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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the implementation of a teacher performance appraisal process that encourages self-directed learning (SDL), highlighting the extent to which teacher efficacy (TE) influenced the its success. The study also examined whether lack of readiness for SDL was an implementation obstacle. Finally, it noted other barriers and obstacles to full implementation of a teacher performance appraisal policy in one Newfoundland school district. The researcher analyzed current literature dealing with teacher professional growth, teacher performance appraisal, TE, and SDL in an attempt to isolate barriers to full implementation of a teacher performance appraisal process that encourages SDL. The study analyzed the Newfoundland school district's implementation of a teacher performance appraisal policy using teacher and administrator surveys and interviews. Results highlighted several themes related to this process within the school district: rationale, implementation, barriers, responsibility, uniqueness, and growth realization. Teachers' levels of TE influenced their attitudes toward, and success in, this new process which encourages SDL. This influence, in turn, affected teachers' professional growth experiences in the process itself. Teachers believed that the most effective and meaningful teacher evaluations were self-directed. Barriers to implementation included time and teacher-administrator relationships. (Contains 54 references.) (SM)

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The Influence of Teacher Efficacy and Readiness for Self-Directed Learning on the Implementation of a Growth-Oriented Teacher Performance Appraisal Process

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1. Introduction

In recent years, traditional approaches to teacher supervision have been criticized as giving little impetus for teacher professional growth by scholars sharing a neo-progressive perspective (Johnson, 1993; Tracy & MacNaughton, 1989). Educational research literature is replete with references highlighting the disdain that teachers have for traditional supervision approaches that emphasize teacher evaluation policies and procedures (Blumberg, 1980; Greene, 1992; Popham, 1988).

More recently, teacher evaluation is now considered by some researchers as best done through a process of teacher performance appraisal for professional growth (Cousins, 1995; Duke, 1990, 1993). Teacher performance appraisal processes have two distinct purposes. One purpose is to enhance teacher professional growth and, by extension, to benefit the entire school milieu. This purpose is collegial in nature, and teachers assume responsibility for their own learning and professional growth (Cousins, 1995). This first purpose contrasts with a second, more traditional model of teacher supervision, in which supervisors point out to teachers cause and effect relationships with respect to instruction and use this information for such personnel and accountability purposes as staffing, tenure, promotion and/or dismissal (Duke & Stiggins, 1988, 1990; Garman, 1990; Haefele, 1993). Despite many efforts, researchers report that in most classrooms, "control supervision still dominates professional practice" (Gordon, 1997, p.117). This neo-traditionalist perspective is viewed as hierarchical in nature, with the supervisor controlling the process (Tracy & MacNaughton, 1989).

There is evidence to suggest that the goals of teacher performance appraisal processes are dependent on teacher efficacy (TE). TE can be defined as "...a self-perception, not an objective

measure of teaching effectiveness" (Ross, 1998, p. 49). TE has been linked to the goals of instructional experimentation (Allinder, 1994; Ross, 1998), teachers' willingness to implement innovations (Guskey, 1984; Smylie, 1988), and teachers' goal setting (Ross, 1998). On the one hand, it appears that "High TE teachers are more willing and likely to implement new instructional programs, leading to the acquisition of new teaching skills" (Ross, 1995, p. 231); on the other hand, there is indecision as to whether TE is an obstacle to full implementation of a teacher performance appraisal policy that encourages self-directed learning (SDL) as a means for professional growth.

Teacher performance appraisal processes that are collaborative in nature also appear to align well with current concepts associated with adult learning. For example, SDL, one concept associated with adult learning, has been referenced as a process to promote ongoing reflective thought, "with learners expected to assume primary responsibility for their own learning" (Caffarella, 1993, p 26). SDL appears to be consistent with contemporary collaborative models of teacher performance appraisal aimed at teacher professional growth. As Blake, Bachman, Frys, Holbert, Ivan & Sellitto (1995) point out: "No matter how teacher performance is appraised, the evaluation that is most meaningful is one that is self-directed" (p. 39). It is uncertain, however, if lack of readiness for SDL is a barrier to the full implementation of a teacher performance appraisal process.

Close inspection of the literature reveals a void in available empirical research-based knowledge about the influence that TE and SDL have on teacher performance appraisal processes. This study analyses the extent of implementation of a teacher performance appraisal process that encourages SDL. It highlights the extent to which TE influences the success of this type of teacher performance appraisal process. The study also attempts to establish whether or not lack of readiness for SDL is an implementation obstacle. Finally, it presents other barriers and obstacles to full

implementation of a teacher performance appraisal policy in one Newfoundland school district.

2 Context

Prior to January 1997, the education system in Newfoundland and Labrador was governed by Boards having religious affiliations. Denominational education ended in Newfoundland in January 1997 when school district boundaries were reorganized and denominational control of the school system was removed. Twenty-seven former denominational school districts became ten interdenominational (public) school districts. In some jurisdictions, as many as seven former districts came together to form one new district. The requirement of, and desire for, common policies and procedures was evident, and during the 1997-98 school year, many school districts undertook the major initiative of policy development.

The boundaries for School District #3 (Corner Brook - Deer Lake - St. Barbe) extend from Daniel's Harbour in the north to Corner Brook and the Bay of Islands area in the west, and also east to include the White Bay area. With an approximate student population of nine thousand students, School District #3 operates thirty-one schools. Approximately five hundred and sixty teachers are employed in School District #3, and the administrative offices are located in the city of Corner Brook.

During the 1997-98 school year, School District #3 placed a priority on the development of policies and guidelines for teacher evaluation. A working group was established in November 1997 to develop a professional staff evaluation policy for classroom teachers, specialist teachers, principals and program specialists. Invitations for participation were sent to all schools and a representative group of teachers, principals and district office staff was chosen. Early in its discussions, the working group decided to minimize the use of the words 'teacher evaluation' owing

to its negative connotation amongst teachers. In the past, teacher evaluations have been too narrowly defined in both purpose and method. The working group agreed that the main objective of staff evaluation is professional growth, and it adopted the term 'teacher appraisal, professional growth and improvement' for these reasons.

It was decided that the following philosophical principles would guide this new process of teacher appraisal, professional growth and improvement:

Teachers are committed to professional growth, and it is the responsibility of the School District to support the process through ongoing appraisal and feedback.

The primary focus of teacher professional growth and appraisal is to enhance opportunities for student learning.

Teachers are competent, dedicated individuals who want to grow professionally to improve their performance.

Teacher professional growth and appraisal must encourage self-directed reflection.

The professional strengths and needs of teachers should guide the process.

The professional growth and appraisal process should be a constructive, cooperative undertaking.

Effective teaching practices can be defined, learned and practiced by a professional.

The above principles are evidence of School District #3's assumption that the teacher performance appraisal process encourages SDL for professional growth in that there is an emphasis on professional growth, the personal needs, and self-reflection of teachers. Proponents of SDL

suggest that the approach allows for and encourages individual differences (Brockett & Heimstra, 1985). The process of teacher performance appraisal and teacher professional growth are individualized processes. Also evident is the assumption that there is a relationship between TE and professional growth. Teachers who have greater beliefs in their ability to teach are more likely to try new ways of teaching, and be confident and enthusiastic about teaching (Allinder, 1994).

The School District #3 working group agreed with Marczely (1996) that effective teacher professional development must be personalized to address the needs of individual teachers. This personalization will result in more desirous outcomes with respect to teacher professional growth.

3 Purpose

This study analyses current research literature dealing with teacher professional growth, teacher performance appraisal, TE and SDL in an attempt to isolate the barriers to full implementation of a teacher performance appraisal process that encourages SDL. The literature review expands upon a collaborative performance appraisal conceptual framework proposed by Cousins (1995) to facilitate teacher professional growth. Additional educational research literature, adult learning literature, and perspectives from the business employee development literature is incorporated into the developing Cousins' (1995) framework. This presents a clearer understanding of those individual characteristics that are essential prerequisites for teacher professional growth. These individual characteristics highlight the barriers and obstacles to effective implementation.

There appears a scarcity of empirical evidence to link the concepts of SDL and teacher professional growth. Moreover, it would seem that a knowledge of teachers' readiness for SDL, coupled with an increased understanding of attributes of TE, would allow for more positive experiences with teacher professional growth through a teacher performance appraisal process. This

study allows for these two areas to be analysed within the context of the actual teacher performance appraisal process in School District #3 in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, Canada. It highlights the barriers and obstacles to implementation of such a policy.

4 Review of the Literature

4.1 Teacher Professional Growth

Duke (1993) suggests that all school systems need to analyze hindrances to teachers' professional growth. He further implies that a close inspection of policies on teacher evaluation may reveal what those hindrances are. Cousins (1995) indicates that research on the impact of teacher performance appraisal systems has clearly demonstrated the need for reform. Duke (1993) further suggests that renewing approaches to teacher evaluation may remove some of the barriers to teacher professional growth.

It appears that there is a consensus among researchers and educational professionals that teacher professional growth is an essential component of teachers' careers. Teachers appear to want professional development opportunities, but do not see the teacher evaluation process as a source (Duke & Stiggins, 1990). This may be attributed to past, negative experiences that some teachers have experienced with teacher evaluation processes. Tracy & MacNaughton (1989) suggest that proponents of a collaborative approach to teacher supervision have often had negative experiences with the more neo-traditionalist processes. The notion of renewing the commitment and approaches to teacher evaluation is also supported by Haefele (1992; 1993) and Popham (1988). Teacher professional growth through a teacher performance appraisal process is among the 'newer' approaches of teacher evaluation and supervision.

The definition of teacher professional growth espoused by Duke (1993, p. 703) is very

inclusive:

> Professional growth is not staff development, though it may be stimulated by staff development. Professional growth involves learning, but it is more than learning. While learning may represent the acquisition of new knowledge, growth implies the transformation of knowledge into the development of the individual. Growth is qualitative change, movement to a new level of understanding, the realization of a sense of efficacy not previously enjoyed.

Cousins (1995) analyzed collaborative performance appraisal as a tool to enhance teachers' professional growth. Based on an extensive literature review, Cousins (1995) suggests that factors influencing the appraisal process include teacher characteristics, supervisor characteristics and organizational characteristics. These characteristics, in turn, affect the growth-oriented appraisal process. This process is described by Cousins (1995) as "nonlinear and cyclical" (p.201) and includes three elements: preparation, data collection and feedback/follow up. The last component of the framework is the impact section, where conceptual and affective differences and changes are described. These impacts are either positive or negative, and either intended or unintended.

The literature review conducted by Cousins (1995) was followed by a minor study with a limited sample size. Among Cousins' (1995) findings is the fact that respondents (i.e. supervisors) agreed that teachers are aware of their own strengths and are motivated to improve their teaching. Duke (1990) supports this finding in that he suggests that teacher involvement in the professional growth process is one of the keys to success. He states "It is a process in which teachers must play an active role. Involvement begins with planning and policy-making and continues through training and goal-setting" (Duke, 1990, p.137). This idea is supported by Tracy & MacNaughton (1989) in

their discussion of the neo-progressive perspective of clinical supervision. This standpoint is at the opposing end of the continuum from the neo-traditionalist perspective and situates the teacher as equal partner in the supervision process. The neo-progressive orientation to teacher performance appraisal subscribes to the idea that the process ought to follow the teachers' agenda, and be collegial in nature. This contrasts with the various traditional accountability roles associated with teacher evaluation in that the traditional roles follow the supervisors' agendas and are not collegial in nature.

Personal empowerment is viewed as essential in the professional process of supervision (Garman, Glickman, Hunter, & Haggerson, 1987). The neo-progressive, collaborative approach to teacher professional growth exists in some teacher performance appraisal processes *in theory* only. The extent to which it exists *in practice*, however, is unknown. In order to more clearly describe the gap between theory and practice, it is necessary to examine the individual teacher characteristics associated with teacher professional growth.

4.2 Individual Characteristics

The examination of individual characteristics will include a discussion of general elements and characteristics, teacher efficacy, and self-directed learning.

4.2.1 General Elements and Characteristics

According to Cousins (1995), the individual teacher characteristics which influence the teacher performance appraisal process are "the desire for constructive feedback, growth objectives, experience, knowledge of self" (p.200). While these particular attributes of teachers may seem inclusive, other research literature offers more specificity of elements.

In a discussion of employee development, for example, Noe, Wilk, Mullen & Wanek (1997) provide more definition to the specific characteristics of the individual and the organization.

The framework begins with individual and organizational antecedents of the development activity followed by the decision process. This leads to the development activity that, in turn, leads into the actual learning process which terminates with the learning outcomes. There are several, possible theoretical frameworks associated with the decision process, and there also are several attributes of the learning environment connected with the learning process. The Noe et al. (1997) framework depicts a process very similar to the Cousins (1995) framework; both are developing conceptual frameworks with some empirical evidence, and each contributes to a greater understanding of the other. In addition, the Noe at al. (1997) version adds specificity to the individual characteristics highlighted by Cousins (1995).

Noe et al. (1997) present several immutable characteristics that they refer to as individual antecedents of development activities. "Immutable characteristics, such as age, race, gender, and even cognitive ability, may play a role in an individual's level of participation in development activities" (Noe et al., 1997, p.170). These stable elements are consistent with the individual characteristics presented in the Cousins' (1995) framework. This discussion continues and postulates that an individual's attitudes and beliefs are important determinants to participation, and that past experiences often play a significant role. This notion is supported by Greene (1992) when she highlights teachers' beliefs as one of several factors that contribute to the success of a process of teacher supervision that encourages teacher professional development.

Inherent in any discussion of individual teacher characteristics are attitudes and beliefs, two very important issues in any discussion of self-directed teacher growth. "The assumption is that individuals who have had positive experiences in development activities are more likely to participate in the future than individuals who have had negative experiences" (Noe et al., 1997, p.

172). Greene (1992) also suggests that teacher receptivity to a new model of teacher supervision is related to "teachers' individual beliefs" (p. 144). A knowledge of such important individual characteristics as teachers' attitudes and beliefs can assist in the process.

Noe et al. (1997) continue their discussion of attitudes and beliefs by focusing on motivation to learn, motivation to transfer, and self-efficacy. The authors refer to the definition of self-efficacy espoused by Bandura (1977) as the confidence of individuals to cope with challenging situations. The indication is that self-efficacy could influence the motivation to learn and, ultimately, the participation in a development activity. They conclude that "individuals with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to participate in new and challenging situations than individuals with low levels of self-efficacy" (p. 173). The issue of efficacy, and specifically TE, is accented here. With experience, teachers develop a relatively stable set of core beliefs about their abilities, and the relationship between experience and teacher efficacy is reciprocal (Ross, 1998). Research on TE can inform efforts in teacher professional growth; therefore, TE is deserving of a more detailed discussion. It appears that if a teacher scores high on a TE measurement, more success with respect to teacher professional growth initiatives may be apparent.

4.2.2 Teacher Efficacy

Ross (1995) posits that TE is a multi-dimensional construct, and distinguishes between two types of TE: "*Personal* TE (PTE) is a teacher's expectation that he or she can bring about student learning. *General* TE (GTE) is the belief that teachers are able to do so despite the impact of environmental factors beyond their control" (p. 228). Both types are referenced in the literature, and it appears that each has relevance with respect to teacher professional growth through an appraisal process. A more recent publication adds specificity to the previous definition: "Teacher efficacy is

a self-perception, not an objective measure of teaching effectiveness. It represents teachers' beliefs that their efforts, individually and collectively, will bring about student learning" (Ross, 1998, pp. 49-50).

TE has been linked to instructional experimentation (Allinder, 1994; Ross, 1998). It seems as though increasing TE leads to a greater willingness to try new methods. One intent of teacher professional growth initiatives is to provide an avenue for experimentation with teaching. This is possible during a teacher performance appraisal process with regular feedback, particularly in light of the fact that elements of SDL exist. Fritz, Miller-Heyl, Kreutzer & MacPhee (1995) support this idea. They indicate "A boost in one's sense of efficacy increases the effort expended to reach a desired outcome" (Fritz et al., 1995, p. 200). It would seem that an increase in TE would allow for more self direction of professional growth activities.

The willingness of teachers to implement innovations is also related to TE (Guskey, 1984; Smylie, 1988). Teachers need to see relevance and importance attached to initiatives in order to afford it their concentrated efforts. Fritz et al. (1995) uphold this idea and reference the role of facilitators: "Staff developers need to better understand personal teaching efficacy and develop ways to augment a strong sense of efficacy among teachers" (p. 200). Although teacher performance appraisal processes are largely self-directed, there is a role for supervisors and facilitators. A better understanding of TE can assist these participants in the supervision process. "Teacher efficacy is enhanced when teachers have greater control of their workplace..." (Ross, 1998, p. 56).

TE has also been linked to levels of professional commitment for teachers (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998). It seems that a commitment to professional growth is necessary for teachers to experience success. "Higher teacher efficacy is consistently associated with the use

of teaching techniques that are more challenging and difficult, with teachers' willingness to implement innovative programs, and with classroom management practices that promote student responsibility" (Ross, 1998, p. 58). Commitment on behalf of teachers is an essential prerequisite to participation in a professional growth process.

This knowledge base of TE is based on extensive research using a number of instruments to measure the levels and effects of TE. According to Ross (1998), the most widely used instrument used to measure TE is the 'Teacher Efficacy Scale' (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). This instrument was originally a thirty item measure; it was, however, later modified to a sixteen item measure (Ross, 1998). Other measures of TE include the 'RAND measure' (Armour et al., 1976). This measure includes 2 items on a five point Likert scale. The 'Teacher Locus of Control Instrument' (Rose & Medway, 1981) comprises 28 items with a forced choice format where half of the items describe situations of student success, and half describe student failure. The 'Responsibility for Student Achievement Measure' (Guskey, 1981) asks participants to give a weight or percentage to each of the 2 choices provided dealing with either the responsibility for student success or the responsibility for student failure. In addition, the Ashton Vignettes (Ashton et al., 1982) includes 50 items describing problem situations concerning various dimensions of teaching, including motivation, discipline, academic instruction, planning, evaluation, and work with parents. Participants are asked to respond to these items ranging from 'extremely ineffective' to 'extremely effective'(cited in Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

It seems that an increased knowledge of TE would allow for more positive teacher professional growth experiences through a teacher performance appraisal process that encourages SDL. If teachers' self-perception of teaching is high, it would appear that teachers assume the

responsibility for their own professional growth. In taking ownership, and the lead, in efforts to improve their teaching effectiveness, an element of self-directedness is apparent. The attributes of SDL are discussed in the adult learning literature.

4.2.3 Self-Directed Learning

The collaborative process of teacher professional growth as outlined by Duke (1990) appears to be essential for success and is very similar to the concept of SDL discussed in adult learning literature. The neo-progressive perspective on teacher professional growth is mirrored in the adult learning literature with the tenets of SDL. It would appear that a clear picture of a teacher's readiness for SDL could serve to define the steps necessary to the process of translating theory into practice.

Cousins (1995) also outlines that a review of prior research yields a rich base of data that presents an image of effective practice. Specifically, he highlights that "the participation of teachers in the process, taking an active role in negotiating growth objectives, deciding on the nature and frequency of information collection, and engaging in transactional, constructive feedback is clearly the most salient feature of the process" (p. 214). This finding is consistent with the suggestion that the teacher performance appraisal process is most effective, and results in more identifiable and desirable teacher professional growth outcomes, if clearly self-directed by the teacher. As Blake, Bachman, Frys, Holbert, Ivan & Sellitto (1995) point out: "No matter how teacher performance is appraised, the evaluation that is most meaningful is one that is self-directed" (p.39). They continue by stating that "Self assessment is motivating; it helps teachers to feel challenged, to possess enhanced self-esteem, and to be excited about professional growth" (p.39).

It would seem that SDL is pertinent to ongoing educational reform efforts and to teacher professional growth and appraisal, in particular. There also are traces of SDL in the employee

development literature cited beforehand through discussions of "motivation to learn/transfer" (Noe et al., 1997). Knowles (1975) description of SDL is grounded in his conceptualization of andragogy, which has as one of its assumptions that as learners mature, they become increasingly more self-directed (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991, p.46). Teacher professional growth planning appears to fit this criteria.

According to Caffarella (1993), SDL is humanistic in nature. "The process of learning, which is centered on learner need, is seen as more important than the content; therefore, when educators are involved in the learning process, their most important role is to act as facilitators or guides, as opposed to content experts" (Caffarella, 1993, p.26). The teacher's role in the collaborative process of teacher performance appraisal appears to be self-directed. Sergiovanni has described teachers as self-directed learners (cited in Blake et at., 1995). If teachers are self-directed learners in continuing professional development aimed at professional growth, they may concentrate their efforts on their identified needs, and, in turn, identify their desired growth areas This is also referenced in the TE literature by Ross (1998) in that TE is dependent on teachers' goal setting.

The process of teacher professional growth, punctuated by events such as needs assessments and identification, consensus forming, and effective follow-through, is a process of learning very similar in nature to that espoused by SDL. The effective follow-through, for example, can be seen as the appraisal process in the model presented by Cousins (1995). The reciprocity of SDL and teacher professional growth and development seems indubitable. It appears that the theory of SDL is present in the process of teacher performance appraisal and in teacher professional growth.

Another individual characteristic to add to the Cousins (1995) model is the extent of self-directedness. The level of self-directedness appears to influence the impact of the process. As

was highlighted from the employee development literature, the motivation to learn is important and, therefore, it appears that the level of readiness for SDL is an important aspect for consideration. Guglielmino (1977) developed the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) as an instrument to measure SDL readiness. This instrument has been widely used and validated. Merriam & Brockett (1997), and Brockett & Heimstra (1991) indicate that the SDLRS is the most widely used quantitative measure of self-direction in learning.

Finding ways to individualize professional learning activities has been, and still is, a major challenge for facilitators of professional development (Sparks, 1991). Caffarella (1993) suggests that "One way to accomplish individualization is to provide a self-directed learning option as part of staff development programs" (p.30). Brockett & Heimstra (1991) suggest that "learner self-direction" (p. 29), or factors internal to the individual, influence an individual in taking responsibility for personal learning endeavors. They propose a "Personal Responsibility Orientation (PRO) Model" which posits four interrelated factors within the social context: personal responsibility, learner self-direction, self-direction in learning and SDL (Brockett & Heimstra, 1991). The issue of learner self-direction deals with characteristics of the learner, and adds more specificity to both Cousins (1995) and Noe et al (1997).

It seems that the tenets of SDL, in relation to teacher professional development and teacher professional growth, are not being used to the extent that they ought to be. Increased application and utilization of the assumptions of SDL would allow for improved teacher professional development experiences, which could result in more positive teacher professional growth through the teacher performance appraisal process. The belief that such a process ought to be teacher-directed, collaborative and subscribing to the attributes of SDL fall within the neo-progressive orientation that

suggests "that the primary focus for growth is the teacher's agenda and that the process is agreement-oriented and collegial" (Cousins, 1995, p.214).

SDL can be defined as a form of learning in which participants have primary responsibility for planning, carrying out, and evaluating the learning experiences (Candy, 1991; Merriam & Brockett, 1997; Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). If, as Guskey (1997) indicates, "...professional development is an ongoing activity woven into the fabric of every educators life" (p.39), then it seems that SDL ought to be the thread that keeps the fabric intact. This notion of "learner control" espoused by Guskey (1997) is also discussed in the SDL literature.

Individual teachers can best decide on which areas of professional growth they should concentrate. Candy (1991) supports this notion by stating that "It is the belief that giving learners control over certain instructional functions leads to demonstrably superior learning outcomes" (p. 215). This argument has been used in the adult learning literature as a rationale for increased learner control. SDL appears to have a powerful, overwhelming influence on teacher professional development efforts in this instance. As with the neo-progressive approach to supervision, the agenda becomes teacher-driven in the professional growth process. To participate fully in this process, to be comfortable with it, and to derive maximum benefit from it, an element of readiness for this area of SDL is necessary. This would become another of the individual characteristics as outlined by Cousins (1995).

Teacher professional growth appears to be influenced by TE, SDL and a variety of other individual characteristics. It seems that high self perceptions of TE, and readiness to participate in SDL, in particular, are indicators of success in a process of teacher professional growth. An expanded knowledge of successful implementation would seem to be of relevance in analyzing what

barriers and obstacles to implementation may exist.

4.3 Implementation

"Teachers are key change agents in the classroom, yet inadequate attention has been paid to traits that optimize teachers' success in implementing innovations" (Fritz et al., 1995, p. 200). Research literature is replete with references detailing the factors influencing implementation (Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin & Hall, 1987; Fullan, 1991, 1993). The idea that change is *a process and not an event* has become an accepted norm in both theoretical and practical milieus. Plans for successful educational change involve the stakeholders, and allow for preparatory work and follow-up.

Hord et al. (1987), in their discussion of change implementation, highlight the fact that "Change is accomplished by individuals" (p. 6) and that "Change is a highly personal experience" (p. 6). These statements are very true as they relate to policy implementation initiatives. Although policies within the education field exist to provide direction and remove discrepancies, they also exist to ameliorate the lives of teachers. If these changes are to be accomplished by individuals, it would seem that a knowledge of the barriers and obstacles that hinder effective implementation of new polices would be beneficial.

This literature review highlights individual characteristics associated with effective teacher professional growth. It draws extensively from the conceptual frameworks of both Cousins (1995) and Noe et al. (1997). These developing frameworks have some empirical evidence, and also have methodological limitations. This study broadens the perspective of these two conceptual frameworks in defining the influence of TE and SDL on a teacher performance appraisal process.

It seems that TE and teachers' readiness levels to participate in SDL are key individual

characteristics to consider in the implementation of a teacher performance appraisal policy that encourages SDL. Hord et al. (1987) suggest that "the single most important factor in any change process is the people who will be most affected by the change". An analysis of the barriers and obstacles associated with the implementation of a new teacher performance appraisal policy will provide for an empirical contribution to the research literature in this area.

5 Statement of the Problem

Teacher performance appraisal has become somewhat of an umbrella concept, under which both teacher professional growth and teacher personnel decisions are situated. In some jurisdictions, teacher performance appraisals have replaced teacher evaluation and they have become an accepted manner in which to make various personnel decisions and, more importantly, to plan for teacher professional growth. Teacher performance appraisal processes that encourage SDL appear to contribute positively to teacher professional growth. Teachers' level of TE and their readiness level to participate in SDL appear to affect teacher professional growth. This study analyses the extent to which this is true in one educational jurisdiction, School District #3 in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, Canada.

6 Hypotheses and Research Questions

It appears that teachers' level of TE and readiness for SDL can influence the implementation of a teacher performance appraisal process. Also, there are specific barriers and obstacles to the implementation of such a process. Specifically, this study addresses the following questions:

1. Do teachers' levels of TE influence their professional growth experiences in a teacher performance appraisal process that encourages SDL?
2. Do teachers' levels of readiness for SDL influence their professional growth experiences in

a teacher performance appraisal process that encourages SDL?

3. What are the barriers to implementation of a teacher performance appraisal process that encourages SDL?

7 Methodology

7.1 General

This research project was a qualitative case study. As defined by Creswell (1995), a case study is a study "in which the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon ("the case") bounded by time and activity..." (p.12). The research project, however, employed both qualitative and quantitative methods, and was largely exploratory in nature. When used together, qualitative and quantitative research methods gain strength from each other (Woods, 1992). In addition, Greene, Caracelli & Graham (1989) suggest that although triangulation is an important reason to combine qualitative and quantitative methods, the ways in which they complement each other are also important. "...in that overlapping and different facets of a phenomenon may emerge (e.g. peeling layers of an onion)" (cited in Creswell, 1994, p. 175).

This project analyzed the field-test of School District #3's new policy on teacher performance appraisal. The participants in this study were teachers involved in the field-test of this process during the 1998-99 school year. District office administrators suggested school administrators follow the new process with at least one staff member during the 1998-99 school year. Some school administrators followed the process with more than one teacher. The actual research sample consisted of 98 participants involved in the field test in 29 different schools; 2 school chose not to participate in this study.

While the sample may seem small, "qualitative researchers usually work with *small* samples

of people nested in their context and studies in-depth - unlike quantitative researchers, who aim for larger numbers of context-stripped cases and seek statistical significance" (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 27). This field-test is a clear example of a "bounded system" as espoused by Creswell (1998). This research project dealing with a policy field-test is "bounded by time and place" (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). The case study approach "is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning to those involved" (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). This research project can be categorized as such in that it will deal with teachers participating in a field-test of a new approach to teacher performance appraisal in one Newfoundland school district during the 1998-99 school year. It was a single case study as opposed to a multiple case study; there were three phases of data collection.

7.2 Phase 1

Phase one employed two quantitative survey instruments. All participants were asked to complete two surveys: the Gibson & Dembo (1984) Teacher Efficacy (TE) scale and the Guglielmino (1977) Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS). This began the data collection process of this case study which enabled the researcher to obtain evidence of themes associated with the two concepts, as well as teachers' level of TE (PTE and GTE) and SDL. The identified themes formed the basis for the teacher interviews in the second phase. In addition, some descriptive statistics and simple pattern means were provided through these survey instruments.

7.3 Phase 2

The study, however, was mainly qualitative and exploratory in nature. This approach is best suited because of the need to present a detailed view of the topic (Creswell, 1998). In phase two of the project, in-depth interviews were held with a purposive sample of participants. A random

purposeful sample of those participants who completed both the TE scale and the SDLRS measure were interviewed. This random, purposeful sampling "adds credibility to sample when potential purposeful sample is too large" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 28). In addition, a stratified purposeful sample of those participants who scored high on the TE scale and the SDLRS instrument were interviewed. This latter method of sampling will "facilitate comparisons" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 28). This within-case sampling is necessary, as Merriam (1998) points out "...unless you plan to interview, observe, or analyze *all* the people, activities, or documents within the case, you will need to do some sampling within the case" (p.65).

The detailed interviewing allowed participants to express a range of perspectives dealing primarily with TE, SDL and the implementation of a teacher performance appraisal policy that promotes SDL. Participants in the interviews were asked to interpret the quantitative results from their own perspectives in one part of the interview. Table 3 outlines the 14 teachers who were interviewed during the period October 1999 to April 2000, and indicates their levels of SDL, GTE and PTE as above or below mean scores. In addition, 2 other teachers had been identified for inclusion in the interview sample, but refused participation.

7.4 Phase 3

The final phase of this research project entailed interviewing school administrators who were responsible for leading the field-test in their respective schools. These interviews focused on policy implementation, or what are the barriers and obstacles to implementation of such a policy? Administrators were also asked to describe the process that took place in their respective schools during 1998-99. Themes that emerged from the teacher interviews formed the basis for the administrator interviews. Once again, this sample was a random purposeful sample as espoused by

Miles & Huberman (1994) and Creswell (1998).

8 Findings: Teacher Participants

8.1 Quantitative Survey Instruments

There were 98 teacher participants in 29 schools in the 1998-99 School District 3 field test of this new teacher performance appraisal process. A total of 98 sets of questionnaires were sent out in May 1999; 90 were returned, equating to a 91.8% response rate.

Some descriptive statistics from the Guglielmino (1977) SDLRS administration are shown in the Table 1.

Table 1

Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) Results

Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
240.722	20.067	87.000

The Gibson & Dembo (1984) Teacher Efficacy Scale generated two scores: a General Teacher Efficacy (GTE) Score and a Personal Teacher Efficacy (PTE) Score. Some descriptive statistics from this TE scale are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Teacher Efficacy (TE) Scale Results

Mean PTE	Mean GTE	S.Dev (PTE)	S.Dev(GTE)	Range PTE	Range GTE
40.967	24.867	4.921	5.230	27.000	24.000

8.2 Qualitative Data: Teacher Interviews

A total of 16 respondents were identified to participate in an interview; two (2) of those teacher participants refused participation. The remaining 14 represent 10 of the 29 participating schools. They also represent the SDLRS, GTE and PTE scores as outlined in Table 3.

Table 3

Teacher Interviews

SDLRS($<\bar{x}$)	SDLRS($>\bar{x}$)	PTE($<\bar{x}$)	PTE($>\bar{x}$)	GTE($<\bar{x}$)	GTE($>\bar{x}$)
5	9	4	10	5	9

The following discussion is organized in themes and summarizes the information gleaned from the interviews as they relate to the field test of the new teacher performance appraisal process in School District 3 during the 1998-99 school year.

8.2.1 Process Rationale

All 14 respondents interviewed agreed that teacher professional growth is a necessary and essential component of a teacher's career. In addition, all 14 respondents agreed that teacher professional development / teacher professional growth is encouraged through this new policy and process. One respondent indicated that "... a teacher, just by the fact that he or she is a teacher, is always ready to grow and learn". This seems to suggest that this new teacher performance appraisal process would assist teachers with their professional growth efforts by providing a framework for planning and accomplishing the same.

Cousins (1995) states: "The neo-progressive orientation to supervision posits that the primary focus for growth is the teacher's agenda and that the process is agreement-oriented and collegial"

(p.214). There was consensus with respect to this assertion in that 13 of the14 respondents agreed with this characterization of the new process within School District 3. One respondent indicated "it needs to be!" to emphasize agreement with the idea. The one respondent who disagreed with this premise suggested that district office involvement in the process diminished any suggested aspects of collegiality. This respondent scored above mean scores on SDLRS and PTE, but below the mean score on GTE.

Respondents provided a number of "original" definitions for professional growth. These included: "...professional growth experiences are ones that stretch your thinking and challenge the ways you think and cause you to change direction"; "...any situation where teachers are collaborating with any other teachers" and "...professional growth ... is, in fact, an inquiring mind". There seemed to be consensus in that professional growth involved a change in both practice and beliefs.

8.2.2 Process Implementation

It appears that if a knowledge of the new School District 3 *"Teacher Appraisal, Professional Growth and Improvement"* policy document is present, teachers are more accepting of the process. Of the 14 respondents interviewed, 12 indicated that they were familiar with the new document, and the other 2 indicated that they were somewhat familiar with it, had seen it or had looked at it briefly.

Both respondents who had little familiarity with the new policy document scored below the mean on the SDL scale; one was a relatively new teacher in the profession, and the other was preparing for retirement. With respect to TE levels, one respondent scored above the mean GTE score and below the mean PTE score, while the other respondent scored the exact opposite: below the mean GTE score and above the mean PTE score. Of the 12 respondents who indicated a level of familiarity with the new district document, 7 scored above the mean scores of SDL, GTE and

PTE.

Awareness is at the very basic level of implementation of an innovation, and is required to proceed with implementation. Hall & Hord (1987) support this belief by indicating that change will be more successful if the concerns of teachers are considered and addressed from the onset. This assertion is further supported by Pankake (1998), who suggests that successful routine implementation necessitates that clear expectations for what is to happen, and the various procedures for accomplishing the same, are stated. It would seem that teacher awareness of the new district policy is a prerequisite to successful implementation of the same.

Awareness is also essential for a commitment to the process. There was also some consensus amongst respondents that this new direction in teacher evaluation / teacher appraisal by School District 3 was a good direction. Ten (10) of 14 interviewees felt that it was a good direction for the school district, and the other 4 were unsure if the process was the correct course to be taking. All 4 of these respondents were below the mean on both SDL and PTE. It is interesting to note that high PTE scores, or the teachers' belief in their own ability to affect student learning, are often linked with instructional experimentation (Allinder, 1994). Teachers who score high in PTE are more open to try a variety of materials and approaches in a desire to find better ways of teaching (Allinder, 1994). These 4 respondents did not fit this high PTE category.

All 10 interviewees who agreed with the orientation of the school district scored above the PTE mean. One indicated that "... the likelihood of change in teachers would evolve out of a process such as this more so than a top heavy, imposed process". Another respondent indicated that "...it's a growing document, I hope... I don't think this (here) is finished... you're going to have to change some things and that". It appears that high PTE teachers in this study support the assertions of

Allinder (1994) in that they are willing to investigate other instructional techniques and approaches.

There were, however, several highlighted barriers and obstacles to implementation of this new teacher performance appraisal process.

8.2.3 Process Barriers

Several possible barriers to full, intended implementation of this new policy were identified by respondents. Participant readiness to enter into a process that places the onus on the individual was identified as one such barrier. There was confusion as to how one could determine readiness to participate in a process where they were responsible to plan for their own learning and professional growth. Twelve (12) respondents indicated that there were ways of knowing, whether from observation, experience or an administrator's knowledge of the individual.

A total of 2 respondents indicated that they believed there was no way of knowing whether an individual was ready to participate in a self-directed learning process. Both of these respondents scored above the means and very high in both SDL (rank 12 and 5) and PTE (rank 3 and 10). A high ranking in SDL indicates that the individual is ready to take on the task of concentrating their efforts on their identified needs and their desired growth areas. It is interesting that these two respondents subscribe to the idea that these types of individuals are not easily identifiable, given that they fall into this category themselves. In addition, one of these two respondents ranked second overall in GTE, or the teachers' belief that teachers can influence student learning, yet did not believe that certain types of individuals were more inclined to be ready to grow and learn than others.

In addition, 4 of the 12 respondents who believed that there were ways of knowing about participation readiness, indicated the administrator could identify those teachers. One (1) respondent (of 12) demonstrated her confidence by stating that "... they got to be ready if they're in a

classroom". Another (of the 12) stated: "I think it's the role of the administrator to make someone at ease with the process".

Gower and Cunningham (1995), after studying a self-directed staff development program for teachers, reported that school leaders need to support self-directed efforts for teachers within a personally structured framework. "They observed that when given the opportunity for self-reflection, collegiality, and goal sharing, teachers were more likely to perceive innovation and change as a positive growth experience" (Guglielmino & Nowocien, 1998, p.4).

Also, time available for planning and availing of professional growth opportunities was also seen as a possible barrier to implementation. Five (5) of the interviewed participants discussed time during the day or during the school year, and also during the summer or other "off" teaching times as issues. All 5 respondents scored above the mean scores on SDL, GTE and PTE.

Another issue that was highlighted was administrator accountability. A total of 3 participants indicated this issue as a concern and all 3 respondents scored above the mean on SDL, GTE and PTE. These respondents also stressed the other administrative demands included in the new process as another concern.

Individual differences can be considered as another obstacle to the success of the process. This viewpoint is supported in the research literature by Cousins (1995) and Noe et al. (1997) in their discussions of essential prerequisites for teacher professional growth and also immutable characteristics. Some teachers are apprehensive, yet comfortable, with older, more traditional models of teacher supervision. Some teachers are uncomfortable with evaluation processes under all circumstances. In addition, success is often dependent upon the individual and his or her relationship with the school administration. The rapport between teacher and administrator can be translated into

a "trust" factor. This notion is also supported in the research literature by Greene (1992) in her discussions of teacher attitudes and beliefs contributing to success in a professional growth process. Also, one respondent added another dimension by stating that "the inability for some people to understand the process itself" could be seen as another possible barrier, suggesting that some teachers may have difficulty comprehending the process itself.

8.2.4 Process Responsibility

"Ongoing learning and development by employees are critical to the mission of any modern organization, nowhere more so than in education" (Rhuotie, 1996, p. 419). With respect to teacher professional growth within a performance appraisal process, it is expected that the responsibility would be shared, collegial matter.

There appears to be agreement that the major responsibility of professional growth lies with the individual teacher. There was consensus amongst respondents, for example, that exploring instructional strategies and new methods are important and essential for teachers. Nine (9) of the 14 respondents interviewed agreed with the idea that teachers should be permitted to set their own agendas in the new appraisal process. These 9 respondents scored above the mean scores on the SDLRS. One (1) of these 9 simply stated "... there'll be more positive results because of that". Another stated "teachers have to make choices ... administrators cannot do that for them". Another added "you're not able to grow as much as a teacher if someone is just telling you the things you do right and the things you do wrong, you know ... it's not as powerful as the things you examine within yourself".

When asked if the appraisal process should necessarily focus on the teacher's agenda, 7 (50%) indicated yes, 5 indicated no, one suggested a "shared package" and one other was unsure.

Of the 5 respondents who did not believe that the teacher's agenda was at the forefront, 3 scored below the mean on the SDLRS and 2 above the mean. There was also some consensus that individual, school and school district needs would all be taken into account in the planning and discussion stages of the process.

Duke (1993) posits that "...teacher involvement in the professional growth process is one of the keys to success...". All respondents agreed with this statement in one form or another. Comments included: "Absolutely", "THE key to success" and etc. One respondent indicated "I should be responsible for my own learning". Another indicated that "... well, without it, I don't think you would have the process, would you"?

8.2.5 Process Uniqueness

It seems that all respondents were somewhat pleased with the uniqueness of the new performance appraisal process; most agreed they had never participated in a "teacher evaluation" process that allowed them some "real, actual" input. Pierce & Hunsaker (1996) posit that rarely does one ask teachers what they want or need to know in professional development efforts.

Respondents did not, for the most part, use Self Directed Learning (SDL) terminology, but they did agree that THEIR involvement in the process accounted for most of the success, and that participation was a unique feature of the process. As one respondent indicated "Allowing me to set my agenda has made me feel a little more optimistic...". There was consensus on the point that teachers were permitted to set their own agendas for professional development throughout this process.

Another respondent indicated "... like I said, the professional growth was definitely unique, and unlike any other time ... there was never anything encouraged, or there was no support given...".

Others indicated a definite difference from the older, more traditional, "checklist" models in that teachers are now partners. One respondent indicated that having the principal's support in such a process was also unique!

Another unique feature that was highlighted by several participants was the fact that this appraisal process included a self-evaluation component and a student survey. Other comments about the process included: "Too formal"; "... more in depth, more detailed" and "The encouragement of professional growth / professional development is unique".

8.2.6 Process Growth Realization

There appears to be some consensus with respect to the realization that professional growth has taken place. Respondents seem to be able to perceive that they have "changed" somewhat. Although this is a difficult variable to measure, respondents made several comments suggesting ways that they deduce changes have taken place in their practices and in themselves. These included: "... you start reflecting on your own teaching practices"; "...when I see myself trying to modify my approaches...". "...I realize I don't think the same way anymore. I don't do things the same way anymore".

In any efforts in teacher professional growth and teacher professional development, it is often postulated that enhancing opportunities for teachers will enrich student learning experiences. One respondent who scored very high on both the PTE and GTE scores highlighted the changes she saw in her classroom practices and routines as a result of her professional growth process with her administrator. She indicated, "I found it - direction... that I needed" and that after spending some time with other teachers and researching an area of interest she could see some differences. "There were some students that I was getting absolutely nothing from, because their level was just too ... it

was too high of a level for them Now, I was actually getting work from them". This is one example of how professional growth was realized by one teacher participating in the field test of this new policy document.

9 Findings: Administrators

The school administrator interviews adhered to the same themes as those that arose from the teacher interviews. A total of four school principals have participated in interviews with the researcher. The following discussion summarizes information gleaned from these interviews.

9.1 Process Rationale

School principals were in agreement that teacher professional growth was an essential component of teachers' careers. They indicated that teachers must be provided opportunities to grow professionally, and that administrators needs to support all such initiatives by teachers. As one principal indicated, " I assume every teacher has a strength" and he suggested that efforts must be undertaken to have teachers examine their professional growth needs.

Principals agreed that risk-takers would likely be more successful in this self-directed approach. Also, teachers who are serious about their profession, and can accept constructive criticism are more likely to prevail. One principal was specific in his recommendations: "... you're looking for people who have a sense of humor, you're looking for people who are positive in their outlook, you're looking for people who have a caring disposition...".

9.2 Process Barriers

Principals were also in agreement that time was a major barrier to implementation of this new policy. There was consensus over the fact that much time was needed to sit, meet and discuss professional growth plans and this process with teachers. In addition, principals highlighted the fact

that often times they are responsible for several performance appraisals in the span of one school year, and that this, coupled with routine administrative responsibilities, can become overwhelming, at times. One principal commented that " the more teachers you have, I firmly believe, the less important this becomes, because we have so many other things to be doing". This comment clearly emphasizes the time factor as an issue for administrators.

The school principals interviewed were also in agreement that accountability can sometimes get in the way of professional growth initiatives. As one principal highlighted, "we're often victims of collective agreements" while suggesting that evaluation and performance appraisal endeavors are taken very seriously by teachers, and are often not seen in the same light as professional growth plans. Three (3) of the 4 interviewed principals highlighted a difference in dealing with the tenured, veteran teacher as opposed to the untenured, beginning teacher with respect to planning professional growth experiences. One went as far as to say that even with tenured teachers there are several different subgroups to deal with. At least 2 principals felt that the process went somewhat smoother with new or newer teachers. One commented that "teacher receptivity" was a very important factor influencing the success.

9.3 Process Responsibility

Principals agreed that teachers have primary responsibility for their own learning in this process. This notion supports the definition of SDL espoused in research literature (Candy, 1991; Merriam & Brockett, 1997; Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). Teachers require the "professional freedom" or "autonomy" in this area, commented one principal. These specific suggestions compliment the definition of SDL as advocated in research literature on the topic mentioned beforehand. Another principal commented, " I think teachers always have primary responsibility for

their own learning".

One principal also mentioned the fact that school and district needs should be included in some components of the teachers' plans for professional growth. This same principal also suggested that principals can "lead" or "help" a teacher, but that a "top down" approach cannot work in teacher professional growth initiatives.

9.4 Process Uniqueness

In discussing the uniqueness of the new teacher performance appraisal process, one principal indicated that the process is unique because of the fact that it takes place over the course of several months, perhaps even the full school year, and that there is a plan or a framework to adhere to. This was different because of the fact that in the past, teacher evaluations were often done very quickly, within very short time frames, to satisfy district-level bureaucracy.

Principals were in agreement that the most obvious unique element was the attention being paid to teacher professional growth and improvement in this process. This was unlike other past evaluation 'episodes' in the minds of many principals. Neither principal could disagree with the idea that teacher professional growth was a continuous and ongoing process within education, and to have this incorporated into a teacher performance appraisal process was a very useful mechanism.

One principal indicated that he did not see that professional growth and professional development was encouraged through the new district process, and admitted difficulties separating teacher accountability and teacher professional growth issues.

9.5 Process Growth Realization

There were different ideas and opinions provided with respect to the realization that teacher professional growth had taken place. One principal described this process culmination as "nebulous"

and as being "very difficult to quantify". Another responded that one particular teacher gathered some very valuable information from his students in the student survey suggested in the policy document, and that he could see changes in that person as a result of the feedback from his students. Other comments ranged from being able to see visible changes in teachers, from more open at staff meeting discussions to more willing to share ideas with colleagues on a routine basis.

All of the principals agreed that the process of teacher professional growth is ongoing and continuous, and that although principals may have worked through the new process with several teachers this particular school year, their growth and improvement continues on into future years. As one principal commented, "This particular document encourages teachers to take a good look at themselves".

One principal discussed the difficulty of combining a professional growth process with an accountability process, and that teachers rarely see the two together. He indicated that "teachers do not see evaluation as being for themselves, yet they see evaluation in the classroom as benefitting student growth". These comments were also highlighted in the uniqueness category.

10 Discussion

The quantitative survey instruments administered allowed the researcher to group teachers in terms of TE levels and SDL readiness levels. The teacher interviews uncovered several themes relating to this new process of teacher performance appraisal within School District #3. These were: rationale, implementation, barriers, responsibility, uniqueness and growth realization. These same themes formed the basis of the interviews with administrators.

It appears that teachers' levels of TE influences their attitude toward, and success in, this new teacher performance appraisal process that encourages SDL. This influence, in turn, affects teachers'

professional growth experiences in the process itself. This new process allows for, and encourages, individual differences such as those advocated by Greene (1992). Furthermore, it seems that teachers' willingness to implement innovations is linked to their identified TE levels as is supported by Allinder (1994). Teachers with high levels of TE, particularly PTE, were more likely to see the performance appraisal process as a learning opportunity, and are more likely to experience positive professional growth experiences. This view is supported by Noe et al. (1997).

The teachers interviewed in this study seem to support Blake et al. (1995) in their contention that the most effective and meaningful teacher evaluations are self-directed. There was some confusion amongst respondents with respect to SDL readiness, and the willingness to participate in a professional growth process that places onus on the individual. There was, however, a clear consensus among respondents that their input was a unique attribute of the process, and that having this element of self-direction allowed for more positive professional growth experiences.

It seems that teacher SDL readiness is an unrecognized and unconscious attribute of teachers as professionals in general. Teachers possess this innate characteristic quite unknowingly simply by matter of the career they have chosen, the types of individuals they are, or, in general terms, the passion they have for teaching and learning. In addition, it appears that high SDL readiness levels can positively influence teachers' professional growth experiences in a teacher performance appraisal process that encourages SDL.

Many barriers to implementation were highlighted by both teachers and administrators. The most common of those mentioned was time, from both perspectives. It would seem that the suggestion from the administration of School District 3 to field test this policy and process with one teacher during 1998-99 was a good suggestion, and one that was not adhered to for the most part.

Principals went ahead with multiple teacher performance appraisals using this new policy, and then became burdened with time constraints and other administrative responsibilities. It seems that the intent and objectives of the new teacher performance appraisal process may have been jeopardized as a result of this.

In addition, teachers considered the relationship with administrators a very important factor in determining the success of this performance appraisal process. This relationship could be a barrier to effective policy implementation after consideration of all other local parameters.

11 Conclusion

This research project is ongoing as a doctoral thesis study at the University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. More data has been collected from both teachers and administrators, and more analysis will be completed. Preliminary findings as presented in this paper would suggest that teachers are in agreement that the process is very much self-directed, and is a good direction for School District 3 to be taking with respect to teacher supervision.

In addition, TE levels seem to influence teachers' success in the process. It is uncertain at this juncture if readiness for SDL has an equal or noticeable effect on teachers' professional growth experiences in a process that encourages SDL. More data analysis is required to substantiate both assertions (i.e. TE and SDL) and their influences on teacher professional growth.

Barriers and obstacles influencing implementation have been highlighted by both teacher and administrators. Time and teacher/administrator relationships appear to have an impact on full, intended implementation. Again, more data analysis will provide a clearer understanding of the issues surrounding this conundrum.

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