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Educator Perceptions Regarding Quality Workplace Professional Development

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ABSTRACT

This study, Educator Perceptions Regarding Quality Workplace Professional Development, attempted to formulate through interviews and surveys the attitudes of educators regarding their personal experiences with professional development. The study was based on Donald Super's Career Development Theory, Jack Mezirow's Transformational Learning Theory, and David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. These three theorists help form the conceptual foundation for the study.

One of the challenges the United States has had within the past fifty years is that workers were not being adequately prepared for the workplace during their school years or after. Super, Mezirow, and Kolb helped to identify stages of growth and career development and how to measure and assess meaningful learning. This study addressed these ideas and others found as educators were interviewed and surveyed regarding their professional development experiences and how they would make those experiences better. These data were analyzed using both qualitative data outcomes and quantitative statistical tools.

Qualitative data in this study revealed that the majority of the educators interviewed believed they were not receiving quality professional development and that the delivery of professional development should not be lecture type format. It also revealed that hands on, group, or project based professional development was preferred by a majority of the respondents.

Quantitative data indicated that when professional development was of a type that included value to the educator, they were able to learn from it. The data also indicated that the majority of the respondents were not being sent to professional development they considered quality and therefore the professional development was of little value to them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have been a life-long learner and believe everyone who has an attainable goal can achieve that goal. One day as I was walking on the beach at sunset while living in Alaska, the sun was glistening off the water as if to make a golden pathway on which to walk. It seemed like I could walk forever toward the sun on that pathway.

In my pursuit of a doctoral degree in education, I see the professors I have had the good fortune to have in class and on my doctoral committee continuously providing a golden pathway for me to journey on, and now, the journey is complete. My educational walk has been a process, one that started as I first entered graduate school in 1996. I can hardly believe it is coming to an end; though I will continue to be a life-long learner and continue my journey on that golden pathway.

A huge thank you goes out to my wife Gladys Rink, who pushed me along that pathway many times. Gladys also put up with my weird schedule of work and study and never had a harsh word when it was time to study – even at midnight.

Another thank you goes to my committee chair, mentor, and great friend Dr. Bobbie Biggs who had faith in my ability to start and finish this project. In addition, I would be remiss if I did not thank Dr. Jules Beck and Dr. Carsten Schmidtke for their help and guidance throughout this process, for being agreeable to be a part of my doctoral committee, and for being great friends along the way. Their humor and expertise truly moved me to where I am today.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my best friend and wonderful wife, Gladys and our children, John, David, Christopher, Christina, Landra, and in memory of our dear son Michael who died before he had the chance to live out his dream of becoming a cardio-vascular surgeon. It is also dedicated to our ten energetic and fantastic grandchildren, Adyn, Tyler, Aryn, Wesley, Sara, Aspyn, Hannah, Anyn, Maggie, and Aowyn.

Each one of you has helped in big and small ways in making me stay the course and complete this educational goal I have had for myself for many years. Without all of you it would have been impossible. With you, it is a reality. I love all of you with all my heart!

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

In the early 1960s, several important events occurred: John F. Kennedy was elected president and gave the great, "Ask not what your country can do for you…"(Paragraph 26 of John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Speech, 20 January 1961) (Hossell, 2006; Kennedy, 1961) speech; the United States entered the space race with the Soviet Union; and the United States government officially entered the education business with the passage of the first Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (P. L. 89-10, 1965). Since the passage of that first ESEA over fifty years ago, schools and school districts have been charged with increasing student achievement and closing the educational achievement gap between ethnic groups and nationalities all across America (Choy, Chen, & Burgarin, 2006; P. L. 89-10, 1965).

One of the challenges the United States has had with closing the educational achievement gap was that adult workers were not being adequately prepared for the workplace during their secondary school years; new workers lacked skills that would assist them in the transition to a career like writing and math skills (Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer, 1988). The study Workplace Basics indicated that employing companies and manufacturers had to take time to train their new hires on some of the most fundamental of workplace processes. Even in industry and manufacturing simple processes like correct grammar, basic arithmetic, punctuality and regular attendance had to be taught (Carnevale et al., 1988). Additional employee training was needed because of the lack of technical and critical thinking skills needed to complete tasks at work (Choy et al., 2006). Employee training did not stop with new hires; companies throughout the United States began to understand that professional development in the workplace would assist veteran employees in their job performance as well, so these employees were targeted for refresher type training and continuing education in their areas of expertise (Barton, Kinder,

Casey, & Artman, 2011). The idea of continuing education moved to the forefront in education as well (Choy et al., 2006).

One of the major areas targeted, as the United States has moved further away from the first ESEA, has been continuing education for educators or professional development as it is called today (Dr. M.B. Gunter, Graduate Dean, Arkansas Tech University, personal communication, May, 2012). Professional development has moved closer to the forefront as a requirement to lessen the achievement gap and help educators increase their job performance or classroom efficacy (Guskey, 1995). Wayne, Yoon, Zhu, Cronen, and Garet (2008) indicated that a strong base of research was needed for professional development in order to move educators through their careers.

Educators defined quality professional development in several different ways. From the viewpoint of the individual learner it meant that we must sometimes push back personal ideals, especially in school and in the workplace, and work toward positive classroom efficacy (Dr. John Jones, Dean, College of Education, University of Arkansas, Fort Smith, personal communication, June, 2012). Educators and educational administrators must maintain a commitment to excellence and educational reform and move classroom educators to a place where their classroom efficacy provides them a commitment to the equitable treatment of students in every walk of life (Guskey, 2009; Payne, 2005).

Educators who try to make every day equitable for their students by attending high-quality professional development provide a profound and practical imprint on their students, our economy, and our society (Payne, 2005). Education cannot allow the educators or the students in their charge to miss learning opportunities because the educators do not stay current in their career development (Guskey, 1995, 2009). If educators acted in opposition to the idea of high-

quality professional development, educators would run the risk of denying students their chance to learn and increase their knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Choy et al., 2006; Guskey, 2009).

The goal of all educators must be to develop the talents of all their students to their fullest (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Attaining a goal to develop the student knowledge, skills and dispositions requires that educators assist all students to work to the utmost of their abilities (Barton et al., 2011). Educators should expect schools to have genuinely high-quality professional development available that will help them support and encourage their students to make the most of their talents and abilities (Dr. Karen Cushman, Assistant Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education, personal communication, October, 2012). Quality of the professional development received by educators is important to enable high-quality learning (Dr. Mark Arant, Dean, College of STEM, University of Arkansas Fort Smith, personal communication, January, 2014).

In The National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) 1983 study, *A Nation at Risk*, it was the reported that there was a need for change in how career development opportunities were identified and delivered; the current issue is that 30 years later, the same problems exist. The search to find answers to the workforce educational problems of today include the need for workers to be a willing participant in life-long learning opportunities as well as current job related needs (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). About 75 percent of the current workforce is established workers who need to be educated in new workplace procedures and retrained in established ones if they are to be productive employees (The National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The NCEE report (1983) along with Workplace Basics report (Carnevale et al., 1988) indicated that employee training and education were important to employers across the nation. Investigating this trend, this researcher found that Donald Super, Jack Mezirow, and David Kolb had researched the areas

of career development, education, and training. These three theorists were used to formulate the theoretical framework in this study.

In his study of life-span and life-space approaches to occupations, Super (1963, 1980, 1990), suggested a developmental model of emergent career decision making. This model followed the same investigative path that an educator would need in order to pursue quality professional development for their career development (Guskey, 1995). With the emergence of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and other legislation enacted by Arkansas and the federal government, educator evaluation and student achievement are important factors in how educators are evaluated and how administrators are evaluated (Dr. T. Kimbrell, Arkansas Commissioner of Education, personal communication, January 10, 2013). The implementation of the CCSS will make quality professional development vastly more important than professional development has been in the years leading up to the implementation of these benchmarks (Dr. T. Kimbrell, Arkansas Commissioner of Education, personal communication, January 10, 2013). As educators and administrators move from Super's (1980) late Exploration stage into the Establishment and Maintenance stages, they need to continue to develop roles for goals they wish to achieve, such as acquiring seniority, developing teaching skills, and demonstrating knowledge and dispositions by utilizing skills obtained in professional development workshops.

This researcher also noticed during the prior 18 years of educational experience with professional development that educators wanted to enumerate ways to make professional development better from their perspective. For this reason, Mezirow's (1981, 2000) work was seen as an important addition to the theories used in this study. Mezirow's (1981, 2000) research in transformational learning was indicative of how adult learners needed to change their perspective about learning and become change agents for themselves in work-based areas.

Kolb's Transformational Learning Theory was added because it points workers and learners adjusting to reflective learning toward work-based training for their schooling and career development needs (Kolb, 1976, 1984).

Since the first ESEA, there have been rumblings from educators and administrators about professional development and how professional development was a waste of time and did little for them (Guskey, 1995). In many instances in the early years of ESEA, professional development had consisted of topics selected by educators, without consulting the districts in which they worked, or by schools and districts without consulting educators who worked for them; these workshops were taken only to fulfill the letter of the law, not the intent (Guskey, 1995). There is and always has been professional development that would be of benefit to classroom efficacy and personal professional growth, educators just needed to search it out (Choy et al., 2006). Educators must seek well delivered, content specific quality professional development so they will be prepared for the classroom of the 21st century (Barton et al., 2011; Danielson, 2011; Harris & Sass, 2007; Karimi, 2011).

Beginning in the 1990s, some experts in education and professional development suggested that the traditional forms of educator professional development of the past lacked major items, including focus, intensity, and continuity that were required to help educators to effect positive classroom change (Guskey, 1995). The old ways of presenting professional development were also inadequate for preparing educators to meet the educational needs of their students (Choy et al., 2006).

In addition to workshop professional development opportunities, educators can receive professional development by taking university course work to meet mandated professional development hours or credits (Choy et al., 2006). College coursework, used as professional development, allows an educator to pursue a specific skill-set in a specific area of education that

is designed to increase their classroom efficacy (Arkansas Department of Education, Rules Governing Professional Development, 2012). In response to the latest reauthorization attempts of ESEA, educator evaluation processes and the need for educator professional development have driven state legislative bodies to enact legislation to mandate specific professional development hours for educators (Arkansas General Assembly, 2011).

Statement of the Problem

Presently, professional development opportunities in Arkansas, do not include the knowledge and skills required to increase educator career growth, are not easily found, nor regularly attended (Arkansas Department of Education, Rules Governing Professional Development, 2012; Arkansas General Assembly, 2011). Without quality professional development, classroom efficacy may be diminished, and student success will probably decrease.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

Continuing career development has become an important part of education reform. It became clear, as this study was envisioned, that several items had to be addressed regarding professional development including how educators defined quality professional development and what they believed their professional development should be. It also allowed the participants to discuss issues they have encountered with professional development. Because professional development has become an important part of the national education reform, the purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of a selected group of Arkansas educators regarding professional development.

This study reviewed feedback on the following questions through interviews and a survey:

1. How do selected educators define quality professional development?

2. What issues have selected educators identified with current and past professional development?

3. What would selected educators like their professional development to be?

Overview of the Conceptual Framework

Public and private school educators need quality professional development to build on Super's Theory of Career Development (1963, 1980, 1990). As adult workers move from Exploration to Establishment and then to Maintenance stages of Super's theory, they require adequate opportunities for career development by developing new skills, and developing a realistic concept of self and the relationship of self and students. Super's theory was an appropriate choice for this study because research was conducted with adult workers, specifically educators, some of whom had less than five years experience in education, some from five to ten years of experience, and even others with more than ten years of experience (see Figure 1).

These separations in experience fell directly into Super's stages of career development (1963, 1980, 1990). The educators with fewer than five years experience fell into the Exploration Stage, those in the years five to ten fell into the Establishment Stage, and those with more than ten years experience fell into the Maintenance Stage. As Super's stages were researched, it was found that individuals in these three listed stages were learners, were opportunistic, worked to make occupational positions secure, readily developed new skills, but also knew their personal limitations (Super, 1980). A direct implication for this researcher's study was Super's suggestion that direct work experiences were important in the workplace (Super, 1981) (see Table 1).
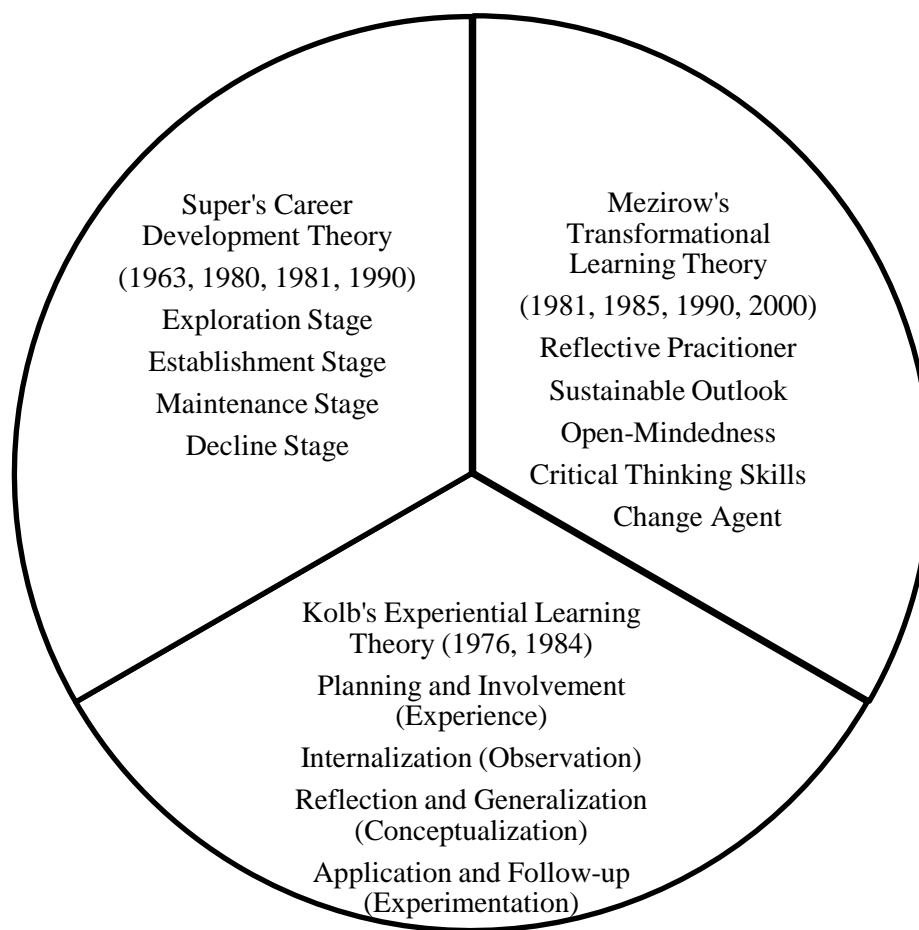
Figure 1. Model of theories that influence the concept of workplace professional development.

This study also allowed the participants to enumerate ways to make professional development better from their point of view. Mezirow's (1981, 1985, 1990, 2000) work in transformational learning indicated that adult learners changed their perspective about learning and were change agents of their frames of reference (see Figure 1). Mezirow (1990) indicated that reflection on work-based training was important for facilitators so that future trainings could be changed as needed to offer better delivered trainings. He also found that workers needed to be open-minded in their approach to work-based learning and be able to use critical thinking skills in order to improve their stake as an employee; in this study, a better educator (Mezirow,

1981, 1985). Mezirow's work also indicated that a sustainable outlook was needed by all adult

workers so that after reflecting on past trainings, an employee and supervisors could reasonably

work together to plan and implement future career development.

Kolb's Transformational Learning Theory (see Figure 1) also pointed toward workers

and learners adjusting to reflective learning and how that reflection could be of help to the

worker or learner as they move through training for their schooling and career (Kolb, 1976,

1984). Kolb's work indicated a connection between planning and involvement, internalization,

reflection (as does Mezirow in his 1990 work) and generalization, and application and follow-up

(Kolb, 1976, 1984). Kolb's work with Boyatiz and Mainimelia (2000) validated Kolb's ideas

that experiential learning involves experience of the adult worker, observations of what has been

internalized within the learner in regard to the specific learning outcomes of a training,

conceptualization of the learning, and experimentation. In order to follow-up and use training,

the adult worker must have the ability to use the training or the time and man-power expended

for the training was of little value (Kolb et al., 2000). Dean, Murk, and Del Prete (2000)

continued to expand on Kolb's work and validated his theory of experiential learning. Even

though many researchers have questioned Kolb's findings, the findings have withstood many

tests over many years (Dean et al., 2000).

Significance of the Study

In August 2012, the Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR) published a report

on teacher professional development and effectiveness evaluation. With the advent of CCSS in

the state and this report, it appeared that knowledge regarding professional development was

vital to not only Arkansas, but all states implementing CCSS. Since the present narrow study

offered a definition of quality professional development from an educator's viewpoint, identified

professional development issues, and determined what educators would like in professional development, it should extend the 2012 report from the BLR.

According to Guskey (2009), the present day scarcity of good research regarding professional development does not mean professional development researchers or their work are not being studied. Schools and school districts cannot achieve any higher a standard than the educators who work in them, and professional development remains paramount to educator professional growth (Choy et al., 2006; Guskey, 2009).

No improvement effort in the recent history of education has succeeded without thoughtful, planned, and well-implemented professional development designed to promote educator knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Payne, 2005). Reports regarding educator professional development opportunities stated that sound valid evidence regarding professional development characteristics that helped improve student learning remain hard to find. They also indicated that dedicated efforts by researchers today to add to research in the area of professional development are sorely needed because of the lack of readily available research in this area (Guskey, 2009).

Why do we have so little research on effective professional development? Part of the answer is that the logistics of this type of research are difficult because of the daunting task of finding adequate time for the educators to respond. Rigorous studies about professional development can consume much educator and administrator time and valuable school and district resources (Guskey, 1995, 2009). These types of studies also require high levels of cooperation from educators at all levels to gather pertinent data (Guskey, 2009). Even if every aspect of the proposed research goes as planned (not always the case because of the shear nature of the school business), clear and complete results can be somewhat elusive (Choy et al., 2006; Guskey, 2009).

The many facets of professional development have also shut down researcher attempts to identify consistent guiding principles about effective professional development. Most schools today are applying standards-based curricula, such as CCSS in Arkansas and a majority of the other states, differentiating instruction, developing critical thinking skill/formative assessments, gathering evidence regarding classroom efficacy, altering or doing away with homework policies, and revising grading and assessment practices (Danielson, 2005; Guskey, 2009). Pin-pointing the effects of just one innovation and the professional development events that surround it can be extremely challenging, regardless of the research design being used (Choy et al., 2006). Because of the complexity of this type of research, many researchers shy away from studies about professional development; hence the significance of this study.

Assumptions

The following assumptions about the study were noted:

1. School district educators believe professional development should be tailored to the needs of the individual worker. The researcher assumed that each of the participants in both the survey phase and interview phase believed professional development would include quality content and be tailored to their needs. It was also assumed that hands-on, activity based professional development events would be considered best in quality; as long as they were facilitated by someone who had expertise in the content area. Quality tailored training allows for better learning and the ability for the attendee to take positive training back to the workplace.

2. Professional development should be designed and delivered in such a way that educators will benefit from the content. Perceived quality of training provided the learner a better opportunity for the professional development to benefit them in a positive way.

3. Top performing educators transfer excellence to their students, regardless of the socio-economic status, environment, sex, age, or nationality of the students. Though poverty is a difficult construct to understand, it is well documented that on average, the lower the poverty, the lower the child will perform in the classroom (Dr. Fran Murphy, Lamar University Center for Educational Leadership Conference, San Antonio, TX, personal communication, February 25, 2014). Ruby Payne poverty workshops that have been attended over the past four to five years by many educators in Arkansas may play an important role in how questions in the study were answered. Ruby Payne information identified poverty and how it affected education attainability (Payne, 2005). This paralleled the idea that quality professional development workplace problems, regardless of the magnitude, can be overcome; poverty is a large problem for educators and work in this area is helping to mitigate the problem (Payne, 2005).

4. Quality professional development may be a difficult term to define, even though most educators have a good idea in their minds what quality professional development means to them. This assumption indicated similarities in how quality professional development, each one of them had their own idea on how it would most positively affect them and their efficacy in the classroom.

Delimitations

The following delimitations to the study were noted:

1. Only two rural districts in Western Arkansas were chosen for educator feedback.

2. Educators with less than two years of experience were not interviewed nor were they asked to complete the survey. Educators with less than two years experience did not have sufficient professional development experience.

3. Interviews were conducted with 17 secondary educators, not the entire faculty and staff of the districts; only those who volunteered were interviewed.

4. Mandated programs such as the Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS) and CCSS affected how participants answered questions regarding their attitudes toward professional development.

Definitions

Advanced Placement (AP) – AP coursework allows the student to test at the end of the year and receive college credit for the course if their grade is high enough on the exam.

Alternative Learning Environment (ALE) – Alternative learning strategies and environments to best serve at risk students from a variety of situations.

Arkansas Ideas (IDEAS) – Professional development offered online through the Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN).

Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) – Professional development offered through the AETN system for Arkansas teachers.

Educational Cooperative (Coop) – Educational entity available to all school districts in a region for the supplying of professional development workshops.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) – The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (1974) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education (FERPA, 1974).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) – The latest reauthorization of the ESEA setting performance benchmarks for students and schools.

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) – Educators who regularly collaborate with each other in the learning process. Generally these are by department, grade level, or building.

Professional Development (PD) – Training for educators in their content area or area of

deficiency as observed by the district in which they teach.

Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS) – Mandated portion of implementation of the

CCSS standards that tie teacher evaluation to student success (Arkansas Department of

Education, Licensure Rules, 2013).

Chapter Two

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are many assumptions regarding professional development. In industry, training is required to keep workers up-to-date on industry changes and requirements (United States Department of Labor, Standards for Apprenticeship, 2012). In adult and community education, professional development is sought out by individuals in order to stay updated on best practices (Dean et al., 2000). In addition, Galbraith and Zelenak (1989), list several areas of professional development such as on-the-job learning, organizational in-service, and university coursework directed to assist employees in their continuing education efforts. Professional development is a requirement for public school educators in Arkansas as well (Arkansas Department of Education, Rules Governing Professional Development, 2012). Workplace training can prepare individual employees to do their job better (Dean et al., 2000).

During many years of the 20th century, the United States had an almost worldwide monopoly on math and science prowess (United States Department of Education, 2008). However, during the last decade, it was apparent that those numbers were dwindling and school districts and schools were scrambling again like they did when ESA was first legislated (United States Department of Education, 2011). School districts and educators, since the passage of the first ESEA, have struggled with the problem of classroom effectiveness and closing the achievement gap (Choy et al., 2006). From that time to present day, professional development of educators has been a major component of that struggle. Guskey (1995) noted that traditional professional development was once a short, out-of-content workshop that did little to increase educator effectiveness.

After the passage of the first ESEA in 1965, one of the major areas targeted was educator professional development (P. L. (89-10). Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965). Over

the course of the fifty years since the passage of ESEA, professional development of educators

has become a requirement to assist all educators in the classroom not only with content, but

classroom efficacy (Guskey, 1995, 2009). More recently, educator evaluation processes, such as

what states that are implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are experiencing,

and the need for educator professional development have driven many states to enact legislation

to mandate more and more professional development for classroom instructors at the public

school level as well as at the adult basic education level and at the higher education level (Belzer,

2005). As reported by Guskey (1995), professional development has in the past consisted of six

hour, non-essential, and sometimes even boring workshops on topics selected by educators

without consulting the districts in which they work or by schools and districts without consulting

educators who work for them. These non-essential and boring workshops were taken only to

fulfill the letter of the law, not the intent (Guskey, 1995). Belzer (2005) indicated that the

education field as a whole has been slow to move toward content driven quality professional

development.

There are other ways for educators to fulfill their professional development requirements.

One way is by taking university course work to meet their mandated professional development

hours or credits (Choy et al., 2006), and through online educator professional development at the

public school and higher education levels to assist educators in receiving the most up-to-date

education information in their content area or grade level (Bryant-Shanklin & Brumage, 2011;

Ostashewski, Moisey, & Reid, 2011). Online professional development for educators, offered to

Arkansas educators by Arkansas IDEAS and academically subsidized by the Association of

Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), is a growing and unique process that is

aimed at providing educators in Arkansas another type of event for professional development

attainment (Holmes, Signer, & MacLeod, 2010). These professional development opportunities

are generally for non-credit (Galbraith, Sisco, & Guglielmino, 1997), except for the university

course work; but it is mandatory in order for the educators to maintain their teaching license

(Arkansas Department of Education, Licensure Rules, 2013).

      Starting in the late 1990s, educational experts in professional development initiated

conversations that the traditional forms of teacher professional development of the past lacked

cohesiveness; including focus, intensity, and continuity that were required to help teachers to

effect positive classroom change (Karimi, 2011). The old ways of presenting professional

development are inadequate for preparing educators to meet the educational needs of their

students today (Choy et al., 2006). Harter, Schmidt, and Keyes (2003) found in their study that

worker quality of life and worker workplace performance were directly attributable to

professional development events attended. They found that without quality professional

development for the workplace, employee productivity decreased. They also found the same

decrease in classroom efficacy when educators did not receive regular, high-quality professional

development (Harter et al., 2003). They also noted that worker questions either from an

interview or a survey were important to businesses, and in the case of this study, education

entities, to receive the best information from employees regarding the type and amount of career

development they require and were attending (Harter et al., 2003). This is important because in

the study by Milliken, Morrison, and Hewlin (2003), they found that it is not easy for employees

to speak to supervisors or building administrators on items they find important to their work; the

better the lines of communication, the better the collaboration between the parties.

      In a 2011 study, Prusaczyk and Baker, researched the benefits of a public

school/university partnership for the purpose of presenting and receiving content specific

professional development. This idea was researched to help move away from the old ways of

presenting professional development by initiating a program consisting of a cognitively guided

instruction format (Prusaczyk, & Baker, 2011). Results of the Prusaczyk and Baker study (2011) revealed an over-reaching effect of mentors from higher education when assisting public school educators through professional development and curriculum.

Educator effectiveness in the classroom is what all districts in the nation would like to maximize. Administrators must be able to assist those workers in their attempts to receive quality professional development so that their efficacy in the classroom will promote student success (Volante, Cherubini, & Drake, 2008). Attitudes toward professional development must be focused and have the continuity to help educators attain and maintain a quality classroom environment conducive to learning (Choy et al., 2006). Without this continuity, educators burn-out and leave the profession in alarming numbers (Graziano, 2005). In addition, Luthans (2002) found that workplace challenges, such as burn-out, could be overcome through a proactive school district and educator collaboration to find and fix weaknesses in how education was being presented to the students of the district and thus increase classroom efficacy.

There is a definite relationship between professional development and school development, which is also tied to school improvement (Hawley & Valli, 1999). This relationship is one of the reasons districts are presently involved in trying to make professional development as content centered and specific as possible so that the maximum number of their educators and administrators can be helped (Guskey, 2009). If the professional development received does not help educators and ultimately the district, how can that translate into better classroom success for the students and educators? Quality professional development must be defined not only from an organizational point of view, but also from the educators' viewpoint (Wayne et al., 2008).

A study on this subject was to conceptualize educator professional development as the educators' personal development of knowledge and skills (Tang & Choi, 2009); it was not to

make professional development just a paper shuffle (Barton et al., 2011). The challenge was that professional development needed to take care of the diverse needs of all educators (Barton et al., 2011) and help educators make sense of their lives (Aslanian, 2001). Colbert, Mount, Harter, Witt, and Barrick (2004) found that negative worker perceptions decrease as collaboration between workers and supervisors in the workplace help to eliminate problems and create positive workplace situations. Districts and educators must work together to make certain positive outcomes happen in professional development events (Colbert et al., 2004).

The same collaboration concept was found in research done by Meyer and Allen (1997) in which they found that a commitment between workers and supervisors and in the case of this study educators and administrators is critical for student success. They also indicated that the collaboration should not be initiated by only one side; educators and administrators alike should facilitate the brainstorming sessions that deal with the complexities of excellence in the workplace and ultimately classroom efficacy (Meyers & Allen, 1997).

Conceptual Framework

The State of Arkansas requires a minimum of 60 hours of professional development each year for all licensed educators (Arkansas Department of Education, Rules Governing Professional Development, 2012). Within those hours are legislatively mandated hours in specific areas of growth (parental involvement, bullying, technology, Arkansas History, ethics, lottery training, and the list is even more extensive for administrators). The participants in this research study were all licensed educators and were required to receive these hours of professional development or risk the loss of their license (Arkansas Department of Education, Rules Governing Professional Development, 2012). The need for content specific and mandated hours of professional development (Koretz, 2008) has affected educators nationally (Thompson

& Goe, 2009) as well as those in Arkansas and has changed the outlook of professional growth and development in these groups of educators.

This study identified the attitudes of educators regarding issues with professional development, definition, content and delivery, and what professional development should be. An overview of professional development or career development in industry circles (Dean et al., 2000), specifically in education, needed to be investigated. During a face-to-face brainstorming session early in the planning stages of this study, the researcher and his faculty advisor discussed and researched different theorists that might become a part of the conceptual framework of this study. The work done in that brainstorming session culminated with the decision to incorporate three theorists: Donald Super's Theory of Career Development, Jack Mezirow's Theory of Transformational Learning, and David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory.

Super's Theory of Career Development

Super's Theory of Career Development (see Table 1) was focused on conceptualizing an individual learner's self-concepts of change oriented professional development opportunities (Super, 1984, 1990). It was an appropriate theory to use in this study that researched educator perceptions of quality professional development. Super's concepts of career development for workers in the Implementation, Stabilization, Maintenance, and then Consolidation sub-stages and stages of his theory are the individuals that are the participants in this study (Super, 1963, 1981). Super's theory was focused on the individual learner's ability to affect change in professional development opportunities (Super, 1963).

Table 1

Model of the Adult Stages of Super's Theory of Career Development (1957)

Super's Stages	Sub-Stage Types	Age Range	Typical Stage Occurrences
Exploration	Transitions Stabilization Crystallization	14-25	School, College, Career Choice, First Job (crystallizing, specifying, and implementing a plan for the career)
Establishment	Stabilization Consolidation Evaluation	25-45	Career Advancement, Frustration with Career, Re-evaluation of Career Choice, Career Services – (beginning to look at retirement options)
Maintenance	Consolidation, Stagnation, Holding, Specialization	45-65	Self-Development, Career Planning, Retirement Planning, Collaboration with peers
Decline	Deceleration, Specialization	65-?	Retirement, Disengagement, Trainer, Mentoring, Reflection

Looking at the stages of Super's theory; as the adult worker begins the process of assessing the best career path to traverse (Super, 1980), they were in the Implementation Stage. This stage may last until the individual is in their mid 20s. At that point they begin the move into the Stabilization Stage at which time the individual becomes comfortable with the career choice(s) they have made (Super, Tiederman, & Borow, 1961). Many of the participants were veteran educators that have moved through the Stabilization Stage into the Consolidation Stage (35-55 years old). In this stage, the adult worker is generally sessile in that they are no longer

willing to move within the career parameters they have set for themselves and are happy to remain in one job until time to retire which is the Decline Stage (Super, 1981).

These stages and this theory allowed individuals to chart the course of their career lives in a logical and predictable way (Super, 1957). Career development, also known as professional development, is a process that each adult worker must go through in order to not only better themselves during their career, but to ready themselves for the vast changes that occur in all types of organizations when it pertains to worker knowledge, skills and dispositions for any given career or position (Super, 1957). It is noted here that not all adult workers go through the stages of development at the same rate or at the exact same age (Super, 1980). They do, however, have to go through all the iterations of the tasks contained in each stage (Super, 1981).

Mezirow's Transformational Learning Theory

Mezirow (1978) introduced the term Transformational Learning as a part of his Transformational Learning Theory to underpin the importance of currently adaptable work related experiences for the adult worker and adult learner. Several of the participants of this study were non-traditionally trained educators. Mezirow based his Transformational Learning Theory on a study using non-traditional college students (1989). The State of Arkansas provides educators with the Non-Traditional Licensure (NTL) route to licensure. Some participants in this study had degrees not connected to education, but in fields pointed toward other careers. Regardless of the degree or former career path, the NTL educator has the opportunity to receive education based classes over a two year period that lead to standard licensure (State of Arkansas, Department of Education, rules governing licensure, 2012). The NTL educators possessed the same types of critical thinking skills, as the traditionally trained educators, both of which enhanced the results of this research study.

In the course of the career of an adult worker, experiences tended to help the worker become reflective in their positions, regardless of the industry (Mezirow, 1981). Adult learners need to have this same motivation to learn to be a reflective practitioner (Mezirow, 1981). By learning to be reflective in all aspects of their training and career, adult workers developed for themselves the ability to be a critical thinker and be able to affect change in their lives (Mezirow, 1985). Transforming themselves into reflective practitioners helped them cope with change and change advocates in their chosen field of study or their career path (Dr. M.B. Gunter, Director of the Center for Leadership and Learning, Arkansas Tech University, personal communication, May 05, 2006).

Transformational learning, therefore, enables the worker (or learner) to reflect not only on information received during training, but in their career experiences as well. It helps the worker (or learner) to have a sustainable outlook and open-mindedness toward the training and career development opportunities that are available through the new knowledge attained through the learning process (Mezirow, 1990).

Mezirow indicated the importance of adaptable work related experiences for the adult worker (1990, 1994). Educators needed to become reflective practitioners in order to rate professional development taken as well as prepare themselves for future trainings by being better informed as to what issues have been noted from previous events and their ability to rate and attend these future events (Mezirow, 1985). By learning to be reflective in all aspects of their training and career, workers developed for themselves the ability to be critical thinkers and be able to affect change in how they registered for and attended professional development events in the past and how they will attend in the future. Transforming themselves into reflective practitioners helped them cope with change in the new laws regarding mandatory professional development hours.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential Learning is learning that allows for real world experience to help in the learning process. The learner uses their experience and/or the experience of the facilitator as underpinning of the learning (Dean et al., 2000). The major areas of this type of learning are: (a) reflection regarding learning, critical analysis of learning and learning synthesis; (b) students take opportunities for initiative, making decisions, and accountability for the results of the learning; (c) opportunities for students to be engaged in their learning in several ways, including: physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually, or creatively; and (d) learning experience designed to include learning from natural consequences, mistakes, and successes (Kolb, 1976). The majority of adult learning is based on real world point-in-time experiences that mold the adult learners thoughts and reflective process (Kolb, 1976). Educators are no different in their learning patterns. This andragogical learning is different from the pedagogical learning that took place in the elementary grades of school and as society grew up (Danielson, 2011).

Adult learners, including educators, learned primarily through doing (Kolb et al., 2000). This was played out as novice educators engaged in practice teaching and veteran educators engaged in content specific professional development that was designed to create a positive effect on the educator's classroom efficacy (Guskey, 1995, 2009). Not only should the professional development event be a positive experience, but one that is practical as well (Gutteridge, 1993). In order for professional development to be productive for the educator, it must be presented not only with good delivery and content, but in a place and time available to the educator (Gutteridge, 1993). According to research done by Wei, Darling-Hammond, and Adamson (2010), it does not need to be a short fragmented event that does little to prepare the educator for their classroom or to increase classroom efficacy.

Thus, adult learning regardless of whether it is undertaken from the view point of Super, Mezirow, or Kolb is an experience-based process culminating in the adult worker's or in this case an educator's ability to affect positive change in his or her professional growth and development (Kolb, 1976). Within the extant research on this topic, some experts have expressed their concern with Kolb's over all ideas on experiential learning, but his ideas have withstood many years of scrutiny. Researchers like Dean and others are using Kolb's research to validate their own (Dean et al., 2000). Dean et al. (2000) allowed for the expansion of Kolb's idea of experiential learning with an expansion of Kolb's seven stage process for experiential learning (see Table 2).

Table 2

Kolb's Process Model for Experiential Learning in Adult Education (1976)*

Stage	Process	Role of the Facilitator	Role of the Learner
1 Planning and Involvement	Assessing the learner's ability to participate in the learning.	Facilitator prepares lessons and activities for the learning.	Learners are not a part of this sub-stage given their need for experience.
(Experience)	Identify quality of content, student learning expectations (SLE), and create trust between facilitator and learners.	Facilitator must be overly directive in this stage, but must also understand the needs of the learners.	Learners begin the process of learning through experience gathering.
2 Internalization (Observation)	Facilitate learner understanding of the learning expectations through participation.	Facilitator must keep learners on task, but must also manage the learning.	Active engagement of learners while they internalize the learning.
3 Reflection and Generalization	Clarify and re-teach learned activities. Help the learner become a reflective practitioner.	Facilitator becomes a process facilitator; helping individual learners.	Learners learn to be reflective in their tasks through group work and consensus building.
(Conceptualization)	Tying real world experience/work to the learning using examples that are easy to connect.	Group and individual facilitation showing learners about their work and higher order thinking skills.	Small group and individual learning occurs in this stage.
4 Application and Follow-up	Transference of learning to real world situations. Documentation of learned SLEs.	Supporting the transfer of learning and celebrating successes and redirecting or re-teaching mistakes.	Learners now must apply what they have learned to their work.
(Experimentation)	Evaluate and assess the abilities of the learner. Use new learnings to guide learner activities.	Evaluating and assessing learning through tests and performance evaluations.	Learners are not actively involved in this stage, but reflect on the past learnings.

*Adapted from Dean's Expansion of Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (Dean et al., 2000)

Educators as Adult Workers

As the United States tried to close the achievement gap in the early 1960s caused by the

space race with the USSR, it was found that entry-level workers were not trained sufficiently

through the school systems of the day, and employers were spending large amounts of time retraining the new hired employees in basics that should have been taught in high school (Choy et al., 2006). Employee training did not stop with new hired individuals; companies and industries throughout the United States began to understand that established employees require professional development in order to not only maintain their job performance expectations, but to enhance those expectations and assist them in increasing their expertise in the workplace (Barton et al., 2011). As major industry grew so did industries efforts to train their employees; education was a part of this growth. Educators were expected to attend professional development events to increase efficacy in the classroom (Guskey, 1995).

Super's life-span and life-space approach to occupations (1980), suggested a developmental model for career decision making that would assist educators as well as other adult workers to pursue quality professional development for their career development. With the emergence of CCSS and TESS not only by the legislature of Arkansas, but many other states and the federal government; educator evaluation and student achievement will be important factors in how educators of all types are evaluated (Dr. T. Kimbrell, personal communication, January 10, 2013). These required evaluations allow school district administrators to assist their educators in the type and scope of the professional development they receive.

Super's stages of career development were originally developed for adult workers in industry and manufacturing (1980). Adult workers generally fit into the stages from Exploration through Maintenance, with some reaching Decline as they ready for retirement (Super et al., 1961). Educators can be inserted into Super's work as they entered during Exploration and most certainly made it through Decline as they readied for retirement (Super, 1980).

While corporate professional development may generally occur at the specific job site, professional development for educators does not necessarily happen in the same way.

Corporations and companies across the United States labor to make certain the training that is afforded to their employees is training that will assist them in their work and enhance their expected job outcomes. The same is true for educators, though the journey getting to that point has been a rough one (Choy et al., 2006). Instead of holding training on school grounds, especially during the summer months, school districts send educators to the regional education cooperatives or local universities to obtain their professional development. In some instances, undergraduate and graduate class work can be used to substitute for workshop type professional development usually was provided at the cooperative or local university (Choy et al., 2006).

Corporate training as well as workshop and college course work training received by educators allowed them to pursue a specific skill-set generally in a specific area of education that is designed to increase their content knowledge as well as their classroom efficacy (Arkansas Department of Education, Rules Governing Professional Development, 2012). Corporate training and educator professional development have become vital in how they are produced, their delivery, and for their content (Choy et al., 2006).

Professional Development Opportunities and Theories

In response to the numerous reauthorizations of ESEA, the need for educator professional development has driven many state legislative bodies to enact legislation to mandate additional professional development hours for classroom teachers. In Arkansas, professional development totals went from 30 hours to 60 hours (Arkansas Department of Education, 2012). In many instances in the early years of ESEA, professional development had consisted of non-essential workshops on topics selected by educators many times because they fit into a summer schedule that was full of personal days or by schools and districts which were reacting to the newest and/or greatest mandate from the state with no regard for the educator (Choy et al., 2006).

Today, professional development is evolving into a much needed event, collaborated on by the educator and the district in order to maximize the content of the professional development event for the educator (Guskey, 1995; Colbert et al., 2004). Thompson & Goe (2009) indicated the extreme need for quality professional development for all educators. Koretz (2008) researched and reported the need for content specific professional development. According to current school district administrators, professional development is an integral part of the career and professional development of educators (Dr. B. Gooden, personal communication, March 04, 2013).

It is important to note that professional development must be delivered in such a way as to benefit the audience for which it is intended. Danielson (2011), in her work, described the overwhelming need for quality delivery of professional development. She says that delivery was sometimes the most important element of professional development along side content (Danielson, 2001). Many educators in Arkansas will have the opportunity to take part in much of her work as CCSS and TESS are implemented over the next two years since her evaluation model is being used (Danielson, 2011). In addition, Wilson, Hallman, Pecheone, and Moss (2007), speak about the need for validity in the content and delivery of professional development. It is important for educators to be able to count on the content and delivery of workshop and conference material that is being attended for professional development credit (Wilson et al., 2007).

While delivery, content and validity all three were very important, the value of the professional development was noteworthy as well. Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley (2007), researched the need for high quality and specific value of professional development. The authors underscore how quality content and delivery can positively affect not only educator growth, but student achievement (Yoon et al., 2007). Positive, proactive and practical

approaches to professional development increased the productivity of the educators and in turn increased their classroom efficacy (Gutteridge, 1993; Luthans, 2002; Yoon et al., 2007).

Best Practices

In an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of educator professional development, the term best practice is often used. While the new TESS teacher evaluation system takes into account several criteria, basing teacher evaluation and performance solely on student test scores has its problems (Baker, Barton, Darling-Hammond, Haertel, Ladd, Linn, … & Shepard, 2010). The basic construct of the evaluation system from Danielson's (2011) viewpoint is not only one item. Since the Danielson Model (2011), allows for several other criteria to be measured in addition to student test scores; educators will have a balanced rubric styled evaluation based on measurable outcomes (Arkansas Department of Education, Licensure Rules, 2013). Baker et al. (2010), indicated that using student test scores solely for evaluation leaves the professional growth of the educator unfinished. Practical approaches to career development for educators provided for successful career development practices as the educators strived to attend the highest quality professional development they could find (Gutteridge, 1993). It was this practical approach that will assisted educators to shy away from the fragmented type of professional development (Wei et al., 2010).

As a majority of the states move closer to full adoption of the CCSS, the nation is seeing positive effects from educator professional development through student achievement. Educational leaders and administrators, whether at the public or adult education levels require useful scientific evidence regarding student gains in the classroom (Blank & de las Alas, 2009). Research completed by these authors looked directly at the effect of educator professional development on student gains (Blank & de las Alas, 2009). Districts must examine how teacher evaluation is affected by professional development and how student achievement is affected

(Brandt, Mathers, Olivia, Brown-Sims, & Hess, 2007). Best practices depend on the quality of

the professional development and its delivery and content (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, &

Yoon, 2001). In turn, best practices can only occur with support from the educators and

administrators in searching out professional development events (Tansky & Cohen, 2001)

Part of the TESS model for educator evaluation is to make certain the educator has a

professional growth plan (PGP) during each year of teaching (Arkansas Department of

Education, Licensure Rules, 2013).   The PGP needs to include not only content specific

professional development for the educator, but also needs to include what might be considered

value added training in other, less content specific areas, but still deemed as important to the

professional well being of the educator (Glazerman, Loeb, Goldhaber, Staiger, Raudenbush, &

Whitehurst, 2010). Value added professional development would or could be training in

classroom management, personal development of some type linked to the position held by the

educator, or other non-content specific training deemed necessary by the district in collaboration

with the educator (Corcoran, 2010; Glazerman et al., 2010; Goldhaber &Hansen, 2008).

One area that has not been mentioned in this research study is how national board

certification of educators (NBPTS) is affected by professional development and subsequently

how student achievement is affected. Harris and Sass (2007) studied the effects of NBPTS

educators on student achievement. Professional development taken during the course of the

commitment to the NBPTS program has been linked, as a positive factor, in increasing student

achievement (Harris & Sass, 2007). Regardless of whether an educator is NBPTS certified or a

regularly licensed educator, collaboration with the administration to design a performance

appraisal of the scheduled professional development is important (Brown & Brooks, 2002;

Isaacson & Brown, 2000). The professional development collaboration should be undertaken so

that the educator and administration provide the best professional development opportunities for their employees (Choy et al., 2006).

Future of Professional Development for the Adult Worker

In present day education environments in Arkansas and the United States, the need for quality teaching and learning has moved to the forefront as a major priority for all educators (Blank & de las Alas, 2009; (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos, 2009). An effective, logical, and measurable professional development program for teachers provided by outside sources similar to the educational cooperative system in Arkansas assist educators in becoming highly-skilled in their content or program area (Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos, 2009).

Within the confines of workforce development, many companies, corporations, and other such entities have found that training while working has a positive impact on the overall learning that is taking place (Dufour & Marzano, 2011). Though the referenced training opportunities are called many different things, depending on the type of business and source of training; education has always considered this training professional development. During the last several years of professional development, administrators and educators alike have found new and innovative ways to not only increase their own professional growth, but to do so with others in their departments or subject areas; this process has evolved into what is known as a professional learning community (PLC) (Dufour, 2004; Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Fulton & Britton, 2011). These learning communities have been embraced by many districts throughout the country; however, not all districts have included this type of learning in their professional growth opportunities for their educators. Studies indicate that educators learn through collaboration with peers (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). This collaboration is most effective when it is coupled with a PLC in the educators content area (Dufour & Marzano, 2011).

In many industrial settings such as manufacturing, job-embedded learning is known as on-the-job learning (OJL) (Benson, 2006; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Darling-Hammond et al., (2009) have taken this OJL concept and moved it into the educational job setting with their assessment of professional development in a career based on teaching and learning. Not only is the delivery changing for on the job learning and professional development, the design needs to be updated as well (Garet et al., 2001).

A study done by Saunders, Goldenburg, and Gallimore (2009) found that improved student achievement occurs when collaboration of educators searching for content specific professional development is found and attended. Professional development's impact on classroom efficacy has been debated for many years, but recent evidence has brought to the forefront a high level relationship between quality professional development and student success (Blank & de las Alas, 2009). The United States Department of Education (2012) found that there was an extreme need for professional development to be undertaken by educators nationwide.

Professional development is how educators and administrators stay current with instructional needs (Baker et al., 2010; Blank & de las Alas, 2009). The review of nine studies by Yoon et al. (2009) indicated that student success and associated gains were directly attributable to professional development that was content specific. With meaningful, content-specific professional development offerings, educators will have the opportunity to improve their classroom efficacy as well (Barton et al., 2011).

The design of professional development needs to more closely resemble what is actually happening in the organization (Wei et al., 2010). Organizations must give the individual learner the correct information in as timely a fashion as possible (Koretz, 2008). In the education profession, professional development and career growth need to be delivered in such a way as to not only supply the information needed, but should be done in a way that engages all educators,

not just a small group or department (Danielson, 2011; Garet et al., 2001). This delivery

conundrum of the past has initiated the need for more correlation between professional

development and student achievement (Gallagher, 2004). Not only should the delivery be of a

quality and consistent nature, but the professional development should be presented by experts in

the content area either from within or from outside the employing district (Wei et al., 2010). The

National Staff Development Council (NSDC) found that there is a correlation between content

and contexts of professional development events as well as how those experiences are designed

(Garet et al., 2001; Wei et al., 2009).

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) received a grant from the National

Science Foundation (NSF) to conduct a meta-analysis assessing the effects of educator

professional development and how those professional development events in turn affected

student success (Blank & de las Alas, 2009). The CCSSO 2006 study also showed marked

evidence that educator professional development in hands-on areas of classroom efficacy like

modeling or coaching were key in the development of professional development that could be

used immediately after the event was over by those educators attending the professional

development event (Blank & de las Alas, 2009).

<div align="center">**Summary**</div>

Though on-the-job learning and professional development have been a part of

organizations for many years, it has not been until recently that administrators and supervisors

have come to the realization that this type of training is important to the well-being of the

organization as well as the well-being of the employees (Dufour & Marzano, 2011). While OJL

is important to industry and manufacturing to better train their workforce, professional

development is the term used by education to give educators an opportunity to increase their

classroom efficacy and provide for their personal professional growth (Gallagher, 2004). As

education moves to another level of educator evaluation and assessment with the adoption of

CCSS, professional development will be even more important to each educator to ensure that

they are receiving quality professional development each time they attend a professional

development event (Danielson, 2011).

This literature review comprised several foundational levels. Not only has the researcher

reviewed employment in industry and manufacturing, but education was researched as an

employment type and the needs of the professionals in education to receive OJL or professional

development as it is called in education (Thompson & Goe, 2009). Even though in industry and

manufacturing the training received is usually specific to one type of job or position, in

education, many content areas must be covered in order to increase the classroom efficacy of the

educators and subsequently increase student achievement (Wylie, 2008; Darling-Hammond &

McLaughlin, 1995).

Because a majority of the states are turning to CCSS, the need for quality content specific

professional development will continue to grow in importance into the foreseeable future

(Arkansas Department of Education, Rules Governing Professional Development, 2012). The

use of Danielson's (2011) model in Arkansas will help administrators evaluate the effectiveness

of the professional development taken by the educators. Research is needed in the area of

professional development content and delivery to ensure that educators are receiving adequate

and appropriate training (Wayne et al., 2008).

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this limited study was to determine the perceptions of a selected group of Arkansas educators regarding professional development. This study reviewed feedback on the following questions through interviews and a survey:

1. How do selected educators define quality professional development?

2. What issues have selected educators identified with current and past professional development?

3. What would selected educators like their professional development to be?

Research Design

The design of this research was a convergent parallel, simultaneously collected, concurrent, and integrated study using mixed methods. Interviews and attitudes of participants were measured through coding of interviews and analysis of answers drawn from a researcher-created Likert-Type survey which included a demographics section. The mixed method strategy used a simultaneously collected (Morse, 1991) concurrent mixed method procedure that allowed the researcher to triangulate qualitative study data and quantitative data sets offering a comprehensive overview and analysis of the interviews and surveys (Creswell, 2003, 2009; DeVoe, Graham, Angier, Baez, & Krois, 2008). Morris, Leung, Ames, and Lickel's, (1999) research discusses the etic or deductive reasoning approach. The qualitative portion of this mixed methods study was completed using the etic approach which allowed the researcher to emphasize what he considered important in forming the interview and survey questions.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods into a mixed methods research study allowed elements of both methods to be used for the purpose of a deeper understanding and corroboration of the collected data (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner, 2007). Mixed

methods research studies also allow for a research design that takes into account the philosophy behind both methods (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2011). Mixed methods were chosen for this study because the researcher wanted a way to cross-validate the questions that were created. Triangulation of the data received from both the qualitative and quantitative pieces was important in the compilation of both types of data (DeVoe et al., 2008).

According to Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007), there are four major types of mixed methods designs: a) the convergent parallel design, b) the explanatory sequential design, c) the exploratory sequential design, and d) the embedded design. The data collected during this study were done simultaneously and the results put together at that time, so the design selected for this study was the convergent parallel design. Within data collection there are three ways to combine the data; integrating, connecting, and embedding. The integrating style of mixing the data was chosen for this study. DeVoe et al. (2008) indicated in their research that an integration model of mixing, included independent analysis of both types of data immediately before the results were brought together.

In another study, Steckler, McLeroy, Goodman, Bird, and McCormick (1992) indicated in their research that a mixed methods model supporting parallel or both methods being equal and used for the same results is a verifiable method for undertaking a mixed method study. Morse (1991) found that simultaneous use of qualitative and quantitative data is another variant of a mixed method study, The choice of mixed methods for this study was well within the parameters of the definition of a mixed method study (Creswell, 1999; DeVoe et al. 2008; Fielding & Fielding, 1986; Green, Caracelli & Graham, 1989; Trochim & Donnelly 2006; Steckler et al. 1992).

Mixed methods were first introduced into research in the late 1950s and have steadily become more and more popular. As this method of research gained notoriety, it was noted that

biases in either qualitative or quantitative research seemed to have the affect of cancelling each other out (Creswell, 2009). It was the intent of this researcher to broaden the knowledge and understanding of the reader by including both qualitative and quantitative data sets. It was anticipated by the researcher that the use of interviews and the Likert-Type survey would complement each other and that answers to questions asked both in the interviews and the survey would garner insight into the true attitudes of the educators toward professional development. Data collections in this study were intended to cross-validate the data (Creswell, 2009).

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher was to collect, disaggregate, code, and report on what the study data sets indicated (Salkind, 2011). The researcher was the one important instrument in the study who had the responsibility of making certain the parts of the study were completed (Creswell, 2009). The researcher had direct contact with educators from around the state of Arkansas from his years as a public school administrator. Collegial relationships with the school superintendents inside and outside the Western Arkansas Educational Service Cooperative allowed ease of information sharing as it pertained to the researcher requesting and receiving permission to enter the selected districts in order to gather the research data (Weeks, 1996).

Trochim and Donnelly (2006) indicated in their research that probing questions (like the ones produced in this study) could be created by the researcher if the researcher had intimate knowledge of the subject. The researcher in this study had 18 years of first-hand experience with professional development in Arkansas. During his education career, the researcher had not only been a creator and presenter of multiple professional development events, but also taught professional development creation and presentation as an adjunct professor at an Arkansas state university for several years. The researcher was responsible for professional development record

keeping, creation, and presentation for seven years while a public school administrator in school districts in Western Arkansas.

During his tenure in higher education, the researcher continued to create and present professional development events for public schools and for higher education faculty and staff. In addition, he is the university professional development specialist in child maltreatment and is responsible for the professional development required for all university faculty and staff who come in contact with minor students. In addition to the 18 years of education experience with professional development, the researcher had an additional15 years of experience as a general contractor and was responsible for mandated job-site training and industrial safety training for job-site employees.

The researcher's perspective on the study was one of professional need. Too often in his education career, the researcher found educators sorely in need of quality professional development when little or none was available. Though the researcher had a passion for the delivery and content of professional development, bias in questions asked and opinions were kept out of the interviews.

Establishing Rapport and Trust

The researcher had many years of experience in public school administration, so rapport with the superintendents and principals in the school districts in the Western Education Cooperative was easily attained. A 45 minute semi-structured interview was conducted with part of the initial portion of the interview used to build rapport with the participant. Time was spent building rapport by asking simple to answer leading questions about school and classes; questions outside the realm of the study. Other questions were sequenced in a manner that would get the respondents involved in the interview as soon as possible by asking them to talk about themselves at the outset. In addition, survey completion was done with the researcher

present so any questions could be answered. The researcher addressed any concern that the participants had, and if any felt uneasy about participation, they were allowed to leave the study; no one had any problem with the interviews or the survey, and all eligible and interested secondary educators in each of the two districts became participants in the study. At the point of the informed consent being signed, the researcher asked all participants if they had any questions regarding the content of the study as each eligible educator in the districts received a copy of the survey and interview questions 10 days prior to the researcher's arriving on campus. This gave each eligible educator time to assess whether they wanted to participate in the study and made the transition to the actual interviews and survey easy for all concerned. In addition, the confidentiality of the participants was paramount for the researcher, so each participant was given an alphabet letter or letters to identify them in the study as a way to increase trust.

Selection of Subjects

Educators to be interviewed about their professional development were contacted by their respective principals or superintendents from rural school districts in Western Arkansas. During the initial requests for entry into the districts that were a part of the study, the superintendents became concerned about privacy issues regarding the contact of the educators in their districts and the use of their prep/conference periods for interviews and survey completion. It is for this reason that either principals or superintendents were asked to approach the educators initially and ask if they would be willing to participate in the interview portion of the study, the survey portion, or both. All secondary educators in each of the districts contacted were invited to participate.

The educators who volunteered for the interview portion were a cross-section of the faculty in the building. The educators taught core classes such as math, English, science, or social studies, but were also educators from non-core areas of the curriculum. The main criteria

for selection was that each educator interviewed or surveyed had to be fully licensed and have at least two years of teaching experience with at least 120 hours of professional development experience. Seventeen educators from secondary schools in the districts were interviewed and surveyed, and in addition, 23 educators who consented to participate were given the survey. Originally 20 educators had volunteered to be interviewed; but because of scheduling issues, only seventeen interviews were completed. The survey was completed by 40 of 43 qualified secondary educators whether interviewed or not from the school districts included in the study. Three educators were out of the classroom and unavailable. Participant E stated, *When I got the email that said you were coming to our district to do these interviews and surveys, I was the first to respond to the invitation. I was happy to be interviewed and was also glad to see a well designed survey for us to fill out. I cannot wait for the completion of this study to see the results.*

Rural schools in Western Arkansas were the focus for obtaining the sample population interviewed; specific schools were chosen because of proximity. Educators were chosen from those who had two or more years of teaching experience, guaranteeing each one had participated in at least 120 hours of professional development activities before the start of the interview phase of the study. This population was narrowed to teachers of grades 7 through 12, and interviews were conducted during school hours during planning periods in the classroom without interruption by students or staff. All educators who participated volunteered for the interviews when asked by administrators via email to all their qualified educators. Initial contact with the school districts was undertaken by the researcher, but because of FERPA, privacy, and due process issues, the superintendents of both districts asked to able to make the initial contact with the secondary educators in their districts. In this way, an administrator with which the educators were knowledgeable of and part of the district were able to verify the legitimacy of the request before the researcher was granted entry. As soon as the initial contact was made by the district

administrators via email, the researcher was able to contact all secondary educators in the district who indicated they would participate in either the interview phase, the survey phase, or both phases.

Instrumentation

The researcher was an important instrument in this study because of his many years of public school administration and work with professional development coupled with the choice that this was a convergent parallel design, integrated mixed methods study. Both a semi-structured interview guide and a survey were created by the researcher. The semi-structured interview guide contained 13 main questions and 25 probing questions; the Likert-Type survey included 10 demographic questions and 16 stem statement questions.

After the researcher received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for up to 50 participants in this study, the researcher asked for and received permission to enter the districts where the study participants were employed. The researcher, after entrance into the district, asked each participant to sign an informed consent form prior to speaking to any of the educators regarding the study or its content.

During the interviews, only the written questions were asked and if clarity was asked for by the participants, the questions were reread so as to not change the possible meaning or interpretation of the question from one participant to another. Participants in this study commented on the thoroughness of the questions and were interested in the research outcomes. Educator P stated, *Why have I not been interviewed on this topic before? This study will assist educators to better understand the need to attend professional development in their content areas that is content rich and delivered by specialists in the content area.* Educator B echoed similar feelings, *If teachers do not start finding and attending quality professional development,*

students will continue to suffer. This study is a welcomed first step toward making professional

development a positive aspect of a teacher's career, not a burden.

Semi-structured Interview Guide

A 45 minute semi-structured interview was conducted with each participant. Member

checks were conducted with a majority (12 of 17) of the participants to clarify information

received in the initial interview. Five declined the researcher's request for the review of their

transcript saying they were happy with what they had said during the interview and were certain

the researcher had not changed anything they said. Creswell (2007) indicated this process

provides for the external check needed to verify the research procedure chosen. The member

check, approximately 30 minute interview with 12 participants, worked to clarify any and all

areas from the first interview and any areas that the participant wanted to cover after the review

of the transcript of the interview. The researcher administered a third interview to seven subjects

based on data received during the initial interview regarding extended professional development

events lasting more than one day in which those educators had participated. Semi-structured

interview questions (see Appendix A) were based on the three research questions found in Table

3. The semi-structured questions were created by the researcher. Trochim and Donnelly (2006)

reported from their research that questions created by researchers who were intimately involved

with a subject were valid.

The choice of an interview instrument was based on instruction from the researcher's

professors, peer input from fellow doctoral students, and general knowledge of the ways

educators participate in professional development activities. Validity and reliability are two

things researchers should be very concerned about (Patton, 2002). Validity in qualitative

research, which encompasses a major portion of this study can be attained by combining

methods through triangulation (Patton, 2002). There are, however several other ways to make

certain that study questions and research methods are valid and reliable (Trochim & Donnelly,

2006).

Table 3

Data Analysis Matrix for Educator Perceptions Regarding Quality Workplace Professional Development

Questions	Type of Data	Statistical Test
1. How do selected educators define quality professional development?	Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and	Coding system predetermined by research questions
	Inferential Quantitative data from the Likert-Type survey Independent variable: Participants Dependent variable: Survey responses	Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient
2. What issues have selected educators identified with current and past professional development?	Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and	Coding system predetermined by research questions
	Inferential Quantitative data from the Likert-Type survey Independent variable: Participants Dependent variable: Survey responses	Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient
3. What would selected educators like their professional development to be?	Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and	Coding system predetermined by research questions
	Inferential Quantitative data from the Likert-Type survey Independent variable: Participants Dependent variable: Survey responses	Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient

Six months before the study, the interview questions were pilot-tested with educators at a

school district not involved in the actual study. For test-retest reliability, the same educators

from the non-participating district were interviewed by the researcher just prior to the beginning

of the actual interview process for this study (Trochim & Donnelly, 2006).   Answers were

disaggregated, and there were no substantial changes in the data being measured between the two occasions.

In their research on mixed methods, Harter et al. (2003), created interview questions that were reviewed in the creation of the interview questions in this study. Harter et al. created 12 questions that asked adult workers to respond to regarding the career development they had received. These twelve questions, along with input from graduate professors, doctoral students, and test /retest reliability as stated above were the methods the researcher chose to validate the instrument and add credibility and dependability to the instrument as the questions for this study were patterned after the questions posited by Harter et al. The 12 questions from Harter et al. were proprietary property of the Gallup Company and the researcher was unable to obtain permission to reproduce them, therefore, the Harter et al. questions were not used.

Semi-structured open-ended interview questions were chosen for this phase of the research and were asked of all interview participants, thus facilitating faster interviews and allowing the researcher to analyze and compare the results with greater confidence. The interview was rehearsed several times with peers and co-workers as well as during the test-retest of the questions before the study began.

The classroom setting was chosen by the administrators at each respective location as a place that would have the least distraction during a teacher's planning period. All participants received an explanation of the purpose of the interview and a copy of the questions they would be asked one week before the date of their interview, thus giving them an understanding of the format and a general idea of the possible length of time needed and questions to be asked.

On the day of the interview, participants were required to sign informed consent which included the terms of confidentiality, and were provided with contact information for the interviewer and his University of Arkansas faculty advisor. Interviewees were allowed to ask

questions before and after the interviews which were entered in a field note notebook and answered as fully as possible to clarify any questions or doubts. An Olympus Digital Voice Recorder VN 7200 was chosen as the method for recording data verbatim, and additional field notes were taken at times by the researcher during and after the interviews.

The interview topic was chosen because the researcher, as a former public school administrator was familiar with the subject, and had received input from present and former faculty members from three different public school districts. The topic and interview questions were based in part on academic instruction by graduate instructors and were reviewed by graduate school faculty members and peer doctoral students.

Questions overall were simple, easy, short, understandable, and spoken distinctly – interviewees had prior knowledge of what would be asked. Behavioral questions asked were regarding instructions from administrators, input from colleagues, and availability of professional development. Opinions and values were gathered by inquiring about the interviewees' overall opinion of the value of professional development attended and what they and administrators felt they needed for their area of public school academia. Knowledge questions asked were to get facts about the topic and the participants' knowledge of mandated professional development for licensure requirements.

The researcher was tolerant, sensitive and patient to any unconventional answers, and questions were restated if necessary to make sure they were answered completely and to avoid digressions from the topic. Reliability and validity of answers offered by the interviewees can be supported by the requirement of a minimum of sixty hours documented professional development per year. Interviews were conducted without any of the subjects' governing administrators present. The researcher shared no data with any of the district administrators.

All interviews were recorded to retain accurate information. They were then transcribed, questions were disaggregated and matched with the appropriate research question and data were compiled by creating a table for each research question – results were reported from that compilation of data. Standard background questions, such as age, education and work experience were also asked.

Questions about facts were addressed for the first half of the interview, then perceptual questions were asked. Fact-based questions were spread throughout the interview, and respondents were allowed to provide any other information they wished to add, including their impressions of the interview.

After making sure the recording device was on and working properly, the interviews were conducted by asking one question at a time, and sometimes one section of a question at a time. Questions were read verbatim unless the interviewee asked for clarification. In order to maintain a lack of bias for any question answered, the interviewer used the method of restating the question; some were further defined by follow-up questions (a., b., c. d., etc.).

Eye contact was maintained throughout, with careful use of note-taking during and after the interviews. The recording device was checked periodically to make sure it was working properly. Upon completion of each interview, the researcher verified that the recording device had completely recorded the session, then wrote any notes of observations made during the interview.

Likert-Type Survey

The researcher developed a 26 question Likert-Type survey, which included a 10-question demographic section (see Appendix B). The first section (10 questions) of the survey collected the demographics on the population, and the second section contained 16 questions specifically related to perceptions of the educators toward professional development. The

specific aim of these questions was to assess the levels of professional development attained by

and attitudes of the participants in the target population. The Likert-Type survey was conducted

as a paper/pencil type survey. For each stem statement, the participant was provided a list of

four choices, from positive to negative from which to choose.

The goals and objectives of the study needed to be measurable, so after the research

questions were written, the task of writing the Likert-Type questions and the demographic

questions was made easier. Survey items were designed to help answer the larger-scale research

questions. Clearly stated survey questions kept the researcher and participants focused.

This survey was conducted to obtain useful, reliable, and valid data sets received in a

format that made it possible for analysis of the data which allowed the researcher to draw valid

and reliable conclusions about the surveyed population as it pertains to the overall population of

the two school districts included in the study (Fowler, 2002).

Content validity was expected because the researcher had intimate knowledge of the

subject and the questions were tested in a test-retest situation six months before and then again

just before the study was initiated (Isaac & Michael, 1995). Internal validity was assured in that

the questions asked were directly connected to the study outcomes of learning educator points of

view regarding professional development and no deviation of how the questions were asked to

each participant was observed (Isaac & Michael, 1995). External validity was expected because

of the total population of secondary educators available for participation in the districts studied,

who had more than two years of experience, those who were invited to participate in the study

were the population (Isaac & Michael, 1995).

A Likert-Type survey was used to measure professional development awareness for

educators from grades 7-12 who had taught for two or more years and were employed in rural

school districts in Western Arkansas. The response scale items were created solely by the

researcher, who is intimately familiar with all facets of professional development for educators in Arkansas (Trochim & Donnelly, 2006).

During the past 18 years, the researcher has attended all required and mandated professional development, has presented many hours of professional development, has, in the role of administrator, been the record-keeper for educator professional development, and, as an adjunct professor at a state university, trained other educators to present professional development in their respective districts. As a school administrator, the researcher attended many hours of presentations by the Arkansas Department of Education and its representatives on changes and mandates in laws and rules governing professional development for educators in Arkansas (2012).

The questions were designed to gather information about how educators perceived the need for professional development as required by the Arkansas Department of Education (Rules Governing Professional Development, 2012) and their respective districts, and to learn what (if any) changes they would like to see.

Six months before the study, the survey questions were administered to educators at a rural school district not involved in the actual study. Answers were separated into groups and graphed. To establish test-retest reliability, those educators answered the survey questions again just before the survey and interview processes for this study began (Trochim & Donnelly, 2006). Answers were again disaggregated, and there was no significant change in the data being measured between the two occasions.

Research Sites/Access and Informed Consent

After requesting and receiving written permission to enter the districts for the express purpose of the stated data acquisition; the interviews and survey completion took place at rural school districts in Western Arkansas with 17 educators from two districts being interviewed and

40 eligible educators answering the survey. Educators were initially contacted through the central office or the building principal's office of the district in which they were employed. The superintendents in the districts where the educators were employed were concerned about FERPA regulations and educator privacy and due process, so they made the initial educator contact. All participants in both the survey and interview were required to read and sign an informed consent document (see Appendix C). The informed consent document gave specific guidelines for participation and listed the directory information for the principal investigator and the faculty advisor. It also provided an opportunity for any and all questions of the participants to be answered before the interview and survey and permitted participant to remove themselves from the project at anytime without adverse action. Educators were asked to use their planning periods or their personal time to complete the survey portion of the data collection. Those educators being interviewed were asked to schedule a time that was convenient for them to answer the interview questions; the interviews were held at their school. No names of participants were reported in the data. All 17 participants were assigned an alphabet letter for use in qualitative data disaggregation. In addition to the 17 interview participants that were assigned alphabet letters, the additional 23 survey respondents were also given alphabet letters to maintain the confidentiality of all participants.

The interviews lasted a minimum of 45 minutes initially with follow-up interviews that lasted up to an additional 30 minutes. All interview participants were given the opportunity to review transcripts of their interviews. Any changes to the transcripts were at the request of the participants. The survey took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. At the end of the study, the transcripts, surveys, and sound recordings were shredded by the principal investigator.

Data Collection

Data were collected through interviews and a survey. Twenty-six survey questions (10 demographic and 16 Likert-Type) presented in a Likert-Type format were asked of 40 participants. The population was 43, but 3 educators were not available. Of these, 17 were also interviewed for their feelings and perceptions regarding workplace mandated professional development.

The researcher interviewed 17 secondary teachers from two rural districts in Western Arkansas. The interview questions were individually asked and answered during a 45 to 60 minute interview conducted within the planning periods of the educators. A second interview was available to the educators to qualify answers to questions; they were also conducted during planning periods.

The second portion of the data collection was from a survey. Surveys were given to 40 licensed educators from the two districts participating in the research. The Likert-Type survey was divided into two parts: 10 demographic questions and 16 Likert-Type questions regarding the educator's perceptions of professional development. The data were collected during planning periods or after school during staff meetings held by the building principal or superintendent.   The researcher conducted all data collection and was the facilitator for both the interview portion and the survey portion. As stated, the data were collected at school during planning periods and after school at faculty meetings. The researcher interviewed all participants during their planning periods; while some surveys were completed during planning period time, others were completed after school hours in a called faculty meeting at which the researcher was given time to facilitate the survey portion. All data were collected during early/middle May, 2013 (see Figure 2).

Data collections were complete by the third week in May. Data were collected from one of the districts in the first week of May and data from the other district was collected in the third week of May. The researcher had a major medical condition that precluded him from beginning the data analysis until late November of 2013.

| October 2012 Test survey questions administered Test interview questions administered | Late April 2013 Retest survey and interview questions with same participants | Early/Middle May 2013 Study data collection from interview and survey questions with actual participants |
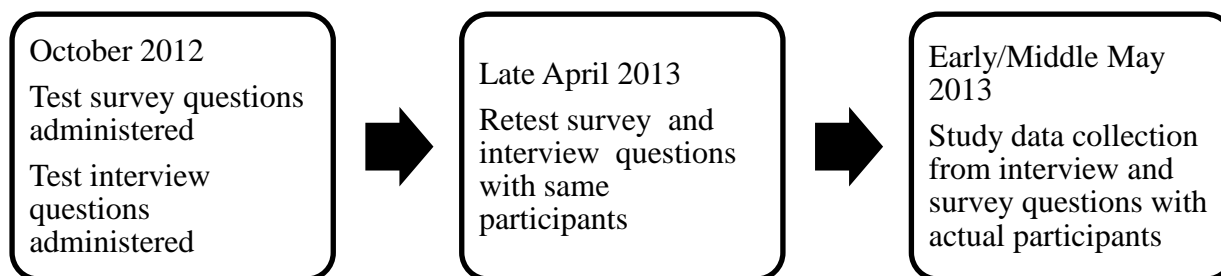
Figure 2. Timeline of Qualitative and Quantitative Data Collection.

Interview and Survey Data Management

The researcher was charged per study requirements and IRB requirements to manage all raw data received in the course of the study. Interviews were typed verbatim and disaggregated into predetermined coding sets and analyzed, member checks were completed on a majority of the transcribed interview sessions, and follow-up interviews and associated verbatim transcripts were disaggregated and coded. All data were kept by the researcher digitally, in field notes located in a spiral notebook and verbatim transcripts were kept in a locked filing cabinet. At the conclusion of the study, the researcher personally destroyed all copies of digital records, field notes, paper data, and transcripts of interviews. No personal information about any participant was left available. Alphabet letters were the only identifiers in the study for all participants which guaranteed confidentiality of all participants.

Data Analysis

Interview data were disaggregated and placed into predetermined data sets based on the research questions and analyzed. The survey data were disaggregated and analyzed using

Pearson's Random Moment Correlation Coefficient, also known as Pearson r (Salkind, 2011), along with the raw data being analyzed as percentages of like answers and plotted on scatter plot depictions of each Likert-Type question. The statistical tool was chosen based on Salkind's (2011) flow chart for determining which statistical tool to use in research. Salkind (2011) suggests that because more than two variables were being dealt with, Pearson r was the best choice for the statistical tool. Raw data from the survey were reported in table form as well as using Excel for the statistical computations of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Data from both the quantitative and qualitative research were combined into a matrix that allowed the data to be identified in cells of the matrix (see Table 4) (Creswell, 2009).

Table 4

Matrix identifying Interview and Survey Questions Associated with the Research Questions

Research Questions	Semi-structured Interview Questions	Likert-Type Survey Questions
Research Question One	7, 9, 11, 13	13, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26
Research Question Two	1, 2, 3, 4	12, 16, 18, 19, 24
Research Question Three	5, 6, 8, 10, 12	11, 14,15,17

Control of Research Errors

A Type I error is often referred to as a false-positive, and is the process of incorrectly rejecting the null hypothesis (Salkind, 2011). A Type II error, also known as a false-negative, is the opposite of a Type I error and is the acceptance, albeit false, of the null hypothesis (Vogt, 2005).

Sometimes, by chance, a sample does not represent the population and the results in the sample do not reflect what the population as a whole looked like. The random error leads to an error in the data collection (Isaac & Michael, 1995). A Type I error occurs if the researcher

rejects a null hypothesis that is actually true and a Type II error occurs when the researcher does not reject a null hypothesis that is false (Salkind, 2011). Although Type I and Type II errors are generally unavoidable, researchers can reduce the likelihood of their appearance or occurrence by increasing the sample size to include more of the entire selected population of the study (Banerjee, Chintis, Jadhav, Bhawalkak, & Chaudhury, 2009). Since Type I and Type II errors were not found in this study because research questions were asked, the researcher looked at other errors types to make certain they had been addressed during data collection and analysis.

Errors from researcher bias were considered. Researcher bias was considered because both the interview questions and survey questions were researcher created. Creswell (2009) found that the use of both qualitative and quantitative data collection in a study made the parts better by removing bias from both types of data. The idea of cancelling out biases with multiple forms of data was echoed by other researchers (Banerjee et al., 2009; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Selection biases were considered by the researcher. Selection bias was dismissed from this study as the selection of subjects in this study was accomplished by the subject populations at each district selecting themselves. Forty of 43 eligible educators made the decision to participate in the survey and of those who participated, 17 interview participants volunteered from within that population (Banerjee et al., 2009).

Data from both the qualitative and quantitative portions of the study were received simultaneously; thus the results of the study were validated through the cross-validation of the triangulated qualitative and quantitative data accumulated from the survey and interview processes. Data from the survey were short and concise quantitative data while the data from the interviews were in-depth. Survey data were collected one time from each participant; 12 member check follow-up interviews of approximately 30 minutes were undertaken to verify content of the transcripts, while seven participants in the interview process participated in an

additional 30 minute interview to clarify areas in the transcript of their initial interview regarding

extended professional development events they had attended. Both the qualitative and

quantitative data were linked to the research questions (see Table 4).

There were several ways to code the data from the qualitative data sets retrieved in this

study; the researcher chose deductive coding (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The data were coded by

bundling the interview transcript data from the qualitative data into a research question

predetermined matrix with the goal of using the data to help in answering the three research

questions in the study (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The use of deductive coding of the data allowed the

raw verbatim transcript data to be disaggregated, matched, and grouped within the predetermined

matrix (Hesse-Biber, 2010).

Before the interview and survey questions were created, the research questions were

written. The research questions were more universal in nature than the ideas of the survey

questions. The research questions indicated what the researcher wanted to learn from the study.

Statistical analysis of the Likert-Type questions included in the survey was accomplished

by the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r). It is important to to figure

out the amount of relationship between the variables (Isaac and Michael, 1995). Pearson r

indicated the degree of linear relationship that the independent and dependent variables had with

each other (Vogt, 2005). Pearson r was measured by using the correlation functions of Excel in

order to find the product of the z scores (Vogt, 2005). Pearson r indicates the direction and size

of the relationship between the two variables being measured (Ary, Chester-Jacobs, & Sorensen,

2010).

This study included two different dynamics of Pearson r; direct and indirect correlations

(Salkind, 2011). The graphic representations of the linear correlation of the variables showed

both types of relationships between the variables (Salkind, 2011). Interpretation of each Likert-Type item was undertaken within the narrative of the individual items in Chapter Four.

The attribute independent variable (Ary et al., 2010) in this study was the population of the two secondary schools surveyed (n=40). This type of independent variable is the variable that was most constant in the study and could not be manipulated by the researcher, since the population never changed from what it was before the study (Ary et al., 2010); it was always n=40 for each question asked.

The observed and measurable variable is the dependent variable (Ary et al., 2010). In this study, the dependent variables were the answers the population gave to the Likert-Type survey questions. Dependent variables are classified as outcome or response variables (Isaac & Michael, 1995). The responses to the Likert-Type questions from the dependent variables were important to the outcomes of the study. The analysis of all data retrieved from the participants of this study became a part of Chapter Four.

Three questions from the Likert-Type survey were analyzed using the Mann-Whitney U-Test. The three questions analyzed were chosen because the answers given by male and female participants seemed to be very different. The Mann-Whitney U-Test data became a part of Chapter Four also.

Limitations of the Study

The following were limitations in this mixed-methods study:

1. No first or second year educators were interviewed because their experience level, as it pertains to any type of professional development, was virtually non-existent.

2. The gathering of qualitative data was from a one-time question/answer period. The interview transcript was available for a member check.

3. Because of the population size and geographical boundaries of this study, results from the

   raw data cannot be generalized nor transferred to a more diverse population.

Chapter Four

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of a selected group of Arkansas educators regarding professional development. Since educators are in the workforce, and adult workers are the focus of this study, educators were interviewed and surveyed for their perceptions of mandated professional development.

Quantitative data were gathered through the participant answers to the Likert-Type survey, whereas qualitative data were gathered through interviews. The qualitative data gathered were a compilation of educator perceptions toward professional development as it pertained to the interview questions (see Table 5). The quantitative data were gathered for the purpose of reviewing the perceptions of a larger group of individuals.

Table 5

Matrix for Grouping Coding Elements from the Qualitative Data Sets by Research Question (RQ) and Related Interview Question (n=17)

Interview Question	Themes and Responses from Interview Questions Based on Research Questions							
	RQ 1: How do selected educators define quality professional development?							
7	quality	17	delivery	17	content	16		
9	opportunity	15	schedule	15	choice	13	discrepancy	5
11	chance	7	change	14	delivery	14	benefit	14
13	related PD	7	improve	14	quality	17		
	RQ 2: What issues have selected educators identified with current and past PD?							
1	professional	17	certified	17	training	17	experience	17
2	parameters	16	legislated	17	mandatory	17	specific	15
3	administration	9	type	5	direction	1		
4	amount	14	type of PD	17	specific PD	14		
	RQ 3: What would selected educators like their professional development to be?							
5	facilities	14	locations	17				
6	conference	7	participation	15	efficacy	9		
8	required	9	implementing	7	strategies	7		
10	offer	17	content area	9	audience	9		
12	look forward	16	areas of PD	5	effectiveness	7		

Quantitative Data

The sample was 40 licensed educators with at least two years of experience participated in the quantitative portion of the study research by answering a Likert-Type survey. The population was 43 educators with 3 unavailable. The response rate in the districts was 93 percent.

Demographic Data

The disaggregation of the demographic data indicated that 67.5 percent of the respondents were female and 32.5 percent were male. An overwhelming majority (87.5%) of the participants reported that they were white with 5 percent indicating they were Native American, 2.5 percent Latin or Hispanic, 2.5 percent Pacific Islander, and 2.5 percent indicated other.

Their ages were as follows: 20-30 (12.5%), 31-40 (32%), 41-50 (17.5%), 51-60 (32.5%), and 60 + (5%). Ten percent reported that they were single; 77.5 percent indicated that they were married; 7.5 percent were divorced; 2.5 percent were widowed, and 2.5 percent did not respond to the question.

The participants reported that 37.5 percent had a Bachelor degree, 55 percent had a Master degree, 5 percent had a Specialist degree, and 2.5 percent held a terminal degree. Only 7.5 percent of the participants had what would be considered as minimum experience for this study; 2-5 years' experience, 22.5 percent had 6-10 years, 22.5 percent had 11-15 years, 15 percent had 16- 20 years, 10 percent had 21- 25 years, and 20 percent had 26 or more years as a licensed educator. A total of 2.5 percent of the respondents did not answer the experience question. Thirty percent of the respondents indicated they held licensure levels of P-12/K-12, 62.5 percent held middle school (grades 4-8) licenses, and 62.5 percent held 7-12 licenses. Respondents indicated that 15 percent had completed 1-2 years as an educator, 10 percent anticipated 3-4 years as an educator, 10 percent anticipated 5-6 years as an educator, and the 65

percent majority anticipated seven or more years of employment as an educator. All participants

were asked how satisfied they were with their current positions. Of those responding, 55 percent

were very satisfied, 37.5 percent were satisfied, 2.5 percent were neither satisfied nor

dissatisfied, and 5 percent were dissatisfied (see Table 6).

Table 6

Responses to Demographic Survey Questions (n=40)

Question	Response A	Response B	Response C	Response D	Response E	Response F	Response G
Gender	Male 13	Female 27	0	0	0	0	0
Race	Native American 2	Hispanic 1	Asian 0	Black 0	Pacific Islander 1	White 35	Other 1*
Age	20-30 5	31-40 13	41-50 6	51-60 14	61+ 2	0	0
Marital Status	Single 4	Married 31	Divorced 3	Widowed 1	0	0	N/R 1
Highest Degree	Bachelor 13	Master 24	Doctor 1	Post Dr. 0	Specialist 2	0	0
Years of Exp.	2-5 3	6-10 9	11-15 9	16-20 6	21-25 3	26+ 9	N/R 1
License Type	P-4 0	4-8 3	7-12 25	P-12 12	0	0	0
Work	Full 40	Part Time 0	0	0	0	0	0
How long will you work	1-2 years 6	3-4 years 4	5-6 years 4	7+ years 26	0	0	0
How satisfied are you with your position	Very 22	Satisfied 15	Neutral 1	Dissati'd 2	0	0	0

*One respondent identified his/her race as Portuguese.

Discussion of Demographic Data

All 40 educators were eligible for this study because 100 percent were employed at the junior high and/or high school level. Licensure in the public schools was not only important but also required by the Arkansas Department of Education (Arkansas Department of Education, Standards Assurance Rules, July 2013). All educators in this study were licensed.

Burn-out rates for educators have been reported as high in other studies; many educators do not reach their fifth year of teaching before leaving to pursue a different career (Graziano, 2005). With high burn-out rates, it is critical to supply quality professional development to all educators. Not only did the majority of this group of educators anticipate working 7 or more years as an educator, 92.5 percent of them were satisfied with their current positions. This current trend seemed in contrast to Graziano's (2005) article in which she indicated almost 50 percent of new teachers do not teach past the fifth year.

Career Development Likert Data

Of the total 26 questions in the Likert-Type survey, the last 16 questions posed to each participant in the study were quantitatively analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and associated scatter plot for each survey question.   For the purposes of this study, the independent variable was identified as the population of educators employed at the two secondary schools in the districts studied, and the dependent variables were identified as the participant responses to the 16 Likert-Type questions. In finding the critical values of Pearson r, *df* was 38. According to Vogt (2005), strong data associations occur when Pearson r is close to 1 or -1 and weak when Pearson r is close to 0.

Item No. 11. Participants were asked to consider the idea of how important it is for a teacher to deliver effective content instruction. Participant responses indicated that 27 (67.5%) educators surveyed strongly agree that delivery of content is important, 11 (27.5%) agree that it

is important, and 2 (5%) were neutral on the subject. Participant responses indicate that an overwhelming majority 38 (95%) agree or strongly agree that delivery and content are very important (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. A teacher's job is to deliver effective content based instruction. (n=40; p<.01)
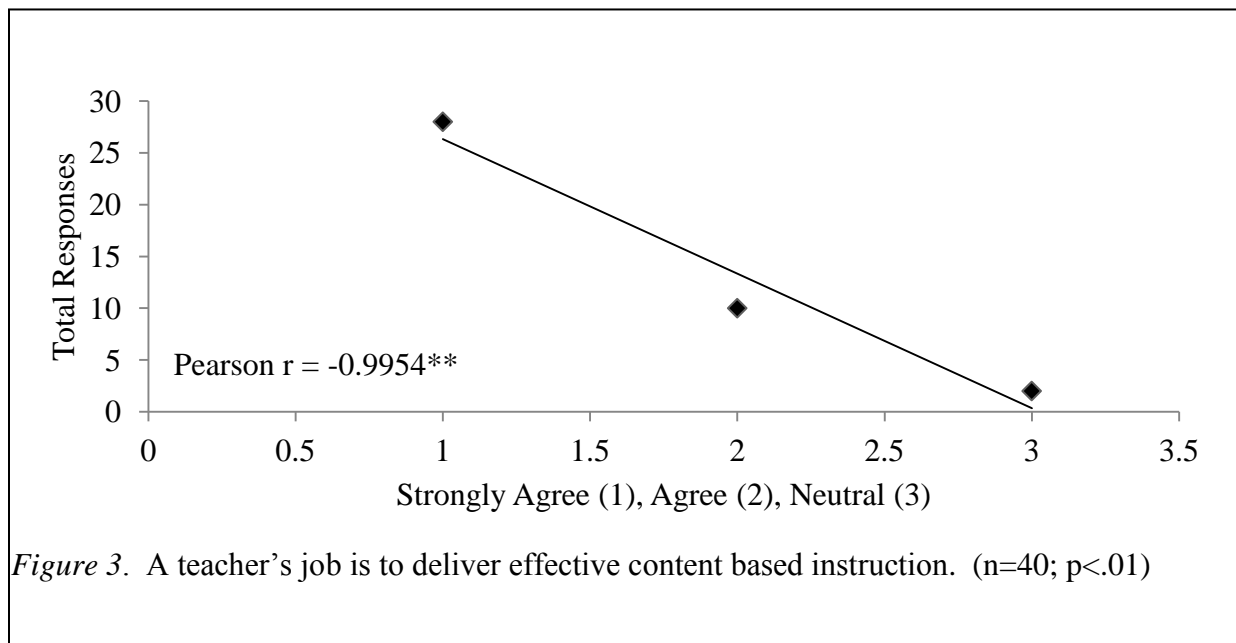
Subject content and its delivery to students and educators have routinely been at the heart of professional development topics (Guskey, 1995). Without effective delivery of content in workplace training, worker productivity goes down (Barton et al., 2011). As Figure 3 indicates, a majority of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that effective content based instruction was important for students.

The findings from Figure 3 indicated a very strong indirect or negative correlation between the total population and the need for teachers to deliver effective content based instruction. The significance of this correlation is validated by the fact that 95 percent of the respondents indicated they thought delivering content based instruction was important. The probability that another population would have similar results was possible with a critical value of Pearson r of .01 for this item (Salkind, 2011).

Item No. 12. The question related to this subject indicated that 29 (72.5%) of the participants strongly agree that students must ready themselves for the workplace, while 10 (25%) agree, and 1 participant (2.5%) was neutral. It is clear from the responses that a large number of the participants 39 (97.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that training is essential for workplace readiness whether the trainees are students training for entry level positions, or veteran workers in need of refresher courses. Educators are no different in their need for training (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. A student's job is to learn so they will ready themselves for the workplace. (n=40; p<.01)
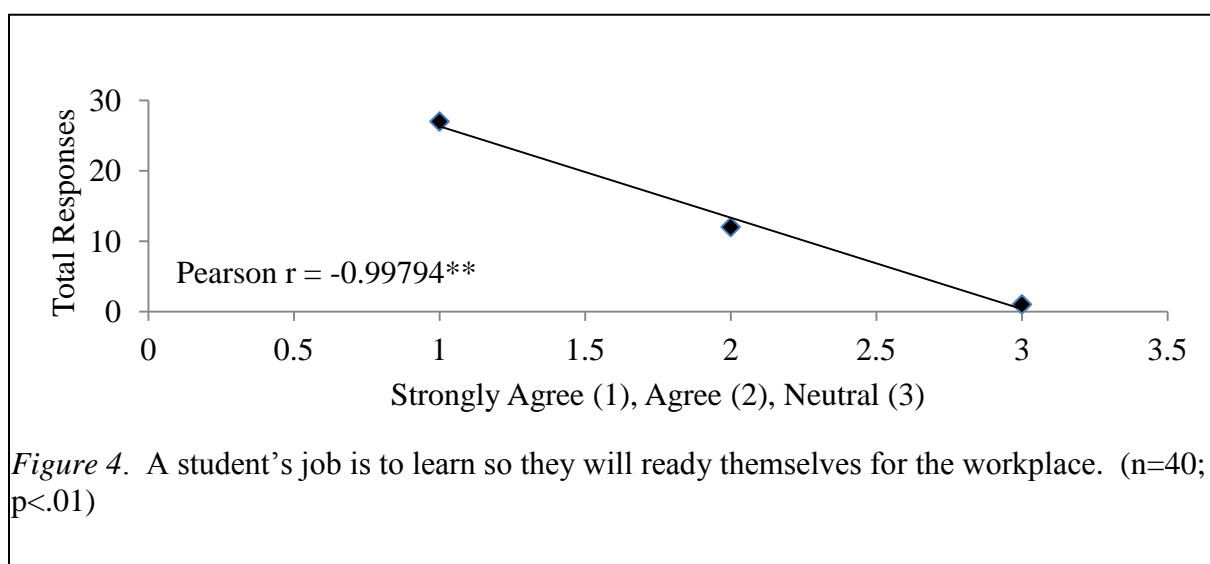
It appeared, from years of observing the training of individuals, the ability for a person being taught a specific skill needed to be accomplished using the best possible strategies in order to ready them for the workplace (Dr. M. Dickerson, Superintendent, Van Buren Public Schools, personal communication, October 2012). The statistically significant findings from this question were supported by Guskey (1995), in which it was noted that specific training was needed in order for a positive workplace outcome to take place for the educator and students. In addition, Super (1980), concluded that a decision making criteria needed to be implemented in order to rate how the training effected those who attended. The correlation between the independent and

dependent variables in this item was very strong. The Pearson r results indicated a strong

negative correlation regarding the responses received with the critical value at the .01 level.

Item No. 13. When faced with the question on searching out the best available

professional development, 22 (55%) of respondents said they strongly agreed that they searched

for the best training in their specific content area, 17 (42.5%) agreed, and 1 person (2.5%) neither

agreed nor disagreed (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. When attending PD, I try to find the best available to increase my classroom efficacy. (n=40; p<.01)
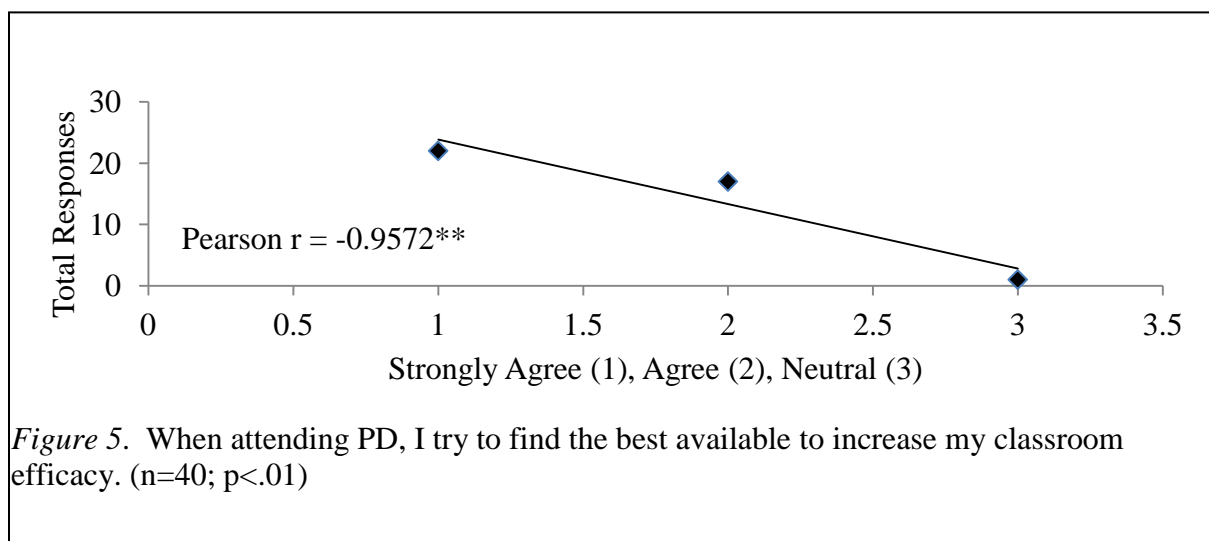
Again, an overwhelming number of respondents 39 (97.5%) indicated that finding

quality, content specific training is important for efficacy purposes in the workplace; educators

needed to receive content specific quality professional development so the efficacy of their

classrooms were ready for the students of the 21st century (Barton et al., 2011; Blank & de las

Alas, 2009; Danielson, 2011; Harris & Sass, 2007; Karimi, 2011). Not all educators have the

flexibility to search out and attend the trainings of their choice; many times the district takes that

role and does not give the educator the opportunity to find and attend professional development

(Dr. Karen Cushman, Arkansas Department of Education, Assistant Commissioner of Education,

personal communication, October, 2012).

Educators need to focus on content specific professional development and now CCSS and

TESS workshops. Finding content/core specific professional development has become difficult

because of the vast array of CCSS and TESS workshops. Finding quality content/core

professional development events will remain difficult over the next 2-3 years (Dr. B. Gooden,

Superintendent, Special School District of Fort Smith, personal communication, October, 2013).

The data from this item continued to show a very strong negative correlation for those

participants believing they needed to find the best professional development possible. Myers and

Allen (1997) found that a commitment by employees to the type of professional development

they were receiving was critical for their success; the item responses support the findings of

Myers and Allen.

Item No. 14. This question found an array of answers; 6 (15%) of the respondents

strongly agreed that their employer regularly sent them to content specific professional

development trainings, 14 (35%) agreed, 12 (30%) neither agreed nor disagreed, 8 (20%) said

their employer did not send them to content specific trainings (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. My district always sends me to content specific PD. (n=40; p<.01)
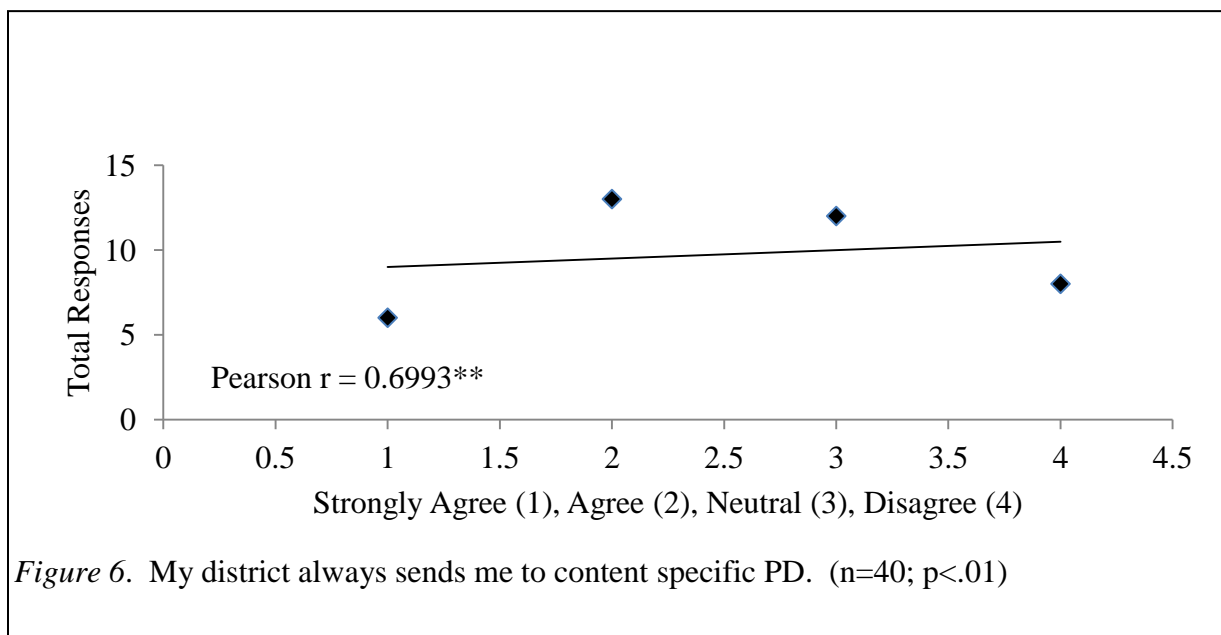
Many times the employer researched the best practices of a position and suggested or mandated attendance in a specific training (Tansky & Cohen, 2001). Educators fall into this category very often as districts strive to either locate or provide cutting edge training for their employees (Choy et al., 2006). As discussed in Figure 3, these content/core specific professional development events will become more difficult to access until the majority of educators are TESS and CCSS trained. Statistically, this item had a very strong direct or positive correlation between the participants and their responses indicating they needed communication from their administrators to assist them in attending content specific professional development.

Item No. 15. Ten (25%) participants strongly agreed they communicate with fellow educators about trainings they have attended, 23 (57.5%) agreed, 3 (7.5%) were neutral, and 4 (10%) disagreed. Results of the survey indicate that a large majority (80 %) of those surveyed believe collaboration between educators is of value to them (see Figure 7).

Pearson r = -0.6481**

Figure 7. I talk to other educators in my content area about the PD I have taken. (n=40; p<.01)

While employers, according to the participants, sometimes mandated attendance in a specific training, communication between educators in this study had similar outcomes when asked about collaboration in finding and attending quality professional development.

If an educator had the ability to talk to other educators in their subject field, many times they would help each other find professional development events from which they could benefit (Danielson, 2011). The very strong indirect correlation of this item indicated that the respondents needed to talk to peers in their content area more often to help each other find and attend quality professional development. Statistically, this item had a very strong correlation.

Item No. 16. This question asked if the employer mandated professional development training was challenging to the employee. Responses included 1 (2.5%) strongly agreed, 7 (17.5%) agreed, 8 (20%) being neutral, 17 (42.5%) disagreed, 5 (12.5%) strongly disagreed, and 2 did not respond (5%) (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Attending district mandated PD opportunities makes me feel challenged. (n=40; p<.01)
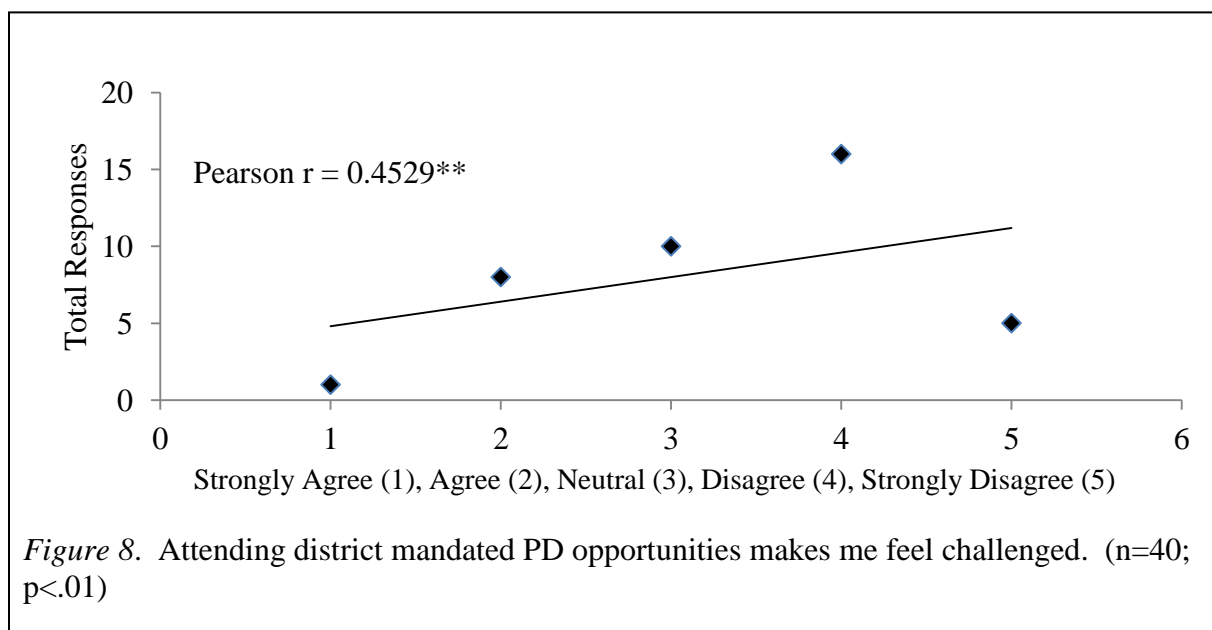
Mandated trainings were usually based on the same information every year. Workshops such as parental involvement and bullying seldom change (Dr. B. Gooden, Superintendent, Special School District of Fort Smith, personal communication, October, 2012). The majority of the respondents did not think these events were of much value. The answers to this question
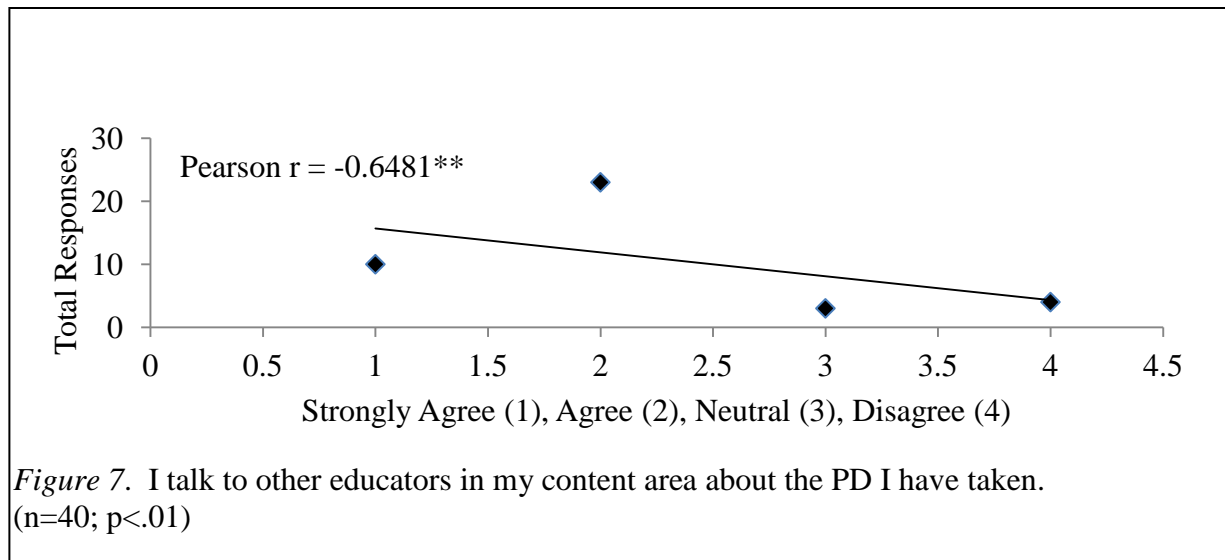
were in agreement with Super (1980) in that employees had trainings that produce new or

retrained skills and realistic opportunities for growth, regardless of the stage of development.

With the advent of revolving mandated professional development, in areas such as

parental involvement, bullying, and suicide prevention, to name just a few; these will help the

educators as they search for other professional development offerings throughout the summer

and school year. The rotation will be on a four year cycle (Arkansas Department of Education,

Standards Assurances Rules, 2012).

The direct correlation of this item indicated that the different ways of offering district

mandated professional development was important to the participants. The large number of

responses indicated the mandated events were not helping the educators with their professional

growth or their classroom efficacy (Guskey, 2009). The item had a very strong positive

statistical correlation.

Item No. 17. The participants were aware of the PLC and answered the question with the

knowledge they had of the model, though most did not participate in a PLC in their district. Of

those responding, 6 (15%) strongly agreed professional learning community collaboration is

important, 13 (32.55%) agreed, 9 (22.5%) were neutral, 7 (17.5%)t disagreed, and 5 (12.5%) did

not respond (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. I talk to other educators in my PLC about the PD I have taken. (n=40; p<.01)
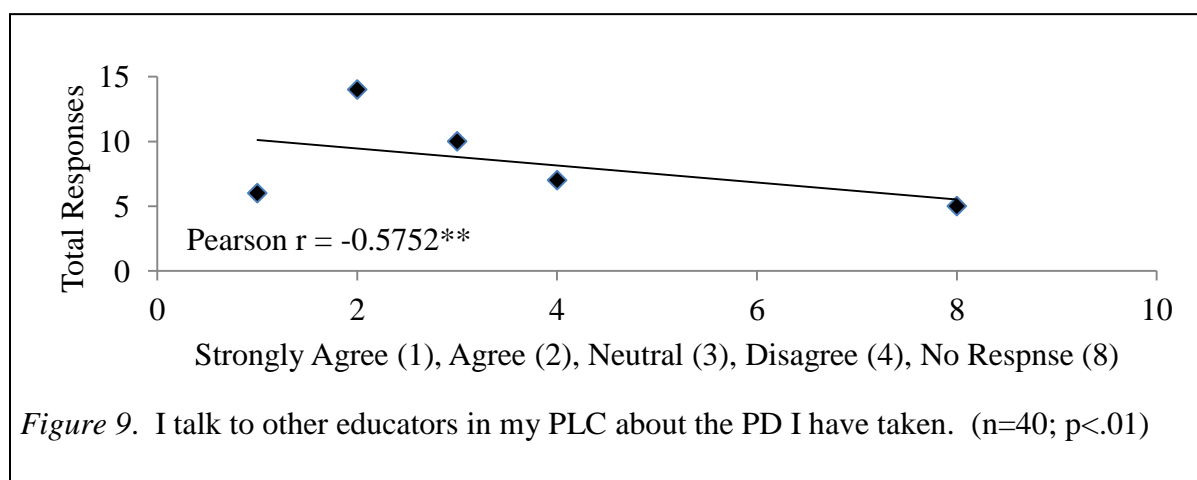
Employee collaboration was important for not only the employees but also for the employer. If employees were collaborating, they were finding new and innovative ways to bring quality training into the workplace (Isaacson & Brown, 2000; Karimi, 2011). Educators have a collaborative group they call a Professional Learning Community (PLC). Many schools have adopted the PLC model (Dufour, 2004; Dufour & Marzano, 2011), but not all have adopted the model. When asked about collaboration between PLC members regarding trainings they have received, many of the participants were unable to answer the question from a personal standpoint as very few of them participated in this type of learning model in their district. The use and availability of PLCs in districts was still a rather new idea, so the responses having outliers around the line of best fit was normal. The very strong negative findings indicated that educators would have liked having a chance to be a member of a PLC. That was not an option in the schools surveyed.

Item No. 18. Responses varied, but no one strongly agreed that they were uneasy talking to their building supervisor about their professional development needs, 3 (7.5%) agreed, 5 (12.5%) were neutral, 13 (32.5%) disagreed, and 19 (47.5%) strongly disagreed. From this data it appears that a majority of the participants 30 (75%) were comfortable talking to their building principal about their professional development needs (see Figure 10). This finding was in direct conflict with the research of Milliken et al. (2003) where they found that employees did not feel comfortable talking to supervisors about career development items that were of concern to them.

Figure 10. When talking PD with my building principal, I feel uneasy when revealing my PD needs. (n=40; p<.01)
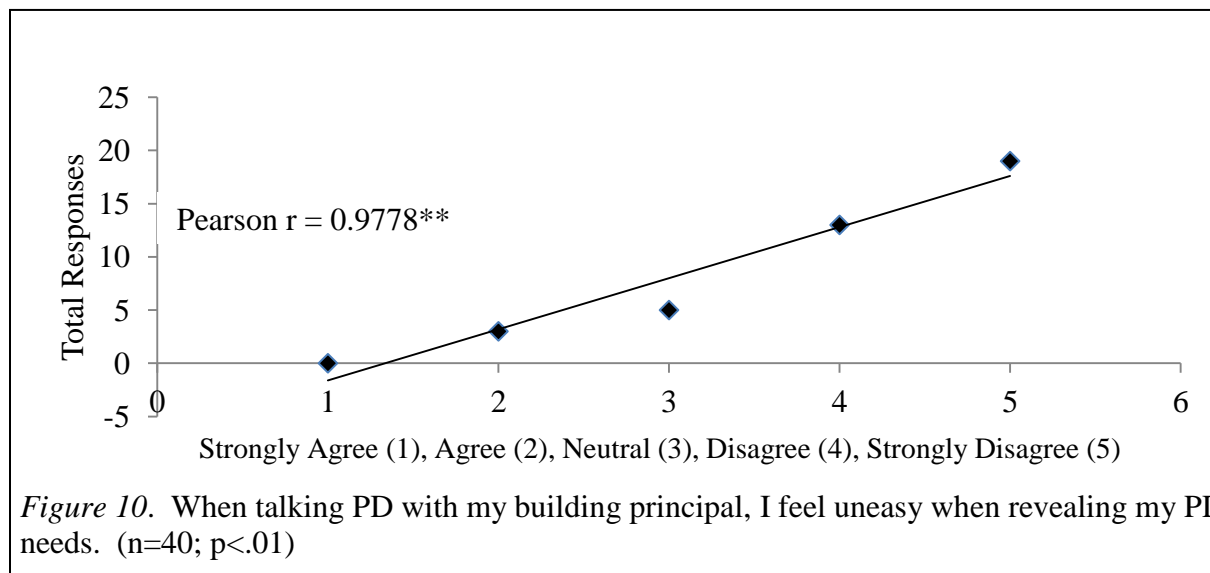
Another type of training collaboration was when an employee communicated directly with their immediate supervisor regarding their training needs. This type of training was generally taken in order to facilitate a change in classroom management style, to begin work on a new core content curriculum challenge, or to help in the process of starting the TESS program for classroom educators (Danielson, 2011). These professional development opportunities truly assisted the educators in these areas of need (Danielson, 2011).

With 75 percent of the respondents comfortable with talking to their building principal, both educators and the administration of the school were able to communicate with each other regarding the type of professional development needed (Fulton & Britton, 2011). The statistical findings support the fact that a very strong positive correlation was found for this item. The direct correlation was very high with only one small outlier that kept the statistic lower than the line of best fit could have indicated had that outlier been more in line with the other responses.

Item No. 19. One of the questions survey participants answered asked if attendance policies were too strict. Responses were spread evenly with 5 (12.5%) strongly agreeing that the policies were too strict, 14 (35%) agreeing, 9 (22.5%) both being neutral and disagreeing

separately, and 3 (7.5%) strongly disagreeing, (see Figure 11). A rather flat line of best fit in regards to this item indicated that there was a strong indirect correlation when educators talk about policies regarding attendance and flexibility of professional development events.

Figure 11. Policies regarding PD attendance are too strict and provide little flexibility. (n=40; p<.05)
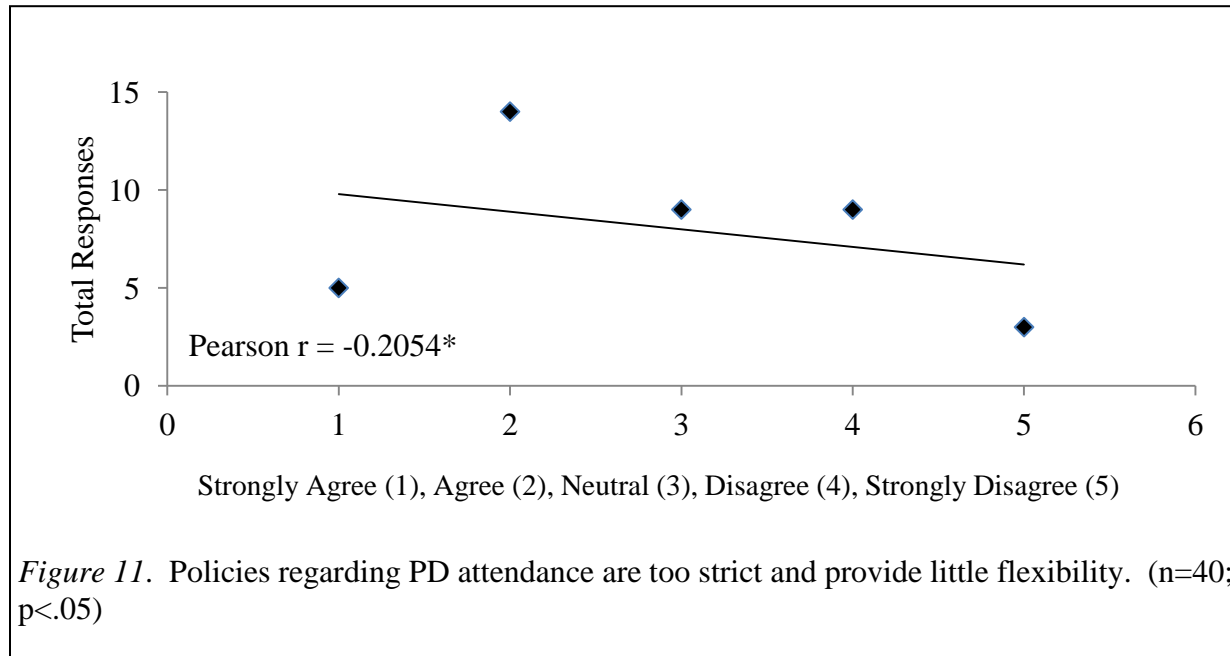
Employer policies regarding mandated training may or may not have provided flexibility for the employee in attending training opportunities (Volante et al., 2008). Since TESS and CCSS are both being implemented simultaneously, for the foreseeable future, there will remain little or no flexibility in professional development attendance policies (Dr. M. Dickerson, Superintendent, Van Buren Public Schools, personal communication, October 2012).

Item No. 20. When asked whether educators were satisfied with the type and amount of professional development attended, the participant's answers were as follows: 4 (10%) strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the type and amount of training they received, 13 (32.5%) agreed, 6 (15%) neither agreed nor disagreed, 10 (25%) disagreed, and 7 (17.5%) strongly disagreed (see Figure 12).

The slight direct correlation in this item would indicate that school districts and educators need to do more to make certain that the professional development attended is quality. The line of best fit is almost horizontal which means it was hard to assess from the statistic (at the p< .05 level) the basis of the correlation results except that based on the actual percentages, more work must be done to strengthen the types and amounts of professional development attended.

Pearson r = 0.1049*

Total Responses

15

10

5

0

0   1   2   3   4   5   6

Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4), Strongly Disagree (5)

Figure 12. I am satisfied with the type and amount of PD I attend. (n=40; p<.05)
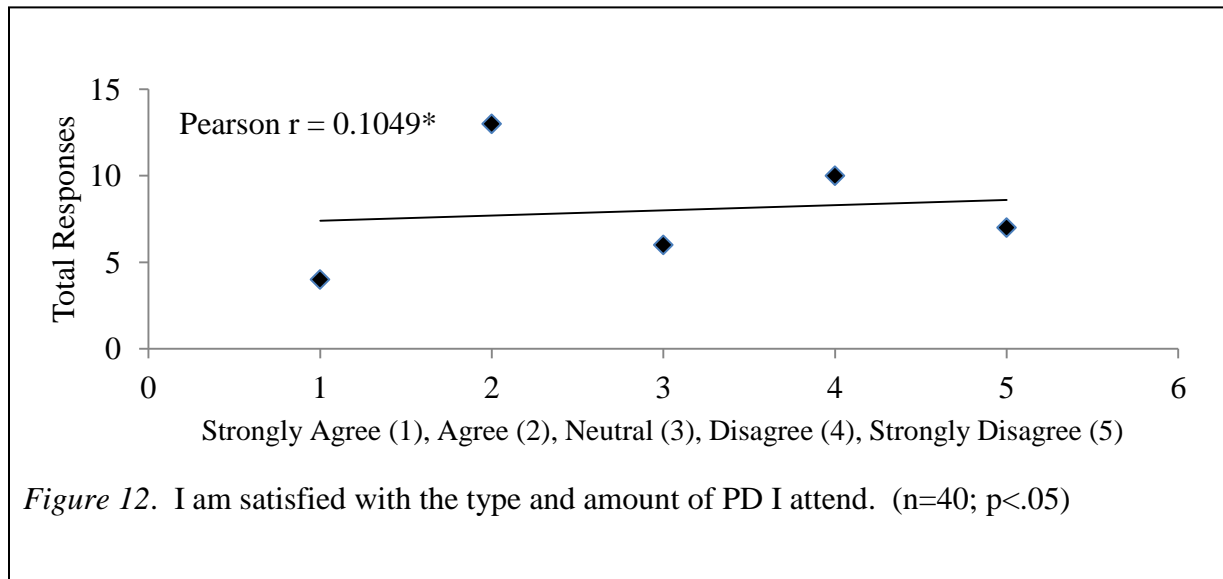
Fifty-seven and a half percent of the responses indicated either indifference or disagreement that the trainings received had been beneficial to the participants. The researcher gleaned data that being satisfied with training choices increased the amount learned and the amount retained. The more the educator felt ownership of any professional development event, the more they were able to glean from it and take back to the workplace for use in their classrooms (Guskey, 1995).

With the majority of the respondents (57.5 %) to this question believing they had not received a satisfactory amount or type of professional development, it appeared from the data that intense work needed to be done by the districts and ADE to offer better events. Better

professional development events would allow educators more quality options from which to choose (Hawley & Valli, 1999).

Item No. 21. Responses concerning understanding quality were varied including 12 (30%) who strongly agreed that there was a need for quality training, 16 (40%) who agreed, 7 (17.5%) who were neutral, and 5 (12.5%) who disagreed (see Figure 13).

Figure 13. Most teachers understand the need for quality PD. (n=40; p<.01)
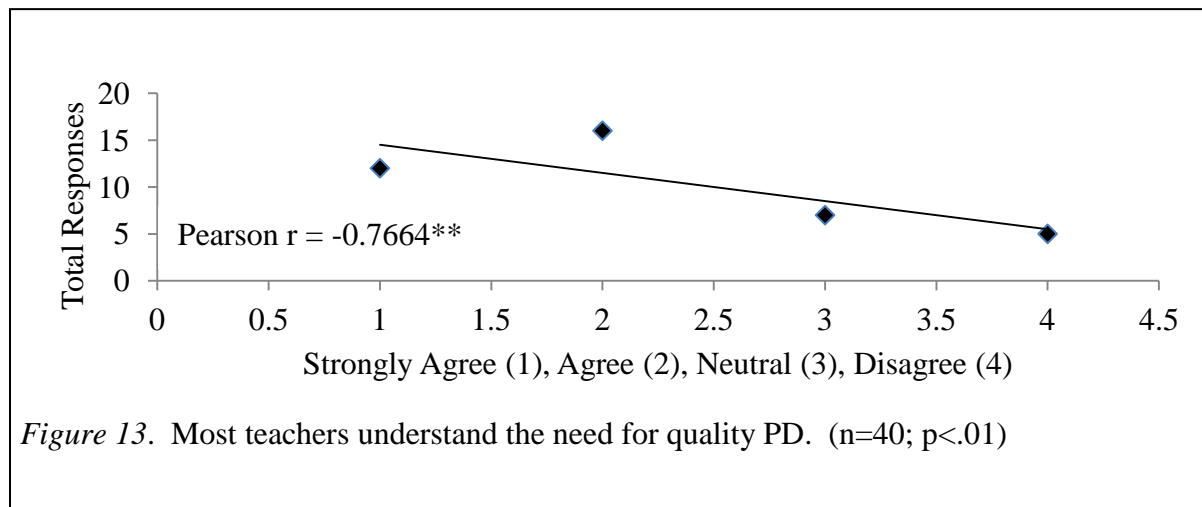
Data from the question regarding understanding of the need for quality professional development appeared to indicate that educators at least understood the need for quality professional development (Tang & Choi, 2009). With 70 percent of the respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing, the perception of the need for quality professional development was apparent for many educators (Barton et al., 2011).

The statistic for this item indicated a very strong indirect correlation; the observed line of best fit was very strong as the researcher had first thought it would be for this item. The correlation here indicated that some educators still need assistance in understanding exactly why they need quality professional development .

Item No. 22. Respondent answers were as follows: 4 (10%) strongly agreed that most of the trainings they received was a waste of time and resources, 14 (35%) agreed, 8 (20%) neither

agreed nor disagreed, 12 (30%) disagreed, and 2 (5%) strongly disagreed. The responses of the

participants indicated that a slightly higher percentage of these educators believe the present

form of professional development delivery is a waste of time (see Figure 14).

Figure 14. Most of the PD I attend is a waste of time. (n=40; p<.05)
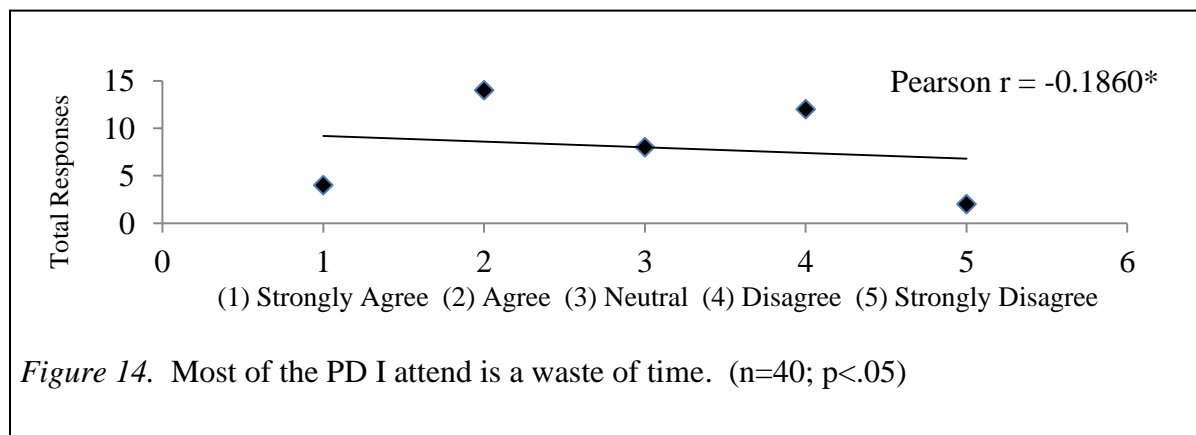
This line of best fit is almost horizontal on this item. The slight weak indirect correlation

between the total responses and the response types indicated that the responses were split over

quality of the events attended (at the p<.05 level). The findings indicated that participants

needed to make certain the professional development that was attended was of quality in nature

and that all educators had the opportunity to attend quality professional development.

It appears logical that understanding quality in training would help one know what is not

quality (Danielson, 2011). For many years job related training professionals have worked to

minimize those trainings that are deemed unneeded by the employees and thus a waste of

employer resources (Danielson, 2011). Quality professional development was important to the

educator and to the district for which they were employed because there was no need to waste

time and money on non-relevant professional development events (Choy et al., 2006).

Item No. 23. When asked whether quality training was essential, the participants

answered in this way: 15 (37.5%) strongly agreed that trainings were essential, 17 (42.5%)

agreed, 5 (12.5%) were neutral, 2 (5%) disagreed, and 1 (2.5%) strongly disagreed (see Figure

15).

Figure 15. Quality educator PD is essential for maximizing student learning. (n=40; p<.01)
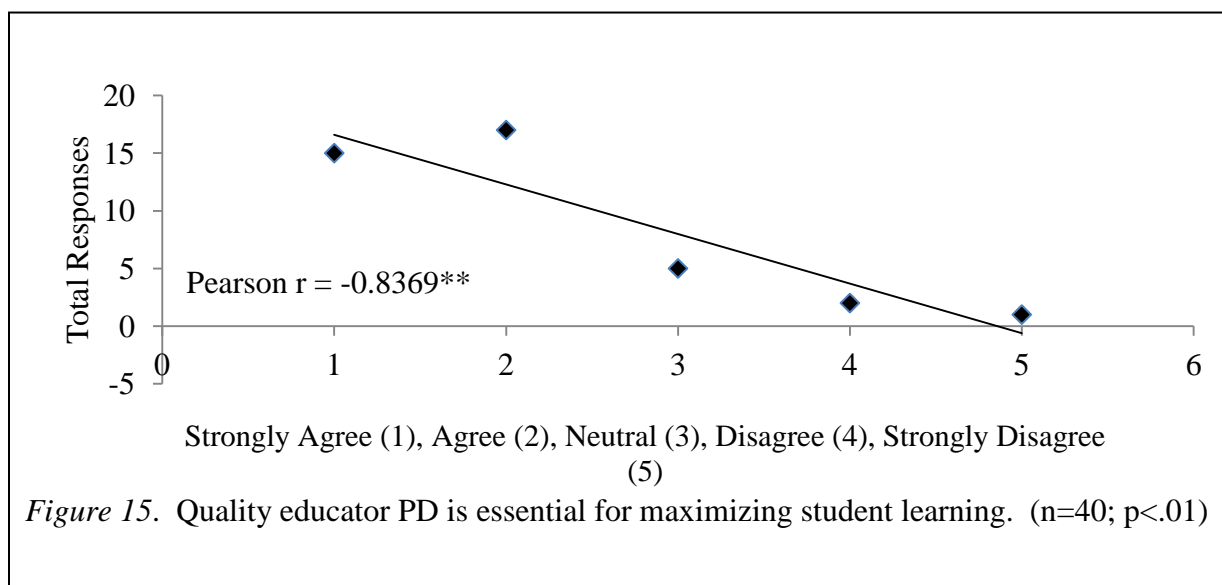
Educators have a knack for understanding the need for increased efficacy in the

classroom and training that will help that need (Guskey, 1995). Quality professional

development trainings are essential in order to maximize the educator's ability in the workplace

(Barton et al., 2011). With 80 percent of the participants responding that quality professional

development was essential, student achievement can only increase with the increase in the

quality of the professional development (Choy et al., 2006).

A very strong correlation existed for this item. The line of best fit indicated that a high

number of total responses were made in the agree and strongly agree areas. That would indicate

that this percentage of the participants (80%) believed maximizing classroom efficacy and

student learning was important.

Item No. 24. The question regarding consultation with others received these answers: 6

(15%) strongly agreed that consultation should be undertaken, 17 (42.5%) agreed, 8 (20%)

neither agreed nor disagreed, 7 (17.5%) disagreed, and 2 (5%) strongly disagreed (see Figure 16).

Figure 16. When picking quality PD, I should consult my building administrator and colleagues. (n=40; p<.01)
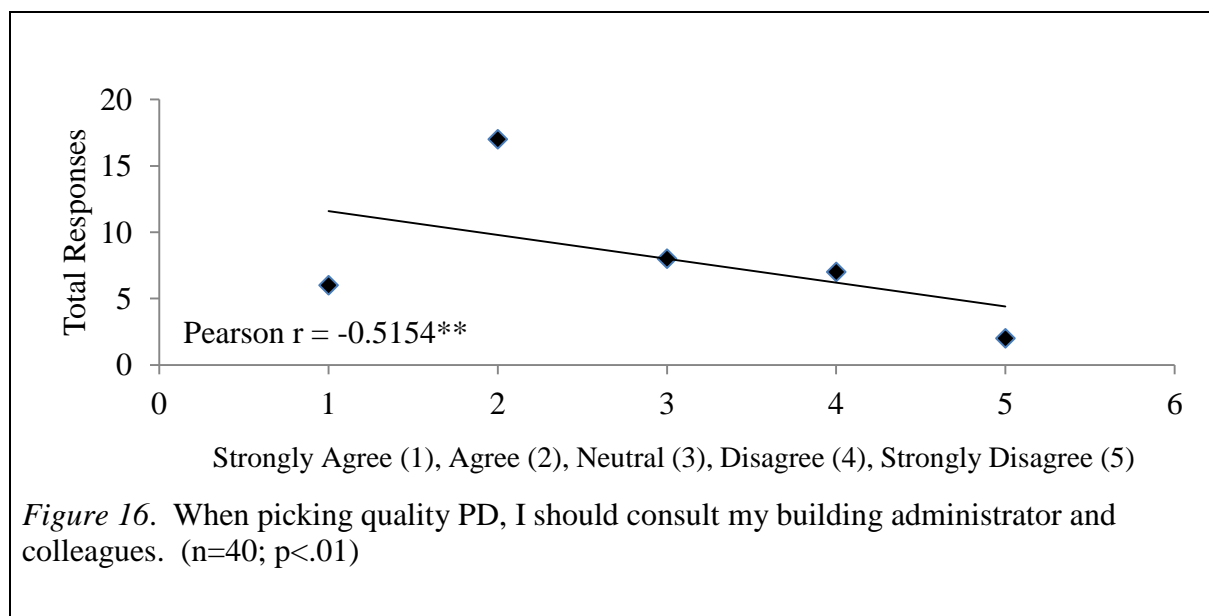
This item had a very strong indirect correlation, and one that indicated that a larger number of participants said that administrators needed to be consulted when professional development was being picked for attendance. Employer mandated attendance at some training and others where employees picked from a laundry list of choices from other trainings (Choy et al., 2006; Guskey, 1995), was important because quality professional development was being picked out. Collaboration between direct supervisors or colleagues and an individual increased the chances that quality trainings are chosen to attend (Corcoran, 2010; Glazerman et al., 2010; Golhaber & Hansen, 2008; Guskey, 1995).

Participants indicated that a majority (57.5%), believed collaboration with other educators in their district and with their building administrator was important. Educators, working together, could find and attend quality professional development (Thompson & Goe,

2009). Educators, working with their districts, could also find quality professional development to attend (Koretz, 2008).

Item No. 25. When asked whether they should pick the best professional development and be on time, the participants overwhelmingly stated, 26 (65%) strongly agreed and 14 (35%) agreed, that choosing and attending quality trainings is important (see Figure 17). The exceptional indirect correlation in this item was indicated with the perfect 1.0 value. All participants were in agreement that the best professional development needed to be attended and that they needed to be on time.

Figure 17. When attending PD I should pick the best and be on time. (n=40; p<.001)
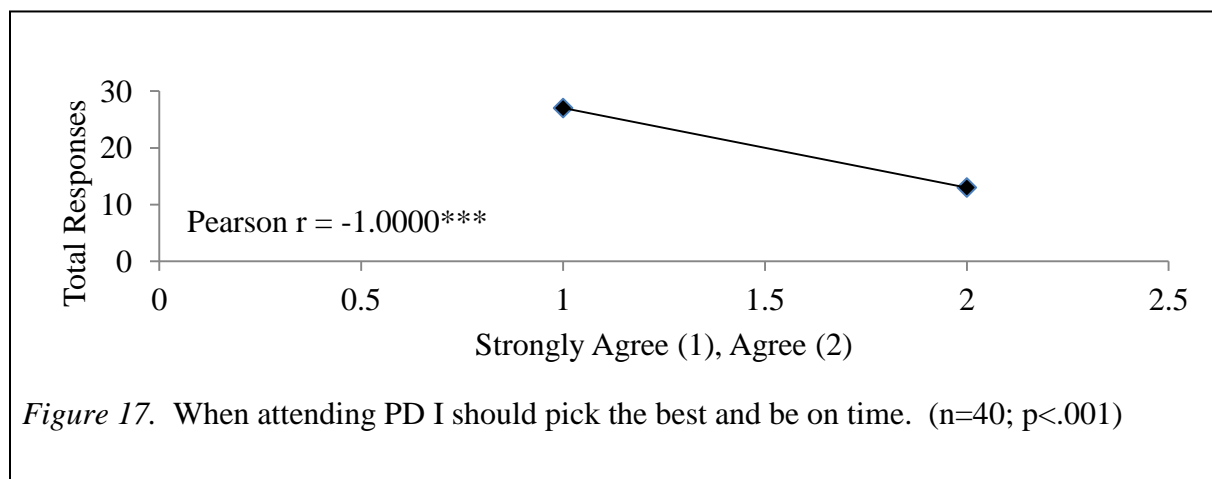
Increased base knowledge and increased efficacy were goals of employees and employers (Guskey, 1995; Yoon et al., 2007). Picking quality trainings and being on time for those trainings were an important element to the educators and districts that employ them (Dufour, 2004). One hundred percent of the respondents indicated that they either strongly agreed or agreed that picking good professional development is important. They also indicated that being on time was important to them. Since employers placed a high importance on attendance and time of arrival, especially during the school year, educators understood the need to be in

attendance on time for the professional development events they were scheduled to attend

(Dufour and Marzano, 2001).

Item No. 26. When asked whether or not professional development enhanced classroom

efficacy, 16 (40%) strongly agreed, 20 (50%) agreed, and 4 (10%) were neutral (see Figure 18).

Finally, reflection and feedback were essential to all workplace individuals and organizations

(Danielson, 2011; Dr. M. B. Gunter, Graduate Dean, Arkansas Tech University, personal

communication, May, 2010). An employee should always reflect on trainings received and give

feedback to the presenters. Content and delivery could be adjusted because of the input of

attendees (Danielson, 2011).

Figure 18. I should always rate how the PD may or may not enhance my classroom efficacy. (n=40; p<.01)
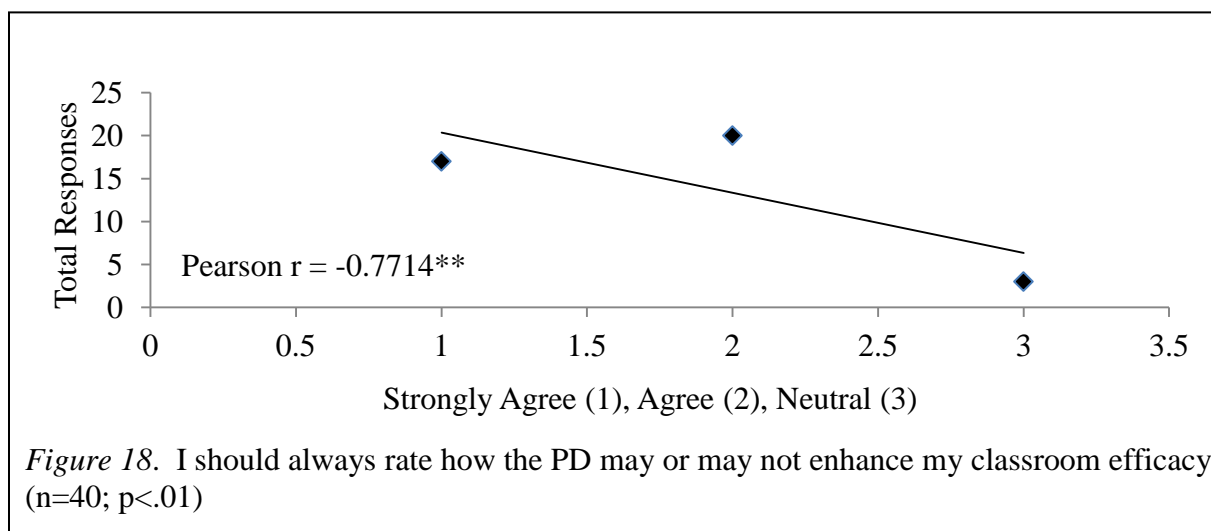
Participants responded as a majority (90%) that reflection and evaluation of professional

development was important. Educators should always take time to evaluate the professional

development attended as well as give feedback on the quality and delivery of the professional

development to the presenter (Danielson, 2011).

This item had a very strong indirect correlation. A high number of responses were either

strongly agree or agree that reflecting on past professional development was a good idea. It was

of note that only 4 of the participants were neutral on this subject. The very strong correlation

was indicative of the need for educators to enhance their classroom efficacy.

Additional Quantitative Data: Gender Responses. During survey data collection, the

researcher looked at the responses from the views expressed by the male and female respondents.

The rationale was a simple one; was there a difference in the perception of quality professional

development dependent upon gender? The responses were gathered from the Likert-Type survey

questions 11-26 and were answered the same by both female and male respondents with the

exception of the three indicated responses.

Data indicated that responses by both genders were consistent with the exception of three

questions; one of which was number 14 which asked if the district always sent the educator to

content specific PD. The responses from that question indicated that 74 percent of the female

respondents believed that the district sent them to specific professional development events while

only 7.5 percent of the males had that perception. The difference between 74 percent and 7.5

percent may be a cause for concern for school districts. The male perception was that they

seldom attended content specific professional development.

Another question that was inconsistent between genders was number 18: I am satisfied

with the type and amount of PD I attend. Responses indicated that 55.5 percent of the female

respondents were not satisfied with the professional development they received. The responses

from the male respondents were different. The males indicated that only 23.1 percent were

dissatisfied with amount and type of professional development they attended.

The final question that appeared to be different in the responses was number 23: when

attending PD I should pick the best and be on time. For this question, the responses were as

follows: 81.5 percent of the females indicated they agreed or strongly agreed, and 92.3 percent of

males agreed or strongly agreed that they should pick the best professional development and be

on time for the event. Though the differences in these two percentages were subtle, the

interesting responses were those of the male participants. The male participants indicated in

question 14 they seldom attended content specific professional development, but they had the

desire to pick quality professional development and be on time at the events they did attend. The

researcher used the Mann-Whitney U Test to indicate whether there was a statistically significant

difference in the data from the three questions.

The Mann-Whitney U-Test, also known as the Mann-Whitney-Wilcoxon (MWW) or

Wilcoxon Rank-Sum Test, is a non-parametric test that is used in order to overcome the

assumption of normality in a parametric test (Dr. S. Huang, Assistant Professor of Mathematics,

University of Arkansas Fort Smith, personal communication, October, 2014). General

assumptions regarding the populations being studied are used in these tests. Unlike the t-test

which is a counterpart to the Mann-Whitney U-test, this test makes no assumption that the

difference between the samples is normally distributed, or that the two populations vary. With

such a small sample the t-test could reveal an unreliable statistic because the data may be skewed

by the small size of the populations. When validity of the assumptions is a problem, and the t-

test results are questionable, the Mann-Whitney U-Test is a good choice. The logic is simple,

since the Mann-Whitney U-Test tests if two samples are drawn from like populations, it does not

depend on a normal distribution like the t-test does for accuracy (Dr. S. Huang).

After computing the data from these three questions through the Mann-Whitney U-Test

with SPSS software, only one question, number 14 (significance .000) was shown to have any

significance in the responses between males and females. The other two questions, 18

(significance .100) and 23 (significance .500) were shown to have no significance between the

responses. The computing of this statistic validated the researcher's assumption regarding the

significance of these sets of data.

Research Question One

How do selected educators define quality professional development?

Survey Data – Career Development

Surveys and interviews conducted during this research were important to the outcome. Because this was a mixed-methods study, where the qualitative research portion was expected to hold the most personal information from participants regarding their perceptions regarding quality professional development, these findings sections, beginning with question one allowed the researcher to identify through the words of the participants their exact perceptions.

Several questions asked during the survey phase of the research were important in answering research question one (see Table 7). From data included in Table 4, educators indicated the need for quality content driven and well delivered professional development. Ninety-seven and one half percent (97.5%) of the surveys indicated the need to find the best available professional development; while 100 percent of those surveyed strongly agreed or agreed that they needed to pick the best professional development available. The need for new and innovative delivery techniques is evident in that 57.5 percent of those surveyed felt they were not satisfied with the professional development they had received or were neutral in their feeling toward professional development received. Survey participants (80%) indicated that they either strongly agreed or agreed that quality professional development was essential for student learning. The participants also indicated the need for reflection and rating of the professional development taken (92.5%).

Interview participants had similar responses to this question. It was evident that a wide majority of the responses 15 indicated that they wanted and needed a hands-on approach to the trainings and that those trainings be led by experts in the content area. The other 2 participants

wanted group activities in their content areas that engaged the entire workshop audience; also led

by an expert or specialist in the content area.

Table 7

Research Question One: Responses from the Survey (n=40)

Survey Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13. When attending PD, I try to find the best available to increase my classroom efficacy.	22	17	1	0	0
20. I am satisfied with the type and amount of PD I attend.	4	13	8	10	5
21. Most teachers understand the need for quality PD.	10	18	7	5	0
22. Most of the PD I attend is just a waste of time.	2	16	8	12	2
23. Quality educator PD is essential for maximizing student learning.	15	17	5	2	1
25. When attending PD I should pick the best and be on time.	27	13	0	0	0
26. I should always rate how the PD may or may not enhance my classroom efficacy.	17	20	3	0	0

Interview Data

Interview participants indicated in several ways that they did not always like the content

and delivery of the professional development that they received. Interviewed educators indicated

that professional development opportunities should offer the adult learner the ability to receive a

portion of learning that is content rich and delivered in such a fashion as to peak the learning

curve for that individual learner.

In addition to the survey questions, the interviews appeared to be complimented by the survey results. Seventeen educators were interviewed; of those 17, 16 participants, indicated they did not receive quality professional development more than 50 percent of the time (see Figure 19). They also indicated that as low as 10 percent was useful (2 participants) to a high of 80 percent (one participant) was what they considered quality. When the one participant was asked why their professional development was at such a high quality, the response was that the professional development they received was very specific and content rich Advanced Placement (AP) training. Advanced placement training is five full days of 6-8 hours per day of content specific professional development in certain core content areas.

Figure 19. Identified quality professional development attended from interviews. (n=17)
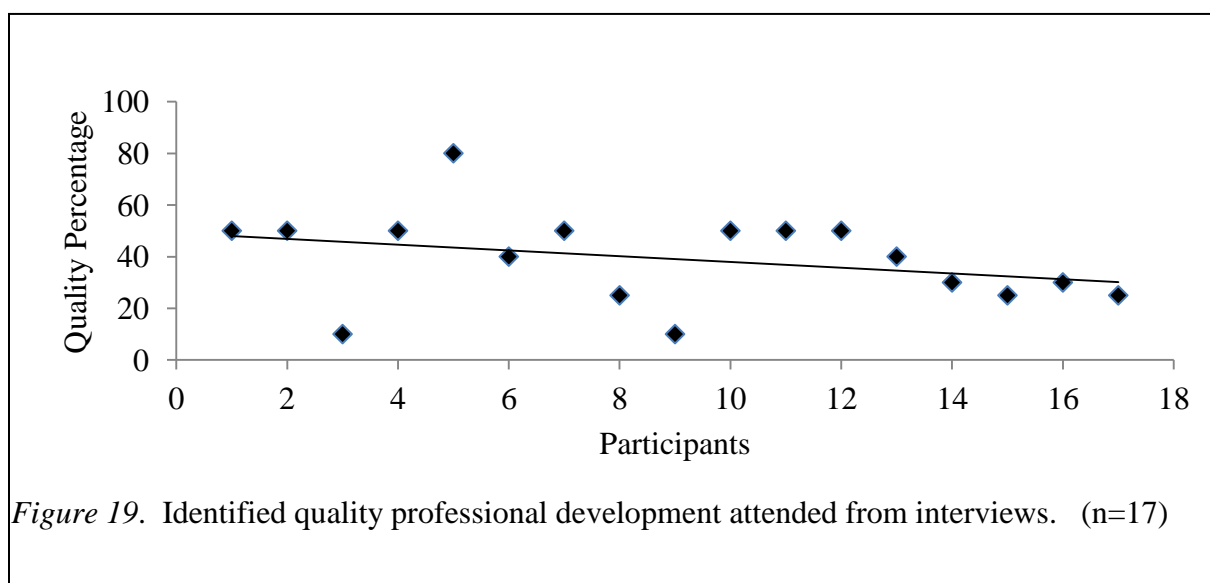
All 17 participants indicated they would like to see professional development that was delivered in such a fashion as to engage all teachers in every area of development. Four participants indicated that quality professional development was difficult to receive in areas like counseling, library media, and foreign languages. When asked why, they indicated a shortage of experienced personnel to deliver the needed content. During the interview process participants indicated that content specific professional development was very important to them. Nine

participants indicated that work needed to be done in the area of those who were qualified to offer professional development events. Thirteen participants indicated that too much professional development was offered by those who did not seem to qualify to offer the professional development or were uninterested in delivering quality professional development. Thirteen participants said instead of seeking qualified presenters, school districts or other professional development providers used personnel who lacked expertise in the areas in which they were presenting.

A majority, 14 of those who were interviewed indicated the need for a change in the way professional development was delivered. They indicated that too much time was spent listening to lecture type professional development events instead of allowing the educators an opportunity for hands-on or group work that would better assist them in understanding the learning expectations for the professional development event. It was also noted by 7 participants, the delivery and content needed to be in agreement with the title of the professional development.

All 17 respondents had an idea of what quality professional development was in their estimation. Several respondents had very similar answers, but several also stood out as to what was inferred by the overall majority. Respondent A said: *Well, quality PD is when somebody is talking to you about a lesson and the person that is talking to you is an expert in that field; whatever it might be. In other words they are qualified to talk about that and qualified to give that PD. It is not somebody standing up in front of you reading a PowerPoint presentation who just happens to be giving a professional development on something just because they studied it once or went to one workshop to learn about it. I think it needs to be people who are experts in the field who have a passion for the subject they are presenting.* E said: *Does the PD impact the classroom? If it does not impact my teaching, I will not waste my time taking it.* Also, Respondent C said: *Quality PD is about being able to take the positive things that you learn at*

an in-service and put them into practice in your classroom, whether it was through an immediate

hands-on activity at the event, or whether you are able to come back and take care of it in your

classroom and try to implement it there. P said: *I believe quality PD is when you can relate to*

what the person presenting is saying and will be able to take the content back to my classroom.

B summed up the essence of the question: *Quality PD is if it makes a positive difference in the*

classroom. These responses indicated that the participants truly wanted content specific

professional development that was delivered professionally and made a difference for the

students.

Not only did educators want professional development delivered professionally, but as

Respondent D said: *It is receiving hands-on opportunities to do actual work with groups and*

figure out a group problem. It is not walking into a room and sitting in a chair for six to eight

hours listening to someone talk or read a PowerPoint slide show. Q echoed the idea with:

Please, no more PowerPoint presentations that are read to me. I think anyone presenting a

subject should be able to talk about it, not just read it from a slide. Apparently, the tolerance for

PowerPoint presentation is waning, however, it must be noted that there are good PowerPoint

presentations available; they are just hard to find as these direct comments from participants

brought out.

Participant comments generated from the question; what are professional development

events that have been good indicated that quality professional development can be found in many

venues. Respondent B said: *The Alternative Education Conference is the best PD I ever had; it*

made a positive difference in the alternative education classroom. Respondent D commented:

The best PD I have received has come from the local university. And yet another response about

a technology based professional development event from E: *I love TICAL. They have such great*

breakout sessions. Data from this question verifies the question that will be discussed later

regarding conferences as viable professional development events.   Another type of professional

development is the multiple day seminar event. Respondent A said: *The best quality PD I have*

ever had was when I attended AETN, AP Literature, and AP Language. Respondent I echoed

this thought in his/her interview: *The AP Summer Institute is best because it gave me a lot of*

materials for my classroom. Q said: *Hands on group work presentations at the Coop have*

always been good for me. They offer a wide range of help when you work with other teachers on

issues relevant to the area of your license and expertise. These events lasted up to five days

each at an off-site facility and focused on specific topics of professional development with a

specific audience and experts in each of the disciplines.

As a precursor to the AP training in all AP areas, training in Pre-AP work is also

available to the educator. Respondent G said: *The best I have been to is a Pre-AP summer*

institute at the university. These professional development events were also multiple days and

develop the educator's ability to instruct the Pre-AP class in several disciplines.

In several of the definitions of what quality professional development was to the

educators, several made it a part of their definition to say what quality was not in their opinion.

Understanding what types of professional development that did not meet the professional needs

of the educators was an important step. As was described at the beginning of Chapter One,

professional development just after the initial passage of the ESEA, was a lecture type event that

might or might not meet any need of educators (Guskey, 1995). Super's Theory of Career

Development indicates that educators require adequate opportunities for career development by

developing new skills, and developing a realistic concept of self and the relationship of self and

students (Super, 1980). Mezirow in his Transformational Learning work describes how an adult

worker must be reflective in all areas of learning (Mezirow, 1981). Both Super and Mezirow

teach that not only is the training important throughout life, but reflection on how it affects the

individual is important as well (Mezirow, 1981; Super, 1980). Respondent O summed this idea

up well in his/her definition of quality professional development*: I used to work in the private

sector. I know that the trainings we received then were always pointed toward what we needed

to do in our job. It was always brought back to the workplace. Being in education is not quite

like that. Many of the things you receive at a PD event are usable, but not mandatory; you have

to reflect on what you have learned so what you use is good for the classroom and students.

That will probably change with common core coming in over the course of the next few years. I

think there will be more and more mandated material that an educator will have to bring back to

their classroom in order to have sufficient evidence that the SLE or other expectation is being

covered in the content area. Mandated PD will not allow for very much reflection.*

The scheduling of professional development either by the educator or the district which

employs them was important because research into what was available before it was scheduled

allowed the educator to attend the best suited training available. The collaboration between

peers and administrators was an important step in this process. Respondent O captured the

essence of the need to schedule quality professional development: *It is my hope that all

educators have the ability to schedule and receive quality PD from a reliable source. I cannot

imagine spending good time for a bad product. In our personal lives, we would take back

whatever is bad…as far as PD goes, you cannot take back bad PD. We just need to make sure

what we schedule to attend is quality from the beginning.* The scheduling of quality professional

development must be undertaken to assure continuity between what is taken and the expectations

that the districts have for their employees (Hawley & Valli, 1999).

Discussion of Research Question One

It has been identified that most adults learn in order to make sense of the changes in their

lives (Aslanian, 2001); educators are no different. Quality professional development is

especially essential to educators with the creation and implementation of TESS and CCSS in public schools in Arkansas. Reflection was a great way to recreate the best and worst parts of professional development events and give feedback in order to make the professional development event better the next time (Dr. M. B. Gunter, Graduate Dean, Arkansas Tech University, personal communication, May, 2010).

According to these participants professional development with unusual or fluffy titles was not always content specific; these unusual titles made it difficult for educators to pick quality professional development (Belzer, 2005). Since attending quality professional development and picking quality professional development was indicated by those interviewed as very important, the titling of the professional development events should have been done so that the educator and/or administrator of the district could identify the true content of the professional development (Choy et al., 2006).

When answering the questions connected to research question one, participants in the interview portion of the research had varying personal ideas about quality professional development. It was indicated by the majority of their responses that critical work needed to be undertaken to assure that all educators received the highest quality professional development available (Danielson, 2011). It should be noted here that content and delivery of content specific professional development were major points brought up by many of the participants as being important factors in the presentation of quality professional development. Participants in the survey portion of the research had similar reactions to questions about this research question.

When answering the seven questions related to research question one, the survey participants indicated that not only was picking the best professional development important but collaborating with their colleagues and building administrators was also very important in scheduling quality professional development. It was also indicated that educators need to reflect

on attended professional development afterword and rate the effectiveness of it for their

classroom (Danielson, 2011; Dr. M. B. Gunter, Graduate Dean, Arkansas Tech University,

personal communication, May, 2010).

Respondents in the 17 interviews indicated as low as 10 percent and as high as 80 percent

their attitude toward the presentation of quality professional development they had previously

attended. These answers were outliers and well outside the line of best fit in the regression

graph. The mean of the responses was 39.1 percent. This average of the response data for this

question appeared to indicate that participants believed they had not received a consistent level

of helpful, interesting, insightful, or meaningful professional development as Volante et al.

(2008), indicated as an important addition to educator's classroom efficacy.

Research Question Two

What issues have selected educators identified with current and past professional

development?

Survey Data – Career Development

Participants of the survey indicated that content and delivery methods must be addressed

in order to allow professional development to be offered in a quality setting and with quality

content. Several questions included in the survey addressed this problem. Questions listed in

Table 8 identified those areas that were important to the educators surveyed.

Survey results indicated 97.5 percent of the participants felt that professional

development needed to be offered to better prepare their performance in the workplace.

Participants (55%) also indicated that interacting with colleagues in picking and reflecting on

professional development was important to them.

When asked if professional development policies were too strict, respondents were split

on how they felt about those policies with 47.5 percent indicating they were too strict, 30 percent

disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were too strict with 22.5 percent neutral on the subject.

When asked if they consulted their administration regarding other professional

development events, respondents to the survey indicated that only 57.5 percent talked to their

administration on this subject. It is believed by those respondents that this percentage will

increase over the next two or three years because of the inception of TESS and CCSS. In order

for teachers in the education workplace to understand the depth and breadth of these two

programs, respondents indicated they believed help from administrators would increase by 20 to

30 percent as these programs were implemented.

Table 8

Research Question Two: Responses from the Survey (n=40)

Question Number	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. A student's job is to so they will ready themselves for the workplace.	29	10	1	0	0
16. I talk to other educators in my PLC about the PD I have taken.	7	15	10	8	0
18. Policies regarding PD attendance are too strict and provide little flexibility.	3	16	9	9	3
19. Attending district mandated PD opportunities makes me feel challenged.	1	8	8	18	5
24. When picking quality PD, I should consult my building administrator and colleagues.	6	17	8	7	2

Interview Data

According to all participants in the interviews; at the beginning of each school year local districts provided a certain number of professional development hours for the faculty and staff. These provided hours were the ones most mandated by state regulation (Dr. M. Dickerson, Superintendent, Van Buren Public Schools, personal communication, January, 2012). Professional development in areas such as parent involvement, bullying, and professional ethics are just a few of those that districts provided to their staff and faculty (Dr. M.B. Gunter, Graduate Dean, Arkansas Tech University, personal communication, May, 2012). Those hours were provided by the local district, however, educators did consult their districts in order to sign up for and attend other professional development events.

Results from the interviews were very similar to the results gathered in the survey for research question two. Gathered interview data indicated a vast majority 16 of the respondents believed that delivery of professional development events was important to the recipient. Also, 15 of those interviewed believed that careful selection and reflection of professional development wais crucial to their continuing workplace learning. Interview participants had varying answers when asked if they thought district mandated professional development was important to their learning; however, 9 of the responses were either neutral or negative as to the type and usefulness of this form of professional development.

Yearly mandated professional development, which recently has been retooled to professional development events required only every four years on a revolving basis, has been difficult for districts to provide with content that was acceptable. Interview responses indicated that the majority 16 of the participants believed this mandated professional development was not only a waste of their time but also the time and valuable resources from the district as well. When asked follow-up questions regarding their feeling regarding this type of professional

development wasting their time and the time and resources of the district, the majority 15 of the

participants responded that because it was offered so often, no one listened to it anymore. This is

one of the reasons that this type of professional development has been moved to be offered every

four years instead of annually (Dr. T. Kimbrell, Arkansas Commissioner of Education, personal

communication, January 2013).

Mandated professional development offered by the local districts at the beginning of each

school year will be changing with the new rules and regulations regarding how the professional

development will be offered (i.e. every four years). More and more educators will be looking to

their administration for assistance in finding and attending quality professional development.

During data collection in the interview phase of this research it was noted that a majority 13 of

those interviewed received help in setting up and attending professional development workshops

not only during the summer months but during the school year as well. When asked for rationale

for their answers, the interviewees 16 answered that common core standards and the new

educator evaluation system (TESS) would play a major role in how they as educators received

help from the administration and school district in finding relevant quality professional

development.

The respondents in this study had definite attitudes toward the type and style of

professional development they attended. They also had definite attitudes toward issues that were

present in attended professional development. As indicated in research question one findings, a

definite issue with professional development attended was the large number of PowerPoint

presentations as well as lecture type events where the presenter is not an expert or specialist in

the content area.

Observations like those of Respondent A and Respondent D at the beginning of those

findings give insight into issues that seem to plague the professional development industry.

Respondent A added a very poor professional development event they had attended: *The very worst I have ever been to was where a guy taught a class on some kind of technology. I don't even remember the name of it. It was not going to be useful to me as far as practicing its use afterward. And I don't think he knew what he was doing; and so he made mistakes and people had to correct him, and that probably was the longest, most boring PD I have ever had.* The issue of competent presenters is one that continuously came up during the interviews. Respondent I said: *When you are unable to get anything out of PD because the person presenting does not have command of the content, there is nothing to chew on in the entire presentation.* In another interview, Respondent Q said: *If the person conducting the PD does not present the content in a way that is understandable, useful information cannot be gathered and cannot be transferred to the students to make their educational experience the best it can be.*

Other issues with the way professional development was delivered made it difficult for the educators to obtain quality training. Respondent I said: *Spending time on the disaggregation of Common Core sample data that I have never looked at in two years has been a waste of time.* The idea behind disaggregating data was a good one; it gives the educator an opportunity to understand where the students were struggling within the confines of the tested material. The CCSS testing as of this writing has only been field tested in the secondary schools. It is critical for the educator to know what to expect as the new standards are rolled out in both CCSS, but using valuable professional development time on items that have not been looked at in two years appears not to be the best use of the training time. In another instance Respondent F replied: *I have used a lot of what I have learned in quality PD in my classroom, but not so much the PD from what I would consider poorly delivered PD.* Poorly delivered or content deficient professional development seemed to be a major issue. K observed the following: *Obviously the content and delivery of the professional development we are receiving is not working.* Again

Respondent I: *I do not mind PD being required, but I want it to be something that I can come back and use. I do not like to sit and listen to someone read from a Power Point to me because you wind up tuning it out, and it is just not a good use of your time. You are thinking, 'Man, I could be in my classroom doing so much stuff, other than sitting here listening to this guy read to me.'*

Yet another issue that was detrimental to quality professional development was the lack of district support in the development of not only a schedule of summer professional development for the educator, but a lack of content rich pre-service training at the district level. M said: *We go and listen to an update on state laws, we listen to an update on mostly the legal aspects of teaching that we could read in a Commissioner's Memo if someone would figure out a way we could somehow get those memos every day. Anytime you tell a bunch of teachers something is mandatory every year, they are going to groan and say oh no.* P concluded in his/her opinion: *The district did not help much at all in my planning of PD opportunities.* Respondent D echoed the same idea: *The district is not much help, but they do approve the PD I want to take.* K stated: *My biggest thing is that administrators will not listen to teachers regarding what teachers really need for their PD in a year. If the teachers have a plan, many times the administration says, "Oh, we do not want to do that," or "We are not going to do that this year." If they do not solicit ideas from their teachers, how are they going to know what is going on the classrooms?*

The need for better district/employee collaboration in planning and scheduling professional development should not be a difficult task since the majority (57.5%) of the participants indicated that they have no problem talking to the administration about their professional development needs so working closely with their districts in order to achieve the best schedule of trainings they can schedule should not be difficult. However, if the district does

not take an active role in the development of employee professional development, they are missing opportunities to assist their employees in finding and scheduling training that will be not only helpful, but essential to the educator's needs. Respondent N: *The thing that I thought about in the past is that if every teacher could be honest with themselves about their strengths and weaknesses, and then be honest with their administration; and every teacher had a meeting sometime before the end of the school year with their administration discussing their strengths and weaknesses, then they and their administration could come up with a really good plan for their PD for the coming year.*

Discussion of Research Question Two

As indicated, problems existed with the delivery and content of professional development. Interview participants indicated that professional development needs to have content and delivery that will help them learn for the workplace. This confirms what Volante et al. (2008) found in their research.

Professional development policies vary from workplace to workplace as indicated in the experiential learning research completed by Dean, et al (2000). In addition to local policies, many professions have state policies that also mandate the type and amount of professional development taken by participants (Belzer, 2005). The education workplace is no different; local and state policies abound for professional development. New state policies and regulations for Arkansas educators are being implemented during fall of 2014 and spring of 2015; how educators will react to these mandates is still to be seen.

The 39.1 percent mean response of the interview respondents indicated in research question one discussion regarding quality professional development lead directly into the summary of research question two, issues educators had with professional development. Educators must engage in a specified number of professional development hours each year and

those hours must include the mandated hours as well as hours chosen either by the educator or

the employing district for attendance (Arkansas Department of Education, Licensure Rules,

2012). Issues educators had with professional development included poor content, poor delivery,

as well a combination of the two. These same issues were of note in the research conducted by

Bryant-Shanklin & Brumage (2011). Quality professional development seemed to be possible

with specific content and delivery completed in a professional fashion by experts and/or

specialists in the identified subject. Many professional development opportunities are attended

through Arkansas IDEAS and other high quality on-line professional development events

conducted by ASCD or the like (Arkansas Department of Education, Rules Governing

Professional Development, 2012)

Other issues seemed to be problems with CCSS and TESS implementation and the roll

out of the rules and regulations for both of these (Arkansas Department of Education, Standards

Assurance Rules, 2013). Additionally, content of professional development in these two areas

has been such that educators have not been able to consistently gain positive understanding of

the expectations that the state and districts have for them (Dr. B. Gooden, Superintendent,

Special School District of Fort Smith, personal communication, October, 2013). This issue may

subside as the full roll out of these programs is completed in fall 2015.

<div align="center">**Research Question Three**</div>

What would selected educators like their professional development to be?

Survey Data – Career Development

The survey responses to the third research question were an important part of the overall

research in identifying quality professional development. Four questions contained in the survey

were associated with this research question (see Table 9).

Table 9

Research Question Three: Responses to the Survey (n=40)

Question Number	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. An educator's job is to deliver effective content based instruction.	26	12	2	0	0
14. My district always sends me to content specific PD.	6	15	10	8	0
15. I talk to other educators in my content area about the PD I have attended.	10	23	3	4	0
17. When talking PD with my building principal, I feel uneasy revealing my PD needs.	0	3	5	15	17

Survey questions asked specific questions regarding attitudes of the participants toward professional development they have received and the process of professional development occurring for them. A majority (95%) of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that their job is to provide effective content to their students. In order for them to have the ability to provide effective content, they must be trained in the latest types of classroom strategies so they are able to provide the best to their students. Effective content for the educator transitions to effective content for the student (Danielson, 2011). The same can be expected when an educator is obtaining professional development. According to participants, content supplied by the instructor needs to be such that the trainee will take the best information possible back to the workplace with them. The content and delivery therefore are important points to cover in the research to understand the attitude of the educator and their need for their perceived professional development needs.

It is also interesting to see that only about half (52.5%) of respondents said their district sent them to quality professional development. Respondents to this question said it is important

that educator training be tied to not only classroom needs, but district mandates such as the new educator evaluation system (Danielson, 2011). The need for districts to quantify teacher effectiveness is another reason professional development must be content driven (Danielson).

Quantifying professional development for the educator can be accomplished through the use of collaboration between educators in the same grade level or department area. The professional development collaboration was measured in this research by looking at the total responses from the survey question regarding whether the educators discuss professional development needs with other educators in their content or grade area. It was reported by 82.5 percent of the participants that they did some collaboration with co-workers when selecting professional development to attend. In this day and time of PLCs in many districts it was worth noting that there were still 17.5 percent of the respondents that did not consider collaboration important. Talking with co-workers was not the only way of collaborating with others to select quality professional development.

Supervisors can also help shape a strong professional development schedule for an educator. When asked if speaking to their building principal made them feel uneasy, 80 percent of the respondents said overwhelmingly that those types of discussions with principals did not concern them.

Interview Data

Overall responses from the interviews indicated similar attitudes. Fourteen interview participants indicated they regularly communicate with their supervisor regarding the type and scope of the professional development they attend. This number is supported in the interview research with fifteen participants stating their supervising principal assisted or guided them in their decision on the professional development they would take in any given year. These

numbers indicated that the educators and their principals were in at least limited conversation to assure a baseline of professional development scheduled.

All 17 of the interview participants were aware of the total number of professional development hours required in a school year and when that year starts. When asked about the mandated professional development the participants, 16 were almost in unanimous agreement that this type of training is not interesting to them. Respondents noted that mandated hours have been rearranged and redirected into the afore mentioned four year cycle of professional development and that cycle has not yet begun (in earnest), so it will be four years before actual data can be collected on the changeover.

There were mixed attitudes when asked how professional development strategies were brought back into the workplace. Respondents were split almost in half with 9 stating they either did not or could not bring training back to their classroom from professional development offerings they had attended. Twelve persons indicated they would bring strategies back if and when they were relevant to their classroom needs and could increase their classroom efficacy. All 17 of the educators said common core strategies need to be highlighted in the trainings and brought back to the workplace with the rollout of the CCSS this year, but 6 indicated that they have yet to see adequate professional development on this subject.

When asked about the delivery of professional development, a majority, 15 of those interviewed indicated that they would like to see a hands-on approach to training, especially in the areas that affect their main focus; their content. The other 2 participants wanted group activities in non-content areas that engaged the entire workshop. When questioned about entire workshops, those interviewed stated they were extended workshops that covered five days and four nights at an off-site facility. In both circumstances the workshops were delivered by highly qualified industry experts.

When asked how professional development would look if they conducted an event; all (100%) participants indicated they would like to see fewer or no six hour PowerPoint presentations where they sat and received information usually read off the PowerPoint slides. All respondents indicated regardless the number of hours of professional development; lecture type, no involvement, training did not peak their interest in any subject.

Research question one and two asked about quality professional development and issues getting quality training. Research question three asks about how the educators would like their professional development to look. Throughout this study, both in the survey and the interview, participants indicated that quality content and quality delivery methods are important factors for the educator's ability to receive quality training. Respondent N: *I would like to produce PD that would guide a teacher to use technology in the classroom...more hands-on, where participants are able to produce technology based ideas to help them understand better classroom ideas and better lessons. I would let the participants work together and with something that they can apply to their classroom.* Hands-on learning is one of the things kinesthetic learners did in order to connect with a concept; a hands-on approach has been spoken to by several of the participants. P added: *Definitely it would have to be a hands-on approach to teaching. Whether it is content specific or not, I would provide relevant information on the subject.* Q stated: *Group work would be the cornerstone of my presentation. The teachers present would be engaged in group work and group projects from start to finish. Hopefully, they would be able to take back many ideas to incorporate into their classrooms.* It appeared from the data sets received that not one of the participants wanted any length professional development event to include sitting and listening to either a person with little or no concrete knowledge in the content delivered and especially the did not want to be read to from a PowerPoint presentation. Respondent L highlighted this concern when they said: *It would definitely NOT be with a whole herd of*

PowerPoint slides. The reality is if you are presenting a sixty or seventy slide PowerPoint presentation, you lost your audience before you started…or three hours ago. They are not listening to you anymore. There were several other ways in which the participants looked for ways to provide quality training. Even though one of the delimitations of this study was that only secondary licensed educators would be approached to participate, many of the responses included all district personnel. F stated: *My PD session would be with speakers that are experts in their content or subject area. The audience would be faculty and staff district wide.* B echoed this need: *For this particular location, it would be instructional strategies taught by experts from the State or Coop and the audience would be all teachers in the district…we so desperately need this type of development.*

The hours and types of training already received appeared to have a bearing on what the participants believed professional development should look like in the future. Respondent I, when interviewed said: *I need to attend PD on the planning side of common core. I need someone to say to me, "This is what Common Core is going to look like." Then proceed to show me how to implement it. I need to be focused on how Common Core works in the classroom before I try to fill out the paperwork that must be done to document the classroom work.* Respondent B appeared to have put this idea of future professional development in context when they were interviewed: *Now with Common Core coming in, where it seems to be taking up all of my time; do I want to take 60 hours on Common Core, or do I really want to attend other things I would really like to go to?* This is a common conundrum for educators. Many times the newest workplace ideas are the ones that everyone has to focus on in their quest for training. The same is true for TESS competencies. These trainings are mandatory so the educators will be able to understand how the new evaluation and observation program will be initiated and what part they must play in order for it to be successful (Danielson, 2011).

Part of the presentation issues in professional development were the number of hours educators were required to receive each year. All 17 participants indicated they received at least the minimum number of hours required (60) each year (Arkansas Department of Education, Rules Governing Professional Development, 2012). Responses range from a low of 65 hours to a high of 150 hours per year (see Figure 20). The average number of hours attended by all respondents was 88. Several like Respondent N lamented: *I usually receive 65 hours; sometimes it is a struggle to get that many.* Or as P said: *I get right at 65 hours every year; I do not like it, but I get them.* While others like Respondent J stated: *150 hours, that is about average for me.* Respondent A said: *I usually get well over 120 hours, but I stop writing them down after I get that many…I should probably write all of them down and surprise myself.* B said: *I get about 100 hours every year that I write down, I probably get another 30 or 40 that I just forget to document. Having 100 hours of documented PD is a satisfactory number for me.*

Figure 20. Number of professional development hours per year per participant.   (n=17)
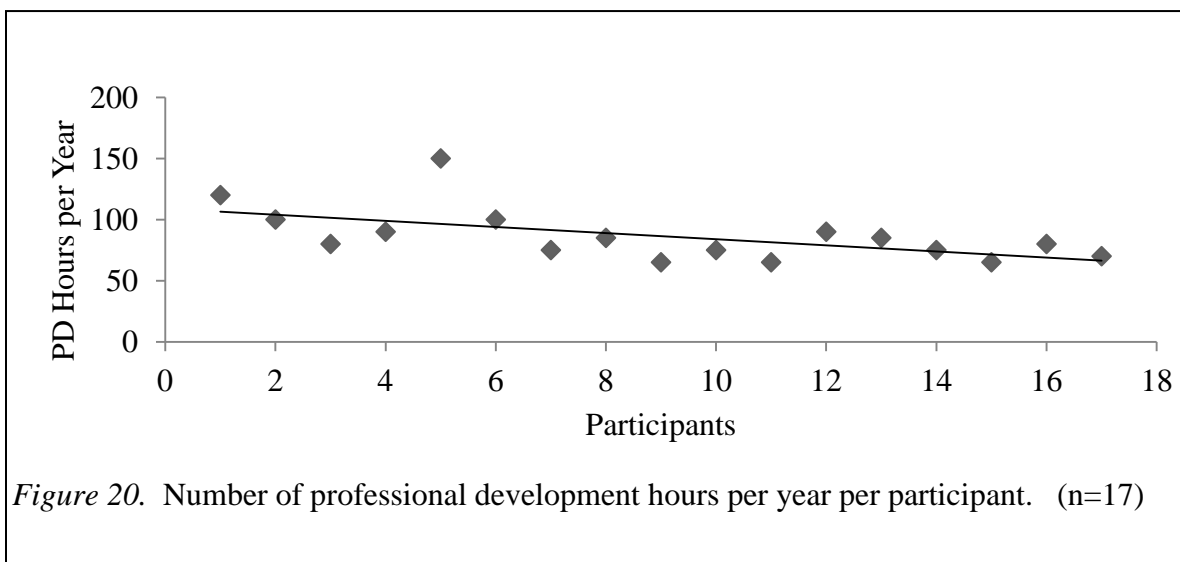
Discussion of Research Question Three

Professional development was important to educators in that each educator had a specific need when it comes to training (Dean et al., 2000). Core content educators (those teaching math,

science, social studies, and English) had specified needs so that the training they receive would translate into positive classroom efficacy for their students (Galbraith & Zelenak, 1989). Non-core educators had similar needs in order to assist the core content educators, but they also had course specific needs in their content area (e.g., agriculture, business, and family and consumer sciences). Responses to the four questions in this area of the interview indicated that the participants wanted content rich training that was hands-on and not presented as a sit and get type of event; which is in agreement with the research conducted by Karimi (2011).

As was heard during the majority of the interviews, educators were tired of PowerPoint technology when it pertained to sit down, hours long training (Guskey, 1995). Too many times professional development events filled with PowerPoint type content bored the audience into a state of not being able to understand the reasoning behind the training, which in turn stifled the ability of the learner to readily accept the precepts of the professional development (Belzer, 2005).

Participants indicated they wanted to able to collaborate with their peers in order to create the best possible schedule for their professional development. That collaboration extended to the district as well. Educators did not appear to have trouble talking to their superiors about professional development needs, nor did they have a problem with the district administration helping them to form a cohesive schedule of training tailored to them or to a group of educators in the same content area, department, or grade level (Ostashewski, Moisey, & Reid, 2011).

Adult learning, regardless of whether it was undertaken from the view point of Super, Mezirow, or Kolb, was experience based learning culminating in the educator's ability to affect positive change in their professional growth and development (Kolb, 1976). It appeared that the participants of the interview phase of this study were truly interested in increasing their learning through experienced based, hands-on professional development opportunities at both the local

district and regional level with the occasional training that was extended in a specific content area (Prusaczyk & Baker, 2011).

Additional Qualitative Data

During the course of the interview phase of the study, several of the participants were very interested in this study and how they might help to increase the validity of the data shared. Respondents A, B, E, G, N, P, and Q answered additional questions about their professional development past and future in 30 minute follow-up interviews. In the course of receiving this additional information a pattern formed regarding how each educator viewed present state rules regarding their training especially with the advent of TESS and CCSS just on the horizon.

Through asking additional questions of these seven individuals, the researcher found some interesting similarities in attitudes. These seven individuals had been given the opportunity by their respective districts to attend extended workshops in several areas as previously reported. What was important to this study was the following information gleaned from those additional conversations in follow-up interviews conducted as a result of the initial interview. Information recorded was gathered immediately after the initial interview on subsequent days.

This data were collected during the follow-up questions, in the 30 minute interviews, regarding these extended workshop events offered off-site and that required over-night stays to complete the workshop. Some of them were three days in length, but the majority, 4 were five days in length. The most attended of any of the workshops were the Summer AP Institutes offered at several universities in the area. The participants attended the following AP events; AP English Literature, AP English Language, AP Statistics, and AP United States History. One person had an additional five day workshop at AETN for technology advancement as well as the AP trainings they attended in English. One person attended the three day Pre-AP training, one attended a three day alternative education conference, several attended a two day Ruby Payne

workshop on poverty, and one attended the three day TICAL conference (technology based

consortium of educators and administrators that meet annually in February for the purpose of

sharing information on technology).

All participants indicated they would return to these workshop forums again and again.

The over-riding reason for their interest in these types of professional development events was

that they were not only hands-on, but these events challenged them to be at their best from start

to finish. The five day events even included home work that had to be completed for the next

day's session. All seven of these individuals had great things to say about the professional

development they attended in these configurations. Respondent E replied: *I love TICAL. They*

have such great breakout sessions. Others indicated: *The best quality PD I have ever had was*

when I attended an AETN five day workshop and when I attended AP Literature and AP

Language. And: *The best I have been to is a Pre-AP summer institute at the university five years*

ago. Also: *The Alternative Education Conference is the best PD I ever attended.* The shortest of

these extended professional development events was the Ruby Payne event on poverty. Several

years ago educators began attending this workshop and it has been offered several times each

year. Comments from those who mentioned this event were always positive like Q who said:

One of the best I have attended is the Ruby Payne workshop on poverty. It gave me useable

insights and strategies for my classroom and helped me formulate ways to interact with all my

students regardless of their socio-economic status. Those extended workshop events were self-

defined by Respondent B as: *The Arkansas Association of Alternative Educators is the entity*

that puts on the alternative education (ALE) *convention and they do an excellent job. They give*

you up to date information regarding best practices in ALE and strategies in how to help all

students adapt to a good work ethic and society as they grow up. After all, servicing student

educational needs and helping them succeed is one of our main jobs. The point made by B in

reference to helping all students was one of the tenants of all educators; each worker needs all the training they can get in these areas (Guskey, 2009). Those extended workshop and conference opportunities have been good for these individuals. These additional interviews resulted in all seven interviewees rating those extended workshops as providing information and practices they were able to use in their classrooms

Extended workshop and conference opportunities were not usual professional development events (Barton et al., 2011). Usually, an educator must seek out this type of offering in order to have the ability to attend. Educators finding this type of professional development event were not used extensively by districts because of the extra cost of room and board associated with them. They were, however, as the data indicates, a very good way for the educator to obtain quality professional development that was transferrable to the classroom and ultimately to the students as was indicated in the work done by Hawley and Valli (1999).

Figure 21 was a representation of the integrated data from the qualitative and quantitative data collected during the study. This representation was envisioned to help the reader understand the data sets received from the mixed-methods data collection. The three theorists that were a part of the conceptual framework of this study were included in the center of the graphic; it was envisioned that the data sets retrieved would be encased around the work of the theorists. The data found in the circles outside the theorists circle are the words and phrases retrieved from the survey as well as words and phrases retrieved from the interviews. The inner two circles that held the data from the qualitative and quantitative were added together in the outer circle to show the integration of the data sets and how in many ways they were similar.

The quantitative data included in the graphic was retrieved from the Likert-Type survey questions that were asked of all 40 participants. These were the most often found in the strongly agree and agree sections of the questions. The qualitative data were the words and phrases most

duplicated in the 17 participants answers to the questions. The flow of the words and phrases

can be followed in the table included in Appendix E.

Qualitative Data

Quantitative Data

Integrated Data Results

PD Facilitation

Quality Learning Experiences

Collaboration

Reflection

Collaboration

Learning Experiences

On-The-Job Learning

Professional Development

PD Facilitation

PD Availability

Reflection

Quality Learning Experiences

On The Job Learning

Professional Development Availability

Professional Development

PD Availability

Extended Workshops

PD Facilitation

Reflection

Quality Learning Experiences

PD Availability

Career Development

Extended Workshops

Extended Workshop Events

Career Development

Super's Theory (1963, 1980, 1981, 1990)
Exploration Stage
Establishment Stage
Maintenance Stage
Decline Stage

Mezirow's Theory (1981, 1985, 1990, 2000)
Reflective Practitioner
Sustainable Outlook
Open-Mindedness
Critical Thinking Skills
Change Agent

Kolb's Theory (1976, 1984)
Planning and Involvement (Experience)
Internalization (Observation)
Reflection and Generalization (Conceptualization)
Application and Follow-up (Experimentation)

Figure 21. Results from qualitative and quantitative data which relate to the theories that
influence the concept of workplace professional development.

Chapter Five

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Presently, educators seem to be lacking in their satisfaction of the professional development they are receiving. Professional development is important to the well-being of all educators and to the success of students in those classrooms where educators have been afforded good quality professional development opportunities (Barton et al., 2011). Without quality professional development, classroom efficacy may be diminished, and student success will probably decrease.

Examining attitudes of educators toward quality professional development caused the researcher to ask questions regarding how educators defined quality professional development, perceived the need for quality professional development, and also how they collaborated with peers and supervisors to create a positive experience each time they attended a professional development event.

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of a selected group of Arkansas educators regarding professional development. The research questions were:

1. How do selected educators define quality professional development?

2. What issues have selected educators identified with current and past professional development?

3. What would selected educators like their professional development to be?

Educators need quality professional development to build on Super's Theory of Career Development. As educators move from Exploration to Establishment and then to Maintenance stages of his theory, they require adequate opportunities for career development by developing new skills, and developing a realistic concept of self and the relationship of self and students (Super, 1963, 1980, 1981). Super's theory has proven to be a good choice in this study because

research was conducted with educators who indicated their understanding of professional

development guidelines for educators; some of whom had less than five years' experience in

education, some from five to ten years of experience, and even others with more than ten years

of experience. These educator career milestones fit directly into Super's theory at the stages

indicated above. The educators with fewer than five years' experience fall into the Exploration

Stage, those in the years five to ten fall into the Establishment Stage, and those with more than

ten years' experience falling into the Maintenance Stage (Super, 1980). As Super's stages were

researched, it was found that individuals in these three listed stages were learners, opportunistic,

worked to make career positions secure, readily developed new skills, and learned to understand

their personal limitations. In addition, Super's Theory had a direct implication in this study in

that he suggests that direct work experiences are important in the workplace (Super, 1984).

This study also considered the relationships between educators and their abilities as they

progressed through Mezirow's Transformational Learning Theory (2000), which enables the

worker (or learner) to reflect not only on information received during training, but in their career

experiences as well. It helps the training participant to have an open-mind toward the training

and career development opportunities that are available through the information contained within

the content of the professional development received. Mezirow's (2000) work in

transformational learning indicates that adult learners change their perspective about learning

and are change agents of their changing frames of reference. Mezirow's Transformational

Learning Theory (2000) also points toward workers and learners adjusting to become reflective

practitioners and learning how those reflections can be of help in making workers and learners

more effective through training for their schooling and career.

Kolb's Experiential Learning provides for real world experience to help in the learning

process (1976). The learner uses their experience and/or the experience of the facilitator as a

basis for the way in which they evaluate and reflect on attended professional development. The major areas of this type of learning are: (a) reflection regarding learning, critical analysis of learning and learning synthesis; (b) learners create opportunities for decision making, and content accountability for the results of what has been learned; and (c) opportunities for learners to be engaged in their own learning in several ways.

The researcher collected, disaggregated, coded, and reported the data. Survey questions were disaggregated and reported using scatter plots and Pearson r as the statistical tool. The researcher was responsible for following the IRB protocols. The researcher had direct contact with secondary educators from around the state of Arkansas from years as a public school administrator; hence, collegial relationships with the school superintendents inside and outside the Western Arkansas Educational Service Cooperative allowed the researcher the ease of entry and information sharing/gathering for the purpose of completing this study.

This mixed methods descriptive study integrated both qualitative and quantitative data into a comprehensive overview and analysis of the research questions. Surveys were completed with 40 subjects from two rural school districts located in the region of the Western Arkansas Educational Service Cooperative. Interviews were conducted with 17 subjects from the same districts who also participated in the survey portion.

Educators were notified by their respective principals or superintendents from two rural school districts in Western Arkansas of the researcher's desire to conduct the research in their school district. During the researcher's tenure as a public school administrator, it became evident that administrators should always be concerned about privacy issues for their employees, hence the initial internal notice. Seventeen educators who volunteered from secondary schools in the district were interviewed, and in addition, all qualified educators who consented to participate were given the Likert-Type survey. The educators who volunteered for the interviews

were representative of the overall secondary faculty in the building. The main criteria that the researcher had in the research process were that all the educators interviewed or surveyed had to be fully licensed and have at least two years of classroom teaching experience. All respondents requested a copy of the research paper when completed. They also all said they believed this study was long overdue and needed to be completed.

<div align="center">

Conclusions and Implications

</div>

The conclusions and implications of this study are presented here for each of the three research questions. As the data were disaggregated, coded, and reported; commonalities emerged pertaining to the attitudes of educators regarding their professional development experiences past, present, and future. Likert-Type data complimented and paralleled the interview data.

Research Question One

How do selected educators define quality professional development? This question was the most difficult of all the questions for the participants to answer. Even though the participants seemed to have a good idea what quality professional development was in their minds, it was difficult for them to articulate the definition in concrete terms. Respondents who were interviewed said, *Quality professional development is directly related to delivery, content, opportunity, choices in scheduling, and can always be improved.*

Conclusions for research question one. Super's Theory of Career Development is focused on conceptualizing an individual learner's self-concepts of change oriented professional development opportunities (Super, 1984, 1990). If change is occurring, as it is in Arkansas education, professional development must change to meet the needs of the educators that the change is affecting. This was found to be true in the study as the respondents in both phases (survey and interview) indicated as they advanced through years of experience, they were better

able to define what professional development events would help them remain firmly connected to their jobs, many times **collaborating** with other educators and supervisory personnel to overcome challenges that were seen in education every day. Respondent M said, *This CCSS and TESS implementation is truly messing up how I research and schedule PD. I am not certain PD will fair well as these two programs start in earnest next year.*

Mezirow's Transformational Learning Theory shows the importance of currently adaptable work related experiences for the adult worker and/or adult learner (1978). If the current learning opportunities are not based on **current educator needs**, the training that is offered will not positively affect the way the educators respond to the trainings. Respondent C said, *I need content rich PD. We never seem to get enough well delivered content.*

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory states that experiential learning is learning that brings in and supports real world experience to help in the learning process (1976). The learner uses their experience and/or the experience of the facilitator/presenter as the basis of the learning (Kolb, 1976; Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2000). In research question one; the participant's responses mirrored the idea that real world responses and collaboration with peers and superiors helped when searching for quality trainings to attend. Respondent F spoke to this point well when he/she said, *Real world experience, which CCSS is supposed to be bringing to the classroom needs to be a part of the PD we receive.*

All educators must have the opportunity to not only have quality professional development that is readily available; the professional development also needs to be **timely** and conducted by **specialists** in the content area in order to increase transference of information to the worker. The study also found that participants enumerated ways to make professional development better from their perspective; mainly through quality **extended** professional development events. This was shown to be important to the educators as they plan for

professional development in today's high accountability environment of CCSS, TESS, and high stakes testing.

A majority of the participants indicated that a **hands-on** approach to trainings that included group work, with as little lecture as is necessary, was how they preferred to receive their professional development. A hands-on approach was indicated as well as a need for well presented and content rich trainings. Even if an expert were lecturing, the consensus of the participants was that kinesthetic learning and **group learning** were the best way to provide usable trainings for educators.

Quality professional development was still a difficult event to define; each individual learns a different way. It is important for professional development facilitators to have strategies in place for the proposed learning so that a maximum amount of knowledge can be transferred in a timely fashion.

Implications for practice. Research question one was focused on the definition of **quality** professional development for educators. The researcher, through many years as a public school administrator had personal assumptions regarding how quality professional development needed to be addressed and defined. The researcher did not know, however, the attitudes of other educators and how they would respond to this question. All educators in Arkansas must have a minimum of 60 hours of professional development each year. The **type**, **content**, and **delivery** of the professional development should be offered in a manner that is clear as to content.

The emphasis for quality must be on content and delivery no matter how training events are defined in their title or abstract. Presenters must have consistent rules for presentation that allow for usable understanding of the delivery of the training. These trainings should be

consistently presented regardless of the focus and area of concentration of the professional development.

An additional implication is to make certain all educators are aware of ongoing changes to the professional development rules and regulations. This is vital information for the educator with the advent of **TESS and CCSS** and the **legislative changes** made in 2013 that have made the professional development rules in Arkansas difficult to navigate. As of this writing, educators are uncertain as to the required 36 or 60 hours of professional development each year.

Legislative action in late 2013 changed the mandated hours of professional development to 36 hours but left the total required at 60 hours (Arkansas General Assembly, 2013); very difficult for all educators to understand and seems contradictory to Super's theory that infers the individual adult worker needs to have control over their own learning (1981). Participants agreed these changes in the law and subsequent rules in Arkansas may cause confusion and discontent as educators continue to apply for and attend what they think is **mandated** quality professional development events.

Research Question Two

What issues have selected educators identified with current and past professional development? Respondents who were interviewed said, *Educators receive extensive training before certification, and then are required by state law and their administrators to attend mandated and content specific professional development.*

Conclusions for research question two. Super's (1984, 1990) work indicating that educators must have at least some control of their professional development was evident in research question two. Educators need to be **reflective practitioners** in all areas of their employment, including the evaluation, rating, and feedback they create when reflecting on professional development and the issues they have had attending past events. Super (1963)

stated that employees need to affect positive change in their attended professional development events. The only way to affect that change is to reflect on the content and try to attend high quality trainings in the future based on those reflections as well as collaboration with colleagues. In looking at this reflective piece, respondent N said, *I think giving someone else the opportunity to know about a specific PD event is important. If I can help guide someone to a good PD event, everyone wins. The only way to guide teachers to good PD is to reflect on them with some sort of evaluation tool, even if that tool is just a narrative about the workshop.*

In addition, finding and attending quality prepared professional development in **content** areas was important. In order to receive the highest quality professional development, educators indicated they needed the opportunity to attend quality trainings in their content area. Mezirow's (1978) work indicated this need for adult workers to have the ability to fashion their professional development opportunities in order to receive content specific trainings.

Respondents in both the survey and interview confirmed their **need to control**, at least at a foundational level, their professional development calendar and attendance. They liked the idea of **collaboration** with peers and district administrators as discussed earlier in this chapter, but they also had strong opinions on how they wanted their trainings to be offered and by whom. Participants indicated that all professional development should be designed and delivered in such a way that the educator will benefit from the content. Many of the participants in the interview phase said they needed **content and delivery** to be such that they remain engaged in the professional development event and be able to take back to the workplace positive workplace incentives and ideas that would improve the efficacy of their classroom. Survey participants also indicted that attending quality professional development and using **quality ideas** from those trainings in the classroom was important to them. Kolb's (1976) theory is supported by those ideas from the respondents. Further affirmation was seen from the response of O when he/she

said, *The ability of a teacher to bring positive ideas back to the classroom for use in real world settings is what PD is all about. Students should have the best opportunities; only if a teacher is well prepared and trained can they have that as a possibility.*

The participants responded with a personal need to affect change in how their professional development was scheduled, attended, and rated. They also indicated that **feedback** to presenters was vital in order that future professional development events could be changed and modified to fit current and future needs of educators and participants indicated they needed to collaborate with both peers and district administrators as they searched for professional development events that supplied quality content. This collaboration provided better understanding by the educator and the districts they serve of what types of professional development was of interest to them.

Implications for practice. Responses to research question two were consistent with the research conducted by the three theorists who comprised the conceptual design of this study. Implications for research question two would suggest that **monitoring** attended professional development events through evaluation would help not only the individual employee but would also help the employing districts better prepare their employees for **training**. An educator or district created evaluation tool may be a way to aid in the overall evaluation process. Another implication for this question is the need to attend trainings that are content specific and current for the educator and their classrooms.

Educators, as well as employing districts, should look for **high quality** professional development events. During data collection, several of the participants had negative memories regarding training events they had attended. Participants said the bad ratings were because the facilitators did not know or understand the content they were teaching. Professional development needs to be led by **knowledgeable individuals**.

Research Question Three

What would selected educators like their professional development to be*?* Participants

said*, The best and most effective PD would be defined by the facilities, location, and*

presentation, as well as views of the value of what was delivered, how it was delivered and what

strategies they implemented in order to become a more effective educator.

Conclusions for research question three. Super's (1980) work allowed that adult

workers needed quality trainings so they could move more smoothly through his career

development stages. A majority of the participants in this study were frustrated with the **lack of**

quality trainings in their content areas. Many could not find sufficient professional

development in their **content areas** to satisfy the mandatory 60 hours of trainings. What might

be considered regular or core areas seem to have plenty of content available, however, content of

core areas still must be monitored to make certain they are of sufficient quality. The areas that

seem to suffer from a lack of content specific trainings, like counseling and library media, seem

to always find it difficult to find and **attend quality professional development**. Respondent A

said more than once, *I have been an English teacher and served in several other non-core areas*

and I can never find any quality PD except for English. There is never any PD for areas outside

the four core curriculums. There is little chance for those who need content specific professional

development in their areas to receive enough quality professional development to obtain the

minimum of 60 hours. Participants indicated an inability to attend professional development

offered in their content area because of the perceived need by the employing districts to send the

educator to **mandated trainings in TESS and CCSS**.

Mezirow's (2000) research indicated that work related topics were needed to provide well

rounded professional development opportunities. Mezirow concluded that relevant work related

professional development allowed the adult worker to relate to the trainings because the trainings

had relevance for the worker. This was evident in the survey phase as respondents indicated that talking through professional development **potential opportunities** with peers and supervisors was one of the ways they were able to create a **well rounded** professional development offering for themselves and take from those events **positive ideas** to use and refine through **reflection** in the classroom. In addition to the survey responses indicating reflection that was needed in order to use professional development received to its fullest potential, interviewees also indicated that **collaboration** with others and meetings with supervisory personnel increased their ability to reflect on attended trainings and glean positive points from relevant material offered at the events. The idea of collaboration was echoed by G when he/she said, *I think talking to peers and my building principal help me to understand the PD I need to attend. Each one of them provides a different perspective on the types of PD that are available.*

It was also evident from the data that a professional development event that was 100 percent lecture was not what was best and participants shied away from such events when possible. The participants suggested a more **user friendly environment** with **group activities** and **kinesthetic learning** activities. They also said **extended workshops**, those that take more than a day to complete, are truly preferred. Those types of user friendly and extended professional development events allowed the educator to receive real world experience from experts in the program or content area. Kolb's (1976) research indicated that real world experience was important to the adult worker (educators).

The extended events allow for more group activities as well as the ability for a slower pace in some instances. One of the important items found in the data regarding these extended events was the ability to network with a broader number of individuals in the content area of the trainings. The other significant finding was that in most cases, the majority of educators were not afforded the opportunity to attend extended events.

The probable reason the extended event was not widely accepted was overall cost. Extended events required overnight stays and generally did not fit into the funding budgets of school districts; especially small rural districts like the two in this study. In most instances, the only extended events attended from the small rural districts are AP and Pre-AP training because they are required in order to teach AP classes. Other extended events that have traditionally been attended by educators are for vocational and career and technical content areas.

Respondents in this study want their professional development events to be **hands-on** with group activities. The participants also want those events to be relevant and within the scope of the hours that are required in their yearly total of professional development. Q said, *I love hands-on PD. It is the only kind I want to go to.*

Implications for practice.   Findings emphasize the need for **collaboration** between educators and their administrators. Educators who require trainings need to have **content area focus** for those trainings as they discuss their needs with his/her building administrator. In addition a measuring device is needed that will assist the educator and the district administrators in rating attended professional development so that adequate **planning** can take place for future training events. Respondent H said, *I always begin to plan my PD early in the spring, that way when the Coop workshops go on-line, I can pick the ones I need quickly so the workshops do not fill up before I get the chance to sign up for them.*

The implications for question three may require additional research outside the focus of this study. Because TESS and CCSS are so new to the educational realm, participants really did not have the ability to discuss with any experience how the roll-out of these programs will affect their choices in future professional development. If roll-out of these programs is similar in nature to the initial development events that were in place for educators in these areas, these programs will constitute the majority of the time the educators spend in professional

development events throughout the next year and assuredly for several years following the full roll-out of these two programs.

Additional qualitative data

As reported in Chapter Four, additional data were retrieved from several of the participants regarding extended professional development opportunities. At the conclusion of research question three, extended trainings were mentioned. This type of professional development event is unusual in most districts because of the increased cost to send an employee to this type of training. It is noted here that those participants who attended this type of workshop event would return to attend the same event again.

Conclusions for additional qualitative data. Even though this is an event that is somewhat costly to the employer, an **extended training** allows an educator the chance to **collaborate** and network with individuals over time. In viewing the data from this section it is evident that extended training events may be a way to increase the amount of **content specific** professional development available especially for those who are searching for **non-core content** professional development. Respondent B said, *I love going to the extended workshops. They always offer me so much in the way of content knowledge and the opportunity to network with fellow teachers and administrators.*

It was apparent from the data that the longer the event was, the more willing the individual was to return. AP and Pre-AP events were the most common extended events because they are required. If more extended events had the focus and relevancy of AP trainings perhaps even more individuals would benefit from this type of professional development. K said, *I truly enjoy the 5 day AP trainings at the university. They offer great ideas and materials for the AP classroom.*

Implications for practice. Having more **non-core content** professional development is important to educators who are not core subject educators. Most educators find it difficult to find **sufficient quality trainings** to attend each year to satisfy the requirements of their professional development hours. This type of training event could spark interest in more areas of professional development as district employers warm to the idea of these events positively affecting the classroom **efficacy** of their employees.

Figure 22 is a representation of the results and conclusions from the study. The integrated data results found in the outer circle of Figure 21 were put in the inner circle of Figure 22 around the three theorists. Those words and phrases were connected and triangulated with the words in the conclusions and implications section of the study. The flow of the words and phrases from the integrated data to the conceptual model conclusions can be seen in the table contained in Appendix F. The connection between the theorists and the data and how the participants in the study responded to the concepts modeled through out the study is shown in Figure 22.

Conceptual Model
Conclusions

Integrated
Data Results

Kinesthethic Events

Hands-On/Groupwork

Quality Learning Experiences

Limited Lecture

PD Facilitation

Reflection Collaboration

Content Specific

Readily Available PD Events

On The Job Learning

Expert Delivery

PD Availability

Career Development

Extended Workshop Events

Extended Workshops

Reflective Practitioners

Super's Theory
(1963, 1980, 1981,
1990)
Exploration Stage
Establishment Stage
Maintenance Stage
Decline Stage

Mezirow's Theory
(1981, 1985,1990,
2000)
Reflective Practitioner
Sustainable Outlook
Open-Mindedness
Critical Thinking Skills
Change Agent

Kolb's Theory
(1976, 1984)
Planning and Involvement (Experience)
Internalization (Observation)
Reflection and Generalization (Conceptualization)
Application and Follow-up (Experimentation)

Figure 22. Results and Conclusions from qualitative and quantitative data which relate to the theories that influence the concept of workplace professional development.

Recommendations

The majority of the research collected in this study was positive toward the future of

professional development in Arkansas. Progress and change has occurred regarding professional

development since the first ESEA was passed in early 1965 for education. The researcher offers

the following recommendations based on the findings from the surveys and interviews of the

study. As stated, these recommendations are for current practice and for additional research. All bolded words in the recommendations portion of the study can be found in the word search charts in Appendix G.

Recommendations for current practice

The data from this research indicated the following for career development, transformational learning, and experiential development for educators. It is recommended that:

1. More time be spent in **collaboration** with peers and district administrators in preparing a **well-rounded** training schedule that will benefit the educator and satisfy the requirements of the district and state. Additionally, this collaboration should include the ability of the educator as well as the employing district to **evaluate** the attended trainings. This could be done through an agreement between the ADE and the regional education cooperatives developing a strategy to clear the **miscommunication** regarding the true total hours of professional development that an educator needs to attend per year. **Clear rules** and clear examples of how professional development hours are counted should be implemented. Educators need to have adequate notice and adequate information about these hours and how the roll-out of the once-every-four-years required trainings will affect those total hours and the scheduling of yearly professional development.

2. The **delivery** system for professional development include less PowerPoint and lecture and include more group work, projects, hands-on activities, and content rich material for the educators to take back to his/her classroom.

3. Hours dedicated to TESS and CCSS should be as **concise** and content should be **understandable** in order for all educators to have an opportunity to engage in content-rich professional development in their content areas, which should increase classroom efficacy.

4. The same quality opportunities be provided for **non-core content** educators that core content educators have available for their attendance; especially during the summer professional development calendar. Only qualified **experts or specialists** in a content area provide professional development. Experts in all non-core content areas such as counseling, instructional media, and foreign languages, need to be located and recruited to present trainings to those educators that are not employed in the core content areas.

5. More **extended workshop events** be developed with the educational cooperatives so that overnight stays could be minimized, but the content of the workshop would still allow for increased participation by those in attendance. Also, more educators need to have the ability to attend AP and Pre-AP events. In the rural districts of this study, only a few core area educators from each district have been afforded the opportunity to be a part of this type of training. More individuals would spread the workload of AP classes to more qualified educators and allow each one to benefit from these events.

6. Districts reevaluate their planning for late summer pre-service professional development. Much of the pre-service planned the week before the fall semester begins is relegated to **mandatory trainings** such as parental involvement, bullying, students at risk, and special education. Many of the mandated trainings have moved to the four year cycle of professional development where they only have to be offered once every four years. This change will allow the districts to schedule other high value topics for their pre-service professional development.

Recommendations for future research

Future research in understanding quality professional development could include the following:

1. Research similar to this study could be undertaken at a statewide level with elementary and secondary educators who fall into Super's developmental stages. Data could be gathered from both urban and rural areas of the state and from areas of high socio-economic status and from areas with a mixture of differing socio-economic statuses and also from an area of low (poverty) socio-economic status.

2. Quantitative research into differences in student learning expectations and outcomes dependent on whether educators were involved in extensive professional development events as opposed to educators who were involved in just the minimum amount of required training. Standardized test scores of the students whose instructor attended more than the minimum amount of professional development compared to those instructors who attended only those professional development events that were mandatory to attend would provide study into Mezirow's transformative learning and its effect on student learning.

3. Qualitative research into how the rating of professional development has an effect on the quality output of the trainings from those events that are repeated. Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory could be used in this study to see that experiential learning based on evaluation of the key strategies in the professional development events would allow for real world experience of the evaluators to help in the rating process.

4. Research the correlation between how student learning outcomes change due to the implementation of TESS and CCSS. Every participant in this study mentioned these two programs required significant training time.

5. Research how delivery of professional development affects classroom efficacy.

Summary

Educators in this study indicated that they truly expected quality professional development each time they attended. *Do not waste my time with PD that is not going to help*

me in the classroom, is what several of the interviewed participants said. It is evident from the findings of this study that the group of educators interviewed and surveyed feel that collaboration with peers and administrators was an excellent way to find, plan, and attend professional development events when areas of need were identified by the educator or district. Time spent reflecting and evaluating professional development events could be helpful to other educators in search of professional development events to attend.

Recommendations gleaned from this study seemed to point to a growing concern from educators that TESS and CCSS are overwhelming the professional development opportunities available. The educators indicated they were not getting enough content rich professional development because implementation of TESS and CCSS had taken up all their summer and pre-service days. The impact of how TESS and CCSS will affect the classroom will not be known for several years, but one thing is certain in the opinion of the participants in this study, they have had little time to plan or attend professional development of their choice during the start-up and implementation of TESS and CCSS. How these challenges play out over the next two or three years will dictate how professional development evolves.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Would you take a few moments and tell me about your professional background?
    a. What type of training did you receive to become a certified teacher?
    b. At which grade levels have you taught K-12?
    c. How many years of experience do you have in the teaching field?

2. Let's talk about your professional development (PD) so far in your career.
    a. How many hours of PD is a certified teacher required to take per year? How do you feel about the number of hours required?
    b. Has your administration posted how the yearly PD calendar runs in the district you serve? If so, what are the parameters of that calendar? If not, how are you made aware when your PD begins and ends?
    c. Within the legislated hours of PD there are hours that are mandatory in content specific areas (like parental involvement, bullying, etc.). Has your administration made you aware of those mandated hours and if so, what are they? What are the hour totals for each type? Is this type of PD helpful to you? Why or why not?
    d. Approximately how many PD hours do you acquire each year? Do you think that number is too much? Not enough? Just right? Why?

3. Does your administration meet with you annually to set the type of PD you will receive?

    a. What is the procedure for the teachers receiving PD direction from your district?

4. What kind of input do you have in the amount and type of PD you receive?

    a. Does the administration guide you?

    b. Are you on your own to find specific PD offerings?

5. Where does the majority of your PD take place (Your school? School district facilities? Local universities? Educational COOP? Other locations off campus? Online?)?
    a. Which location(s) do you prefer and why?

6. Do you consider conference participation as PD? If so, how does it increase your efficacy in the classroom?

7. How would you define quality PD?
    a. Of the hours you receive, how many do you believe are quality hours?
    b. As you look back on the PD you have received, has there been any that has stood out as particularly good quality? What made it good in your opinion?
    c. How about PD that was really bad? What was wrong with it or what was lacking in the delivery or content?

8. To what extent have you followed-up on PD suggestions?
   a. If you were required to do any additional tasks such as implementing a new classroom management idea or classroom strategy after leaving the PD, did you do them? Why or why not?
   b. Have you implemented suggestions based on PD? That your chose? That your district or school scheduled for you? Why or why not?

9. If you could only have one PD opportunity this year, what would you schedule for yourself?
   a. Why this choice?
   b. What do you think the district would schedule for you?
   c. Why is there a discrepancy between the two?

10. If you were going to offer PD in your content area, what would it look like?
    a. Who would your audience consist of?

11. If you had the chance, how would you change the delivery of PD to better suit you?

12. Do you think it would suit and or benefit other teachers teaching in your area? How so?

13. As you look forward, what would you consider to be areas of PD that you could use to increase your effectiveness in the teaching field?

14. Are there any other items related to PD that you would like to discuss that would improve the quality of the PD received?

APPENDIX B

Likert-Type Survey with Demographics

Likert-Type Survey with Demographics

Demographics

1. Gender:
- o   Male
- o   Female

2. Race:
- o   American Indian or Alaskan Native
- o   Latin (Hispanic)
- o   Asian
- o   Black or African American
- o   Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- o   White
- o   Other

3. Age Range:
- o   20 – 30
- o   31 – 40
- o   41 – 50
- o   51 – 60
- o   61+

4. Marital status:
- o   Single
- o   Married
- o   Divorced
- o   Widowed
- o   Prefer not to answer

5. Highest degree obtained:
- o   Bachelor's
- o   Master's
- o   Doctorate
- o   Post-Doctorate
- o   Specialist

6. Years of work experience:
- o   2-5 years
- o   6-10 years
- o   11-15 years
- o   16-20 years
- o   21-25 years
- o   26+ years

7. Type of license you hold:
- o P-4
- o 4-8
- o 7-12
- o P-12

8. Do you work full-time or part-time?
- o Full-time
- o Part-time
- o Not presently employed

9. How long do you plan to teach at your current licensure level:
- A. 1-2 years
- B. 3-4 years
- C. 5-6 years
- D. 7+ years

10. How satisfied are you with your current position if you have one?
- A. Very satisfied
- B. Satisfied
- C. Neutral
- D. Not satisfied
- E. Very dissatisfied

11. A teacher's job is to deliver effective content based instruction.
- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Neither agree nor disagree
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly disagree

12. A student's job is to learn so they will ready themselves for the workplace.
- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Neither agree nor disagree
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly disagree

13. When attending PD, I try to find the best available to increase my classroom efficacy.
- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Neither agree nor disagree
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly disagree

14. My district always sends me to content specific PD.
    A. Strongly agree
    B. Agree
    C. Neither agree nor disagree
    D. Disagree
    E. Strongly disagree

15. I talk to other educators in my content area about the PD I have taken.
    A. Strongly agree
    B. Agree
    C. Neither agree nor disagree
    D. Disagree
    E. Strongly disagree

16. I talk to other educators in my PLC about the PD I have taken.
    A. Strongly agree
    B. Agree
    C. Neither agree nor disagree
    D. Disagree
    E. Strongly disagree

17. When talking PD with my building principal, I feel uneasy revealing my PD needs.
    A. Strongly agree
    B. Agree
    C. Neither agree nor disagree
    D. Disagree
    E. Strongly disagree

18. Policies regarding PD attendance are too strict and provide little flexibility.
    A. Strongly agree
    B. Agree
    C. Neither agree nor disagree
    D. Disagree
    E. Strongly disagree

19. Attending district mandated PD opportunities makes me feel Challenged.
    A. Strongly agree
    B. Agree
    C. Neither agree nor disagree
    D. Disagree
    E. Strongly disagree

20. I am satisfied with the type and amount of PD I attend.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Neither agree nor disagree
   D. Disagree
   E. Strongly disagree

21. Most teachers understand the need for quality PD.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Neither agree nor disagree
   D. Disagree
   E. Strongly disagree

22. Most of the PD I attend is just a waste of time.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Neither agree nor disagree
   D. Disagree
   E. Strongly disagree

23. Quality educator PD is essential for maximizing student learning.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Neither agree nor disagree
   D. Disagree
   E. Strongly disagree

24. When picking quality PD, I should consult my building administrator and colleagues.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Neither agree nor disagree
   D. Disagree
   E. Strongly disagree

25. When attending PD I should pick the best and be on time.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Neither agree nor disagree
   D. Disagree
   E. Strongly disagree

26. I should always rate how the PD may or may not enhance my classroom efficacy.
   A. Strongly agree
   B. Agree
   C. Neither agree nor disagree
   D. Disagree
   E. Strongly disagree

APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol/Informed Consent Form

Adult Worker Perceptions Regarding Quality Workplace Professional Development
Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Principal Researcher: D. Chris Rink

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Bobbie Biggs

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

You are invited to participate in a research study about educator attitudes toward professional development (PD). You are being asked to participate in this project because you are a licensed educator and are qualified to answer questions regarding your attitudes and feelings regarding PD that you have received in the past and how you perceive future PD affecting your abilities as a classroom educator. Also, you will be asked to define what you believe to be quality PD. In addition to a survey, you may be asked to participate in an interview. Interview questions will be asked about your attitudes toward PD.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE RESEARCH STUDY

Who is the Principal Researcher?   *Who is the Faculty Advisor?*

D. Chris Rink, Ed.S.   Dr. Bobbie Biggs

What is the purpose of this research study?

This study will attempt to find what an educator believes "quality" PD is and to understand the attitudes of educators on PD they have received and the types of PD they believe would be beneficial to them in the future.

Who will participate in this project?

Licensed educators from two rural school districts in Western Arkansas will participate in this project. All educators will be asked the same questions.

What am I being asked to do?

Your participation will require the following:

All respondents will be asked to participate in a survey with the primary researcher lasting about fifteen to twenty minutes. You may also be asked to participate in an interview lasting no more than 45 minutes. An additional 30 minute interview may be needed or requested as well. The survey contains questions about demographic information and additional questions regarding PD.

What are the possible risks or discomforts?
There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this project.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
The respondents will receive data derived from the interviews as to the overall attitudes toward PD and the possible ways to increase PD quality for educators.

How long will the study last?
The study will be completed over the course of 90 days with participants asked to provide possible dates for interviews convenient to their schedules.

Will I be required to pay for anything, or will I receive compensation for my time and inconvenience if I choose to participate in this project?
There are no costs to the participants in the project. No compensation will be offered for participation in this project.

What are the options if I do not want to be in the study?
If you do not want to be in this study, you may refuse to participate. Also, you may refuse to participate at any time during the study. Your position as an educator will not be affected in any way if you refuse to participate. Should you decide to participate after the start of the project, accommodation will be made if possible to allow for your participation.

How will my confidentiality be protected?
All information will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by applicable State and Federal law and University Policy. All interview information will be transcribed using generic names for the respondents so that no answers to questions will be recognizable or be able to be connected to any one respondent. All interview transcriptions will be reviewed by the respondent for accuracy. Any additions or deletions of the transcribed text will be at the request of the respondent. Copies of transcribed interviews will be kept until the end of study. At the conclusion of the study, all audio files and the transcribed interviews and surveys will be shredded and/or destroyed by the principal researcher.

Will I know the results of the study?
At the conclusion of the study you will receive feedback about the results. You may contact the Faculty Advisor, Dr. Bobbie Biggs, UA-Fayetteville or Principal Researcher, D. Chris Rink, Ed.S., at any time during the project. You will receive a copy of this informed consent form for your files.

What do I do if I have questions about the research study?
You have the right to contact the Principal Researcher or Faculty Advisor as listed below for any concerns that you may have.

D. Chris Rink, Ed.S.   Dr. Bobbie Biggs

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You may also contact the University of Arkansas Research Compliance office listed below if you have questions about your rights as a participant, or to discuss any concerns about, or problems with the research.

Ro Windwalker, CIP

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I have read the above statement and have been able to ask questions and express concerns, which have been satisfactorily responded to by the investigator. I understand the purpose of the study as well as the potential benefits and risks that are involved. I understand that participation is voluntary. I understand that significant new findings developed during this research will be shared with the participant. I understand that no rights have been waived by signing the consent form. I have been given a copy of the consent form.

_____

Signature of Participant   Date

Signature of the Participant signifies receipt of document as well as consent to be interviewed.

APPENDIX D

University of Arkansas Fayetteville IRB Approval

March 21, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chris Rink
                Bobbie Biggs

FROM: Ro Windwalker
                IRB Coordinator

RE: New Protocol Approval

IRB Protocol #: 13-03-596

Protocol Title: *Adult Worker Perceptions Regarding Quality Workplace Professional Development*

Review Type: ☒ EXEMPT ☐ EXPEDITED ☐ FULL IRB

Approved Project Period: Start Date: 03/21/2013 Expiration Date: 03/20/2014

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a request, using the form *Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects*, prior to the expiration date. This form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website (http://vpred.uark.edu/210.php). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the request in sufficient time for review and approval.   Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

This protocol has been approved for 50 participants. If you wish to make *any* modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to* implementing those changes.   All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 210 Administration Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

APPENDIX E

Flowchart of results from qualitative and quantitative data which relate to the theories that

influence the concept of workplace professional development

Flowchart of results from qualitative and quantitative data which relate to the theories that influence the concept of workplace professional development.

Qualitative Data	Quantitative Data	Integrated Data Results
Collaboration		Collaboration
PD Facilities	PD Facilities	PD Facilities
Quality Learning Experiences	Quality Learning Experiences	Quality Learning Experiences
PD Availability	PD Availability	PD Availability
Reflection	Reflection	Reflection
	Extended Workshops	Extended Workshops
	Career Development	Career Development
	On-the-Job Training	On-the-Job Training

APPENDIX F

Flowchart of results and conclusions from qualitative and quantitative data which relate to the

theories that influence the concept of workplace professional development

Flowchart of results and conclusions from qualitative and quantitative data which relate to the

theories that influence the concept of workplace professional development.

Integrated Data Results	Conceptual Model Conclusions	Recommendations
Collaboration	Group Work –	Collaboration – TESS and CCSS
PD Facilities	Kinesthetic – Limited Lecture – Hands-on – Group Work	Planning for Future PD Events
Quality Learning Experiences	Expert Delivery – Content Specific	Experts – Delivery System – Non-Core Content
PD Availability	Readily Available Events –	Well Rounded Events
Reflection	Reflective Practitioner	Delivery System
Extended Workshops	Extended Workshops	Extended Workshops
Career Development	Content Specific – Delivery Readily Available Events	Clear Rules – Miscommunication
On-the-Job Learning	Hands-on	Mandatory Training

APPENDIX G

Conclusions and Implications Word Search

Conclusions and Implications Word Search

Conclusions RQ 1	Implications RQ 1
Specialists Timely	Quality of Presentation
Extended Events Hands-on Group Learning Collaboration	Content Delivery Quality PD Mandatory PD
Current Education Needs	TESS/CCSS Legislative Changes

Conclusions RQ 2	Implications RQ 2
Content and Delivery Collaboration	High Quality PD
Quality Ideas Need Control of PD Training in the Classroom	Training Knowledgeable Individuals
Feedback Reflective Practitioner	Monitoring Attended PD

Conclusions RQ 3	Implications RQ 3
Lack of Quality Content Area Attend Quality PD	Collaboration
Mandated TESS/CCSS	Content Area Focus
PD Opportunities Hands-on Well Rounded Positive Ideas Reflection Collaboration	Planning Future PD Events
Kinesthetic Extended Events User Friendly Environment	Content Area Focus

Conclusions Additional Data	Implications Additional Data
Extended Training Collaboration	Sufficient Quality Training
Specific PD	Efficacy
Non-Content Area PD	Non-Content Area PD