ELEMENTARY CAMPUS PRINCIPAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEXAS TEACHER EVALUATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEM (T-TESS)

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Abstract

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to: (a) examine new and experienced elementary campus principals' perceptions of the Texas Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS); and (b) identify factors contributing to the perceptions of new and experienced elementary campus principals with regard to the T-TESS. A purposeful sample of new and experienced elementary school principals representing 64 T-TESS pilot districts provided responses to the Texas Evaluator Perceptions of T-TESS Survey. An independent samples t test, frequencies, and percentages analyzed quantitative findings, while an inductive coding process revealed the qualitative data. Quantitative results indicated there were no significant differences between new and experienced principals with regard to value, goal setting and professional development, system structure, and implementation fidelity. However, there were significant barriers for campus principals to consider for effectively implementing T-TESS. Qualitative findings indicated elementary principals agreed that the T-TESS allowed teachers to receive accurate and valuable information regarding their individual instructional performance and that the teacher evaluation instrument encouraged continuous professional growth. Findings revealed four themes that explained new and experienced principals implementation perceptions of T-TESS: [(a) lacks appropriate training, (b) ongoing, (c) outcome is determined by the owners, and (d) time consuming.]

Keywords: principal perceptions, standards-based teacher evaluation, T-TESS

Within the past few years, states and school districts across the U.S. initiated processes to redevelop their teacher evaluation systems in order to provide teachers with meaningful feedback (Sartain, Stoelinga, & Brown, 2011). Since teacher effectiveness has been found to be closely aligned to student achievement, lawmakers have sought ways to improve the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom (Hallinger, Heck, & Murphy, 2014). However, Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, and Keeling (2009) found that teacher evaluators in the past have not always fully utilized teacher evaluation instruments in order to provide adequate and accurate feedback to teachers regarding their teaching effectiveness.

Designed by Texas educators, the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System, (T-TESS) was piloted by 64 Texas districts in 2014-2015 as a way to improve teacher effectiveness. This new performance-based teacher evaluation system evaluated teachers using six standards: "instructional planning and delivery, knowledge of students and student learning, content knowledge and expertise, learning environment, data driven practice, and professional practices and responsibilities" (TEA, 2016a, p. 5). The Texas Commissioner's Rules regarding educator standards also required teachers to create, aim for, and achieve professional goals to improve and support his or her instructional practice. Support was offered to teachers in meeting students' needs (Texas Commissioner's Rules Concerning Teacher Standards, 2018a). Since implementation, there has been limited research regarding the effectiveness of T-TESS in improving teachers' professional practice.

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to: (a) examine perceptions of new elementary campus principals and experienced elementary campus principals regarding the new standards-based teacher evaluation system currently used in Texas

in measuring teacher performance and growth; (b) identify factors contributing to the perceptions of new elementary campus principals and experienced elementary campus principals regarding the new standards-based teacher evaluation system in Texas; and (c) to inform teachers, campus principals, and especially elected officials on the value of the current Texas teacher evaluation system and its capacity to influence teacher professional performance and growth. The following research questions guided this study.

1. Was there a difference in perceived value of T-TESS between new and experienced elementary school principals?
2. Was there a difference between new and experienced elementary school principals regarding the T-TESS Goal Setting and Professional Development dimension (GSPD)?
3. What were the implementation perceptions of campus elementary school principals utilizing T-TESS?

Literature Review

Effective teacher evaluation systems have repeatedly isolated and quantified teacher strengths and shortcomings so teachers received specific, usable feedback in order to improve their practice. Data from effective teacher evaluation systems also provided evaluators with information needed to effectively allocate resources for teacher and school improvement (Weisberg et al., 2009). Since the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), a major focus of education has been to close student achievement gaps at all levels and provide all students with a just, equal, and substantial opportunity to acquire a first-rate education. As a result, teacher evaluation systems have gained popularity to help meet this challenge.

The Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS) has offered each teacher the opportunity to improve his or her craft by providing goal identification and attainment through professional growth opportunities (TEA, 2016b). An integrel part of T-TESS design was the opportunity to change the evaluation paradigm from that of teacher inadequacy to a new, robust pattern of ongoing collaborative, continual feedback designed to improve professional growth and development (TEA, 2016b). The responsibility to adhere to these tenets has been principally left to appraisers. T-TESS has offered appraisers important opportunities to provide actionable, timely feedback to teachers during the pre-conference and post conference phases, periodically through the goal setting and professional development phase, and during student growth discussions (TEA, 2016a). Each of these key areas allowed teachers the opportunity to self-reflect on personal instructional practices and identify areas for improvement (TEA, 2016a). Teachers have been encouraged to implement necessary changes to classroom instruction as his or her reflections deemed appropriate.

Since its inception in 2014, T-TESS has been publicized as a teacher evaluation instrument that encouraged collaboration between the principals and teachers to improve the teaching process through ongoing dialogue (TEA, 2016a; Templeton, Willis, & Hendricks, 2016). Sixteen dimensions encompass the T-TESS evaluation criteria which were designed to support the teaching process by identifying specific reinforcement and refinement areas deemed vital for the improvement of instructional teaching practices (TEA, 2015; 2016a). The T-TESS Goal Setting and Professional Diminsion (GSPD) enabled principals and teachers to document goal attainment progress with a flexible tracking document based on a teacher's goals and feedback (TEA, 2015).

Principals Perceptions

New Principal Perceptions

New principals have often felt overwhelmed and in survival mode (Kersten, 2010) due to the nature of the position. Novice administrators often encountered more issues leading their campuses than that of experienced principals (Sodoma & Else, 2009). This has resulted in frustration the time constraints and demands associated with the job. This was consistent with the findings of research conducted in this area (Lunenburg, 2010; Wells, 2013). Research further indicated new principals devoted less time and attention to instructional leadership and more time to those tasks considered managerial in nature (Hvidston, Range, McKim, & Mette, 2015). The definition for instructional leadership has evolved over time and is arguably the most important role principals have on their particular campus. According to The Room 241 Team (2013):

Instructional leadership involves setting clear goals, managing curriculum, monitoring lesson plans, allocating resources and evaluating teachers regularly to promote student learning and growth. Quality of instruction is the top priority for the instructional principal. Instructional leadership is committed to the core business of teaching, learning, and knowledge. Staff members should meet on a regular basis to discuss how to do their jobs better and ultimately help students learn more effectively (para.3).

The Room 241 Team included four essential skills necessary for an instructional leader to be effective: (a) effective use

of resources, (b) communication skills, (c) serving as an instructional resource, and (d) being visable and accessible. However, according to Stronge (1988), only one-tenth of their time was devoted to being the insructional leaders on their campuses, while the remainder of the time a principal devoted to their job was spent on other tasks. Often, those tasks were managerial in nature.

As new principals navigated work environments, they found little time for cultivating strong instructional leadership. Novice principals also required an effective support system to become acclimated to his or her position. Allocating their time among multiple and complex responsibilities created a dilemma for newly appointed campus leaders due to a lack of preparation needed to adequately address instructional leadership. However, new principals regarded instructional leadership as valuable to their professional success (Hvidston et al., 2015).

Experienced Principal Perceptions

Although new principals and experienced principals approached the role of campus leadership differently, both groups were charged with improving student achievement. While novice principals struggled with finding the time to implement sound instructional leadership effectively, many experienced principals incorporated unique practices in order to find time to address teacher evaluation. Sodoma and Else (2009) found some experienced principals assigned low-level, non-instructional school tasks to secretaries. This provided the experienced principals more time to focus on improving instruction and providing effective feedback to teachers. Further research revealed that more experienced administrators reported higher gratification, personal achievement, and greater satisfaction with their school and community relationships than less experienced principals (Sodoma & Else, 2009).

In recent years, several educational studies have examined the perceptions of experienced principals regarding teacher evaluation and leadership needs. Results of these studies indicated that experienced principals required learning and growth opportunities in order to sustain them in their roles as campus leaders (Cardno & Youngs, 2013; Robertson, 2017). A recent qualitative study (Robertson, 2017) used a multiple case study approach to determine the factors that influenced professional identity. The summarized findings of the study indicated experienced principals consciously and continually manipulated their professional identity throughout their career. Key factors identified as contributing to principals' transformational identity included the capacity to express principles and beliefs and the ability to reflect on professional practice while maintaining peer role models and networks with other principals (Robertson, 2017).

Researchers have supported teacher evaluation procedures that enhanced the student learning experience (Fisher, 2013; Garubo & Rothstein, 1998). Mendels and Mitgang (2013) suggested that the conduit leading to principal progress was comprised of teacher and staff quality with an emphasis on persistent improvement, processes that ensured student learning, higher education and career readiness, prudence, stakeholder engagement, and the implementation of a clear school vision.

Principal Time Management

U.S. principals have been required to meet various accountability standards while inundated with internal and external job demands. These demands have required principals to balance around-the-clock access from stakeholders and supervisors, accompanied with the task of completing numerous job-related requirements such as teacher evaluations (Wells, 2013). These demands on the principal's time have impacted the principal's ability to build a positive school climate and improve teaching practices. Principals have been challenged to meet federal and state accountability standards while building or maintaining positive campus climate and staff morale (Drago-Severson, 2012). Ever increasing time-intensive workloads have challenged principals to find time to provide effective feedback to teachers.

Typically elementary school administrators have worked up to nine hours a day or more than 50 hours per week, while some secondary school principals reported working up to 70 hours per week on job-related tasks (Lunenburg, 2010; Wilson & Winn, 1980). During working hours, campus administrators filled this time with tasks such as parent, teacher, or student meetings, answering email, completing required paperwork, or other relevant tasks. Principals often experienced frequent interruptions such as unscheduled meetings or other types of disturbances. The average principal rarely had unstructured time and when unstructured time was available, the time was often filled with completing overdue tasks or other work-related requirements (Lunenburg, 2010).

Since the role of the principal has been dominated by administrative tasks and managing unscheduled events, litttle time remained for instructional leadership, professional development, and teacher evaluations (Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010; Leonard, 2010). Even though principals indicated teacher growth and feedback were essential to increasing student

performance, many campus administrators admitted to the abandonment of all but basic instructional leadership duties in order to address other competing tasks (Kersten & Israel, 2005; Kraft & Gilmore, 2017).

Population and Sample

Of the 784 elementary and middle/intermediate school principals in 64 T-TESS pilot school districts who were invited to participate in this study, 154 (20%) completed the online survey. All but two of the particants were teacher evaluators who were principals, or assistant principals; the two exceptions identified as "other" were supervisory staff certified by the State Board for Educator Certification who also had not been identified as teachers of record. (Texas Commissioner's Rules Concerning Educator Appraisal, 2018b).

Table 1

Participant: Demographic Data

	%	*n*
1. Position		
Total Participants	100.0	154
Principal	60.4	93
Assistant Principal	38.3	59
Other	1.3	2
	%	*n*
2. Experience Level		
New Principal (1-3 Years)	29.9	46
Experienced Principal (4 or More Years)	70.1	108

Instrumentation

The standards-based survey instrument, the TEPT-TESS, and nine core interview questions solicited opinions and attitudes regarding T-TESS. The survey required evaluators to rate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with positive statements about T-TESS support activities.

The TEPT-TESS included 32 Likert-scale items with four response options, 1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Agree*, and 4 = *Strongly Agree*. Seven items, numbered six through 12, measured respondents' T-TESS value perceptions. Seven items, numbered 13 through 19, measured respondents' T-TESS GSPD value perceptions. Ten items, numbered 20 through 29, measured respondents' T-TESS system structure value perceptions.

The instrument was developed with input from 18 educational experts including campus administrators, principals, doctoral students, and doctoral candidates. The TEPT-TESS was drafted based on the theoretical framework presented in the literature review and questions adapted from the Louisiana Educators' Perceptions of COMPASS survey (Auguste, 2015).

Data Collection Procedures

The principals were emailed information about the study's purpose, process, and ethics. The researcher also requested their voluntary, confidential participation completing a brief survey linked to a second email sent five days later. The first email advised potential participants that they could withdraw from the study at any time. This email also indicated the participants may also be asked for a follow-up personal interview. A link to SurveyMonkey was included in the email. Three subsequent emails were sent following the original email as reminders to those not responding.

Three principals were selected with the highest TEPT-TESS scores and three principals with the lowest TEPT-TESS scores, all of whom agreed to interviews by Skype or phone, whichever they preferred. The three principals with the highest and lowest scoring TEPT-TESS were selected to be interviewed in order to capture the participants thoughts and feelings

(Lichtman, 2006) and to uncover common threads/themes in the participants' responses. For each interview, nine core interview questions were asked pertaining to the T-TESS evaluation proccess.

Data Analysis

Quantitative

The TEPT-TESS collected quantitative data on principals' perceptions of the T-TESS process in the areas of value and GSPD. The descriptive statistics were calculated for the 154 respondents using SPSS. This included their item and total means, the standard deviations, and response percentage by item. Frequency distributions and response percentages by new and experienced principal classification were also calculated. Participant TEPT-TESS total scores determined their rank order for selecting interviewees who reported the most and least positive T-TESS perceptions.

An independent samples t test answered research question one (RQ1), was there a significant difference between new and experienced principals' perceptions of the T-TESS's value. An independent samples t test of four T-TESS mean scores answered research question one (RQ1) and research question two (RQ2) to determine if there were significant differences between new and experienced principals' perceptions of T-TESS's value and value of the GSPD. An independent t test compared mean scores of two groups to estimate sample variability (Rojewski, Lee, & Gemici, 2012).

Qualitative

Interview data answered research question three (RQ3): What were principals TEPT-TESS implementation perception? The information provided in the qualitative interviews was transcribed, sorted, coded, and organized using NVivo software. Open coding theory classified grouping and organized data into emerging themes and patterns (Lichtman, 2006) that were color-coded by question. A coding chart separated data into three informational categories: codes/nodes, themes, and supporting data. Using a constant comparison analysis method (Lichtman, 2006), data was matched from each interview using relevant data from other interviews in the same category. Captured data, codes/nodes in the first column were drawn from individual responses to specific interview questions. Axial coding identified relationships among open code groupings based on similar relationship and meaning. Responses entered in the third column provided supporting data for each theme. All data were organized based on frequency, participant reflection, or by experiences.

Results

Research Question 1

Although quantitative data revealed that elementary principals tended to disagree with the positive Perceived Value of T-TESS as a teacher evaluation system (M = 2.8, n = 154), statistical findings indicated both experienced and new principals agreed that T-TESS provided teachers with the information they needed to improve their instruction (M = 3.1, n = 119). This finding was in agreement with research which indicated the new Texas teacher evaluation system encouraged and promoted teaching and learning practices (TEA, 2014; 2016a; 2016c). When surveyed, 80.4% of new principals also agreed that T-TESS had shifted the mindset from compliance to offering specific feedback to teachers (n = 37). This finding was congruent with research that asserted the purpose of T-TESS was to provide teachers with specific job-related feedback to improve instructional practices (TEA, 2016a; 2016b). However, negative findings were also uncovered. Data found elementary principals disagreed with the statement, T-TESS is worth the amount of time it takes to complete (M = 2.6; n = 75 and both principal groups disagreed with the statement, I would choose to participate in T-TESS if it was not required (M = 2.6, n = 84). Lastly, an independent samples t test directly answered RQ1, Was there a difference in perceived value of T-TESS between new and experienced elementary school principals? Findings indicated there were no significant differences between new and experienced principals with regard to the perceived value of T-TESS, t (143) = 1.2, p = .21.

Although there were no significant differences between new and experienced principals regarding the perceived value of T-TESS, the findings within this study indicated that T-TESS proved valuable as an evaluation instrument to improve instruction and provide feedback to teachers. However, the time involved with implementing this system was disheartening and led some elementary principals to opt out when given the opportunity.

Research Question 2

Quantifiable statistical data indicated that elementary principals disagreed that the activities related to the GSPD dimension of T-TESS added value to this teacher evaluation system (M = 2.9, n = 154). Frequency distributions and percentage statistics from this section revealed elementary principals (M = 3.1, n = 111), and specifically new principals (88%, n = 95) were generally supportive of the T-TESS GSPD dimension. New principals also agreed that the feedback teachers received regarding the GSPD dimension led to personal growth in teachers (81.5%, n = 88). This statement was in direct agreement with the literature. Weisberg et al., (2009), firmly advocated using quality feedback to improve teacher practice. Experienced principals also indicated that through the T-TESS process, teachers self-reflected on teaching practices to improve their instructional effectiveness (78.8%, n = 85).

However, these results emerged on the low end of the findings: All principals (M = 2.8; n = 113), and especially experienced principals (28.7%, n = 31), did not believe that through the T-TESS goal setting and professional development process, teachers self-reflected on teaching practices to engage in continuous professional learning. Further, all principals (M = 2.6; n = 106), and specifically new principals (21.8%, n = 10), did not believe that through the T-TESS goal setting and professional development process, teachers used self-reflection to develop action plans for improvement. Also noteworthy, is the fact that only 63.6% of all principals would have chosen for their teachers to participate in the T-TESS GSPD dimension if it had not been required (N = 154). Lastly, a statistical analysis was utilized to uncover the differences between new and experienced principals. Findings from an independent samples t test concluded there were no significant differences between new and experienced principals regarding the GSPD dimension of T-TESS $t(143)$ = 1.3, p = .21.

In summary, the data regarding this portion of study was supportive of the literature indicating that the goal setting and professional development dimension had been developed to support teacher growth throughout the evaluation process (TEA, 2016a; 2016b; 2016c). Quantitative findings indicated T-TESS was meeting expectations in supporting educators by providing a comprehensive goal setting and professional development system for teachers. Drago-Severson (2011), stressed the imporatance of this process by declaring educators needed to focus on teacher learning systems that supported teacher growth and development, and that developing such systems was an obligation that was owed to school leaders and teachers. Equally important, feedback opportunities provided by the T-TESS GSPD dimension adequately met educator needs. This proved to support the research that advocated for utilizing feedback to grow teachers. Effective feedback was essential to building highly efficacious teachers (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012). As a result, T-TESS seemed to provide an effective framework for administrators to grow and develop teachers by utilizing the GSPD dimension. Although these findings were uplifting, outcomes indicated that administrators were not as hopeful in the teacher self-reflection processes that were part of the T-TESS experience. However, this area was important and was promoted by TEA for self-reflection allowing a teacher to improve his or her own performance (TEA, 2016a; 2016b). This resulted in the empowerment of the teacher to take ownership for personal growth and development.

Research Question 3

Qualitative data collected through principal interviews provided a deeper perspective into RQ3, What are the implementation perceptions of campus elementary school principals utilizing T-TESS? In this phase of the study, four themes materialized regarding elementary principals' perceptions: the need for more training, an ongoing process, ownership of the process by both principals and teachers, and the time demands of the program.

More training

Principals indicated there was a need to provide additional teacher and administrator training in order to adequately transition to the new evaluation paradigm. Two subthemes contributed to this theme which included a need for understanding the mechanics of T-TESS process and being able to link T-TESS to everyday application. Understanding the mechanics of T-TESS referred to the provision of training in order to gain better knowledge regarding the basic processes, practices, techniques, and specifics of T-TESS. Principals reported that teachers had difficulty accepting the terms and processes of the program as adequate measures of teaching. Some teachers expected a higher grade other than "Rock Solid," although this was a proficient rating in T-TESS terminology and principals felt pressure to rate teachers higher than was deserved (Weisberg et al., 2009). To avoid an adoption of faulty evaluation habits, more training needed to be provided to change this thinking on the part of the teachers and to offer principals added support.

Ongoing journey

Educators view the T-TESS process as an on-going experience and not a one-time event. Three subthemes developed from this topic: supporting teacher growth and development, fostering collaborative relationships, and supporting self-reflection. Some principals reported that the T-TESS process encouraged teacher growth and development through goal-driven conversations and feedback. Research indicated that participation in feedback conversations related to instructional practices helped educators become aware of patterns and tendencies regarding personal teaching practices (DuFour & Mattos, 2013). This finding was in alignment with the purpose of T-TESS, which was to grow and develop teachers through on-going feedback (TEA, 2016b; 2016c). Research also indicated that building relationships where teachers and principals collaborated for school improvement proved beneficial (Cosner, 2009). Qualitative findings also found T-TESS helped foster deeper collaborative relationships between principals and teachers.

A final area uncovered by the data which indicated T-TESS was seen as an ongoing journey was found in the self-reflection component. The T-TESS process allowed teachers to reflect on personal teaching on an ongoing basis which was viewed as part of the evaluation journey. The self-reflection process encouraged teachers to make positive changes to their craft which led to positive outcomes (TEA, 2016a).

Ownership of the Process

This theme suggested both teachers and principals were in control of their T-TESS experience. The ownership of the T-TESS experience was derived from the amount of quality time, attention, and attitude placed on the instrument and feedback. To enhance the experience, principals were committed to a new paradigm of growing and developing teachers through such methods as coaching and offering specific and regular teacher feedback. Of equal importance, teachers have taken ownership of their evaluation journey and will reap the potential benefits of T-TESS by incorporating the feedback in their teaching.

Time Demands

This theme consisted of the time demands of T-TESS-related tasks that required the principal to implement the evaluation process with fidelity. Elementary principals cited tedious paperwork requirements, numerous observations and walkthroughs, and face-to-face feedback sessions as some of the burdens inherent to the evaluation instrument. Some principals described the T-TESS time commitments as overwhelming, disheartening, and frustrating.

Implications

Implications for Elementary School Principals

Results from this study yielded important implications for elementary school principals. First, providing additional and ongoing high-quality T-TESS training should be considered by for teachers by elementary school principals. Connecting gaps in knowledge and teacher training focused on common language, core processes, and methods to link T-TESS to everyday practice may help clarify teacher uncertainty for both teachers and administrators. Second, given that T-TESS is an instrument to support teacher growth and development, elementary campus principals should continue to seek effective systems and processes so quality and specific feedback may be provided. Providing specific teacher feedback is a key component to effective teacher evalaution (Weisberg et al., 2009). Third, so trust and respect for the teaching profession may be maintained, balanced feedback from principals must be provided to teachers in order to build quality relationships. Research has indicated that quality relationships supported learner outcomes and aided in establishing a positive learning environment (Divoll, 2010). Therefore, this seems to be an essential element that must be considered by principals when T-TESS processes are developed.

Implications for Central Office Personnel

A common understanding of district teacher evaluation expectations is required on the part of principals. Without this common understanding of what principals are expected to accomplish, principals are left to interpret T-TESS according to their preferences and schedule resulting in possibly compromising the fidelity of the instrument. Also, it is imperative to train new principals in the T-TESS process at a different level than experienced principals. Research indicated new principals focus more time on campus management and less time on instructional leadership (Hvidston et al., 2015); it is therefore recommended that more structured evaluation procedures and frequent follow-ups with new principals be provided. Lastly, T-TESS expects principals to grow and develop teachers; however, the reality is that time is keeping principals from meeting this expectation on

a consistent basis. Therefore, time management obstacles need to be identified and addressed by central office personnel supervising principals or by those overseeing the teacher evaluation process.

Recommendations for Future Research

There were two specific areas where future research would prove beneficial. A future study could strengthen this area of research by including teacher, lawmakers, and other stakeholder's perspectives. Examining the teacher perspective of T-TESS and aligning the perspectives, accomplishments, and concerns to those of campus principals would offer a more robust perspective and further insight into campus attitudes regarding teacher evaluation. In addition, a future study could expand the targeted population to include Texas secondary principal perspectives. This could include a focus on the 64 pilot districts or be expanded to include Texas regions according to their demographics, proximity, or size.

Conclusion

This study contributed to the body of literature supporting the use of teacher evaluation systems that provide feedback regarding instruction and using the feedback to promote onoging professional development and improvement to the nstructional practices of teachers. This study also provided support to the rationale provided by the Texas Education Agency regarding the T-TESS instrument. The notion that new elementary campus principals and experienced elementary campus principals differ in regard to the new standards-based teacher evaluation system in Texas in measuring teacher performance and growth is not supported by t-test data results. However, diverse tendencies contributing to the perceptions of these two principal groups were uncovered. For instance, most experienced principals believed T-TESS provided teachers with the information needed to improve their own instructional practices (80.5%, n = 87); however, most new principals believed T-TESS shifted the mindset from compliance to offering specific feedback to teachers (80.4%, n = 37). New and experienced principals also disagreed on the GSPD dimension. Findings indicated that the majority of experienced principals "Agree" that through the T-TESS process, teachers self-reflected on teaching practices to improve their instructional effectiveness (78.8%, n = 85). Meanwhile, the majority of new principals were in agreement with two findings: 1) the feedback teachers received regarding the GSPD dimension led to personal growth (80.4%, n = 37); and 2) most new principals were generally supportive of the T-TESS GSPD dimension (80.4%, n = 37). Moreover, factors contributing to the T-TESS perceptions of new principals mirrored the factors for experienced principals. However, one main inconsistency was the perception of T-TESS being a helpful and accepted teacher evaluation instrument. Both principal groups opposed and criticized T-TESS for the time the program took away from other responsibiliites inherent in the performance of the role of their daily duties. If the Texas teacher evaluation system was intended to grow and develop teachers for the purpose of contributing to student growth, the educational community there is still work to be done in order to provide both teachers and principals with a compelling teacher evaluation experience.

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