COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE AMONG FACULTY TEAM-TEACHING EDUCATION DOCTORATE (ED.D.) STUDENTS: A REFLECTIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Aim/Purpose	The purpose of the study was to contribute to knowledge about the ways in which incorporating a Community of Practice into doctoral seminar teaching and course management could be a practical and sustainable path to professional development for doctoral faculty aspiring to become stewards of the practice of teaching.
Background	This report documents a reflective self-study conducted by four professors engaged in a community of practice while team-teaching a linked pair of EdD seminars on action research at Arizona State University.
Methodology	This reflective study used field notes and written reflections as its sources of data to examine how participants' identities as professors of education changed during and after participating in a team-taught professional doctoral pair of courses.
Contribution	An important goal of the community of practice was to promote faculty professional development as stewards of the practice of teaching. Engaging in disciplined reflection on teaching is uncommon in American graduate education and rarely documented in the literature of post-compulsory education.

Findings	Analysis of post-hoc reflective accounts and contemporaneous notes revealed a general pattern of gradual transformation by the teaching team members. The professors moved from anxious concern about appearing competent to growing confidence and appreciation for the potential of a community of practice to provide significant professional benefits to students and faculty. Salutary features of reflective team teaching in a community of practice persist in participants' subsequent teaching practice.
Recommendations for Practitioners	Reported benefits include eagerness for team teaching, increased openness to pedagogical suggestions from peers, comfort with being observed by colleagues while teaching, and willingness to revise plans when initial plans and practices are not working effectively for students.
Recommendations for Researchers	Data analysis and testimony support the claim that engaging in a CoP, in this case, did support their identity transformation as stewards of their own practice as instructors and professors of education. However, the study design does not support a claim that most or all future Communities of Practice in doctoral education will produce similar salutary results. Testing this proposition will require additional research in settings and programs different from the one represented here.
Impact on Society	Implementing communities of practice in doctoral programs can make room for professional development for both the faculty team and for the students.
Future Research	Further studies could be conducted to document the ways in which other communities of practice can be used to develop faculty instructors in masters and doctoral programs and in undergraduate education.
Keywords	community of practice, stewards of practice, team teaching, doctoral seminar, reflective self-study, systematic reflection

INTRODUCTION

Particularly distressing to me has been the rapidly disappearing notion … of teaching as a professional practice with the capacity for and the commitment to improving itself. (Lytle, 2008, p. 373)

An important theme in the discourse about doctoral education explores the habits of mind that leaders should have – what they should know and be able to do to improve their practice. Shulman et al. (2006) proposed the idea of steward of practice to describe what and who doctoral-level leaders in education should aspire to become:

We use the term "steward" deliberately, intending to convey a role that includes, but also transcends, accomplishments and skills. A steward is entrusted with the care of the discipline and thinks about the discipline's continuing health and how to preserve the best of the past for those who will follow. Stewards direct a critical eye toward the future. They must consider how to prepare and initiate the next generations of leaders. (p. 27)

Essential elements of stewardship of practice include being reflective about one's practice and working continuously toward its improvement. To consider the care and health of the field involves continual reflection with other stewards who aspire to a common goal. Stewardship situates itself between the world of practice and the world of scholarship in an effort to "… prepare students for the complex demands of the professional world – to think, to perform and to conduct themselves like professionals [as well as] teach the complex ensemble of analytic thinking, skillful practice, and wise judgment upon which each profession rests" (Sullivan et al., 2007, p. 27). This description of optimal education leadership is helpful in understanding what type of persons professional doctoral programs should be designed to serve as well as the professional responsibilities of the professors who

teach in professional doctoral programs. We contend that to create and cultivate stewards of practice in education, faculty members in doctoral programs must become stewards of their own teaching and learning themselves. In sum, institutional, organizational, or programmatic change must begin with the professors who teach in forward looking doctoral programs. We argue that faculty members who teach, advise and interact with doctoral students should first uncover, reflect upon, examine and refine their own theories in use in order to model the habits of mind and action that we hope to inspire in our students (Argyris, 1991).

Stewardship does not flourish automatically as a result of how a program is designed or of the content of courses offered in the curriculum. Instead, this paper argues that stewardship emerges as the outcome of a voluntary transformational learning process in which participants (professors and students) generate opportunities to act in real settings, to reflect systematically on their actions, and to reify and transform their identities as leader-scholars in the profession (Wenger, 1998). Transformational learning begins and ends with purposeful interaction, collaboration, and participation with others in systematic reflexive practice that can only happen in a Community of Practice (CoP) (Wenger, 1998). It is this process of double-loop learning (Argyris, 1991) in a CoP with others that enables professionals to reflect on past performance and to act on these reflections to make substantive differences in their own development as professionals.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Community of Practice theory posits that active engagement and participation in cultural practices are fundamental to the development and transformation of thinking and being. In other words, the identities of professors of education and graduate students who strive to be educational leaders evolve and change as they interact and cooperate with others in a doctoral program. As Wenger (1998) and Wenger et al. (2002) assert, the more often professionals engage in social practice with others, the more they gain new understandings of the practice and of ways of being in the practice. Through active interaction and cooperation, members develop a sense of belonging to the practice and learn new ways to collaborate and to enact the practice itself, co-constructing and reifying their identities as learners and practitioners.

The organizational structure and academic content of the curriculum remain important components of the graduate school experience. However, they cannot be the sole mechanism for developing stewards of practice in the profession. We know from Community of Practice theory that professors who teach courses that espouse an ethic of stewardship must be active participants in their own learning and change processes. The four participants in this study attended graduate schools with traditional curriculum and pedagogy. To teach together in a CoP, participants had to engage with others in the planning and the practice of the curriculum together, providing each of them the opportunity to reify and to rethink their graduate school pedagogy as well as reimagine how graduate school education could cultivate stewardship in ways that their formal education did not.

The CoP described in this study offered the participants frequent opportunities to reflect on recent and distant past experiences, to articulate and challenge our assumptions about graduate education, and to consider the working tensions of stewardship in an innovative doctoral program in education. For the faculty members co-teaching in doctoral courses, CoP theory predicts that professors will be socialized into renewed understandings and dispositions that support teaching and learning in doctoral education as we interact, share, and participate in construction, planning, reflection, and collective enactment of the courses. This study may advance the conversation about cultivating an ethos of stewardship in professional education by describing our experiences of team-teaching doctoral courses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are few studies that inform this research on the benefits of working in communities of practice at the doctoral level in education. Most of these studies focus on the effects that CoPs or community engagement have on graduate students' learning and development. Research by Warren et al. (2016) demonstrates the benefits to doctoral students of working together to develop their capabilities and dispositions as educational leaders. Specifically, the Warren et al. self-study examined the effects of a doctoral program in which the students were being trained both as researchers and also as "community-engaged scholars" who have the skills and attitudes required to conduct applied research that promotes positive changes in public education. While Warren et al. did not study CoPs directly, they discovered that both collaboration and community in the practice of doctoral studies provided graduate students with the safety and trust needed to share their knowledge and experiences, develop professional relationships, and take risks in their practice that, in turn, helped develop their identities as community-engaged researchers and scholars.

Likewise, Kriner et al. (2015) discovered that theory, practice, and cooperation within CoPs helped students transform their identities from graduate student to novice scholar in the field of adult learning. This work shows the potential of the CoP model, as compared to other less participatory organizations of learning, to provide students opportunities to collaborate, reflect and support each other during graduate work. With the ability to practice developing inquiry skills in a secure, collaborative environment, the graduate students reported that they were able to implement their new knowledge and capabilities in their field.

Olson and Clark (2009) reported similar results in a study of an education doctoral program grounded explicitly in a theoretical and applied model of Community of Practice. Doctoral students reported that their participation in CoPs throughout the graduate program provided them with the social, emotional, and academic support needed to achieve their goals. Further, they reported that the communal aspect of CoPs allowed them to develop their new inquiry skills in a safe environment, claiming that this organization of learning and program structure was essential to their program completion and to shaping their new identities as inquiry-oriented leaders.

We found no research literature that specifically addresses the use of communities of practice by faculty members while teaching in doctoral programs or studies of CoP effectiveness in providing mutual support for learning, teaching and professional identity development by faculty. We infer from the aforementioned studies that communities of practice could promote grounded knowledge development in graduate school settings when scholars and practitioners in education work together to collaborate and solve immediate practical and pedagogical problems. The dearth of scholarship on this facet of doctoral education warrants further examination of self-directed doctoral faculty development working together in a CoP.

CONTEXT

THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The doctoral program in which the authors co-taught at Arizona State University is a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) program designed for professionals working full time in leadership positions in K-12 and higher education. The events, interactions and insights described here took place primarily during the first semester of the third year of this program's history. The Ed.D. program was designed as an intense three-year set of academic and applied experiences to equip leaders in education to study, implement and evaluate immediate practical improvements in their local institutional contexts. It was promoted as a path to making practical differences in one's professional setting, guided by applied scholarship.

The explicit theoretical framework of the program, philosophically and structurally, was Community of Practice theory (Wenger, 1998). Students are admitted in cohort groups of approximately 25 and

move together through a largely prescribed curriculum taught by a small number of faculty members who were closely monitoring and adjusting the evolving development of the then new doctoral program.

The prescribed doctoral courses were team-taught by pairs or teams of four faculty instructors, many teaching for the first time in a doctoral program. Each cohort was further subdivided into Leader-Scholar Communities (LSCs) of 4-6 doctoral students and two faculty advisors to provide mutual academic and social support through the three years of each cohort's time in the program (Olson & Clark, 2009). The LSC groups became the signature pedagogy of the doctoral program (Golde, 2007) within a university culture that placed a high value on innovation and on providing practical service to local and state communities. Our conceptions of doctoral education and of ourselves as fledgling stewards of practice evolved during a semester-long team-taught pair of seminars on applied research.

THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants in the study had a variety of educational and instructional experience in higher education. The following list provides a short description of each member's professional rank and the educational institution from which they earned his or her doctoral degree.

- Kate was in her fourth year of a tenure-track Assistant Professor position. She received her Ph.D. from UCLA.
- Ozge holds a doctorate in Educational Administration and was visiting on a one-year sabbatical at Arizona State University. She is the only one of the group with a Ph.D. earned outside the USA.
- David was in his second year of a six-year tenure-track Assistant Professor position. He was the most recent graduate of the group. David earned an Ed.D. from Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Chris was the leading figure in developing the doctoral program in which we were teaching. He had been a professor of education, researcher on teaching and college administrator elsewhere for over 30 years before taking on the doctoral program leadership role. He earned his Ph.D. from Stanford University.

STUDY DESIGN, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of the study was to contribute to knowledge about the ways in which incorporating a Community of Practice into doctoral seminar teaching and course management could be a practical and sustainable path to professional development for doctoral faculty aspiring to become stewards of the practice of teaching. In this study, data were collected to document how or whether participation in a CoP influenced how participants identified as professors of education and stewards of the practice of teaching and learning.

Research question

The research question that guided the design of the study was: How did team-teaching doctoral courses in a CoP transform participants' identities as professors of education and understanding of the practice?

Data collection

We used CoP theory to frame the collaborative nature of team-teaching experiences and to identify pivotal learning moments for each participant. In CoP theory, reflection and interaction are key elements that define a social practice in which members learn to grow and develop their identities (Wenger, 1998). This reflective study, therefore, used field notes and written reflections as its sources

of data to examine how participants' identities as professors of education changed during and after participating in a team-taught professional doctoral pair of courses.

During a 15-week semester, participants interacted intensely in weekly planning and reflection meetings, teaching sessions, and in frequent conversations, keeping track of the instructional decisions we made on the learning management system Blackboard and in individual notes. To record changes and insights about identity development, participants independently composed reflection papers at the end of the semester to explore common themes and insights regarding how views of the practice of doctoral education and views of ourselves as instructors changed during the semester. Figure 1 is a schematic diagram that portrays the design of the study.
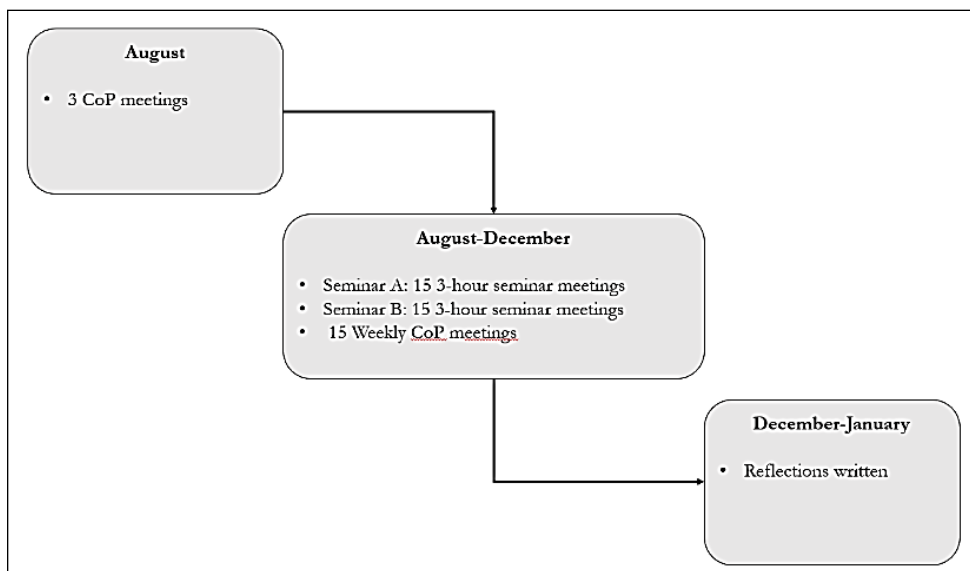

Figure 1. Design of the study

Field notes were taken during each CoP meeting. Written reflections were composed independently by each participant. Specifically, our data consists of:

> *Written reflections:* At the end of the semester, each participant wrote a reflection in response to an agreed upon set of questions and prompts.

> *Weekly meeting notes:* As co-instructors, the participants held planning and reflection meetings each week. During these meetings, they negotiated their plan for the next class meeting, shared our experiences and thoughts about the previous class meeting, and documented these exchanges using contemporaneous field notes and making changes on Blackboard, the electronic interface that recorded and communicated our instructional plans to our students.

Data analysis

To analyze the data, the notes and the reflection essays were coded and categorized using grounded theory (Huberman & Miles, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Each reflection document was coded to characterize our beliefs about our identities and beliefs about our teaching practice. Those codes were then clustered to determine their prevalence and to search for identifiable patterns in the data. Once these patterns were established, selected representative quotes from the data were used to illustrate shared beliefs about how the Community of Practice experience changed identities as professors and refined our teaching practice.

The excerpts quoted below were identified as illustrative of the beliefs, emotions, and interpretations of reflective practice in a CoP. The accounts are told in the first person to provide the feeling of

spontaneous speech (Gay et al., 2009; Noddings & Witherell, 1991; Purcell, 1996). In the end, the goal was to understand and show what experiences and activities in the co-teaching practice meant to participants and how the experiences transformed beliefs about doctoral teaching practices.

RESULTS: TESTIMONIES OF IDENTITY TRANSFORMATION

The results of our study illustrate two themes: professional identity change and transformed teaching practice. As university professors, participants created and sustained a CoP in support of doctoral team-teaching and made the workings of the CoP visible to doctoral students. Participants shared a commitment to actively engage students in their own learning and development. Participants were different from one another in cultural histories, ages, gender, family and professional status, educational backgrounds and prior institutional experiences, yet reached consensus on practical matters of teaching content and process.

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY CHANGE

In our journey of reflective practice, we underwent changes in our identities as researchers, teachers and leaders. The quest to develop better practices for the benefit of our leader-scholar students also served as a stimulus to make changes in our own teaching strategies and in our philosophy of leadership training. David's words reflect his initial concerns and history as a doctoral student before joining our CoP:

> I had a very rigid view of teaching doctoral level courses. Some of it came from my own experiences in graduate school where the professor sort of "held court" with the yearning, yet lowly students. The role of the student was to show their worth, to prove that they were capable of doing "the work." … Classmates competed with each other and rarely collaborated on projects. In our dissertation proposal seminar, many of us were towards the end of doctoral studies, and every class we had taken up to this point was loaded with people we did not even know. I did not know a thing about the people in my proposal seminar and had not had classes with 95% of them. To have each of us talk about our work, to share a common interest, was the best the professor could do at this point to build a "community of learners." (David's reflection, 2009)

Ozge's reflection follows:

> When I came to the university for my sabbatical, I was amazed by the idea that I would be teaching with three other faculty members. To be frank, I was a little nervous to have the CoP experience with three colleagues. I was worried at first [because] it was going to be my first co-teaching experience in a totally different culture. I was also skeptical on how to keep students in the class for 6 hours since they had to take combined two courses on the same evening. I was anxious and at the same time curious about how things would work out. I thought it might have been too hard to teach with many players. To be honest, this one semester course turned out to be one of the most valuable teaching experiences in my life. From now on it is difficult for me to imagine teaching a course as a single lecturer. I hope I will be able to practice it when I go back to my home country. (Ozge's reflection, 2009)

Our reflections revealed that we were nervous about teaching the course with three other instructors, except for Chris, our veteran team member. David said that he did not know what his own role would be in the process, or what he could contribute to the class. He thought that one of the most positive parts of team teaching would be that he did not have to be the only one in the room who had the answer, or the next question, or the comment that clears everything up. He felt free on some level to share his strengths – to make his contributions as best he could to the mosaic.

Maintaining one foot in practice and one in scholarship forced participants to realign and adjust their pedagogical approaches to teaching. Their reflections illustrate that, in the process of planning the

course, participants let go of limiting, received views and expectations of a doctoral course and developed trust that colleagues have useful ideas, perhaps more informed ideas, about how to teach and how to be a professor. The three more junior faculty members reflected that, each semester, they were learning how to be a professor, and indeed how to be stewards of practice. Much of that learning was not about knowing the content, but about developing a shared personal philosophy of teaching in relation to a larger community. As David wrote:

> I can't help but to think of Nel Noddings and Maxine Greene; issues of care and imagination are becoming so relevant to my growth as a professor. When I started my doctoral program years ago, I told my advisor that I was a teacher first and a researcher second, and that I didn't want that to ever change. Being a part of this course made me realize how being a teacher is an ongoing process. (David's reflection, 2009)

Kate also wrote that she had reservations at the beginning of the course about how team-teaching a doctoral course would be with three other professors with different perspectives and backgrounds. Her hesitation came from past experiences trying to work with other professors on course development projects. Those experiences were frustrating for Kate as it seemed almost impossible to come to consensus. However, the team-teaching experience for Kate in a CoP was totally the opposite. It went smoothly from the beginning. Kate recalled that the team came together with different agendas but were able to smoothly articulate and work together to make the doctoral course a coherent and cohesive experience for the graduate students, as expressed in this excerpt:

> During our CoP meetings, we were able to discuss and share ideas like colleagues, mentors and friends. There didn't seem to be any rivalry, competitiveness, or [jealous] ownership of the course. We all had the same goal: to help our students begin to understand the processes and products of inquiry-based leadership and applied research. (Kate's reflection, 2009)

Kate also emphasized the influence of her CoP experience on her teaching. She reported that her teaching in other courses has changed dramatically as a result of her experience team-teaching the CoP doctoral course. The most important aspect for her is to have her students feel safe to discuss, to ask questions of her and of each other so that they are able to provide one another with assistance and support in understanding and acting on the content. This approach allowed students to utilize their expertise about their contexts (e.g., school, district office) in order to enrich it through applied scholarship. Second, Kate doesn't lecture or use PowerPoint presentations anymore in class. She makes them available to the students to read in outlines posted on an online course management site, but she doesn't use them to lecture the material to students. This excerpt from Kate's written reflection summarizes her new model of undergraduate teaching, adapted from her CoP experience in the doctoral program:

> Each week we have the students bring in notes on what they learned from the [reading] material, relating it to their experiences or to their vision of their future classrooms, and we share their reflections together in groups. Then we spend time on questions that they create ahead of time to discuss in class. It is the students' questions, their authentic inquiries about the material, which form the basis of our discussions in class. So far, my students all tell me how much they are learning from our discussions and how happy they are in my class. I have very few absences each week – evidence of success. From these discussions, I am able to meet the students' needs because I hear and learn about each student and what they understand about the course information/content, which, in turn, I use to reinforce particular concepts or correct misunderstandings as they arise – a much more meaningful and authentic learning experience for all. (Kate's reflection, 2009)

In line with Kate's reflections, Ozge wrote that she has become a different teacher and person as a result of participating in our doctoral CoP. She now thinks about teaching in doctoral education completely differently than before. She used to believe that teaching was about making sure that she delivered the appropriate information to the students through lectures, PowerPoint presentations,

and in-class activities; that she had to follow the syllabus exactly and to keep on track with the pre-specified content topics and schedule.

Each participant reflected that this one semester of intense engagement with one another served as a pivot point between our pre-CoP histories and our current and future aspirations for teaching. It was an unexpected identity quest in which we sought a new balance among our expectations, capabilities and limitations. Although this identity quest was implicit and largely invisible to us at the time, our ongoing conversations helped us to navigate the journey as part of the ordinary seeming work of collective planning for teaching and debriefing with confidence and determination. We experienced the beauty and value of grounded professional talk in an academic setting during our weekly meetings and informal conversations. We found ourselves walking the walk of reflective practice.

Our shared experience of the doctoral course community of practice reminded us that leadership and stewardship are not one-person exercises of authority, but rather a collaborative practice that also requires considerable improvisation. Care for the health of the field is a collective endeavor. Without fully intending to, our course leadership team modeled for our doctoral students our own instructional leadership repertoire through visible public collaboration and connection based on mutual trust and flexibility. We modeled ways of working through the tensions of stewardship to and with our students.

In contrast to the three more junior co-authors, Chris has been engaged in co-teaching and in developing social constructivist learning environments for decades, so this most recent doctoral community of practice course followed a somewhat familiar pattern for him. Chris reflects as follows:

> [I]n spite of my many positive experiences with learner-centered and community-intensive courses, I am always a bit nervous during the planning and early implementation stages of a new course with new students and a new teaching team. I ask myself: Will it work this time? Will this particular group of students and this particular group of instructors enter into this unfamiliar process wholeheartedly? Will we be criticized this time for failing to be rigorous enough or for holding back on giving the authoritative right answers to our students? Am I using the power of my seniority, experience, and personality to push reluctant colleagues and students into ways of teaching and learning that are not right for them? (Chris's reflection, 2009)

As a scholar and a practitioner in leadership training, Chris asserted that he is a different person as a consequence of our co-teaching and interactions with us and with the cohort of doctoral students. But he also notes that the differences that he sees in himself are not new differences in kind, they are differences in degree. That is, his commitment to working collaboratively with faculty peers has deepened as a consequence of this successful and rewarding teaching experience; his commitment to letting the learner do the learning has deepened; he sees more clearly that it is crucial for each student to have and own an authentic, challenging project that they complete outside class time; that co-instructors need to model the process of paying attention, week in and week out, to each learner's progress and to the rhythm and morale of the group; and that the students should have a public professional forum at the end of the semester in which they present the fruits of their learning to an audience of peers and colleagues whom they want to impress. Chris's testimony illustrates that stewardship involves living a series of questions about practice, care, and the future of the field.

OPENNESS TO INNOVATION

It became clear in analyzing the reflections data that creating a CoP among the faculty members supported a spirit of innovation. Each participant emphasized the unity among the professors in establishing and celebrating a micro-culture of balanced collaboration in the service of student self-transformation. Creating such an atmosphere takes time and energy both for the professors and the students. David asserted that in our reflexive practice, the weekly meetings were quite formative for him. He used the metaphor of dancing to illustrate his experience:

> I really learned a lot about ambiguity and dancing. Ambiguity because we planned the follow-ing week's class based on our reading of our students' needs. Although we had a general out-line for the course, we planned the details of each session in our weekly [CoP] meetings. Even though at first I was a little frustrated with this level of flexibility, I learned to become more pliable as the semester progressed when I noticed that things do not always work out as we planned. We had to continually adjust our teaching; we had to adjust our dancing style. … Planning our weekly meetings compelled me to be more flexible, to live in ambiguity, to make changes, to adjust my approach, to shift from salsa, to cha-cha, and then into an Ar-gentine tango. … others in the group would remind me that a plan is just a plan – it's not etched in stone, and that improvisation is imperative to creation. (David's reflection, 2009)

The value of weekly gatherings and professional conversations were conspicuous in all the reflec-tions. Stewardship does not consist of following hard and fast rules, or traditional teaching methods, but demands flexibility and an imperative to creation and compromise. The most formative experi-ences recalled, though, were discussions about what the goals and purposes of this doctoral course were to be. Participants continuously wrestled with what the goals were for the students, where they were in their development and understanding of the course material and course assignments, and how to move toward those goals during the next class meeting. Kate's words reflected common ground:

> These discussions were rich in [drawing on] our expertise and our understanding of our stu-dents. The exciting part was figuring out together each week what we had to do to help the students. I loved the always-changing plans and curriculum [driven by our shared commit-ment] to meet the students' needs. (Kate's reflection, 2009)

Ozge noted that as a teacher educator, she has long believed in the beauty of dynamic and engaging lectures during class meetings. However, our doctoral course experience taught her that the words of students can be just as powerful as the dynamism of a great lecturer—that authentic conversation can beget transformative learning. In her experience, she has seen that setting a few ground rules for discussion and making room for students to think aloud and to reflect on action can be much more powerful than listening to an energetic lecturer who tries to control every piece of teaching and learning. This excerpt taken from her reflections shows how one could change her teaching strategy in response to the culture of collaboration created in our CoP:

> I used to be the strongest voice in the class although I let other voices be heard. This collab-orative experience held up a mirror to how traditional I was previously. Unfortunately, I did not have the chance to analyze myself so critically before, since as faculty we all had the ten-dency to evaluate our teaching performance based on students' evaluations. Interestingly, I had always been ranked among the top lecturers in the faculty I worked with since the day I started teaching. I have always thought that I was a good lecturer … I believe that I am a bet-ter lecturer now, one who can offer her thoughts to students in a manner to reveal their thoughts and invite them to express and explore ideas from their own points of view. (Ozge's reflection, 2009)

Student engagement and application constituted the highest values in our shared, evolving teaching philosophy and these goals can be pursued not only in doctoral education but also in graduate and undergraduate education. Furthermore, Ozge's reflection illustrates how stewardship is an ongoing exploration in which students emerge as stewards themselves in the process of dialoguing and engag-ing with the professor and vice versa. Once we commit to student engagement and application as top priorities, instructors can then establish a course-wide or program-wide culture based on engage-ment. David recalled that one of the most memorable moments during the semester occurred after we returned from a mid-semester break:

> [We] were not satisfied with how we tied theory to practice, or demonstrated the value that theory has, or could have, to their [applied action research] studies. …We thought about having them read a theoretical book each week for the rest of the semester. We did not think that would work because they were getting started on their first cycle of action research. We also thought about having them read [common] articles each week … it was discarded because we wanted them to read articles that were relevant to their specific projects. In an epiphanic moment, Kate suggested that as students ask questions and talk about their projects, we encourage them to read certain theorists. For example, when students brought up issues of race or class, we could encourage them to read Freire, or when they brought up issues of self-esteem we could encourage them to read Bandura. I thought this was a great solution to the problem, and one that reflected our vision. (David's reflection, 2009)

As professors, the participants acted as resources for students to learn about theoretical approaches relevant to their first action research projects. Participants reported that they re-learned through being lead participants in a doctoral CoP that *all of us are smarter than any one of us*. Participants reported that they came to believe that each member of the instructional leadership team brought great energy and imagination to the course planning process. This reflection reveals the importance of initial experiences in the first hours and days of the semester:

> [W]e learned or were reminded that, at the very beginning of something new and important to the students (their doctoral program), students typically try very hard to get off to a successful start. They will do almost anything we ask of them and try really, really hard to meet our expectations. So, the first full course experience is extremely important in establishing expectations and patterns of teaching and learning for the remainder of the doctoral program. (Chris's reflection, 2009)

Participants came to realize that implementing this kind of faculty learning community is a professional development exercise for both the faculty team and for the doctoral students. "The faculty team has to learn how to work together, to blend their strengths, to think aloud, to take turns in the lead, and to act outside their comfort zones" (Chris's reflection, 2009). This is true for the doctoral students as well, since their formal education and their successes as students to date depended on working and succeeding in a different, more individualistic and competitive model. Virtually everyone in the social system was on new ground, on thin ice. As a community, we had to learn from one another how to do this well while we were in the midst of doing it. In some ways, this study reveals how stewardship demands being comfortable with being uncomfortable. To remain in the worlds of scholarship and practice as well as keeping the future of the field in mind requires courage, compromise, and persistence.

This doctoral CoP course experience can be a practical model for advanced professional development for doctoral faculty as well as for the accomplished professionals who are doctoral students. One of the most important consequences of co-teaching was learning that academic work does not have to be an isolating experience. Working with others was an enriching experience that challenged one's views, created constructive confusion and emotional angst/excitement, which can be signs of waking to exciting possibilities for personal and professional growth. The CoP participants learned that their lives of rich and varied experiences, multiple understandings of the world and personal passions are precious resources that, when we make a place for them, can contribute to a vision of teaching larger than any one of us could realize alone.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

To reiterate the theoretical framework of this study, Community of Practice theory posits that active engagement and participation in cultural practices are fundamental to the development and transfor-

mation of thinking and being (Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al., 2002). CoP theory predicts that the identities of study participants as professors of education would evolve and change as they interacted and cooperated with one another while team-teaching in a doctoral program. Additional support for the prediction of identity change by CoP participants came from the literature reviewed above, especially from the Olson and Clark (2009) study, which was conducted in the same EdD program studied here but with doctoral students as the participating CoP members. The present study, however, is unique in that effects of CoP participation by team-teaching faculty members have not been documented in the extant literature.

The results of this study support the prediction that a team of four instructors co-teaching a linked pair of EdD seminars while intentionally engaging in a Community of Practice gained new understandings of their teaching practices. Through active interaction and cooperation, participants developed an enhanced sense of belonging to the practice and learned new ways to collaborate and to enact the practice itself, co-constructing and reifying their identities as learners and practitioners. Study participants' reflections demonstrate that the participants care about doctoral students and are motivated to embrace the notion of stewardship to improve their teaching.

CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This study portrays the brief life history of one CoP in doctoral education in a large American public research university. The data illustrate the potential value of communities of practice in professors' professional development and learning in one team-teaching setting at the professional doctoral level. Study participants' individual and collective identities developed through frequent, intense and consequential engagement with diverse others in a complex socio-cultural setting. Through reciprocal mentoring, group planning, reflection and collaboration in a Community of Practice, participants' roles in the practice of teaching changed and developed as they moved from novice toward expert in their understandings of the tools, concepts and processes that co-construct and constitute the practice (Olson & Clark, 2009; Rogoff, 1995; Vygotsky, 1978; Wenger, et al., 2002). Participants travelled together with doctoral students as novice, risk-taking stewards of practice by team teaching with others.

The small size of the study and its relatively brief duration limit the generalizability of this reflective research. Data analysis and testimony support the claim that engaging in a CoP, in this case, did support their identity transformation as stewards of their own practice as instructors and professors of education. But the study design does not support a claim that most or all future Communities of Practice in doctoral education will produce similar salutary results. Testing this proposition will require additional research in settings and programs different from the one represented here.

Although a few thinkers advocate for the importance of professional development in academics' careers, there is no satisfactory empirical record documenting effective practices and experiences that promote professor professional development. Moore (2006) argues that university faculty members (in contrast with their graduate students) rarely feel the need to advance their knowledge and skills within a frame of collaboration. Further, most studies focus on the effects that CoPs or community engagement have on graduate students' learning and development (Kriner et. al, 2015; Warren et al., 2016). The higher expense of institutional support for team-teaching of doctoral courses, which historically have been offered as one-professor courses, must also be taken into account when weighing costs against the potential benefits of sponsoring faculty Communities of Practice.

Implementing communities of practice in doctoral programs can make room for professional development for both the faculty team and for the students. The faculty team studied here was aware of the importance of working collaboratively to reveal their strengths, to think aloud, to take turns in the lead, and to act outside their comfort zones. Academic leaders provided the freedom and resources needed to support structured opportunities in which faculty members developed their teaching competencies and scholarship activities, in a real applied situation. Systematic written reflections emphasized the importance of dedication to student engagement and application, collaboration and

connection, improvisation and mutual respect. For the participants, this was a transformative journey, much treasured but unlikely to be repeated. The greater challenge will be for participants to embrace and adapt the spirit and stance of stewardship by continuously reflecting while in action and then acting on reflections in future teaching, mentoring and inquiry activities. Sagor (1992, p. 10) describes one positive developmental path for professors who incorporate reflective self-study into their practice:

> If we had continued to use this type of disciplined inquiry throughout our teaching career, we would all probably have become more thoughtful teachers and better educators … by turning to collaborative action research. However, we can renew our commitment to thoughtful teaching and also begin developing an active community of professionals. (p. 10)

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

We recommend that faculty members teaching in advanced professional development settings resolve to become stewards of practice through communities of practice. There are many paths to stewardship, each constrained by local circumstances, habit, politics and personalities. We recommend that professors begin with themselves as models of ways to achieve stewardship of teaching practice. The long-range goal is that contemporary leaders in education will become more humane, reflective and dedicated to student success. This study is a conceptual work supported by the reflective analysis of scholars who have implemented their own CoP. Further studies could be conducted to document the ways in which other communities of practice can be used to develop faculty instructors in masters and doctoral programs and in undergraduate education. Future studies could examine how adopting an ethos of stewardship could reshape teacher education programs. Developing CoPs based on an ethos of stewardship could be beneficial and transformative for faculty in colleges of education and across the university.

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