Influence of Normative Commitment on English as a Second Language Teachers' Implementation of Learner-Centered Practices for Diverse Learners

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Dedication

To my loving family, thank you for making the ultimate sacrifice to allow me to pursue my dream. To you, I am eternally grateful. My heart is filled with love for you all.

To my first teacher, my mom Sheba Delores Tartt, thank you for the gift of literacy and the burning desire to be a life learner. I am forever indebted to you. Without you none of this would have been possible. You have been my "rock" from day one!

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The commitment you demonstrate serves as an exemplar to our profession. Continue to touch the heart and souls of our future and transform the world.

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Dissertation Abstract

Influence of Normative Commitment on English as a Second Language Teachers' Implementation of Learner-Centered Practices for Diverse Learners

In light of the paradigm shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction occurring globally, the need for committed teachers is critical. Due to the influx of foreign nationals securing positions in the U.S. educational system, the teacher workforce has become more diverse. This diversity manifests a broad range of beliefs and values in regard to the teaching and learning process that are culturally inherited by an individual. Hence, "cultural incongruence" between the teacher and school organization is more likely to occur. A lack of understanding of how the cultural and educational aspects of normative commitment influences teachers' implementation of learner-centered instructional practices can lead to school systems experiencing organizational conflict.

Six multicultural English-as-a-second language teachers, three males and three females, representing six countries were purposely selected to participate in the study. The normative commitment survey from Meyer and Allen (2009) Three Component Model of Organizational Commitment, professional performance documents and a semi structured interview served as the data collection methods. The interview data was analyzed using Laughlin et al. (2006) to the start coding process. The information gathered from the surveys and professional review documents was triangulated with the interview data to evaluate consistencies or inconsistencies amongst the sources. The data yielded six reoccurring themes throughout the study. (1) Cultural Congruence, (2) Cultural Incongruence, (3) Paradigm Shifts in Teacher Training, (4) Pedagogical Identity Manifestation, and (5) Societal Obligation. Further, the findings of this study can contribute to the development of cultural educational training with a focus on

instructional methodology for school districts with high English-as-a-second language populations. These findings can also be used in the hiring process in order to evaluate potential organizational congruence.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

> "The aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think, than what to think—rather to improve our minds, so as to enable us to think for ourselves, than to load the memory with the thoughts of other men."—John Dewey

Learner-centered instructional practices have permeated classrooms throughout the years. However, this pedagogical approach has been defined in numerous ways. Pillay (2002) describes learner-centered instruction as "learning that is self-directed and active on the part of the learner participant. Its most common attribute is that the learners' needs are the focal point of the design and delivery of instruction. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (U.S. Department of Education, 2009) and the Individual Disability Education Act (IDEA, 2004) have placed high demands on the accountability on educational leaders and teachers (Duncan-Owens, 2009). These demands require student achievement gaps be reduced by addressing individual educational needs. To date the United States has infused learner-centered instructional practices into the teaching and learning processes, based on the promise of social and economic growth. This has motivated educators to cultivate students who are empowered to negotiate their own learning.

This study explored the learner-centered instructional practices encompassed in the Learner-Centered Educational Model. Salinas and Garr (2009) credits increased student learning to the use of learner-centered practices in a 12th-grade biology class. These students displayed higher levels of reasoning compared with a traditional teacher-centered class setting. Fasko and Grubb's (1997) study of sixth through 12th grade

teachers who rated themselves on their use of learner-centered practices reveals that the most effective teachers showed greater implementation of these practices.

Darling-Hammond (1997) asserts, "No other intervention can make the difference that a knowledgeable, skillful teacher can make in the learning process." However, research ignores the sociological elements of normative commitment such as educational experiences and the cultural backgrounds of the teaching workforce.

Although the normative component of Three Component Model of Organizational Commitment is the least researched form of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 2001), various scholars have attempted to define and develop parameters for its application in the workplace. The most prevalent work is by Meyer and Allen (1990), who define normative commitment as the feeling of debt displayed in the workplace that stems from a person's socialization, cultural background, family ties, educational experiences, and/or religion. Normative commitment is deemed the best predictor for allocentrics—individuals who behave according to the norms and obligations designed to maintain social harmony among members of an in-group (Wasti, 2003, p. 305).

For the purpose of this study, the educational experiences describing how the participants were taught and cultural congruence, the extent to which the teachers' and organizational beliefs and values are aligned was investigated. The cultural component of normative is based upon the demonstrated patterns of action and behaviors learned from respective in-groups from which the teachers originate (Matsumoto et al., 1996).

Although there is limited empirical research exploring the phenomenon of normative commitment's influence on the implementation of learner-centered

instructional practices, Cothran (2005) research findings concluded, "teacher beliefs are a major influence on teacher action." The study investigated teachers' self-reported use of various teaching styles in seven countries with over 1,400 educators. The results use a core of reproduction teaching styles, which consist of standard information presentations. However, the use of production teaching styles, which consist s of individualization and differentiation of instruction, varies. The results also indicate the "cultural influences on teachers' beliefs…were significantly different regarding the potential benefits of teaching styles." Hence, Salmon and Truax (1998) state that teachers "found they taught best the way that they learned best."

Statement of the Problem

> "Teachers are viewed as important agents in the reform effort currently under way in education and thus are expected to play a key role in changing schools and classrooms" Prayat (1992).

In light of the paradigm shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction occurring globally, the need for committed teachers to implement practices based students' needs is critical. Due to the influx of foreign nationals securing positions in the U.S. educational system, the teacher workforce has become more diverse. This diversity manifests a broad range of beliefs and values with regard to the teaching and learning processes that are culturally inherited by an individual. Hence, "cultural incongruence" between the teacher and school organization is more likely to occur. A lack of understanding of how normative commitment influences teachers' implementation of learner-centered instructional practices, can lead to school systems experiencing

organizational conflict. These conflicts are due to the contradiction of cultural norms and the principles embedded in learner-centered instructional practices. The mismatch of cultural infrastructures and learner-centered instructional practices is demonstrated when the expected pedagogy fails to be executed (Altinyelkin, 2010, pp. 165–-167). The reason for practices not being used is due to teachers being more inclined to teach how they were taught (Yilmaz, 2009). This revelation is based on the educational interactions that have contributed to their cultural beliefs and values.

Cothran (2005) reported the pedagogical shift from "reproduction teaching," which involves standard information presentations, to "production teaching," which is the individualization and differentiation of instruction in France for a physical education curriculum that exhibited organizational conflict. The teachers self-reported frequently using both reproductive and production teaching styles despite national curriculum mandates. The term "strategic rhetoric" is used to describe a "change in language with little change in instructional practices of French teachers (Cothran 2005). Cothran asserted this occurs when teachers attempt to provide the "right answer" to demonstrate a buy-in to the prescribed organizational goals. Moore (2000) extends this by suggesting that difficulties occur for teachers when there are apparent areas of mismatch between what official policy instructs and what should be done, and the model of learning and development teachers wish to put into practice based on individual views or beliefs. (p. 41). The views espoused by teachers in the same school constitute what they believe are educational best practices. These best practices are elements of the "teachers' and schools' "pedagogic identities"; in other words, how they perceive and present themselves and their professional practices (p. 42).

The goal of this study was to explore the influence that teachers' normative commitment has on their implementation of learner-centered instructional practices. The existing literature reports on organizational commitment, normative commitment, individualism and collectivism, and the learner-centered practice pattern shift across cultures. However, very little literature has addressed the influence that normative commitment has had on the use of learner-centered strategies.

Henkin and Holliman (2009) assert that "teacher commitment is an important psychological concept associated with individual attachment to work organization, employee retention, job performance and success of current educational reform agendas." Henkin and Holliman's (2009) study shows high levels of interpersonal conflict linked to lower levels of organizational commitment. Interpersonal conflict is "An expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals" (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). The assumption is that employees who commit possess beliefs and values that are aligned with their organization's beliefs and values**.**

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this investigation was to explore how normative commitment influences English as a second language (ESL) teachers' implementation of learner-centered practices. The following questions guide this study:

1. How does normative commitment influence Multicultural elementary ESL teachers' implementation of learner-centered practices for diverse learners?
2. In what ways do teachers' cultural backgrounds influence their commitment to the implementation of learner-centered practices?

3. How do sub-cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism influence learner-centered practice implementation?
4. In what ways do teachers' educational experiences influence their commitment to the implementation of learner-centered practices?
5. How do teachers demonstrate a commitment to the implementation of learner-centered practices?

Statement of Potential Significance

Although a plethora of research has been conducted on organizational commitment and the implementation of instructional practices, research connecting the two constructs is still unexplored. This study responds to this void in the literature regarding how educational experiences and cultural beliefs and values that are demonstrated through patterns of action and behavior (Matsumoto, 1996) influence the implementation of learner-centered instructional practices. This study allows new knowledge to be exposed regarding the presence of "cultural congruence" or the lack of it in an educational institution based on teacher self-reporting and instructional performance documentation.

The researcher believed this qualitative study adds scope and depth to normative commitment research as it relates to the implementation of instructional practices. Due to the number of diverse students enrolling in public educational institutions, teachers must modify their instructional practices. Therefore, this study highlighted the importance of teachers' cultural awareness of themselves and others, how it applies to instruction, and the necessity to consistently address the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Moreover, the findings of this research may be useful for the

expansion of system-wide pedagogical reform initiatives aimed at increasing student achievement. Potential topics for further research would be the comparison of primary and secondary teachers, general education and special education teachers, males and females, and the level of implementation of learner-centered practices and student achievement in schools with diverse populations.

Benefits of the Research

The benefits of this research are the development of rigorous teacher preparation programs and professional development programs. This will be accomplished by identifying the root cause for teachers' commitment to instructional initiatives. This research will go beyond examining curriculum and materials. Teachers' beliefs and values regarding the reform process will be assessed and the patterns of activity and interaction that constitute the teaching and learning processes will be evaluated (Olson, 2007). Carrigan (2009) claims, "one of the best methods for developing continuity and relevancy in ESL classrooms is to incorporate tasks that focus on accomplishing learner goals that are based on student needs and interests." This study will also provide insights into why reform initiatives work for some schools and not others based on sub-cultural dimensions, individualism, and collectivism. These dimensions indicate whether an individual is inclined to conform or resist norms. Moreover, it will encourage school districts to develop intensive programs that reinforce the communities of practice proposed by Wenger (2002), amongst the general, special needs, and Multicultural elementary ESL teachers.

Theoretical Framework

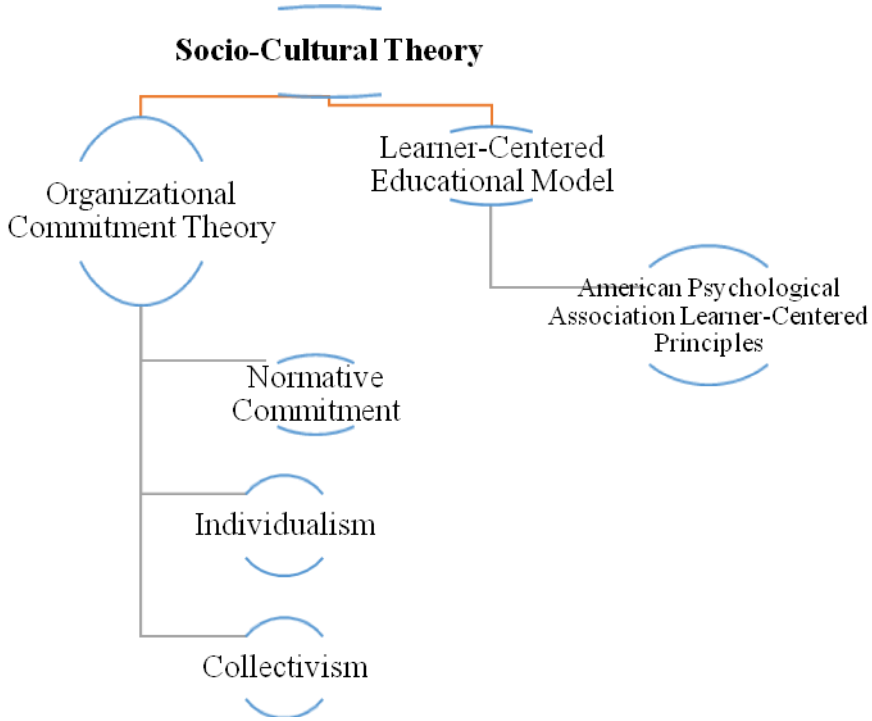

Figure 1. Theoretical framework for the influence of normative commitment on learner-centered practices (2012)

This study is situated within the framework of three key theories that will be outlined in the following order:

1. Socio-Cultural Theory

2. Organizational Commitment Theory

3. Learner-Centered Educational Model

This section describes these three theories individually and then the researcher delineates how these theories are aligned to support the rationale for the research. The Socio-Cultural Theory focuses on the cultural and language growth as posited by Lev Vygotsky. Myer and Allen's (1991) "Three Component Model of Organizational Commitment" is framed in order to provide background information about normative

commitment and its sub-cultural dimensions of individualism and collectivism. The four domains and 14 principles developed by The Learner-Centered Education Model are outlined according to the principles developed by Barbara McCombs and Lynda Miller.

The tenets highlighted in the socio-cultural theory emphasize the work of Vygotsky (1934; 1986) that describes cultural development as it relates to learning and language. Socio-cultural theory is a psychological theory that explores the importance of the contributions a society makes towards the development of an individual. The focus of this theory is on how the interactions of people develop within the culture in which they live. Lev Vygotsky (1934; 1986) is the seminal psychologist for the emergence of this theory. He believed higher-order functions derived from the input of parents, peers, and the individual's culture.

Vygotsky (1934; 1986) stated, "every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first on the social level, and later on the individual level." The social level is referred to as the "inter-psychological" level, whereas the "intra-psychological" level is when development is occurring inside the child. Socio-cultural theory not only relies on how adults and peers influence individual learning, but it also highlights how cultural beliefs and attitudes impact instruction and learning.

"No organization in today's competitive world can perform at peak levels unless each employee is committed to the organization's objectives and works as an effective team member," Coetzee, 2005). The crux of the organizational commitment theory is built on this assumption. However, it is defined in many different ways. Scholl (1981) purports that commitment is, "…a stabilizing force that acts to maintain behavioral direction when expectancy/equity conditions are not met and do not function…the

relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization," (Mowday et al., 1979). Allen and Meyer (1990) assert that it is "…a psychological state that binds the individual to the organization." In this study, the interest is in normative commitment that is one of the three components of Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three Component Model of Organizational Commitment. Normative commitment is

> …induced by a feeling of obligation to remain with an organization…such feelings are characterized as, 'generalized value of loyalty and duty…this an almost natural predisposition to be loyal and committed to institution such as family, marriage, country, religion and employment organizations as a result of socialization in a culture.' (Prabhakar & Padmakumar, 2001)

This study also explored how the cultural dimensions of individualism and collectivism in normative commitment are manifested and how they relate to the implementation of learner-centered practices.

Although there is a plethora of learning theories, education reform efforts are geared towards making the "learner" central to the teaching and learning processes (Dolence, 2003). The Learner-Centered Psychological Principles developed by the American Psychological Association (APA) and McCombs and Whistler (1997) consists of four domains and 14 principles. The four domains are cognitive and meta-cognitive factors, motivational and affective factors, developmental and social factors, and individual differences factors. Each domain describes a psychological factor and the proposed demonstrated behaviors of the learner and the teacher. In 1997, the APA

adopted the Learner-Centered Psychological Principles as the official framework for redesigning K–-20 education (McCombs & Miller, 2009). McCombs and Miller (2009) assert, "…these principles, representing over a century of research, have been advocated by many well-known educators…." The reform concepts encompassed in the Learner-Centered Principles are attributed to the work of Dewey, Bruner, and Schwab (McCombs & Miller, 2009).

Socio-cultural theory is the umbrella that tethers organizational commitment and learner-centered education due to "cultural interaction" being a contributing factor for both.

The connection between organizational commitment and the implementation of learner-centered practices mirrors functionalism, a branch of the Social Transmission Theory. Functionalism is described as operations comparable to those exhibited in living organisms. These functions are necessary to sustain life; just as the functions are executed in societies in order to maintain order and cultivate growth and development (Demarrai, 2004). Demarrai (2004) argues that the most important catalyst for sustainability is transmission:

> Like living organisms, all societies possess basic functions which they must carry out to survive. Like living organisms, they evolve structures to carry out the functions. For example, the human body is composed of many interdependent organs, each of which carries out a vital function. Every organ must be healthy and all must work together to maintain the health of the entire body. If any organ malfunctions, the entire body may die. Similarly, societies in order to survive

> develop specialized structures to carry out vital functions as they reproduce themselves, recruit or produce new members, distribute goods and services and allocate power. (Demarrai, 2004)

Ultimately, teachers who are committed to operating within the school system will implement the learner-centered practices as mandated in order to maintain functionality and produce viable new members of society. Therefore, the teachers as a part of a school system are held accountable for implementing learner-centered practices. Actions to the contrary would be viewed as a conflict that is outside the norm or pathological. Hence, teacher commitment is a crucial factor for ensuring that systems put in place are operating accordingly to sustain the success of the school organization.

Bonk and Cunningham (1999) assert that traditional teacher-centered models of instruction in which knowledge is transmitted from a teacher to a student are being phased out and replaced by alternative models such as the Learner-Centered Educational Model. This model allows the instruction to shift to the constructive activities of the learner. Teachers are now realizing that learners need to secure their learning in real-world contexts that make learning meaningful. As stated, "In employing constructivism some teachers believe that better learning occurs when knowledge is the result of situated construction of reality" (Bonk & Cunningham, 1999). Constructivist theory is recognized as supporting learner-centered instruction. Lev Vygotsky, a social constructivist, views learning as a collaborative effort in which learners are immersed in social interaction settings and knowledge emerges (Bonk & Cunningham, 1999).

The preliminary literature review confirmed that an adequate base of research is established on organizational commitment and the Learner-Centered Educational Model. The research on teachers' commitment to their profession indicates that committed employees have a strong belief in, and acceptance of, their organizations' goals and values (Henkin & Holliman, 2009). Henkin and Holliman (2009) also note high levels of commitment are tied to commitment norms among peers, which translates to fidelity of collaborative activities within the school. A more detailed discussion of the literature on organizational commitment, normative commitment specifically, and learner-centered practices is presented in Chapter 2.

Basis in Research Literature

The review incorporated several diverse areas of the literature based on the concepts explored, each of which contributes to the relevancy of the study and its findings. The literature review section addresses the following topics:

1. Historical constructs of organizational commitment
2. Socio-cultural connections to forms of organizational commitment
3. Historical constructs of the Learner-Centered Education Model
4. Learner-Centered Educational Model principles
5. Paradigm shift from teacher-centered instruction to learner-centered instruction
6. Learner-centered practices and the impact on diverse learners
7. The use of learner-centered practices globally

Summary of Methodology

This interpretive qualitative study investigated the commitment exhibited by elementary school multicultural elementary ESL teachers who use learner-centered practices. Cohn and Lyons (2003) describe interpretive qualitative study as a form of research that helps researchers understand human experience. Klein and Meyers (1999) state that interpretive research allows for the understanding of human thoughts and actions in social and organizational contexts.

The research took place in an urban school district. Teacher participants instruct ESL learners. The schools selected were chosen by geographical location, the percentage of students receiving English language learner supplemental services, and the demographics of the student body. The teachers were selected from a pool of multicultural ESL educators who serve at elementary schools.

The following forms of data were used: normative surveys, professional documents, and interviews. The normative commitment survey (eight items) provides insight into the teachers' level of normative commitment. The normative commitment survey yields evidence of an individualist or collectivist mindset. The surveys were utilized to tether the information compiled from semi-structured interviews and professional document review. The performance data obtained from the professional document review of classroom observations revealed a pattern of learner-centered or teacher-centered practices observed by school administrators and master educators.

Lastly, interviews were conducted. Interviews are described as person-to-person conversations between a researcher and a participant. These conversations facilitated

purposeful questioning that elicits specialized information from a participant that cannot be obtained via a survey (Merriam, 2009). This study used the semi-structured interview format in order to gain information that allowed the researcher to construct meaning as asserted by Crotty (1998). The semi-structured interviews provided participants' authentic thoughts and feelings about the influence of culture and educational experience on their choice of instructional strategies. The duration will be 60 minutes; however, this depends on the participant's investment in the process.

Subjectivity of the Researcher

Peshkin (1988) found that whatever the substance of our persuasions at any given point, our subjectivity will remain an insistent presence of which we must remain on guard for, and aware of, during the research process. There exist both personal and professional biases in the researcher's process as it pertains to her experience with teachers' organizational commitment and the implementation of a system-wide initiative such as learner-centered instruction. As an elementary school teacher who transitioned from corporate banking to the education field, she found it difficult to grapple with the art and science of teaching as a whole. That being said, she was hired without having the foundational coursework required that would support and cultivate her professional skills as a teacher. As a result, she adhered to directions contained in the teacher's editions of every textbook used. She grappled with thoughts of how she was taught, what is deemed the best way to teach, how she prefers to learn, and how to transfer that knowledge into practice.

These thoughts were prevalent, even though she had no prior knowledge of multiple intelligences or learner-centered practices. Ultimately, the researcher always

believed learning should be fun, challenging, and, most of all, interactive. Therefore, she began to seek out lessons that she believed met these criteria. This preparation was time-consuming compared with reading directly from a teaching manual. However, it was also more rewarding for her students and herself. The researcher was labeled as an effective teacher based on her use of learner-centered practices before it was mandated by her school district.

As an instructional coach, she assists teachers with shifting their practice from teacher-centered to learner-centered methods. Through her work, she has witnessed first-hand accounts of how lower levels of commitment to school initiatives affect the productivity and quality of instructional delivery. The most predominant complaints regarding this shift are the fact that preparation for learner-centered instruction requires more time and the relinquishing of power to the students to guide instruction.

Throughout her childhood, much emphasis was placed on education and the exploration of creative endeavors. The support came from her family and teachers from elementary through university levels. Therefore, once she was in the classroom, she drew knowledge from what came natural and most comfortable to her. Moreover, the researcher believed in the eclectic form of instruction due to the success she experienced using it.

Limitations

1. The study is limited to the environment in which the teachers instruct culturally and linguistically diverse students in an urban school system.

2. The outcomes in this study are relevant to teachers and administrators in school systems under reform.
3. This study can only apply to a school system that utilizes an evaluation system based on the APA learner-centered principles.
4. The study is based on teachers' self-reporting of cultural nuances and their educational experiences as they perceived these occurrences.
5. Teachers are included who were trained by the school systems' professional developers on learner-centered practices in the past three years.

Delimitations

1. This study comprises the personal accounts of the role that cultural and educational experiences played in influencing teacher commitment to implementing learner-centered practices for elementary-level multicultural elementary ESL teachers, and not middle, secondary, general education, or special education teachers.
2. Although previous research implies the impact learner-centered practices have on student achievement, this study will only report on the influence a teacher's normative commitment has had on the implementation of learner-centered practices.
3. The past instructional practices unrelated to learner-centered practices are not analyzed unless the teacher uses them in attempts to compare and contrast the instructional practices they employed before the system-wide initiative was mandated.

Assumptions

1. This study is comprised of a myriad of assumptions that include, but are not limited to, the teachers being identified as highly qualified as specified by the No Child Left Behind Act (2001).
2. The school and teachers adhere to the system-wide pedagogical initiative in which learner-centered strategies are embedded.
3. Teachers participating in the study received the prescribed professional development on the learner-centered strategies.
4. It can also be assumed that the teachers participating would provide honest and accurate responses to questions posed in the interviews and surveys.

Definitions of Key Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms have been defined to ensure an understanding of their core contexts in this research.

Collectivist. Collectivist cultures are those in which the "self is defined primarily in terms of in-group membership, with the family," work groups, and peers (Guzley, Fumiyo, & Chalmers, 1998). Triandis (1989) also contends that people in collectivist cultures do what is the norm and is expected of them whether they want to do so or not.

Commitment. Henkin and Holliman (2008) view commitment as have three dimensions: affective, continuance, and normative. The affective connects an individual through emotions, the continuance allows for awareness of the cost to leave an

organization, and the normative reflects feelings of obligation to continue an association with an organization. It is a formidable force in one's life as a professional and serves as an important source of need fulfillment.

Culture. Triandis (1993) defines culture as "shared attitudes, beliefs, categorizations, expectations, norms, roles, self-definitions, values…language, historical period and geographic regions." Matsumoto el al. (1996) extends this definition by stating, "culture reflects learned patterns of action and behavior…reflects race, ethnicity and other demographic attributes," such as religion "…reflects a way of life…for a group of people that is handed down from generation to generation."

Cultural congruence. Cultural congruence occurs when there is an alignment between individuals and the organizations in which they are employed or are engaged with based on traditional infrastructures. (Tartt-Walker, 2014).

Cultural Incongruence. Cultural incongruence occurs when there is a demonstrated mismatch between individuals and the organizations in which they are employed or are engaged with based on traditional infrastructures in place. This can occur when a person enters an organization with a predisposition of beliefs and values exhibited from an opposing culture (Tartt-Walker, 2014).

Hermeneutics. Crotty (1998) states, "hermeneutics is a sharing of meaning between communities or persons…it grounds the meaning of text…accounts tend to be taken as the intentions and histories of the author."

Implementation. A source of experiences used by managers of education that test and improve programming (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984).

Individualist. Cultures in which the "self is defined predominantly in terms of independence from other people and groups" (Hofstede,1991; Markus & Kitayama, 1991;Triandis, 1995).

Interpersonal Conflict. "An expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals" (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007).

Learner-Centered Instructional Model. Pillay (2002) defines this as the learning that is self-directed and active on the part of the learner participant. Its most common attribute is that the learners' needs are made the focal point of the design and delivery of instruction.

Normative Commitment. Meyer and Allen (1990) define normative commitment as being mainly affected by an individual's socialization and/or culture, family ties, school experiences, or religion prior to entering an organization. A person will remain with an organization after determining that doing so is the "right" thing to do and is expected (Weibo et al., 2010).

Pedagogic Identity. Describes how "teachers and school organizations perceive and present themselves and professional practices" to the public **(**Moore, 2000, p. 42).

Phenomenology. Crotty (1998) describes phenomenology as a state of revisiting an experience in our life and making sense of it.

Production Teaching Styles. A constructivist teaching model emphasizing individualization that incorporates problem-solving and differentiation of tasks (Cothran, 2005).

Progressive Teaching Styles. Instruction that include cooperative learning, problem-solving, and the differentiation of tasks that meet the needs of individual students **(**Moore, 2000, p. 12).

Reproduction Teaching Styles. A traditional teaching model that comprises standard information presentation and student performance (Cothran, 2005).

Strategic Rhetoric. Occurs when there is a change in the description of instructional practices with little or no change in practices (Cothran, 2005).

*Teacher-centered***.** Textbook-driven and content-focused instructional approach that consists of lectures, recitations, and drills (Yilmaz, 2009).

Transmissive Teaching Style. Teacher-centered instruction that consists of lectures and textbook instruction **(**Moore, 2000, p. 12).

Summary of Chapter

This chapter briefly described the problems related to the research topic and outlined the research questions. The chapter then described the theoretical framework and provided an overview of the methodology that will be used in the study. Data was collected through surveys, interviews, and reviews of professional documents. Multiple levels of coding were used for data analysis. The chapter also discussed the limitations, delimitations, assumptions that may affect the study and defines key terms that clarify processes, classifications, and pedagogy that are uncommon.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Purpose and Methods of the Literature Review

The literature review focuses on topics within organizational commitment theory and the Learner-Centered Education Model. Each topic is defined and specific sub-topics, such as normative commitment, individualism and collectivism, and learner-centered instructional practices, are discussed. The instructional behaviors of educators from countries classified as individualist or collectivist are also compared. In addition, the discussion also includes the paradigm shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction and training disparities and best practices for diverse learners. As a result, the review introduces the underlying cultural influences that may possibly enhance or dissipate the implementation of learner-centered instructional practices.

In order to support this study, a myriad of databases were investigated that addressed various education, sociology, and business models. The databases used are as follows: ERIC, Academic Premier, Psyc Info, ProQuest, Education Abstracts, JSTOR, and Google Scholar. The keywords and phrases utilized were teacher commitment, organizational commitment, and normative commitment; student-centered instruction, learner-centered instruction, and learner-centered instruction for diverse learners; teacher commitment and learner-centered instruction implementation; collectivism; individualism; collectivism in education; and individualism in education. The aforementioned keywords and phrases were searched individually as indicated. The requests were limited to peer-reviewed articles and books in the English language. In addition, consultations were conducted with the university's research librarian and the reference lists contained in articles and books were also used. Abstracts were read to

evaluate the noteworthiness of articles for this literature review. The criteria set forth were the need to indicate cultural and educational experiences as a form of enculturation and the impact of the learner-centered practices. The research cited in this study spans from 1951 through 2011, due to the historical context of organizational commitment and learner-centered instruction. Table 2.1 outlines the sources located, the keywords activated in each search, and the criteria.

Table 2.1

Summary of research gathering process for theoretical framework and literature review

Sources	**Keywords**	**Criteria**
ERIC ERIC Plus Education Abstracts JSTOR Google Scholar Pro Quest Psyc Info EBL (EBooks) Academic Premier Dissertations Research Librarian Reference Lists Worldcast	Teacher commitment Organizational commitment Normative commitment Student-centered instruction Learner-centered instruction Learner-centered instruction For diverse learners Teacher commitment and Learner-center instruction implementation Collectivism Individualism Collectivism in education Individualism in education	No date limitations Original research on Seminal theoretical texts Abstracts read

Overview of Chapter Structure

This chapter begins with a brief history of organizational commitment that is followed by the Three Component Model (TCM) of organization. The introduction of the TCM serves as the prelude to the element of the TCM that this study explored:

normative commitment. The chapter focuses on how cultural and educational experiences that influence collectivist and individualist mindsets are revealed in the workplace. The development of the learner-centered psychological principles is introduced and examples are provided about how the principles are applied in the classroom. Due to the gap in the literature, connecting the normative commitment of teachers and the influence it has on the implementation of learner-centered practices is non-existent. Therefore, the implications for further research are presented. The review attempts to tie the two constructs. Lastly, the chapter is summarized.

The first gap to be explored is the development of a normative commitment in the area of an individual's "personal values and dispositions that reflect cultural socialization," in an educational setting (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2001). The rationale for pursuing this topic is influenced by Clusston, Howell, and Dorfman (2000) and Wasti (1998 ;2005) who found individual differences in cultural values, specifically collectivism and power distance correlated positively with normative commitment to an organization. This revelation shows positive correlations with desired outcome variables such as employee performance and organizational commitment behavior, (Meyer et al., 2001).

Theoretical Framework

Socio-Cultural Theory

The theoretical framework of this study consists of the Socio-Cultural Theory, Organizational Commitment Theory, and the Learner-center Education Model.

1. The tenets of sociocultural theory are outlined in the work of Lev Vygotsky.

2. Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three Component Model of Organizational Commitment provides the foundation for the normative commitment construct.
3. The Learner-Centered Education model is explained by beginning with the philosophy of Socrates through the development of the Learner-Centered Principles.

The diagram below provides a pictoral description of how the three constructs' principles overlap.

Vygotsky, a socio-cultural theorist, describes how society deposits crucial cultural elements that develop an individual. His sociocultural perspective yields implications that support the idea of the teaching and learning process as being fundamentally culturally based, (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Vygotsky, a seminal psychologist, theorizes that a child's cultural development occurs on two planes. The first is the social level with family, peers, and the community (inter-psychological) and then on the individual level with themselves, (intra-psychological) (Vygotsky, 1934; 1986). Vygotsky stresses that cognitive and communicative higher order functioning in a child could only develop through social interaction (Vygotsky, 1934; 1986). The focus of sociocultural theory does not only exalt the influence adults and peers have on an individual's learning process, but it also depicts how cultural beliefs, values, and attitudes impact instructional practices, are implemented, and then learning occurs (Cherry, 2012).

Organizational Commitment Theory

The Organizational Commitment Theory has been transformed since the 1960s, as four schools of thought have been introduced: (1) Becker's (1960) Side-Bet Theory, (2) the Middle Affective-Dependence Period, (3) the Multi-Dimension Period, (4) and the New Development Phase. Normative Commitment is this study's focus and is derived from Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three Component Model of Organizational Commitment. Normative commitment emphasizes how an individual's cultural, educational experiences and societal norms influence his/her commitment to an organization. The subordinate dimensions of normative commitment are individualism and collectivism. An individualist mindset is aligned with individual goals. In contrast, the collectivist mindset exhibits characteristics of group conformity.

Learner-Centered Educational Model

The Learner-Centered Educational Model is deeply rooted in the constructs of Vygotskian theory. The inputs from parents, peers, and society shape the individual's cognitive development theory interaction. Students are also provided with the means to facilitate their own learning and develop higher order thinking skills throughout their learning experiences.

Brief History of Organizational Commitment

This brief history of organizational commitment will discuss four critical periods of organizational commitment theory from the 1960s to the present. The periods occurred in the following order: (1) Becker's Side-Bet Theory, (2) Middle Affective Dependent Period, (3) Multi-Dimension Period, and (4) the New Development Period.

Side-Bet Theory

Becker's Side-Bet theory is one of the earliest attempts to explain the relationship individuals develop with their organizations (Weibo, Kaur, & Jun, 2010). This theory describes a contract between the employee and organization that binds the two entities by an economic exchange (Weibo et al., 2010).

It implies that a committed employee is only committed due to hidden investments that are referred to as "side bets" (Weibo et al., 2010). These side bets are the accumulation of investments valued by the individual (Weibo et al., 2010). Becker (1960) argues these investments over time make it more difficult for the employee to leave the organization (Weibo et al., 2010). Becker (1960) also asserts an employee's voluntary turnover behavior and organizational commitment have a causal relationship. He identifies organizational commitment as a predictor for voluntary turnover. Later research conducted by Ritzer and Trice (1969) support this theory. The Ritzer Trice Scale (RTS) measures an employee's perceived loss Alutto and Hrebmiah (1973) altered the scale and renamed it the Hrebmiah Alutto Scale (HAS). To date, it has been reported to lack content and discriminant validity.

Although the side-bet theory was dismissed as the prominent commitment theory, its influence is evident in Meyer and Allen's (1991) scale that introduced continuance

and affective commitment (Weibo et al., 2010). This scale was developed in order to better test the validity of the side-bet approach.

Middle Affective-Dependence Period

The second period of organizational commitment shifted from the accumulation of investments as described by side bets to psychological attachments someone has to an organization. Affective-dependence is a form of commitment that is attitude centered (Weibo et al., 2010). Porter et al. (1974) define commitment as "...The relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization..." (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Weibo et al., 2010). Porter et al.'s (1974) Exchange Theory is recognized as the main explanation for how the process of commitment unfolds (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Weibo et al., 2010).

The three factors that characterize commitment are as follows: (a) a strong belief in, and acceptance of, the organization's goals and values; (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on the behalf of the organization; and (c) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (Mowday et al., 1979). Porter et al. (1974) document these factors as contributing to the development of constructs established for organizational commitment. The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire emerged from this research. This tool consists of 15 items that follow the characteristics of the three aforementioned factors and satisfies the test of reliability.

O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) contest the items presented in the tool, claiming that they are more geared towards turnover, performance, and behavior intentions rather than attitudes, (Weibo et al., 2010). Moreover, O'Riley and Chatman (1986) state it is

difficult to differentiate between the three dimensions and Porter's theory (Weibo et al., 2010). For this reason, caution was placed on future research that pursued using this instrument (Weibo et al., 2010). In order to correct the issue, two abbreviated versions of the scale were developed. Lastly, six items that were negatively phrased were eliminated from the nine-item scale (Becker & Wilson, 2000; Weibo et al., 2010).

Multi-Dimension Period

After the passing of the one-dimensional era, the multi-dimensional approaches emerged through the work of O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) and Meyer and Allen (1984) (Weibo et al., 2010). The O'Reilly and Chatman theory focused on the "antecedents and consequences of commitment and the outcomes for a tax on the other" (Weibo et al., 2010). O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) defined commitment as the psychological attachments felt by the person for the organization, reflecting the degree to which the individual internalizes or adopts the characteristics or perspectives of the organization (Weibo et al., 2010).

O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) introduced three independent factors: (a) compliance or instrumental involvement for specific, extrinsic rewards, (b) identification or involvement based on a desire for affiliation, and (c) internalized involvement predicated on the congruence between individual and organizational values.

The first factor describes compliance being the weaker form of commitment due to the need for extrinsic rewards (Weibo et al., 2010). The second and third factors—identification and internalization—are much stronger forms of commitment due to the psychological attachments formed (Weibo et al., 2010). Another contribution of O'Reilly

and Chatman (1986) was the concept of the "outcomes of organizational commitment" (Weibo et al., 2010).

These outcomes manifest organizational citizenship behaviors that may be relevant in regards to commitment. The dominant theory for the past 20 years has been the three-dimensional scales of Meyer and Allen (1984, 1990, 1997). This approach exhibits the remnants of the theories of Becker (1960) and Porter et al. (1974). Meyer and Allen's (1984) approach emerged to contest the appropriateness of the side-bet approach, due to its measuring attitudinal commitment opposed to side bets (Weibo et al., 2010). Meyer and Allen (1984) state that in order to measure side bets, one must use measures that "directly assess individuals' perceptions regarding the number and magnitude of the side bet they have made" (Weibo et al., 2010).

Meyer and Allen (1984) tested their theory by comparing the overlapping relationship across various common commitment scales and developed what is now known as affective commitment and continuous commitment constructs (Weibo et al., 2010). The affective commitment scale evaluates "commitment characterized by positive feelings of identification with and involves the work organization" (Weibo et al., 2010). The continuance scale was designed to assess the level at which an employee feels committed to the organization based on the loss he/she may incur if a decision is made to leave (Weibo et al., 2010). The third component developed, normative commitment, is defined as "a feeling of obligation to continue employment... employees with a high level of normative commitment feel that they ought to remain within the organization" (Meyer & Allen, 1990; Weibo et al., 2010).

Meyer and Allen (1990) extend the definition of normative commitment by stating that it is also affected mainly by socialization and/or culture prior to entry into an organization (Weibo et al., 2010). Meyer and Allen's (1984; 1993) Three Component Model of organization commitment and normative commitment will be discussed later in the chapter.

New Developments

Two-Dimensional Commitment Model

One of the two new developments in the evolution of organizational commitment was based on two dimensions: time and style of commitment (Weibo et al., 2010). The first aspect of the two-dimensional approach is the timing of the commitment. The timing of commitment differentiated between commitment propensity of an individual "before entry into the organization and commitment which develops after entry into the organization" (Cohen, 2007; Weibo et al., 2010).

The second dimension is the basis of commitment that illustrates a clear distinction between commitment based on instrumental considerations such as extrinsic rewards and those based on psychological attachments (Weibo et al., 2010). Conceptually, this four-part model is broken down into two forms that occur pre-entry: instrumental commitment propensity and pre-entry normative commitment propensity (Weibo et al., 2010).

Instrumental commitment propensity is an individual's preconceived notion of what the quality of exchange will be within an organization with regards to the benefits

and the rewards that may be obtained (Weibo et al., 2010). The normative commitment propensity aspect is defined as

> The belief that one has a moral obligation to demonstrate loyalty and duty in all social situation in which one has significant involvement…a committed individual retains membership...because it is right and expected…is a stable attitude and is rooted in one's past experience, particularly culture and socialization. (Weibo et al., 2010; Meyer & Allen, 1990; Cohen, 2007)

The goal of Cohen's (2007) Two-Dimensional Model was to resolve two potential issues with the high correlation between affective commitment and normative commitment (Weibo et al., 2010). Cohen (2007) attempts to resolve the discrepancies by (1) taking an attitudinal approach to avoid blending predictive intentions with outcome variables of behavior, (2) a distinction outlining the commitment propensity before and after entry into an organization, (3) identification of motivational forces, and (4) affective commitment rank the highest form of commitment compared to instrumental commitment.

Combined Influence of Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment

Somer (2009) introduced the second development in organizational commitment. This approach suggests the research of organizational commitment should focus on the combined effects of commitment on work outcomes (Weibo et al., 2010). Somers' (2009) research was geared more towards exploring the combined influences of commitment as it relates to employee retention and citizenship behavior. Somers (2009) hypothesized that the following commitment profiles make up organizational

commitment: highly committed, affective dominant, continuance dominant, normative dominant; these are, rendered respectively as AC–CC dominant, AC–NC, and CC–NC dominant and uncommitted. The research asserts the process of commitment is far more complex than initially surmised. The occurrences that support this statement are when AC and NC are high, and thus the potential negative effects of CC are attenuated possibly because employees do not feel stuck in their organizations, but rather invested in them (Weibo et al., 2010). Somers (2009) asserts the "potential negative affect of CC seemed to be mitigated when AC and NC are also high at least for employee retention."

The Three Component Model of Organizational Commitment

Meyer and Allen (1990) introduced in the three component model (TCM) of organizational commitment and it quickly gained popularity. Meyer and Allen's (1990) model describes an employee's commitment reflects a desire, need, or obligation to maintain membership in an organization. This can be manifested in three ways: affective commitment, continuance of commitment, and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1990).

Affective commitment is the psychological attachment an employee has to an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1990; Coetzee, 2005; Prabhakar & Padmakumar, 2011). This emotional state allows the employees to identify with the organization and volunteer to be actively involved in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1990; Coetzee, 2005). Ultimately, they remain with an organization because they want to (Meyer & Allen, 1990; Prabhakar & Padmakumar, 2011).

Continuance commitment refers to an employee's awareness of the impact costs on a decision to remain with an organization. Coetzee (2005) states that a continuance commitment is exhibited when the potential threat to perceived costs are wasted time and effort spent acquiring non-transferable skills, losing attractive benefits, giving up seniority-based privileges, or having to uproot family, and disrupt personal relationships. Consequently, the reason for remaining with the organization is necessity.

Normative commitment is expressed as feelings of obligation to remain with an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1990; Coetzee, 2005). Meyer and Allen (1991) suggest these emotions may result for two reasons. The first is described as an internalization of normative pressures impressed upon an individual prior to entering organization due to family or cultural experiences. The second would be rewards presented to an employee in advance, such as tuition assistance for college or professional development (Coetzee, 2005). These incentives increase the chances of an employee being more inclined to feel an obligation to reciprocate by committing to the organization in order to repay a debt (Coetzee, 2005; Scholl, 1981).

Prabhakar and Padmakumar (2011) recognize that these are commonalities in the use among the three types of commitment; however, "these three classifications of commitment are conceptually and empirically separable." One of the greatest concerns regarding the model is the overlap between affective and normative commitment. Questions arise regarding the relevance of the normative component due to the closeness of the psychological descriptions of employees to organizations (Weibo et al, 2010).

Meyer and Allen (1991) revised the three-component model scales of affective, continuance, and normative from eight items to six items to overcome discrepancies (Weibo et al., 2010). Meyer et al. (2001) state that, although affective and normative commitment show similar patterns of correlations with antecedents and consequence variables, the magnitudes of the correlations are often quite different. The distinguishable differences "in the moderating effects of geographic location of correlations involving affective and normative commitment have been identified" (Meyer et al., 2001, p. 41).

Three-Component Model Employee Commitment Survey

The TCM employee survey is based on Myer and Allen (1991; 1997). The tool consists of three well-validated scales: affective commitment scale (ACS), the normative commitment scale in (NCS), and the continuance commitment scale (CCS). Each of the scales can be scored and used separately in order to identify the commitment profile of the employees within an organization (Meyer & Allen, 2004). The TCM employee commitment survey has two versions, the original eight-item survey and the revised six-item survey, as mentioned previously (Meyer & Allen, 2004). The items include statements that pertain to how the employee perceives a relationship with an organization and the rationale for remaining with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 2004). The TCM employee scale uses a Likert scale that ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The three scales are integrated when administered together. An average of the items within a scale is taken to yield an overall score (Meyer & Allen, 2004).

The version of the instrument the researcher uses to conduct the study is typically based on the desired length of the tool and what is to be measured. The original version in NCS includes information about the basis for individuals' obligation, and the revised version is geared towards the feeling of obligation without designating a specific source.

The items of the NCS that are aligned to how an individual internalizes the norms "occurs when influence is excepted because the attitudes and behaviors one is being encouraged to adopt work with existing values" (Coetzee, 2005). These pre-existing values stem from the family or cultural experiences the individual encountered before entering the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Weibo et al., 2009). The next section highlights normative commitment and extends the conversation regarding organizational goals and change initiatives.

Normative Commitment

Normative commitment is the third component of the Three Component Model (TCM) of Meyer and Allen (1991). Meyer and Parfyonova (2010) define normative as being characterized by a mindset of obligation. This obligation stems from the idea that they must remain with the organization in order to support a change initiative. Normative commitment can be experienced in two ways. The first is an individual's moral duty and the second is a sense of indebtedness (Meyer & Parfyonova , 2010). Although normative commitment is the newest of the three component models, it is considered to be the most under-studied to date.

The idea of commitment based on obligation has had roots embedded in sociological theory since the 1960s and 1970s (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). Evaluative-

control commitment was described by Kanter (1968, p. 501) as a "commitment to norms, values and inner convictions which morally obligate the individual (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). Kantor (1968) also argues cohesion commitment (ties to social relationships) and continuance commitment (commitment to social roles related to extrinsic motivation, costs, and rewards) differ greatly from that of normative commitment (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). Etzioni (1975; 1999) states individual behavior is influenced by moral involvement in an organization through internalization of organizational goals and values. Norms are more influential than cost base commitment when organizational change occurs (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010).

Wiener (1982) presented a model that represents an individual's commitment to an organization. Organizational commitment is defined as the "totality of internalized pressures to act in a way that meets organizational goals and interests" (Wiener, 1982). Two types of internalized normative beliefs held by members are described as being the immediate determinant of the commitment. The first is generalized as loyalty and duty, and the second is organizational identification (Wiener, 1982). Wiener (1982) also asserts commitment is influenced by both personal predispositions and organizational intervention. The focus of the normative approach is based on personal normative beliefs as determinants of commitment. As a result, the normative approach

> …recognizes that some people are more likely to develop commitment toward a particular organization than other people…. This commitment predisposition, or 'pronenes,' is determined by the particular configuration of the two dimensions—generalized loyalty and duty, and value congruency—prior to entry into the organization. (Wiener, 1982, p. 424)

Lydon (1996) is aligned with person-organization fit. He contends values play a crucial role with regard to commitment (Liu & Cohen, 2010). Lydon (1996) extends his belief by stating an individual demonstrates more organizational commitment to goals, projects, and life tasks when he/she is aligned with its values, beliefs, and identities as "…they serve as a bridge from the self to life experiences by informing us about the meaning that life experiences have for us" (Liu & Cohen, 2010, p. 496). This statement acts as a segue to the point also made that "employees from different socio-cultural backgrounds bring different career aspirations and value systems to their work" (Liu & Cohen, 2010; Fischer & Smith, 2006, p. 493).

Individualism–Collectivism

The cultural dimensions individualism and collectivism are the focus of most theoretical and empirical investigations (Wasti, 2003). These two dimensions are referred to as cultural syndromes. They describe rules of the self (Wasti, 2003; Triandis, 1995, Kagitcibasi, 1997). Individualists are characterized by primarily referencing their own thoughts, feelings, and actions rather than those of others (Wasti, 2003). Collectivists are deemed as being interdependent, which "entails seeing oneself as part of an encompassing social relationship and recognizing that one's behavior is contingent on what the individual needs to be the thoughts, feelings and actions of the important others, namely, the group" (Wasti, 2003; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Cross-Cultural Perspective

The cross-cultural perspective gives way to how nations are viewed with regard to individualist and collectivist mindsets. The common belief among scholars is that Western countries such as Western Europe, North America, and Australia have the traits of individualists. Non-Western countries such as Asia, South America, and Africa are characterized as having collectivists mindsets (Green, Deschamps, & Paez, 2005). The study by Green, Deschamps, and Paez (2005) examined how "individual patterns of endorsements of individualist and collectivist attitudes were distributed within and across 20 countries" (p. 323). Three specific dimensions were investigated: self-reliance, group-based interdependence, and competiveness. Realistically, individualism and collectivism are constructs that are so complex that they cannot be reduced to a single sub-dimension in order to define. Therefore, Green, Deschamps and Paez (2005) manage to create a "typology of individuals"…..that distinguishes typical combinations of the three dimensions on the intra-individual level, irrespective of national membership" (Green, Deschamps, & Paez, 2005, p. 324).

The study consisted of the distribution of questionnaires to 2,546 university students in 20 countries. The participants expressed their attitudes in regards to competiveness, self-reliance, and interdependence (Green, Deschamps, & Paez, 2005). The findings revealed that, regardless of the given typology for a group within a country, variability was observed (Green, Deschamps, & Paez, 2005, p. 333). The most frequent type identified in the research was the interdependent non-competition. This type was found in Portugal, Spain, Belgium, the United States, and the wealthier regions of South American nations usually classified as collectivistic (Green, Deschamps, & Paez, 2005, p. 333). Self-reliant competition was found to be most prevalent among individuals from

Lebanon, Russia, Turkey, and China, which is indicative of individualistic mindsets (Green, Deschamps, & Paez, 2005, p. 334).

The findings suggest that "competiveness can be associated with both individualism and collectivism"…the results allude to the cause being a combination of both self-reliance and group-oriented interdependence (Green, Deschamps, & Paez, 2005, p. 324). The researchers extended their interpretation of the findings to state the "predominance of competitive goals in collectivist countries" is based on the motivation of the individual which may derive from social and collective concerns (Green, Deschamps, & Paez, 2005, p. 334). Green, Deschamps, and Paez (2005) assert interdependence is compatible with competition and achievement motivation when an individual "feels attached to and whose well-being one is concerned about." Similar sentiments are experienced with family, communities, and organizations in which they work.

Fischer and Mansell (2005) conducted two sets of meta-analyses in order to investigate cultural differences in organizational commitment. The results yielded consistent but lower levels of cultural effects (Fischer & Mansell, 2005). Affective commitment was found to be higher in individualistic settings, whereas at the country level normative commitment yielded an increase with collectivism and power distance (Fischer & Mansell, 2005). Moreover, when normative pressures are important to those affected, individual turnover intentions decrease in collectivist settings (Fischer & Mansell, 2005).

Guzley, Araki, and Chalmers (1998) conducted a qualitative study in order to uncover themes of individuals in the United States and Japan regarding their perspective of organizational commitment. This study was based on Hostedes' (1991) Index of Individualism scores from the study of organizational life that spanned 40 countries and focused on power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, and masculinity versus femininity (Fischer & Mansell, 2005). Out of the four dimensions presented by Hostedes (1991), Fischer and Mansell (2005) concentrated solely on individualism versus collectivism.

The themes that emerged for the U.S. were dedication, obligation, integrity, and determination. These descriptors are deemed representative of "an independent construal of self, as described as individualism (Fischer & Mansell, 2005). The Japanese themes were connection, membership, responsibility, and cooperation and interest, which characterized a collectivist perspective (Fischer & Mansell, 2005). Nevertheless, Fischer and Mansell (2005), Hofsted and Bond (1984), Lincoln (1989), and Schmidt and Yeh (1992) argue that scales that are developed and tested for a particular culture may have the context of the culture embedded unconsciously. This ultimately only allows the results yielded to be reliable; however, the undetectable conceptual differences between cultures remain hidden (Fischer & Mansell, 2005).

Individualism-Collectivism in Education

Research that focuses on normative commitment sub-cultural dimensions individualism and collectivism is limited. However, Karakus and Aslan (2008) captured Turkish high school teachers' commitment levels, their commitment focus, and variables

that determine the origin of their commitment. The survey-based study investigated 1,017 teachers from both private and public institutions (Karakus & Aslan, 2008). The findings revealed the teachers' personal characteristics such as gender, marital status, and tenure impact their levels of commitment (Karakus & Aslan, 2008). Female teachers were found to be more affectively and normatively committed to the teaching profession. Male teachers, "have low levels normative commitment to their work group" and low levels of continuance commitment due to the lack of investments to their school (Karakus & Aslan, 2008). Married teachers are reportedly less affectively and normatively committed to the teaching profession than unmarried teachers; however, the married teachers have higher levels of continuance commitment to the profession and their school (Karakus & Aslan, 2008). Lastly, a teacher's tenure increased his or her perception of the investments, and results in an increasing continuance commitment to the school's focus (Karakus & Aslan, 2008). Teachers with one to five years of tenure are the least affectively and normatively committed to the school's focus. However, they are found to have the highest normative commitment to the teaching profession (Karakus & Aslan, 2008).

Buy-in and implementation are the keys to success when employing a school initiative. Flum and Cinamon (2006) wrote that "a critical link in the translation of theory and policy into practice is the teacher at school (Flum & Cinamon, 2006, p. 125). This study features Jewish and Israeli teachers from two Israel school systems. Flum and Cinamon (2006) discuss the importance of teachers' attitudes towards a career education program. The purpose was to assess "the effect of a career education program, or successful application of curriculum that integrates real-life applications and academic

teaching" (Flum & Cinamon, 2006, p. 125). Although this study does not directly reference normative commitment, the questions posed that guide their research lean towards the origin of the teachers' motivation to willingly implement a career education program due to their current and past life experiences within a cultural context. The following is a sample of the types of questions asked: "…to what extent do teachers identify with the goals of career education?," "how do they perceive their role in relation to the students learning about the world of work?," and "to what extent are teachers interested in the promotion of their students helped knowledge, choice of making and planning skills?, (Flum & Cinamon, 2006, p. 125). The rationale for this study was to assess

> …the gap between the Jewish and Arab school systems which start in early childhood through secondary school. The differences are revealed through educational outcomes such as dropout rates, lower academic achievement and entitlement for high school matriculation diplomas among the Arabs. (Flum & Cinamon, 2006, p. 140)

Israel has been described as a state with multiple cultural layers. This cultural heterogeneity is categorized by ethnicity, religion, and nationality. The Jewish people are the majority and the Arabs are the minority (Flum & Cinamon, 2006, p. 140). Flum and Cinamon's (2006) study exemplifies the need to apply concepts and make practical applications of instruction.

Flum and Cinamon's (2006) study yielded the following: (a) the teachers in both groups regard their self-knowledge goal as the most important and the world of work goal

as the least important; (b) significant differences between the Arab and Jewish groups and the extent to which the career goals are endorsed; (c) 31% of the Arab teachers and 16% of the Jewish teachers reported a plan to engage in promoting their students' familiarity with the range of occupations; (d) 42% of the Jewish participants, compared with 24% of the Arab participants, reportedly did not engage in promoting ranges of occupations; (e) 81% of the Arab teachers reported engaging in either planned or unplanned discussions of the relationship between work and other life areas with their students, whereas 69% of the Jewish teachers reported conducting discussions; and (f) levels of resistance with regard to implementing a career education program were higher for Arab teachers than for Jewish teachers.

Flum and Cinamon (2006) concluded that Arab and Jewish teachers agree when they consider career development issues in educational implementation at the school level, due to the pattern of the general linking of the issues as they are translated into the schools' curriculum goals. The teachers' differences are a reflection of diverse worldviews, a disparity between majority and minority status, and a difference in social structure (Flum & Cinamon, 2006).

Ultimately, Jewish and Arab teachers share a general social discourse and rank self- knowledge as the most important educational goals for career education; however, "the significantly smaller emphasis Arab teachers put on this goal can be attributed to a more collectivist worldview." The promotion of the students' awareness of their interests and abilities is in accordance with an individualistic worldview: "…this mindset is more aligned with the results of the Jewish teachers" (Flum & Cinamon, 2006; Sivan, 1995; Triandis, 1990).

Lastly, Flum, and Cinamon (2006) state their study "highlights both the content and process of career education activities implementation" at the school level. The latter statement provides segues into how the connection between normative commitment and learner-centered education will be linked.

History of Learner-Centered Education Model

The section presents the origin of learner-centered education, and Henson (2003) provides a comprehensive timeline of the seminal theorists. This cursory review connects the contributions of educational philosophy, psychology, and social constructivist perspectives.

The following contributors and their philosophies that have influenced instructional practices are outlined below (Henson, 2003, pp. 5–16):

Philosophical Knowledge Base

Each of the individuals presented in this section contributed to the foundation of the philosophical knowledge that emerged in their respective region. Confucius (551 B.C.–479 B.C.) emphasized the development of character and good citizenship. His belief was that every person had the ability to strive for continual self-development in order to achieve excellence. Socrates (469–399 B.C.) focused on the individual and his maxim was "know thyself." Confucius and Socrates are documented as the first teachers of learner-centered education (Henson, 2003, p. 2).

The idea that teacher-centered instruction hindered student growth was introduced by Colonel Francis Parker (1837–1902). Discouraged by school systems that relied on

rote memorization, he developed and taught learner-centered methods to teachers in Quincy, Massachusetts. When adopted by other school districts, these techniques were referred to as the "Quincy System."

John Dewey (1859–1952) recognized that children possessed psychological and social dimensions that made them effective beings. He determined that educational systems must start the learning process by understanding the capabilities and interest of the child. Dewey views learner-centered education as a problem-based process that is enjoyable. He states, "Unless a given experience leads out into a field of unfamiliar, no problems arise. Problems are the stimulus to thinking (Dewey, 1938, p. 48).

Psychological Knowledge Base

Carl Rogers (1902–1987) wrote *Freedom to Learn,* which is based on "client-centered" therapy. He postulates five hypotheses that describe his person-centered educational approach (Rogers, 1951):

> (1) A person cannot teach another person directly; a person can only facilitate another's learning, (2) A person learns significantly only those things that are perceived as being involved in the maintenance of or enhancement of the structure of self, (3) Experience which, if assimilated, would involve a change in the organization of self, tends to be resisted through denial or distortion of symbolism, (4) The structure and organization of self appears to become more rigid under threats and to relax its boundaries when completely free from threat, and (5) The educational situation which most effectively promotes significant

learning is one in which (a) threat to the self of the learner is reduced to a minimum and (b) differentiated perception of the field is facilitated.

Social Constructivist Perspective

Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934) introduced cooperative learning. He studied children's interactions and concluded students work more efficiently in small groups when solving problems. They are able to discuss their ideas and resolve issues collectively. This is a key element of the social learning approach known as "negotiating meaning."

Jean Piaget (1896–1980), a social cognitive theorist, focused on the individual learners. He observed how students manipulated concrete objects in order to solve problems. He created an outline of developmental learning stages based on his observations.

Henson (2003) asserts the contributions that were made to learner-centered education suggest several important dispositions that include: (a) education should be experienced based, (b) each individual learner's own unique qualities and disposition should be considered when planning experiences, (c) the learner's shared perceptions shape the curriculum, (d) learners' curiosity should be fed and nurtured, (e) learning is best when it involves the motions, and (f) the learning environment should be free from fear.

These individuals created the precedence for the teaching and learning experiences for educators and students. Cooperative learning, exploratory learning, and the identification of students individual needs serve as the foundation for academic

enrichment. Hence, this brings forth the development of the learner-centered education model.

The Learner-Centered Education Model

The learner-centered education model consists of various components that are a part of a complex living system. McCombs and Miller (2007) present three diagrams that show interrelationships: beliefs and the change process, elements of living systems and the learner-centered model (a holistic perspective). The figures and explanations of the concepts are as follows:

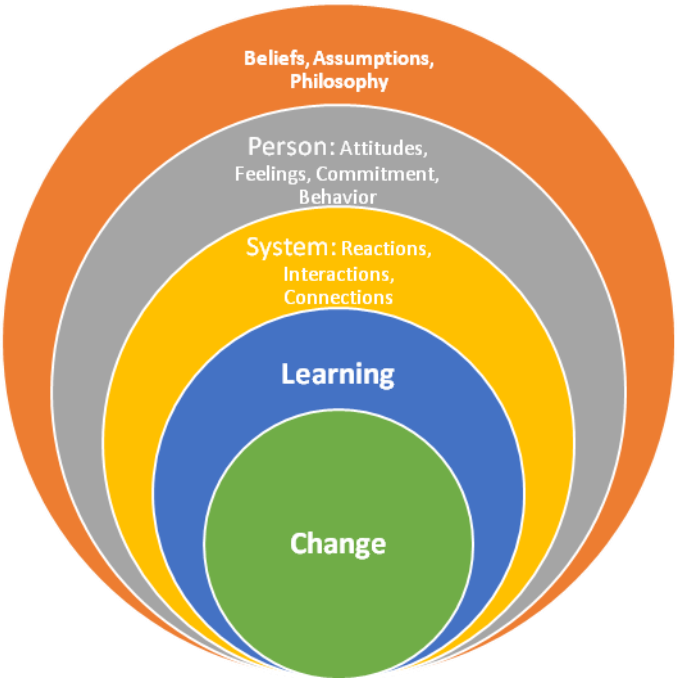

Figure 2.1. The belief and the change process adapted from McCombs and Miller (2007).

Figure 2.1 illustrates the beliefs and the change process that occurs for students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community stakeholders (McCombs & Miller, 2007). Each has a role in establishing the personal and system climate for the process of

learning and change (McCombs & Miller, 2007). The goal is to allow individuals to examine their fundamental beliefs, assumptions, values, attitudes, and learning simultaneously in order to cultivate personal and systemic change. This is accomplished by making meaningful learning relationships that influence their habits of the mind (McCombs & Miller, 2007).

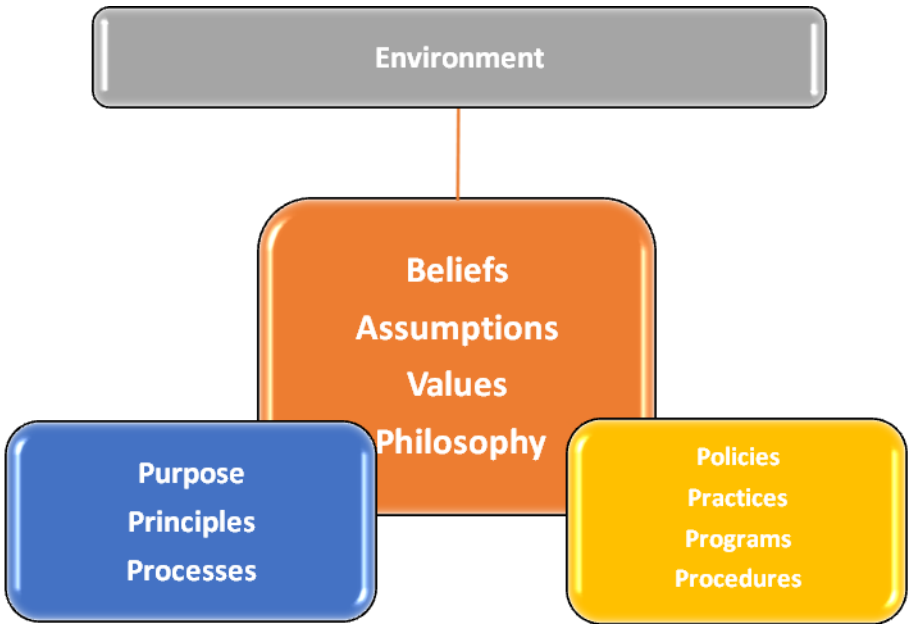

Figure 2.2. Elements of living systems adapted from McCombs and Miller (2007).

The elements of living systems demonstrate how stakeholders within a school's beliefs, assumptions, values, and philosophies are aligned. After the four constructs are identified, the purpose, principles, processes, policies, practices, programs, and procedures can be developed and implemented (McCombs & Miller, 2007). The

"environment" represents the classroom, the school surroundings, and family influences (McCombs & Miller, 2007).

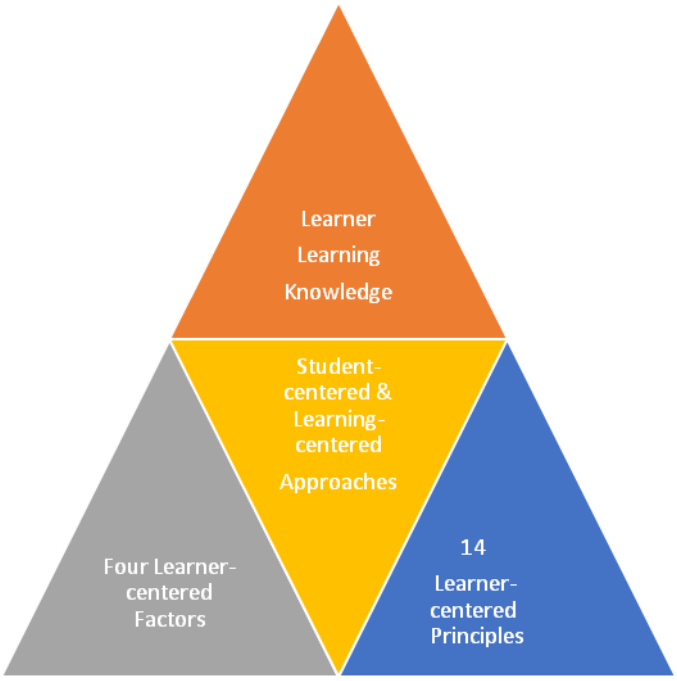

Figure 2.3. Learner-centered model: a holistic perspective, adapted from McCombs and Miller (2007).

Figure 2.3 represents a holistic perspective of the Learner-centered Model and provides a scientific foundation for instructional practices (McCombs & Miller, 2007). The four domains and the 14 learner-centered principles place the emphasis on the learner. They also consider the significance of the process of learning, the acquisition of knowledge and content, and the uniqueness of each learner (McCombs & Miller, 2007).

Learner-Centered Psychological Principles

The American Psychological Association's (APA) Presidential Task Force on Psychology in Education and the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory joined

to develop universal principles that support closing the achievement gap (McCombs & Miller, 2007). McCombs and Miller (2007) stated,

> The research-validated principles show educators how to help students know, their competencies, their abilities to choose, be in control, and their role in generating the will to learn. An understanding of the research on learning and learners discloses that all children are gifted and talented in different ways. The systems that educate all school age children have a responsibility to foster beliefs, learning environments, and learning communities that benefit all learners and value their diversity.

The four domains and 14 learner-centered principles developed by the APA Presidential Task Force on Psychology in Education and the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McCombs & Miller, 2007, p. 46–-62) are as follow:

Cognitive and Metacognitive Factors

1. **Nature of the learning process:** The learning of complex subject matter is most effective when it is an intentional process of constructing meaning from information and experience.
2. **Goals of the learning process:** A successful learner, over time and with support and instructional guidance, can create a meaningful, coherent repetition of knowledge.
3. **Construction of knowledge:** The successful learner can link new information with existing knowledge in meaningful ways.

4. **Strategic thinking:** The successful learner can create and use a repertoire of thinking and reasoning strategies to achieve complex learning goals.
5. **Thinking about thinking:** Higher order strategies for selecting and monitoring mental operations facilitate creative and critical thinking.
6. **Context of learning**: Learning is influenced by environmental factors, including culture, technology, and instructional practices.

Motivational and Affective Factors

7. **Motivational and emotional influences on learning:** The "what and how much is learned" is influenced by the learner's motivation. Motivation to learn and time are influenced by the individual's emotional state, police, interest, and goals, and habit of thinking.
8. **Intrinsic motivation to learn:** The learners' creativity, higher-order thinking, and curiosity contribute to their motivation to learn. Interim motivation is stimulated by tasks with optimal novelty and difficulty and that are relevant to personal interest and provide personal choice and control.
9. **Effects of motivation on effort**: Acquisition of complex knowledge and skills requires extended learner effort and guidance during practice. Without learners' motivation to learn, the willingness to exert this effort is unlikely without coercion.

Developmental and Social Factors

10. **Developmental influences on learning:** As individuals develop, they have different opportunities and constraints for learning. Learning is most effective

when different children's development within and across physical, intellectual, emotional, and social domains is taken into account.

11. **Social influences on learning:** Learning is influenced by social interactions, interpersonal relations, and communication with others.

Individual Differences Factors

12. **Individual differences in learning:** Learners have different strategies, approaches, and capabilities for learning that are a function of their prior experience and heredity.
13. **Learning and diversity:** Learning is most effective when differences in learners' linguistic, cultural, and social backgrounds are taken into account.
14. **Standards and assessment:** Settings that are appropriately high and standards that are challenging for assessing the learner, as well as the learning process, include diagnostic, process, and outcome assessments as integral parts of the learning process. These postulates have catapulted a change initiative worldwide.

Teacher Education and Professional Training

Kemp (2005) claims the need for change in the educational system is due as the industrial-age of being teacher-centered has proven to be counter-productive. Educators are armed with strategies that are fostered by a standardized educational format at a time of new educational deficiencies.

Instruction and Training

The implementation of outcome-based education (OBE) in South Africa endorses the shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction. School officials

recognized the need to immediately train teachers on this method (Golightly, 2010, p. 233). Golightly's (2010) study evaluates the perceptions and attitudes of geography teacher trainees. This microteaching program assists teachers with implementing learner-centered instructional practices. Ultimately, the goal of the study was to assess the impact microteaching had on instructional practices (p. 235).

The findings showed the teacher-trainees experiencing negative feelings about the training for three reasons. First, the teachers were uncomfortable with the presentation of the training (Golightly, 2010, p. 236). Second, they thought training was unwarranted, due to their practical experience (Golightly, 2010, p. 236). Lastly, they found the learner-practices to be challenging based on the planning and presentation of the learning activities (Golightly, 2010, p. 237).

Historically, teacher education programs have promoted the use of learner-centered teaching methods; however, teacher/educators failed to model the said practices during their instruction. Pierce and Kalkman (2003) provide examples of the issues that are encountered during the application of the learner-centered practices in higher education settings. This study highlights the promotion of self-regulation and pre-service teachers' beliefs about the teaching and learning process. Pierce and Kalkman (2003) presented the following results: (a) teachers struggle with facilitating their own learning, (b) self-reflection was cumbersome, (c) the belief in the first try of mastery for an assignment was to be the final and only attempt, and (d) the ability to improve upon a concept was foreign and definitely uncomfortable.

The new curriculum requires the teacher to prepare well-planned activities and use innovative equipment and materials. Literature regarding the deployment of M.I. in Turkish primary and secondary classrooms has grown exponentially. Kazu (2009) reaffirms the best way to reach a learner is to address his or her individual learning style. However, the style should be identified prior to instruction.

Ünver (2002) affirms student teachers who receive the learner-centered teacher training differ from those who do not. Their skills in planning and applying the learner-centered practices are more refined. The following quote captures the goal of the training: "Teacher education is based on the assumption that students will eventually teach in the way that they were taught" (Altan & Trombly, 2009).

The Turkish school system's new curriculum and the introduction of the learner-centered education approach required extensive pre-service and in-service teacher training. However, teachers and administrators displayed a lack of motivation to participate in these training activities. They were reportedly deemed ineffective (Saban, 2000).

Learner-Centered Practice: Reality or Illusion

A study by Lui, Qiao, and Liu (2010, p. 77) confirms teachers need to continue to use teacher-centered learning styles regardless of their gender, educational level, or course type. Although learner-centered practices have been advocated for language instruction, the term is interpreted in many ways (Lui, Qiao, & Liu, 2010, p. 77). Learner-centered practices for the purpose of this study are defined as "a style of instruction that is responsive, collaborative, problem-centered, and democratic in which

both students and the instructor decide how, what and when learning occurs" (Lui, Qiao, & Liu, 2010, p.78). This collaborative effort is contingent upon a myriad of factors, such as the instructors' cultural and educational background. These demographics strongly influence the teaching style that is employed (Lui, Qiao, & Liu, 2010, p. 80).

Hansen and Stevens (2000) describe the dynamics that impede the process of the successful implementation of learner-centered education as follows:

(1) Student expectations:

(a) learned helplessness

(b) self-appraisal

(2) Group dynamics:

(a) low tolerance for challenges

(b) social loafing

(3) Environmental Conditions:

(a) political correctness

(b) consumer attitude

(4) Evaluation Demands:

(a) peer evaluation anxiety

(b) product fixation

All of these occur on various levels for students. When these dynamics surface, it is a true demonstration of the diversity of the needs in the classroom.

Cultural Incongruence

In order to better understand learner-centered instruction from the multiple intelligence perspective, Hall-Haley (2004) conducted a study with second language learners in foreign language classrooms. The participating teachers incorporated the eight intelligences in their lesson plans and assessments after first identifying the general characteristics of each of their students' intelligence profile (Hall-Haley, 2006). The results from the informal interviews of teachers and students indicated the newly applied instructional strategies and presentation of information did "affect student learning, student attitudes and the learning environment" (Hall-Haley, 2006). In addition, Hall-Haley (2006) references another pilot study conducted in second language learner classroom that resulted in teachers expressing they experienced a shift in paradigm from teacher-centered to learner-centered. They were more excited about continuing to apply the new pedagogy and would ultimately reach more students (Hall-Haley, 2006). The previous studies give a brief overview of how learner-centered practices have been adopted.

The next section provides a comparison as to how the shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered instructional practices among countries classified as either individualistic or collectivistic has evolved.

Approaching Learner-Centered Education Globally

This section reviewed the efforts various countries have made towards shifting instructional practices to those that are holistic in nature.

China: Tibetan Reform Efforts

China's reform efforts consist of a revision of curriculum and instruction (Carney, 2008, p. 39). Their goal was to shift the focus of teaching and learning to a format that is learner-centered. The shift also includes modifying the country's collectivist view by acknowledging the uniqueness of each individual and tailoring instruction to suit their needs (Carney, 2008, p. 40). Carney (2008) contends "learner-centered pedagogy as an 'international agenda' aimed at improving educational systems in ways that support the spread of advanced capitalism and global democracy." They deem the efforts of the Chinese in Tibet in enacting this pedagogical reform as a form of cultural imperialism.

The uniqueness that the country sought was aimed at allowing teachers and students to bring about an awareness of one's individual identity in the learning process. The new basic curriculum was developed from this new form of thinking. The Tibetan policy-makers' goal is to make learning conditions conducive to being more creative, flexible citizens and ultimately future workers (Carney, 2008, p. 41). The assessment of this new learning was also being reconstructed to align with the instruction, (Carney, 2008, p. 42). However, the curriculum was disjointed due to ill-defined guidelines. Although, the constructs of LCE alludes to habits of the mind, key terms were not "unpacked" for the stakeholders that would to ensure implementation of the learner-

centered practices, (Carney, 2008, p. 42). This disconnect greatly impedes the continuity of learner-centered practices.

Africa's Pedagogical Renewal Conflict

Sub-Saharan Africa has also attempted to revive pedagogical practices in order to improve education quality (Altinyelken, 2010, p. 151). The new prescriptive Child Centered Pedagogy (CCP) was advised and funded by the international development agencies through educational projects and consultancies; recent studies report the continued use of lecture driven lessons (Altinyelken, 2010, p. 152). The theoretical foundation of CCP instruction has been described to educators as the polar opposite of teacher-centered instruction, which consists of "…a fundamental change in views on the nature of knowledge, students and their role, teachers and their role, and classroom organization in general" (Altinyelken, 2010, p.153). The African countries in which this pedagogy has permeated are Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda. To date Ethiopia, Tanzania, Gambia, South Africa, and Namibia demonstrated evidence of government policies and implementation plans in place. However, teacher interviews and lesson observations confirmed the lack of CCP principle implementation (Altinyelken, 2010, p. 154).

On the other hand, Uganda formulated aggressive dissemination of information tactics and teacher training. Nevertheless, "practices were embraced unevenly," and "pedagogical reforms permeated classrooms to a lesser degree than initially reported revealed by a hybrid of teacher-centered and learner-centered practices."

Lastly, the contrasting interpretations of the policies were reflected in student participation and group work (Altinyelken, 2010, p. 162). Ultimately, the study indicated the teachers in sub-Saharan Africa were under-qualified or unqualified to teach CCP, the training was inadequate, there was a lack of modeling of the CCP program; teacher knowledge of CCP was limited; and "teachers teach the way they were taught" (Altinyelken, 2010, p. 164).

Other obstacles that hindered the process of CCP implementation were excessive class sizes, insufficient teaching and learning materials, English language skills, lack of planning time, low buy-in to program, cultural appropriateness, and the examination system. The contradiction of the cultural norms and CCP was an issue raised by teachers. The very act of thinking critically entails questioning adults, which conflicts with Uganda culture. Children are taught to respect their elders and authority. In this regard, the high stakes examination system puts pressure on teachers by the school administration and parents due to the limited slots available and competition for secondary school (Altinyelken, 2010, pp. 165–167).

Vietnam: Clashing Cultural Factors

Vietnam's rationale for a student-centered approach to the national educational system was based on the need to equip students with the skills required to function in the labor market, such as "independence, creativeness, active nests, and cooperativeness (Thanh, 2010, p. 22). The goal of this study was to find ways to make the student-centered learning approach more adaptive in non-Western countries.

Vietnam's choice to implement the new teaching and learning approach was deemed appropriate and Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) classified them as being a society culturally oriented towards collectivism (Thanh, 2010, p. 22). Thanh (2010, p. 22) protests designating local infrastructural conditions and cultural barriers as the reason learner-centered instruction has been unsuccessful.

Although Vietnamese educational system stakeholders were aware of the changes needed, other factors strained the process. The paradigm shift was hindered by the influence of a thousand years of Confucian philosophy influence that set the standard for "interpersonal norms would dearly behaviors, attitudes, and practices demanding reflection, modernize nation, persistence, humility, all begins to superiors and stoic response to pain" (Thanh, 2010). These character traits describe what is referred to as the Confucian Heritage Culture that the Vietnamese share with East Asia and Asian students (Thanh, 2010, p. 23). Thanh (2010, p. 24) outlines the preferred learning styles of Asian students as follows:

- Learning by rote without understanding
- Reliance on surface learning as opposed to deep learning
- View instructors and written text as defined in their sources of knowledge
- Non-participation in class settings

Nevertheless, Asian students are reported to have outperformed their Western counterparts on international assessments. Student performance prior to the instructional shift is the rationale that teacher-centered instruction continues. The following factors decrease the use of learner-centered teaching: large class sizes, limited reading material that presents one point of view, curriculum design, worldview of teachers and students,

and culture as "face saving" in the social and professional realms (Thanh, 2010, p. 28). Thanh (2010) states,

> No matter what the educational reform is, it will always be seen as being temporary… however, the cultural factors are considered terminal because they are norms and values that are deeply embedded in the cultural niche in everyday life be enemies teachers and students.

Four proverbs illustrate the role teachers play in transferring knowledge to their students (Thanh, 2010, p. 30):

1. One does not dare step on a teacher's shadow.
2. Without a teacher, you are unable to do anything.
3. If a child wants to learn how to write, he/she must love the teacher first.
4. Children are only successful if they are instructed by a teacher.

Thanh (2010) states that "researchers attempting to develop principles for learner-centered learning in Vietnam should address the mismatch between the principles of the learner-centered approach and the local culture and infrastructural conditions."

Ireland: Progressive Learner-Centered Education

Murphy (2006) delineates the progression of learner-centered practices in Irish primary school development. In 1971, IPSC was introduced as a new curriculum based on making the child the center of the educational process. The developers' intention was to identify the nature of the child, and then allow the curriculum "to enable the student to understand the world in her or his own terms through her or his own inquiries" (Murphy, 2006). The IPSC was quickly replaced with what is referred to as the IPSC 1999. The

revised curriculum includes three pedagogical principles that are broken down into 15 learning concepts. The constructs allow the "recognition of the environment as a context for learning to an acknowledgment of the centrality of linguistic, social, emotional and its aesthetic factors to a child's learning" (Murphy, 2006).

Irish educational stakeholders became concerned about the level of curriculum implementation (Murphy, 2006). This prompted a nationwide questionnaire survey of 300 senior and the teachers. This survey assessed the accessibility of materials, the teaching methods employed, and the attitudes of the teachers regarding the 1999 Irish primary school curriculum, (Murphy, 2006).

The study resulted in a 62% response rate, with 100% of the respondents being women; 51% were between 20 and 30 years of age, 17% were 40 to 45 years of age, and 32% were over 45 (Murphy, 2006). The three categories surveyed—(1) availability and frequency of the use of the equipment, (2) the teaching methods and strategies employed, and (3) teacher attitudes—provided a clear picture of Ireland's practitioners' use of learner-centered practices. The consensus was that the classrooms were poorly resourced with basic play equipment (Murphy, 2006). The equipment that was indicated to be available in 50% to 75% of the classrooms was used infrequently. Materials for arts and crafts and children's stories were used frequently or very frequently in 20% of the classrooms.

Teaching methods used very frequently by 85% of the teachers were large group and/or parallel instruction. In addition, 61% of the teachers reported they would continue to apply traditional didactic teaching methods even under ideal classroom conditions

(Murphy, 2006). Two of the statements by teachers about their attitudes towards the curriculum stood out. The first spoke of the impact it had on the population: 45% claimed it did impact them, while 23% held no opinion. The second statement addressed the issue of the curriculum meeting the needs of the children: 29% of teachers had no opinion, and 55% agreed it does meet the needs of the youth (Murphy, 2006). Ultimately, in spite of the policies advocated, the overall classroom practices remained teacher-centered opposed to learner-centered.

Synthesis of the Literature

The review of the literature indicates organizational commitment is a concern for employers internationally across professions. Due to the many demands that have been bestowed on educational institutions, a highly qualified committed corps of educators is critically needed. Hence, the principles of learner-centered instructional practices as outlined by the APA and those based on constructs of pioneers such as Carl Rogers, John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky are being utilized around the world. Strategies such as higher-order thinking, cooperative learning, problem solving, and differentiation of instruction are prevalent in school systems seeking to change.

However, the literature also indicates, based on cultural background and experience, there is resistance to implementing the strategies. It also revealed how pedagogical reforms such as learner-centered practices were "unevenly embraced" based on culture regardless of the hierarchical mandates. Two studies exclaimed that cultural beliefs hindered the implementation of learner-centered practices. The prescribed principles allow learners to lead and question authority. These behaviors do not align

with their cultural norms. The reform is viewed as temporary, whereas their beliefs were permanent. These two studies were derived from countries classified as collectivistic.

Lastly, the literature indicates that the studies introduced used interview and survey methods. The use of learner-centered practices and normative commitment was investigated independently in the research. As expressed by Meyer et al. (2002), normative commitment is an understudied form of commitment and the need to explore cultural values and individual differences would be fruitful. The following section provides the implications for further research.

Implications for Research

There is a well-established research base in the areas of organizational commitment and learner-centered practices. However, there is a substantial gap in the research that links the two constructs. To date, there has been a lack of peer-reviewed research that addresses the topic of commitment that is culturally-based, such as normative commitment in the profession of teaching as it applies to the implementation of learner-centered practices. Over the last 10 years, teacher commitment has focused primarily on retention and job satisfaction. This is in response to the loss of qualified and committed educators. The sub-cultural dimensions of normative commitment—individualism and collectivism—are focal points in this study in order to highlight the impact specific cultural socializations and educational experiences have on an individuals' decision making regarding instruction. To no avail, Altan and Trombly (2009) explicitly state "a teacher teaches the way in which they were taught." This study

seeks to address this gap by examining behaviors that are documented and reported as they relate to instructional practices and commitment.

Chapter 3 will delineate how the gaps in the body of research will be addressed. The research cited has used data such as interviews or surveys. However, there has not been any encountered that use a combination of interviews, surveys, and the review of professional documents that provide explicit details of performance and provide a rating based on a specific rubric. The triangulation of methods will allow the researcher to gain credibility for the phenomenon being reported (Merriam, 2009).

Summary

This chapter provided an outline of how the information for the literature review was gathered electronically and physically. The purpose of the study and the research questions are outlined. The theoretical framework is delineated through the lens of socio-cultural theory, organizational commitment theory, and the learner-centered educational model. A brief history of organizational commitment and the four periods in which it evolved are discussed. Following the brief history of organizational commitment theory, the Three Component Model of Organizational Commitment and the commitment scales are described.

Next, normative commitment is defined and studies that provide a cross-cultural perspective, the changing patterns of cultural syndromes, and individualism-collectivism in education are discussed. Lastly, a history of learner-centered education is given, beginning from Confucius to McCombs and Miller (2009). The Learner-Centered

Psychological Principles are outlined and defined, as are the reality of the impact of learner-centered education and how it occurs globally.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The goal of this study is to analyze the normative commitment of multicultural ESL teachers as it relates to the implementation of learner-centered practices. Normative commitment is defined as a form of commitment that is mainly affected by an individual's socialization and/or culture prior to entering an organization (Weibo et al., 2010). This chapter will encompass the ways in which the study will proceed. The following is a list of the sections that will be highlighted: (1) the "Research Purpose and Questions" details the rationale for the study and the guiding questions; (2) the "Methodology" provides the process in which the research will be conducted; (3) the "Site and Participants Selection" explains why particular participants were chosen for the study; (4) the instruments used to conduct study are described; (5) "Data Collection" identifies the sources of data and how they will be gathered; (6) "Data Analysis" details the procedures that will be employed to analyze the data during the study; "Trustworthiness" itemizes the strategies the researcher will utilize in order to ensure credibility of the study; and lastly, "Human Participants and Ethics Precautions" outlines the steps the researcher will take in order to protect the participants from physical and/or psychological harm.

Epistemological Foundation

Crotty (1998, p. 8) describes an epistemology as "a way of looking at the world in making sense of it." The relevance of epistemology "is concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate" (Crotty, 1998, p. 8).

Crotty (1998) first distinguishes the contrast between constructivism and constructionism by stating constructivism is the act of an individual human subject interacting with objects in the world and ultimately making meaning of it, whereas constructionism is described as being introduced to an entire world of meaning: "A mélange of cultures and subcultures into which we are born provides us with meanings...these meanings we are taught and we learn in a complex and subtle process of enculturation" (Crotty, 1998, p.79). This study is guided by a combination of constructivism and constructionism. It is grounded in constructivism due to the researcher and the participant interacting in a way to make meaning of their individual experiences. Constructionism is injected based on the backgrounds each participant and the researcher bring to the study that may influence the outcome.

Crotty (1998) also purports the constructionist view allows a researcher to construct rather than discover meanings. As quoted, "…actual meaning emerges only when consciousness engages with them." Consciousness, in this sense, is described as one being "conscious of something" (Crotty, 1998; Brentano, 1973, p. 88). The goal of my study is to construct meaning of how Multicultural elementary ESL teachers' normative commitment influences their implementation of learner-centered practices.

Lastly, hermeneutical phenomenology will be applied to the written evaluations that the teachers receive on their instructional practices. These evaluations provide details of teachers' actions. Hermeneutics investigates the meaning of text as it is revealed to the reader. Crotty (1998) asserts, "

> Because in the writing of the text so much is taken for granted, skilled hermeneutic inquiry has the potential to uncover meaning and intentions that are, in this sense, hidden in the text…. Interpreters may end up with an explicit awareness of meanings, and especially assumptions, that the authors themselves would have been unable to articulate.

The phenomenon under study is the impact Multicultural elementary ESL teachers' cultural background and educational experiences have on their willingness to shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction in a common school system.

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this investigation is to explore how normative commitment influences Multicultural elementary ESL teachers' implementation of learner-centered practice. The focus of the study is guided by the following questions:

1. How does normative commitment influence Multicultural elementary ESL teachers' implementation of learner-centered practices for diverse learners?
2. In what ways does a teacher's cultural background influence his/her commitment to implement learner-centered practices?
3. How do sub-cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism influence learner-centered practice implementation?
4. In what ways do teachers' educational experiences influence commitment to implement learner-centered practices?
5. How do teachers demonstrate commitment to implement learner-centered practices?

The design of the research questions is derived from a review of the literature and reflected on factors that may influence the implementation of learner-centered practices (Question 1). Questions 2 and 4 attempt to formulate ways in which a teacher's cultural background and educational experiences could have contributed to how he/she approaches the teaching and learning process. According to Flum and Cinamon (2006), an individual's cultural origins influence what they deem as important and will be more inclined to disseminate in a classroom setting. Based on Question 3, the focus is on how the participant's country of origin's sub-cultural dimension, such as individualism or collectivism, is manifested through classroom instructional practices. Question 5 looks at actions taken by the teacher that demonstrate a level of consistency of the use of learner-centered practices.

Methodology

Interpretive research is classified as such if the "knowledge of reality is gained only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, documents, tools, and other artifacts" (Klein & Myers, 1999, p. 69). The intention set forth is to allow the complexity of "human sense making" to unfold as situations emerge (Klein & Meyer, 1999, p. 69). Interpretive research's most common form of data collection is interviews. Klein and Meyer (1999) purports this dialogic process is "a complex sequence of exchanges" in which understanding of a topic is negotiated between the interviewer and interviewee. The goal of the interview is to capture how the participants transitioned from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction.

TABLE 3.1 Teaching and Learning Framework Timeline				
SY 2008-09	SY 2009-10	SY 2010-11	SY 2011-12	SY 2012-13
Teacher-Centered Introduction of Teaching and Learning Framework Professional Development	Learner-Centered Revision of the Teaching and Learning Framework Limited teacher classifications Revised Professional Development Focus	Learner-Centered Extended teacher classifications	Learner-Centered Refined rubrics for Teaching and Learning Framework enhancing math and reading instructional delivery	Learner-Centered Continued Professional Development

In the 2008–2009 school year, the school district to be studied shifted how instruction was evaluated. A framework was developed that describes effective teaching to rate performance. The items in the rubric outlined the practices of teachers only. This instruction characterized teacher-centered instruction. All teachers were trained systematically across the school system by instructional coaches in order to saturate the schools with the same doctrine.

After the first year of implementation, revisions were made in the August 2009. In the 2009–2010 school year, the framework was altered to focus on student outcomes. The teachers were retrained to develop instruction that addressed various learning modalities, cooperative learning, and strategies that facilitate students' use of higher order thinking in order to solve problems.

This interpretive qualitative approach was deemed most appropriate for this research due to the research questions focusing on the participants being able to draw

from their cultural experiences as they relate to a commitment and how it is linked to implementing learner-centered practices (Creswell, 2007). This study will contribute to the body of knowledge that demonstrates how teachers' normative commitment influences their implementation of learner-centered practices. In addition, it will shed light on teacher effectiveness and performance.

Event	**Start Date**	**Completion Date**
Study instruments were identified, reviewed, and piloted	December 2012	January 2014
Multicultural elementary ESL teachers were identified	December 2013	January 2014
The researcher built relationships with the site administrators in order to gain access to potential research participants.	December 2013	On-going
The researcher designated the primary administrator of the surveys, document reviews and interviews.	December 2013	January 2014
Study participants were recruited.	January 2014	January 2014
Data was collected at an agreed upon site by the participant and researcher.	January 2014	February 2014
Survey data was reviewed and analyzed.	January 2014	February 2014
Professional documents was reviewed and analyzed.	January 2014	February 2014
Interview data was transcribed, reviewed, and analyzed.	January 2014	February 2014
Findings were compiled in order to address the research questions.	February 2014	February 2014
Conclusions and recommendations were delineated.	February 2014	February 2014

Design of Study

This interpretive qualitative study explored the influence that the normative commitment of multicultural elementary ESL teachers has on their implementation of learner-centered practices. The specific research design employed consisted of a normative commitment survey, a review of professional documents, and an interviews of six Multicultural elementary ESL teachers. This study employed the use of both quantitative and qualitative instrumentation in order to triangulate the data collection and analysis process. The integration of the three types of data sources allowed the different facets of the phenomenon to emerge and add scope and breadth to the research.

This study included the following methodological procedures; however, due to the qualitative nature of the study, flexibility is factored in for adjustments. Modification included how questions will be presented to the participants. Reflections were ongoing throughout the research process. Therefore, the researcher made any adjustments based on the information that emerged from the data collection and analysis process that may indicate adjustments are needed in the areas of sample size, instrumentation administration, and analysis.

Calendar of Events

The initial preparation for the study activities began approximately in December 2013. All emails and phone calls made to set up meeting were scheduled based on the availability of the participants. The administration of the surveys, professional document reviews, and interviews began the third week in December and concluded January 2014. Data preparation, analysis, and report-writing took place in January and February 2014.

The final reports summarizing the findings of the study will be made available for distribution by August 2014.

Event	**Start Date**	**Completion Date**
Proposal Defense		November 2013
IRB Approval	November 2013	November 2013
Pretest & Piloting	January 2014	January 2014
Study Participant Recruitment	January 2014	January 2014
Call/email to schedule data collection sessions	January 2014	January 2014
Confirm data collection sessions via email/call	January 2014	January 2014
Data Collection	January 2014	February 2014
Data Storage	Ongoing	February 2014
Data processing	Ongoing	February 2014
Data analysis	On-going	February 2014

Pilot Test

A pilot test was conducted in order to validate the interview protocol. Due to the limited pool of multicultural elementary ESL teachers executing learner-centered strategies, an alternate sample was sought. Two multicultural elementary ESL teachers and one pre-school teacher agreed to participate. These individuals were purposely selected based on nationality to ensure cultural backgrounds were diverse. The participants were Senegalese, Chilean, and Chinese.

The survey, professional document rubric, and interview items were reviewed by one methodologist and six doctoral candidates. Based on the methodologist's recommendations the interview questions were modified to elicit deeper, more thoughtful responses in order to make the interviews conversational. The Normative Commitment

Scale (NCS) has been validated in studies by Myer and Allen (1991, 1994, and 2010). The professional document rubric describes the guidelines for the school districts teacher observations. The descriptions are aligned to the American Psychological Association Learner-centered Psychological Principles.

The field test was conducted at a traditional elementary school in the same geographic area as the proposed study. Three educators were solicited to participate in the pilot study. Each participant made arrangements to meet with the researcher based on individual schedules. Each participant was informed of the study's topic. The researcher followed the directions outlined in the data collection protocols for the Normative Commitment Scale and interview. The professional document review was omitted due to the differences in the participants' job descriptions and evaluation rubrics.

Although all interviews were audio-recorded, anecdotal notes were taken during and after the sessions. Prior to the sessions, the goal was to assess whether the survey was appropriate due to the diversity of the sample. The clarity of the interview statements/questions was also a concern. The two participants that had difficulty were not sure if the survey was referring to their past or present positions. This made it difficult for them to respond. The semi-structured interviews varied based on the region the participant originated due to the need to clarify questions. Each of the sub-sections of the interview protocol required significant follow-up questions. Statements directed to the exposure to and use of learner-centered practices were also clarified. The statements' questioning practices were not consistent with the wording used to identify learner-centered practices. The wording to elicit responses that describe cultural values was difficult due to the differences in working definitions of terms.

In light of the discrepancies encountered during the pilot, the following adjustments were made: (a) clarification of terms in the survey, (b) clarification of the terms "familial traditions" and "values" will be provided to frame the normative statements, (c) the word "curriculum" will be replaced with "learner-centered" practices to maintain uniformity, and (d) additional items will be inserted in the sub-section for "learner-centered practices," "normative commitment," and individual levels of normative commitment that describe whether an individual is more of an "individualist" or a "collectivist."

Site Selection

The study took place at the school of the elementary ESL teacher. The setting in which multicultural elementary ESL teachers instruct culturally and linguistically diverse learners can have a tremendous influence on their commitment and their usage of learner centered practices. The site will be based on the population of ESL learners who are serviced at a particular school.

The school district to be studied consists of 125 schools with approximately 45,000 students. The population is 72% Black, 14% Hispanic, 4% other, and 10% White. Sixty-five of the 125 schools are at the elementary level. Approximately 20,220 students are enrolled. The ESL learners on the elementary level make up 9% of the population. There are 65 multicultural elementary ESL teachers; 12 of which are classified as itinerant. Itinerant multicultural elementary ESL teachers service schools with low enrollment levels of ESL students.

The sites were selected based on to the researcher's ability to gain access to participants through relationships developed with and programming directors. According to Creswell (1998), gaining access from the gatekeeper is crucial to the sampling process. The gatekeeper acts as the researcher's initial contact to the participants. The demographic information will be obtained through the schools' public website. The website provides the number of students, teachers, programs and ethnicity of the student population. No student data will be obtained for any reason. Nor will the researcher be in contact with the student population.

The information is public and critical to the researcher's ability to locate multicultural elementary ESL teachers for recruitment. Each school in the district under study is required to meet a target number of English language learners in order to be allotted a fulltime ESL teacher.

Participant Selection

Participants were chosen based on their certification as ESL elementary school teachers and cultural diversity. The desired candidates will have at least five years of teaching in the district. Specification of the number of years teaching is most appropriate for this study due to the change in instructional methods in the district.

The form of purposeful sampling that will be employed is criterion sampling. The rationale for this choice was to "gain some perspective on time in the social life of the group, people and the context that lead to different forms of behavior" (Creswell, 1998, p. 119). Emphasis will be placed on the individual's country of origin. The significance of selecting participants with differentiated backgrounds allows the manifestation of cultural

differences that may prove meaningful to the study (Behling, 1984). The following criteria will be used to recruit participants: (a) teach elementary-level ESL classes, (b) employed in an urban school district, and (c) country of origin based on the literature as being characterized as individualist or collectivist.

Instruments

TABLE 3.1 Description and Origin of Instruments

Instrument	Author	Identification Numbers
Normative Commitment Survey	Miller & Allen (1991)	NCS
Normative Commitment & Learner-Centered Practices Interview(s)	Tartt-Walker (2012) Miller & Allen (1991) McCombs & Miller (2009)	NCS LCPI
Learner-centered Practice Rubric	American Psychological Association Learner-Centered Domains (2009) Teaching and Learning Framework (2010)	LCPR

Three instruments are identified to address the main and sub-research questions: Normative Commitment Survey, professional document review rubric, and semi-structured interviews. The selection of the instruments was compiled with the intent to triangulate findings and make meaning of why teachers employ learner-centered practices.

Normative Commitment Survey

The Normative Commitment Scale comprises eight items using a Likert scale. It is one of the components of the Meyer and Allen (1984, 1990, 1994) Three Component Model of Organizational Commitment. The Normative Commitment Scale addresses the

socio-cultural ties an individual has to an organization. It indicates the likelihood that he/she will remain with an organization and/or buy into what is valued due to loyalty. This measurement is most useful for pre-entry selection to determine a candidate's good-fit for employment. In addition, it predicts anticipated behaviors of the potential employee based on predispositions (Weibo, Kaur, & Jun, 2010). Normative commitment is identified as one of the dimensions deemed most susceptible to cultural influences as purported by Fisher and Manseli (2009). The survey is valid and reliable based on the results yielded in the studies conducted by Meyer and Allen (1991, 1993). The items of the survey are contained in Appendix B.

Professional Document Review

The professional document under review was the teachers' evaluation of instructional performance. The teacher evaluation document consists of four instructional cycles with a nine-part rubric that is scored on a four-point scale; 4.0 being the highest level and 1.0 the lowest. The categories of the rubric are as follows: Learner-centered Practice 1: Lead well-organized; objective driven lessons; Learner-centered Practice 2: Explain content clearly; Learner-centered Practice 3: Engage students at all learning levels; Learner-centered Practice 4: Provide students multiple ways to engage; Learner-centered Practice 5: Check for student understanding; Learner-centered Practice 6: Respond to student misunderstanding; Learner-centered Practice 7: Develop higher level understanding; Learner-centered Practice 8: Maximize instructional time; Learner-centered Practice 9: Build a supportive learning focused classroom. The observations take place over an academic school year when both teachers and students are present for teaching and learning. Teachers receive two observations from their school

administrators and two from a master educator. These observations provide a narrative of the teachers' actions that justify the score given.

The researcher developed a document that aligns the APA Learner-centered Domains and Principles with the teacher evaluation tool, (See Appendix E). The researcher will analyze the teacher evaluation documents to identify commonalities outlined in the APA Learner-Centered Domains and Principles.

The school district's rubric quantifies the level of teachers' ability to employ learner-centered practices during instruction. It also includes narratives of the teachers' actions, which then serves as a mechanism to justify the assigned rating. The rubric has been adapted by the researcher to be aligned to the APA Learner-Centered Practice Domains and principles for grades kindergarten through sixth grade. It has also been altered to conceal the identity of the participants and the school district that is participating in the study. The researcher will request permission to retain copies of the evaluations. Teachers sharing evaluation documents is common when working with instructional coaches and consultants in order to improve instructional practices.

The teachers' evaluation documents past performance as cited by the school administrators and master educators and was deemed most appropriate to answer research Question 3, due to its ability to describe the past instructional practices.

Interview Protocol

The semi-structured interview followed a protocol that will be used for all participants. All items in the interview protocol will be utilized to support one or more questions in the research. The interview protocol has been broken down into four parts.

The four sections capture background information, cultural experiences, normative commitment indicators, and teacher learner-centeredness.

The questions are organized based on the research question they support. They are as follows:

A. Warm-Up: Background

1. What position do you hold at this location?

2. How long have you been teaching?

3. Describe your educational and professional background.

4. Describe the expectations of teachers who work in this school district.

B. In what ways does a teacher's cultural background influence commitment to implement learner-centered practices? (LCP)

1. What is your cultural background?

2. Describe the cultural values of your culture.

3. How have these cultural values influenced you?

4. Do these values influence your work ethic?

5. What is a good teacher?

6. What is a good student?

7. How were you taught?

8. What are some of the ways that you made connections with instruction when you were taught?

9. What are some of the ways you assist students in making connections with the instruction when you teach?

10. Describe some of the educational experiences that have had an impact on your opinion of the teaching and learning process?
11. Can you share what you feel is your rationale behind your choice to teach ESL learners.

Probing Question(s):

1. What do you mean?
2. Can you provide more details/examples?

C. How do sub-cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism influence learner-centered practice implementation? (NCS)

1. Based on your cultural background, what has been the philosophy of the group regarding teaching and learning?
2. Does your cultural background promote individual success or competition in education?
3. Does your cultural background promote the need for all to have equitable or comparable opportunities to excel?
4. How important are your individual professional goals?
5. In ways do you demonstrate this in your work?

Probing Question(s):

1. What do you mean? Tell me more.
2. Can you provide more details/examples?

D. In what ways do teachers' educational experiences influence commitment to implement learner-centered practices?

1. How do you prefer to learn?

2. Why do you feel it is the best way for you?
3. How were you taught?
4. How did the way you were taught impact or hinder your learning?
5. At what grade level did you or a teacher realize what worked for you?
6. What event(s) occurred in your educational journey that may have been a turning point for you?

Probing Question(s):

1. What do you mean? Tell me more.
2. Can you provide more details/examples?

Concluding Questions

1. Is there anything you would like to add?
2. Is there anything I haven't asked that you think is important for me to know?
3. Do you have any questions that you would like to ask me?

The following is how the instruments will be aligned with the research questions for this research study:

TABLE 3.2 Research Question(s): How does English as a second language teachers' normative commitment influence learner-centered instruction implementation for diverse learners?

	Sample	**Task**	**Measure**	**Analysis**
Research Questions # 3	How do sub-cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism influence learner-centered practice implementation?			
	Multicultural elementary ESL teachers In urban school district Teaching in	Normative Commitment Survey	Normative Commitment Scale (Eight Item) Meyer & Allen	Triangulation of Data Memos Frequency

	Elementary Schools		(1991)	
Research Questions #1, 2, 3, 4	1. How does normative commitment influence English second language teachers' implementation of learner-centered practices for diverse learners? 2. In what ways does a teacher's cultural background influence commitment to implement learner-centered practices? 3. How do sub-cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism influence learner-centered practice implementation? 4. In what ways do teachers' educational experiences influence commitment to implement learner-centered practices?			
	Multicultural elementary ESL teachers In urban school district Teaching in Elementary Schools	Semi-structured Interview	Normative Commitment & Learner-centered practices	Triangulation of Data Member Check Coding Memos
Research Questions #5	How do teachers demonstrate commitment to implement learner-centered practices?			
	Multicultural elementary ESL teachers In urban school district Teaching in Elementary Schools	Document Review of teacher observations	LCI Implementation School Year (SY) 2012-13 (5 cycles) (professional documents) Merriam (2009), p. 142	Triangulation of Data Patterns Memos Frequency

Data Collection Procedures

The data for this research will be collected in a manner in which the participants will not be personally identified. The information the researcher will extract from the

records is school-level data such as teacher and student demographics. All of the demographic information is public record and will be obtained via the school websites

. The researcher will not make any contact with students or student data. The records of this study will be kept confidential. In any published articles or publications, the researchers will not include information that will make it possible to identify the participants.

The Normative Commitment Scale (Myer & Allen, 1991) will be administered to participants in the form of a written document. Professional documents will be reviewed that comprise of instructional observations. The semi-structured interview will be administered verbally and recorded via a digital recorder. The rationale for conducting the interview protocol orally is to obtain explicit responses that may not otherwise be captured in a written format. It also allows the researcher to obtain rich, thick data that can later be analyzed for reoccurring themes during cross-comparative analysis (Merriam, 2009).

Description of the protocols for data collection

The forms of data to be used are as follow: surveys, professional documents, and interviews. First, a survey will be administered to assess the teachers' normative commitment level. Next, the professional documents that evaluate the teachers' actual implementation of learner-centered practices will be reviewed. Lastly, the interview will be conducted. Interviews are described as a person-to-person conversation between a researcher and participant. These conversations employ purposeful questioning that elicits specialized information from a research participant that cannot be obtained via a

survey (Merriam, 2009). The guidelines that will be used to administer the interview protocol are described as the "Three Interview Series" process (Seidman, 2006). The three components of the series aspire to capture the participants' past life history; details of their present lived experience, and lastly allow them to reflect on the meaning of the past and present experiences. Although this process is usually conducted over a two to four week period in three separate sessions, Seidman (2006) does confirm that if time is an issue the researcher may use alternative timelines. One of the examples provided described using the first and second component in one session and the third in another or all three in one session modifying the time of the session.

The following describes how the research session will proceed in order to capture the survey, professional document content, and interviews. However, the process will be assessed throughout in order to make any adjustments, if necessary.

Survey

The protocol that was used during this study will encompassed the following procedures:

a. English as a second language teacher will be invited to participate in the study via email or direct contact.
b. Upon confirmation of participation teacher will be contacted to schedule a time and location to complete survey.
c. Survey completion date and time will be confirmed 24–48 hours before scheduled date via email and phone.

d. Researcher will arrive 30 minutes prior to interview in order to secure interview location and set up equipment.
e. Equipment will be tested for functionality (i.e., audio/video recorders). When interviews are conducted by phone, a speaker phone will be used to record conversation. If Skype (an Internet face-to-face video call application), the conversation will be captured either by the Skype video recorder or manually by a digital audio recorder.
f. The researcher will stand to greet participants and then thank them for participating the study.
g. The participant will be asked to take a seat.
h. The participant will be asked to sign a consent form.
i. Statement of confidentiality will be disclosed to participant.
j. The participant will be told the length of time allotted for the completion of the survey and their ability to exercise the option to discontinue their participation in the study.
k. The participant will be provided a pencil/pen and a copy of the survey for Normative Commitment.
l. Once the participant is finished, the survey will be collected by the researcher and stored in the accordion file labeled with participants' pseudonym under "Surveys" tab. All documents will also be electronically scanned to a file related to the participant's pseudonym.
m. The participant will then be transitioned to engage in the next activity (document review).

Professional Document Review

The protocol that was used to review teachers' professional documents entailed the following steps:

a. After the administration of the normative commitment surveys, the researcher will request access to the teacher's observation evaluation documents for review. The teacher will voluntarily provide a copy of their job performance observations. In the event they do not desire to provide this information they may discontinue the research process.

b. The participant will be told the length of time it will take to review the documents, which should not take more than 5–10 minutes.

c. After completing the document review, a copy of the original document will be retained for the research files.

d. The researcher will store the document in the accordion file labeled with participants' pseudonym under "Professional Document Review" tab. All documents will also be electronically scanned to a file tethered to the participant's pseudonym.

e. Lastly, the researcher will prepare to transition the participant to the last stage of data collection (interview).

Interviews

The protocol that was employed during the interview was as follows:

a. If the interview cannot be conducted face to face, the alternative options would be via phone or Skype connection at agreed designated time. Completion of the research process will constitute consent.
b. The audio/video equipment will be turned on to start the interview process.
c. The participant will be told the length of the interview and it will be audio taped and his/her ability to exercise the option to discontinue participation in the study.
d. During the interview, the researcher will take anecdotal notes of non-verbal behaviors and memo questions and thoughts for the analysis process.
e. Open-ended warm-up questions will be used to start the interviews.
f. An inductive approach will be taken throughout the interview. The same questions will be modified for each participant based on responses; major questions are followed by minor questions.
g. Probes will be employed to follow up on responses or to clarify.
h. Participant will be asked if they have any questions after the interview and will be directed to the research team for any concerns.
i. All audio and video file transcripts will be electronically uploaded to a file connected to the participant's pseudonym. In the event the participant is uncomfortable with being audio taped, they may discontinue with the process immediately.

After the administration was completed, the researcher annotated the completion of each component on a participant log sheet for tracking purposes. The strategy that was used to maximize the data collection completion rate was to have finalized all three stages in one meeting. The time allotted for the research session was 60–75 minutes.

The concerns participants had regarding the potential risks and benefits and ethical considerations in terms of how the research was conducted were addressed in the" Information about the Study" document. This document explained in the invitation to join the study that the right to withdraw from the project may be exercised at any time if any undue stress is experienced. The participants were compensated with a $25 Visa Gift card for partaking in the research.

Data Analysis

TABLE 3.3 Data Analysis and Representation

Data Analysis and Representation	Normative Commitment Survey	Professional Document Review	Interview
Data managing	Create and organize data files	Create and organize data files	Create and organize data files
Reading, memo		Read through text, make margin notes	Read through text, make margin notes
Describing		Describe setting and events	Describe the meaning of the experience
Classifying		Establish patterns	Find and list statements of meaning Group into meaningful units
Interpreting	Theorize toward developing patterns and meanings	Develop a textual description, "What happened"	Use direct interpretation
Representing, visualizing		Use tables or figures of statements and meaning units	Use tables or figures of statements and meaning units

The chart above outlines the techniques that were incorporated to analyze data. Cresswell (1998) asserts "data analysis is not off the shelf; rather, it is custom-built,

revised, and choreographed." He states a researcher must move in analytic circles rather than using fixed linear approaches, (Cresswell, 1998). Cresswell (1998) outlined the steps in which a researcher should take in order to manage the data analysis process. The first step in this spiral consisted of how the data was stored. All data gathered in this study was organized in confidential electronic files. Next, files were converted to manageable and appropriate text units. Step two involved the reading of the text. The text was read thoroughly and margin notes were annotated. The margin notes then lead to the initial forming of codes. The third step was describing. A vivid description of the phenomenon and the setting was recommended by Cresswell (1998) in order to determine evidence for each step or phase in the evolution of the case. Step four consisted of classifying the interview data by engaging in categorical aggregation. This step allows the researcher to seek out a collection of events from the data in hopes of issue-relevant meaning emerge to inform them. Direct interpretation is the fifth step in the process that was utilized to examine single instances in order to draw meaning without looking a multiple instances. Lastly, naturalistic generalizations was developed in order for readers of the research to learn from the expressed experience and ultimately apply it to themselves (Cresswell, 1998).

Survey

Due to the Normative Commitment Scale (NCS) being a pre-existing tool, no edits were needed. After careful consideration, the choice to use the eight-item survey oppose to the six-item survey was based on the difference between the two versions. The eight-item survey (original) version of the NCS includes information about the basis for the obligation, whereas the revised version focuses on the feelings of obligation (Meyer

& Allen, 2004). In order to obtain a composite score the items are averaged. In the event a participant fails to answer all of the items, Meyer and Allen (2004) suggest referencing McDonald et al, (2000) for direction. McDonald et al, (2000) outlined five methods for handling missing data: list-wise deletion, item mean substitution, random number substitution, person mean substitution, and regression imputation. The method deemed most appropriate for the Normative Commitment Scale (NCS) for missing data is the item mean substitution procedure. This procedure entails taking the average response across cases and using the product to replace the missing data in question. McDonald et al. (2000) claim, "this causes the inter-item correlations between item and the other items, the summated scale standard deviation, and correlations between the summated scale and other variables to be attenuated." McDonald et al. (2000) also assert this method preserves statistical power opposed to the listwise deletion method due to information having to be removed from the data set. Next, the items that have been designated as "reverse-keyed" items are recoded and averaged. Reversed keyed items are strategically placed in the scale in order to "encourage respondents to think about each statement carefully…rather than adapting a pattern of agreeing and disagreeing with the statements" (Meyer & Allen, 2004).

Lastly, the individual items for each respondent will be cross-referenced with the semi-structured interview data and the content from the professional documents.

Professional Document Review

The professional document to be reviewed contains scores and narrative accounts of teachers' instructional practices. Each element on this portion of the document was scored from a rating of 1.0 to 4.0. Each observation and the elements across the four

observation cycles will have averages. Therefore, the researcher will only identify what constitutes high and low levels of learner-centered implementation based on the scaled scores. The narratives that are aligned to scores will be coded using initial and focused coding and the strategies used for analysis of the semi-structured interviews will be applied.

Interview Protocol

Once the interviews have been recorded and transcribed, the coding process will begin.

The interview data will be analyzed using the data analysis process otherwise known as coding outlined in Lofland et al. (2006). This two-step process consist of "two overlapping sorting and categorizing processes called initial coding and focused coding" (Lofland et al., 2006). The first step is initial coding. Initial coding will be used to condense and organize the interview transcriptions into categories that are relevant to aspects of the normative commitment learner-centered practices.

The interview transcripts and memos of the interviews were inspected line by line using the inquiry process (Lofland et al., 2006):

1. What is this? What does it represent? (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 63)
2. What is this an example of? (Cuba, 1988, p. 35)
3. What is going on? What is the person saying? What are people doing? What do these actions and events take for granted? How do the structure and context serve to support, maintain, impede, or change these actions and statements? (Charmaz, 2001, p. 142)

The second step was the use of focused coding. Focused coding allows certain information to be selected from the initial codes that is deemed a conceptual "good fit." Hence, the initial codes that are accumulated from the subsections of the semi-structured interview will be used to construct larger chunks of data, (Lofland et al., 2006). The newly constructed code will be used to ask the following questions:

1. Of what topic, unit, or aspect is this an influence?
2. What questions about a topic does this item of data suggest?
3. What sort of an answer to a question about a topic does this item of data suggest?

Once the initial and focused coding is complete the last step will be to enter the data into a computer database. The qualitative data analysis program that will be used is NUD*IST. The files will be broken down into three broad sets of generic files: (1) setting-specific files, (2) analytic files, and (3) methodological files (Lofland et al., 2006). In addition, chronological sets of the records will be maintained in the event locating information that is not easily accessible in one or another file. Therefore, the full sets of data will be stored in the order in which they were originally collected.

Throughout the initial and focused coding process, the memorandum technique will be performed. Lofland et al. (2006) suggest three types of memos be used: code memos, to clarify the codes and underlying assumptions; theoretical memos ideas formulated about the themes of codes and the relationship to the research; and procedural memos that will be written to the researcher and team members regarding any challenges encountered or success during data collection. Lastly, visual representations of the relationships between the concepts of normative commitment and learner-centered practices will be displayed in a tree diagram.

Trustworthiness

According to Merriam (2009, p. 210), no matter the type of research, the researcher should be concerned with how data is collected, analyzed, and interpreted in order to ensure reliability. The three ways in which credibility will be increased are triangulation, member checks, and rich, thick descriptions. In order to enhance the reliability of the study, peer examinations, audit trails, and triangulation of the three forms of data will be incorporated to identify emergent themes and to achieve data saturation (Merriam, 2009).

The first method to be employed is triangulation. Merriam (2009) describes this method as a technique that allows the collection of varies sources of data exponential researchers and multiple methods. It was chosen for my study in order to evaluate the consistencies or inconsistencies of the themes derived from the sources. For example, my research consists of interviews, surveys, and observations; what is reported in the surveys and interviews should be supported by the documentation from the observations of teachers implementing Learner-centered instruction, which would be triangulation of the research methods.

The second is the member check method. The member check method is a mechanism that cross references the data gathered from interviews of participants with them to ensure their view is interpreted accurately. It also minimizes the researcher's bias. By using this member check, the themes that arise in my study can be clarified for better cross referencing with the second site under study. . In addition, the researcher will be able to use the member check strategy to ensure the true essence of the participant responses were interpreted correctly (Merriam, 2009).

Lastly, the use of rich, thick descriptions is a highly detailed account of the events and findings of a study lends to transferability (Merriam, 2009). This method will allow the reader to draw logical conclusions based on the evidence presented. This study will describe the feelings and behaviors of the teachers as they engage in the interviews about their organizational commitment and how it may or may not transfer to their performance.

Human Participants and Ethics Precautions

Potential risks

Participants will possibly encounter risk. This risk may be due to having to access memories from their past that may elicit unpleasant emotions from their childhood familial events or academic experiences. In the event this occurs the participants may exercise their right to discontinue with the research process immediately.

Benefits

Although, the participants may not benefit directly from the implications of the study, they may support the development of rigorous teacher education and professional training programs that explicitly instruct on how to implement learner-centered practices. Ultimately, the needs of diverse populations will be met in order to close the education equity gap.

Ethical Considerations

The data collected for this research will be obtained in a manner in which the participant will not be identified. The only information the researcher will extract from the records is school level data such as teacher and student demographics. The records of this study will be kept private. Any published articles or publications will not include

any information that will make it possible to identify the participant. The records for the study will be reviewed by the urban school district and departments of the George Washington University responsible for overseeing research safety and compliance. Only the researchers who participated in the project will have access to the data and identifying information. In addition, no identifying information will be contained in any publications, and this includes the omission of GWU as the institution where the research takes place.

Participant Consent

The participants will be presented with a consent form in order to confirm their commitment to participate in the study. The consent will contain the names and contact information of the principal researchers, a description of the study, the research process, and the purported risks and benefits associated with the research. The presentation of the consent will be modified in the event the participant cannot meet face to face. For example, if a participant can only meet via Skype or telephone, then the consent will be presented via email.

Chapter Summary

This chapter began with a methodological overview of what an interpretive qualitative study is and then the outline of the research question were presented. The methodology and instruments are outlined; the selection criteria for participants is stated; the overviews for data collection and analysis strategies are provided; the techniques for gaining credibility of information are described in the trustworthiness section; and the risks, benefits, and ethical implications of the research are presented.

Chapter 4
Findings of the Study

This study strived to fill a void in the literature regarding the influence normative commitment has on multicultural elementary ESL teachers' implementation of learner-centered practices. It revealed a continuum in which educators' progress through in order to reach the pivotal point of commitment to implement learner-centered practices.

The presentation of the data proceeds in the order in which the study was conducted. First, the normative commitment survey data is presented. Second, the ratings captured in the professional document reviews are charted and descriptions of the teachers' instructional practices outlined. Next, the participant responses to the interview questions are presented. Lastly, the emergent themes are delineated.

The questions that guided this study were:

1. How does normative commitment influence Multicultural elementary ESL teachers' implementation of learner-centered practices for diverse learners?
2. In what ways do teachers' cultural backgrounds influence their commitment to the implementation of learner-centered practices?
3. How do sub-cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism influence learner-centered practice implementation?
4. In what ways do teachers' educational experiences influence their commitment to the implementation of learner-centered practices?
5. How do teachers demonstrate a commitment to the implementation of learner-centered practices?

Participants' Background

The six participants of this study were multicultural elementary school level English as second language teachers. All of which taught in an urban school district setting. Three participants were men and three were women. These individuals represented six countries; China, Africa, Ukraine, United States, Columbia and Iran. Each participant was educated in their country of birth on the elementary level or beyond. The post-secondary education acquired amongst the group range from a bachelors to doctoral degree level. The participants' teaching experiences span from seven to thirty years. They all taught diverse learners at least five years in the urban school district being studied. This commonality afforded the participants the experience of the paradigm shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered instructional practices mandated by the district in which they taught.

Participant A: China. Participant A was born in China. His first language is Chinese. He was educated on the elementary, secondary, and undergraduate levels in his home country. When he came to the United States he obtained a Masters degree in ESL and bilingual special education. He is currently a certified English as a second language teacher instructing on the third through fifth grade levels. He has taught diverse learners for 11 years.

Participant B: Africa. Participant B was born and educated on the elementary through secondary levels in Africa. Her first language is Uraba. She obtained a bachelor's degree in English, a Masters degree in linguistics and completed three years of doctoral level courses in the United States. She is currently certified as an ESL teacher

serving diverse learners on the second grade level. Participant B has been an educator for 25 years.

Participant C: Ukraine. Participants C was born and educated on the elementary school level in the Ukraine. Her first language is Russian. At an early age her family migrated to the United States where she continued her education. She obtained a bachelor's degree in English and economics. She also earned a Masters degree in education. Participants C is currently an English as a second language teacher for diverse learners on the third grade level. She has taught for seven years.

Participant D: United States. Participant D was born and Educated in the United States. Her first language is English. She obtained a bachelor's degree in Latin in London, England; a MED in Multicultural Education and an EDS in Bilingual Special Education. Participant D has taught on the elementary, middle school, and college levels in the United States and abroad. She is currently a certified ESL teacher providing services for diverse learners on the pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and first grade levels. Participant D has been an educator for 10 years.

Participant E: Columbia. Participant E was born and educated in Columbia. His first language is Spanish. He obtained a degree in early childhood and a Masters degree in ESL education. Participant E is currently a certified ESL teacher providing services for prekindergarten diverse learners. Participant E has been an educator for over 10 years.

Participant F: Iran. Participant F was born and educated in Iran. He speaks Arabic and Farsi. He obtained a bachelors, masters and doctoral degree in English literature and has taken courses in linguistics. Participant F has taught on the university

level in the United States and abroad. He is also a published author. Participant F is currently a certified ESL teacher providing services for diverse learners in grades third, fourth and fifth. Participant F has been an educator for 30 years.

Normative Commitment Survey

The Normative Commitment Survey was the tool used to acquire the level of normative commitment of each participant. Normative commitment is defined as being mainly affected by an individual's socialization and/or culture, family ties, school experiences, or religion prior to entering an organization. In addition, a person will remain with an organization after determining that doing so is the "right" thing to do and is expected, (Meyer & Allen, 1990).

The normative commitment survey data is delineated based on how participants responded to each survey item. The percentage for each response is reported. Lastly, the overall score of each participant is outlined and the significance of the score is described.

Statement #1	I think people these days move from organization to organization too often				
Participant	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A			X		
B		X			
C			X		
D			X		
E	X				
F		X			

16% of participants strongly agree with statement.
33% of participants maintain agree opinions.
50% of participants strongly neutral with statement.

Statement #2	I believe that a person must always be loyal to his/her organization.				
Participant	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A		X			
B			X		
C				X	
D			X		
E				X	
F		X			

33% of participants strongly agree with statement.
33% of participants maintain neutral opinions.
33% of participants strongly disagree with statement.

Statement #3	Jumping from organization to organization seems unethical to me				
Participant	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A			X		
B				X	
C				X	
D			X		
E				X	
F		X			

16% of participants agree with statement.
33% of participants maintain neutral opinions.
50% of participants disagree with statement.

Statement #4	I believe loyalty is important and therefore I feel strong sense of moral obligation to remain.				
Participant	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A		X			
B				X	
C				X	
D	X				
E	X				
F		X			

33% of participants strongly agree with statement.
33% of participants agree opinions.
33% of participants disagree with statement.

Statement #5	If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my organization.				
Participant	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A				X	
B				X	
C			X		
D			X		
E				X	
F		X			

16% of participants agree with statement.
33% of participants maintain neutral opinions.
50% of participants disagree with statement.

Statement #6	I was taught to believe in the values of remaining loyal to one organization				
Participant	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A			X		
B				X	
C			X		
D			X		
E				X	
F		X			

16% of participants agree with statement.
50% of participants maintain neutral opinions.
33% of participants disagree with statement.

Statement #7	Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organization for most of their careers.				
Participant	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A			X		
B				X	
C				X	
D	X				
E				X	
F		X			

16% of participants strongly agree with statement.
16% of participants agree opinions.
16% of participants maintain neutral opinions.
50% of participants disagree with statement.

Statement #8	I think that wanting to be a company man or woman is sensible				
Participant	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A			X		
B				X	
C				X	
D			X		
E			X		
F		X			

16% of participants agree with statement.
50% of participants maintain neutral opinions.
33% of participants disagree with statement.

Overall Level of Normative Commitment Results

Participant	Normative Commitment Rating	Level Low/Moderate/High
A	3.0	Moderate
B	3.0	Moderate
C	2.8	Low
D	2.7	Low
E	2.8	Low
F	3.0	Moderate

Emergent Themes in Commitment

Theme	Illustration
Sub-cultural Dimensions of Normative Commitment	Participant A: China; Participant B: Africa; Participant C: Ukraine; Participant E: Columbia and Participant F: Iran are natives of countries that are classified as collectivistic under the sub-cultural dimensions of normative commitment.
Response commonalities **Moderate level of commitment**	Participants A, B and F scored 3.0 on the Normative commitment scale. Participants B and F agree with Statement#1 that people these days move from organization to organization too often. Participants A and F both agree with Statement #2 that a person must always be loyal to his/her organization. Participant A and F agree with Statement #4 loyalty is important and therefore feel strong sense of moral obligation to remain with their organization. Participants A and B disagree with Statement #5 which states if they were offered a better job elsewhere they would not feel right leaving their organization.
Response commonalities **Low level of commitment**	Participants C, D and E scored between 2.7 and 2.8 on the Normative commitment scale. Participants C and D were neutral regarding Statement #1 on

	their thoughts about people moving from organization to organization too often. Participants C and E disagree with Statement #2 that a person must always be loyal to his or her organization. Participants C and E disagree with Statement #3 that jumping from organization to organization seems unethical. Participants D and E strongly agree with Statement #4 regarding the belief that loyalty is important and therefore feel a strong sense of moral obligation to remain with their organization. Participants C and D are neutral in regards to Statement #5 that if they obtain another offer for a better job elsewhere they would not feel right leaving their organization. Participants C and D are neutral in regards to Statement #6 which state they were taught to believe in the values of remaining loyal to one organization. Participants C and E disagree with Statement #7 which states things were better in the days when people stayed with one organization for most of their careers. Participants D and E were neutral in regards to Statement #8 which indicates wanting to be a company man or woman as sensible.

Professional Document Review

The professional document reviews were formal observations conducted by the participants' school administrators and master educators. These performance evaluations are objective and unscheduled in order to calibrate instructional practices across the school district. For the purpose of this study, the focus was on Multicultural elementary ESL teachers in an urban school setting. The data highlights the nine areas of expected teacher actions based on a rubric that is aligned to the American Psychological Association four domains and 14 Learner-centered Principles. The table below provides the average scores for an academic year per participant. It also gives the overall average per category for all participants.

Average Rating for Learner-centered Practices over Academic School Year							
Rating Scale: 1.0 to 4.0							
LCP #	Participant A	Participant B	Participant C	Participant D	Participant E	Participant F	Average A-F
1	3.6	3.75	3.6	3.75	3.5	3.6	3.63
2	2.6	3.75	3.3	3.75	3.5	3.3	3.36
3	3.0	3.5	3.6	3.75	3.5	3.6	3.49
4	3.0	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.40
5	3.3	3.5	4.0	3.75	3.5	4.0	3.67
6	2.6	3.5	3.6	3.25	4.0	3.3	3.37

7	2.6	3.75	3.6	3.0	3.5	3.6	3.34
8	4.0	3.75	3.6	3.5	4.0	4.0	3.80
9	4.0	3.75	3.3	3.75	4.0	3.3	3.68

Participant	Learner-centered Instructional Practices Rating SY 2012-13	Level 1.0 Ineffective/2.0 Minimally Effective/2.5 Developing/ 3.0 Effective/3.5 Highly Effective
A	3.22	Effective
B	3.61	Highly Effective
C	3.88	Highly Effective
D	3.55	Highly Effective
E	3.66	Highly Effective
F	3.51	Highly Effective

Emergent Themes in Practices

Theme	Illustration
Individual Instructional Strengths **(Above 3.5)**	***Participant A*:** LCP #1: Lessons are well organized. All parts are aligned to the objective and move students towards mastery of the skill. The objective of the lesson is clear. Students know what they will be able to do as a result of the lesson. Students understand the importance of the objective based on their comments

	actions or products. LCP #8: Routines, procedures, and transitions are systematic with minimal prompting from the teacher. Students are aware of their responsibilities and share the operations and routines in the classroom. Students always have something meaningful to do. Lesson pacing is student directed. An appropriate amount of time is spent on each part of the lesson. Off task behavior never interrupts lesson due to teacher addressing them efficiently. LCP #9: Students are invested in their work and value the academic success of themselves and their peers. Students are willing to take on challenges and risk failure. Students are always respectful to the teacher and peers. Positive behavior and good academic work is reinforced meaningfully. The teacher has positive rapport with students. There is evidence that the teacher has established strong individualized relationships with some students in the class. ***Participant B:*** LCP #1: Lessons are well organized. All parts are aligned to the objective and move students towards mastery of the skill. The objective of the lesson is clear. Students know what they will be able to do as a result of the lesson. Students understand the importance of the objective based on their comments actions or products. LCP #2: Explanation of the content is clear. The teacher provides explanations verbally, in written form, demonstrations; think-louds; visuals or questioning. Teacher gives clear, precise definition when using vocabulary. Students demonstrate understanding of vocabulary through work products. The teacher emphasizes key points. Students authentically explain the main ideas of the content. Students show that they understand the explanations. When appropriate concepts are explained in a way that actively and effectively involve students in the learning process. The teacher makes connections with students' prior knowledge, student

	experiences and interests, or other content areas that will assist in building student understanding and knowledge of the content. LCP #7: The teacher ask questions that push students thinking. The teacher also develop tasks that are increasingly complex to develop a student's higher level of understanding. Appropriate strategies are employed to ensure that students will move towards higher level understanding. Students answer questions or complete complex task that demonstrate movement towards higher level understanding which shows that they are accustomed to being asked these types of questions. LCP #8: Routines, procedures, and transitions are systematic with minimal prompting from the teacher. Students are aware of their responsibilities and share the operations and routines in the classroom. Students always have something meaningful to do. Lesson pacing is student directed. An appropriate amount of time is spent on each part of the lesson. Off task behavior never interrupts lesson due to teacher addressing them efficiently. LCP #9: Students are invested in your work and value the academic success of themselves and their peers. Students are willing to take on challenges and risk failure. Students are always respectful to the teacher and peers. Positive behavior and good academic work is reinforced meaningfully. The teacher has positive rapport with students. There is evidence that the teacher has established strong individualized relationships with some students in the class. ***Participant C:*** *LCP #1:* Lessons are well organized. All parts are aligned to the objective and move students towards mastery of the skill. The objective of the lesson is clear. Students know what they will be able to do as a result of the lesson. Students understand the importance of the objective based on their comments actions or products. *LCP #3:* The lesson is accessible to all students. The lesson is

	challenging to all students. The lesson pushes all students beyond their comfort zone. There is an appropriate balance between teacher directed and student centered learning during the lesson, such that students have adequate opportunities to meaningfully practice, apply and demonstrate what they are learning. *LCP #4:* The teacher provides students multiple ways to engage with the content that ultimately move students toward mastery of the lesson content. Students are able to develop deep understanding of the content. The ways the teacher provides include learning styles and modalities that are appropriate to students' needs. All students respond positively and are actively engaged in their work. *LCP #5:* The teacher checks for understanding of content at key times during the lesson. The teacher has the knowledge, skills and ability to accurately check the academic pulse of the class by using one or more information gathering techniques in order to gauge and direct instruction. *LCP #6:* When students demonstrate misunderstandings of partial understanding the teacher uses effective scaffolding techniques to enable the student to construct their own meaning. The teacher anticipates, misunderstandings or recognize a student's response as a common misunderstanding and shares information with the class to equip all students with a more complete understanding. The teacher probe students correct responses to ensure student understanding. *LCP #7:* The teacher ask questions that push students thinking. The teacher also develop tasks that are increasingly complex to develop a student's higher level of understanding. Appropriate strategies are employed to ensure that students will move towards higher level understanding. Students answer questions or complete complex task that demonstrate movement towards higher level understanding which shows that they are accustomed to being asked these types of questions. *LCP #8:* Routines, procedures, and transitions are systematic with minimal prompting from the teacher. Students are aware of their responsibilities and share the operations and routines in

	the classroom. Students always have something meaningful to do. Lesson pacing is student directed. An appropriate amount of time is spent on each part of the lesson. Off task behavior never interrupts lesson due to teacher addressing them efficiently. ***Participant D:*** *LCP #1:* Lessons are well organized. All parts are aligned to the objective and move students towards mastery of the skill. The objective of the lesson is clear. Students know what they will be able to do as a result of the lesson. Students understand the importance of the objective based on their comments actions or products. *LCP #2:* Explanation of the content is clear. The teacher provides explanations verbally, in written form, demonstrations; think-louds; visuals or questioning. Teacher gives clear, precise definition when using vocabulary. Students demonstrate understanding of vocabulary through work products. The teacher emphasizes key points. Students authentically explain the main ideas of the content. Students show that they understand the explanations. When appropriate concepts are explained in a way that actively and effectively involve students in the learning process. The teacher makes connections with students' prior knowledge, student experiences and interests, or other content areas that will assist in building student understanding and knowledge of the content .*LCP #3:* The lesson is accessible to all students. The lesson is challenging to all students. The lesson pushes all students beyond their comfort zone. There is an appropriate balance between teacher directed and student centered learning during the lesson, such that students have adequate opportunities to meaningfully practice, apply and demonstrate what they are learning. *LCP #5:* The teacher checks for understanding of content at key times during the lesson. The teacher has the knowledge, skills and ability to accurately check the academic pulse of the

	class by using one or more information gathering techniques in order to gauge and direct instruction. *LCP #9:* Students are invested in your work and value the academic success of themselves and their peers. Students are willing to take on challenges and risk failure. Students are always respectful to the teacher and peers. Positive behavior and good academic work is reinforced meaningfully. The teacher has positive rapport with students. There is evidence that the teacher has established strong individualized relationships with some students in the class. ***Participant E:*** *LCP #6:* When students demonstrate misunderstandings of partial understanding the teacher uses effective scaffolding techniques to enable the student to construct their own meaning. The teacher anticipates, misunderstandings or recognize a student's response as a common misunderstanding and shares information with the class to equip all students with a more complete understanding. The teacher probe students correct responses to ensure student understanding. *LCP #8:* Routines, procedures, and transitions are systematic with minimal prompting from the teacher. Students are aware of their responsibilities and share the operations and routines in the classroom. Students always have something meaningful to do. Lesson pacing is student directed. An appropriate amount of time is spent on each part of the lesson. Off task behavior never interrupts lesson due to teacher addressing them efficiently. LCP #9: Students are invested in your work and value the academic success of themselves and their peers. Students are willing to take on challenges and risk failure. Students are always respectful to the teacher and peers. Positive behavior and good academic work is reinforced meaningfully. The teacher has positive rapport with students. There is evidence that the teacher has established strong individualized relationships with some students in the class.

	Participant F: LCP #1: Lessons are well organized. All parts are aligned to the objective and move students towards mastery of the skill. The objective of the lesson is clear. Students know what they will be able to do as a result of the lesson. Students understand the importance of the objective based on their comments actions or products. LCP #3: The lesson is accessible to all students. The lesson is challenging to all students. The lesson pushes all students beyond their comfort zone. There is an appropriate balance between teacher directed and student centered learning during the lesson, such that students have adequate opportunities to meaningfully practice, apply and demonstrate what they are learning. LCP #5: The teacher checks for understanding of content at key times during the lesson. The teacher has the knowledge, skills and ability to accurately check the academic pulse of the class by using one or more information gathering techniques in order to gauge and direct instruction. LCP #7: The teacher ask questions that push students thinking. The teacher also develop tasks that are increasingly complex to develop a student's higher level of understanding. Appropriate strategies are employed to ensure that students will move towards higher level understanding. Students answer questions or complete complex task that demonstrate movement towards higher level understanding which shows that they are accustomed to being asked these types of questions. LCP #8: Routines, procedures, and transitions are systematic with minimal prompting from the teacher. Students are aware of their responsibilities and share the operations and routines in the classroom. Students always have something meaningful to do. Lesson pacing is student directed. An appropriate amount of time is spent on each part of the lesson. Off task behavior never interrupts lesson due to teacher addressing them efficiently.

Group Instructional Strengths	***LCP # 8****:* Routines, procedures, and transitions are systematic with minimal prompting from the teacher. Students are aware of their responsibilities and share the operations and routines in the classroom. Students always have something meaningful to do. Lesson pacing is student directed. An appropriate amount of time is spent on each part of the lesson. Off task behavior never interrupts lesson due to teacher addressing them efficiently. ***LCP #9****:* Students are invested in their work and value the academic success of themselves and their peers. Students are willing to take on challenges and risk failure. Students are always respectful to the teacher and peers. Positive behavior and good academic work is reinforced meaningfully. The teacher has positive rapport with students. There is evidence that the teacher has established strong individualized relationships with some students in the class ***LCP #5:*** The teacher checks for understanding of content at key times during the lesson. The teacher has the knowledge, skills and ability to accurately check the academic pulse of the class by using one or more information gathering techniques in order to gauge and direct instruction. ***LCP #1****:* Lessons are well organized. All parts are aligned to the objective and move students towards mastery of the skill. The objective of the lesson is clear. Students know what they will be able to do as a result of the lesson. Students understand the importance of the objective based on their comments actions or products.

Interview

Participants' Answers to the Interview Questions on the influence of Normative Commitment on the implementation of learner-centered practices.

A. **Question A1-A4. Warm-Up: Background.** Participants were asked background

questions which yielded the following information: Participant A is a Chinese national.

He was educated in China from elementary through college levels. He is currently a third, fourth and fifth grade ESL teacher. He has 11 years of teaching experience. Participant B is African. She obtained her education on the elementary and secondary levels in Africa. She is currently a second grade ESL teacher. She has 25 years of teaching experience. Participant C was born in the Ukraine. She went to school on the elementary level in her country before migrating to the United States. She is a third grade ESL teacher with seven years of teaching experience. Participant D was born and educated in the United States. She currently teaches prekindergarten, kindergarten and first grade ESL students. She has 10 years of teaching experience. Participant E was born and educated in Columbia. He is a prekindergarten ESL teacher. He has more than 10 years of experience as an educator. Participant F was born and educated in Iran. He currently teaches diverse students on the third, fourth and fifth grade levels. Participant F has 30 years of teaching experience.

Participants A, B, and E migrated to the United States when they were over the age of 20. Participant A moved to attend graduate school whereas, Participants B and E relocated to attend under graduate school. Participant C was under the age of 10 years old when she entered the United States. She attended part of elementary school in her home country Ukraine and the rest in the United States. Participant D was raised in the United States. However, Participant D lived on both the East and West Coasts due to parental military obligations. Lastly, Participant F moved to the United States over the age of 35.

Prior to his arrival he obtained a doctoral level degree and taught university courses abroad.

When asked what the expectations of their school district the following responses were given: Participant A stated the expectation of the district teachers was to close the academic gap between affluent families and those of lower socioeconomic status. Participant B responded that the district required "there be strong collaboration between all the people that are teaching ESL students. There is strong communication as to what is expected". Participant C stated that the expectation was to collaborate with others and set high expectations for student. Participant D stated the expectation was to improve student achievement. Participant E said that the expectation was that "teachers work hard and take their work seriously". Participant F reiterated that the requirements of the district in which he worked the "teachers take their practice seriously and update themselves with recent research to improve their work".

B. In what ways does a teacher's cultural background influence commitment to implement learner-centered practices? (LCP)

Question B1: What is your cultural background? When asked their cultural background each participant described themselves in the following manner. Participant A: I am Chinese. Participant B: I was born and raised in Nigeria, I am Uraba. Participant C: I'm from Ukraine. My family speaks Russian. Participant D: I was an Army brat. My dad grew up in the US. My mom is British. I grew up on the West Coast. Participant E: Colombian, Latino or Hispanic. Participant F: I am from Iran. I know Farsi. I know Arabic. I am familiar with most of the Middle Eastern cultures.

Question B2: Describe the values of your culture. When asked to describe values of their culture, participants passionately attested "education". They carefully reflected on who communicated these values and provided examples of the rationale for why education was deemed to be one of the most important.

Participant A stated:

> We value education. In order for you to get a better job, a better career you need to get a good education". According to Participant B: "Education is highly rated in my culture, actually in my country as a whole. Education is seen as the step ladder towards greatness of any kind". Participant C described the how her culture demonstrated valuing education. "Um, people are expected to take education very seriously. When my parents were in Ukraine, they would get like stipends to learn –So, if you went to college you had, um, you had like a living allowance so the – the government was very supportive of higher education.

Participant D attested:

> That's really complicated, if it's just my culture as in American culture. That's so like – that's so broad. So I mean I can say the values of my family as — a tiny little subset. I mean education. Education is everything. It was kind of a religious family so moral values and ethical values. That's a really difficult question. It's probably a little bit of like Protestant work ethic. However, packaged the love of family, respect and education as overlapping values.

Participant E: "We value family a lot, especially my family. We value education and we value respect for the elders, your adults especially. And we value our moral values you know, be good, do good to whomever you know."

Participant F highlights the incentives for acquiring an education by stating:

> My culture is a very old traditional culture. And like other traditional countries, we value. We attach a lot of value to education. Common people who are not educated say they have a very, very high respect for educated people like teachers, professors, you know. And so there is a very strong incentive for people. So there is a very strong incentive for people to, uh, get as high as they could in education.

Question B3: How have these values influenced you? The participants provided examples of the manner in which their cultural values influenced them by describing how they would work hard in school to achieve good grades; pursuit higher levels of education and hold themselves to higher standards as a professional due to responsibility. Participant A:

> My parents always encouraged me to you know to study well in school you know to be a good student and to listen to the teachers." On the other hand, Participant B emphasized obligation by stating, "In terms of how I demand of my students, I feel that if their parents trust me enough to hand over their children to educate them, to make them better people, I need to step up. And I let the students know, that your parents have trusted me, so I'm going to do my part, but at the same time I let them know that they also have to meet up to their parents expectations of them.

Similarly to Participant A, Participant C focused on academic achievement:

> I was like always pretty good in school so I've never really had a detention and I, um, always took like high like whatever the highest class that was offered."

> Participant D added "Even though I'm kind of the rebel in my family they still creep in there you know I still probably subliminally still have the same values I was raised with you know. So still kind of about service or working hard. Studying, kind of overachieving.

Participant E highlights obligation by responding:

> Tremendously because I use these values in everyday teaching and dealing with parents. I hold them to a higher standard because I hold myself to a higher standard working with their little one. So parents see that I have a strong believing of what I do for education and what I think is good for them.

Similarly, Participant F response leaned toward academic accomplishments when he expressed:

> It influences me in the sense that after I finished my – got my first degree in my country, I went to England to pursue my studies and, you know, to get a Master's and then get a PhD. And I started teaching at Georgetown University here for 15 years. And after I had been teaching in Iran as a university professor in Iran after I got my PhD. Then, after the revolution I moved to the United States and started teaching at Georgetown University. After I retired, I came back to teaching here in this Public School.

Question B4: Do these values influence your work ethic? The participants expressed having high expectations for students and themselves. One described this as a collaboration or partnership that needed to be developed between the teacher and students. Giving back to society was also conveyed. In addition, the need to show respect

for one's job by improving themselves with advanced research in order to provide the best instruction. This also included being a role model for students.

Participant A pondered how the values he was taught would impact his students' future. He said:

> Yes, so I want my students you know to – to get good education as well you know so – because I know a lot of students in our schools and the district they are actually in the lower socioeconomic status. So I mean, there's only way for them to get better life in the future is through education. So they need to go to college, they need to do well in school, so now in the future they can get a better job.

Participant B emphasized collaboration with conjectures such as:

> This is a two part job. It's a two part collaboration between myself and the students. My job is to teach, pure and simple. And their job is to learn. Sometimes, we flip roles, where I will be learning from them and they will be teaching me. And then, they ask me how come, because you have to teach me how to teach you, okay? And there are some things that I will not know because of your cultural background that you will be bringing to the table. That's going to add to my knowledge and then I can use it for other students that are coming down the pipeline. And I think it opens up a new avenue in my student's mind that, oh yeah, I can do this. I can teach the teacher. And I have to reiterate it over the school year that we are both in the learning process. My primary role is to teach and your primary is to learn, but every once in a while we will switch roles. And it's very,very powerful because I'm speaking to the students, and they know that I am expecting a lot of them.

For participants C, D and F standards and expectations was messaged. Participant C exclaimed: "I, um, hold myself to high expectations for student performance." Participant D described external reminders from family members. She said: "The things parents were stressing me out about because –I think it's just high expectations that we try to give our students, I guess my parents really did that too. It's like, "Well what's next? "Are you still teaching? What are you doing next?"

Participant F reiterated:

> Yes, obviously they do that. Well in a sense they make me sort of respect my job and try to update myself to most advances in research and try to be a good teacher. And to have a good relationship with my students to play as a role model because I myself am a product of ESL. So they look at me as a role model and I'm trying to maintain a high standard.

Participant E recounts family obligations and how it transferred into obligation as a group member with the following statement, "Absolutely yes. My family gave a lot to us but as a family member we have to give back whatever our duties were."

Question B5: What is a good teacher? The participants described a good teacher is being someone who truly care about students and wanted to improve their lives. Good teacher is assist students in taking control of your learning. The statement "Good teachers are in the process of molding human beings for the future," was made to affirm the seriousness of the position. In addition, not only do they update themselves with advanced research, but they shared this information by collaborating with their colleagues. Most of all, the best teacher knows their content and teaches students to the

best of their abilities. The fear of not teaching adequately resulting in future catastrophes was communicated. Therefore, there is a moral obligation to society.

Participant A believes having a grasp of the content to be taught is critical. He asserted:

> A good teacher is you know to what to teach. You know your stuff and also you know to make sure that the students know what you have taught them. And also I think a being a good teacher is always put your students first.

According to Participant B teachers are obligated to provide the best instruction possible because the society is depending on them. She attested:

> Wow. I think a good teacher knows that regardless of what it is, they will create – not creating, but they're involved in molding a human being, an individual. I never say that this kids can or cannot do my work. I have to find what level that child is at, because it's his or her work, and I have to pull him or her up. A good teacher is a parent, because this is not all about content, and academics, and language, it's also socialization. Because very often the society in the house is different from the society in the school, and classroom teachers, or Multicultural elementary ESL teachers, regardless, have to help the kids find a safe and healthy balance where both cultures are valued. Both cultures have to be valued. For ESL students, especially it's very,very important that the adults in the building do not say, well that's how they do in their home. And they do it in a derogatory manner. All cultures are valid except a culture of failure that has to be specified. So a teacher has to know how to tow that line. We are involved in birthing the next generation. I said this a couple of times to my previous teachers, and they thought I was funny, but I really did mean it. That these kids that we're teaching,

they are our future doctors and lawyers, and we need to be careful how we teach them, and what we teach them, and what we demand of them, which will be excellence.

Because, God forbid I don't teach this child as much math as he needs, or teach him to access how to count, or to calculate properly, if he turns out to be a doctor in the future and he gives the wrong dosage of meds and it's my fault. And I cannot sue him because if the lawyer that I go and find is incompetent, I was the one that didn't teach him. So it rests on me to make sure that this person that I'm pushing into the next grade is ready to go there.

On the other hand, Participant C believes:

Um, a good teacher is someone that gets students to, um, take control of their own learning so someone that finds what each student's interest is and then infuses that into the curriculum so that, you know, students will own it.

Caring about the students is crucial for Participant D and E:

It's someone who really, really in the bottom of their heart cares about the kids. So it's not just – I don't know – who sees them each as individuals and really cares about you know what they're teaching each year, how that's gonna impact the rest of their life and looks at the kind of whole child. I have a great teacher I'm working with this year. She's really, really, really invested in the kids. So it's like she'll cry you know if one of the kid's scores come out or they have a bad day or something happens. So you get really involved with each little individual.

Participant E incorporated:

A good teacher is a loving person that is in the profession to improve not only the student's life but also the lives of their families. A good teacher is a person that is willing to go the extra mile, do the extra thing, to improve the education of those students. And also the families because especially in this area, the urban schools, we have a lot of needs, low income families, the level of education is not that high so you have to work with the child, you have to work with the family. Because as the popular saying, "It takes a village," so that's the main thing for me. I cannot do it by myself and parents need help sometime. So that's a good teacher for me, the one that is working from the heart out. Yes I work for my salary because I have to pay bills but when I come to work I'm happy. I'm happy here. The only issue that I have is getting up in the morning out of my bed but after I shower I'm happy here and teaching. So I think that might be a good teacher, like the one who love what you do.

Participant F highlights knowing the best practices:

Well, as I said, a good teacher is one who first of all who enjoys what he's doing. Because when you enjoy what you are doing, then you will do everything you can in order to do the best. For a teacher, what this means is that you know research is going on and on and on and on. There are sort of new findings come every day. So a good teacher should update himself with those advances in research and try to implement them in his classroom to see what works, what doesn't work, and learn from the things which don't work and do work. And also share those with his colleagues.

Question B6: What is a good student? According to these Multicultural elementary ESL teachers a good student is someone who is willing to learn; thinks critically; tries hard and can be pushed into goodness or greatness. It was also stated that every student is good. In addition, a good student is also someone who commits to his studies and knows the impact it has on their future.

Participant A Stated a good student is: "Willing to learn you know, take school serious. Do what the teacher asks you to do in school you know. And also like you know make their efforts and trying you know."

The key word for Participant B was potential. Her reaction to the question was:

> Wow. I don't know if there's any such thing as a good student. I know that there is a student that is, that can be pushed into goodness or greatness, there's potential. I mean, the perfect student will come in with all the skills and get straight A's and you don't have to say anything or do anything and they just know it. But I don't know those students exist. I don't know they exist. But it is up to the adults in the building to help the good students find himself or herself regardless of what the home culture is or the school culture is.

Participant C:

> Um, a good student is someone who thinks critically and, um, applies what they learn into their own like – into the world or like finds – or into their own lives, finds like a deep meaningful connection to the material and, um, can sort of justify why it's important for them to be learning what they're learning.

Participant D agreed with Participant A. She believes a good students is someone: "Who's trying hard, who wants to learn you know, who is doing their best to try to learn and participate and isn't afraid to kind of take risks and push themselves."

However, Participant E cannot imagine a student without potential. He asserts:

> Good student is every single student that comes to my class. Challenging, behaving good or behaving this way or that way but they're like little sponges that you can fill with knowledge and things like that. As many times I tell parents, whatever your child does is not because of him it's because of you or it's because of me. It is the adults that influence that child and how that child behave and respond is on us, on the adults. So for me all students are good, there are you know some that are more challenging than others but that mean that they might need more help, more love, more rules, more limits.

Future implications for success was what Participant F communicated:

> A good student is someone who takes his job seriously just like teachers. And, uh, has developed a sort of commitment towards his studies and understands the importance of education and the role it could play in his future. If he has this understanding, then he will do everything he can in order to be a good student.

Question B7: How were you taught? Participants describe being taught in a teacher centered manner. There was a lot of rote memorization and teacher talk. Two of the participants describe being taught in a teacher centered way in the beginning of their education, then later experiencing learner centered practices in another educational setting.

Participant A describes instruction in his country:

When I was in school, um, all the context was taught in Chinese, not English. And you know basically, it's more like teacher centered. You know the teacher will teach us, we just listen to whatever the teacher was teaching us. You learn a lot of stuff by memorization. So – you know so – that's the way like we learned in school.

Participant B emphasized the authoritative manner of teachers and how education was to be taken seriously:

Oh, completely different. Completely different mindset. It was rote, you respected the teacher. The teacher better not have anything negative to say about you to your parents, because it will be horrible. And basically education was just so highly valued that you just knew that you really couldn't play around. And you didn't come home and complain about a teacher. Teachers are right close to God and Pastors, you know, just way up there. I think there's a different level of saint hood for teachers.

Participants C and D recount how they experienced teacher centered education and learner centered education. Participant C:

Um, I had kind of a mixed education – when we first immigrated here, I went to like Chicago public schools so the education was kinda mixed there. Um, and then we moved to the suburbs and so the education was a little bit better.

Participant C also describes her educational experience in the Ukraine:

Um –Um, for like my early childhood, not – not past kindergarten though. Um, it was also very strict, um, like I remember sometimes being yelled at and, um, I remember like having to like copy things a lot.

Participant D details the progression of her instruction and compared East Coast instruction to West Coast instruction:

> I went to a public school, big public schools, fairly diverse. Not necessarily like high SES, it wasn't like a really blue ribbon school; it was pretty average public schools. And, I don't know, I think I actually learned probably more at home. My mom was a teacher, so she never let anything slip by you know. She always knew my teachers. She followed me from school up. She had certifications [inaudible] so she taught at like my elementary school, she taught at Pre K, she taught at – she didn't teach at my middle school but she taught at my high school. And she was always really involved. And I mean I felt like I learned a lot at home too, just had a lot of, yeah, extra opportunities. it's funny that you're asking this too actually, we've had a lot of conversations on Facebook with friends who are in AP classes and I think what was really interesting about the schools in Arizona and when I came from the East Coast, because like I said my family is military, but I spent the majority of my time in Arizona in school.
>
> What was very different it was very like very creative and very like project-based. You know it had – we would make movies or get lizards and do studies on them. It was like very hands on and really – it was really cool and very creative the things that we used to do like produce our own play and make the set or like you know a lot of things we hadn't done in the kind of East Coast school. They were very traditional, textbook. And high school was great. I mean we really had kind of the cool, hippy, smart teachers that really kind of challenged us in a weird intellectual kind of – like fan the flame of all of our crazy high school – but I

mean I don't know. They were cool. They were very rebellious kind of intellectually which kids love at high school age.

You know there were lots of kind of cool guru sort of teachers that still like we talk about them to this day. There's like a 20 comment thing on my Facebook going back and forth between all the kids, "Did I dream that that happened in high school? Did our teacher like lit candles and we danced to a French song in the middle 9th Grade?" Like that's the kind of stuff that happened at my high school. It was very interesting.

Participant E also highlights teacher authority:

My father and my family was believing that the teacher was always right and that even if the teacher is not that good if you pay attention to the teacher you will learn something, so basically in terms of education. And then the bar, the bar was high. You have to do all your grades good. There is no excuse for you because this is your duty. They did talk a lot. And that time you know that was like not differentiation on instruction. There were no like you know all these intelligences like visual, kinesthetic, naturalistic, interpersonal, auditory, all that. No they were like, "You listen to your teacher. You do what the teacher tells you," and that's it. It was tough because comparing the two systems in Columbia the education there is tougher. You have to study a lot more than you do here.

The term Participant F uses is "traditional" to describe instruction:

It was a very traditional way. There was no modern sort of, you know, there was no kind of – they were not familiar with the modern techniques, modern strategies, modern theories. But when I went to England, that's where my real

education started actually. And that's how I came to see what modern teaching is. And how modern strategies can be used to advance learning. And how teacher can implement in order to make a good job of his teaching.

Question B8: What are some of the ways that you made connections with instruction

when you were taught? The responses included making real-world connection; making connections to text and self; by reading a lot and using their home language. One participant stated that they had difficulty making connections and another stated they fed off of the creative elements provided in the classroom.

Participant A pointed out using his home language assisted in making connections. Participant B struggled to make connections with instruction. She stated," I think one of the things that I will say I missed when I was learning, that I incorporate now that I'm teaching is, different learning styles."

Participant C described connecting with the world:

I just sort of naturally related everything back to my own world, like I was very good at making like text to self or text to text or text to world connections. Um, I think – I had – I mean I had high school teachers that would give us sort of real world problems to solve like we would have to write like a persuasive essay on like how to fix the like Israeli/Palestinian conflict and you'd have to think of like a creative solution and defend our answers.

On the other hand, Participant D prospered academically due to creative measures.

I mean I totally fed off the creative bit because I mean I love to write. I totally loved being creative and I loved that challenge. It seemed like they really cared about the product. I remember you'd get to stand up and read it, like stand on your desk, or we'd have days you'd close all the blinds and everyone would put their head down and listen to songs. It was very personal and very creative and I loved that. It always made me inspired to like bring in a new cool book I could be reading because the teacher would be like, "You're reading that?" You know like you'd really want to impress them.

Participant E and F's way of connecting was riddled with demands of the teaching style administered:

I just had to follow my father's advice, "Stay with your teacher, be in front of the class, be in front of it. Do as the teacher asks you to do and take notes." Connections to that time I guess I did it through my life experiences. We used to have a farm and we went to the farm almost every weekend so I can compare for example. You know when we studied animals and things like that. I will see them. I will see animals you know in on the farm, cows, dogs, pigs, things like that so I will connect those. But the teacher really didn't do that much. Participant F adds: "Well, when I was in Iran, I had to follow the same traditions, you know. I was in a teacher centered environment, I read a lot. So when you do read a lot about that, then that makes it easier.

Question B9: What are some of the ways you assist students in making connections

with the instruction when you teach? In order to assist students in making connections with the instruction the participants described themselves using methods such as building background knowledge; tapping into prior knowledge and presenting material in a variety of ways. One participant stated they would try every angle possible to get their students to learn. The responses echoed determination on the part of the teachers to move students to mastery.

Participant A believes in allowing his students to continuously make home country connections:

> – Build up their background knowledge in their home culture and also teach them explicitly of the US culture. Like you know so trying to have them understand what's going on in their reading, you know. And – and in terms of mathematics teaching, I was trying to you know encourage them to learn the math in their home language as well. So they can make the connection once they know the content in their home language.

A plethora of methods and exposure is what Participant B prescribes to:

> I try to do is to expose my students to as many different ways of accessing the same information as possible. Like, um, the skeleton in my science unit, I had a map of the body, but I also had a skeleton Kids generally, are very, very visual kids. They have to touch something, they have to feel it, they have to smell it, they have to move around in it. And you cannot expect kids to just sit for so many hours and just read, and read, and read, and read, and read, and not be able to access other ways of experiencing the material. I strongly believe in

multimedia access to the same content. I like for students to compare a movie with a book that they read. It's a very powerful tool.

Participant C also make connections with her students' home country:

Um, I try to sort of tap into their prior knowledge and, um, like find good like materials to bring in that relates to whatever we're learning about. If it's math, like explain to them like how it'll be useful to their lives.

Though she teaches a younger population Participant D like Participant B utilizes multiple ways to present the same content:

I think I try every angle possible and I try to find what works with each student. And sometimes I'll get kind of an insight with one student and, "Oh this might work with somebody else. Let's try this." I mean I really will try every single way until I find – latch on to what's working. And if it's not, if it's working with four students and not one then I have to follow up with one student and try it again and try and find something new. So that's kind of why I love teaching, it's just this creative, "How are we gonna get this done?" you know. Yeah and I mean connections with – like I said before – caring about the kids as individuals and caring enough to kind of see the way they see it.

Participant E maintains authority in his class but also incorporate practices that meet the needs of his students:

The connections that I do, and this is my phrase for my students, "Look at the teacher, listen to the teacher and you will learn a lot." And I sell that point to my students. If you look at me and you listen to me you will be able to learn a lot. But I also integrate that with the different strategies that we learn in school. You

know you learn by visual, you learn hands on, these activities, people working here, people working there. Small groups or things like that. That I have adapted that to the new needs of today's children.

Participant F uses a collaborative selling point:

Uh, well, I try to sort of give them the idea that in order for them to learn, they have to help me help them learn. And I have to help them actually help me teach. When they have that understanding, then things go easy.

Question B10: Describe some of the educational experiences that have had an impact on your opinion of the teaching and learning process? The participants' descriptions varied. One spoke of experiences and education that provided community-based projects; the topics they learned in a master's degree programs for education; when given opportunities to improve their grades when in college and the contrast of instructional methods from one country to another. In addition, one participant began to question what she was taught in school when she realized there could be a difference in opinion regarding the teaching and learning process. Another teetered between teacher centered and learner centered instruction due to not wanting to give more credit to one over the other.

Participant A highlights being able to recognize the difference between teacher-centered and learner-centered instruction. In addition, the need for both:

Ah, I think you know whether the class is student centered or teacher centered; it really depends on what you are trying to teach you know. Some things for instance you may have to explicitly teach the student. I think this is fine you know so. But for some content, maybe we have to create a student centered setting.

> You know for students to explore the content themselves. So it's really depends on what kind of subjects we are trying to teach them. So both ways could be working. I don't think one way is better than the other. So it really depends on what we are trying to teach.

Participant B expresses an epiphany:

> I think that when I started teaching, I started asking a little questions about the kinds of information that I was given as a child. I started finding out that, yes it is possible to have a difference of opinion, and nobody is going to bleed if you express that difference of opinion.

Participant C recalls being pushed to own her learning by having to move out of her comfort zone:

> Um, um, I guess there was a project where we had to sort of, um, like venture outside of our own community –Um, like on a – like a quest to sort of, um, like document sort of what we saw like to sort of like compare and contrast our communities, um, and sort of take risks and go outside of our comfort zones so I thought that was very valuable.

Participant D explains how she had no knowledge of student needs before university course work:

> It started when I did my Master's in Education. Before that I really did not know anything about teaching whatsoever. So I mean that was really my first exposure to what good teaching is supposed to be like and how you're supposed to you know modify the curriculum for ESL students. After that I mean I think my school district itself has changed the way I thought of good instruction I guess just

in sort of part of the school system culture. You know what are expectations are. But I think I really was there from the beginning. It was probably from my first Master's in Education. I don't know if that makes sense?

The most profound experience that occurred for Participant E was in college:

One of the experiences when I came to this country and I was getting my degree, under graduate. I did like the idea that at the university here, is to teach you and help you learn. In Columbia they're trying to kick you out of the university because there are many people behind your spot. So if you don't keep up with the grade and you have to do it almost on your own. Here I did my paper and I got a B and then the teacher said, "You want to revise it and bring it back to me? I said, "What? Are you kidding me? Sure, of course I'll bring it back." And I did and I got my A. And that was like something that I say, "Well this is good because they are making me want to improve myself." Not, "You got your B and that's it, move on.

Like Participant E, Participant F encountered a shift in instructional practices that impacted his view positively:

Well, the experience I had was because there was such a contrast between the way I was taught in Iran and then when I went to England and came to America. The contrast actually made me aware of the importance of experience in teaching. And I use that experience a lot in order to make a connection.

Question B11: Can you share what you feel is your rationale behind your choice to

teach English language learners? Four of the participants expressed wanting to teach English language learners due to the fact they were English language learners themselves. One participant expressed loving language and being able to share that with others. The last participant's experience teaching ESL in college and was drawn to the profession from that point. Overall, the message of a societal obligation to give back to the community of English language learners was an overarching goal. This was expressed due to the participants' ability to identify with the students they taught. Moreover, making their lives better was deemed their responsibility as professionals.

The focus for Participant A is on equipping English language learners with the knowledge, skills and abilities to succeed academically and socially:

> Ah, first of all, because I'm an English language learner myself. You know so that's why I'm thinking you know so helping them out – I – I kind of like ah, understand you know how you would feel like if you come to a new country you know with English like was – was – with being able to speak that language. The importance of being to speak that language you know so – and I think you know they – someone needs to be teaching them so they can – they will be able to like use the second language you know in order to achieve academically and socially you know.

Participant B was captured by her love and language and need to share it:

> I think it comes from my language learning experience. I've always, always, always been interested in language. My language, Uraba language is a very rich. Very rich culture. Very, very, rich language. The figurative language is just unbelievable. There's so many different ways to express the same thing. And I've always been influenced by that fine line between literal and figurative language.

Participant C remembers how helpful her Multicultural elementary ESL teachers were and desired to extend the same courtesy to her students:

> Um, well, I think like when I first came to this country, I had very good, um, Multicultural elementary ESL teachers and so I think I was able to sort of catch up very quickly. Um, and so I wanted to be able to help students who were in the same position as me but also I feel like I didn't necessarily like retain my home language skills as much and so I'd want to, um, help students still like keep in – like keep in touch with their home language and not lose their home language because it's so valuable.

Like Participant B, Participant D love languages and found the experience abroad teaching ESL most rewarding:

> Well my – well I started – I really didn't start thinking I was going to be a teacher in my career. I came as foreign policy editor, researcher when I finished my Master's and I went on a limb and decided to start teaching. And I knew right away that I really didn't want to stay in Latin and my – honestly I loved travelling and I wanted to go abroad and I love languages and so that's why I decided to study ESL. I was intending to live abroad and I had taught ESL twice in my undergrad in Palestine and Morocco and I loved that experience. And it surprised me that I liked it that much and I'd never thought about being a teacher but I love learning from all the kids. It was fun. Just the rapport and I learned so much more about culture.

Participant E reiterates needing to help others overcome adversity in an educational system: "I think that because I went through the process of learning the second language.

I have been there, done that so I may have firsthand experience on how a person can learn or not."

Participant F concurs with Participant A regarding uplifting students in order for them to accomplish academic and socioeconomic goal. In addition, he expresses the need to help those like himself and family members. Moreover, it is his responsibility:

> My rationale here was partly because it's my job, you know, and it goes with my studies and experience. But apart from that, I do feel this culture commitment. I do believe that minority students who come to the United States should be helped to learn English because English is the passport to success in Economics, in job matters, you know, in the future actually in their later studies. So and because my own sons learn English here as a second language, they were able to find good jobs and good studies here in the United States. And so I feel that I have that commitment to enable my own students to that.

C. How do sub-cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism influence learner-centered practice implementation? (NCS)

Question C1: Based on your cultural background, what has been the philosophy of the group regarding teaching and learning? Participant responses regarding the philosophy of their group reiterated there being excessive amounts of teacher talk and practice drills. Teachers were held as the authority in the community. Therefore, they were not to be questioned and respect was in order. The lack of differentiation across the curriculum. One participant stated in her culture there were many misconceptions regarding teaching and learning. In

essence, the consensus was a student had to either sink or swim. The onus was theirs alone.

Participant A asserts:

I don't know about now, but in the past when I was a student in China it's more teacher centered in school. Basically the teacher would teach you and then you'd just learn. The teacher talked for most of the class, then we do a lot of practice drills you know.

While Participant B confirms the same occurrence in her country. However, offers a description of how information was not to be challenge:

When I look back at how I was taught, you had the text, the teacher told you the gospel truth of the text, you cannot question what the teacher – it was just rote memorization. At the end of the quarter, you took your exams, you passed it or you failed it. Opinions were not so much invited, because whatever was in the text book is God's own truth.

The lack of differentiation due to centralization is pointed out by Participant C: 'There's not really like a lot of differentiation going on or there wasn't at least when I was studying there or my parents were. They're just like, you know, kind of a very, um, centralized curriculum."

Participant D believes: "People that don't know anything about the school district there are different misconceptions about what a teacher is. I think a lot of people either overestimate the challenge or underestimate the challenge."

Although, Participant E attests the thoughts of his countrymen have evolved. When he was taught it was a struggle to get assistance:

> It has evolved a lot but when I was growing up it was like more individual. We have to fend for our self. You have to ask for help from your peers or look out for the teacher if you wanted to or go to the library. At that time there were not many resources like internet or stuff like to today. So the philosophy was more or less you are on your own. You know, swim or sink. Swim or sink.

Participant F refers to a teacher centered environment being authoritative. He believes his culture supports this form of pedagogy in order to maintain respect from younger generations:

> In my culture, because teachers in a traditional culture feel that a teacher centered environment would be the best. Uh, there is some kind of logic to that in the sense that when they, uh, sort of see what the bad things which happen in the West. Uh, they contribute it to or they think that is part the new generation's lack of respect for authority. When you are teaching or learning in a teacher centered environment, authority is there. Although, that has a terribly negative aspect as well if you are not careful.

Question C2: Does your cultural background promote individual success or competition in education? All of the six participants reported their culture as promoting competition. Two of which agreed that it was needed in order to achieve greater goals. Two out of the six participants reported their country's frowning upon competition.

Participant A justifies why competition is necessary in his country:

> Um, I think both. Um, we do encourage competition because in China there's a large population so there's – there's only very limited spaces for certain kinds of careers. So I mean, in order to achieve that you have to be competitive. And also, they encourage individual success as well. In a school on certain test or exam you know. They would rank all the students from number one to the bottom of the class. So they also encouraged that you would be number one or number two.

Participant B confirms the competitiveness of her culture. However, explains they also have societal obligations that include uplifting members of their in group when success is achieved. Whether or not they received academic support the expectation was implicit. Due to the group as a whole believes no one can succeed alone:

> Both. Nigeria is highly competitive, highly competitive. However, there's always the mindset that just because that one person has succeeded it does not mean that they are on their own. They have to remember the family, the culture, the society, the community that they come from.

Participant C describes her cultures' non-competitive state until encountering a competitive environment:

> I mean it was like kind of under communism back then so not really, like there wasn't necessarily an advantage to being a doctor over being a bus driver. So, there was no like necessarily a status. I would say a lot of the immigrants from there, when they come to the United States, have a status drive.

Though not claiming to be competitive, Participant D confirms the mindset of her culture: “Yeah it’s definitely one of those probably an individual type culture. That’s what they usually say about Americans but it probably is true.”

Participant E uses a personal experience that allowed him to reap the benefits of a competitive edge:

> It does promote individual success. Competition as well and I can see that competition is good sometimes depending on how it’s presented. When I was in high school one day at the end of the school year I was the first student in the class. I didn’t have no idea. But then looking back was that I have a friend, he was very competitive, and he was competing with me in class. And for me not get behind I will fight back and compete with him and it comes out that I was the first, you know the best student of that year. And I said, “How did that happen? I was not looking for that.” And then I saw that that because I wanted to beat him that was intrinsic motivation for me.

According to Participant F, “Competition is not considered as a positive,” in his country.

> **Question C3: Does your cultural background promote the need for all to have equitable or comparable opportunities to excel?** The terms fair and equitable was deemed rhetoric to one participant. Though intentions are good most participants reported there being a lack of resources due to socioeconomic status hinders equality.

Participant A:

Ah, I think my culture is trying to have like equal opportunities for everybody. However in reality, it didn't really happen you know so – because first of all the resources not equal. Curriculum in some places are different you know. So – relatively there's no equal things.

Participant B:

There's a wide gap between the haves and the have not's. The middle class is almost nonexistent, they've been squeezed out of existence. So the haves, I think, feel that they have achieved their success by whatever means, and they really don't owe anybody else anything. And that is not the old way of thinking, this is a more modern way of thinking. And I think that the masses for the most part feel powerless to access the same source of wealth that the really wealthy people have.

Participant C: "So, everything was equal but it wasn't necessarily like – so, if you were like a struggling student, it wasn't like you were given extra opportunities. You just kinda like had to keep up. It was like sink or swim."

Participant D: "I guess in our background I mean we always learned fairness or equity or justice you know is correct. At the same time we're always spurred on to compete so it's kind of a little bit of both."

Participant E:

Yes. For example the information is there nowadays. Everybody will have the opportunity to get the resources that they need. At that time when I was growing up of course that was not always the case to present but as today I know that they do. They have tutors, they have afterschool classes and they have all these

programs that will help students in need. So I think it promotes assisting students that are struggling.

Participant F: "Yeah. To a certain extent. Uh, well, in a sense the, uh, because the country is being modernized."

Question C4: How important are your individual professional goals? The theme that resonated when the participants answered the question regarding the importance of their individual professional goals was based on what they believe a good teacher should exhibit. All express the academic advancement of their students, hard work and collaboration as a key measure for effective teaching.

Participant A professional goal is to be the best teacher he possibly can. His motivation is based on the affinity he has with his students as English language learners:

> I mean, I'm thinking I'm trying to help my students do their best. Now – I do the best that I can to help my students. It's kind of important for me to understand what they need because of being an ESL learner myself in the past. I kind of understand what they are trying to learn in school.

Participant B is moved to improve herself in order to provide exemplar instruction. She rewarded by student academic growth:

> For me, they're very very important. I find very great fulfillment at the end of the day when I feel that I have moved one child closer to being able to access the world. When I come across that one challenging student, or two challenging students, or three, I go out to go take classes.

Participant C and D want to be known for their work ethic: "My personal, um, goals are important like I wanna be a good teacher and a good, um, collaborator, like I – my team relies on me."

Participant D:

> They are very important to me because I've worked very hard. So I definitely do value that and hope to get something out of my work someday. My profession, I spend more time here than I spend at home so I guess it is kind of important to me.

Participant E:

> Very important because I'm here to do a job and if I do it good and if I see my students advancing, all of them, that's me. That's my reward. I get my energy from the students. I get my energy and the rewards but when I see my students succeeding. And when I see the Kindergarten teachers telling me, "These students are really doing good. Thank you for doing your job.

Participant F describes the importance of his personal goals based on his academic accomplishments. He earned a doctoral degree and is a published author. The research he has done to update his pedagogical skills is motivated by wanting to be a role model and contributor to the field of education.

Question C5: In what ways do you demonstrate this in your work? According to the participants the way in which they demonstrate the importance of their individual professional goals consisted of the following: doing what they're district required; taking university courses; engaging in professional development at their jobs; completing work assignments and collaborating with their colleagues. The examples provided regarding

how they demonstrate the importance of their professional goals exhibited characteristics of a collectivist mindset. All of the actions presented were to benefit not only be participant but everyone within their organization.

Participant A:

> I'm always trying to do what the district requires to do. For instance, they want us to do intervention for the students and trying to implement intervention. Like the RTI, you know and also I'm trying to use different strategies to help ESL students to learn as well. And also, I'm trying to go to educate myself to go through some kind of educational professional developments.

Participant B:

> Um, not this past two years, but about three years back, I had – I had a couple of students that had traumatic brain injuries, so I took a class on special education and inclusion. And I thought that through that class I would be able to access different methodologies to be able to help these students. What I discovered and what I always knew was that ESL and special ED methodologist are very, very similar.

Participant C:

> Um, I try to be reliable and like get my, um, like assignments done. Like we try to split things up –As a grade-level team and so I try to take charge of all the like language-based stuff, all the vocabulary. I took additional training and an extra like graduate-level course. So I try to stay, you know professionally engaged.

Participant D:

> I guess putting all myself into it and really caring about it deeply which makes it frustrating too because you know you really want all your students to do well. You want to be the best you can. It's investing yourself personally in it. I go to school. So I've basically been the eternal student. I've always taken advantage of any kind of professional development I can, any outside opportunities.

Participant E: "I talk to colleagues from my school. I go out to visit other schools."

Participant F attest to sharing his knowledge with his colleagues in order for them to improve their pedagogical practices.

D. In what ways do teachers' educational experiences influence commitment to implement learner-centered practices?

Question D1: How do you prefer to learn? When asked to disclose their preference for instruction the participants enthusiastically replied visual, auditory; tactile; kinesthetic. In some instances they stated there was more than one learning style that allowed them to absorb instruction.

Participant A exclaimed:

> Ah, I think I'm a mix. I have –I'm a visual, I mean, then I'm also a – can – be tactile – um, I need to touch stuff, so visual – and auditory too. But the – if you want to identify one learning style, I think I'm – like a visual learner. I want to see it. Like when teachers teach, I want to see it on the board you know.

Participant B vehemently replied:

> Oh, I am a very visual learner. I'm also tactile. I am not abstract at all, so my teaching style has nothing abstract in it." Participant C: "Um, I like in-person

learning. I really don't like online, modules, um. I like smaller settings. I don't like big lecture classes. I like sort of hands-on and like kinesthetic and multisensory.

Participant D: is a visual and tactile learner. She stated:

I think I'm a very like introverted type person so on my own I can focus and think about it but I can't just read, it's like I have to interact with it somehow, I have to take notes or write or – I've got to make something out of it too so to me it's not really a passive thing, I like reading and writing.

Participant E:

I have to do. I have to. Even like computer, "Oh you do here, click, click, click." Uh uh, you can tell me 50,000 times I will not learn. Let me have the little mouse and then you tell me where to click and how to do it and then I will remember. I have to do it. I'm a visual, kinesthetic learner so I have to do to learn.

Participant F confirmed his learning style with confidence: "Yeah, mainly visual."

Question D2: Why do you feel it is the best way for you? The participants being able to articulate their learning styles and why they felt it was the best way for them to learn was evidence that exposure to new ways of learning was effective. They described how knowing their learning style lead to academic success. It was asserted application of their learning style assisted them in grasping concepts more quickly.

Participant A attested: “It’s easy for me to memorize— to remember it. You know to keep that in mind. You know so it helps me to memorize that – that concept or whatever the skill, you know the teacher is trying to teach.”

Participant B used hand gestures to express her style of learning when she said:” I have to see. I cannot be described to, I just have to see, I have to touch, I have to feel.”

Participant C: “I’m not really sure why. I just – that’s how I’ve had the most success.”

Participant D excitedly detailed how she discovered her learning style:

> I always was like a crazy note taker in college. And my friend did teach me – well I just always remember him saying, “Write your notes and then type them over again.” And I did that all through college, wrote out my notes, then typed them over again and then liked saved them and then went back and like highlighted them and stuff. So I’ve always been like a note taker when I’m reading and just to organize my thoughts.

Participant E proclaimed:

> Because I like it and when I do it I remember doing it and it has worked for me and I like do things. So for example when I was at college so one of the best parts – I like it more when they you know, “Okay you’re gonna do a presentation about this.” So you read, you prepare, you learn, you do your outline, you prepare your handout and you tell. But when they tell me, “Oh study here I’m gonna quiz you.” Oh I like it too but I don’t learn you know.

Whereas Participant F simply stated: “Because it works better – I find it more effective than other ways.”

Question D3: How did the way you were taught impact or hinder your learning?

According to five of the six participants the way they were taught did hinder their learning. They felt they had to find ways to compensate due to instruction not being challenging or adequate. It was also stated that academic struggles were encountered. They did not learn as much as they could have had instruction been different. At the same time, the participants were able to compare and contrast the teacher centered instruction they experienced and the learner centered instruction that they encountered that decreased their learning curve when the need to learn was critical.

Participant A did not discredit any learning presented to him:

> Um, it’s not really hindered my learning. I think the way I was taught just forced me to remember what the teacher was saying. I don’t think it’s like really the way that I was being taught has impact me or anything. So I – I don’t think – think anything negative or positive.

Participant B strongly believes late identification hampered her learning:

> It hindered my learning, because again, my different learning style was not – I did not identify it until I started teaching English language learners, because I saw the struggles that my students were having and identified with that struggle. So I would say that it hindered me in so many ways because I had to wait until adulthood to identify how I learned and now start using it to learn more and bringing my students along.

Participant C proclaims having to work harder to meet goals and find assistance independently:

> Um, I mean I would find ways to like compensate for it –So, if I wasn't being taught in my modality, I guess I like ended up having to do extra work on my own or like ask peers for help.

Similarly, Participant D used techniques to combat boredom:

> I mean for me sometimes the way I was taught was not very challenging. Like I was a kid who brought – I would bring books to school and put them inside my other books because it was like it had to be a little more like invigorating. My first breakthrough year I was like in 6th grade– I love this teacher – It was a 6th Grade teacher who came in the middle of the year and she was really young and she loved – like she was literacy woman. We learned like no math so I didn't get into honors math in 7th Grade because I didn't learn any 6th Grade math but I mean she loved reading and writing and we read so much. And she learned that I like really loved to write so she would let me sometimes stay in from like recess and from specials and like write and she made like a writing box for me that was special and I got to put my little stories in it and stuff. So it's like that was the first time a teacher kind of figured me out and learned a way to kind of bring that out in me.

Both Participant E and F voiced a contrast encountered regarding instruction that was astonishingly blatant. Participant E stated:

> I think that if there were more different ways to teach it would be easier for me to learn more because there was only one way when I was in high school I didn't learn as much as I experienced here (U.S.) in college. They gave you different ways to learn and I did learn more.

Participant F accounts the transformation when he left his country:

> When I went to England I found a contrast between the way I had been taught before in Iran. That had a very good impact on me. I picked up the results, the good results by learning very quickly.

Question D4: At what grade level did you or a teacher realize what worked for you? All of the participants reported they self -identified their learning style. Three out of school when he discovered he was a tactile learner. Another participant encountered confirmation of her learning style at the sixth grade level, high school, and college. The last participant did not realized her learning style until she became a teacher. The participants' responses to this question demonstrated they underwent the process of self- evaluation. At some point during learning each were taking inventory of what worked and what did not work for them.

Participant A:

> I think – not until I was in college, I realized that like visual is more like a helping me you know to be a good learner. I didn't really think about it when I was in elementary, middle school or high school. So – when I was in college, I remember whenever the teacher wrote it down, I can remember. I can recall it pretty well.

Participant B:" It wasn't until I started teaching that I started identifying my own learning styles, and then started identifying my student's learning styles."

Participant C accounts no one assisted her in identifying her learning style she just happen to encounter a specific learning environment, which includes seminar and small group work. "I'm not really sure why. I just – that's how I've had the most success"

Participant D expressed encountering a shift in instruction in sixth grade, high school and in college. At these three checkpoints she recognized that she was more organized when using tactile methods. The shift propelled her creative side and boosted her self- esteem.

Participant E remembers being accommodated by a teacher:

> I don't remember exactly if the teachers ever discovered how I learned but I think it was in chemistry class that I loved and there was this tough professor, teacher in high school, everybody was afraid of her because she was tough on the grades. But I loved chemistry so I didn't care. So I will finish everything that she did in the laboratory and then everything that was left over I would mix it up and ask her, "Teacher so what do I have here?" And she would turn and she would laugh. And I guess that she saw that I appreciate the hands on activities. But other than that I don't think the teachers knew." It was me but I think that's how she got that – at that time I didn't know that that would be kinesthetic.

Participant F: "I realized it through the contrast which I mentioned. That was with my Master's and PhD in England. It was the general learning environment that made the difference."

Question D5: What event(s) occurred in your educational journey that may have been a turning point for you? The responses to the turning point that occurred in the participant's life varied among the six. Never the less pivotal for each. Two of the participants described success in college courses. One expressed being less bored. Another participant described the paradigm shift from teacher centered to learner centered instruction in different countries. Two participants described the change occurred when they became teachers. One of the two expressed being exposed to learner centered instruction through her work. The other referred to the opportunities he would be afforded due to his accomplishment.

Participant A:

I think it's more like a college – it's – it's a turning point to me. Then I realized what I wanted to do. Then I decided oh, I need to go to English speaking country to explore what's going on, because I was learning English at that time.

Participant B expressed not being afforded the opportunity to experience learner-centered instruction while in school. It was not until she started teaching and witnessed the struggles of her students that she realized learning was individualized.

Participant C:

Um, I think I just recognized it from like when I freshman, I had some classes that were really large and I some like smaller more like seminar classes and they were more like discussion focused so I think I just noticed that I was like excelling better and, um, it's easier to access like the professor in those settings.

Participant D:

> College was definitely a turning point. I don't know. I was less bored. And then I realized that – I mean I was never, in high school I was never a straight A student. I mean I still was like a 3.5 student but I wasn't like perfecto. And college really brought out this, "Ah hah," I don't know, I guess my own competing against myself maybe it brought out this something in me where I really over did it I think in every way possible like over studied. And it was definitely a turning point but I also had a lot of professors that came to me and were like, "Your writing is the best writing I've ever read," or like, I don't know, college definitely probably changed my like confidence in myself somehow so that was probably a big turning point.

Participant E:

> When I finished my early childhood degree it changed my life because I became a teacher, something that I love. And it also changed the way – economically it also helped me out with more salary, more opportunities for development because I was able to get my Master's degree. Better – what do you say – better standing position I guess because when you're a teacher people appreciate that.

Participant F attested the major turning point for him was when he left his home country to be educated in England.

E. Which learner-centered principles are most frequently practiced? (LCP)

Question E1: What types of activities do you prepare in order to address the needs of individual students? The participants reported using charts, graphs; manipulatives; kinesthetic activities and hands-on lessons to meet the needs of individual students. The importance of taking into account the needs of each student before preparing a lesson resonated. The key to a successful was based on the right resources and materials.

Participant A:

Ah, activity like ah, I always have some kind of like visual representation in my lesson, like for instance, like chart or graph or something. when I was teaching math, I would have some manipulators for them to touch. And also I would have them to turn and talk – stop and jot to address them interpersonal learning style as well.

Participant B:

Depending on the lesson. Actually, the lesson usually influences the activities. There was a unit where we did, um, it was a quilt of cultures. When we're done at the end of the unit we made a quilt.

Participant C: "Hmm. I mean I try to do all of them. I try to make sure every lesson has something for each one."

Participant D:

I mean to teach I use a lot of manipulatives for K or Pre K, a lot of visuals. A lot of games with like a lot of like standing up and moving around. Singing which is

embarrassing but yeah. Things like, as crazy as it sounds, like puppets and stuff, like they love those things. A lot of basically everything that you can think of and pull out of the bag. Definitely the tactile when working with phonics a lot of tactile and visual in terms of vocabulary.

Participant E:

For the little ones all they want to do is play so I disguise the learning strategies under play. They don't know they are learning and they are working. They think they are playing but they are learning. So I see individual needs and I say okay this person for example needs to develop the eye/hand coordination with the scissor, okay here is more activities for you.

Participant F:

Well, I take into account the individual needs of each student. And then I try to prepare myself finding the right resources, finding the right teaching material, and finding the right, uh, and one of the things you have to learn right at the beginning is the learning style of each student because learning styles are different from one student to one student and from one culture to another culture.

Question E2: Which learning styles do you find yourself most often

accommodating? Based on the participants' responses they all strive to accommodate all of the learning styles that are in their classroom. Most declared their practice included the modalities of learning that was needed for the skill being taught. This could consist of an end product or visual representations. These responses of self- reported practices

indicated that by any means necessary each of these teachers would do what they deemed necessary to enable learning.

Participant A: “Hum, visual.” Participant B:” Most often, the visual and the tactile.” Participant C: “Hmm. I mean I try to do all of them. I try to make sure every lesson has something for each one.” Participant D purported her practice including all modalities of learning based on students’ needs. Participant E: “kinesthetic. The students like to do stuff. They like to cut, they like to glue, the like to color, they like to build. Things that may come with an end product.” Participant F: “depends upon the group–Student, yeah. Because some

students, you know, they prefer visual. Other students prefer other kinds. So it really depends upon the student. I can’t make a general statement about that.”

Question E3: What type of learning activities are you most comfortable with executing during instruction? Why? When the participants were asked what type of learning activities they were most comfortable executing during instruction, the activities mentioned were aligned with the participants learning style. In essence, the learning style in which they identify work best for them is what they are most comfortable with implementing in their instruction.

Participant A: “Activity like a for instance like ah, graphic organization – graphic organizer.”

Participant B:

I love asking questions about the text. I want students to be able to go into the texts and find evidence to support a yes or no answer. That's tells me that they are at the point where they are able to access higher ordered thinking. If I am given a little bit more time, I can always find pictures of items on the internet. I like when I pair vocabulary with pictures and examples. When it comes to math I like for my students to manipulate things.

Participant C: "Um, probably like a guided reading lesson."

Participant D:

During instruction I really try and get a balance of all of them so it's not just like we're just using tactile or – also I guess I would say interpersonal because getting the students to work together. Working with me finding different ways to respond and communicate with their learning. Usually making them move, they're little kids so it's essential.

Participant E: "I prepare different tables and different areas that students have to rotate. So the variety of the activities, that one is totally different from the other one but is also productive."

Participant F: "Visual, yeah. Anything. It could be pictures maybe and videos."

Concluding Questions

Is there anything you would like to add? Four of the six participants had nothing to add to their interviews. However, Participant B expressed great pleasure in being able to discuss her profession. Participant E reiterated how

much they loved their work and the population in which they worked. He also added he would stay with is organization due to realizing the impact he had on the lives of his students.

Participant A: "That's it. "Participant B: "I haven't been asked a thing too much, so much about my discipline techniques; it's been a pleasure. I haven't been asked to think so much about my discipline in a long time." Participant C: "Hmm, no." Participant D: "No I think I've talked a lot." Participant E: "I would just like to say that I love my profession. I'm very happy working with this type of population, pushing them up a little bit. Anything, little bit or much that I do, it has a bigger impact. I'd say that this population I can do more here and that is why I'm staying here." Participant F: "Umm. No, not really."

Is there anything I haven't asked that you think is important for me to know? All participants responded no to this question.

Do you have any questions that you would like to ask me? Participant C: "So,

What is this research really about?"

Emergent Themes Through-out the Study

Themes	Illustration
Cultural Incongruence	**Home Country Education** "When I was in school, um, all the context was taught in Chinese, not English. And you know basically, it's more like teacher centered. You know the teacher will teach us, we just

	listen to whatever the teacher was teaching us. You learn a lot of stuff by memorization. " -Participant A " Oh, completely different. Completely different mindset. It was rote, you respected the teacher. The teacher better not have anything negative to say about you to your parents, because it will be horrible. And basically education was just so highly valued that you just knew that you really couldn't play around. And you didn't come home and complain about a teacher. Teachers are right close to God and Pastors, you know, just way up there." -Participant B " I think that when I started teaching, I started asking a little questions about the kinds of information that I was given as a child. I started finding out that, yes it is possible to have a difference of opinion, and nobody is going to bleed if you express that difference of opinion." -Participant B " It hindered my learning, because again, my different learning style was not – I did not identify it until I started teaching English language learners, because I saw the struggles that my students were having and identified with that struggle. So I would say that it hindered me in so many ways because I had to wait until adulthood to identify how I learned and now start using it to learn more and bringing my students along." -Participant B "Um –Um, for like my early childhood, not – not past kindergarten though. Um, it was also very strict, um, like I remember sometimes being yelled at and, um, I remember like having to like copy things a lot." -Participant C

	"Um, I mean I would find ways to like compensate for it –So, if I wasn't being taught in my modality, I guess I like ended up having to do extra work on my own or like ask peers for help." -Participant C "I mean for me sometimes the way I was taught was not very challenging. Like I was a kid who brought – I would bring books to school and put them inside my other books -Participant D "My father and my family was believing that the teacher was always right and that even if the teacher is not that good if you pay attention to the teacher you will learn something. There is no excuse for you because this is your duty. They did talk a lot. And at that time you know there was like no differentiation of instruction. There were no like you know all these intelligences like visual, kinesthetic, naturalistic, interpersonal, auditory, all that. No they were like, "You listen to your teacher. You do what the teacher tells you," and that's it." -Participant E "I think that if there were more different ways to teach it would be easier for me to learn more because there was only one way when I was in high school I didn't learn as much as I experienced here (U.S.) in college. They gave you different ways to learn and I did learn more." -Participant E "It was a very traditional way. There was no modern sort of, you know, there was no kind of – they were not familiar with the modern techniques, modern strategies, modern theories" -Participant F

Cultural Congruence	**Commitment** Participants B and F agree with Statement#1 that people these days move from organization to organization too often. Participants A and F both agree with Statement #2 that a person must always be loyal to his/her organization. Participants D and E strongly agree with Statement #4 regarding the belief that loyalty is important and therefore feel a strong sense of moral obligation to remain with their organization. Participant A and F agree with Statement #4 loyalty is important and therefore feel strong sense of moral obligation to remain with their organization. **Values** "We value education. In order for you to get a better job, a better career you need to get a good education". -Participant A "My parents always encouraged me to you know to study well in school you know to be a good student and to listen to the teachers." –Participant A "Education is highly rated in my culture, actually in my country as a whole. Education is seen as the step ladder towards greatness of any kind". -Participant B

	"Um, people are expected to take education very seriously. -Participant C "I was like always pretty good in school so I've never really had a detention and I, um, always took like high like whatever the highest class that was offered." -Participant C "That's really complicated, if it's just my culture as in American culture. That's so like – that's so broad. So I mean I can say the values of my family as — a tiny little subset. I mean education. Education is everything. It was kind of a religious family so moral values and ethical values. That's a really difficult question. It's probably a little bit of like Protestant work ethic." -Participant D "Even though I'm kind of the rebel in my family they still creep in there you know I still probably subliminally still have the same values I was raised with you know. So still kind of about service or working hard. Studying, kind of overachieving." -Participant D "We value family a lot, especially my family. We value education and we value respect for the elders, your adults especially. And we value our moral values you know, be good, do good to whomever you know." -Participant E I hold myself to a higher standard working with their little one. So parents see that I have a strong believing of what I do for education and what I think is good for them." -Participant E "My culture is a very old traditional culture. And like other traditional countries, we value. We attach a lot of value to

	education. Common people who are not educated say they have a very, very high respect for educated people like teachers, professors, you know." -Participant F "It influences me in the sense that after I finished my – got my first degree in my country, I went to England to pursue my studies and, you know, to get a Master's and then get a PhD. And I started teaching at Georgetown University here for 15 years. And after I had been teaching in Iran as a university professor in Iran after I got my PhD. Then, after the revolution I moved to the United States and started teaching in Georgetown University. After I retired, I came back to teaching here in this Public School." -Participant F
Paradigm Shifts in Teacher Training	"I think – not until I was in college, I realized that like visual is more like a helping me you know to be a good learner. I didn't really think about it when I was in elementary, middle school or high school. So – when I was in college, I remember whenever the teacher wrote it down, I can remember. I can recall it pretty well." -Participant A " It wasn't until I started teaching that I started identifying my own learning styles, and then started identifying my student's learning styles." -Participant B "Um, I think I just recognized it from like when I was freshman, I had some classes that were really large and I some like smaller more like seminar classes and they were more like discussion focused so I think I just noticed that I was like excelling better and, um, it's easier to access like the professor in those settings."-Participant C

	"I think what was really interesting about the schools in Arizona and when I came from the East Coast, because like I said my family is military, but I spent the majority of my time in Arizona in school. What was very different it was very like very creative and very like project-based. You know it had – we would make movies or get lizards and do studies on them. It was like very hands on and really – it was really cool and very creative the things that we used to do like produce our own play and make the set or like you know a lot of things we hadn't done in the kind of East Coast school. They were very traditional, textbook. And high school was great. I mean we really had kind of the cool, hippy, smart teachers that really kind of challenged us in a weird intellectual kind of – like fan the flame of all of our crazy high school – but I mean I don't know. They were cool. They were very rebellious kind of intellectually which kids love at high school age. You know there were lots of kind of cool guru sort of teachers that still like we talk about them to this day. There's like a 20 comment thing on my Facebook going back and forth between all the kids, "Did I dream that happened in high school? Did our teacher like lit candles and we danced to a French song in the middle 9th Grade?" Like that's the kind of stuff that happened at my high school. It was very interesting." -Participant D "One of the experiences when I came to this country and I was getting my degree, under graduate. I did like the idea that at the university here, is to teach you and help you learn. In Columbia they're trying to kick you out of the university because there are many people behind your spot. So if you don't keep up with the grade and you have to do it almost on your own. Here I did my paper and I got a B and then the teacher said, "You want to revise it and bring it back to me? I said, "What? Are you kidding me? Sure, of course I'll bring it back." And I did and I got my A. And that was like something that I say, "Well this is good because they are making me want to improve myself." Not, "You got your B and that's it, move on." -Participant E

	"When I went to England I found a contrast between the way I had been taught before in Iran. That had a very good impact on me. I picked up the results, the good results by learning very quickly. "I realized it through the contrast which I mentioned. That was with my Master's and PhD in England. It was the general learning environment that made the difference." -Participant F
Pedagogical Identity Manifestation	**Participants' Learning Style** "Ah, I think I'm a mix. I have –I'm a visual, I mean, then I'm also a – can – be tactile – um, I need to touch stuff, so visual – and auditory too."-Participant A "You know so it helps me to memorize that – that concept or whatever the skill, you know the teacher is trying to teach." -Participant A " Oh, I am a very visual learner. I'm also tactile. I am not abstract at all, so my teaching style has nothing abstract in it." -Participant B "Um, I like in-person learning. I really don't like online, modules, um. I like smaller settings. I don't like big lecture classes. I like sort of hands-on and like kinesthetic and multisensory." -Participant C "I'm not really sure why. I just – that's how I've had the most

	success." -Participant C "I always was like a crazy note taker in college. And my friend did teach me – well I just always remember him saying, "Write your notes and then type them over again." And I did that all through college, wrote out my notes, then typed them over again and then liked saved them and then went back and like highlighted them and stuff. So I've always been like a note taker when I'm reading and just to organize my thoughts." -Participant D "I have to do. I have to. Even like computer, "Oh you do here, click, click, click." Uh uh, you can tell me 50,000 times I will not learn. Let me have the little mouse and then you tell me where to click and how to do it and then I will remember. I have to do it. I'm a visual, kinesthetic learner so I have to do to learn." -Participant E -"Yeah, mainly visual." -Participant F **Participants' Learner-centered Practices Self-reported** "Ah, activity like ah, I always have some kind of like visual representation in my lesson, like for instance, like chart or graph or something. When I was teaching math, I would have some manipulators for them to touch. I would have them turn and talk; stop and jot to address their interpersonal learning styles" -Participant A "Depending on the lesson. Actually, the lesson usually influences the activities. There was a unit where we did, um, it was a quilt of cultures."-Participant B

	” I love asking questions about the text. I want students to be able to go into the texts and find evidence to support a yes or no answer. That’s tells me that they are at the point where they are able to access higher ordered thinking.”-Participant B “I try to make sure every lesson has something for each one.”-Participant C “I mean to teach I use a lot of manipulatives for K or Pre K, a lot of visuals. A lot of games with like a lot of like standing up and moving around. Singing which is embarrassing but yeah. Things like, as crazy as it sounds, like puppets and stuff, like they love those things. A lot of basically everything that you can think of and pull out of the bag. Definitely tactile when working with phonics a lot of tactile and visual in terms of vocabulary.”-Participant D “Kinesthetic. The students like to do stuff. They like to cut, they like to glue, the like to color, they like to build. Things that may come with an end product.”.” -Participant E “Visual, yeah. Anything. It could be pictures maybe and videos.” -Participant F **Professional Image Projected to the World** “A good teacher know what to teach… I think being a good teacher is also putting your students first.” -Participant A

	"A good teacher is a parent because this is not all about content and academics in language. It's also socialization. Because very often the society in the house is different from the society in the school and classroom teachers and Multicultural elementary ESL teachers regardless have to help the kids find a safe and healthy balance where both cultures are valued. We must be careful how we teach them and what we teach them, and what we demand of them, which will be excellence. " -Participant B "I get my assignments done…collaborate with my team mates….I hold myself to high standards." -Participant C "I'm at work more than I am at home. I am an overachiever. I will do anything to get students to learn." -Participant D "I hold myself to a higher standards. A good teacher is a loving person that is in the profession to improve not only the student's life but also the family." -Participant E "I must a role model to my students. I update myself with the most current research to improve my work and share the information with my colleagues."-Participant F **Participants' Learner-centered Practices Observed** **(strengths- Averages of 3.5 and above)** **Participant A:** LCP #1 Organized Objective Driven Lessons LCP# 8 Maximize Instructional Time

	LCP# 9 Build a Supportive, Learning Focused Environment **Participant B**: LCP #1 Organized Objective Driven Lessons LCP# 2 Explain Content Clearly LCP# 3 Engage Students at all Levels of Learning LCP# 4 Provide Students Multiple Ways to Move Towards Mastery LCP# 5 Check for Understanding LCP# 6 Respond to Misunderstanding LCP# 7 Develop Higher-Level Understanding LCP# 8 Maximize Instructional Time LCP# 9 Build a Supportive, Learning Focused Environment **Participant C**: LCP #1 Organized Objective Driven Lessons LCP# 3 Engage Students at all Levels of Learning LCP# 4 Provide Students Multiple Ways to Move Towards Mastery LCP# 5 Check for Understanding LCP# 6 Respond to Misunderstanding LCP# 7 Develop Higher-Level Understanding LCP# 8 Maximize Instructional Time **Participant D:**

	LCP #1 Organized Objective Driven Lessons LCP# 2 Explain Content Clearly LCP# 3 Engage Students at all Levels of Learning LCP# 4 Provide Students Multiple Ways to Move Towards Mastery LCP# 5 Check for Understanding LCP# 7 Develop Higher-Level Understanding LCP# 8 Maximize Instructional Time LCP# 9 Build a Supportive, Learning Focused Environment **Participant E:** LCP #1 Organized Objective Driven Lessons LCP# 2 Explain Content Clearly LCP# 3 Engage Students at all Levels of Learning LCP# 4 Provide Students Multiple Ways to Move Towards Mastery LCP# 5 Check for Understanding LCP# 6 Respond to Misunderstanding LCP# 7 Develop Higher-Level Understanding LCP# 8 Maximize Instructional Time LCP# 9 Build a Supportive, Learning Focused Environment **Participant F:** LCP #1 Organized Objective Driven Lessons

	LCP# 3 Engage Students at all Levels of Learning LCP# 5 Check for Understanding LCP# 7 Develop Higher-Level Understanding LCP# 8 Maximize Instructional Time
Societal Obligation	"Yes, so I want my students you know to – to get good education as well you know so – because I know a lot of students in our schools and the district they are actually in the lower socioeconomic status. So I mean, there's only way for them to get better life in the future is through education. So they need to go to college, they need to do well in school, so now in the future they can get a better job." -Participant A "I think a being a good teacher is always put your students first." -Participant A "In terms of how I demand of my students, I feel that if their parents trust me enough to hand over their children to educate them, to make them better people, I need to step up." - Participant B "We are involved in birthing the next generation. I said this a couple of times to teachers, and they thought I was funny, but I really did mean it. That these kids that we're teaching, they are our future doctors and lawyers, and we need to be careful how we teach them, and what we teach them, and what we demand of them, which will be excellence. Because, God forbid I don't teach this child as much math as he needs, or teach him to access how to count, or to calculate properly, if he turns out to be a doctor in the future and he gives the wrong dosage of meds

	and it's my fault. And I cannot sue him because if the lawyer that I go and find is incompetent, I was the one that didn't teach him." -Participant B "I had very good, um, Multicultural elementary ESL teachers and so I think I was able to sort of catch up very quickly. Um, and so I wanted to be able to help students who were in the same position as me." -Participant C "It's someone who really, really in the bottom of their heart cares about the kids. So it's not just – I don't know – who sees them each as individuals and really cares about you know what they're teaching each year, how that's gonna impact the rest of their life" -Participant D "A good teacher is a loving person that is in the profession to improve not only the student's life but also the family's. It takes a village, so that's the main thing for me." -Participant E "I think that because I went through the process of learning the second language. I have been there, done that so I may have firsthand experience on how a person can learn or not." -Participant E "I do feel this culture commitment. I do believe that minority students who come to the United States should be helped to learn English because English is the passport to success in Economics, in job matters, you know, in the future actually in their later studies. So, because my own sons learned English here as a second language, they were able to find good jobs and

	good studies here in the United States. And so I feel that I have that commitment to enable my own students to that." - Participant F

Research Analysis

1. How does normative commitment influence Multicultural elementary ESL teachers' implementation of learner-centered practices for diverse learners?

The findings of this study served as a testament to how the cultural and educational aspects of normative commitment are contributing factors as to why English as a second language teachers' implement learner-centered practice. The five themes: cultural incongruence, cultural congruence; paradigm shifts in teacher training; pedagogical identity manifestation; and societal obligations chronicles the evolution in which an individual experiences.

First, there is a mismatch in beliefs and values regarding instructional practices. This usually occurs when the individual is a consumer of services. Second, the individual recognizes which cultural values they have acquired from their home country that they are in agreement with. For example, in this study all valued education and believed it would lead to a better life. Thirdly, the individual will then experience a contrast in educational services that they find to be more beneficial for their growth and development. Next, they are able to identify their learning style and self-report

instructional practices that are confirmed by objective observers. This demonstrates "habit of mind" and the self-image they want to present to the world. Lastly, the need to set group goals as their highest priority are professed and serve as their life purpose.

2. In what ways do teachers' cultural backgrounds influence their commitment to the implementation of learner-centered practices?

Cultural beliefs and values permeated this study. The participants expressed that the values they held regarding education stemmed from environmental influences. Family and community members' explicit and implicit theories and expectations created a framework that allowed them to organize their thoughts, emotions and behaviors. All of the teachers were socialized to believe in order to be successful they would have to acquire an education. In addition, they believed the educators over them were the authority, not to be questioned. Success equated with obtaining adequate schooling for the profession pursued that exhibited economic viability. Participants of this study embraced these tenets by accomplishing higher levels of education through hard work and perseverance. This study demonstrated how the dominant values, in this case education, of a culture could ultimately develop intrinsic motivation within a societal member even after they have migrated to a contrasting culture.

3. How do sub-cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism influence learner-centered practice implementation?

Collectivism, the sub-cultural dimensions of normative commitment; was prominent. The participants' interview responses highlighted their need to give back to society. The expressed desires were based on them being able to identify with the needs

of English as a second language learners. All the participants at some point experienced discomfort in the learning process and felt it was imperative to provide a pathway of learning for someone else in a similar situation that was less strenuous. This affinity moved teachers to place the goals of "the group", population of English as a second language learners as a high priority. This ultimately became their life purpose, what they stand for and what they want to be known for as a professional.

4. In what ways do teachers' educational experiences influence their commitment to the implementation of learner-centered practices?

Educational experiences are events that ultimately formulate an individual self-image and concept that later is presented to the world. These events set in motion the calculated actions performed by the teachers of this study that defined how they see themselves as professionals and their purpose in society. The teachers' experiences afforded them the opportunity to synthesize the teaching and learning process. Ultimately, they were able to identity with the population in which they taught.

5. How do teachers demonstrate a commitment to the implementation of learner-centered practices?

All of the participants in this study demonstrated their commitment to implement learner-centered practices through pursuit of additional university or professional developmental training; team collaboration that would allow them to close achievement gaps in their classrooms. In addition, they were able to articulate the best practices in which they engaged and why. Moreover, the outcome of the formal observations

conducted by administrators for all of the teachers in this study supported their claims of commitment to implement learner-centered practices.

Summary

Chapter four delineated how the researcher conducted the analysis of data gathered by outlining the order in which it would be reported. A recap of the research questions is provided. Participant backgrounds are described. The results of the normative commitment survey statements were charted in a table with the percentages of the response selections recorded. The table that described each participant's level of commitment followed. Next, the themes for how the participants responded were delineated. The professional document review listed the averages for each participant in the nine learner-centered categories over the course of a school year. Then, the averages of all participants' scores were cross referenced for each of the nine learner-centered categories. Emergent themes of the learner-centered practices of the participants followed the table of averages. The participant responses to the interview questions were outlined based on research questions guiding this study. Lastly, the emergent themes throughout the study were captured utilizing a triangulation method.

Chapter 5: Interpretations, Conclusions and Recommendations

The researcher's rationale for conducting this study was to explore how the cultural and educational aspects of normative commitment influence teacher implementation of learner centered practices for diverse student populations. The researcher strived to fill a void in the literature due to the increase in diversity of the teaching workforce in the United States urban school districts. The need to ensure teachers' and school organizations' values and beliefs are in alignment in order to enhance student learning potential is crucial. The NCLB Act (2004) has spurred school districts to engage in aggressive actions in order to eliminate academic deficits of their student populations. Learner centered instructional practices have come to be the solution. However, if individual and organizational beliefs and values are misaligned in regards to classroom practices the educational needs of deserving students will go unmet.

This study revealed how cultural and educational experiences molded what was to later be contributing factors that formed the educator's pedagogical identity. Throughout the process the participants openly shared their values, beliefs and educational experiences by way of a normative commitment survey, professional document review and an interview. These accounts consisted of "quiet" frustrations coupled with academic struggles encountered until a turning point in their education occurred that transformed their opinion of the teaching and learning process.

Research Questions

The research questions were carefully crafted for this study. Question number one: "How does normative commitment influence Multicultural elementary ESL

teachers' implementation of learner centered practices for diverse learners?" served as the overarching question for the study. The second question: "In what ways do teachers cultural backgrounds influence their commitment to implementation of learner centered practices?" was developed in order to target specific beliefs and values held by the teachers regarding education based on their cultural backgrounds. The third question:" How do sub-cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism influence learner centered practice implementation?" highlighted the characteristics of the sub-cultural dimensions of normative commitment that were associated with the participants' country of origin.

Whereas, the fourth question:" In what ways do teachers' educational experiences influence their commitment to the implementation of learner centered practices?" was created to obtain thick, rich descriptions of the participants' educational experiences. The interview protocol was used as the primary source of information gathering for this research question. The questions formulated inquired specifically about education acquired in the participants' home country and outside of their place of origin. All of the participants provided substantial information regarding the method of instruction received on the elementary through post- secondary levels of education.

Lastly, the fifth question:" How do teachers demonstrate a commitment to the implementation of learner centered practices?", supported the studies overarching question by allowing participants to provide concrete illustrations of how they demonstrated their commitment to implement learner centered practices. The professional document review which consisted of instructional observations served as the data collection tool to support this question. In addition, the interview protocol allowed

participants to elaborate on the training they sought in order to improve their practices. Work place collaboration was also a venue used to demonstrate commitment to increase the use of learner centered practices across their organization.

Theoretical Framework

Lev Vygotsky's Socio-cultural Theory served as the foundation for the theoretical framework in which the study was developed. This study demonstrates how Organizational Commitment Theory and the Learner centered Educational Model are woven into the fibers of Socio-cultural Theory. Socio-cultural theory highlights the importance of societal contributions in regards to the cultural interactions that shape an individuals' thoughts, and actions. Whereas, Organizational Commitment Theory's assumption that a stable workforce that consistently worked at peak performance is based on employee commitment. The level of commitment is gauged by the alignment of the individual and organizations beliefs and values. Normative commitment's sub-cultural dimensions individualism and collectivism delineates the beliefs, values and behaviors of a member of an in group. For the purpose of this study the behaviors in question are encompassed in the overarching four domains and 14 principles of the learner centered educational model.

Literature Review

The literature surveyed for this study outlined the components of the theoretical framework; socio-cultural theory, organizational commitment theory and the learner centered educational model. Normative commitment and its sub-cultural dimensions individualism and collectivism were described. A thorough discussion of learner centered

education and before domains and 14 principles of the American psychological Association learner centered principles included. In addition, research back highlighted the occurrence of cultural incongruence drawing paradigm shifts from teacher centered to learner centered instruction internationally. Moreover, the resistance of teachers to learner centered instructional teacher training was captured.

Methodology

The researcher sought the understanding of human thoughts and actions in a social and organizational context. The selection of tools for data collection were decided due to the researchers need to link the three theories proposed for the study. The normative commitment survey, professional document review and a semi structured interview allowed data to be saturated and yield emergent themes that provided answers to the research questions.

An urban school district was chosen for the setting due to the English as a second language population and district-wide learner centered instructional initiative. English as a second language teachers from diverse cultures that taught diverse student populations at least five years in the urban school district undergoing a system-wide paradigm shift from teacher centered to learner centered instruction was targeted. The rationale for selecting Multicultural elementary ESL teachers on the elementary school level was due to the extrinsic needs of ESL student populations. Therefore, they were deemed prime candidates for learner centered instructional methods to bridge information from their first language to English.

The goal of the researcher was to compile data from participants whose place of origin was representative of countries classified as the sub-cultural dimensions of normative commitment individualism and collectivism. The countries captured in this study were China, Africa, Ukraine, the United States, Columbia and Iran. Subsequently, five of the six countries presented were classified as collectivist. The combination of multicultural elementary ESL teachers and diverse students created an ideal research palette.

The first tool administered in the data collection process was the normative commitment survey. The survey consisted of eight statements that evaluated the participant's level of commitment. The participants in this study scored 2.7 to 3.0 on a five-point scale. The score of 2.7 was deemed a high low; whereas 3.0 was considered a moderate level of commitment. The score of 5.0 which was not obtained would be the highest level of commitment. The levels attained by the participants after all the data was aggregated was recognized as a duality of commitment experienced by the participants. The evidence of duality of commitment manifested due to the participants responses to interview questions that show conformity to their new culture and sustaining values of the culture in which they originated.

The second step in the research process with the professional document review. The professional document that was review comprised of formal unscheduled instructional observations conducted by school administrators and master educators. All six of the participants voluntarily provided access to their 2012 – 2013 school year evaluations. The evaluation tool utilized nine elements aligned to the four domains and 14 principles of the American Psychological Association learner centered principles. The

professional document review was instrumental in providing explicit accounts of teachers' instructional behaviors that addressed the various learning styles of students in their classrooms. Based on this document, five of the participants were rated as highly effective with a score of 3.5 or above and the sixth as effective with a score of 3.2. It described how the participants incorporated their own learning style throughout instruction and infused a plethora of learning styles in order to make instruction accessible and challenging to all of their students. The objective observations served as evidence of teacher practice that was triangulated with interview responses.

Lastly, the semi structured interview protocol was broken down into categories aligned with the research questions. All participants were asked to provide a synopsis of their background. Participants were asked to recount how they were taught in their home country; when they experience a paradigm shift in education; instructional practices they engaged in; their learning styles and the learning styles they accommodated during their instruction.

Emergent Themes

The participants provided thick, rich descriptions of experiences that supported the emergent themes. Five critical themes reoccurred throughout the surveys, professional documents and interviews which saturated the data: (1) Cultural Incongruence; (2) Cultural Congruence; (3) Paradigm Shifts in Teacher Training; (4) Pedagogical Identity Manifestation; and (5) Societal Obligation.

Cultural Incongruence. Cultural incongruence occurs when there is a demonstrated mismatch between individuals and the organizations in which they are employed or are engaged with based on traditional infrastructures in place. This can

occur when a person enters an organization with a predisposition of beliefs and values exhibited from an opposing culture (Tartt-Walker, 2013). The research revealed that participants experienced cultural incongruence on the organizational level as a consumer of educational services. They expressed incompatibility in regards to the teacher-centered instruction implemented in their home countries. Claims indicated instruction was rote, traditional, lacking differentiation, did not present a challenge and did not consist of modern theories. A level of fear was also expressed. The fear stemmed from the thought of being ostracized for questioning or defying an authoritative figure; the highly respected teacher. Grave disparities were described as to how educational needs went unmet due to the rote nature of instruction.

Five out of the six participants believed the lack of diversity in instructional methodology hindered their learning process. They spoke the need to find ways to compensate when not taught in their modality. Most believe that if they received learner centered education sooner they would have required more knowledge. Ultimately, cultural incongruence can occur in a teachers' host or home country. The crux of the matter is what beliefs and values are held by the individual and the organization.

Cultural Congruence. Cultural congruence occurs when there is an alignment between individuals and the organizations in which they are employed or are engaged with based on traditional infrastructures, (Tartt-Walker, 2013). Participants conveyed that loyalty to the organization in which they worked was a moral obligation. They all also described how their educational values were strongly aligned with how they were socialized in their home country. All participants highlighted how individuals are expected to take education seriously. Education in their countries was deemed a "step

ladder towards greatness." Being educated demonstrated they held themselves to a higher standard. Moreover, those that were educated were highly respected by the masses.

Each provided actions in which they engaged in, such as academic excellence, professional development, work place collaboration and completion of higher education on the masters and doctoral levels. These actions demonstrated they embraced their country's values.

Paradigm Shifts in Teacher Training. Throughout the study all participants shared a pivotal point in their life when they were exposed to learner-centered instructional practices that transformed their view and ultimately their philosophy of the teaching and learning process. This exposures contributed increased confidence and how they approached instruction. Four of the six teachers recount having an epiphany while in college. They detailed how they discovered the learner centered practices that worked "Pretty well"; made them "want to improve themselves"; provided "good results" that impacted them and recognized they were "excelling" in courses. High school was the turning point for one participant. The events were so profound that they were compared to being in a "dream state". The sixth participant was not afforded the opportunity to uncover her learning style at an educational institution. It was not until she started her career as a teacher that she realized her learning style and began incorporate it into her educational endeavors later.

Pedagogical Identity Manifestation. Pedagogic Identity describes how "teachers and school organizations perceive and present themselves and professional practices" to the public (Moore, 2000, p. 42). Each participant reported not being aware of their learning style until experiencing struggles in their educational journey. All were self-

identified after encountering an institution that employed learner-centered practices. They proclaim being tactile, kinesthetic, visual, auditory and multisensory learners. The teachers attested that they "need to touch stuff"; they "have to do it" and use tactile methods to organize their thoughts.

Once they recognized the missing element in their personal instruction, variations were incorporated into their work to accommodate the needs of their students. Although, strategic rhetoric, the act of a teacher claiming to implement specific practices while their observed actions contradict their report, is common when organizations are undergoing systematic change such as teacher centered to learner centered education. It was apparent that the teachers actually bought into the change process. In essence, the teachers in this study defied the commonality of strategic rhetoric. All of the participant's self-reported practices that were witnessed in formal, unannounced observations. All of which resulted in effective to highly effective implementation ratings of learner centered practices. Through these systematic observations the teachers earned a reputation of a particular "habit of mind" in regards to exemplary instruction.

The teachers teach the way they were taught when it was compatible with their learning style, they were able to identify their students' learning styles; they are able to accurately self-report instructional practices; learner-centered practices are objectively observed; and they could communicate how they view themselves and how they want the world to see them as professionals. This translates into their pedagogical identity.

Societal Obligation. Societal obligation was a theme that permeated the research. All of the participants embodied the need to "mold", "create", "give back", or "extend" the same opportunity they were afforded on their educational path to other

English as a second language learners. The teacher asserted they "were involved in birthing the next generation"; desire to "provide a way for them to get a better life in the future"; and felt the "culture commitment" as being critical. The why of what the teachers do is based on their belief as to what a good teacher does to safeguard their students' future and improve the lives of their families. In addition, the teachers asserted they had Multicultural elementary ESL teachers that assisted them and or family members that have had a great deal of success. These accomplishments were deemed a "passport to success economically." Moreover, bearing the burden of not adequately teaching a student which could possibly result in future cataclysmic missteps in critical fields such as medicine and law was voiced. Although, the population the teachers taught did not originate from their home country an affinity was evident. The collectivist mindset of group success resonated.

Conclusion

Many studies have been conducted on the topic of normative commitment. However, there remains a breach regarding its influence in educational settings. Consequently, this qualitative study attempts to fill a gap in the literature in order to uncover how cultural and educational experiences influence English as a second language teachers' implementation of learner centered practices for diverse learners.

After micro analysis of the emergent themes and research question explanations the following conclusions were made:

(1) Cultural Incongruence in educational settings occur when an individual is a consumer of educational services and as an organizational entity such as a teacher.
(2) Cultural Congruence is displayed by an employee in the form of communicated alignment of beliefs and values with the organization and demonstrated work ethic that promote the viability of the organization.
(3) Paradigm shifts in educational training from teacher centered to learner centered practices increase learning potential of individuals at all instructional levels and cultural backgrounds.
(4) When the five elements of Pedagogical Identification Manifestation are aligned an educator is more likely to commit to a school initiative based on their intrinsic motivation and habits of mind as a teaching professional.
(5) Societal obligations transcend cultural boundaries based on the affinity individuals share.
(6) Cultural and educational aspects of normative commitment influence the implementation of learner centered practices when a collectivistic mind set is the consensus.

Cultural congruence and societal obligation were the dominant themes that echoed elements of collectivism, the subcultural dimension of normative commitment. The in group represented in this study were English as second language learners that have the potential to experience the emotional strife of the teaching and learning process. The participants defined themselves based on the attributes and experiences they shared with ESL students.

The findings of this study should be shared with teachers choosing to educate diverse learners with and educational systems undergoing the paradigm shift from teacher centered to learner centered instruction. In addition, school district in the process of shifting instructional practices would benefit from the findings due to its guidelines for how they target individuals that would be an organizational "just right fit" based on a teachers' pedagogical identity.

Moreover, policy makers have the opportunity to introduce courses that would assist educators in becoming aware of their own educational needs while preparing for the instructional needs of their future learners. Teachers and educational institutions may encounter issues when there is and instructional paradigm shift in progress, cultural incongruence is one of them.

Recommendations

This study contributes to the available body of knowledge regarding the influence of normative commitment of English as second language teachers' implementation of learner centered practices for diverse learners. The findings of the study revealed five themes that have implications for teacher's choosing to educate diverse learners, school districts that are in the process of the paradigm shift from teacher centered to learner-centered education and policymakers.

Recommendations for multicultural English-as-a-second language elementary teachers

Educators who desire to teach diverse learners can benefit from this study. The researcher believes that is important that they are aware of the following tenants: (1) Know your pedagogical identity. This consists of knowing your learning style, the

learning style of students, accurate self-evaluation of practices; teacher observed instructional methodology is aligned with self-evaluation and the ability to articulate professional self-image. Your pedagogical identity is how you see yourself as an educator and how you present yourself to the world; (2) Be aware of the influence your culture and the culture of your students may have on the teaching and learning process; (3) Be able to articulate your rationale for the choice to educate diverse learners; and (4) know the expectations (mission and vision) of the organization where you intend to practice. The outcome of doing so may lower the chances of cultural incongruence within the workplace.

Recommendations for school districts employing Learner-centered Education initiatives hiring multicultural elementary ESL teachers

First, in order to combat the occurrence of cultural incongruence in your organization it is recommended that on the district and school levels the organizational vision and mission be communicated clearly; specifically on how instruction will be executed to close achievement gaps. Second, when educating diverse learners it is imperative that those involved are culturally aware. Therefore, cultural awareness training should be embedded in the organizations professional development program. In addition, developing a training program that explicitly educates teachers on how to employ learner centered practices in an institution that is undergoing a paradigm shift from teacher centered would decrease expectation confusion. A system-wide implementation of the evaluation of student and teacher learning styles. Lastly, the school organization should conduct a pedagogical identity analysis of their staff in order to customize professional development needs.

Recommendations for Policy Makers

The researcher believes that teacher education programs should implement a teacher self-awareness developmental course that will allow teachers to identify their pedagogical identity. This {Pedagogical Identity Analysis} course should be able to assist new and seasoned educators in understanding their learning styles and motivations for implementing specific practices in a classroom setting. Teacher trainers would benefit from using this tool for their personal repertoire of practices. Ultimately, it would lead to a better understanding of how and why it is imperative to meet the needs of all diverse learners.

Recommendations for Future Research

This topic of normative commitment of English as a second language teachers have a plethora of opportunities for future exploration. The researcher makes the following recommendations:

(1) This study featured a subset of Multicultural elementary ESL teachers that did not work at the same schools. The next logical study would be to replicate the research design introduced in this study to investigate subsets of teachers specializing in ESL, special education and general education in the same schools. Research of this caliber would inform school administrators and districts about the instructional strength of their workforce.

(2) Although, this study explored normative commitment of three female and three male educators from different countries, the comparison between genders' normative commitment levels and level of implementation of learner-centered practices was not investigated.

(3) Another opportunity for future research would be the comparison of Multicultural elementary ESL teachers' normative commitment levels and level of implementation of learner-centered practices on the elementary, middle and high school levels. The researcher believes that success is in the continuity of learner-centered practices being implemented. Therefore it would have to extend beyond the elementary level in order to manifest true student academic achievement.

(4) The comparison of the years socialized and educated in home country and the implementation of learner centered practices based on normative commitment levels.

(5) Lastly, due to the crux of research conducted is to discover ways to increase student achievement; understanding the impact of the workforce is crucial. Therefore the need for the correlation of normative commitment levels, the implementation levels of learner centered practices and student achievement would be the ultimate exploration of this topic.

Study Limitations

Only six countries were represented in the study. All but one was classified as being collectivist. Therefore, countries classified as individualistic were not represented in this study equitably. The goal was to explore how normative commitment influences the implementation of learner centered practices. Due to the nature of this study the findings cannot be generalized to all countries that are classified as collectivist or individualist based on the sub-cultural dimensions of normative commitment.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of normative commitment of Multicultural elementary ESL teachers' implementation of learner centered practices for diverse learners. The theoretical framework that guided the study was comprised of Socio-cultural Theory, Organizational Commitment Theory and the Learner-centered Educational Model; all of which were bridged by the beliefs, values and actions of individuals. Five research questions were formulated to address the tenets of the theoretical framework proposed.

The body of literature reviewed provided an overview of the Socio-cultural Theory, then delved into the history of Organizational Commitment Theory and Learner-centered Education Model. Normative Commitment was defined and the sub-cultural dimensions individualism and collectivism were delineated. The four domains and 14 principles of the American psychological Association learner centered principles were also outlined. The researcher then introduced literature that focused on cultural incongruence and teacher training in regards to the implementation of learner-centered practice.

Cultural incongruence was gleaned from the literature that provided accounts of the paradigm shift from teacher centered to learner centered practices globally. The teachers studied demonstrated difficulty embedding the new practices in their instruction. The research also described teachers resistance to the learner centered training. It was reported that they were uncomfortable with the planning and presentation of learner centered practices. Moreover, teacher education programs that promoted the use of learner centered practices also experienced disconnect with the policy. This was

demonstrated when instructors failed to incorporate the practices they were teaching in their instruction.

The study design employed consisted of a Normative Commitment survey, the review of the participants professional documents describing instructional performance and a semi structured interview. The data sources gathered were triangulated throughout the analysis process. The combination of these tools strengthened the study by allowing participants information to be saturated in order to yield emergent themes.

Six multicultural elementary level English as a second language teachers; three men and three women served as participants for this study. The six countries represented were China, Africa, Ukraine, United States, Columbia and Iran. All participants were employed as Multicultural elementary ESL teachers for seven years or more. The number of years with the school district was critical due to the timeline of the paradigm shift from teacher centered to learner centered instruction. In addition, all of the participants were engaged in ongoing professional development to support their use of learner centered practice implementation.

The Normative Commitment Survey provided the level of commitment of the participants, which ranged from 2.7 to 3.0 on a five-point scale. The professional document review described teacher practice. The rubric for the nine areas were aligned to the American Psychological Association's four domains and 14 Learner centered Principles. Evidence of the use of learner centered practices based on teacher and student learning styles was revealed in the scoring and narratives of the evaluations. Lastly, the interview protocol chronicled the participants' cultural background and educational

experiences in their country of origin and their host countries. All of the participants provided explicit accounts of their cultural beliefs and values; how they were taught; their learning styles; how they view themselves as professionals; and their desire to support ESL students due to sharing similar immigrant or migrant experiences.

The five themes emerge from this study: cultural incongruence; cultural congruence; paradigm shifts in teacher training; pedagogical identity manifestation and societal obligations. Cultural incongruence was experienced on the education consumer level for the participants due to lack of differentiation of instructional methods. Cultural congruence was illustrated throughout the study when participants professed loyalty to their students, their organization and the beliefs and values of their home country. The pivotal point in the participants' lives was when they encountered alternative educational methods that worked. These paradigm shifts in teacher training resulted in ultimate academic success for all participants.

Pedagogical identity manifestation is revealed when the following occurs: the teacher has identified their learning style; they can identify the learning styles of students; the teacher accurately self-reports instructional practices; professed learner centered practices are executed when observed by outsiders; and the teacher can articulate how they see themselves as professionals and how they desire the world to see them.

The last emergent theme, societal obligations encompassed the characteristics of the collectivist mindset. The participants' goal in this study was to improve the lives of their students by providing exemplar instruction. This instruction was deemed the students' "passport" to success for the future. The affinity shared between the teachers of

this study and their students was the experience of being an immigrant or migrant in an educational system which intensified their commitment to their prescribed instructional practices.

The researcher concluded the following: (1) Cultural Incongruence in educational settings occur when an individual is a consumer of educational services and as an organizational entity such as a teacher. (2) Cultural Congruence is displayed by an employee in the form of communicated alignment of beliefs and values with the organization and demonstrated work ethic that promote the viability of the organization. (3) Paradigm shifts in educational training from teacher centered to learner centered practices increase learning potential of individuals' at all instructional levels and cultural backgrounds. (4) When the five elements of Pedagogical Identification Manifestation are aligned an educator is more likely to commit to a school initiative based on their intrinsic motivation and habits of mind as a teaching professional.
(5) Societal obligations transcend cultural boundaries based on the affinity individuals share. (6) Cultural and educational aspects of normative commitment influence the implementation of learner centered practices when a collectivistic mind set is the consensus.

Future research recommended would be the replication of this study using subsets of teachers specializing in ESL, special education and general education in the same schools and school districts. The researcher also made recommendations for multicultural English as a second language teachers; school districts shifting instruction from teacher centered to learner centered practices and policymakers of teacher education programs.

The evaluation of the influence in which normative commitment has on teachers' implementation of learner centered practices is a critical matter. Teachers' normative commitment has the potential to impact nations of young learners. There are also implications for teacher training and prep programs. The ability to produce highly effective educators is imperative. Therefore, programming that take into account teacher candidates' cultural and educational backgrounds would strongly impact the profession. Ultimately, a strong workforce of teachers implementing practices based on students' learning styles would reduce the need for excessive intervention. Educational practices would be proactive opposed to reactive. Consequently, student achievement would improve exponentially for English as a second language students and students with special needs.

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Appendix A

Information about the Research Study

INFLUENCE OF NORMATIVE COMMITMENT OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHERS' IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNER-CENTERED PRACTICES

IRB # 111327

You are invited to participate in a research study under the direction of Dr. Michael Castleberry of the Department of the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, George Washington University (GWU).

Taking part in this research is entirely voluntary.

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of culture and educational experiences of English as a second language teachers' implementation of learner-centered practices.

The research will take place at the Gelman Library at George Washington University or the participants' school site. A total of 6 participants who are Multicultural elementary ESL teachers implementing learner-centered practices as mandated by their school district. Each participant will participate in a 30-45 minute interview; complete a 10 minute survey and review of professional documents will take 5 minutes. The interview will be audio recorded. The surveys and the professional documents will be collected on site.

If you choose to take part in this study, the total amount of time you will spend in connection will be one hour. An additional 10-15 minutes will also be allocated for any follow-up questions the participant or the researcher may have after the interview.

You may not benefit directly from your participation in the study.
You will be compensated with a $25 Visa Gift Card for taking part in this study upon completion.

There are no physical risks associated with this study. Although, reflections of past learning experiences may cause negative emotions. However, in the event the participant becomes uncomfortable with the research process they may discontinue immediately.

Every effort will be made to keep your information confidential. You will receive a copy of the Research Consent Form. No signature will be obtained in order to maintain anonymity. Completion of the research constitutes consent. The researcher guarantees the research will not affect your employment in any manner.

If results of this research study are reported in journals the participant in this study will not be named or identified. GWU will not release any information about your research involvement without your written permission, unless required by law.

The Office of Human Research of George Washington University, at telephone number, (202) 994-2715, can provide further information about your rights as a research participant.

Further information regarding this study may be obtained by contacting Dr. Michael Castleberry, principal investigator (202) 994-1510 or Sheba Tartt-Walker, Doctoral Candidate at telephone number (202) 288-0676.

Appendix B

Normative Commitment Scale (Eight (8) Items)

Meyer & Allen (1991)

1. I think people these days move from organization to organization too often.

    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Neutral
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree

2. I believe that a person must always be loyal to his/her organization.

    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Neutral
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree

3. Jumping from organization to organization seems unethical to me.

    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Neutral
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree

4. I believe loyalty is important and therefore I feel strong sense of moral obligation to remain.

    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Neutral
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree

5. If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my organization.

    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree

- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. I was taught to believe in the values of remaining loyal to one organization.

    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Neutral
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree

7. Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organization for most of their careers.

    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Neutral
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree

8. I think that wanting to be a company man or woman is sensible.

    - Strongly Agree
    - Agree
    - Neutral
    - Disagree
    - Strongly Disagree

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

Topic: Influence of Normative Commitment of English as a Second Language Teachers' Implementation of Learner-centered Practices for Diverse Learners

B. Warm-Up: Background

What position do you hold at this location?

How long have you been teaching?

Describe your educational and professional background.

Describe the expectations of teachers that work in this school district.

B. In what ways does a teacher's cultural background influence commitment to implement learner-centered practices? (LCP)

What is your cultural background?

Describe the values of your cultural.

How have these values influenced you?

Do these values influence your work ethic?

What is a good teacher?

What is a good student?

How were you taught?

What are some of the ways that you made connections with instruction when you were taught?

What are some of the ways you assist students in making connections with the instruction when you teach?

Describe some of the educational experiences that have had an impact on your opinion of the teaching and learning process?

Can you share what you feel is your rationale behind your choice to teach English language learners.

Probing Question(s):

What do you mean?

Can you provide more details/examples?

F. How do sub-cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism influence learner-centered practice implementation? (NCS)

Based on your cultural background, what has been the philosophy of the group regarding teaching and learning?

Does your cultural background promote individual success or competition in education?

Does your cultural background promote the need for all to have equitable or comparable opportunities to excel?

How important are your individual professional goals?

In what ways do you demonstrate this in your work?

Probing Question(s):

What do you mean?

Can you provide more details/examples?

G. In what ways do teachers' educational experiences influence commitment to implement learner-centered practices?

How do you prefer to learn?

Why do you feel it is the best way for you?

How were you taught?

How did the way you were taught impact or hinder your learning?

At what grade level did you or a teacher realize what worked for you?

What event(s) occurred in your educational journey that may have been a turning point for you?

Probing Question(s):

What do you mean?

Can you provide more details/examples?

H. Which learner-centered principles are most frequently practiced? (LCP)

What types of activities do you prepare in order to address the needs of individual students?

Which learning styles to you find yourself most often accommodating?

What type of learning activities are you most comfortable with executing during instruction? Why?

Probing Question(s):

What do you mean?

Can you provide more details/examples?

Concluding Questions

Is there anything you would like to add?

Is there anything I haven't asked that you think is important for me to know?

Do you have any questions that you would like to ask me?

Appendix D

American Psychological Association Learner-centered

Four (4) Domains and (14) Principles

Domain 1: Cognitive and Metacognitive Factors

Principle 1-Nature of the learning process: the learning of complex subject matter is most effective when it is an intentional process of constructing meaning from information and experience.

Principle 2-Goals of the learning process: a successful learner, over time and with support and instructional guidance, can create meaningful, coherent reputation of knowledge.

Principle 3-Strategic thinking: the successful learner can link new information with existing knowledge in meaningful ways.

Principle 4-Thinking about thinking: the successful learner can create and use a repertoire of thinking and reasoning strategies to achieve complex learning goals.

Principle 5-Context of learning: higher order strategies for selecting and monitoring mental operations facilitate creative and critical thinking.

Domain 2: Motivational and Affective Factors

Principle 6-Motivational and emotional influences on learning: learning is influenced by environmental factors, including culture, technology, and instructional practices.

Principle 7-Motivational and Emotional Influences on learning: the what and how much is learned is influenced by the learner's motivation. Motivation to

learn, and time, its influence by the individuals' emotional state, police, interest and goals, and habit of thinking.

Principle 8-Intrinsic motivation to learn: the learners creativity, higher order thinking, and after clear curiosity all contribute to motivation to learn. Interim thick motivation is stimulated by task of optimal novelty and difficulty, relevant to personal interest and providing for personal choice and control.

Principle 9-Effects of motivation on effort: acquisition of complex knowledge and skills requires extended learner effort and guide of practice. Without learners motivation to learn, the willingness to exert this effort is unlikely without coercion.

Domain 3: Developmental and Social Factors

Principle 10-Developmental influences on learning: as individuals develop, there are different opportunities and constraints for learning. Learning is most effective when different children development within and across physical, intellectual, emotional, and social domains is taken into account.

Principle 11-Social influences on learning: learning is influenced by social interactions, interpersonal relations, and communication with others.

Domain 4: Individual Differences Factors

Principle 12-Individual differences in learning: learners have different strategies, approaches and capabilities were learning that are a function of prior experience and heredity.

Principle 13-Learning and diversity: learning is most effective when differences in learners and linguistic, cultural, and social backgrounds are taken into account.

Principle 14-Standards and assessment: settings appropriately high and challenging standards and assessing the learner as well as learning progress including diagnostic, process, and outcome assessment are integral parts of the learning process.

Appendix E

Alignment of Learner-centered Practices and APA Learner-centered Domains and Principles

Learner-centered Practices	APA Learner-centered Domains & Principles
Learner-centered Practice 1: Lead well organized objective driven lessons	**APA Domain 1: Cognitive and Metacognitive Factors** **Principle 2: Goals of the learning process**: a successful learner, over time and with support and instructional guidance, can create meaningful, coherent reputation of knowledge.
Learner-centered Practice 2: Explain content clearly	**APA Domain 1: Cognitive and Metacognitive Factors** **Principle 1: Nature of the learning process**: the learning of complex subject matter is most effective when it is an intentional process of constructing meaning from information and experience.
Learner-centered Practice 3: Engage students at all learning levels	**APA Domain 2: Motivational and Affective Factors** **Principle 6: Motivational and emotional influences on learning**: learning its influence by environmental factors, including culture, technology, and instructional practices. **APA Domain 3: Developmental and Social Factors** **Principle 10: Developmental influences on learning**: as individuals develop, there are different opportunities and constraints for learning. Learning is most effective when different children development within and across physical, intellectual, emotional, and social domains is taken into account.

	Principle 11: Social influences on learning: learning is influenced by social interactions, interpersonal relations, and communication with others. **APA Domain 4: Individual Differences Factors** **Principle 13: Learning and diversity**: learning is most effective when differences in learners and linguistic, cultural, and social backgrounds are taken into account.
Learner-centered Practice 4: Provide students multiple ways to engage	**APA Domain 3: Developmental and Social Factors** **Principle 10: Developmental influences on learning**: as individuals develop, there are different opportunities and constraints for learning. Learning is most effective when different children development within and across physical, intellectual, emotional, and social domains is taken into account. **APA Domain 4: Individual Differences Factors** **Principle 12: Individual differences in learning**: learners have different strategies, approaches and capabilities were learning that are a function of prior experience and heredity. **APA Domain 4: Individual Differences Factors** **Principle 13: Learning and diversity**: learning is most effective when differences in learners and linguistic, cultural, and social backgrounds are taken into account.
Learner-centered Practice 5: Check for student understanding	**APA Domain 4: Individual Differences Factors**

	Principle 14: Standards and assessment: settings appropriately high and challenging standards and assessing the learner as well as learning progress including diagnostic, process, and outcome assessment are integral parts of the learning process.
Learner-centered Practice 6: Respond to student misunderstanding	**APA Domain 2: Motivational and Affective Factors** **Principle 9: Effects of motivation on effort**: acquisition of complex knowledge and skills requires extended learner effort and guide of practice. Without learners' motivation to learn, the willingness to exert this effort is unlikely without coercion.
Learner-centered Practice 7: Develop higher level understanding	**APA Domain 1: Cognitive and Metacognitive Factors** **Principle 3-Strategic thinking:** the successful learner can link new information with existing knowledge in meaningful ways. **Principle 4-Thinking about thinking**: the successful learner can create and use a repertoire of thinking and reasoning strategies to achieve complex learning goals. **Principle 5-Context of learning:** higher order strategies for selecting and monitoring mental operations facilitate creative and critical thinking. **APA Domain 2: Motivational and Affective Factors** **Principle 8: Intrinsic motivation to learn:** the learners creativity, higher order thinking, and after clear curiosity all contribute to motivation to learn. Motivation is stimulated by a task of optimal novelty and difficulty, relevant to personal interest and providing for personal

	choice and control. **APA Domain 4: Individual Differences Factors** **Principle 14: Standards and assessment**: settings appropriately high and challenging standards and assessing the learner as well as learning progress including diagnostic, process, and outcome assessment are integral parts of the learning process.
Learner-centered Practice 8: Maximize instructional time	**APA Domain 1: Cognitive and Metacognitive Factors** **Principle 1: Nature of the learning process**: the learning of complex subject matter is most effective when it is **an intentional process** of constructing meaning from information and **experience.**
Learner-centered Practice 9: Build a supportive learning focused classroom	**APA Domain 2: Motivational and Affective Factors** **Principle 6: Motivational and emotional influences on learning**: learning is influenced by environmental factors, including culture, technology, and instructional practices.