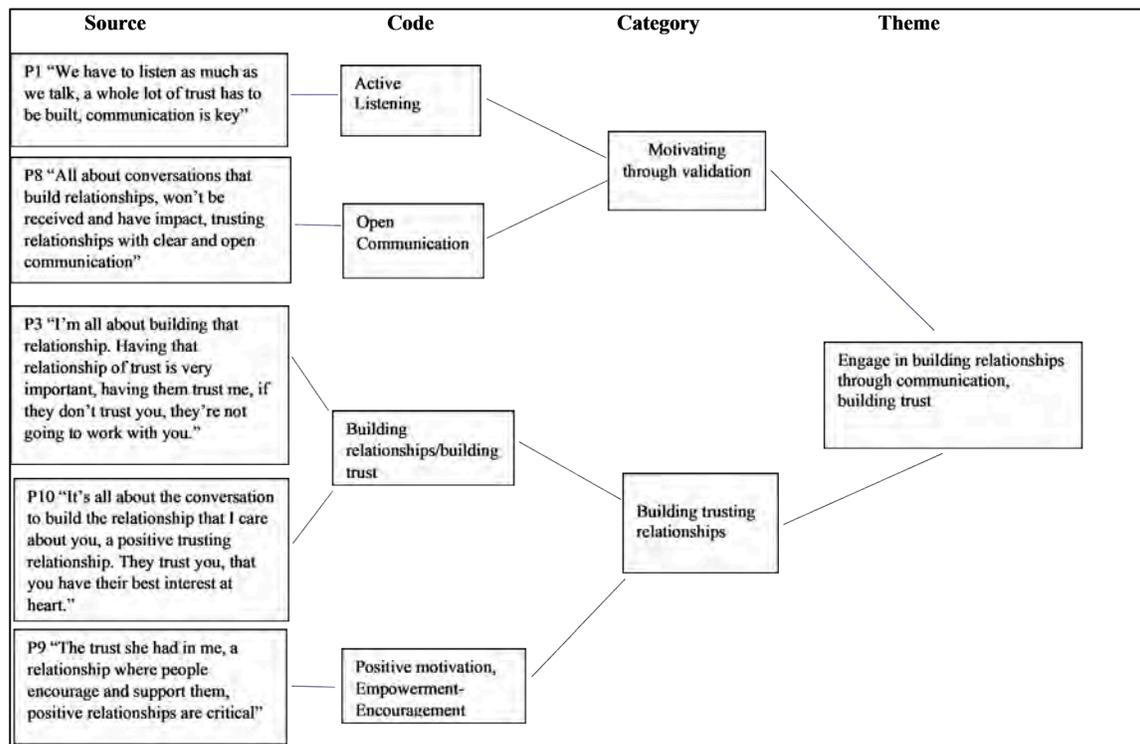


Figure 2. Theme 1. Engage in building relationships through communication, building trust.



Having the opportunity to build relationships with students has the potential to lead them in a positive direction. Participants explained how adolescent middle school girls felt when they had someone they could talk to, someone in their corner. This is done through one-on-one time with girls, in the classroom setting, or in formal group settings

THEME 2. EDUCATORS EMPOWER THROUGH AFFIRMATIONS, INSPIRATION, EMPATHY, AND COMPASSION

Theme two emerged to identify and define the strategies that educators use in inspiring and encouraging adolescent middle school girls through

positive words and actions. The characteristics of this theme align with transformational leadership by promoting growth, inspiring, and offering support. Support is offered through the relationships with educators and the safe space they provide, which gives the adolescent middle school girls a place to grow. Using affirming language, educators were able to offer added support to adolescent middle school girls (See Figure 3 and Figure 4).

Figure 3. Theme 2. Empower through affirmations, inspirations, empathy, and compassion.

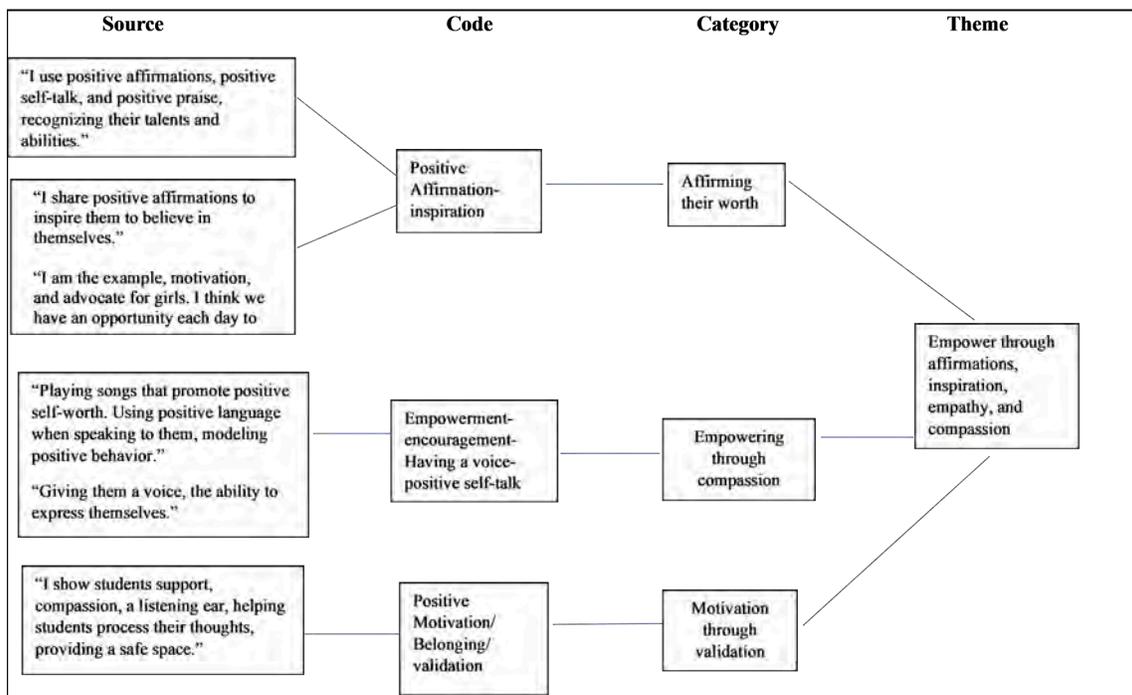
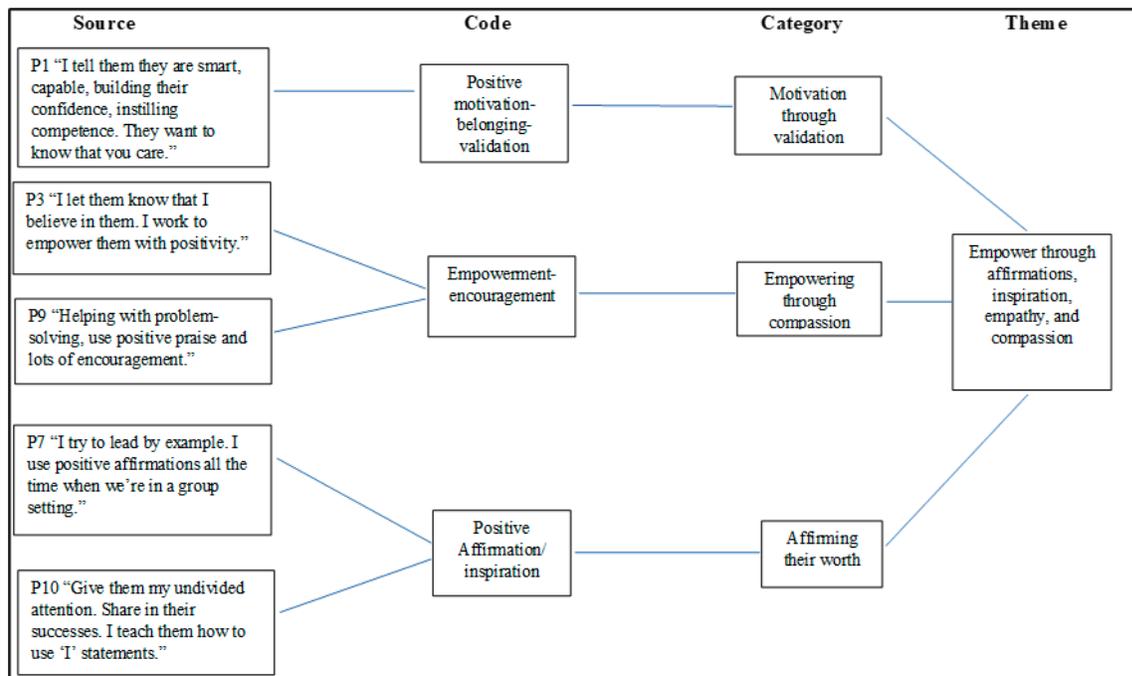


Figure 4. Theme 2. Empower through affirmations, inspirations, empathy, and compassion.

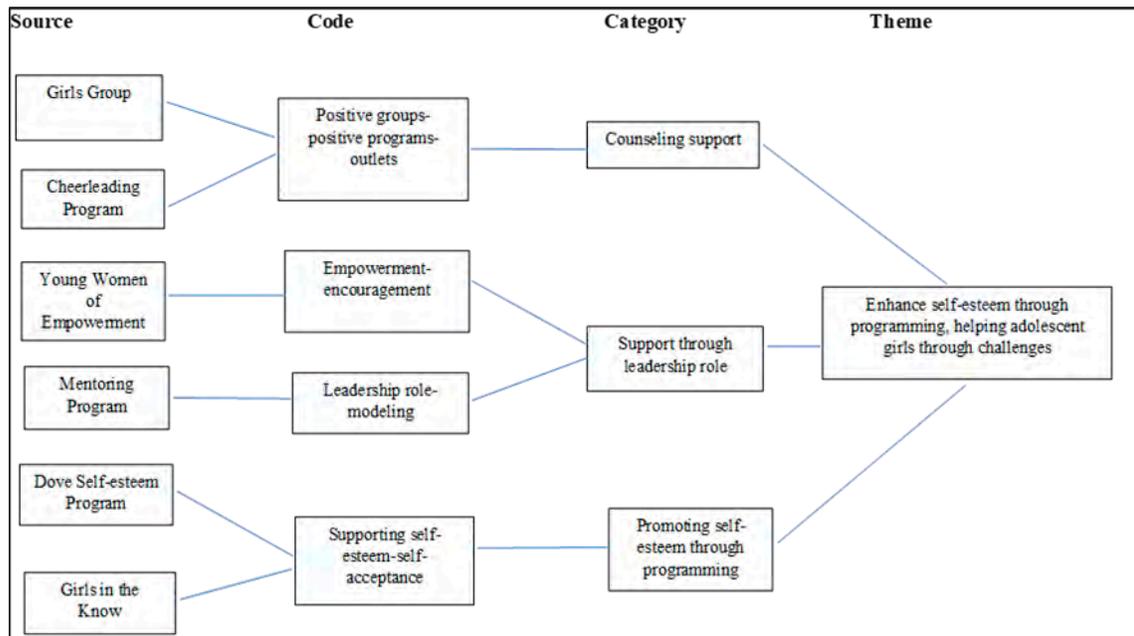


Most of the educators used some form of affirmation and inspiration in their work with adolescent middle school girls. The majority of educators used affirmations, either in the classroom or during group sessions or individual sessions. This theme requires educators to be active in their interactions with adolescent middle school girls and references the tenets of transformational leadership in being inspirational and motivational. The leaders inspire followers, helping them with specific skills. The results of this research have shown a need for educators to continue using the strategies of positivity in their work with adolescent middle school girls.

THEME 3. EDUCATORS ENHANCE SELF-ESTEEM THROUGH PROGRAMMING, HELPING ADOLESCENT MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS WORK THROUGH CHALLENGES

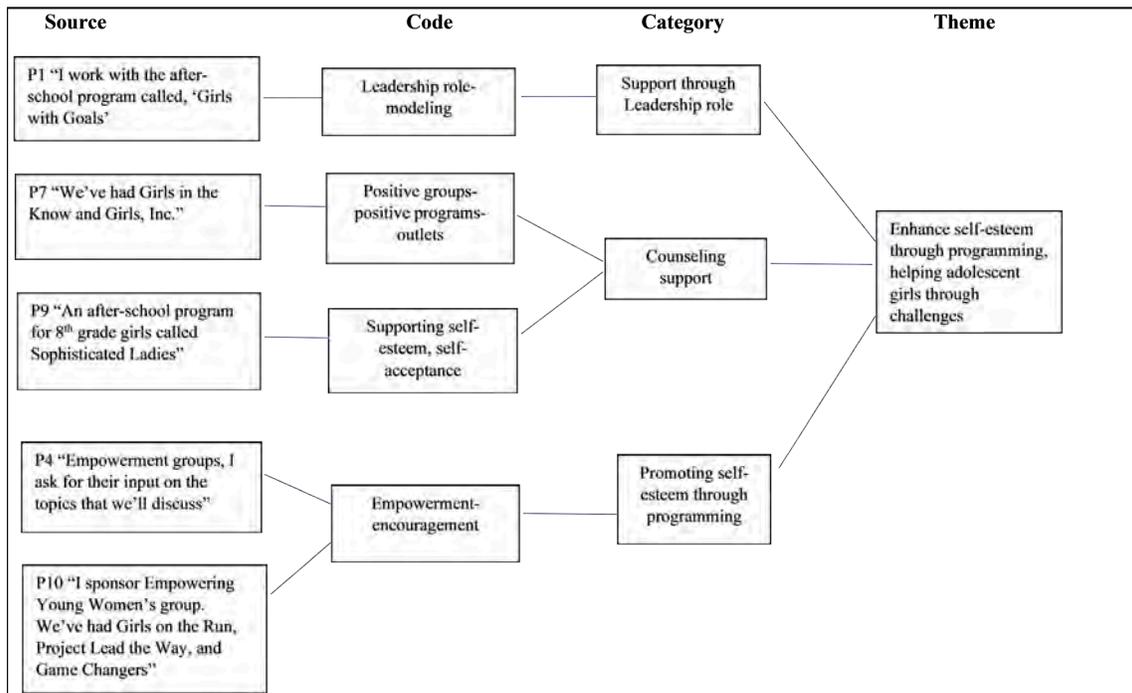
Adolescence is a critical period in an individual's development. During the middle school age of adolescence, girls are continuing to go through many challenges that affect their self-esteem. Challenges such as risky behavior, physical aggression, and poor hygiene have been indicators of low self-esteem. Other challenges that questionnaire participants noticed of girls with low self-esteem were failing grades, being promiscuous, showing disrespect to adults, accepting verbal abuse, being overly emotional, being preoccupied with body image concerns, distancing themselves from their peers, and using negative self-talk. Implementing positive programs can combat the challenges that adolescents face regarding their self-esteem. Additional questionnaire responses are noted in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Theme 3. Enhance self-esteem through programming, helping adolescent middle school girls work through challenges.



Educators are working to enhance the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls through positive programs that address concerns and strive towards building a more positive self. In six out of 11 questions on the questionnaire, participants referenced using some form of positive programming to help girls with their self-esteem. Examples from the questionnaire were: Cheerleading program, Girls in the Know, Leadership groups, Friendship Circles, Empowerment groups, social skills and social situations, Lunch Bunch, and small groups with the Counselor. Nine out of 10 interview participants noted that they were involved with implementing or partnering with an outside agency to offer a positive program at their school for girls enhancing their self-esteem. Interview participants stated that offering positive programs was another strategy that helped adolescent middle school girls gain positive skills working towards their self-esteem (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Theme 3. Enhancing self-esteem through programming, helping adolescent middle school girls work through challenges.



THEME 4. EDUCATORS ENCOURAGE THROUGH LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF BEING A ROLE MODEL, MENTOR, AND SUPPORTER

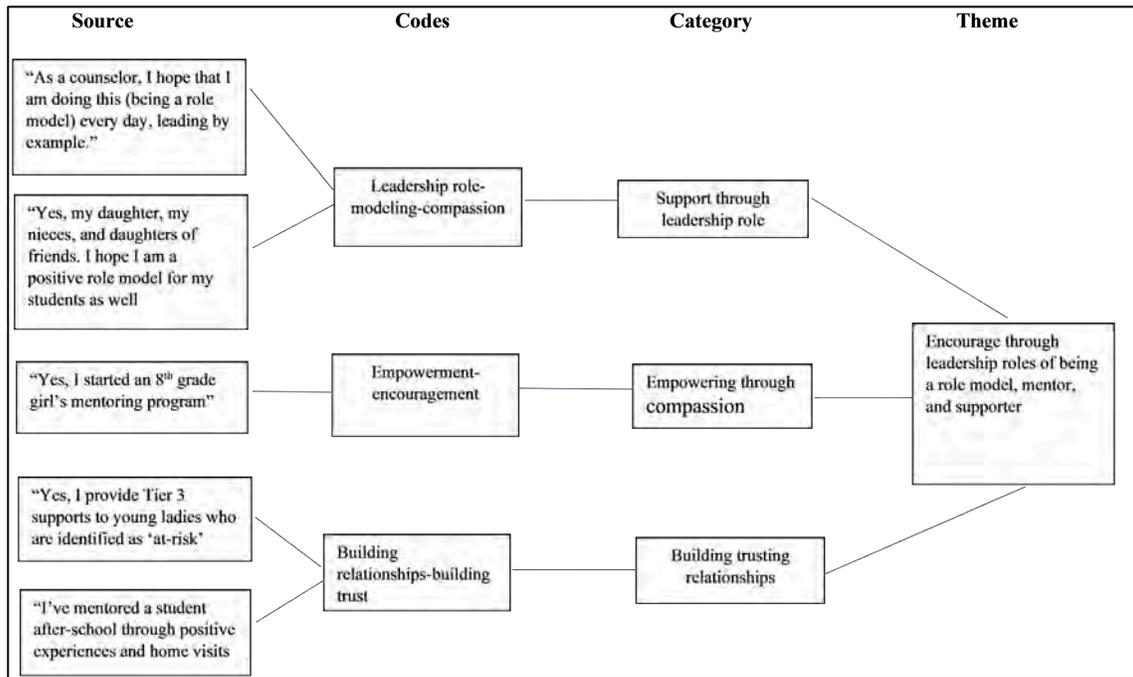
The fourth theme was created during data analysis through the responses given by educators on how they see themselves as a positive presence in the lives of adolescent middle school girls. They described their presence as interactive, caring, and responsive to the needs of the girls they encounter either periodically or daily. This theme aligns with the tenet of transformational leadership of idealized influence and individual consideration, which states that the leader is a role model and mentor to followers, offering encouragement and support, thereby accepting followers as individuals (Stewart, 2006) (See Figure 7). Other questionnaire responses were:

As a counselor, I hope that I am doing this (being a role model) every day, leading by example! I've done this for 19 years and I try to be a role model every day and encourage girls to be their best and learn how to forgive themselves when they make mistakes.

Several educators stated that they did not see themselves as role models to students, but more of a mentor or supporter. One educator responded, "I haven't been a mentor, however, I worked to develop a positive relationship with the adolescent girls assigned to my grade level." Another educator related his mentoring experience to fatherhood, stating:

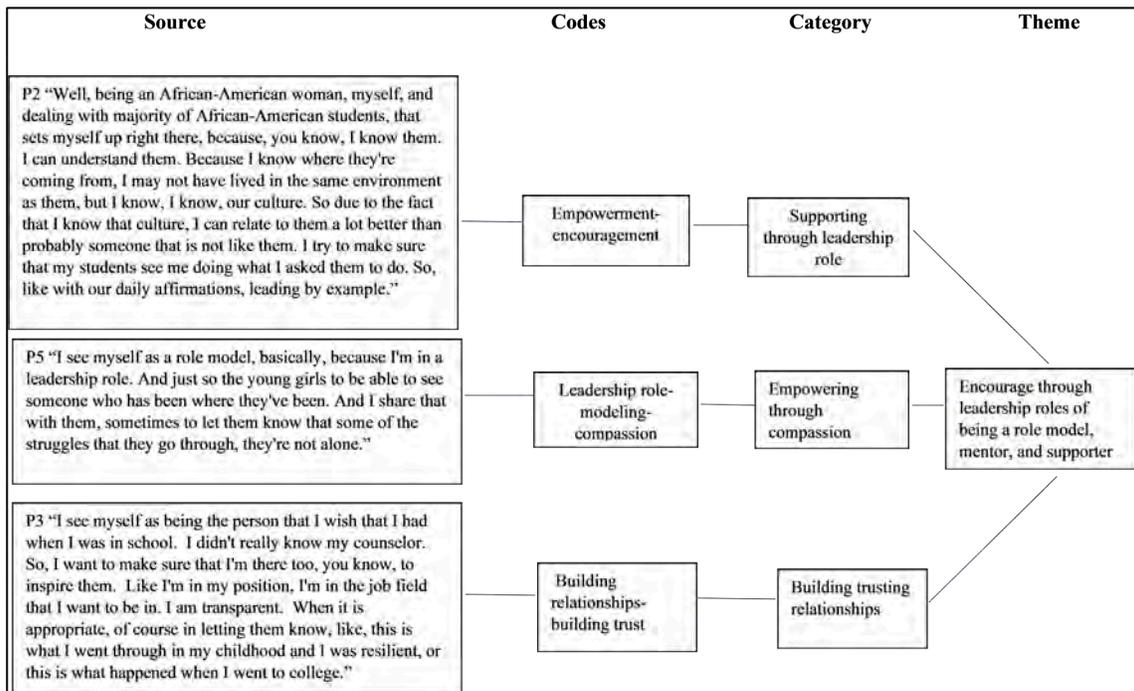
Never a role model so to speak, just someone who has raised four daughters, who understand the trials and tribulations girls go through and am able to speak on what helped my daughters navigate situations and issues relating to adolescent girls.

Figure 7. Theme 4. Encourage through leadership practices of being a role model, mentor, or supporter.



Interview participants also responded favorably to being a role model, mentor, or supporter. Many felt that their presence with the girls allowed them to see positive role models and to witness how they handled different situations. There were some educators who felt that their leadership presence was based more on mentorship or support. They understood that their role was equally important and strived to help adolescent middle school girls through their challenges. Being a role model was not something that they thought came naturally in their leadership role (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Theme 4. Enhance through leadership practices of being a role model, mentor, or supporter.



One educator emphasized that he did not feel he was a role model.

P1 stated, "whereby virtue of me being a man, I don't really see myself as a role model. I see myself as a role model with the young men. You know, if the theory is in order to be it, you have to see it. Well, I can't be a role model for girls because I can't show them. I can't be a successful woman for them. No, but I can be a successful man for the boys. I see myself more as a (how do I put it). I don't know, I see myself more as a mentor, and not necessarily a role model. But I can be a mentor, I consider myself I mentor to a lot of these girls by virtue of just teaching them and talking to them about how to always be the best version of themselves that they can be each and every day. Anything I tell them that they could do and that have a chance of going is by virtue of what out by virtue of what I've watched my daughters do? Not anything specific that I've done as a young lady that could help them.

Although this educator did not recognize that the interactions with the adolescent middle school

girls were that of a role model, there was recognition of being a mentor and supporter.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to explore how educators describe strategies used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. Conducting this qualitative descriptive study allowed the researcher to gain data on the experiences of the participants (Sandelowski, 2000). A strength of this study was the use of questionnaires and one-on-one interviews. The participants for the one-on-one interviews were those who also participated in the questionnaire portion of the study. The strength was recognized that the interview participants were open and free to express more about the strategies they used. They were able to go in-depth with their responses, which gave the researcher a clearer picture and understanding of the phenomenon. An additional strength of the study its ability to gain the perspectives from a variety of educators in different roles. In particular, there were other educators who were not in the traditional role of principal/asst. principal, counselor, or classroom

teacher. Their inclusion allowed the researcher to gain the perspectives of these other educators who may not work with adolescent middle school girls regularly but still have an important role in contributing to their self-esteem. Another strength of the study was the experience of the interview participants. The range of experience of the educators was from three years to over 30 years, highlighting the vast difference in knowledge and experience of the educators working with adolescent middle school girls helping them with their self-esteem.

A possible weakness of this study is related to the need to conduct the one-on-one interviews online through Zoom. The Zoom online site was used due to COVID-19 Pandemic, making it unsafe to conduct interviews face-to-face. Using the Zoom online website limited the researcher's ability to build a rapport with the participants, gaining their trust. Another weakness of this study was the possibility to researcher bias. The researcher has been an educator for over 30 years as a classroom teacher, working with grades four through six, and a professional school counselor, working with grades Kdg. through six. The researcher made every attempt to reduce bias and worked to interpret the data as truthfully and as accurately as possible. Fadnes et al. (2009) note that research results can be sabotaged by bias, leading to false associations or failure to identify true relationships. The researcher used open-ended questions and transcript reviews with participants to reduce possible bias. Cope (2014) stated that transcript review allows the participant to view and approve the interpretation of the data. The researcher attempted to reduce bias by implementing this practice.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends the following to connect the study's significance and advancing the scientific knowledge of this study. The recommendations align with the literature review and the study's findings. The first recommendation is to continue research to understand the phenomenon of how educators describe their experiences as a catalyst for using strategies to assist adolescent middle school girls with their self-esteem. The research should focus on the educators' past experiences and the impact they have had on adolescent middle school girls' self-esteem. Gaining insight on how educators continue to work on their

self-esteem may reveal rich details and strategies for future educators to use. Continuing with the theory of transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006), the findings could increase the degree to which the data could be transferred to other populations.

Another recommendation is to conduct a qualitative descriptive study on educators from larger school districts. The district that contributed to this study was a smaller district consisting of two middle schools. Conducting a qualitative study on educators in a larger district may yield different results, benefiting those who work with a larger number of adolescent middle school girls. A third recommendation is to conduct a qualitative study with other middle school personnel that interact with adolescent middle school girls regularly. The personnel could hold the title of Custodian, Bus Driver, Secretary, or Cafeteria Worker. Their interactions with adolescent middle school girls can be another factor contributing to their self-esteem. Gaining information on how they view their role in helping adolescent middle school girls with self-esteem may assist in recognizing other beneficial strategies that can be used in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that educators implement a vast number of strategies that contribute to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. The strategies varied depending on the role of the educator, but all strategies were important in contributing to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls. Practical strategies were used and recommended to address the needs of the adolescent middle school girls. The results of this study can be helpful to educators in the middle school setting and all educational levels helping to contribute to the self-esteem of adolescent middle school girls.

References

- Akin, I., & Radford, L. (2018). Exploring the development of student self-esteem and resilience in urban schools. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 11(1), 15-22. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1171498.pdf>
- Amankwaa, L. (2016). Creating protocols for trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Cultural Diversity*, 23(3), 121-127. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/CREATING-PROTOCOLS-FOR-TRUSTWORTHINESS-IN-RESEARCH.-Amankwaa/987e3b05cf2d37b85cfbb7a92955621f6c73f5d6>
- Anney, V. N. (2014). Ensuring the quality of the findings of qualitative research: Looking at trustworthiness criteria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS)*, 5(2), 272-281. <http://196.44.162.10:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/256/Ensuring%20the%20Quality%20of%20the%20Findings%20of%20Qualitative%20Research%20NEW.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Basit, T. (2003). Manual or electronic? The role of coding in qualitative data analysis. *Educational Research*, 45(2), 143-154. doi: 10.1080/0013188032000133548
- Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. The Free Press. doi: 10.2307/258081
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational Leadership*. Psychology Press. https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C26&q=transformational+leadership+bass&btnG=&oq=Transformational+Leadership.+
- Berg, B. L. (2004). Designing qualitative research. *Qualitative Research Methods*, 37-38. Retrieved from <https://www.pearson.com/us/higher-education/product/Berg-Qualitative-Research-Methods-for-the-Social-Sciences-6th-Edition/9780205482634.html>
- Best, P., Manktelow, R., & Taylor, B. (2014). Online communication, social media and adolescent wellbeing: A systematic narrative review. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 41, 27-36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2014.03.001>
- Blattner, M. C., Liang, B., Lund, T., & Spencer, R. (2013). Searching for a sense of purpose: The role of parents and effects on self-esteem among female adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence*, (5), 839. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2013.06.008>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. Harper & Row.
- Burmeister, E., & Aitken, L. M. (2012). Sample size: How many is enough? *Australian Critical Care*, 25(4), 271-274. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aucc.2012.07.002>
- Çakar, F. S., & Tagay, Ö. (2017). The mediating role of self-esteem: The effects of social support and subjective well-being on adolescents' risky behaviors. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 17(3). doi: 10.12738/estp.2017.3.0024
- Chubb, N. H., Fertman, C. I., & Ross, J. L. (1997). Adolescent self-esteem and locus of control: A longitudinal study of gender and age differences. *Adolescence*, 32(125), 113. <https://www.proquest.com/openview/26bb250f36bb2e8f9bd4f77443d4fc58/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=41539>
- Collie, R. J., Shapka, J. D., & Perry, N. E. (2012). School climate and social-emotional learning: Predicting teacher stress, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(4), 1189. Doi: 10.1037/a0029356
- Cope, D. G. (2014). Methods and meanings: Credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, (1), 89. https://www.yourhomeworksolutions.com/wp-content/uploads/edd/2018/02/methods_and_meanings_credibility_and_trustworthiness_of_qualitative_research.pdf
- Cribb, V. L., & Haase, A. M. (2016). Girls feeling good at school: School gender environment, internalization and awareness of socio-cultural attitudes associations with self-esteem of adolescent girls. *Journal of Adolescence*, 107-114. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2015.10.019>
- Downton, J. V. (1973). *Rebel leadership: Commitment and charisma in the revolutionary process*. Free Press. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1974-00859-000>
- Erikson, E. H. (1956). The problem of ego identity. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 4, 56-121. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/000306515600400104>
- Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity, youth and crisis*. Norton. <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=nGqc6JxV0aQC&oi=fnd&pg=PP2&dq=Identity,+youth+and+crisis&ots=amCttZaAST&sig=Vg3caXDoT5LrrMW2le33y6ISuyY#v=onepage&q=Identity%2C%20youth%20and%20crisis&f=false>
- Fadnes, L. T., Taube, A., & Tylleskär, T. (2009). How to identify information bias due to self-reporting in epidemiological research. *The Internet Journal of Epidemiology*, 7(2), 28-38. http://www.ispub.com/journal/the_internet_journal_of_epidemiology/volume_7_number_2_25/article_printable/how-to-identify-information-bias-due-to-self-reporting-in-epidemiological-research.html
- Flick, U. (2014). *Triangulation in qualitative research. A Companion*

- to Qualitative Research, 3, 178-183. https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=IRSL1KJEPoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA178&dq=Triangulation+in+qualitative+research&ots=eODTjhw9Eq&sig=W7yEGx_NkAeeNXrctdG7qYk4O2o#v=onepage&q=Triangulation%20in%20qualitative%20research&f=false
- Ford, A. D., & Nelson, J. A. (2007). Secondary school counselors as educational leaders: Shifting perceptions of leadership. *Journal of School Counseling, 5*(19), 1-27. <http://jsc.montana.edu>
- Fox, J., Gong, T., & Attoh, P. (2015). The impact of principal as authentic leader on teacher trust in the K-12 educational context. *Journal of Leadership Studies, 8*(4), 6-18. doi:10.1002/jls.21341
- Fusch, P., Fusch, G. E., & Ness, L. R. (2018). Denzin's paradigm shift: Revisiting triangulation in qualitative research. *Journal of Social Change, 10*(1), 19-32. doi: 10.5590/JOSC.2018.10.1.02
- Fusch, P. I., & Ness, L. R. (2015). Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report, 20*(9), 1408. doi 10.46743/2160-3715/2015.2281
- Gabriele, E. F. (2003). The Belmont ethos: The meaning of the Belmont principles for human subject protections. *Journal of Research Administration, 34*(2), 19-24. <http://download.srainternational.org/journal/archive/2003%20SRA%20Journal%20Vol%2034%20Issue%202.pdf#page=23>
- Galeotti, S. (2015). Empowering pre-adolescent girls. *Journal of Experiential Education, 38*(4), 407-423. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1053825915603578>
- Gerard, J. M., & Booth, M. Z. (2015). Family and school influences on adolescents' adjustment: The moderating role of youth hopefulness and aspirations for the future. *Journal of Adolescence, 44*, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2015.06.003>
- Goodrick, D., & Rogers, P.J. (2015). Qualitative data analysis. In K.E. Newcomer, H.P. Hatry, & J.S. Wholey (Eds.), *Handbook of practical program evaluation*, 561-595. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/umanitoba/detail.action?docID=2144898>
- Granger, B. B., Sandelowski, M., Tahshjain, H., Swedberg, K., & Ekman, I. (2009). A qualitative descriptive study of the work of adherence to a chronic heart failure regimen: Patient and physician perspectives. *Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing, 24*(4), 308-315. doi: 10.1097/JCN.0b013e3181a4be30
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods, 18*(1), 59-82. doi: 10.1177/1525822X05279903
- Health and Human Services (1979). The Belmont Report: Ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research. <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html#xrespect>
- James, W. (1890). *The principles of psychology*. New York University Press. <https://archive.org/details/theprinciplesofp01jameuoft>
- Joshi, A., Lazarova, M. B., & Liao, H. (2009). Getting everyone on board: The role of inspirational leadership in geographically dispersed teams. *Organization Science, 20*(1), 240-252. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1080.0383>
- Kelly, K. (2017). A different type of lighting research. *A qualitative methodology. Lighting Research & Technology, 49*(8), 933-942. doi: 10.1177/1477153516659901
- Leary, M. R. (1999). Making sense of self-esteem. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 8*(1), 32-35. https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C26&q=Making+sense+of+self-esteem&btnG=
- Leech, B. L. (2002). Asking questions: Techniques for semi-structured interviews. *PS: Political Science & Politics, 35*(4), 665-668. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1554805>
- Levitt, H. M., Motulsky, S. L., Wertz, F. J., Morrow, S. L., & Ponterotto, J. G. (2017). Recommendations for designing and reviewing qualitative research in psychology: Promoting methodological integrity. *Qualitative Psychology, 4*(1), 2-22. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/qup0000082>
- Liang, B., Lund, T. J., Mousseau, A. M. D., & Spencer, R. (2016). The mediating role of engagement in mentoring relationships and self-esteem among affluent adolescent girls. *Psychology in the Schools, 53*(8), 848-860. doi: 10.1002/pits.21949
- Magilvy, J. K., & Thomas, E. (2009). A first qualitative project: Qualitative descriptive design for novice researchers. *Journal for Specialists in Pediatric Nursing, 14*(4), 298-300. doi: 10.1111/j.1744-6155.2009.00212.x
- Maldonado, L., Huang, Y., Chen, R., Kasen, S., Cohen, P., & Chen, H. (2013). Impact of early adolescent anxiety disorders on self-esteem development from adolescence to young adulthood. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 2*(2), 287-292. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2013.02.025>
- Marshall, S. L., Parker, P. D., Ciarrochi, J., & Heaven, P. C. (2014). Is self-esteem a cause or consequence of social support? A 4-Year Longitudinal Study. *Child Development, 85*(3), 1275-1291. doi: 10.1111/cdev.12176
- McGuigan, L., & Hoy, W. K. (2006). *Principal leadership: Creating*

- a culture of academic optimism to improve achievement for all students. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 5(3), 203-229. doi: 10.1080/15700760600805816
- McGuirk, P. M., & O'Neill, P. (2016). Using questionnaires in qualitative human geography. In I. Hay (Eds.), *Qualitative research methods in human geography* (246-273). Oxford University Press. <https://ro.uow.edu.au/sspapers/2518>
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass. https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=JFN_BwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA137&dq=Qualitative+Research:+A+Guide+to+Design+and+Implementation+&ots=wOYURK2C60&sig=jGLdCiFSC8-MS2EvTwtGyZyZN0o#v=onepage&q=Qualitative%20Research%3A%20A%20Guide%20to%20Design%20and%20Implementation&f=false
- Moksnes, U. K., & Reidunsdatter, R. J. (2019). Self-esteem and mental health in adolescents—level and stability during a school year. *Norsk Epidemiologi*, 28(1-2). doi: 10.5324/nje.v28i1-2.3052
- Morrow, S. L. (2005). Quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(2), 250. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.250
- Mruk, C. J. (2006). *Self-esteem research, theory, and practice: Toward a positive psychology of self-esteem*. (3rd ed.). Springer. <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=I7LofZoJcUC&oi=fnd&pg=PR5&dq=Self-esteem+research,+theory,+and+practice:+Toward+a+positive+psychology+of+self-esteem&ots=Xbd244-4XT&sig=1qB5GAc4GSeaa7SYq2Fo6Pt4nRg#v=onepage&q=Self-esteem%20research%2C%20theory%2C%20and%20practice%3A%20Toward%20a%20positive%20psychology%20of%20self-esteem&f=false>
- Olsson, I., Hagekull, B., Giannotta, F., & Åhlander, C. (2016). Adolescents and social support situations. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 57(3), 223-232. doi: 10.1111/sjop.12282
- Orth, U., & Robins, R. W. (2014). The development of self-esteem. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 23(5), 381-387. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721414547414>
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533-544. doi: 10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). Two decades of developments in qualitative inquiry: A personal, experiential perspective. *Qualitative Social Work*, 1(3), 261-283. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325002001003636>
- Percy, W. H., Kostere, K., & Kostere, S. (2015). Generic qualitative research in psychology. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(2), 76-85. <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol20/iss2/7>
- Rattray, J., & Jones, M. C. (2007). Essential elements of questionnaire design and development. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 16(2), 234-243. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2702.2006.01573.x
- Rissanen, M. L., Kylmä, J., & Laukkanen, E. (2008). Descriptions of self-mutilation among Finnish adolescents: a qualitative descriptive inquiry. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 29(2), 145-163. doi: 10.1080/01612840701792597
- Rolfe, P. (2011). Transformational leadership theory: What every leader needs to know. *Nurse Leader*, 9(2), 54-57. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mnl.2011.01.014>
- Rudnick, A. (2014). A philosophical analysis of the general methodology of qualitative research: A critical rationalist perspective. *Health Care Analysis*, 22(3), 245-254. doi: 10.1007/s10728-012-0212-5
- Ruzek, E. A., Hafen, C. A., Allen, J. P., Gregory, A., Mikami, A. Y., & Pianta, R. C. (2016). How teacher emotional support motivates students: The mediating roles of perceived peer relatedness, autonomy support, and competence. *Learning and Instruction*, 42, 95-103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2016.01.004>
- Saldaña, J. (2015). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage. <https://eduq.info/xmlui/handle/11515/35868>
- Sandelowski, M. (2001). Real qualitative researchers do not count: The use of numbers in qualitative research. *Res Nurse Health*, 24(3), 230-240. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.1025>
- Sandelowski, M. (2000). Whatever happened to qualitative description? *Research in Nursing & Health*, 23(4), 334-340. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1098-240X\(200008\)23:4<334::AID-NUR9>3.0.CO;2-G](https://doi.org/10.1002/1098-240X(200008)23:4<334::AID-NUR9>3.0.CO;2-G)
- Schwartz, S. E., Chan, C. S., Rhodes, J. E., & Scales, P. C. (2013). Community developmental assets and positive youth development: The role of natural mentors. *Research in Human Development*, 10(2), 141-162. doi: 10.1080/15427609.2013.786553
- Srivastava, A., & Thomson, S. B. (2009). Framework analysis: A qualitative methodology for applied policy research. *Journal of Administration and Governance*, 4(2), 72-79. <https://roam.macewan.ca/islandora/object/gm%3A1207/datastream/OBJ/view>

- Steiger, A. E., Allemand, M., Robins, R. W., & Fend, H. A. (2014). Low and decreasing self-esteem during adolescence predict adult depression two decades later. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 106*(2), 325-338. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035133>
- Stewart, J. (2006). Transformational leadership: An evolving concept examined through the works of Burns, Bass, Avolio, and Leithwood. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy, (54)*, 1-29. <https://cdm.ucalgary.ca/index.php/cjeap/article/view/42735>
- Suri, H. (2011). Purposeful sampling in qualitative research synthesis. *Qualitative Research Journal, 11*(2), 63-75. doi: 10.3316/QRJ1102063
- Taylor, R. D., Oberle, E., Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2017). Promoting positive youth development through school-based social and emotional learning interventions: A meta-analysis of follow-up effects. *Child Development, 88*(4), 1156-1171. doi: 10.1111/cdev.12864
- Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of Educational Research, 83*(3), 357-385. doi: 10.3102/0034654313483907
- Thorne, S. (2000). Data analysis in qualitative research. *Evidence-based Nursing, 3*(3), 68-70. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/ebn.3.3.68>
- Torres-Arcadia, C., Rodríguez-Urbe, C., & Mora, G. (2018). How principals lead high needs schools in Mexico. *International Studies in Educational Administration (Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration & Management (CCEAM))*, 46(1) 128-171. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Cesar-Rodriguez-Urbe/publication/326327907_How_Principals_Lead_High_Needs_Schools_in_Mexico/links/5bf702e2a6fdcc538813a863/How-Principals-Lead-High-Needs-Schools-in-Mexico.pdf#page=128
- Zimmerman, M. A. (1995). Psychological empowerment: Issues and illustrations. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 23*(5), 581-599. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02506983>