



EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCES WITH RESEARCH

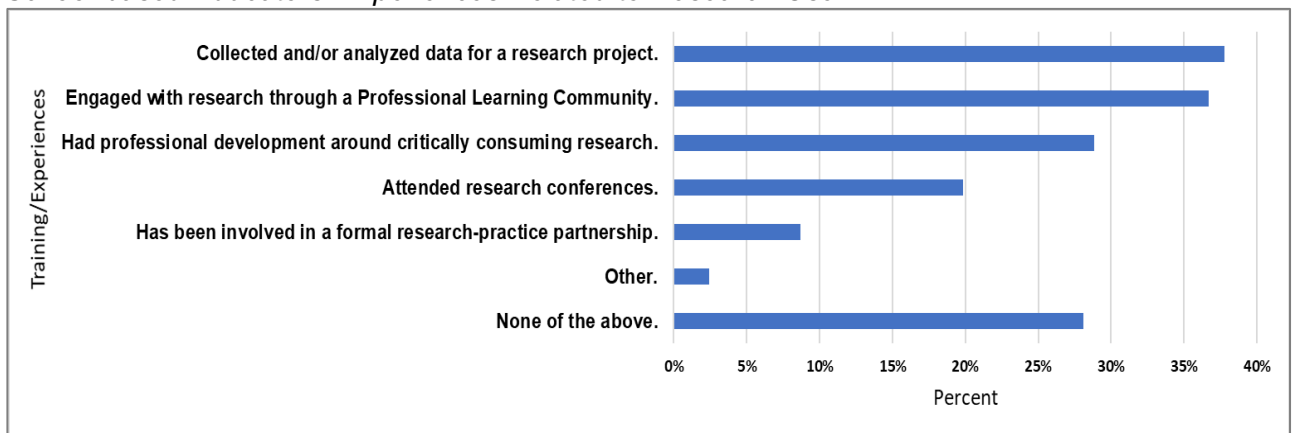
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Insights from the Center for Research Use in Education

DATA POINTS

The U.S. Department of Education, in concert with many states, has pushed for greater use of evidence in decision-making in our nation's schools. This call underscores the need to shed light on the experiences related to research use that educators are exposed to once in the field. Research (and common sense) suggest that increased exposure to, and engagement with, research can lead to greater use of research as a form of evidence in decision-making. In the 2018-2019 school year more than 2000 educators in 94 schools were asked about the experiences they've had that focused on using or understanding research. The figure below presents some results.

School-based Educators' Experiences Related to Research Use



Educators stated that their most prevalent form of engagement with research use was collecting or analyzing data for a research project. Regarding more structured activities related to their professional development, approximately 1/3 of educators reported engaging with research in their professional learning community. Similarly, nearly thirty percent of educators sampled had participated in professional development around critically consuming research. Fewer than one-fifth of educators had attended a research conference and less than ten percent had been involved in a formal research-practice partnership. Though many respondents indicated having some experience related to research use, twenty-eight percent stated that they hadn't been exposed to any of the experiences listed.

There are several structures and practices that may enable educators to better incorporate research into their practice to improve teaching, learning, and the general functioning of a school. However, we are just now shedding light on the nature of educators' specific experiences related to research use. Still, schools can find ways to build capacity for research use by embedding discussions about evidence from research into their professional development. Capacity building efforts around research use can also be supported by providing additional opportunities to engage with the research community such as supporting attendance at research conferences and seeking out opportunities to engage with researchers in more formal partnerships.

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