INTRODUCTION

The American educational system is changing rapidly and being influenced through a variety of global connections. The results of international comparative educational exams such as Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) play a bigger role in educational policies in many countries; therefore, it becomes essential for American educational leaders to better understand educational reforms in the global context and think critically of those international benchmarks. Closing the international achievement gap has been recognized as a new and significant responsibility for educational leaders (Stringfield, 2011).

Many have argued that the role and skills of leaders in the current American school system need to be transformed. We continue to serve students in school systems that operate on a 19th Century timetable and deliver a 20th Century curriculum (Hayes-Jacobs, 2014). In the 21st century, how is the American educational system preparing children for a future that is connected both locally and globally? To improve the quality of schools and increase student academic achievement, it is critical to develop competent educational leaders who have a solid understanding of global education and who can lead across different cultures.

One critical attribute of effective educational leaders is the capacity to understand and implement a global view of the world, including intercultural competencies. Schools and districts can no longer function independently. School leaders should understand that modern learners need to interact not only in their local community, but also with state, national, and international communities. Global literacy should become an integral part of the school curriculum. Global literacy, as described by Rosenthal Tolisano (2014), is an individual's ability to understand global education and competencies, while being able to switch flu-
ently between local and global perspectives. Students need to recognize the challenges and opportunities of an interconnected world and be able to work in it and improve it (Bois-Mansilla, & Jackson 2011). Therefore, educational leaders must have the knowledge and capabilities to model and create the culture that embraces these literacy skills for students and staff.

Only when education leaders have a clear global perspective can American school systems prepare youth to be competitive in the ever-changing world. Our leaders should have access and ability to analyze other countries’ educational systems to partner and learn from them. The 2012 International Summit on “Teaching and Learning in New York City provided an avenue to promote global competencies. Ministers of education and teacher leaders from 23 high performing or rapidly improving countries agreed that “leadership with a purpose” is central to raising student achievement. Several participating countries underlined the central role of high quality training, careful mentoring of new leaders, and ongoing development and feedback (Asta Society, 2012). Acknowledging and utilizing the information from international systems can provide support and leverage to impact the American educational system. The challenge for school leaders is not simply figuring out which specific activities contribute to fostering aspects of global competency, but also finding out how to integrate those activities into the regular work of schools (Reimers, 2012). Therefore, educational leaders must have the knowledge and capabilities to model and create the culture that embraces these literacy skills for students and staff. This thread was co-taught by a business faculty member and an education faculty member. In this paper, we will share the efforts that the MBA in Education Leadership at the University of Indiana-napolis made to integrate the development of their understanding of global education and intercultural competency specifically in the areas of instruction, curriculum, and assessment.

Program Overview

To respond to the pressing need to promote candidates’ understanding of global education and intercultural competency, the MBA in Education Leadership program at the University of Indianapolis designed and integrated a global/local thread in their program. In this paper, we will present an innovative approach of other countries’ policies and practices for my school and my school district? Given my global understanding of those concepts, how can I think critically about what is being done in my school and school district? This thread was co-taught by a business faculty member and an education faculty member. In this paper, we will share the efforts that the MBA in Education Leadership at the University of Indiana-napolis made to integrate the development of their understanding of global education and intercultural competency specifically in the areas of instruction, curriculum, and assessment.

Global/local understanding of assessment

This paper focuses on promoting prospective educational leaders’ understanding of assessment in a global context. Within the program, there are two courses that focus on the assessment of student learning in mathematics and statistics and (2) Instruction, Curriculum, and Assessment. These two courses were dedicated to effectively finding, analyzing, and interpreting assessment data. The global/local/school context was offered to Fellows on the last day of the two courses. This 4-hour session focused on three modules: (1) Individual Fellows presentations on global data; (2) Instructional design to global education data; and (3) Comparing and contrasting several countries’ assessment data. The session utilized various teaching methods, including lecture, discussion, and hands-on activities within small groups.

Individual Fellows “Fact-Sheet” Presentations in A Small Group

The class meeting started with Fellows presentations on their “fact sheets” of global education. Prior to the meeting time, Fellows were asked to identify a problem or a situation that they identified from their current work and intended to solve. Then Fellows read required course readings to learn more about what other countries have been doing to address that problem or similar problems. The assigned readings (see Appendix) covered two topics: a) global education, and b) entrepreneurship and innovation in education and business.

The Changing Landscape of Educational Leadership Programs

Global literacy is an essential component for training and licensing educational leaders; however, there are few programs around the country that adequately integrate the global/local strands into administrator preparation studies. Brockman and Boix-Mansilla have advocated re-thinking educational leadership for 21st Century schools.

Although the National Education Association (NEA) and educational policy organizations have advocated for global competency as a 21st Century imperative (www.nea.org), there is limited evidence that educational leadership programs and masters programs include curriculum aligned with global-local skills. The Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) reports 36 graduate programs that offer the Master’s level in the United States; however, their curricula are research-based and do not necessarily include courses to meet building-level administrator licensing requirements (www.cies.un). Principal preparation programs seeking National Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) accreditation must demonstrate curricular alignment with Educational Leadership Constituent Council Standards (ELCC, www.ncaet. org) pertaining to visioning, strategic planning, supervision, instruction, management and operational systems, school-community relations, social justice, and school law. At the present time, the ELCC standard elements for content knowledge and professional leadership skills reference cross-cultural leadership, but not specific global educational competencies.

A look at international leadership programs reveals a very different scenario. The University of Southampton Education School in the United Kingdom offers a master’s in educational management and leadership with coursework in globalization and internationalization in education (www.southampton.ac.uk). Students create presentations and project planning strategies to internationalize educational curricula. Cambridge College students, who are also eligible for licensure in Massa- chusetts, study Advanced Leadership in Policy and Practice, using simulations and scenarios to examine national and local educational policies (www.cambridgecollege. edu). Future school leaders for the United States will complete courses to meet building-level administrator licensure requirements (ELCC, www.ncate.org), there is limited evidence that educational leaders in global education and provide strategies to integrate into the curriculum. These courses are designed to create future leaders in global education and provide strategies to integrate into the curriculum. If our American education system is to support and grow our youth for the future, the leaders must be well prepared. According to Zhao (2009), a paradigm shift in thinking about education, both in what we teach and how we deliver it, is needed.

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Fellows’ choice was found helpful for this learning activity. They were encouraged to connect their work to the unique needs of their school or school district. Many of the Fellows seized this as an opportunity to conduct in-depth research for their school or school district and seek inspirations and solutions from other countries. The topics for their “fact sheet” and presentation covered a wide range of topics, including retention rate, technology integration, poverty issues in schools, the development of community schools, 21st Century skills, and collaboration between school and corporation. Each Fellow presented in a small group of five. In the presentation, the presenter stressed the significance of the problem and shared what inspiring ideas were discovered from other countries. Discussion time was provided after each presentation, during which group members gave feedback to the presenter. They also asked questions and shared how that issue was approached in their schools or districts. By doing this, the conversation was taken from a global level and applied at the local level.

Introduction to Global Educational Data

A mini-lecture, co-led by School of Business and School of Education faculty, provided multiple resources and databases on global education (e.g., World Bank Education Database, UNESCO database). Instructors showed Fellows how to navigate within each database and how to read those databases. Fellows had access to those databases on their own devices during the session.

Comparing and Contrasting Global Assessment Data

Fellows received additional hands-on experiences with finding, analyzing, interpreting, and presenting large-scale data from this small group activity. Numerous sources of international educational data were provided. They were asked to download data from the UNESCO database and to compare their local district with other countries via specific educational variables, such as teacher-student ratio.

Additionally, Fellows learned about the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), an international assessment that measures 15-year-old students’ reading, mathematics, science literacy, and collaborative problem solving in more than 70 countries. Fellows compared PISA scores from various countries and discussed what factors may be attributed to the different performance data among those countries.

FELLOWS’ FEEDBACK

Altogether, 35 fellows participated in this pilot program and provided feedback for this innovative approach. When asked about their learning experience in this interdisciplinary session, the majority of the fellows reported that it was helpful, as indicated in Table 1. As to fellows applying the global perspective to their school district, the findings with regards to the neutral and disagree responses could be due to the fellows being in the early stages of developing their transformational educational leadership skills. When Fellows were asked about their overall experiences with the global/local session in their program, the majority of the Fellows reported that those sessions helped them with their understanding of the global/local thread of the program. As shown in Table 1, when asked about how helpful the sessions were in linking the courses together within the educational leadership program, Fellows seemed to have more mixed opinions. While the majority still indicated “Somewhat agree” or “Strongly agree” that the sessions helped them to understand how the courses were linked together within the program, about half of them were not clear about the connections.

DISCUSSION

Overall, the feedback was positive and suggested that the global/local session was helpful in promoting the fellows’ understanding of both the global and the local. Fellows reported the session was more helpful in developing their understanding of the global perspective of the course materials than in allowing them to apply the global perspective to their school district. One way to explain this is to look at the results from Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Bloom (Seddon, 1978) classified learning goals by the level of cognitive demand. The original Bloom’s taxonomy included remembering (the lowest level in the cognitive domain), understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating (the highest level). The first feedback question (i.e., Understanding the course content materials from the global perspective) would fall into Level 2 and the second feedback question (i.e., Applying the knowledge to their school district) achieved a Level 3 or higher learning goal.

According to Bloom’s Taxonomy, a Level 3 learning goal is higher than Level 2 and would require more knowledge and skills to process the information. It is possible that Fellows felt that the learning activities in the global/local thread were helpful for them to explain related ideas and concepts, but they needed additional support and resources to successfully apply their newly acquired knowledge. Another possible factor for the result is the timing in which this global/local session was offered. The session was provided quite early in the 13-month intensive program, when Fellows still had limited opportunities to systematically apply that knowledge. Receiving their understanding of global perspective into their school district would be even harder for Fellows whose primary job responsibility was still teaching, because they would have to switch their perspective from a teacher to a prospective leader.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Given the potential explanations for the results, multiple directions are being considered for future work. First, we may provide the global/local session at a later time in the program, when Fellows have more leadership knowledge, skills, and experiences. Second, we could collect more longitudinal data to understand Fellows’ feedback and perceptions of the global perspective. Consideration is also being given to using various formats to collect data, including open-ended questions to obtain more detailed feedback and suggestions from Fellows.

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**APPENDIX**

**COURSE READINGS BY THEME**

### Comparing Global Education


### Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Education and Business

- Accelerating the Adoption of mLearning: A Call for Collective and Collaborative Action, World Economic Forum (retrieved from http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GAC_AcceleratingAdoptionMLearning_2012.pdf)