

A systematic review of articles in *PDS Partners: Bridging Research to Practice* (2017–2022)

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Systematic
review of
articles in
PDS Partners

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Received 24 January 2023
Revised 25 January 2023
Accepted 27 January 2023

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study is to provide a systematic review of articles published in *PDS Partners: Bridging Research to Practice* between 2017 and 2022.

Design/methodology/approach – This study uses a systematic review of published articles.

Findings – Findings indicate that keywords in published articles focused on partnerships, professional development, teacher education and teaching. Findings related to authorship indicated that the journal published a combination of articles authored by only individuals in postsecondary institutions, or author teams that included individuals from both postsecondary institutions and PK-12 settings. Findings also indicate that the most common NAPDS Nine Essentials in articles were Essential 4: Reflection and Innovation and Essential 2: Clinical Practice.

Research limitations/implications – Implications for this study include a need for more scholarly writing about specific NAPDS Nine Essentials as well as a potential need for more studies on student learning within PDS partnerships.

Originality/value – This is the first systematic review published about articles published in *PDS Partners*, which transitioned from a magazine to a peer-reviewed journal in 2018.

Keywords Teacher education, Systematic review, Clinical practice, School-university partnerships, Professional development schools

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

PDS Partners: Bridging Research to Practice (hereafter *PDS Partners*) is one of the journals sponsored by the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS). The peer-reviewed journal was printed as a magazine until 2018 for NAPDS. The publication has served the field for over a decade as an outlet for individuals involved in Professional Development Schools and school-university partnerships to share their work. The NAPDS leadership team and the *PDS Partners* editors made the decision to transition the publication from a magazine to a journal in 2018. This article provides a systematic review of the articles in *PDS Partners* over the last five years.

Systematic reviews are valuable to the field as they provide a longitudinal view of published articles (Martin, Bacak, Polly, & Dymes, 2021). The goal of this article is to analyze articles published by *PDS Partners* between 2017 and 2022. This study examined these questions:

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This article was accepted under the current editorial team.

The following Nine Essentials are highlighted in this article:

Essential 2: Clinical Preparation

Essential 4: Reflection and Innovation



PDS Partners: Bridging Research to Practice
Vol. 18 No. 1, 2023
pp. 3-12
Emerald Publishing Limited
e-ISSN: 2833-2059
p-ISSN: 2833-2040
DOI 10.1108/PDSP-01-2023-0004

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- 4
- (1) What keywords were most frequently found in the titles of articles published by *PDS Partners* between 2017 and 2022?

(2) What were the characteristics of authors who published in *PDS Partners* between 2017 and 2022?

(3) What were the various types of articles published in *PDS Partners* between 2017 and 2022?

(4) Which of the NAPDS Nine Essentials were most frequently addressed in articles published in *PDS Partners* between 2017 and 2022?

Methods

This study employed the five-step systematic review process that was described in the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, *What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 4.0* (2017). The steps included: (1) developing the review protocol, (2) identifying relevant literature, (3) screening studies, (4) reviewing publications and (5) reporting findings.

Developing the review protocol

The process of this systematic review started by determining the research questions listed above and developing the review protocol based on those research questions. The Google spreadsheet for the publications was developed with column headings that were easily identifiable from each article: publication year, title, institutional affiliations of authors, type of institution for each author, number of authors, type of article, and if the NAPDS Nine Essentials were mentioned.

Identifying relevant literature

Based on the purpose of this systematic review and the research articles, the authors included every article that was published in *PDS Partners* from the Summer 2017 issue through the Fall 2022 issue. These issues of *PDS Partners* reflect all of the issues in which the authors served as editors of the journal.

Screening studies

A total of 172 articles were identified and included in the spreadsheet. Prior to entering them, it was determined that Editor’s Notes and Messages from the Presidents of NAPDS would not be included in the systematic review. Table 1 shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria for publications for this systematic review.

Reviewing publications and data analysis

Reviewing publications. This systematic review included an analysis of articles published in *PDS Partners* between the Summer 2017 and the Fall 2022 issues in order to answer the research questions. All articles published in the journal were included in the review.

Table 1.
Inclusion and
exclusion criteria

Criteria	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Focus of the publication	Published in <i>PDS Partners</i> between the Summer 2017 issue and the Fall 2022 issue	Publications that did not meet the inclusion criteria
Publication date	The article was published between January 1, 2000 and June 1, 2022	The article was published outside of those dates

Data analysis. Table 2 shows the categories and descriptions of the categories for the different aspects of each publication that was analyzed.

Findings

Research question 1: words frequently found in article titles

The most prominent words. Table 3 provides a frequency count of the nine most frequently used words. The phrase Professional Development School and its acronym appeared in 62 (36.05%) different articles, while the words teacher(s) and partnership(s) appeared in 55 (31.98%) different articles. The next highest word was learning, which was included in 18 (10.47%) different articles.

Research question 2: institutions represented by authors of articles

Research question 2 includes the frequency of articles from authors and their primary institution as well as the number of authors for each article.

Frequency of articles from authors representing postsecondary, PK-12 or both institutions. Out of the 172 articles that were published in *PDS Partners* between the Winter 2017 and the Fall 2022 issues. Table 4 has the frequency and percentages of the institutions represented by authors of articles. Over half of the articles (89, 51.74%) were written by authors who

Aspect of publication	Categories
Year published	Year ranging from 2017 to 2022
Issue	Winter, Summer, Spring, Fall
Issue type	Regular, Themed
Article title	Article title
University institution represented	University or universities represented in the article
Institutional affiliations of authors	University-based, PK-12-based or both
Number of authors	Number representing the number of authors. The number of authors was grouped into the following categories: 1, 2, 3 or more authors
Article type	Descriptive, Qualitative, Quantitative, Both qualitative and quantitative, Special article
Nine Essentials specifically referenced in article	Yes or No
Which Nine Essentials aligned to the article	One or many of the NAPDS Nine Essentials

Table 2.
Categories for
reviewing publications

Word	Frequency
PDS	62 (36.05%)
Teacher(s)	55 (31.39%)
Partnership(s)	55 (31.98%)
Learning	18 (10.47%)
Candidates	16 (9.30%)
School-university	14 (8.14%)
Practice	13 (7.56%)
Research	13 (7.56%)
School	13 (7.56%)

Note(s): The percentage indicates the percentage of times the article includes that word in the title of published articles

Table 3.
Frequency count of
words in *PDS Partners*
article titles

represent both PK-12 and postsecondary institutions. The rest of the articles are primarily represented by authors only from postsecondary institutions (73, 42.44%).

Anecdotally, as Editors, Eva Garin and I made a more cognizant effort to encourage the submission of manuscripts that included authors from both institutions in 2019. This included the themed issue “For Teachers By Teachers” which was published in the Summer of 2020. Following that issue, e-mail communication to NAPDS and personal communication to potential authors included encouragement for authors to try to include teams of authors who represented both PK-12 and postsecondary institutions.

In order to examine if there was a shift in the percentage of articles with authors from both PK-12 and postsecondary institutions, I calculated the percentage of articles from authors from both PK-12 and postsecondary institutions as well as the percentages of articles from only PK-12 and only postsecondary institutions. The two rightmost columns of Table 4 show an increase in the percentage of articles published from Summer 2020 to Fall 2022 that included authors from both institutions. Prior to Summer 2020, 26 of 71 articles (36.62%) included authors from both institutions, while between Summer 2020 and Fall 2022, 63 (62.38%) of the articles included authors from both institutions.

Additionally, there was an increase in the percentage of articles where the authors represented only PK-12 institutions. Before Summer 2020, 3 of 71 articles (4.23%) included authors from only PK-12 institutions. That increased to 7 of 101 articles (6.93%) after Summer 2020.

Table 5 shows the primary institutions of authors by year. The table shows variance in the percentage of articles authored by only individuals from various institutions. It is noteworthy that the number and percentage of articles written by teams that represented both postsecondary and PK-12 institutions were high in both 2020 and 2022. In 2020, there was a special issue that focused on articles by PK-12 authors and their collaborators, while in 2022, the number was high even without a special issue focused on collaboratively authored articles.

Number of authors on published articles. Table 6 shows the number of authors for published articles in relation to the institution types of authors. There were 138 of 172 articles with two or more authors. Of those articles, 91 had three or more authors. Of note, the articles with two authors were fairly evenly split between individuals who were university-based (23, 48.94%) and representative of both university-based and PK-12-based institutions (22, 46.81%). Meanwhile, articles with three or more authors primarily included authors from both institution types (67, 73.63%).

Table 4.
Institutions
represented by authors
of articles

Institutions of authors	Total
PK-12 institutions	10 (5.81%)
Postsecondary institutions	73 (42.44%)
Both PK-12 and postsecondary institutions	89 (51.74%)
Total articles	172

Table 5.
Institution for authors
by year

	PK-12	Postsecondary	Both PK-12 and postsecondary	Total
2017	1 (10%)	3 (30%)	6 (60%)	10
2018	1 (3.03%)	20 (60.61%)	12 (36.36%)	33
2019	0	9 (50%)	9 (50%)	18
2020	3 (8.82%)	10 (29.41%)	21 (61.76%)	34
2021	4 (10.53%)	20 (52.63%)	14 (36.84%)	38
2022	1 (2.56%)	8 (20.51%)	30 (76.92%)	39

Research question 3: types of articles published

Prior to 2018, anecdotally *PDS Partners* primarily published descriptive articles when it was a magazine. As the publication shifted to a journal with a double-blind peer review process, the aim and scope also shifted to include research-to-practice articles that could include action research, evaluation or smaller research projects as long as they included explicit connections to practice and the daily work of PDS and school-university partnerships. Table 7 describes the types of articles that have been published in *PDS Partners* between Summer 2017 and Fall 2022.

Most articles were descriptive articles (124, 72.09%), which was the category used to describe articles that shared about PDS or school-university partnerships, or other partnership work. Qualitative articles (42, 24.42%) included articles that shared data or information that was collected by interviews, focus groups, surveys with written or open-ended prompts, or the analysis of documents such as Memoranda of Understanding, meeting notes or other partnership-related documents. There was one published article with quantitative data (1, 0.58%), which included data collected from a survey with numerical data. Mixed methods articles (5, 2.91%) included articles that included both qualitative and quantitative data.

The three rightmost columns in the table reflect the institutions represented by the authors for each type of published article. Nearly half of all descriptive articles (61, 35.47%) were authored by individuals from both PK-12 and postsecondary institutions. Meanwhile, over half of the qualitative articles (25, 14.53%) were authored by individuals from both institutions. While the sample size was small with only five mixed-methods articles, there were two (1.16%) from authors representing both institutions and three (1.74%) from authors only from PK-12 institutions.

Research question 4: Nine Essentials referenced in articles

The NAPDS Nine Essentials were originally published in 2008. The Second Edition was published in 2021 (NAPDS, 2021). While the Essentials did change, the essence and broad focus of each Essential have remained fairly consistent. For this research question, I examined whether or not Nine Essentials were explicitly referenced in the text of the articles that were published in *PDS Partners* between the Winter 2017 and the Fall 2022 issues.

	University-based	PK-12-based	Both university and PK-12-based	Total
One author	26 (76.47%)	8 (23.53%)	0	34
Two authors	23 (48.94%)	2 (4.26%)	22 (46.81%)	47
Three or more authors	24 (26.37%)	0	67 (73.63%)	91

Table 6.
Number of authors for
published articles and
role of author

Note(s): Percentages reflect the percentage for institutions within each row of the table

Article type	Frequency	Institutions represented by authors		
		Both postsecondary and PK-12	Postsecondary	PK-12
Descriptive	124 (72.09%)	61 (35.47%)	54 (31.4%)	9 (5.23%)
Qualitative	42 (24.42%)	25 (14.53%)	16 (9.3%)	1 (0.58%)
Quantitative	1 (0.58%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.58%)	0 (0%)
Mixed methods	5 (2.91%)	2 (1.16%)	3 (1.74%)	0 (0%)
Total	172	88	74	10

Table 7.
Types of articles
published in *PDS
Partners*

Note(s): Percentages reflect the percentage of the total number of articles published (172)

Second, I read each article and assigned the Nine Essential(s) that the articles focused on. This process, I feel is appropriate, since *PDS Partners* encouraged authors to write about and reference partnership activity that related to one or more of the Nine Essentials.

Were Nine Essentials explicitly named by authors in articles? Table 8 shows whether or not at least one of the Nine Essential(s) was named based on the affiliations of the authors. The Nine Essentials were mentioned explicitly by authors in 51 (29.65%) of the 172 articles. Of the 51 articles that referenced at least one of the Nine Essentials, 35 (20.35%) of the articles were written by author teams that represented both PK-12 and postsecondary institutions. Meanwhile, articles written by only individuals from postsecondary institutions or only PK-12 institutions only referenced the Nine Essentials in 14 (8.14%) articles and 2 (1.16%) articles, respectively. The rightmost column of Table 8 shows the percentage of article that referenced at least one of the NAPDS Nine Essentials based on author institution. The overall average was 29.65%, meaning the only category that was above average were articles authored by individuals representing both PK-12 and postsecondary institutions.

Which Nine Essential(s) did articles focus on? Table 9 includes data that show the number of articles and percentages where the NAPDS Nine Essentials were included. The left column includes only data where authors explicitly named one or more of the Nine Essentials in an article. Essential 4: Reflection and Innovation was the most frequently mentioned Nine Essential in 29 (16.86%) articles, while Essential 1 focused on comprehensive missions and Essential 2: Clinical Preparation, each was mentioned in 24 (13.95%) articles. Essential 6:

Table 8.
Articles where Nine
Essentials were named
based on institutional
affiliations of authors

Institutions of authors	Frequency	Were Nine Essentials named in article?	
		Yes	No
PK-12 institutions	10 (5.81%)	2 (1.16%)	8 (4.65%)
Postsecondary institutions	73 (42.44%)	14 (8.14%)	59 (34.3%)
Both PK-12 and postsecondary institutions	89 (51.75%)	35 (20.35%)	54 (31.4%)
Total	172	51 (29.65%)	121 (70.35%)

Table 9.
Nine Essentials
named in articles by
author role

NAPDS Nine Essential	Articles where authors mentioned specific essentials	Articles where authors did not mention specific essentials	Total in all articles
Essential 1: Focus on Comprehensive Mission	24 (13.95%)	10 (5.81%)	34 (19.76%)
Essential 1: Focused on Equity	7 (4.07%)	13 (7.56%)	20 (11.63%)
Essential 2: Clinical Preparation	24 (13.95%)	67 (38.95%)	91 (52.9%)
Essential 3: Professional Learning and Leading	19 (11.05%)	48 (27.91%)	67 (38.96%)
Essential 4: Reflection and Innovation	29 (16.86%)	65 (37.79%)	94 (54.65%)
Essential 5: Research and Results	9 (5.23%)	20 (11.63%)	29 (16.86%)
Essential 6: Articulated Agreements	5 (2.91%)	3 (1.74%)	8 (4.65%)
Essential 7: Shared Governance Structures	9 (5.23%)	4 (2.33%)	13 (7.56%)
Essential 8: Boundary-Spanning Roles	12 (6.98%)	22 (12.79%)	34 (19.77%)
Essential 9: Resources and Recognition	6 (3.49%)	3 (1.74%)	9 (5.23%)

Articulated Agreements and Essential 9: Resources and Recognition were the least frequently mentioned Nine Essentials, being named in only five (2.91%) and six articles (3.41%), respectively.

The middle column of [Table 9](#) includes data for the number of articles that Nine Essentials were aligned to the article based on my analysis. All of the articles in the middle column were instances in which the authors did not specifically name any Nine Essentials. As previously stated in the methods section, for each of these articles where the authors had not mentioned a specific Nine Essential, I read the article and determined the Nine Essential(s) that aligned to the article. Essential 2: Clinical Preparation (67, 38.95%) and Essential 4: Reflection and Innovation (65, 37.79%) were the topics of the most articles. Additionally, Essential 3: Professional Learning and Leading (48, 27.91%) was the third most found Essential. Meanwhile, Essential 6: Articulated Agreements (3, 1.74%) and Essential 9: Resources and Recognition (3, 1.74%) were the Essentials aligned to the least amount in articles.

The column in the right of [Table 9](#) shows the total alignment of the published articles to the various Nine Essentials. The most-aligned and most-frequently mentioned Nine Essentials were Essential 4: Reflection and Innovation (94, 54.65%), Essential 2: Clinical Preparation (91, 52.59%) and Essential 3: Professional Learning and Leading (67, 38.96%). The least-aligned and least-mentioned Essentials were Essential 6: Articulated Agreements (8, 4.65%) and Essential 9: Resources and Recognition (9, 5.23%).

Discussion

The goal of this systematic review was to provide an overview of articles published in *PDS Partners: Bridging Research to Practice* between 2017 and 2022. The review encompassed 172 articles, and gives insight into the keywords used in titles, the types of institutions of authors, the types of articles and the alignment of articles to the NAPDS Nine Essentials. In this section, I provide a few high-level takeaways and recommendations for future school-university partnership work.

Emphasized keywords and concepts

Findings related to Research Question 1 indicated that phrases such as PDS, teacher(s) and partnership(s) were frequently used over 50 times each in the titles of the 172 published articles. The rest of the frequently seen words were included in 18 or fewer of the articles. This includes key concepts such as learning, teacher candidates and research.

In terms of future articles and topics to write about, the recently published Second Edition of the NAPDS Nine Essentials has lifted Essential 1 as a comprehensive broad Essential talking about how PDS and partnerships can be mutually beneficial structures to help advance equity and access to high-quality education for all learners ([Zenk et al., 2021](#)). Additionally, multiple policy documents have long asked for links between partnership work and student learning ([American Association of Colleges for teacher Education \(AACTE\), 2018](#); [Burns et al., 2022](#); [National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education \(NCATE\), 2010](#)), which means that articles focused on student learning are needed to further develop the knowledge base about what we know about school-university partnerships.

Including multiple voices as authors

One explicit focus that Eva Garin and I made as Editors was to try to intentionally recruit and encourage author teams that reflected both PK-12 and postsecondary institutions and also encourage individuals from PK-12 institutions who presented at the annual NAPDS conference to publish in *PDS Partners*. Data from Research Question 2 indicates that over half (89, 51.74%) of the articles published since 2017 include author teams that represent both PK-

12 and postsecondary institutions. Unfortunately, only ten articles (5.81%) were written solely by individuals from PK-12 institutions, such as schools or school districts.

Reflecting on this finding one implication for future work is to consider ways that Editors of journals and special-themed issues of journals can continue to look for ways to capture and lift up the voices and perspectives of individuals in PK-12 institutions. The job requirements and roles of individuals at postsecondary institutions often include requirements to present and publish in professional settings, but those requirements are not often there for those in PK-12 settings.

This finding does indicate, however, success in having teams of authors that include individuals from both postsecondary and PK-12 institutions collaborate on articles that have been published in *PDS Partners*. Essential 5 of the Second Edition of the NAPDS Nine Essentials explicitly talks about collaborative inquiry and opportunities to collaborate in publicly sharing the results of partnership work. While NAPDS has a blog, *PDS Partners* as well as a more focused research journal *School-University Partnerships*, there is still work to be done to encourage and capture the perspectives and work of individuals housed in PK-12 institutions.

Considering multiple article types

Research Question 3 provided insight into the types of articles published in *PDS Partners* between 2017 and 2022. Table 7 indicates that 124 of 172 (72.09%) articles were descriptive in nature and did not include any explicit reference to data. Meanwhile, 42 (24.42%) articles were qualitative and referenced data such as interviews, focus groups and/or open-ended surveys. There was only one quantitative article (0.58%) that used numerical data from surveys, and five mixed methods articles (2.91%) that referenced both qualitative and quantitative data.

Since *PDS Partners* is a research-to-practice and practitioner-focused journal, this finding is intuitive that most articles would be descriptive in nature. After all, the journal aims to give individuals who are involved with partnership work an outlet to describe their problems of practice, their partnership work, and outcomes of their efforts, if they have them available. One thing worth noting is that there were 42 (24.42%) that referenced qualitative data. Potential authors who have an interest in not only sharing a description of their PDS efforts but also those who have data should be encouraged to consider *PDS Partners* as a publication outlet as long as they can make strong research-to-practice connections.

A group sponsored by the American Educational Research Association has been convening and considering what should be included in a national research agenda on PDS partnerships (see Feinberg, Ogeltree, & Catelli, 2022). As PDS and school-university partnerships are often being questioned about their effectiveness and impact, it is important for potential authors to be aware of publication outlets to share the influence of their partnership work (Polly, 2017).

Alignment of articles to the Nine Essentials

Research Question 4 provided insight about whether authors of *PDS Partners* articles specifically mentioned the NAPDS Nine Essentials as well as which Essentials articles aligned to when specific Essentials were not mentioned. NAPDS has lifted these Essentials up as characteristics of PDS partnerships and the connection between partnership work in PDS and these Essentials helps us as a field stay anchored to the defining attributes of PDS partnerships. The Nine Essentials were mentioned explicitly by authors in 51 (29.65%) of the 172 articles. One way to increase that percentage is to require authors to make a clear connection to at least one specific Essential.

While the Nine Essentials were not all explicitly named in articles when I analyzed each article, I found that every article was aligned to at least one Nine Essential, and in many cases, multiple Nine Essentials were aligned to the article. The combined data that included

Essentials named by authors as well as Essentials identified by myself indicated that Essential 4: Reflection and Innovation (94 articles, 54.65%) and Essential 2: Clinical Preparation (91 articles, 52.9%) were the most frequently occurring Nine Essentials. This means that a majority of articles focused on teacher education (Essential 2) and also included either innovative ideas and projects or reflecting on partnership work (Essential 4). Essential 3: Professional Learning and Leading was a distant third with alignment to 67 (38.96%) of articles. Not surprisingly some of the NAPDS Nine Essentials that focus on logistics and how to set up partnerships were the least frequently found: Essential 6: Articulation Agreements (8 articles, 4.65%), Essential 7: Shared Governance Structures (13 articles, 7.56%) and Essential 9: Resources and Recognition (9 articles, 5.23%). While article topics and Nine Essentials are directly influenced by authors and the work that they do, if NAPDS leaders see a need for more articles on specific Nine Essentials, a special themed issue may be beneficial to help the field better understand aspects of partnership work that have not been written about much.

Conclusion

Systematic reviews of published articles provide readers and the field with an opportunity to look back and reflect upon topics, types of articles and characteristics of authors who have disseminated work in a specific area (Martin *et al.*, 2021). To this end, this systematic review provides readers with a snapshot of articles published in *PDS Partners* between 2017 and 2022, a time in which the journal transitioned from a magazine into a peer-reviewed publication as well as a time in which myself and Eva Garin, as Editors, aimed to encourage author teams that included individuals from both postsecondary and PK-12 contexts to collaborate on articles about their partnership work. As the field continues to move forward, my hope is that this article and future reviews of published articles will continue to provide us with a systematic way to examine what types of articles and topics are needed to help the field move forward. While multiple impactful articles have been published in the journal, there is still a lot of work left to be done in sharing our story and disseminating the impactful work of school-university partnerships.

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