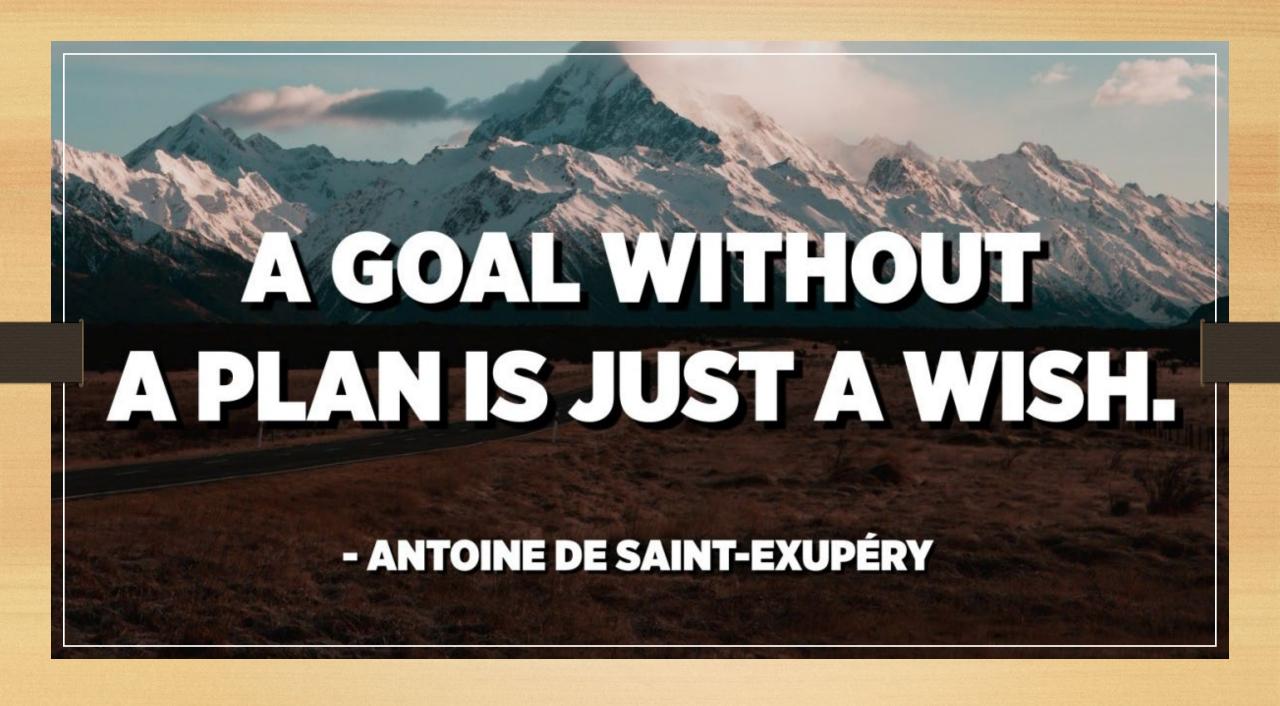
TENNESSEE RURAL MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF IMPLEMENTING ACADEMIC GOAL SETTING FOR STUDENTS

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The Problem

Lack of goal setting research in rural middle school settings



Students needed teacher support to develop goal setting skills



Teachers needed support to implement student goal setting



Teachers needed training to implement student goals

Research Questions

1. How do Tennessee rural middle school teachers perceive implementing academic goal setting for students?

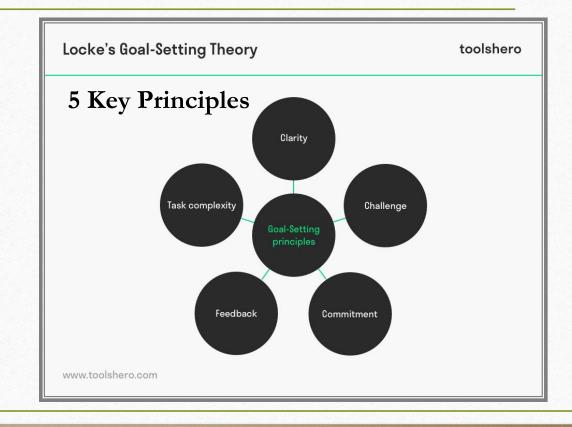
2. In what ways, if any, could Tennessee rural middle school teachers implement academic goal setting for students?

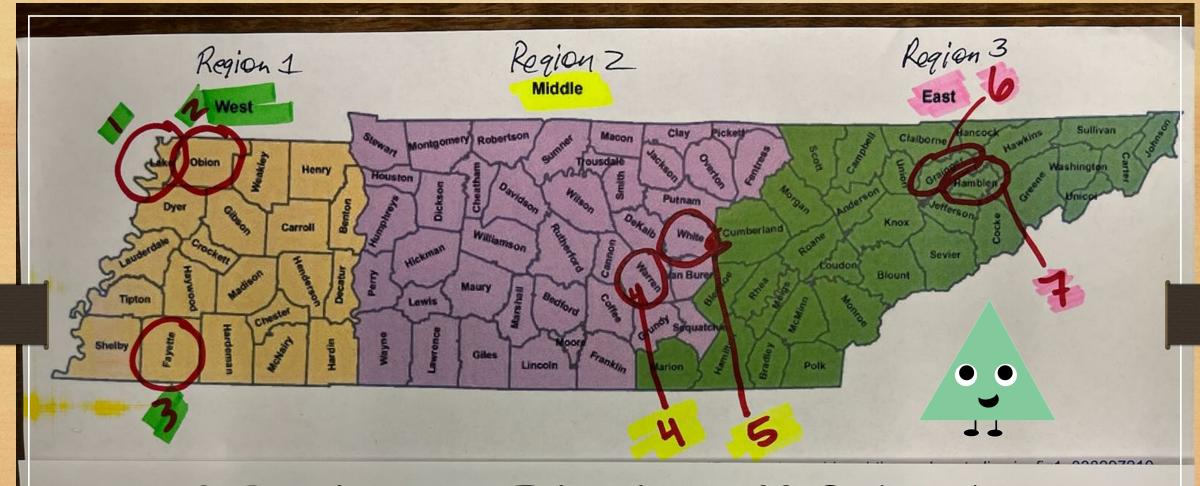
Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative interpretive study was to investigate Tennessee rural middle school teachers' perceptions about implementing academic goal setting for students.

Theoretical Framework

- 1960s Edwin Locke & Gary Latham developed the *goal setting theory*
- Goal setting theory: results of setting goals for an upcoming performance
- Specific & difficult goals = better performance than general/easily achievable goals





3 Regions; 7 Districts; 10 Schools; 117 Potential Participants

ALL TN Rural Middle School Grades 6-8

Data Collection

Google Forms Online Questionnaire



Design

- 6 open ended questions developed
- Anonymous & Asynchronous data collection
- Teachers had complete control
 when/where they completed the questionnaire

Distribution

- Emailed 117 individual potential participants
 - Participation Request
 - Implied Consent
 - Google Forms questionnaire link

2 Weeks: 10/28/22 - 11/11/22

Saturation



Research Question 1

How do Tennessee
rural middle school
teachers perceive
implementing
academic goal setting
for students?

13/4/2

Open Coding	Axial Coding	Selective Coding / Themes
Discuss goals w/test Scores	Test scores to set goals	Teachers perceived academic goal setting implementation as helpful with student motivation and accountability.
Compare previous & current scores	Motivated students = Accountability	
Growth & achievement	Student buy in a must	Teachers perceived lack of student buy in, time, & experience as barriers for academic goal setting implementation.
MAP; CFA; benchmark; iReady; CLEVER tests	Many students do not understand the goal setting process	
Remediate & enrich		
Motivated students		
Student buy in/ownership		
SMART goals		
Retention of content		
Better classroom management		
Students hard to motivate		
Lack of student understanding of importance		
Doesn't work		

Teachers perceived academic goal setting implementation as helpful with student motivation and accountability.

- 14/20 (70%) participants focused on **positive** academic goal setting experiences w/students
 - Participant 3: "I could use setting goals as a **motivator** for them."
 - Participant 5: "Once they reach it, the outcome is amazing."
 - Participant 11: "The majority of students did find some motivation and wanted to meet those goals and be successful."

Teachers perceived academic goal setting implementation as helpful with student motivation and accountability.

- 12/20 (60%) participants shared how academic goal setting implementation was helpful in creating student motivation & accountability
 - Participant 3: "Setting goals can motivate students."
 - Participant 10: "The **biggest benefit** is that the students are involved in the process and **taking ownership** for their learning."
 - Participants 16: "Students have greater focus on their learning, they are more motivated, and they do better quality work."

Teachers perceived lack of student buy in, time, and teacher experience as barriers for academic goal setting implementation.

- 17/20 (85%) participants reported barriers when implementing academic goal setting with students
 - Participant 2: "I've tried implementing academic goal setting and it hasn't worked with the age group that I teach."
 - Participant 4: "My experience is that a **small percentage** will improve."

Teachers perceived lack of student buy in, time, and teacher experience as barriers for academic goal setting implementation.

- 8/20 (40%) participants shared how a lack of student buy in was a barrier
 - Participant 1: "There will always be those who **do not** feel as though academics are a **priority**."
 - Participant 6: "Student buy in is always a factor, and goal setting can be time consuming."

Teachers perceived lack of student buy in, time, and teacher experience as barriers for academic goal setting implementation.

- 4/20 (20%) participants reported lack of time as a barrier
 - Participant 14: "Time constraints."
 - Participant 16: "Time and attendance are the enemy."
 - Participant 21: "Time. The challenge with most things in education is time."

Teachers perceived lack of student buy in, time, and experience as barriers for academic goal setting implementation.

- 3/20 (15%) participants reported a lack of teacher experience when implementing academic goal setting with students as a barrier
 - Participants, 12, 13, & 17 reported having **no experience** implementing academic goal setting with their students.
 - All participants stated "none."

Research Question 2

In what ways, if any, could Tennessee rural middle school teachers implement academic goal setting for students?

15/7/2

Open Coding	Axial Coding	Selective Coding / Themes
Various Positions: central office; academic & instructional coaches; school level admin principals, vice principals, subject teachers, & extended skills teachers	Various central office & school level positions in place to help teachers	Teachers perceived PLCs & strategies as supports to assist teachers in using data to implement academic goal setting with students.
Profession Development (PD): county & school level	No school level help provided	
PLC school level meetings	Available resources	
Tutoring programs (before & after school)	No teacher training/resources received	Teachers perceived a lack of training in implementing academic goal setting for students.
Rewards/incentives	Various PD/PLCs available to help teachers	
Programs: iReady; RTI	Student buy in a must	
Masters' courses	Engage students using S.M.A.R.T. goals & best strategies	
Student buy in		
Motivation		
S.M.A.R.T. Goals		
Time issues		
Modeling & encouraging		
Individualized lesson plans		
No school level support		
No strategies used		

Teachers perceived PLCs and strategies as supports to assist teachers in using data to implement academic goal setting with students.

- 13/20 (65%) participants listed various school-level positions to provide teacher support
 - Participant 1: "Our Central Office has several people in various positions who are there to offer support digging into the data and explaining as needed."
 - Participant 7: "We look at data in **PLC meetings**. This helps us to see where goals should be for students."
 - Participants 4, 16, & 21: academic and instructional coaches were available for teacher support.

Teachers perceived PLCs and strategies as supports to assist teachers in using data to implement academic goal setting with students.

- 7/20 (35%) participants reported various teaching strategies to support academic goal setting implementation with students
 - Participant 2: "We use **agenda books** to help with academic goal setting."
 - Participant 3 listed various teaching strategies including students pick goals that are achievable."
 - Participants 10, 11, & 16: listed **S.M.A.R.T.** goal strategies as supports

Teachers perceived PLCs & strategies as supports to assist teachers in using data to implement academic goal setting with students.

- 7/20 (35%) participants received NO school-level support
 - Participant 9: "I have **never** gotten support at the school level."
 - Participants 5, 12, 13, 14, 17, & 18: "None."

Teachers perceived a lack of training in implementing academic goal setting for students.

- 11/20 (55%) participants focused on lack of training teachers received on student academic goal setting implementation
 - Participant 3 & 14 stated No specific or formal training.
 - Participant 10: "I have received **no formal training** or resources on student academic goal setting."
 - Participant 18: "Teacher prep and personal experience."
 - Participants 5, 11, 12, 16, & 17 reported: "None."
 - Participant 2: "I've had small 2- to 4-hour professional development classes over this and did not find them helpful."

Implications for Practice

District/school leaders SHOULD:

- EXPAND knowledge & understanding of academic goal setting implementation for students...By...
- PROVIDE training/resources/PD/PLCs AND Time to implement
- **BUILD** on **motivating** teachers & provide **mentors** & **modeling**

Knowledge Increases Teachers':

- FEELINGS of self-esteem; understanding; how to best support students in the classroom
- **TEACHER TRAINING** influences outcomes of implementing academic goal setting for students

Recommendations for Future Research



Future Researchers CAN FOCUS on:

- more TN districts (95 total) [0.07%]
- Quality/Relevant...
 - Teacher Training
 - Available Teacher resources
 - Teacher Mentor opportunities
 - Professional Development
 - Professional Learning Communities

Future Teacher Categories:

- Specific grade levels/subjects
- Exact years of teacher experience (novice vs. veteran)
- Gender
- Age
- Education level







G.O.A.L.S.

[Great Options Always with Love & Smiles]

Teacher/Student Mentor Initiative

Questions?

