

FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE SETTING

by

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ABSTRACT

This study examined faculty perceptions of professional development in a community college setting. The research consisted of an online survey and interviews with faculty members from various community colleges within the United States.

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to determine how faculty perceptions about professional development influenced their experiences, beliefs, and actions within the Results Pyramid framework. Specific focus was given to motivating factors and perceived barriers both internally and externally.

The findings indicate there are not many significant differences in the perceptions that faculty have toward professional development. Building awareness of professional development needs can help leaders and professional development administration align their professional development goals to the faculty's specific needs. The results also support that faculty feel that professional development will improve classroom performance.

Furthermore, this study sheds light on the contours of the current professional development culture. It provides insight to equip community college leaders with the tools needed to craft a culture to facilitate increased faculty participation.

KEYWORDS: Professional Development, Faculty Development, Training, Faculty, Perceptions

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my family. Words can never express the gratitude that I owe each of you. Thank you all for your patience, kind words of encouragement, and support. Completing this journey was not just made by me but by all of us. Along with all the trials and tribulations encountered during this program, you have been a great inspiration, whose guidance, motivation, and support have been invaluable throughout this study. I love and appreciate my two lovely daughters, Lindsay and Alexis, for their enthusiasm, and reassurance, along with my Mommy, RoseMarie, Daddy, Edward, my bonus Mom, Aileen, and my one and only sister, Kia. I love you all to the moon! I also express a special thank you to my village, those extraordinary friends who have assisted and coached me during this process. I owe all of you a tremendous debt of gratefulness.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Community colleges are struggling with declining budgets and increasing accountability demands, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. In a time of strict budgets and arduous educational policies requiring higher education institutions to do more with fewer resources, faculty expenditures for professional development (PD) may be low on the list of priorities. In this mixed-methods study, research is focused on the professional development (PD) engagement and perceptions of community college professors, both full-time and adjunct, across the United States.

Swanger (2016) stated that the key performance indicators and constant college challenges are increased enrollment, retention, and completion rates. Colleges must meet these metrics while maintaining quality educational programs geared towards preparing students for life-long success. With the climate and current state of higher education, community college leaders and faculty are pressured to meet these goals. The college leaders can then ensure that PD is developed for faculty to meet those challenges, encouraging faculty to think differently about how they teach by defining student learning and providing evidence that they meet those outcomes (Swanger, 2016). Effective professional development is grounded in innovation. For innovation in PD to occur, faculty and staff must collaborate with

the leaders of the colleges. They must first agree that there is a perceived need for change; this need then becomes an inspiration and a belief that there is a problem to solve.

Extensive research shows that consistent, supportive, and relevant professional development is an action that empowers educators to change (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017). PD is the foundation of training on college campuses (Mizell, 2010; Rebora, 2011; Rutz, et.al, 2012). PD connects faculty across disciplines and career stages, creating a pedagogical community within the community college (Altany, 2012).

DEFINING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Guskey (2009) defined PD as the processes and activities designed to enhance educators' professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes to improve student success. PD is a purposeful and intentional process (Mizell, 2010, Darling-Hammond, et. al. 2017). When the term “professional development” is used by faculty and administrators, they usually mean a formal process, including attending or presenting at a conference, seminar, or workshop. It also encompasses collaborative learning among members of a work team or participating in or facilitating specific courses at a college or university (Mizell, 2010). The most effective professional development engages faculty groups to focus on the needs of their students (Mizell, 2010).

Professional development opportunities have been identified as the foundation of training on college campuses (Mizell, 2010; Rebora, 2011; Rutz, et.al, 2012). Professional development has been defined in many ways. Some colleges use the following terms interchangeably to describe professional development activities:

- Staff Development
- Inservice
- Training
- Professional Learning
- Continuing Education
- Faculty Development
- Faculty Professional development
- Career Planning
- Career Development
- Professional Growth
- Faculty Development
- Learning Development

Professional development in the higher education sector also carries several definitions, and the Glossary of Education Reform (2013) explains that PD may also be used in a wide variety of ways, for example, specialized training, formal education, or advanced professional learning intended to help college administrators, faculty, and staff improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness (pp. 1-2). According to the American Association of Community Colleges, (2014), PD may also be defined as an endeavor to promote faculty success and academic culture as the community college's strategy to ensure that faculty continue to strengthen their practice throughout their career. Adding to the many interpretations of PD, Ricci (2017) also defined PD as learning to earn or maintain professional credentials such as academic degrees to formal coursework, conferences, and informal learning opportunities.

HISTORY OF FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Harvard was the first American college founded, built on a mission to educate the leaders of public life centering on faith, rooted in the Scriptures, together with training in logical argumentation and some exposure to the liberal arts, defined as mathematics, descriptive science, and ancient languages (Park, 1979). When Harvard began, the college consisted of nine students and three faculty members, the master and two master's assistants, also known as tutors. The educational background of these three young faculty members was B.A. degrees. According to Park (1979), the tutors were not given additional training beyond their earned degrees; the administration believed that anyone could teach the texts who had successfully mastered them themselves. A tutor was customarily assigned to teach all course curricula under the president's direction to an entering class.

Park (1979) also described 18th-century American college teaching as a profession not noted for including hierarchical development or progression; instead, teaching was considered an extremely prestigious position. Faculty development at this time consisted simply of earning the highest degree attainable. However, faculty professional development activities can be traced back to 1810 at Harvard University, when university administrators designed leave, also known as sabbaticals, to further develop into scholars (Ouellet, 2010).

During the years of 1827 to 1855, when Francis Wayland was the president of Brown University, he recognized the need for development programs within the colleges. He wanted to establish new training criteria for the appointment of tutors. He was looking for innovative ways for instructors and tutors to develop a curriculum. However, change was slow in coming; it took two World Wars until those professors, also known as "shapers" of college curricula,

realized that developing curricula and academic requirements were not enough; there needed to be more training provided for faculty (Park, 1979).

According to Schwartz & Bryan (1998), many of our current expectations for professional standards for teaching and learning come from those developed by Abraham Flexner in 1910 for medical education at the turn of the century. At that time, physicians typically were trained through apprenticeships and limited, proprietary education. Flexner is noted as setting standards for professional training and education, including the expectation for formal education, professional standards, professional associations, and ethics (Schwartz & Bryan, 1998).

Ouellett (2010) noted that the first faculty development center in the United States was developed at the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching at the University of Michigan in 1962. By 1969, PD was defined as in-service activities designed to improve personnel members' skills, techniques, and knowledge to help them become effective education agents (Schwartz & Bryan, 1998). PD had also become an expectation in the community college sector, founded on the belief that understanding faculty PD needs is a starting point for improving faculty teaching and academic quality.

The 1970s were a crucial time for changes in faculty professional development approaches, according to Schuster (1990). During this time, disciplinary research was the traditional focus for most college professors, but a shift toward a more dominant focus on teaching excellence was beginning (Ouellett, 2010). In their history of faculty development, Watts and Hammons (2002) indicated that faculty professional development (FPD) did not

become an established program within the community college system as quickly as in the university system.

After three decades of gradual application in universities, FPD programs had become institutionalized: more FPD programs had full-time faculty developers, and more FPD programs met human resource needs personally and professionally (Watts & Hammons, 2002). In the 1970s, early FPD efforts attempted to improve institutional effectiveness by focusing primarily on the disciplinary expertise of the pedagogical skills of the college faculty (Hubbard & Atkins, 1995).

It was not until 1973 that the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) annual conference featured instructional development and stressed enhanced teaching and learning in higher education (Lewis, 2010). In 1974, the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD Network) established the first faculty professional development organization (Sorcinelli et al., 2006). The POD Network, along with the National Council for Staff, Program, and Organizational Development (NCSPOD), symbolized the professionalization of faculty PD as a field. To address the complexities of teaching in contemporary society, faculty development was expected to integrate personal, professional, and organizational development (Schuster, 1990).

Professional development—viewed as consistent, supportive, and relevant—was a process that empowered faculty to prepare for challenges (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017). While professional development for community college faculty has been developing for half a century, research on PD has also been flourishing during the process. In fact, over the past decade, community colleges have been required to make changes in many

areas of professional development and delivery, mainly as related to applied research and ineffective teaching for specific delivery modalities (AACU, 2002).

Professional development has become significantly crucial across higher education, especially during the pandemic of COVID-19. Many colleges and universities created multiple new tools to help faculty and other employees keep learning and developing essential skills during this time, expecting faculty to take control and ownership of their PD. Professional development initiatives that support faculty are imperative, particularly as colleges navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and consider how best to serve students in using new teaching modalities (Pittman, 2020). Pittman stressed that pivoting to online learning and teleworking has increased this need. PD centers must have the capacity to meet the diverse faculty needs, including (1) promoting faculty well-being and belonging, (2) enhancing the values of inclusion and equity, (3) developing environments that affirm the value of each individual, (4) and applying and securing funds for professional development activities.

TYPES OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Since the 1980s, professional development has been an integral part of higher education's strategy for faculty self-renewal and increased energy. Before this time, professional development had typically been concerned with the advancement of subject matter competence and the mastery of one's own discipline related to teaching, including promoting attendance and participation in discipline-specific conferences and completing discipline-related primary and secondary research (Sullivan, 1983). Since the 1980s, educators and policymakers began looking increasingly to faculty professional development as an

essential strategy for supporting student learning and success (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, Gardner, 2017).

According to Bok (2017), some college leaders are making serious efforts to improve the quality of teaching, while many others seem content with their existing programs. Aspiring college instructors also need to know much more now to teach effectively. A large and increasing body of practical knowledge has accumulated about learning and pedagogy and the design and effectiveness of alternative methods of instruction. Meanwhile, the advent of new technologies has given rise to methods of teaching that require special training. As evidence accumulates about promising ways of engaging students actively, identifying difficulties they have in learning the material, and adjusting teaching methods accordingly, the current gaps in the preparation most graduate students receive before joining the faculty ranks become more and more of a handicap.

Providing PD for Adjunct Faculty in Community Colleges

Adjunct faculty teach approximately 58% of U.S. community college classes and, thus, manage learning experiences for more than 53% of students enrolled in community colleges (JBL Associates, 2008). The community college relies significantly on adjunct faculty; however, providing PD activities for these faculty encompasses additional challenges. Challenges such as scheduling and differences in institutional expectations between adjunct and full-time faculty make it difficult to provide practical, timely, and appropriate PD activities for these adjunct faculty members. Adjunct access to orientation, professional development, administrative and technology support, office space, and accommodations for meeting with students typically is

limited, unclear, or inconsistent according to the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) (2014).

Adjunct faculty members' views on professional development vary, as indicated in a 2014 CCCSE special report. The report stated that scheduling is a concern for some community college adjunct faculty, with recommendations for weekend PD or "Summer Institutes." The report concluded that adjunct faculty would make efforts to attend PD, no matter when it was scheduled.

An earlier CCCSE report (2013) noted that some adjunct faculty were amazed and excited that PD was available to them free of charge; they also noted appreciating financial incentives to participate in PD activities. The report also indicated that adjunct faculty acknowledged the value of PD in improving their classroom engagement and management abilities, forms of assessment, diversity, inclusion, and student success.

Professional development, however, requires support from institutional leadership. Effective PD also requires appropriate resource allocation and recognition for teaching excellence (McLean, Cilliers & Van Wyk, 2008). Current research (CCCSE 2013, 2014; Meier, 2020) also indicates that college leaders must ask themselves whether their expectations for adjunct faculty align with student needs. If they want to expect adjunct faculty to interact with students outside of class and incorporate high-impact practices in their teaching, they must ensure that adjunct faculty have the support and professional development opportunities they need to help students succeed.

Identifying Faculty Development Topics

While professional development has become a necessary expectation in today's community college settings (Smith, 2007), some faculty complain that professional development workshops are focused on general skills. Further, workshops that are not internalized and used by faculty are therefore a waste of time and money (Mizell, 2010).

According to college leaders, creating opportunities for PD and collaboration among colleagues presents a challenge (Power, 2019). By providing PD that has an emphasis on learning about effective teaching, having assigned mentors, developing intentional connections with colleagues, enhancing awareness of and access to college and campus resources, and increasing familiarity with resources that support students, leaders can support and empower all faculty (CCCSE, 2014). Additional PD training that supports students' learning must focus on (1) promoting critical thinking in the classroom, (2) developing and applying formative student assessment, (3) managing challenging classroom conversations, and (4) using small groups effectively to promote engagement and learning.

In the 2014 CCCSE report, Valencia College (Florida) revealed almost 90% of their current tenure-track faculty had participated in the college's extensive professional development offerings. Valencia offers all full-time and adjunct faculty a variety of certificate programs free of charge. The provided programs provide in-depth development in particular topic areas, such as Digital Professor Certification for online teaching and learning and a certificate program titled "LifeMap," which was developed to inform faculty on the college's developmental advising system. In addition to providing solid training, these programs allow

adjunct faculty members to connect with their colleagues and engage in meaningful discussions about learning-centered topics.

According to Mancinelli (2020), six considerations are foundational when planning PD: (1) survey faculty, (2) offer a variety of choices, (3) extend opportunities for faculty also to facilitate training, (4) acknowledge the faculty's well-being, (5) incorporate collaborative protocols and practice times, and (6) include extension/follow-up activities. When these aspects are considered, identifying valuable training topics becomes easier. Institutions must also begin by addressing the following questions: How should we engage all our faculty to serve students well? How will we include all faculty in discussions about policies and practices that lead to improved student success? How are we going to support everyone whose primary responsibility is to promote student learning?

Addressing these questions keeps PD focused on the quality of teaching and learning college-wide and ensures that more students have access to high-impact learning experiences and faculty prepared to engage them in those practices. It is, in the end, about the critical steps that colleges must take to achieve their goals for improving student learning, academic progress, and college completion (CCCSE, 2014), and according to Mancinelli (2020), simply asking faculty what they would like to learn can go a long way toward making PD more valuable.

Determining the Effectiveness of Professional Development

Research has found that effective PD activities improve faculty facilitation skills, pedagogy, and technology skills, making an impact that lasts over time (Rutz, Condon, Iverson, Manduca, & Willett, 2012). Successful implementation of PD takes collaboration, time, long-

term commitment, and readily available resources relevant to the faculty's needs (Maria & García, 2016). Some researchers have emphasized that the intensity of perception of professional development activities is moderately a function of the faculty's backing to participate in them or the variety of barriers they encounter (Avalos, 2011; Mahmoudia, & Özkana, 2015).

While there is no one-size-fits-all model for professional development, high-quality, effective professional development programs have been identified through substantial research. Those characteristics include a climate that fosters and encourages faculty development; in-depth, structured, and goal-oriented programs that are content-specific; faculty ownership; and administrative support, that is, the belief that good teaching is valued by administrators (Guskey, 2009; Murray, 1999).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In many community colleges, getting faculty to participate in professional development activities is increasingly challenging. As Guskey & Yoon (2009) stated, effective professional programs require dedicated and committed time, indicating that a professional development program must be well organized and directed towards the needs of the intended faculty audience. Some of those identified challenges strive to incorporate a structured, organized, professional development program, which is attainable, affordable, timely, and ongoing.

To better understand faculty's needs and the types of professional development most valued by faculty members, this study focused on community college faculty perceptions of the trends and challenges of professional development in the community college.

Because faculty professional development is an essential component for effective student learning and success, identifying faculty perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, experiences, and valuable PD topics served as the catalyst for exploring community college faculty's perceptions on PD. Research shows that faculty who engage in professional development is more likely to create classrooms that result in students' positive outcomes and academic success (Mizell, 2010). Examining PD from a faculty member's perspective will contribute to the broader knowledge of emerging trends in faculty professional development. In addition, analyzing the faculty members' experiences, beliefs, and barriers connected to PD will give a better insight into how to better support faculty on community college campuses, enhancing student learning and student success. While PD has been a focus in education for at least 40 years, little evidence is available to demonstrate its effectiveness (Murray, 1999).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to identify the faculty perception of PD opportunities at community colleges. For this study, 200 faculty members were contacted who were employed between one and five years at various community colleges across the United States. The research questions in this study focused on faculty members' perceptions of PD on their community college campus and identified motivating factors and potential barriers.

1. What are the faculty's perceptions of professional development at their community colleges?
2. What do the faculty perceive as barriers to their participation in faculty professional development activities?
3. What are the motivating factors for faculty to attend professional development activities in their community college?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research is grounded in motivational theory to study professional development activities and faculty members' perceptions. Motivational theory is tasked with discovering what drives individuals to work towards a goal or outcome. Although in Motivational Theory research, consistency has been identified as key to getting results and building momentum (Kinsey, 2020), the Results Pyramid crafted by (Connors & Smith, 2011) intertwines individual motivation along with the following theory:

1. Our ACTIONS produce the results we achieve
2. Our BELIEFS drive the ACTIONS we take
3. Our EXPERIENCES foster the BELIEFS we hold (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Results Pyramid



Source: Connors & Smith (2011)

Utilizing the theoretical model of The Results Pyramid as the framework for this study, perceptions of PD are explored through a mixed-method study of current college faculty from

various community colleges throughout the United States. This study is based on the belief that the foundation of the Results Pyramid model connects with faculty perceptions of professional development by providing a simple, powerful way of understanding the relationship between the campus culture, looking at the way faculty think and are motivated to participate in PD, and examining the results that are achieved from attending these workshops, training, and other learning activities.

Using the Results Pyramid model as a framework, the community college can identify or establish a culture of accountability that occurs where faculty *take* accountability to think and act in the manner necessary to achieve results. The campus culture—including work ethic, professional learning culture/habits, interpersonal and professional relationships, requirements, and practices—varies considerably from institution to institution, and this culture may significantly influence faculty perception of the effectiveness of PD and faculty motivation to participate in PD. In addition, faculty actions are motivated by the beliefs they hold about PD. Their pre-conceived beliefs affect their decisions to about participating in PD activities. Thus, because these beliefs are created over time by past experiences, understanding the PD culture of a specific institution’s faculty is not easy.

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

Identifying Participants

The study aimed to survey at least 200, and interview at least 6-8, community college faculty from various community colleges. Participants were all employed as faculty and had taught for between one to five years. The researcher used the resources of the Doctorate in

Community College Leadership (DCCL) program at Ferris State University to identify community college faculty to participate in the survey, and from the survey, using those who self-identified to select participants for the interview process.

Collecting Data

There were two phases of data collection for this research. The first phase consisted of a 16-question online survey with questions relating to the faculty member's institution, their teaching experience, their available PD opportunities, the campus culture for PD, the PD resources available to faculty, and the participant's motivation for participating in PD. The second phase of the research included semi-structured interviews with self-identified individuals. Interview questions emerged from the survey and were open-ended. The five questions asked participants:

1. What constitutes professional development for you?
2. What is your perception of professional development on your campus? Why?
3. What are your motivating factors for participating in professional development events?
4. What do you perceive as barriers to professional/faculty development?
5. As a community college faculty member, has your perception of and or participation in professional development impacted your teaching?

Analyzing the Data

After the data collection, descriptive statistics were used to explain the outcomes. The survey was administered using Google Forms, which calculated statistical analysis based on demographics, teaching status, experiences, tenure, and institution. The interviews were conducted using the online meeting system Zoom and telephone conference calls. Once the

data were collected, a comprehensive list of themes emerged in experiences, beliefs/ perceptions, actions, accountability, and campus culture.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This mixed-method study examined community college faculty throughout the United States with the intent to understand their perception of the value of and barriers to professional development opportunities at their institution. To improve teaching effectiveness, student learning, and student success, research indicates that community colleges must become more connected with the needs of their faculty. Effective professional development activities can provide these connections and help community colleges achieve their institutional mission.

Because faculty PD can have an essential impact on the campus culture and the learning environment, PD support services must be well designed and intentional. This study could significantly impact the community college's ability to focus their PD efforts on what is necessary and not on educated guessing of what faculty need.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following list defines the key terms used throughout the research. The definitions cited served as the basis for creating themes and subthemes for this research.

Professional Development (PD)	The growth and development of individual faculty in their professional roles.
Faculty Development (FD)	The wide range of activities and resources that institutions apply to support faculty members' roles.

Organizational Development	The needs, priorities, and organization of the institution.
Full-time Faculty	Instructional faculty members with annual contracts who are also considered regular full-time employees with benefits. This means they earn an annual salary, benefits, and the opportunity for long-term job security. Some may be on a tenure track.
Adjunct Faculty	An adjunct faculty member is someone hired under a contract to teach a specific class. Generally, they are not paid retirement or other benefits.
Instructional Development	The development of faculty skills involving instructional technology, micro-teaching, media, courses, and curricula.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This initial chapter provided the background for this study, a discussion about the importance of professional development, and an overview of the research presented here. The remaining chapters will further support the analysis. Chapter Two will synthesize the research and literature on the significance of PD, the perceptions of faculty principles on PD, and effective practices for PD. This chapter will also examine the body of literature on faculty attitudes and perceptions, explicitly focusing on the few studies that discuss faculty attitudes towards professional development. Chapter Three details the research methodology used to address the perceptions of PD from community college faculty. Chapter Four presents the study's findings. Finally, Chapter Five summarizes the findings, discusses the study's implications, and offers recommendations for future research on faculty perceptions of PD in a community college setting.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Faculty members in the 21st-century have unique professional development and support needs, especially in teaching and learning. Professional development is a vital aspect of addressing the satisfaction and motivation of community college faculty. This study adds to the existing literature on the perceptions of community college faculty on professional development. Faculty members' perceptions and attitudes regarding professional development are likely to be conflicted and diverse. This study aims to uncover what these faculty members currently believe about professional development for teaching to inform practices in teaching centers, to suit faculty needs better, and encourage their participation.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, community colleges with professional development centers have served a crucial role in updating instructional practices in campus departments for conventional courses and innovative program formats. This chapter includes a literature review encompassing perceptions of professional development from a community college faculty perspective. However, due to the limited amount of research-based in community colleges within the past ten years, the literature includes research completed both at community colleges and four-year institutions. The research regarding faculty perceptions and attitudes about various aspects of higher education was examined to gain a broader perspective and understanding of how faculty view issues such as teaching, training, and professional development.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DURING COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound and rapid impact on higher education institutions across the world. The coronavirus outbreak has become a significant disruption to colleges and universities across the country, with most institutions canceling in-person classes and moving to online-only instruction (Smalley, 2020). Similarly, with the disruption to social gatherings presented by the coronavirus, there is increased planning for the use of online

learning and training as a continuity plan for most universities and schools (Moore & Hodges, 2020). Moreover, it seems professional development may have taken a back seat to the many demands and emergencies facing organizations in the pandemic era, especially in the higher education sector (Falcone, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic sent shock waves through the entire higher education system on a global scale. As the virus spread, city, regional, and national lockdown orders were put into place worldwide. With stay-at-home orders and physical distancing orders prohibiting larger gatherings, decisions to cancel, postpone, or move in-person PD activities came within a matter of days for most community colleges (Johnson, et.al., 2020). Since March 2020, an increase of blog posts, editorials, and short reports emerged, highlighting the challenges and anxieties faced by faculty, administration, and institutions as decisions were made about whether, and/or how, to provide continuity of education and PD as COVID-19 cases continue to rise (Judy, 2020; Morgan, 2020; Reed, 2020). These forums discussed topics ranging from managing inequities and student needs, supporting faculty teaching online for the first time, sharing faculty and student experiences, and the implications for institutions in the short and long term (Lederman, 2020, Mckenzie, 2020, Gurung 2020).

No matter what barriers exist, faculty professional development needs to be supported by systemic actions and support structures (Sorcinelli, 2007). There is a need for systemic backing to launch and sustain the new forms of teaching and learning that may be required, and these supports may be needed not only at the institutional level but also at the state level (Amour, 2020).

FACULTY PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

According to the literature, it is frequently perceived that faculty are enthusiastic PD participants. Scherer's (2006) research focused on four respected teachers from a large suburban district who discussed their professional concerns. The study indicated that faculty naturally seek opportunities to participate as students and automatically embrace the teaching offered if relevant to their current situation. Further discussion included a debate about the definition of highly qualified faculty. Policymakers argued about what matters more, content knowledge, instructional techniques, or knowledge about how students learn. However, they rarely note that all three kinds of knowledge are necessary for a highly qualified teacher to possess. Regardless, it was determined that the opinions of highly qualified faculty are rarely considered when determining what helps improve their instruction in areas of PD (Scherer, 2006).

Research conducted by Gow (2014) indicated that educators desire a few basic things from their professional development encounters and working lives. Those fundamental factors included faculty wishing to be taken seriously, being good at their work, and being inspired, and being supported to become even better faculty. They also want both warm personal relationships and professional recognition through their jobs (Gow, 2014).

Many studies target specific faculty members in medicine, pharmacy, or teaching at various higher educational institutions. Some researchers focused on faculty members' perceptions of and attitudes towards other programs and policies on campus within those studies. However, this aspect is not directly relevant to the subject of professional development. Those studies show some techniques for gaining insight into faculty perceptions.

For example, a study conducted by Chaubey & Kala, 2015) investigated the attitude of 124 faculty members working in professional institutions toward PD and their perceived outcomes. The researchers identified five critical factors related to faculty attitude for such development programs. Those five factors consist of:

1. Academic and personal improvement
2. Motivation to participate in PD activities
3. Job-oriented objectives towards PD
4. Management attitude toward PD
5. Obstacles in attending PD activities

Studies that focused on institutions showing a commitment to faculty success and satisfaction noted that the organization offered support in some form of PD. Eagan, Jaeger, and Grantham (2015) note that PD was an essential strategy for improving satisfaction. However, limited research focuses on faculty members' perceptions of and attitudes towards professional development for teaching. Reviewing this literature regarding the perception of faculty members for participating in faculty development activities, it was found that there are several factors such as institutional support, work pressure, lack of internal motivation, financial constraints which hinder faculty members from participating in such activities (Chaubey & Kala, 2015).

From these discussions and studies, calls for changes in the thoughts and attitudes of faculty regarding PD and the regular training and development, including teaching realities that affect the quality of teaching performance, were addressed. One of those changes suggested hiring prospective faculty more carefully. Hence, for community colleges to enhance the quality

of faculty teaching, there must be an understanding of the professional development needs from a faculty viewpoint (Amour, 2020).

The overall faculty perception of PD is that students benefit when faculty develop their teaching practice. A study by Amaro-Jimenez (2020) aimed to identify why faculty seek professional development (PD), barriers to addressing classroom needs, and the benefit of PD in developing an understanding of classroom diversity at community colleges. Data from over 400 survey participants indicated a desire for classroom and online engagement activities. Faculty described PD as facilitating building a community of peers engaged in student success while better understanding shifting demographics (Amaro-Jimenez, et al., 2020).

INSTITUTIONAL BENEFITS OF FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is essential to know the lasting impact of any PD on faculty based on their needs. Faculty must be both content experts as well as skilled in engaging students. At the same time, they learn to think critically through the process of active learning (Chickering & Gamson, 1987), particularly at the community college where active, lifelong learning is emphasized (O'Banion, 1997). As O'Banion emphasizes, this is why it is essential for faculty to view PD as a critical tool and take advantage of the available PD resources.

Researchers have agreed that PD is vital for educators and should be considered an integral component of their work (Darling-Hammond & Young, 2002; Mizell, 2010). These researchers also agree that PD is, however, not an easy task. Simply stated, professional development for faculty could be defined as the methods faculty use to improve their craft. It requires supportive institutional leadership, appropriate resource allocation, and recognition

for teaching excellence. Many scholars in the field of education believe that professional development for educators would benefit community college faculty and should be required to some extent (Van Note Chism & Szabo, 1998, Coffey & Gibbs, 2000; 2001; Kucsera & Svinicki, 2010;).

According to Sharvashidze & Bryant (2011), providing effective professional development is essential for creating education reforms in current demand. According to research by Sharvashidze & Bryant (2011) and Condon et al., (2016), faculty must continually work and receive training to stay at the forefront of good teaching practices to prepare students for their educational needs. The continued PD of faculty is both a necessity and a challenge for community colleges. Community college faculty spend the most significant portion of their professional time devoted to teaching. They also serve on committees and provide service to their colleges in several ways that vary from department to department. Only recently, including Condon et al.'s (2016) study, has research established a connection between faculty PD and student success.

Ruckers (2018) suggests the buck stops with the faculty, or so we are frequently told, and that is why schools and some institutions have invested almost \$18,000 per teacher on training and professional development. Ruckers (2018) revealed research that shows what kind of PD *does* translate into better student outcomes. Summarized below is Ruckers' list of the six biggest downfalls of "status quo" professional development:

1. Faculty being treated as passive learners
2. PD happening periodically and covering a variety of topics
3. PD involving no ongoing support from an instructional expert

4. PD not being tailored to individual problems of practice
5. PD without space for faculty to reflect on their practice
6. PD that does not measure its impact on student learning

Many faculty members, both current and former, have experienced one or many of these PD downfalls. However, Ruckers (2018) specified good news that many faculty have also engaged in some form of PD that worked for them specifically and improved learning for their students. Ruckers emphasized that it is important to turn those instances into the new status quo with fewer workshops and more intentional application of practices proven to help faculty grow.

Research by Mohr (2020) revealed that faculty believe in lifelong learning and skill development, which helps students, but faculty do not want to waste their time on PD offerings that fail to meet their needs and interests. Mohr's research emphasized that faculty are looking for PD that includes personalized, transferrable information that will specifically cater to their needs and can be used immediately. Faculty appreciate the opportunity to engage with their peers, as well as being able to utilize the information available for learning on demand. The research stressed that the opportunity to engage as an active or passive learner could potentially lead to collaborative innovation.

EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Many researchers have studied various elements representing effective professional development (Guskey, 2009; Garet et. al., 2016). The characteristics that affect the effectiveness of PD are numerous and highly intricate. The most commonly supported elements identified by educational experts as improving the quality and effectiveness of PD include:

- Content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge based on the best available research evidence
- Incorporation of principles of adult learners
- Relevance and focus (i.e., results-driven)
- Standards-based
- Ongoing and continuous
- Embedded in day-to-day responsibilities
- Aligned with institution-wide improvement goals
- Collaborative and collegial and
- Provides opportunities for discussion, reflection, and follow-up. (Guskey & Yoon, 2009)

When PD trainers, developers, and administrators consider the elements mentioned earlier, it allows room for faculty growth in content knowledge and understanding. Guskey & Yoon (2009) also indicated that when PD is being developed, the college's faculty trainers, deans, and chairs must consider helping faculty become more effective teachers and have activities to demonstrate how they can improve the institution's commitment to student success.

Effective PD is key to faculty learning and improving the pedagogies required to teach these skills. According to Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner (2017), generally, faculty PD opportunities have tended to cluster into five categories:

1. Campus Semester Starts
2. Gatherings on campus for flex days
3. Department meetings
4. Informal conversations among colleagues

5. Formal conferences off-campus

Gow (2014) stated effective PD programs are not simply those that allow any interested faculty to attend a conference here or take a course there. While these opportunities serve individual needs, they may represent a significant investment in only a few faculty, without any connection to the college's larger mission or strategic goals.

One such study conducted by Badri et al. (2016) focused on better understanding faculty perceptions of professional development needs and impacts and the barriers faced by faculty from secondary schools. Faculty were questioned about the obstacles to taking advantage of more professional development. The study's findings suggest that the structure and type of professional development offered in institutions can affect the degree to which faculty feel PD meets their needs. The authors also recommended that further research was needed to be related to the restructuring of PD opportunities to further faculty engagement, investment, and the ability for long-term involvement with a particular issue. They suggested that faculty find most opportunities for engagement when they have the chance to select among a menu of topics and to customize their PD experiences to their experience, prior knowledge, and student populations. Notably, this may be accomplished by allowing the faculty to complete various distinguished PD activities, providing a choice of face-to-face workshops, or some other means such as online workshops (Maria & García, 2016). This research has implications for professional development providers to ensure the effectiveness of PD opportunities for educators. To fully grasp the role of PD on the community college campus, it is essential to explore how faculty members feel about these initiatives. As Glaveski (2019) stressed,

professional development can expand faculty effectiveness and lead academic transformation on campuses when appropriately implemented.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAMPUS CULTURE

Reporting on the status of PD, Murray (2002) suggested there needs to be an attitude adjustment which is crucial in achieving a paradigm shift on community college campuses. Tagg (2012) suggests faculty choices are made based on how they interpret change that will affect them. Personal and cultural influences may account for the difference. Gow (2014) stressed that, along with ensuring faculty have adequate PD opportunities, it is imperative to incorporate a PD campus culture built around a focused and mission-driven approach to teaching and professional development. Condon, et al. (2016) emphasized that Institutional culture has a significant impact on whether a faculty member is willing to change, reflecting Bolman & Deal (2017)'s definition of culture "as the way we do things around here" and their research showing that institutional culture has a significant impact on the way people view their roles and subsequent behavior.

Research by Guskey (2014) indicated high satisfaction among faculty who feel that their work is aligned with their college's values. When expectations are developed as part of the campus culture, the college community gives faculty an overall sense of success. Extensive research by Gow (2014) noted that keeping faculty invested in PD serves the college campuses' needs just as much as it does their aspirations and growth needs, which are also important. For PD to be valuable, it must be universal, meaning flexible, for existing levels of expertise where no faculty can be overlooked or excused. Gow also indicated that while good PD acknowledges

individual capacities and goals, it holds everyone to high standards of participation and implementation.

Effective PD programs put resources where they will do the best for the most faculty and the college and its experience. More complex is the matter of PD culture within the community college setting. Also, according to Gow (2014), faculty invited into the process of moving a college forward are likely to become even more invested in improving the overall quality of their teaching. This kind of participation in campus-wide thinking is itself a kind of professional development and a potent tool for community colleges looking to improve what their faculty are doing in the classroom and how faculty view themselves within the profession of education.

The authors Weaver, Burgess, Childress, and Slakey (2016) suggested faculty are influenced by their knowledge about new teaching activities and approaches, how new methods will fully improve student learning, their satisfaction with their current facilitation, and access to peer support. Another study by Weaver et al. (2016) determined that cultural aspects, colleague and department interest in change, college incentives or lack thereof, and status, shape faculty decisions regarding PD. Thus, adopting new PD activities can positively impact faculty self-efficacy and their belief to help foster student success and improve instructional practice (Haras et al., 2017). Further, Haras, Taylor, Sorcinelli, and von Hoene (2017) show that faculty participation in PD activities certainly affects classroom pedagogy, student learning, and the overall culture of teaching and learning in a community college setting.

CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

Guskey's research (2009) indicated a significant problem with PD programs because faculty often express that these programs are inadequate in serving their needs and that there is little effect on student achievement afterward. Shagrir (2010) also reported that teacher faculty rarely engage in PD that advances at a steady and predictable pace while working as educators. They contend that the factors that influence PD led them to negative and unsupportive feelings due to the hindering nature of the courses in which they were involved. (Shagrir, 2010).

Many believe that the intensity of participation in PD activities is partially a function of the backing that faculty get to participate in them or the type of barriers they encounter (Avalos, 2011; Mahmoudia, & Özkana, 2015). Other cited barriers to their fulfillment include time, accessibility, staff motivation, marketing and advertising, and financial issues (Badri et al., 2016).

The availability of collaboration, time, long-term commitment, and resources are important for the successful implementation of professional development (Maria & García, 2016). Haras (2018) studied the positive perception of PD colleges and universities. They indicated a need to recognize that although faculty professional development is key to encouraging and supporting instructors' adoption of research-tested instructional ideas and strategies, it is but one of a collection of influences that affect faculty members' approaches to teaching and having a broader perspective on PD activities (Haras et al., 2017).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODELS

Joyce & Showers (1982) shared experts' opinions that traditional forms of PD are a waste of time. This view indicated that lectures, workshops, and other conventional forms of information delivery and training are too top-down and detached from classroom realities to facilitate faculty. Although much of this criticism is probably warranted, many of these cases followed the well-known model of theory-demonstration-practice, feedback, and follow-through advocated by Joyce and Showers (1982).

Sparks and Loucks-Horsey (1989) developed five models of PD. The five models of PD were identified that could be used for educators to enhance their performance. They include:

- Individually guided professional development
- Observation/assessment
- Involvement in curriculum development
- Training
- Inquiry

In summarizing each model, Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) suggest these five models help accomplish the goals of PD. Their summary of each step provides essential elements that create unique learning experiences for faculty and staff development. The models require observations and assessments of the educator's performance.

- The individually guided model requires the individual educator to assess their strengths and weaknesses and self-prescribe staff development.
- The observation model relies on an outside observer to evaluate a lesson and suggest professional development.
- The curriculum development or school improvement model allows the professional development to be aligned with the institution's improvement plan and stay within the boundaries of the college's policies and procedures.

- The training model distinguishes itself as a one-time session with no follow-up.
- The inquiry model begins with data being collected and an action plan being developed with follow-up observations and evaluations of the action plan.

Along with the Results Pyramid Model, several models support PD's emphasis on teaching, thinking, and learning. Guskey (2009) reported that student learning does not automatically follow PD and that successful PD will follow five levels: "participant's reactions, participant's learning, organizational support and change, participant's use of new knowledge and skills, and the intended student learning outcome" (p. 4).

The National Staff Development Council, currently known as Learning Forward (2012), offered guidelines for PD. The guidelines stated PD fosters collective responsibility for improved student performance and must be comprised of professional learning that:

- is aligned with rigorous state student academic achievement standards and related local educational agency and school improvement goals
- is conducted among educators at the school and facilitated by well-prepared school principals and/or school-based professional development coaches, mentors, master teachers, or other teacher leaders
- primarily occurs several times per week among established teams of teachers, principals, and other instructional staff members where the teams of educators engage in a continuous cycle of improvement that—evaluates student, teacher, and school learning needs through a thorough review of data on teacher and student performance. (Learning Forward, 2012, p. 1)

As Burns' 2014 research indicated, the above models represent a shift in the psychology, pedagogy, and pace of current standards of PD. They show that instruction and support for faculty must be characterized by perseverance, practice, and patience if faculty learning is deep and sustained. Garrett (2017) stated that professional development is a way for teachers to enhance their knowledge base of instructional and developmental strategies to employ with students.

THE VALUE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY

When done well, PD is valuable because it leads to improved student success, leading to faculty growth and quality practice. Guskey (2009) indicated that since faculty have so many duties and responsibilities in and out of the classroom, PD is necessary to stimulate professional growth so that faculty are supported and are not struggling to address the needs of students. Guskey also stated that a constant finding in the research is that notable improvement in education rarely occurs when PD is void. To ensure effective teaching in every classroom, educators must have opportunities each day to refine and expand their practice, reflect on how their practice impacts student learning, and engage in ongoing improvement to address learning challenges in the classroom environment (Chung Wei, Darling-Hammond, & Adamson, 2010).

Cox (2015) expressed that educators must have professional development options to sharpen classroom engagement skills, expand their knowledge base, and share best practices. Quality PD can lead to critical qualitative outcomes such as creating a positive campus culture, improving individual faculty skills, and developing opportunities for peer learning (Willemse, Dam, Geijsel, van Wessum, & Volman, 2015). Research by Meissel et al., (2016) indicated that faculty learn best through professional development that addresses their needs. Professional development should provide an important tactic for improving the campus culture, increasing faculty quality, and improving student learning (Opfer, Pedder, & Lavicza, 2011; Girvan, Connelley, & Tangney, 2016; Witte & Jansen, 2016).

MOTIVATION

While motivation and behavior can be energetic and hard to predict, an understanding of the factors that motivate faculty to engage in PD programs could help in understanding their perception of PD and in designing and implementing effective PD programs that would result in enhanced faculty job performance and satisfaction, as well as in the improvement of student learning outcomes (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995). Motivation and sustainability are essential factors for PD leaders to consider in promoting faculty development and growth. Efficiency at doing a particular task, or participating in PD activities, is strongly influenced by how motivated the faculty are.

Faculty motivation to participate and ultimately apply what was learned in PD activities is not consistent. Still, it is a crucial factor in improving student success, and according to Hardre (2012), “motivations demonstrate responsiveness to workplace characteristics as faculty perceive and interpret them” (p. 539). Various approaches to PD motivation in the community college might appeal, depending on the faculty’s personal preference, area of teaching expertise, and or departmental needs. Community college faculty members often find themselves divided between what they want to do and what they can do. Knowing what motivates faculty to engage in professional development and productive scholarly activities provides critical information for administrators (Hardre, 2012). Hardre stressed that because community colleges take pride in their reputation as teaching institutions, understanding that well-prepared, motivated, and enthusiastic faculty are key to a successful college.

Equally important, a study by Flaherty (2018) examined faculty motivation for teaching, indicating that certain kinds of inspiration, both intrinsic and based on a belief that teaching is

important, are linked to best teaching practices across institution types. However, rewards and guilt appear to have no bearing on best practices (Flaherty, 2018). Hardre's (2012) study explored the motivational characteristics of community college faculty focusing on three key professional activities: (a) basic or applied research, (b) classroom action/teaching research, and (c) faculty professional development. Findings indicated that community college faculty are motivated for all three activities primarily by intrinsic and value-related factors rather than extrinsic or relative factors.

Similarly, Kelley (2015) stated that to influence the change through motivation, there must be a visualization of the change for people and utilizing physical and other cues, including vivid storytelling, to help reinforce that the change is desirable. Ultimately, the desired state is to help people see, feel, and believe in the new way of doing things. Further, faculty members present somewhat different motivational profiles. Their motivations also demonstrate responsiveness to workplace characteristics as faculty perceive and interpret them. These findings provide implications to help college administrators make policy decisions to support faculty work and align with institutional mission and goals.

ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Administrators and PD leaders within the community college can play a vital role in faculty PD and growth (Mizell, 2010). According to Darling-Hammond, et al. (2017), while it is true that faculty seek out PD opportunities independently that are exciting and motivational to them, PD leaders and administrators have an invaluable role to play in delivering the type of effective PD that is based on a shared vision and goals for student success that is collaborative,

engaging, collegial, and focused on valuable change. To motivate faculty, combine effective leadership with satisfying faculty needs, treat them fairly, reward classroom success based on feedback, observe performance, and apply effective discipline.

Creating and nurturing a productive learning environment for faculty represents a leadership role that community college administrators/leaders should embrace for motivational support of successful professional development (Read, 2019). Understanding the perceived value of PD and the motivation of faculty attending PD programs will inform community college leaders regarding the diverse needs of faculty. It may help modify the policy, design, and implementation of PD programs or activities.

GAPS IN EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LITERATURE

Joyce and Showers (1982) stated that, on the whole, most researchers agree that PD programs typically have weak effects on teaching because they lack focus, intensity, follow-up, and continuity. In these cases, neither individual nor organizational activities are closely linked to the goals for student performance. Even where there is a substantive link, it is suggested that inconsistency and lack of follow-up weaken potential effects on teaching from a PD standpoint.

Gibbs and Coffey (2004) interviewed faculty; the study focused on the effectiveness of university faculty training involving 22 universities in 8 countries, discovering that their attitudes varied between departmental training and PD programs. A training group of faculty and their students were studied at the start of their training and one year later. Though often snubbed and viewed with criticism within academic departments, training was embraced and seen as opportunities within other training programs (Gibbs & Coffey, 2004).

Guskey (2009) stated that the reason there is so little good research on effective professional development is partly due to the sheer difficulty of the task and the fact that sustained and methodologically rigorous studies of professional development can consume considerable time and resources and require significant cooperation from practitioners at all levels to gather factual data. Both educational improvement and effort seriously jeopardize the chances of faculty PD success. Guskey also noted a gap between beliefs about the characteristics of effective professional development and the evidence possessed to validate those beliefs. The variance was noted by cognitive psychologists, who suggested there were no substantial gains in educational reform until it is understood why faculty members may resist change (Tagg, 2012).

Professional development has become an expectation in today's higher educational system. The primary areas where faculty and administrators identified a need for PD assistance were in the related areas of student support, greater access to online digital materials, and guidance for working from home. According to researchers, including Johnson et al. (2020), this may be an area for future investigation, as researchers could probe issues around the pandemic and training topics surrounding online learning preparedness, faculty development, inequities across institutions, institutional responses, to mention some.

SUMMARY

Murray (2002) stated that faculty are content experts, primarily trained in their area of expertise. However, PD is necessary to enhance teaching and learning. Research demonstrates that what faculty know and practice influence how students learn. As previously established,

supporting faculty through PD enhances student learning and teaching excellence. By its very nature, faculty PD programs provide necessary and relevant training. The topic of PD has generated a great deal of literature, resulting in requests for renewed efforts to provide appropriate pedagogical professional development. However, few studies examine faculty attitudes and perceptions of faculty PD programs. That research has revealed that many programs are ineffective and often resented by faculty (Murray, 2002).

Faculty perception of professional development was discussed in this literature review. The literature introduced discussed various methods used in PD practice and the faculty's perception. Professional development that keeps faculty invested serves the college's needs just as much as it does the faculty's aspirations and growth needs. Gow (2014) indicated that, for PD to be valuable, it must also be universal (adjusted, perhaps, for existing levels of expertise); no faculty can be overlooked or excused. Good PD occurs when individual capacities and goals are acknowledged and holds all faculty and staff to high standards of participation and implementation (Gow, 2014). Emphasis is also placed on attitude. In addition to "good" PD, professional development is also linked to a positive attitude. A positive attitude allows people to gain confidence and develop a more qualified professional (Lozada Negrón, 2016).

The support and encouragement received from PD programs may have contributed to positive change within the community college systems. Lozada Negrón (2016) currently noted faculty who are committed teachers know that it leads them to increase academic achievement in students when they learn. In turn, they continue to develop appropriate and successful practices within the community college environment. Thus, consideration of faculty attitudes is

relevant because positive attitudes and perceptions encourage change and lead to greater efficacy of faculty development programs (Haras, et.al, 2017).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This mixed-method study investigated the perceptions of community college faculty on professional development. Research has shown that professional development (PD) is an essential resource on community college campuses and may positively influence the faculty's personal and professional growth (Mizell, 2010). Since there is little development and research on community college faculty experiences of PD perception, the study described and analyzed faculty members' perceptions, including what motivates community college faculty to take advantage of PD and the perceived barriers to participation. This chapter details the purpose of a mixed-method study, the research approach and design, subject selection, data collection, analysis, limitations, and delimitations while seeking to understand faculty perception of professional development in a community college setting.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This study aimed to investigate community college faculty's perception of professional development at various community colleges within the United States. The study aimed to identify if faculty perception influenced whether an individual engaged in PD activities or training in higher education. This study is based on previous research showing that professional development is beneficial to faculty when utilized (Coffey & Gibbs, 2000, 2001; Van Note

Chism, Lees & Evenbeck, 2002). PD leaders who work to integrate faculty into the social fabric of the community college while also providing institutional support will benefit from knowing how faculty think about PD activities concerning their professional learning and development. Additionally, the perceptions of faculty teaching in community college settings can lead to improvements in faculty development programming.

Research shows that faculty who engage in PD are more likely to create classrooms that result in positive outcomes and academic success (Mizell, 2010). However, increasing faculty involvement with PD activities and attending such activities remains challenging despite knowing this information.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was conducted using a mixed-methods approach. This mixed methods research study includes qualitative and quantitative viewpoints and applied data analysis and inference techniques to assess the faculty's knowledge and perceptions about PD. Methods included using a survey instrument that mixed open-ended and closed-ended questions integrated and analyzed (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). Considerations had timing, weighting, and mixing when choosing an appropriate design (Creswell, 2014). The research addressed personal experiences, often best captured through qualitative analysis (Creswell, 2014). In addition, there was also a need to quantify the different experiences of the faculty. This portion of the study lent itself to a quantitative analysis.

The results were enriched with added breadth and depth by utilizing survey and interview data while offsetting the weaknesses inherent in using each approach alone. This

design helped gain a better understanding of perceptions in professional development from a faculty standpoint. The research design consisted of two phases.

Phase 1: Surveys were sent to community college faculty members from across the country. The online survey was emailed to a purposive sample of participants. Potential participants were initially filtered by the number of years they self-reported having taught at a community college. Those with teaching experience within the past five years were prompted to continue with the survey. If they had not taught in this time period, they were asked not to continue.

Phase 2: In this project phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted through an online meeting platform, Zoom, and by telephone. These interviews were held with a selected group of survey participants to elicit more detailed information. The researcher asked participants to respond to a series of open-ended interview questions related to their perceptions, experiences, and observations of professional development while teaching at a community college. The researcher asked follow-up questions during the interview to encourage elaboration and clarification. Discussions were all digitally recorded for accuracy and were designed to last about 10-20 minutes.

Once a survey participant agreed to participate in the interview portion, the interview was scheduled; verbal agreement to the study parameters was needed to proceed with the interview. There were no known risks associated with this study because the data collection process protected the participant's identity. Any sensitive information that was provided was (upon request) omitted from any written documents. Each participant had an opportunity to ask any questions before consent was given. Participants were assigned pseudonyms for those

who participated in the interview phase (interview participant 1, interview participant 2, etc.). This was done to maintain the participants' privacy, and records of participation were not shared with others.

The specific design that best addressed this research problem and is the most common and well-known approach to mixed methods research is triangulation. This approach aims to obtain different but complementary data using various forms on the same topic of faculty perceptions of professional development to understand best the research problem (Morse, et al., 2002).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Several behavior modification frameworks describe the effect of performance expectations, modification efforts, and results, including the Six Boxes framework from Carl Binder (2012), the Six Sources of Influence framework from VitalSmarts (Patterson, 2016), and the Results Pyramid® from Partners in Leadership (PIL, 2019). There is significant overlap in such models, with each basically starting with the desired performance changes, results, or outcome shifts and working backward (Kelley, 2015). This research study used the Results Pyramid® as its theoretical framework. By applying this conceptual framework to PD, the researcher will attempt to identify and categorize the numerous factors influencing faculty perceptions about PD activity.

Research conducted by the Partners in Leadership Group (PIL) and the authors of *Change the Culture, Change the Game*, Connors, and Smith (2011) define the four components of the pyramid, which are experiences, beliefs, actions, and results (see Figure 1). Those beliefs

lead to specific actions, which, in turn, drive results. *Change the Culture, Change the Game* provides the methodology and approach needed to shift culture related to faculty perceptions of PD based on accountability and focusing on achieving key results. Defining the PD's intent and then applying the Results Pyramid® can help us better understand faculty perception of professional development on their perspective campuses.

In this study, the faculty's perceptions of PD are the focus of the research. Summarized, the Results Pyramid® model illustrates that the actions and perceptions of faculty produce the results achieved. Their beliefs drive the faculty perceptions about what they should do to develop as faculty members and why they should participate. Their previous experiences create these beliefs.

When faculty start at the bottom of the Results Pyramid® and work their way up, results are achieved faster, more efficiently, and most importantly, they are sustained. Thus, Connors and Smith use the Results Pyramid® to provide a helpful way of understanding culture and changing it.

The Results Pyramid® is a model of human behavior leaders use to make culture change happen effectively, accurately, and efficiently in an organization or team (PIL, 2019). These four categories were used in the thematic analysis of responses. This model is powerful for helping PD leaders to connect their actions and behaviors with the kinds of experiences they are creating for faculty and, therefore, the kind of PD culture they want to create on campus. The faculty perceptions, the focus of this research, reflect the value of the PD experiences and the institutional culture for professional development. Culture impacts the desired results, and the right approach to PD culture change accelerates that impact in a way that brings the game-

changing results (Connors & Smith, 2011). Connors & Smith also stated that when culture change is based on accountability and adopts a change process designed to produce the desired results, it creates a competitive advantage. Still, the tools also needed to sustain that advantage are acquired far into the future.

The Results Pyramid® framework focuses on the importance of building a culture of accountability. Faculty can accelerate the change and results that they seek by working with the bottom half of the pyramid (“beliefs” and “experiences”).

The framework of the Results Pyramid® incorporates a culture of accountability, which exists when we see faculty making the personal choice to take the steps to accountability. If everyone takes the Steps to Accountability, the college then moves towards a more positive approach that empowers faculty to begin starring in the solution (PIL, 2019). In a Culture of Accountability, faculty can work with PD leaders and then step forward and work hard to resolve problems and get results. This is done willingly, not because leadership is requiring them to do so. Applying the Results Pyramid® should be a conscious and deliberate campaign to create the best possible results-oriented culture. Shifting the way faculty think and act may be necessary because of a need for improved PD performance. The Results Pyramid® model will help understand and communicate what is needed to do each time change needs to be affected.

Using the Results Pyramid® framework begins by identifying that the faculty’s current set of PD perceptions, experiences, beliefs, actions, and results achieved an equilibrium or alignment, and then moving from the current state of balance or alignment to a new set of perceptions, experiences, beliefs, and actions will create a new equilibrium centered around

these recent results. When faculty identify that they want to move to the top of the pyramid, they start moving the pyramid base sequentially to the layers above it. In doing so, this upward movement prevents the pyramid from toppling over.

Ultimately, understanding faculty members' perceptions will help create professional development programs that better suit their needs. Transformational change is most often lasting and sustainable in achieving the desired new results when PD leaders work to change the beliefs and experiences that faculty have and ensuring that faculty begin having new PD experiences that lead to new beliefs that lead to further actions that ultimately support the desired new results (Kelley, 2015).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions in this study focus on faculty members' perceptions of PD on their community college campus and identify motivating factors and potential barriers. The research questions seek to understand perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and their context; both qualitative and quantitative approaches were necessary.

1. What are the faculty's perceptions of professional development at their community colleges?
2. What do the faculty perceive as barriers to their participation in faculty professional development activities?
3. What are the motivating factors for faculty to attend professional development activities in their community college?

PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Purposive sampling was used to identify potential survey and interview candidates. The participants were recruited via email through an invitation extended by Ferris State University's

Doctorate in Community College Leadership (DCCL) program to graduates and current students in the program. Anyone who met the participant criteria was asked to complete the survey; all recipients were asked to extend the invitation to colleagues who met the requirements. The study aimed to contact at least 200 community college faculty members and interview at least 6-8 of these faculty during the spring and fall 2020 semesters. A total of 77 survey responses were received, and eight interviews were conducted. The sample of faculty included community college representatives with direct knowledge of the focus in this research. The sample faculty also were former community college faculty who had experience and historical understanding of faculty professional development and who currently teach or have taught within the last five years.

The process of conversing with faculty who currently taught and had access to participate in PD activities was an important aspect in capturing the feelings and emotions associated with the experience. It was also believed that a timeframe of five years would allow participants to recall their PD experiences effectively.

DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The research study methodology provided tools to study the PD perception of faculty within their contexts. Research and data were obtained and analyzed, which assisted in evaluating PD events, workshops, training programs, and developing professional development departments and how they impacted faculty perceptions of PD. The foundational considerations for this approach were the use of a survey and interviews.

Data were collected during the 2020 spring and summer semesters. A survey and a semi-structured interview were used to collect data. Using this format allowed the respondents to expound and explore topics further based on the initial responses, looking for potential patterns (Creswell, 2014). The qualitative data were collected through a variety of sources during the study. They consisted of notes taken during interviews from which the original comments, observations, and feelings are reconstructed and text transcribed from a voice recorder. The first formal analytical step was documentation. The various contacts, interviews, and written documents were saved and listed. Documentation was critical to this mixed-method research for several reasons. It was essential to keep track of a rapidly growing volume of notes, tapes, and documents; it provided a way of developing and outlining the analytic process; it encouraged ongoing conceptualizing and strategizing about the text (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Phase 1: Survey of Faculty

The mixed-methods research design included an online survey consisting of 16 questions. The surveys were completed via Google Forms designed to take approximately 10-20 minutes to complete. The survey encompassed the following areas:

- Institution
- Experience
- Learning Opportunities
- Campus Culture
- Resources
- Motivation

- Availability for follow-up Interview

Participant Criteria

Participants were asked to self-select based on the following criteria:

- Faculty: Identified as either full-time or adjunct community college faculty
- Institution: Identified the school where currently teaching or previously taught as having a PD center
- Experience: Taught at a community college within the past five years; taught for more than one year

Phase 2: Follow-up Interviews

For this study, it was important to develop a qualitative interview process for expanding on the survey questions and gathering deeper data than the survey would allow on topics such as personal experiences, beliefs, perspectives, complex ideas, and cognitive processes (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Harris & Guillemin, 2012). Therefore, data were also collected through a follow-up semi-structured interview offered as an option for those who completed the survey and agreed to be interviewed voluntarily.

Flexibility was built into the data collection process by designing the survey to be completed online and conducting the interviews via telephone and an online meeting platform (Zoom). The semi-structured interview format was chosen because it allowed the opportunity to explore and expand and further clarify points made during the interview. This was also an opportunity to build rapport with the interviewees through follow-up questions.

DATA ANALYSIS

During the data collection process, it was important to integrate the data from both study phases in meaningful ways. The first step in collecting data was to compare the data that

emerged from the survey's open-ended questions and those from the interview data to determine where there was overlap. Then it was necessary to create a new, comprehensive list of themes from the qualitative data. Once the interview and survey data themes were combined, there came a higher level of integration. The qualitative data should be seen as the information that surrounds these findings and fills in the gaps, which then creates a fuller picture of what is happening in faculty members' lives and how these factors influence their perceptions and beliefs, which are at the center of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Descriptive statistics were used to explain the outcomes concerning the study items.

Results were tracked in Google Forms. Data from the survey and interviews were analyzed separately and then integrated. Because the survey was the first stage of the study, preliminary findings were used to frame the interviews with participants, and survey data were analyzed first. After the interviews were completed and analyzed, results were integrated to find patterns and relationships between and among the data.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

As reliability is a measured consistency, the project attempted to ensure reliability and validity to protect the data received. Ethical considerations were taken into account to provide guidelines for a responsible study. There were steps taken to assure the quality and reliability of the research. The validity and trustworthiness of the study were ensured by using an audit trail and peer review by other community college PD professionals who were knowledgeable on the topic. All of the raw data, analysis processes, and notes were kept to reconstruct the study if necessary.

Participation in the study was voluntary. Although the survey was conducted online and the interviews were via telephone and an online meeting platform, it is impossible to guarantee absolute anonymity. However, steps were taken to ensure the quality and dependability of the research and to assure the safeguard of the participant's identity. The participants were provided with a description of the study and the electronic consent form. They also had the option to opt-out at any time during both the survey and interview. These steps increased both the validity and dependability of the research.

Researcher Bias and Assumptions

During a brief time, the researcher was employed as the Manager of Professional Development at a community college and as an adjunct faculty member. The researcher interacted with faculty daily, which helped further shape her perceptions and understanding of the faculty participating in PD activities. These experiences affect how the study was designed, how the researcher interacted with participants, and the data analysis and interpretation.

Both background and demographics shaped how the researcher viewed this study. The researcher brought specific attitudes about PD and teaching to this research. To limit or reduce bias, the researcher did not interview anyone she knew and did not receive survey data from the campus from which she was employed.

Delimitations

This mixed-method study focused on faculty members who have participated in PD activities at community colleges throughout the United States. The delimitations of this research included the fact that the participants were part of a limited sampling method using

contacts through the Ferris State University Doctorate of Community College Leadership (DCCL) program network.

To fully explore the perceptions and experiences of faculty, a small sample size was used. Faculty who had not taught within the five years of the survey data were excluded from participating in the study. The analyses and recommendations of this research are directed to both full-time and adjunct faculty who taught at various community colleges throughout the United States.

The delimitations discussed here result from the methodology (the strengths / weaknesses of using surveys and interviews) (Creswell, 2014). It is assumed that the individuals shared their own felt expressions and did not simply provide the answers that would be considered acceptable. It is also believed that the faculty participants reported on their own thoughts and perceptions about professional development as they have personally experienced. Although care was put into constructing the survey instrument, the faculty's interpretation and perceptions might influence their responses.

Limitations

Initially, 200 faculty members were targeted to participate and complete the online survey; however, fewer responses were received because of the timing overlapping with the transition to home-based work because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this external factor that shaped the design of this project, everyone began doing work differently. In addition, during this time, many colleges closed their campuses, and many faculty members had to adjust to working and teaching from home using online modalities. Because of these events, the online survey was left open longer to allow additional faculty time to access and complete.

Also, some faculty who volunteered to complete the interview had to reschedule due to the obligations of sick family members and family emergencies.

SUMMARY

The researcher hopes that this research enriches our understanding of faculty perceptions of professional development opportunities and provides additional insight into identifying the professional development needs of community college faculty. This study's results may also help community colleges develop more robust and appropriate professional development programming for faculty by identifying potential barriers that inhibit participation and growth and, thus, contribute to improving PD opportunities to enhance teaching and learning.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

This mixed-methods study aimed to determine faculty perceptions of professional development in a community college setting. This chapter reports the findings from the study, which were gleaned through the participants' responses and identifying commonalities from the participants' experiences and perceptions.

In this chapter, each research question is reviewed individually regarding survey results, interview results, and analysis. Finally, related data are analyzed collectively across questions, and thematic analysis for applying the framework is discussed.

OVERVIEW OF STUDY: PARTICIPANTS AND INSTITUTION OVERVIEW

This study consisted of two phases to provide a broad understanding of faculty members' perception of professional development. Phase 1 consisted of an online survey that solicited responses from a diverse sample of 77 community college faculty from across the United States and identified participants for the study's second phase. Phase 2 involved interviews with six faculty members who completed the survey to obtain additional in-depth information about their perceptions about professional development opportunities and their value to their teaching.

Phase I: Survey Participant Profile

The participant pool consisted of faculty from community colleges throughout the United States. The survey was emailed to a purposive sample of participants who self-identified as community college faculty: 77 respondents completed the survey. Only participants who had taught at a community college within the last five years were included in the study. Phase 1 faculty participants were asked to identify their number of years of work experience in the community college (Table 1) and whether they are full-time or adjunct faculty. Most respondents, 71% (n=55), had taught for ten years or more. In addition, 69% (n=53) represented full-time faculty, and 31% (n=24) were adjunct faculty; 100% of the surveyed faculty indicated they had taught in a community college within the past five years. Those who identified they had not taught within the last five years were self-eliminated from the survey.

Table 1. Survey Participant Demographics: Faculty Status and Years Taught at Community College

FACULTY STATUS		YEARS TAUGHT AT COMMUNITY COLLEGE				
FULL-TIME	ADJUNCT	< 1	1	2-5	6-9	10+
53	24	0	0	8	14	55
69%	31%	--	--	10%	18%	71%

Phase 1: Survey Participant Demographics and Professional Development Participation

Table 2 illustrates the participating faculty's college location by geographical region within the United States. The results demonstrate that responses were collected from three geographical regions within the United States, with no participants from the eastern region. Thirty-five community colleges within the United States were represented in the survey, with the majority, 69% representing colleges from the midwest.

Table 2. Survey Participant Demographics: Geographic Location

STATE	REGION	NUMBER OF COLLEGES
Arizona	West	1
California	West	1
Illinois	Midwest	5
Indiana	Midwest	1
Michigan	Midwest	15
Ohio	Midwest	3
Tennessee	South	1
Texas	South	8

Of the survey participants, 64% reported that their college had an outlined professional development plan; 36.4% indicated they did not. Similarly, 75% of the participants (58 of 77) revealed their college does have a professional development department/center for faculty, and only 25% did not. Of that percentage, 57% (44 of 77) indicated they had visited the PD department within the past year (Table 3). The majority of the 77 participants, 95%, disclosed they received information regarding PD activities through email, with 52% receiving information from their PD websites.

One of the survey questions was a general question asking whether faculty were aware of professional development on their campus. The responses indicated that the vast majority of those who completed the survey were indeed aware of professional development activities on campus. In addition, the majority (92%) of respondents have attended some professional development programs on their campus in the past year (Table 4), from training and workshops to book discussions and round table discussions.

Table 3. Survey Participant Demographics: Visits to Campus PD Center

CAMPUS HAS PD CENTER		VISITED PD CENTER (ANNUAL)		MEANS OF AWARENESS		ATTENDED PD (ANNUAL)	
YES	NO	YES	NO	EMAIL	WEBSITE	YES	NO
58	19	44	17	73	40	71	6

(N = 77)

**Note: Participants identified all appropriate responses for these questions; thus, the totals may exceed 100%*

Table 4. Survey Participants: Campus PD Participation

ACTIVITIES	# OF PARTICIPANTS N=77	% (*)
Training and Workshops	71	92
Learning Management System	51	66
Webinars	45	58
New Faculty Orientation	44	57
Learning Faculty Communities	28	36
Round Table Discussions	24	31
Book Discussion	23	30
New Faculty Mentorship Program	22	29
Loaner Resources	20	26
Variety of Other Activities listed	12	1

**Note: Participants identified all PD opportunities that they had participated in; thus, the totals here exceed 100%*

Phase 2: Interview Participant Profile

The interview participants were chosen based on their willingness to further assist the researcher in gathering data. Of the 77 faculty who completed the Phase 1 survey, 34 individuals volunteered to continue participating in the study. Participation in this phase of the study was based on teaching experience in the community college setting. Within this sample, six faculty were randomly selected, focusing on years taught, employment status, and whether

they had a faculty development center on campus. The six interviewed faculty were all given pseudonyms that will be used throughout this study to protect their anonymity (Table 5).

Table 5. Interview Participant Demographics: Faculty Status, Geographic Location, and Campus PD Center

PSEUDONYM	YEARS TAUGHT	STATUS	STATE	REGION	PD CENTER ON CAMPUS
Interview Participant 1	10+	Full-time	Michigan	Midwest	No
Interview Participant 2	2	Adjunct	Texas	South	Yes
Interview Participant 3	10+	Full-time	Arizona	West	Yes
Interview Participant 4	6	Full-time	Ohio	Midwest	Yes
Interview Participant 5	6	Adjunct	Illinois	Midwest	Yes
Interview Participant 6	10	Adjunct	Michigan	Midwest	No

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study focused on faculty perceptions of PD, defining the value of PD to their work as faculty, identifying barriers that hinder them from participating in PD, and identifying sources of motivation for attending PD activities. The driving research questions on which this study is based were intended to address these elements of faculty participation in PD.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: WHAT ARE THE FACULTY’S PERCEPTIONS OF PD AT THEIR COMMUNITY COLLEGES?

This research question focused on identifying the participants’ views about professional development, that is, whether professional development activities are (1) valuable to them as a means of developing their teaching skills, (2) if the PD activities are offered when they need them, (3) if the PD activities are appropriate for them as faculty members, and finally (4) if they participate in the PD activities available to them.

Survey Results

In order to understand the perceptions of the survey respondents to professional development activities at their campus, survey participants were asked to rate the value of professional development at their institution and how frequently they participated in the professional development opportunities (table 6).

Table 6. Survey Participants: Value and Use of PD Learning Opportunities

IMPORTANCE OF PD					USE OF PD (EXTENT OF USE)			
Extremely	Imp.	Neutral	Somewhat	Not Imp.	Large	Moderate	Small	None
52	22	3	0	1	31	30	11	6
68%	29%	4%	--	1%	40%	39%	14%	8%

(N=77)

Interview Results

The interviewed faculty described their perceptions of the PD offered at their institution, first through their definitions of the role of faculty professional development. They also described the ways their institution supports PD for faculty, and they finally reflected on their overall satisfaction with the PD opportunities available at their institutions.

Definitions of PD

In defining effective PD, participants stressed both the content of the PD activities and the personal benefits:

Interview Participant 1: Professional development is providing the resources that we need to deliver the best teaching and learning experience for students, and that could be industry-specific or subject-specific, but also other development like technology training and safety training and communication.

Interview Participant 2: [PD is] the kind of training, be it formal or informal, that helps an individual grow and continue their development through their own desired career

path that may not necessarily be the traditional path that one might go down, but it's wherever they are going to take their next steps.

Interview Participant 3: Professional development would consist of activities to foster teaching at the college to strengthen services at the college to support student success.

Interview Participant 4: To me, PD is continuous growth in an area related to your job expertise or skills to do your job responsibilities, and I think it's a very broad term.

Availability of PD Opportunities

Interview participants described their access to their institution's PD activities by discussing the institution's financial support for external activities and also internal opportunities:

Interview Participant 1: Our professional development on our campus has gone through what I call waves or just different stages. Then there was a period several years ago, 5 to 7 years ago, where professional development drastically cut the funding. We were not provided with any professional development outside of campus.

Interview Participant 2: There are multiple ways: professional development funds, access to online professional development like LinkedIn Learning, and encouragement to attend conferences and networking events, etc.

Interview Participant 4: They are generous with funds and offer professional development seminars, online activities, and guest speakers on a regular basis. This is also required as part of our contract. The college encourages all faculty to participate and develop seminars to share on a wide variety of topics.

Interview Participant 6: We have a Center for Teaching and Learning that is faculty-led and driven. Not only is this a space to hold professional growth workshops, but the faculty director brings in people from in and out of the district. The college has professional growth funds for travel... if faculty choose to pay for the conference fees, faculty can apply for professional growth credits and receive a small increase in their pay. The college has a small pot of money for which faculty can apply for grant monies to work together and develop curriculum that is outside of their area (learning communities, cross-collaborative projects, etc.).

Satisfaction with PD Opportunities

Several of the participants' comments reflected mixed feelings about their institution's

PD activities and opportunities:

Interview Participant 1: I have high regard for our campus' professional development at this time. There's just more available to us from the entire group of faculty staff. We have the opportunity of getting together and having a group presentation on our campus while having specific topics unique to those needs that each of us has as professionals to develop further and learn and keep current.

Interview Participant 3: It depends on what the opportunities are. Many of ours are logistics trainings, like using Blackboard or clickers. I would love to be part of something like a Faculty Learning Community about how to teach number sense to adults.

Interview Participant 4: I love learning about new teaching strategies and tools. I want to continually improve my craft as an instructor to engage students and help them to be successful.

Interview Participant 5: Much depends on the content. Some professional development activities do not pertain to my needs or interests.

Interview Participant 6: Accessibility is a problem. Too many of these sessions are synchronous and not archived on video for sharing.

Research Question #1: Analysis

The participants in this study indicated that they have mixed perceptions of PD that has been offered at their respective colleges. They all recognized the value and purpose of PD because it targets their need for continuous growth and supports their desire to become more effective and well-rounded employees. Furthermore, participants identified a close relationship between the nature and quality of the professional development activities they participated in and their ability to implement teaching practices that support student success. On the other hand, they expressed a degree of dissatisfaction with the content, format, and scheduling of PD opportunities offered at their institutions. These data indicate that while faculty possess a

general understanding of the value and role of professional development, their experience has taught them that many of the resources and activities are not based on their specific needs. As Scherer (2006) found, these comments suggest that PD is rarely developed based on consideration of the tools and skills that faculty have identified as critical to improving their teaching skills.

RESEARCH QUESTION #2: WHAT DO FACULTY PERCEIVE AS BARRIERS TO THEIR PARTICIPATION IN FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES?

This research question focused on identifying the personal and institutional barriers that may keep faculty from participating in PD activities. Possible institutional barriers may include an unsupportive college culture, limited or inconvenient scheduling of PD opportunities, or leaders who do not encourage or support faculty PD. Potential personal barriers might consist of a lack of time, lack of interest, or a perception that PD is either not applicable to their work or a waste of their time.

Survey Results

Responses to the open-ended survey questions provided insight into barriers that limited faculty participation in their institution's PD activities. For example, one of the survey respondents commented that "PD on campus was geared mostly toward staff and not faculty" (Survey Participant D). Another commented on this exchange of ideas and said, "We desperately need more training for online learning" (Survey Participant H). Additional responses include the following:

Survey Participant A: I already have a full schedule and attend what I can for professional development. I am not sure I can fit more into my schedule.

Survey Participant B: It is difficult to put PD training into our already busy schedules but making opportunities easier always helps.

Survey Participant C: Having access to PD would have improved my teaching skills because I am not a trained teacher. I have work experience in Business that I share with my students; however, I need PD for building my courses and creating engaging content for my online courses. My focus is student success, which is directly related to my ability to teach.

Survey Participant D: Time commitment is the biggest piece. I work full-time at the college already in a professional/technical position, and all of this must be done outside of the regular workday. Managing professional development, adjunct teaching, a full-time job, and a family is tough.

Survey Participant E: The biggest issue is time and not access. We also need more funding for professional development. We need more time in our day to integrate professional development, reflection, and sharing opportunities. Without the time, it's hard to "do it all."

Interview Results

The interviewed faculty identified several barriers to their participation in their institution's PD opportunities:

Interview Participant 1: I think the funding or the lack of is considered a barrier at times.

Interview Participant 2: Time is a barrier; I think I have a really hard time making time to develop professionally because I didn't put much value into how important professional development is.

Interview Participant 3: Barriers would be time. I would do so much more if I just simply had more time and resources, which would allow me to be able to help if needed.

Interview Participant 4: One of the common barriers I've seen has been cost budgets being tight; when the economy is bad, the cost for sure is a factor. I think, too, there can be varying levels of support from leaders.

Interview Participant 5: The biggest barrier I can see laziness. Some people just don't want to take the time to do PD. They like the way they're doing things and have done them the same way and don't want to improve or change, and then lastly, time people don't want to prioritize.

Research Question #2: Analysis

Guskey's study (2009) identified the inadequacy of PD programming, particularly its failure to address student achievement, as a primary barrier to instructor participation in professional development activities. Although this study also identified the inability of PD programming to address such strategic instructional goals as promoting student achievement and success as a deterrent to faculty participation, this study identified other issues as erecting more formidable barriers. These issues include time constraints associated with scheduling PD activities and instructors' workload and teaching schedules. While Badri's study (2016) concluded that the lack of time, accessibility, staff motivation, marketing, advertising, and adequate funding had erected barriers to participation in PD activities, this study found that institutional and personal barriers exist. While most of these issues have been addressed, inadequate funding for stipends, conference attendance, PD resources, etc., represents a significant challenge.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: WHAT ARE THE MOTIVATING FACTORS FOR FACULTY TO ATTEND PD ACTIVITIES AT THEIR COMMUNITY COLLEGE?

This research question focused on what entices or motivates faculty to participate in PD activities. Possible motivators include rewards and recognition, compensation, personal satisfaction, increased student success, and working at a campus that fosters a PD culture.

Survey Results

Faculty responded to questions that provided insight into the factors that motivated them to participate in professional development activities. For example, the data demonstrates

the campus culture currently supporting PD (Table 7). They also indicated while supporting a campus culture, faculty are rewarded and recognized for participating in PD activities (Table 8).

Table 7. Campus Culture Supports Faculty Professional Development

YES	%	NO	%
62	81	15	20

Table 8. Faculty are Rewarded and Recognized for PD Participation

YES	%	NO	%
40	52	37	48

Survey participants also responded to open-ended questions expressing what they find necessary to be motivated to participate in PD activities:

Survey Participant E: Additional pay or stipends

Survey Participant F: I participate in professional development to continuously evolve and grow in the classroom to provide my students the best experience possible. I do not participate to receive recognition. I am a lifelong learner who loves to learn!!

Survey Participant G: The quality and relevance of the resources provided would influence my likeliness of using these resources. I would also consider the timeliness of the professional development, the cost (I've paid for some professional development registrations, travel, and meals out-of-pocket), location, and timing of the resources.

Survey Participant H: More access and more financial support to cover the costs of PD courses, conferences, etc.

Survey Participant I: Courses or workshops of interest to me personally or to improve my teaching skills or use of technology in instruction.

Interview Results

Interview participants identified and described the sources of motivation that prompted them to participate in professional development:

Interview Participant 1: Being educated and updated, I want to make sure that I have the most up-to-date information.

Interview Participant 3: I want to be part of the professional development process and be a better educator. I also want to be a better, stronger leader and more involved on campus.

Interview Participant 4: It is critical that professional development fosters continuous improvement.

Interview Participant 5: I jump at professional development activities when money is being offered. I also attend when the topic is of interest and one of my passions. It's also motivating when the session is recorded so I can go back and review at leisure.

Research Question #3: Analysis

According to the results linked to this research question, the key motivating factors that promote faculty participation in professional development are the presence of a campus professional development culture, the ability to earn rewards and recognition, personal and professional growth and development, and adequate funding. The majority of respondents (81%) concluded that the degree to which their college has created a culture of professional development caused them to value PD and positively impacted their willingness to take advantage of professional development opportunities (Table 7). This finding aligns with Gow's study (2014) on professional development. He highlighted how developing and incorporating a PD campus culture that centers on the relationship between teaching and professional development, primarily related to realizing the institution's mission, increases willingness to participate.

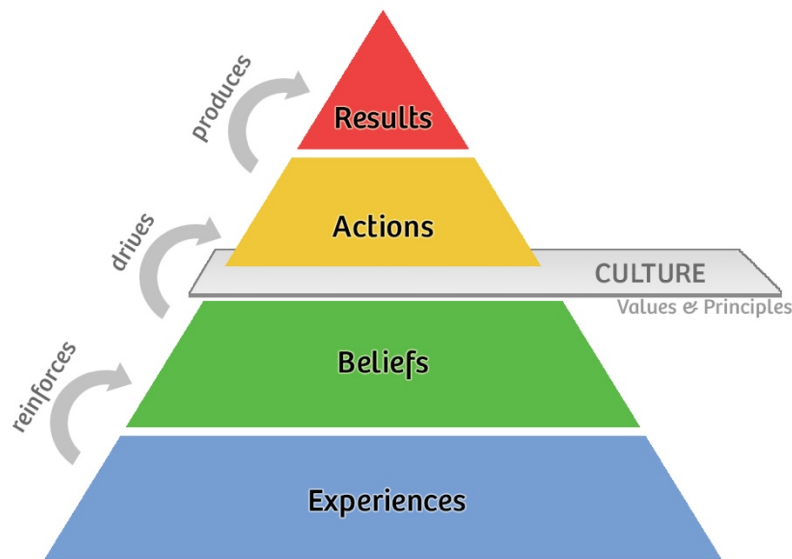
While the presence of a robust professional development campus culture was a powerful motivating force, this research showed that respondents were just as likely to engage in professional development events regardless of the likelihood that they would receive

rewards or recognition. Although some faculty stated that financial incentives like stipends or funding for travel to PD events were a motivating factor, many participants stressed the critical importance of engaging in activities that foster continuous improvement, provide effective teaching tools and strategies, and contribute to their professional growth and development.

APPLYING THE RESULTS PYRAMID® FRAMEWORK

As described in Chapter One, the Results Pyramid® framework is a model of human behavior that illustrates ways to make culture change happen effectively, accurately, and efficiently in an organization or team. Applying this model to the results of this study can provide insights into faculty perceptions of PD and provide a strategy for improving PD opportunities. As the Results Pyramid® illustrates, faculty experiences foster beliefs, beliefs influence actions, and actions produce results (PIL, 2019).

Figure 2: Results Pyramid®: The Links between Experiences, Beliefs, Actions, and Results



Experiences

The PD *experiences* described by survey and interview participants are the foundation for and create their beliefs about PD. Faculty learn from and through their life experiences and actively engage with previous learning to understand a new structure or concept. As evident from their comments, respondents indicated that their institution's effective and valued PD activities attempted to draw on the participants' previous experiences and expertise by inviting them to share stories, lessons, and artifacts connected to the topic being discussed. These comments support the assertion that offering the "right" faculty PD experiences will create and form the desired perceptions and beliefs about PD and enhance a culture receptive to ongoing professional development.

This survey reinforced another key aspect of the Results Pyramid®: Faculty members' experiences with PD at their institutions can influence their desire to participate in future college mandates. As the participants indicated, "participating in PD made me a better, more informed advisor and teacher" (Survey Participant C), and "the greatest benefit from PD is building relationships with students and having a positive change in student success" (Survey Participant F).

Research by Kelley (2015) also supported a vital premise of the Results Pyramid®, asserting that "having an identified PD culture can accelerate the change and results the campus seeks by working with the bottom half of the Pyramid *beliefs* and *experiences*. Those previous experiences are linked to the new experiences faculty will need to have, not only to begin to leave the old way of doing things behind but to support the new results campuses

want to achieve and to help them believe the institution is serious and committed to the new results and that the leadership can be trusted.

According to Connors and Smith (2011), the creators of the Results Pyramid®, four essential steps will ensure that the faculty's PD experience will produce positive perceptions, and, in turn, these types of experiences impact culture change:

1. Plan PD
2. Provide PD
3. Ask about PD
4. Interpret PD

According to extensive research (Mizell, 2010; Badri, et al., 2016; Hungerford-Kresser, Amaro-Jiménez, 2020), campuses' PD experiences will significantly impact faculty perceptions and beliefs. Positive PD experiences are needed to create a PD culture shift.

Beliefs

As illustrated in the Results Pyramid®, if you can change the way faculty think, you can change the culture, and when you change the culture, you change the game (Connors & Smith 2011). Research by Guskey (2014); Johnson, Veletsianos, and Seaman (2020); and Mohr (2020) also indicates that faculty's perceptions regarding PD significantly influence what they do, and these **beliefs** will strongly resist change unless the campus culture of PD aligns with their ideas. While study participants indicated they value the PD training they receive regardless of the delivery method, some of this study's participants stressed that more professional development was needed so that more faculty members would see the value of teaching.

Faculty PD perceptions and **beliefs** cannot be changed simply by asking them to

participate. There is a simple yet powerful relationship between faculty PD *beliefs* and perceptions and their actions. As we progress in the Results Pyramid®, the next step is moving faculty *beliefs to* accelerate the shift to a new PD culture. By identifying and creating beliefs, we can drive the “right” kind of *actions* to achieve desired PD participation.

Actions

People's actions are motivated by their beliefs about what they should do and why; these beliefs are created by their experiences (PIL, 2019). These *actions*—participating in the institution’s PD activities—were reflected in the participants' responses. Community college leaders create PD cultural beliefs that establish a framework for the PD culture. After identifying the PD beliefs of faculty, the generation of the “right” actions towards PD activity can occur.

This study’s results also supported the assumption that faculty seek personalized professional development and training that will affect their success in the classroom. Several of this study’s participants stressed that the PD programs at their college could do more to promote teaching methods and strategies that increase the student's capacity for problem-solving, teamwork, and collaboration. This study supports research by Ruckers (2018) and Amaro-Jimenez, Martinez-Cosio, Patterson, Clark, and Luken-Sutton (2020) that PD collaboration in an environment of heightened personal accountability speeds up the PD culture process and provides the foundation for a successful PD journey for faculty.

Results

The final level of the Results Pyramid® connects the **results** with what faculty experience, believe, and do. As Connors and Smith (2011) stress, accountability produces impressive results. Accountability can and does lead to game-changing results. Without PD accountability, the culture of the institution cannot be affected. These researchers also stress that culture has an impact on results.

Efforts to enhance faculty PD and systematically assess its effects are essential to measure the quality of current offerings and provide recommendations for designing programs that meet learners', faculty's, and institutions' changing needs. As faculty participants in this study reported, the training they participated in has had positive impacts on their instructional delivery:

Survey Participant J: I love learning about new teaching strategies and tools. I want to continually improve my craft as an instructor to engage students and help them to be successful.

Survey Participant F: We are encouraged to present and share what we have learned at conferences. We can share at department meetings or hold sessions that are coordinated by our Academy of Teaching Excellence.

Survey Participant K: Faculty development helped me become a better teacher.

This study's data suggest that enriching faculty participation in critical PD domains of teaching, assessing, professionalism, and classroom engagement can significantly impact professional identity.

HOW THE RESULTS PYRAMID® HELPS US UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF PD

The Results Pyramid® model helps create culture alignment and develop a flourishing, cohesive, collaborative campus environment. The foundation of the Results Pyramid® model is simple: it is a powerful way of understanding the connection between culture (the way people think and act) and the results achieved. Using this framework can accelerate a shift in how faculty act and think when contemplating PD, requires a clear understanding of what to stop doing, what to start doing, and what to keep doing.

STUDY CONCLUSIONS

In this study, community college faculty consistently expressed their desire to develop and improve their teaching skills and believe that their respective institutions' professional development opportunities and resources facilitate achieving those goals. Moreover, some participants in this study stated that their failure to utilize professional development, despite their conviction regarding its value, was not related to negative perceptions or an absence of a willingness to participate in activities offered. These barriers include compensation, rewards, recognition, and topics covered, but mainly time obstacles. Finally, participants concluded that implementing a viable and cohesive policy of institutional support and expanding offerings that target faculty engagement would dramatically increase faculty participation in professional development.

Furthermore, a primary goal of this study was to document the PD experiences of community college faculty and describe the relationship between those experiences and their overall perception of the role and value of professional development. This study revealed that

three critical components frame perceptions of professional development experiences for each faculty participant: (1) a passion for their commitment to their profession, (2) incentives, and (3) personal and professional career interests. Findings from both the survey and interviews indicate that faculty with higher levels of engagement in PD perceived the importance of using strategies and available resources to improve instructional practices. Additionally, the frequency of respondent's participation in faculty PD correlates directly to their degree of passion for teaching, desire to know more about students, and quest for their innovative and effective teaching methods. Finally, a positive perception of the value of PD appeared to be universal among participants: even those faculty who identified themselves as nonparticipants in PD consistently acknowledged its worth, especially when the PD opportunities aligned with their interests.

Although 62% of the participants believe there is a culture of PD on their campus, responses demonstrate that a cultural shift in PD that encourages broader faculty participation is warranted on many community college campuses. This present culture fails to facilitate growth in PD participation because of the absence of accountability regarding the fulfillment of the professional development requirement of faculty workload and failure to identify PD's impact on student success rates, and the disregard for the correlation between student engagement and PD. Notwithstanding, the data indicate that faculty have acquired an accurate understanding of isolated components of the PD process. However, broader connections regarding the role of PD in achieving community colleges' strategic goals have received minimal attention. Furthermore, such a culture will incentivize and motivate faculty to seek out and participate in on-campus and community PD activities.

Finally, the findings in this study provide valuable insight that identifies the state of professional development concentrated in certain areas of community colleges. These findings paint a panoramic image of how faculty define meaningful PD. Furthermore, this study sheds light on the contours of the current PD culture. It provides insight to equip community college leaders with the tools to craft a culture that will facilitate increased faculty engagement.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the findings of this study of community college faculty members' perceptions of professional development. It begins with a summary of the study that provides a concise overview of the information that has been presented in the previous chapters. Also included in this chapter are the conclusions derived from the findings associated with each of the research questions on which this study is based. Additionally, these findings are also discussed within the context of the existing literature on professional development. Finally, this chapter concludes with the limitations of this research, the researcher's reflections, and a summary of this chapter.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This mixed-methods study aimed to examine perceptions of professional development held by community college faculty perception of professional development. Furthermore, the primary goals of this study were to determine the degree to which faculty perceptions influenced participation in PD activities and identify the critical elements of faculty engagement in PD programming. Based on the research questions which served as the basis of this research, the conclusions which the researcher developed center on three areas: (a) faculty perceptions of professional development; (b) barriers to faculty participation in professional development;

and (c) motivation for faculty participation in professional development programs and activities.

Faculty Perceptions of Professional Development

Professional development provides opportunities for faculty to connect with their colleagues and peers. Faculty believe PD is beneficial, especially when they can take something back and apply it in their classroom. Faculty are seeking something tangible and applicable when learning. Based on snapshots of faculty experience, PD may be a source that contributes to their professional worth. This research demonstrates that faculty have different perceptions of PD based on their specific past experiences with their institution's PD. However, findings indicate that most participants positively perceive the components of PD offered at their institutions, reflecting the participants' perception and overall satisfaction.

Without significant structural change and perhaps a carved-out PD plan, the perceptions are not likely to change. Campus cultures can change by taking cues from the administration and faculty leadership. Once the administration makes policy changes and leaders step up to stress the value of faculty PD, campuses and departments can more effectively communicate the importance of PD to their faculty members. Overall, faculty view PD positively, although most do not consider it a top priority in their busy lives. They often cited lack of time as the reason for not participating.

Barriers to Faculty Participation in Professional Development

Faculty who wanted to attend certain activities to aid in their teaching were often unable to because of their myriad responsibilities. Therefore, they could not focus on this

aspect of their professional growth as much as they might like. Ultimately, this could have a negative impact on faculty members as well as their students.

A common theme emerged from the data: There is never a "right" time for PD. It is important to note that the lack of time for PD is not the primary issue in this study. Though limited time is what faculty members referenced most, the more prominent point is that they received or perceived the message that improving their teaching through PD matters less than their other priorities. It was not always conflicts of timing that led faculty not to attend professional development sessions.

Motivation for Faculty Participation in Professional Development Programs and Activities

In identifying participation efforts, the motivation of PD was explored. The literature focusing on faculty satisfaction and motivation clearly state that faculty want to be embraced by their colleges and recognized and rewarded as professional educators (Kelley, 2015; Lozada, 2016; Falcone, 2020). Professional development provides a vehicle for faculty to network that influences their satisfaction. The study results indicate that community colleges should offer PD programs that engage faculty and are topics of interest. Campuses should investigate developing a needs analysis to discover why faculty do not feel motivated to attend professional development.

Significant changes can be made to reward and recognize faculty on a campus level who actively participate in PD. Time dedicated to PD and the campus culture would heighten the value placed on PD. Administrations can incentivize and promote attendance at PD activities by using stipends, giveaways, providing food/snacks, and making opportunities for faculty to develop and present workshops. These changes would help send a message to faculty that

professional development is valued and vital. Therefore, at this level, a college can influence faculty beliefs, motivation, and participation by the types of PD programs it creates and the specific messages it develops related to an institutional policy for professional development.

Reflections on the Research Study

The study shows that professional development workshops are underdeveloped because of inflexibility to faculty needs, irrelevance to the attitudes, and lack of time, selection, and financial resources, which may inhibit professional development effectiveness. Even in a time of tight budgets, campus leadership can direct their limited resources to areas of PD that will have the greatest impact on instruction while providing significant support to faculty. However, overall satisfaction with PD programs was high, and the participants consistently found these programs acceptable, practical, and relevant to their objectives on their respected campuses. Faculty participants reported positive changes in attitudes toward faculty development and teaching.

This study identified the faculty's perception of professional development and what they find beneficial to improve classroom performance. It is essential in growing and developing faculty to learn about their motivation for PD based on their interests and career path and then deliver programs that can translate directly into the classroom.

Professional development workshops are needed to enhance the quality of faculty teaching and foster a positive learning environment to help faculty members carry out their teaching functions effectively. These workshops will prepare faculty for a growing role while reinforcing job satisfaction. The need to link training with the real world is overwhelming. This need has become even more evident during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a whole, it could be concluded that the PD workshop developers and designers need to consider more practical sessions enriched with traditional and electronic resources. The practice may need to include activities such as self-reflection, mentorship, and collaboration. This study is critical because feedback on PD quality is vital to community college faculty. With the increase in online learning, faculty perceive the need to learn about online instruction and utilize technology in their classrooms. With the pandemic of COVID-19 in the past year, the growth of online education has also significantly impacted the need for practical professional development training.

Research on the professional development and training for faculty can have numerous benefits for community colleges that are proactive in providing high-quality programs. These benefits improve the quality of their course offerings by improving faculty performance and student satisfaction (Scherer, Javalgi, Bryant, & Tukul, 2005).

LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Addressing the Limitations of the Study

Initially, 200 faculty members were targeted to participate and complete the online survey. Fewer responses were received, likely because of the timing overlapping with the transition to home-based work because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to these external factors that shaped the design of this project, everyone began doing work differently. In addition, during this time, many colleges closed their campuses, and many faculty members had to adjust to working and teaching from home using online modalities.

Because of these events, the online survey was left open longer to allow additional faculty time to access and complete. Also, some faculty who volunteered to complete the interview had to reschedule due to the obligations of sick family members and family emergencies.

Addressing the Delimitations of the Study

The delimitations of this research included the fact that the participants were part of a limited sampling method using contacts through the Ferris State University Doctorate of Community College Leadership (DCCL) program network. Faculty who had not taught within the five years of the survey data were excluded from participating in the study. It is assumed that the individuals shared their own felt expressions and did not simply provide the answers that would be considered acceptable. It is also believed that the faculty participants reported on their own thoughts and perceptions about professional development as they have personally experienced. Although care was put into constructing the survey instrument, the faculty's interpretation and perceptions might influence their responses.

This research asks faculty about their perception of professional development; the research study does not consider the faculty's actual need for professional development. However, surveying faculty across the United States provided a diverse random sample. Since the survey was not distributed nationally, one cannot infer that these issues regarding professional development are universal. If there were equal representation from other United States regions, more of a complete picture could have been obtained.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In attempting to address a gap in the literature, specifically, it aimed to understand the perceptions and attitudes of faculty members at various community colleges. There are, however, some clear directions for future research. The most notable would be to study faculty at a broader range of institutions across the country, including universities, to determine whether the results are similar. This breadth would make the findings far more generalizable as the sample size would be more significant, and geography would not be a limiting factor. Besides expanding the number and geographic regions of colleges studied, it would also be helpful to ensure that the research covered faculty at all schools and academic divisions within each institution.

The findings in this study support differences in the perceptions that faculty have towards PD. The results also support that faculty feel that professional development will improve classroom performance. With this knowledge, administrators must engage the faculty to increase participation in PD offerings because there is a conflict between the offerings and involvement in professional development. Building awareness of faculty's unique needs towards PD, and realizing that they are not a homogenous group, can help administrators align their goals for PD to the faculty's specific needs.

After reviewing the literature and data, faculty are most likely to engage in professional development when convenient, mandatory, and a topic of interest. Program facilitators should offer multiple events per semester. Still, campus administrators must be familiar that faculty members generally do not plan to attend numerous events per year. The obstacle of how to get PD to faculty should be addressed.

Finally, community college campuses should ensure that quality PD is being offered. Having a designated PD center or teaching and learning center is beneficial for faculty development. Efforts to ensure effective PD programs should be intentional, collaborative, and connected to the campus's mission and initiatives.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, professional development within the community college needs improvements in terms of planning (materials selection and distribution; selection of competent presenters; and audience analysis), implementation (flexibility of the program; availability/relevance of materials/resources; and continuous formative feedback), and evaluation (summative/systematic feedback; and ongoing review and follow up of materials/resources). Within the scope of these findings, the study recommends:

- allocating time for faculty participation and attendance
- identifying innovative methods to provide materials/resources, for example, increasing use of technology
- implementing a rewards and recognition system for faculty participation

Higher education is under pressure to demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of their professional development programs and their quality of instruction (Scherer, Javalgi, Bryant, & Tukul, 2005). Professional development for all faculty should embody a PD culture that all campus employees are motivated to embrace. The findings of this study have demonstrated that faculty are aware of professional development and, for the most part, believe it is valuable and essential.

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APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL LETTER



FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH

1010 Campus Drive FLITE 410 Big Rapids, MI 49307 | (231) 591-2553 | www.ferris.edu/irb

Date: April 14, 2020

To: Susan DeCamillis, Ed.D. and Daphne Jones, DCCL program

From: Gregory Wellman, R.Ph, Ph.D, IRB Chair

Re: IRB Application *IRB-FY18-19-232 Faculty Perceptions of Professional Development in a Community College Setting*

The Ferris State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application for using human subjects in the study, *Faculty Perceptions of Professional Development in a Community College Setting (IRB-FY18-19-232)* and approved this project under Federal Regulations Exempt Category 2.(i). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording).

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

Your protocol has been assigned project number IRB-FY18-19-232. Approval mandates that you follow all University policy and procedures, in addition to applicable governmental regulations. Approval applies only to the activities described in the protocol submission; should revisions need to be made, all materials must be approved by the IRB prior to initiation. In addition, the IRB must be made aware of any serious and unexpected and/or unanticipated adverse events as well as complaints and non-compliance issues.

This project has been granted a waiver of consent documentation; signatures of participants need not be collected. Although not documented, informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and participant rights, with the assurance of participant understanding. Informed consent must be provided, even when documentation is waived, and continue throughout the study.

As mandated by Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46 (45 CFR 46) the IRB requires submission of annual status reports during the life of the research project and a Final Report Form upon study completion. Thank you for your compliance with these guidelines and best wishes for a successful research endeavor. Please let us know if the IRB can be of any future assistance.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory Wellman".

Gregory Wellman, R.Ph, Ph.D, IRB Chair
Ferris State University Institutional Review Board
