ARE WE DUMB YET? A CASE STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF EXCESS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN URBAN SCHOOLS

By

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ABSTRACT

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This qualitative case study combined an action research method with a first-person critical action case study to introduce a first-person action case study. This study critically explored the effects of excess professional development on teacher perceptions' as professionals. The purpose of this first-person action case study was to address the lack of research that critically explores the impact the amount of professional development has on urban teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals, as well as their practice. Illich's (1980) three dimensional theory of development was the theoretical framework used in this study and the results supported the notion that excess professional development is counter-productive, nurtures an environment of degradation, and negatively impacts teacher perceptions of themselves as professionals. The interview and observation data concluded that excess professional development negatively impacts teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals which negatively impacted their practice as well. This case study and the findings produced three (3) major themes: (1) Teachers equate professionalism with a high sense of morality, (2) Professional growth is driven by rewards and expectations, and (3) Teachers transform into defenders of the profession and their professional identity. This case study also introduced the need for a first-person participatory critical action approach which allowed the researcher to insert herself as a participant in the study. In this first person approach, three (3) additional findings or minor themes emerged: (a) The resiliency of the researcher had bred a sense of

righteous indignation, (b) Emancipation and freedom are essential to professional growth, and (c) Urban school teachers are an endangered species. Suggestions for further research has been given in the area of teacher identity, urban teacher preparation courses, and more first-person action studies where the voice of the teacher can be heard as both the researcher and a participant.

In honor of my parents, **William and Diane Wells**, who are now resting in the arms of OUR CREATOR; I do hereby dedicate this doctoral work to my son, **Michael,** my spiritual mother Brenda Rudolph, JLO & Associates, the love of my life (only God knows what shall become of us), my family (Crystal, Aunt Carrie, and Earl) and to every REAL teacher who knows what it feels like to glorify God in the press towards the mark of the higher calling!

Letha

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

Phrases	Abbreviations
Professional Development	PD
No Child Left Behind	NCLB
Annual Yearly Progress	AYP
Professional Learning Communities	PLC
Student Centered Learning	SCL
State Continuing Education Clock Hours	SCECH
Elementary and Secondary Education Act	ESEA
State Education Agencies	SEA
Local Education Agencies	LEA
Individual with Disabilities Education Act	IDEA
State Agency for Higher Education	SAHE
Participatory Action Research	PAR
Observations	OB
One (1) Thousand Dollars	K
State Reform District	SRD

Chapter 1

Introduction

This first-person action case study critically explored the effects of excess professional development (defined below) on teacher perceptions' as professionals; an effect which could impact implementation of innovative educational strategies and ultimately student achievement. In this chapter, I first take a closer look at the background of teacher professional development over six (6) decades in American Public Education. Then, I provide discussion of three areas of focus relative to this study: (1) the amount of professional development teachers receive, (2) the existing rationale for increased professional development, and (3) characteristics of effective teacher professional development. The current State Department Education requirements for teacher professional development is 5 days according to Sections 1526 and 1527 of the State School Code (2006), thus in this study, excess is defined as >5 days. By comparison, all states are allowed autonomy in determining PD requirements for teachers. The five states surrounding the SRD in this study do not specify PD days, however state codes did require some form of established PD programs be present in schools and used for evaluation which contributes to the unique policy requirements in the SRD.

This first-person action case study data was extracted from teacher interviews, teacher professional development observations, and researcher reflection data [notes-to-self] deemed as actionable knowledge. The study takes place in the highly controversial the state-wide reform school district created to turn around the lowest performing schools. The researcher has been an educator for over 18 years in a large urban area and the reform district since its inception in 2012. The goal of the research was to determine the effects of excess professional development

on urban school teacher perceptions of themselves as professionals and explore the implications the results have on effective instruction in urban schools.

Background

"…forced conformity is often passed off as education"~ Ivan Illich (1971)

Since the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) began and defined failure by requiring all schools make Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) toward academic proficiency for all students, schools have scrambled for the solution to survival. NCLB Act created the legal mandate for state and local departments of public education to address low-performing schools and also increased the demand for highly-qualified certified teachers. During a time of wide-spread public concern about the state of education, the NCLB legislation set in place requirements that reached into virtually every public school in America. It expanded the federal role in education and took particular aim at improving the educational lot of disadvantaged students (Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 2011 p.1).

Teacher development is considered essential for effective instruction because of its relationship with student achievement, especially in urban schools. The pressure to "conform" and improve has become a political firestorm where students and those who educate them are caught in the middle. Although teachers are not solely responsible for the rise and fall of education, the need to ensure teachers are professionally developed has sparked tidal waves of workshops, research, conferences, and a variety of professional development activities. Scholars have documented the impact of high-quality induction programs—as a link between preparation and practice—on teacher development and career satisfaction (e.g., Moir, 2003; Smith &

Ingersoll, 2004; Anderson, 2006 p. 360) and have highlighted the need to account for features of teachers' organizational and social contexts (e.g., McLaughlin, 1993; Moore Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004; Anderson 2006 p.360), including the realities they face when working specifically in urban schools (e.g., Weiner, 1999; Anderson, 2006 p. 360), but have failed to document the impact too much PD has on urban teachers.

Researchers have also emphasized opportunities for teachers to become part of professional communities of practice (e.g., Freedman, Simons, Kalnin, Casareno, & the M-Class Teams, 1999; Anderson, 2006 p. 360); to engage in inquiry and dialogue with their peers (e.g., Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Nieto, 2003; Anderson, 2006 p. 360), especially in groups that bring together colleagues across experience levels (e.g., Huberman, 1995; Moore Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Anderson, 2006 p. 360); and to become school leaders if they so choose (e.g., Elmore, Peterson, & McCarthy, 1996; Meier, 1995; Anderson, 2006 p. 360), however the research does not address what happens when new PD innovations are implemented in excess to the point of overload. The pressure to keep teachers sharp is doubled, if not tripled in poverty stricken urban areas where coincidently low-performing schools are abundantly located. One third of the teaching force in the United States turns over each year, with the highest attrition rates occurring in *high-need schools*—urban and rural schools with low-income and minority populations (Hunt & Carroll, 2003; Heineke, Mazza, & Tichnor-Wagner, 2014 p. 751). In the debate about urban school effectiveness and teacher quality, one proposition has emerged as indisputable: The success of urban schools depends heavily on the quality of the teachers who serve the schools and the administrators who support the teachers. Unfortunately, urban school district recruitment policies are often not aligned with research and practical knowledge about urban teacher effectiveness; thus, the best candidates are often ignored, neglected, or otherwise

discouraged (Stotko, Ingram, & Beaty-O'Ferrall, 2007 p. 30). Current research consistently fails at documenting what happens to teachers who decide to teach in urban schools and what occurs when their professionalism is attacked when it should be experiencing development.

Low-performing schools must be accountable for balancing the scales and educational opportunities for every child and only a highly-qualified certified teacher can assist in leveling the playing field. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) builds on previous policies by applying a combination of assistance and consequences to schools in an effort to hold educators accountable for student performance (Finnegan & Gross, 2007 p. 594). NCLB is based on a theoretical assumption that consequences will motivate school staff to perform at higher levels and focus their attention on student outcomes (Finnegan & Gross, 2007 p. 594). Due to the particular issues present in large urban school districts, an urban school teacher "needs even more development" to ensure no child is not left behind, and idea that is at the very core of intent of the NCLB ACT (2001). The State Department of Education School Codes Sections 1526 and 1527 requires the board of each school district, intermediate school district, or public school academy to provide five days of teacher professional development. For new teachers, schools must also provide an additional five days per year for a three year period, a mentor teacher, and an intensive professional development plan that includes increased focus on classroom management and instructional delivery (MDE, 2006). The question then becomes, at what point is enough…enough?

For two decades, U.S. schools have been engaged in major reform efforts to improve student learning, and they have made teacher professional development an essential component of their plans (NCES, 1999/2000). Current literature discussed further along in this section focuses on some researched based characteristics of effective teacher professional development

and the complexity of how teachers learn. However, often neglected in research are the effects of constant or "excess" professional development on teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals, especially urban teachers. The NCLB ACT (2001) requires all highly-qualified teachers to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree, obtain full state certification or licensure, and demonstrate subject area competence in each of the academic subjects in which they teach (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) all of which defines and classifies a teacher professional. It is well documented that teacher quality is the single most accurate indicator of students' academic success and achievement rates (NCES, 2001, McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson & Robinson, 2008; Brown, 2002; Carter, 2001; Delpit, 1995; Haberman, 1995, 2005; Kopetz et al., 2006; Kozol, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Saunders & Rivers, 1996; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2004). Yet many urban districts report problems and frustrations with attracting and retaining quality educators (McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson, & Robinson, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Graziano, 2005; Haberman, 2005). Development then becomes a major focal point as federal, state, and local educational entities create innovative ways to attract more talent to the field in urban school settings. The need to equip teachers places teachers in "laboratory-type settings" guessing, gauging, and searching for a formula that works for everyone with boundless experiments in its repertoire.

Every modern proposal to reform, restructure, or transform schools emphasizes professional development as a primary vehicle in efforts to bring about needed change (Gusky, 1995; NCES, 2000). Thus the argument emerges concerning effective teacher professional development and what constitutes effective professional development. According to NCES,

For many years, professional development typically consisted of short, stand-alone workshops on topics selected by schools and districts (often without consulting teachers),

along with college or university course taking….during the 1990's some experts began to suggest that the traditional forms of teacher professional development lacked the focus, intensity, and continuity needed to change classroom practices (NCES, 2000 pp.1).

A consensus of key elements of effective professional development was summarized by Hawley & Valli (2001); Elmore (2002); NCES (2000, pp.2):

➤ Driven by analysis of the differences between goals and standards for student learning and student performance

➤ Must be part of a comprehensive change process

➤ School based and integrated with school operations

➤ Involves teachers in defining their needs and developing opportunities for professional development

➤ Meets individual teachers' needs but is primarily collaborative

➤ Provides opportunities for teachers to develop a theoretical understanding of the knowledge and skills learned

➤ Continuous and ongoing, with follow-up and support for further learning; and

➤ Incorporates an evaluation of the effect on teaching practice and student outcomes

There is a bottomless sea of teacher professional development research. To some degree, this research has driven the Pre K – 12 education field toward the best practices and professional development that works. However, a tension still exists among teachers as professional development is mandated and now used as a renewal requirement for teacher certification. Hence, it is the point of tension that drives the intent of this research and the existence of a potential problem.

In the state reform district in this case study, teachers had over 100 professional development hours in the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 academic school years as noted in Figure 3.0. It should be noted that the 14 days specified by the calendar does not exempt the district/schools from adding professional development days as "needed". Approximately ten percent (10%) of the required state instructional time of 1,092 hours was added and devoted to the development of teachers, including some highly recommended weekend trainings, regardless of teacher certifications, experience, and pre-existing expertise. This year, the state reform district also designated every third Wednesday afternoon, three (3) additional hours, would be devoted for various kinds of professional development mandated by both District officials and/or Building Administrators to enhance Professional Learning Communities (PLC's). These sessions often include, especially at the high school level, ACT Preparation, Performance Series Data, Student-Centered Learning Classroom practices and procedures (SCL Model will be discussed later). During EAA's first year (2012-2013), all staff was entrenched in a month long professional development student-centered learning boot camp from August 6, 2012 –August 30, 2012 (August 31st-optional). Teachers were given a stipend the first year only for the month long professional development. There were more than 21 scheduled and innumerable unscheduled professional development days throughout the first year since the state reform district had inherited 15 of the lowest performing schools from the largest urban school district in the state.

It is also important to note that teacher evaluations were based on a digital program called PD360. This program allows teachers to network and share ideas globally with other educators around the world. Teachers have access to thousands of PD videos and a portion of our Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF- Federal Grant) is determined by how many videos we viewed along with

the completion of reflection questions which is included in digital teacher portfolios. TIF awards are distributed to teachers for each previous year's cumulative PD360 evaluation.

The state reform district spent over $38,000 in travel expenses devoted to the professional development of teachers and district staff. Time, energy, and money are specifically required in most federally funded grants. For example, the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) provides Title I funding to low performing schools. Federally funded Title I programs contributed over $154 million dollars to Large City School Districts and teacher professional development as a required allotment of the award; SEC. 1119 of NCLB Act requires specific teacher qualifications and measureable objectives for teachers implemented in the state plan for local school districts who qualify for Title I Funding (U.S. Department of Education, NCLB, Title I Part A, 2001).

As low-performing schools fight to compete for grants to help support state education budget cuts, especially in urban school districts, teacher professional development becomes an integral part of the financial equation contributing to the tension mentioned in the above section. The larger the role professional development plays, the larger role quantity, as well as quality, plays in creating that tension. Previous research, especially urban teacher research, emphasizes a few characteristics of effective urban teachers:

- Their consistent integration of the technical dimensions of teaching with the moral, cultural, and political dimensions
- Their demonstration of an explicit commitment to social justice, made real by continual struggle about what it means and how it is carried out by the youth they instruct
- Their view of learning as a social and dialogical inquiry within communities of practice (Quartz and TEP Research Group, 2003, p.102).

These attributes are recurring themes in effective urban teacher research and the contributions have been the driving force behind urban teacher professional development reforms. However, the question of how much professional development is just as important as what kind of professional development is needed; if the question of how much is posed, then the journey leads to when is enough, enough? At what point does excess emerge? And at what point does excess affect teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals?

Current research and case studies have failed to give a voice to educators, especially urban educators, about their individual perceptions of professionalism and how professional development impacts that perception. Horn & Little (2010) investigated how conversational routines, or practices by which groups structure work-related talk, function in teacher professional communities to forge, sustain, and support learning and improvements, but fails to address what happens to the teacher as a perceived professional is silenced and subjected to top-down conversations of "how-to", instead of collaborative conversations of "we-should", especially at the point of excess.

Spaull (1997) researched de-professionalization of state school teaching and determined most bureaucratic structures, like schools, adopt an industrial relations perspective in order to operate effectively. "Industrial relations fundamentally concerns the many ways people behave in the context of work, both as individuals and members of groups (Dabscheck & Niland 1981, p.5; Spaull, 1997, p. 290)…it uses identifiable processes and develops a framework of rules which temporarily accommodates industrial conflict and establishes working relationships between individual employees and employers" (Spaull & Hince, 1986 pp. 5-14; Spaull, 1997, p. 290). This research describes accurately what is happening, however fails to address how it may make teachers feel as professionals to have to "prove their professionalism" constantly.

There is limited research that addresses the impact of excess professional development has on teacher perceptions of professionalism. Professional development effects literature has "…committed an epistemological fallacy by taking empirical relationships between forms of activity or task (e.g., being activity based), structures for learning (e.g., situated in practice), and so on, and some measure of change to be teacher learning" (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). This research explored what happens to urban teachers' perceptions of professionalism at the point where excess has been defined and experienced. The intent was to introduce the discussion of excess PD and its impact on urban teachers to the field of education research.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this first-person action case study was to address the lack of research that critically explores the impact the amount of professional development has on urban teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals, as well as their practice. The demand for more teacher professional development is an increasing epidemic, especially in low-performing schools and school districts. Indeed, the question of whether too much professional development has a negative effect on a teacher's sense of professionalism was answered in this study. Excess PD increased counter-productivity and nurtured an atmosphere of degradation. In this qualitative case study, data was extracted from teacher interviews and observations of teacher professional development sessions in a highly controversial state-wide reform school district created to turn around the lowest performing schools.

Conceptual Framework: Why Illich?

Ivan Illich's Three Dimensional Theory of Development (1981) was used to theoretically help frame teachers' perspective of themselves after experiencing excessive professional development. Illich (1981) explores the complex and often problematic issue of development, teacher learning, and the productivity/ counter productivity of educational training for teachers. This cross-sectional qualitative analysis assisted in positioning the relevance of teachers' perceptions as professionals and its contribution to the learning environment in 21st century urban schools.

Development implicates the need for a suggested transformation of the specimen or person needed to be developed producing a shadow economy that nurtures degradation. ; A hierarchal push to conform to a standardized way of "doing" things. (Illich, 1981) The basic theme of Illich's (1981) criticism is that the institutions and technologies of modern industrial society (its "tools") become independent over against people so that their constant growth has only negative effects (brainwashing education, sickening medicine, time-consuming acceleration) and increasingly harms the autonomy of individuals (Ziai & Jakobeit, 2009). The theoretical focal point, "Development: It's Three Dimensions" (Illich, 1981) served as the foundation of this research. The discussion will highlight the three (3) major themes of Illich's theory of development:

- The X, Y, and Z axis of developmental dimensions
- Origin of conceptual analysis of Development
- Shadow Economy

Foundation of Illich's thought (Regan, 1980) and Misconceptions of Ivan Illich (Birchill, 1972) will also be included in this brief discussion of Illich's work. This work, in addition to additional detail regarding this framework, will be provided in Chapter Two.

Research Question

This first-person action case study was driven by one primary research question:

- What impact does the amount of teacher professional development have on urban teachers' perceptions of professionalism, as well as their practice?

Definition of Terms

- Development- a pattern of resources used, that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment
- Excess- the being of a measure beyond sufficiency, necessity, or duty; {State School code requires 5 days PD.} Excess = >5.
- Professionalism- Of, pertaining to, or in accordance with the (usually high) standards of a profession. (A person who earns a living doing a specific activity)
- Perception- Conscious understanding of something.
- Urban - Characteristic of city life.

The intent of this case study was to continue the discussion for the need for effective professional development research, but to also open up the conversation concerning the impact excess professional development has on urban teachers' perception of professionalism. As teacher professional development requirements increase demands on the research community to determine the most effective implementation plans, it is essential to examine the impact excess professional development has on outcome based PD research.

This research also encourages teachers to consider first person action research as a unique vehicle to close the gap between researchers and practitioners. First-hand accounts of urban teacher PD experiences are essential to innovative directives for future research. Building on Arieli, Freidman, & Agbaria (2009), *The Paradox of Participation in Action Research,* I discovered as both a researcher and a participant in the research that there is much to gain from structured reflective practices that subconsciously emerge in data analysis. The PD experiences of the participants sparked uncharted territory of preconceived notions, uncomfortable dispositions as a researcher, and meaningful internal growth for future PD research, especially urban teacher PD research.

Again, the goal of the research was to address the lack of research excess professional development has on urban school teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals. In striving for that goal, a phenomenon of a self-reflective practice emerged prompting the demand to input the experiences of the researcher during this process. First-person action case studies opens the door for teachers and researchers to systematically express the impact the research itself has on the researcher and magnifies President Barack Obama's charge in 2008:

Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the

ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek (President Obama, 2008).

First-person action case studies assist in bridging the gap between research and practice. Urban

educators must take a proactive role in shaping education policies and strategic reforms through

the power of educational research. Excess PD has become the norm as federal, state, and local

education agencies search for an answer to the urban education crisis.

In this study, excess professional development encouraged counter-productivity and

translated into an extreme waste of time and resources. Since urban districts have reported

difficulty in recruiting and retaining highly qualified certified teachers, development then

becomes a major focal point of urban districts to create innovative ways to attract more talent to

the field. The need to equip teachers places teachers in "laboratory-type settings" guessing,

gauging, and searching for a formula that works for everyone with boundless experiments in its

repertoire.

 The implications of these perceptions determined reoccurring instances of counter-

productivity; low teacher retention rates and recruitment; and an unhealthy environment for

fostering student-teacher relationships, especially in urban school district. As education attempts

to attract talent to the "profession" of teaching, it is critical that new arrivals be treated as a high

level professional or at minimal possess an internal ability to perceive themselves as a

professional so to invite a spirit of integrity to their personal translation of education to young

people.

Summary

The perception of teachers as "professionals" has evolved through the years as the role of teachers in American public education has changed and even dare say declined perceptions of teachers as professionals. Excess professional development does not affirm these notions of lack of professionalism and development due to lack of training, education, and state requirements to teach. The increase in professional development to the point of excess completely unravels the purpose and intent of PD. The next chapter will explore literature discussing the origin for the rationale of teacher professional development, the promise of professional development, and the problem of professional development beginning with the theoretical framework used for the study.

Chapter 2

Professional Development:

The Promise vs. The Problem

In this chapter, the exposition of professional development through the eyes of Illich (1981), the discussion of the rationale of teacher professional development, the promise of teacher professional development, and the problem of teacher professional development is introduced to support the relevance of professional development research to the field; more specifically this research which attempted to address the impact of the amount of teacher professional development. First, an in depth look at the conceptual framework of Illich's (1981) Development in Three Dimensions and then on to a historical look at the origin of teacher professional development and the influence of federal, state, and local professional development policy. Then, an in-depth comparison of the professional development research which supports the promises of effective teacher professional development research versus the increasing problems and controversy of what determines effective teacher professional development. Lastly, a brief discussion of the ideology of professionalism and de-professionalization is given to define how each concept was used in this study.

On the next page, Figure 1.0 is a graphical representation of the journey through the literature that assisted in building a case for this study.

Figure 1.0 Literature Review Graphic

Teacher Professional Development

- Designed to equip teachers to improve instruction
- Often falls short of it's intent
- Despite PD outcomes, the amount of mandated time spent in PD has tripled

Illich's (1980) Development in Three Dimensions

Exploring the Impact of Excess PD on Teachers' Perceptions of Professionalism in Urban Schools

- The ideology of "professionalism" among teachers
- How does the amount of PD effect that perception?
- When is enough, enough?

Illich's Development Theory

- Institutions and technologies of modern industrial society (its "tools") become independent over against people so that their constant growth has only negative effects and increasingly harms the autonomy of individuals.
- Origins of the idea of "Development" produces a shadow economy that nurtures degradation
- Explores the complex and often problematic issue of development, teacher learning, and the productivity/ counter productivity of educational training for teachers.

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The X, Y, and Z axis of Development

Illich (1981) explored the concept of "development" during the 1960's. This concept is paired with the notions of "freedom" and "equality" for all people paid for at the expense of the rich man's duty and burden. A "desirable society" should include opportunities for all, but at what cost and to whom should the bill be addressed. It is a dangerous view of social engineering which demands quality schools, equitable healthcare, green technology, and global competition. However, Illich (1981) argues the desirable society must consider two rationales to accommodate such thought: (1) undesirable externalities exceed benefits and (2) Counter-productivity.

> The tax burden of schools and hospitals is more than any economy can support; the ghost towns produced by highways impoverish the urban and rural landscape. Plastic buckets from Sao Paulo are lighter and cheaper than those made of scrap by the local tinsmith in Western Brazil. But first cheap plastics put the tinsmith out of existence, and then fumes of plastic leave a special trace on the environment—a new kind of ghost…these poisons are inevitable byproducts" (Illich, 1981, p.339).

Externalities represent costs "outside" the price paid by the consumer for what it wants; costs that others or future generations will at some point be charged. Counter-productivity, however, is a new kind of disappointment which arises "within" the very use of the goods purchased. This internal counter-productivity, an inevitable component of modern institutions, has become the frustration of the poorer majority of each institution's clients: intensely experienced, but rarely defined (Illich, 1981, p.345).

It is conceivable to control a "budget" for the externalities, but counter-productivity comes with unpredictable items and boundless expenses. Budgeting for ten (10) highly-qualified instructors at $65K is a piece of cake; hiring highly effective instructors committed to the transmission of a solid, "score-raising" education is like buying a bakery for an unknown price tag expecting a profit in a non-profit organization. Huh? Exactly! Illich (1981) argues that "schooling twists genetic differences into certified degradation; the medicalization of health increases demand for services far beyond the possible and useful, and undermines that organic coping ability which common sense calls health; transportation, for the great majority bound to rush hour, increases the time spent in servitude to traffic, reducing both freely chosen mobility and mutual access" (Illich, 1981, p.339). The "intent" in the name of "development" produces a third dimension that demands and creates its own often *uncontrollable autonomy*. This research sought to discover the voice of that uncontrollable autonomy; exploring how such excessive development impacts teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals.

On the X-axis, Illich (1981) places the "issues related to social hierarchy, political authority, ownership of the means of production and allocation of resources that are usually designated by terms right and left; Y-axis the technical choices between hard and soft, extending these terms far beyond a pro and con…not only goods, but also services are affected by the hard and soft alternatives." Finally the Z-axis, where neither privilege nor technique reign, but rather the nature of human satisfaction is at issue; an axis that produces a commodity-intensive society of having and doing where needs are increasingly defined in terms of packaged goods and services designed and prescribed by professionals and produced under their control (Illich & Fromm, 1981). Hence, on the X-axis, the Federal and State Departments of Education allocate resources, create policies and mandates that determine who gets what, how shall it be received,

and who qualifies to give it all for the sake of public education known as "the educational system"; on the Y-axis, the Local School District/Central Office who decides how will it be reproduced, manufactured, or industrialized, , where shall it be most beneficial, and by what standard shall it be monitored and recorded-{or professionally developed}- Louis Dumont calls *homo economicus* interpreted by the author as the economy of public education; finally, the Z-axis, the frontline, Teachers/Instructional Support Staff, here abides "the *homo habilis*, an image which includes numerous individuals who are differently competent at coping with reality, the opposite of *homo economicus*, who is dependent on standardized "needs." The Z-axis is where human capital dictates the implementation of new programs based on the independent and critical thinking of the battleground soldier, the one who ultimately carries out the standardization directive that "best fits" or "satisfies" within the world created in every classroom. It is the home of the uncontrollable autonomy, the focus of this study; the teacher. The students and parents could quite possibly occupy this space as well, though directly affected by professional development but rarely exposed or subjected to it, thus placing the teacher at the center of the study.

The Origin of "Development"- Illich's Conceptual Analysis

Illich (1981) asserts that every community has a characteristic attitude towards others. The concept of the "alien" is introduced within this theoretical work as the demand to "rescue" is imposed by one community to others.

> The perception of the alien as someone to be saved is part of an evolving view on the functions of institutions. The alien as object of help comes from the attributions of motherly functions to the 4th century church (Illich, 1981, p.341).

A summation of examples given in the "alien" concept is such that of a "wild" man introduced to 4th century Western Europe who defines his "lack of culture" as uneducated. The first motherly instinct of the institution is to "educate" him or indoctrinate him to the ways in which things can and shall be done. The wild man exists without needs, which poses a huge threat to the institution whose standardization depends on needs. Development of the wild man came in stages; from outsider to pagan; pagan to infidel, especially those who refused Christianity and Baptism; then from infidel to native; unlike the wild man, the natives has needs, but unlike those of civilized man (Reagan, 1980). "His needs are fixed by climate, race, religion and providence. Illich cites Myrdal's observation that the construct of distinctly native needs was necessary both to justify colonialism and to administer colonies. Illich (1981) resolved the provision of government, education, and commerce was for four hundred years the white man's *assumed* burden.

The abandoned self-image of the wild man into the transformation of the native in need of rescue was the nucleus of self-righteous colonial rule. Conversion that mandated commodity-defined needs and surely the native without needs, though noble in concept, threatened the colonialized way of life. Men and civilizations that survived for centuries without modern amenities, medicinal remedies to illnesses, and instinctive knowledge of the earth and the materials it provided for shelter and food could by no means surpass the "right" way to live (Birchill, 1972, p.416). According to Illich (1981),

> Development based on high per capita energy quanta and intense professional care is the
> most pernicious of the West's missionary efforts—a project guided by an ecologically
> unfeasible conception of human control over nature, and by an anthropologically vicious

attempt to replace the nests and snake pits of culture by sterile wards for professional

service" (Illich, 1981, p.341).

Thus, the *homo economicus*, the Local/District officials who is dependent on needs for

standardization, insist on orienting the teacher to the ways of standardization and providing what

is considered as needs or professional development for the native, the teacher, *homo habilis*; a

creature capable and competent to deal with the reality of the classroom if given the opportunity

to construct effective instruction based on explored ideologies of post-secondary education and

teacher certification programs. All in the name of professional development is the "right way" or

the "district way" imposed on teachers that obviously need to be rescued using data as

documentation for failure. The assumption is that teachers must be underdeveloped because

student achievement is extremely low. The need for professional development is transformed

into a mandate with the end desired result of reproduced or formulated` success.

The Shadow Economy

Every activity generates an equal, but alternate activity in a commodity-intensive society,

hence the X and Y axis of existence. Commodity intensive societies' needs are based on a wage-

labor way of life. Illich (1981) argues that work legitimizes employment and prestigious

employment was given to white males. Industrialization created an unpaid workforce, the

housewife that supported industrialization in such a way that each fed off of the other- paid and

unpaid work. Work was the rationale for provision for the family and an effectively functioning

family unit was sustained by stability on the home front; food, clothes, shelter, and even love to

reproduce functional citizens who will contribute to the perpetuation of organized consumption.

"The work ethic which drives such a society legitimates employment for salary and wages and

degrades coping" (Illich, 1981 p. 342). Unpaid work produces two kinds of activities- shadow work which complements wage-labor and subsistence work which competes with and opposes both; it is consistently missed.

> "Then as subsistence activities become more of a rarity, all unpaid activities assume a structure analogous to housework. Growth-oriented work inevitably leads to the standardization and management of activities, be they paid or unpaid. Both wage-labor and shadow work will decline since their product, goods, or services, are valued primarily as a means for ever inventive activities, rather than as an end, that is, dutiful consumption…there, the personal control over each worker over his own means of production determines the small horizon of each enterprise, a horizon which is a necessary condition for social production and the unfolding of each worker's individuality….it flourishes, releases energy, acquires its adequate and classical form only where the worker is the free owner of his tools and resources; only then can the artisan perform like a virtuoso…there useful unemployment is valued while wage-labor, within limits, is merely tolerated" (Illich, 1981, p.342-343).

A subsistence activity is an activity that relies on natural or minimal resources to provide its basic needs. This activity demands respect in the shadow economy though often ignored or missed. The Z axis; where development attempts to discredit pre-existing knowledge and skill. A total disregard for basic sustaining conceptual thought in an effort to replace it with standardization that supports industrialization. Its screams of the imposition of what is said to be needed without inquiry or input of the recipient; hence, an atmosphere of degradation is bread and nurtured and counter-productivity reigns. Capital invests assets in hopes of a return on the

investment; a profit or surplus; an extremely risky business venture in education where the main focus is human capital.

> "Fundamentally, the concept implies the replacement of general competence and satisfying subsistence activities by the use and consumption of commodities; the monopoly of wage-labor over all other kinds of work; redefinition of needs in terms of goods and services mass-produced according to expert design; finally, the rearrangement of the environment in such fashion that space, time, materials and design favor production and consumption while they degrade or paralyze use-value oriented activities that satisfy needs directly" (Illich, 1981 p. 344).

The monopoly is paralyzing enough and when combined with "excessive" activities the results were negative returns and in this case demoralization.

The next section will utilize the conceptual framework to build upon the promise verses the problems of professional development and enter into a brief discussion of the ideology of professionalism; more specifically, the complexities of teacher professionalism.

Origin of Teacher Professional Development: The Influence of Federal, State, and Local Policy

Federal involvement in teacher professional learning has existed for over 150 years, however in 1957 in the midst of the Cold War with the Soviet Union, Americans feared a national security threat and intellectual inferiority to the Russians who launched satellites and space crafts before the United States which translated into the capability to launch ballistic missiles carrying nuclear weapons from Europe to the United S. (Garber, 2003, p.1; Cohen-

Vogel, 2005, p.21). Global competition has fueled teacher professional development since the 1950's and government intervention in teacher professional learning, hence the title, The National Defense Education Act of 1958 (NDEA), has historically been in response to a perceived workforce shortage or other national crisis (e.g. the Sputnik launch; Johnson & Borkow, 1985; Cohen-Vogel, 2005). Since then, there have been hundreds of programs created to address education reform. There is a need to remain globally competitive using highly qualified teachers to increase student achievement as a political instrument in shaping U.S. education policy. Below is a list of key legislation relevant to teacher professional development:

- ❖ National Defense Education Act of 1958 (NDEA) – Enables the country to compete globally and secure the nation's defenses by the assumption of improving instruction in science, math, and foreign languages will advance the goals of the act
- ❖ Higher Education Act of 1965 – Solve teacher shortage and improve teaching
- ❖ Education Professions Development Act of 1967- Fill teacher shortage and improve teaching
- ❖ Dwight Eisenhower Professional Development Program of 1985- The program began in 1985, first authorized in 1984 under Title II of the Education for Economic Security Act, and was reauthorized as the Dwight D. Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Education Program in Title II, Part A, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended in1988. The program became the Dwight D. Eisenhower Professional Development Program under Title II, Part B, in the 1994 reauthorization of ESEA.
- ❖ Higher Education Act of 1992 - Promote reform of K-12 schools and postsecondary teacher preparation programs by assuming good schools require good teachers

- ❖ Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994 – Provided a framework to guide federal education policy; upgrade teacher's opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to prepare students for the 21st century assuming all students can meet high content and performance standards

- ❖ Elementary and Secondary Education Act Improving America's Schools of 1994 – Ensured teachers are prepared to teach high standards

- ❖ Higher Education Act of 1998- Improve teacher preparation programs at postsecondary institutions; test performance is a valid measure of teacher quality

- ❖ Elementary and Secondary Education Act No Child Left Behind of 2001- Ensured that all children are taught by highly qualified teachers by assuming teachers with demonstrated content knowledge will lead to improved student achievement

  (Cohen-Vagel, 2005, pp. 22-23)

Professional Development Funding. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title II, Part A: Improving Teacher Quality State Grants

The U.S. Department of Education (2006) published a non-regulatory guide for the use of federal funds by states to improve teacher quality programs. Title II, Part A is how federal government awards are disbursed to State Education Agencies (SEA), then to Local Education Agencies (LEA) and the purpose of these funds is to "… increase the academic achievement of all students by helping schools and districts improve teacher and principal quality and ensure that all teachers are highly qualified" (ESEA, Title II, Part A, pp. B-1, 2006). The term "high-quality professional development" means professional development that meets the criteria contained in

the definition of professional development in *Title IX*, Section 9101(34) of ESEA. Professional development includes, but is not limited to, activities that:

- Improve and increase teachers' knowledge of academic subjects and enable teachers to become highly qualified;

- Are an integral part of broad school wide and districtwide educational improvement plans;

- Give teachers and principals the knowledge and skills to help students meet challenging State academic standards;

- Improve classroom management skills;

- Are sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused and are not one-day or short-term workshops;

- Advance teacher understanding of effective instruction strategies that are based on scientifically based research; and

- Are developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, parents, and administrators.

(ESEA, Title II- Part A p, A-1, 2006)

According to Federal guidelines,

> States can, for example: (1) develop guidance on effective strategies for improving teacher quality and provide that guidance to the Local Education Agencies (LEA's); (2) adopt a formal statement of State priorities; (3) improve technical assistance and monitoring for LEAs; (4) sponsor conferences and other meetings that address issues related to improving teacher performance; and (5)

disseminate information about successful programs and practices. In providing

this assistance, States should consider the needs of all teachers - whether they are

regular classroom teachers, special education teachers, or teachers of English

language learners - so that a unified, comprehensive system of professional

development is available to all who need to be highly qualified. States might also

provide guidance to LEA's on effective ways of coordinating resources available

for professional development from programs such as *Title I* and *Title III* of the

ESEA and IDEA, Part B" (ESEA, Title II- Part A, pp. A.1).

Table 1 summarizes the allocations of resources with states as a part of the ESEA of 1965 as

amended by No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

Table 1.0

TITLE II, PART A WITHIN-STATE ALLOCATIONS
ESEA of 1965 as amended by *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*

2.5% of 99% for SEA-administered State activities	1% of 100% for SEA and SAHE
2.5% of 99% for competitive sub grants to eligible partnerships[1] (SAHE portion)	
95% of 99% reserved to make sub grants to local educational agencies	

Up to a maximum of $125 million total for all SAHEs (ESEA, Title II, Part B, p. B-9)

As the pressure and price tag to "produce" highly qualified teachers at the federal level

increase, the pressure of state and local educational agencies to implement innovative use of

federal funds towards that end is felt. These agencies attempted to increase schools' capacity as

participants in teacher professional learning. School capacity is defined as including the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of individual teachers; the strength of the school's professional community; the extent to which its programs are coherent; the nature of the principal's leadership; and the quality of its technical resources (Newmann, King, & Youngs, 2000; Youngs, 2001, p.279). This collaborative conception of school capacity is based on prior research on school reform and organizational change, with emphasis on traditionally low-performing, high poverty schools (e.g.Newmann et al., 2000; Corcoran & Goertz, 1995; Louis, Kruse, & Associates, 1995; Newmann, King, & Rigdon, 1997; O'Day, Goertz, & Floden, 1995; Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994; Youngs, 2001). It is the notion of the professional community that is a major part of the engine drove this research. As the mandate to improve instruction using teacher professional development as a political instrument becomes more punitive, the need to monitor amounts, activities, and effectiveness evolve into a critical focal point of analysis.

In this state associated with this case study, the state education agency assumes the responsibility to set policy to ensure every teacher is an effective educator and that every child learns at the highest possible level. According to MDE (2006),

> "The driving belief behind professional learning, undergirding the State School Code regarding professional development, is that all educators have the capacity for and the professional and ethical obligation to continue to learn and improve their knowledge and skills. A companion belief is that every educator yearns to optimize the potential of their profession and to realize their own potential as a professional…It is the position of the MDE that quality professional learning is sustained, work-embedded learning experiences focused on teacher growth directly related to student achievement" (MDE, 2006, p.4).

Sections 1526 and 1527 of the State School Code enable school districts to allocate time for every educator to acquire and remain current with new education information evolving constantly. For new teachers, 15 days in a three year period are required, with emphasis on delivery of instruction and classroom management. For tenured teachers, 5 days are required per academic school year and school districts are allowed to include 38 hours of professional development as part of the required 1,098 hours of instructional time devoted to students. It is also important to note that teachers are required by law to hold a certificate in the subject content areas and grades of endorsements. Renewal of that provisional certification requires the teacher to have acquired six (6) semester credit hours within three years of initial certification, 150 hours of State Continuing Education Clock Hours (SCECH's) appropriate to grade level endorsements (A combination of semester hours/SCECH's), or completion of a Master's degree or higher at any time. Renewal of a professional certification (tenured teachers) are the same, however the six (6) semester hours must be a reading methods course, special education courses, diagnosis and/or remediation in reading coursework.

Now, the discussion will shift from the rationale and origin of teacher professional development to the "promises" of effective professional development. This next section will focus on research centered on the intent and goals of effective professional development.

The "Promise" of "Effective" Professional Development

Effective professional development commits to increasing student achievement by what seems to be the natural vehicle for change- teacher transformation. Professional development is considered an essential mechanism for deepening teachers' content knowledge by developing

their teacher practices (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Suk Yoon, & Birman, 2002) and promises this essential mechanism to be the master key to unlocking the mysteries of effective instruction which increases student achievement.

Desimone, Porter, Garet, Suk Yoon, & Birman (2002) researched the effects of professional development on teachers' instruction. Using a selected sample of about 207 teachers in 30 schools, in 10 districts in five states, they examined features of teachers' professional development and its effects on changing teaching practice in mathematics and science from 1996–1999. They found that professional development focused on specific instructional practices increases teachers' use of those practices in the classroom and specific features, such as active learning opportunities, increase the effect of the professional development on teacher's instruction (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Suk Yoon, & Birman, 2002, p. 70).

Professional development is thought to be a cornerstone of systemic reform efforts designed to increase teachers' capacity to teach to high standards (Smith & O'Day, 1991; Desimone, Porter, Garet, Suk Yoon, & Birman, 2002). These reforms pose certain technical demands; demands on the knowledge, skill, judgment, and imagination of individuals. However reforms also communicate a vision of what it means to learn and what it means to be educated; they communicate a vision of schools and teaching, of students and teachers (Little, 1993). Professional development is deemed effective if it equips teachers individually and collectively to act as shapers, promoters, and well-informed critics of reforms (Little, 1993).

It is well documented that teacher quality is the single most accurate indicator of students' academic success and achievement rates (Brown, 2002; Carter, 2001; Delpit, 1995; Haberman, 1995, 2005; Kopetz et al., 2006; Kozol, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sanders &

Rivers, 1996; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2004; McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson, & Robinson, 2007) and it is this premise that has driven professional development practices, also referred to as teacher learning, and research for a formula for success. Desimone, Porter, Garet, Suk Yoon, & Birman (2002) drew on research and best practice data to identify six key features of professional development. Three were structural: (1) *reform type*- study groups, teacher networks, mentoring relationship, committee/task force; (2) *duration of activity*, including contact hours, span of time over each activity; and (3) *collective participation* which is the degree to which teachers from the same school, department, or grade level, as opposed to the participation of individual teachers from many schools. The remaining three features are (4) *active learning*- opportunities for teachers to become actively engaged in meaningful analysis of teaching and learning; (5) *coherence*- alignment of state standards and assessments and encouraging continued professional communication among teachers; and (6) *content focus*- the degree to which the activity is focused on improving and deepening teachers' content knowledge in mathematics and science (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Suk Yoon, & Birman, 2002).

On the other hand, some research shows that workplace learning is deeply connected with the work that people carry out and their collaborations with colleagues and peers; professional development is effectively realized and organized by professionals through their social networks and communities (Cross & Parker, 2004; Duguid, 2005; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Weinberger, 2012; Wenger, 1998; de Laat & Schreurs, 2013). De Laat & Scheurs (2013) conducted a study to develop a method that helps raise awareness using a learning analytics approach. This promising research-driven intervention was designed in hopes of detecting multiple (isolated) networks in organizations, connect ideas, and facilitate value creation. Using this approach, organizations can link with existing informal networks of practice and unlock their

potential for organizational learning by giving them a voice and making their results more explicit within the organization (De Laat & Scheurs, 2013, p. 1421).

Boud and Hager (2012) upgrades the promises of professional development by changing the metaphor from acquisition and transfer participation, construction, and becoming, locating learning in professional practices in day-to-day work (De Laat & Scheurs, 2013). Boud and Hager (2012) argued the need to reposition Continuing Professional Development (CPD) policy within professional organizations and suggests that re-conceptualizing formal CPD through a focus on the notion of practice, away from a perspective framed by acquisition of points or hours. It argues that CPD must be located in what professionals do and how they do it, and sketches some of the implications of such a stance (Boud & Hager, 2013, p. 17).

 Teachers are not just viewed as two-dimensional beings, but actually introduced and acknowledged as a third dimensional being which increases a deepening of teacher learning promising to transform instruction. Although observable explicit knowledge is easy to obtain through reading or training courses, informal social learning in the workplace allows the deeper, tacit components of knowledge (Lane & Lubatkin, 1998; de Laat & Scheurs, 2013) which allows them to interpret, embrace, share, compile, contextualize, and sustain this new knowledge (Baker-Doyle & Yoon, 2011; de Laat & Scheurs, 2013).

In addition to the "normative" promises professional development makes, the promises intensify for urban school teachers. While the challenge to retain highly competent teachers affects all schools, the crisis is critical in urban districts, which historically suffer from a severe shortage of qualified teachers (Hunter-Quartz & TEP Research Group, 2003). Cochran-Smith (2003) emphasizes the consistent call for a 'new multicultural teacher education' in the last

decade (Hunter-Quartz & TEP Research Group, 2003). Core elements and principles of such programs include:

- An explicit commitment to social justice, made real by continual struggle about what it means and how learning is enacted in public schools

- Engaging a diverse group of faculty and teachers for long term professional learning communities

- Viewing learning as social and dialogical inquiry within the communities of practice

- Constant grounding in theory and K-12 fieldwork

- Integrating the technical dimensions of teaching with the moral, cultural and political

- Emphasizing the importance of knowing communities as well as knowing schools and classrooms

- Extending formal preparation into the first year of teaching

- Maintaining connections and support beyond the first year
  (Hunter-Quartz & TEP Research Group, 2003)

Again, teacher quality is documented as the single most accurate indicator of students' academic success and achievement rates (Brown, 2002; Carter, 2001; Delpit, 1995; Haberman, 1995, 2005; Kopetz et al., 2006; Kozol, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2004; McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson, & Robinson, 2008) and research has also confirmed that effective educators can improve the academic outcomes of low-income students and provide them with hope and promise for the future (Banks, 2001; Haberman, 1995, 2005; Hollins, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1994; McKenzie & Scheurich, 2007; Olson & Jerald, 1998; Quartz & TEP Group, 2003; McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson, & Robinson, 2008). Although some urban high-poverty schools have overcome bureaucratic,

societal, and cultural challenges often perceived as obstacles to success, many continue to struggle and fall short of meeting the educational needs of students in poverty (McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson, & Robinson, 2008). Literature also shows that low income students underperform on cognitive assessments in all subject areas when compared to more affluent students (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Haberman, 1995, 2005; Kopetz, Lease, & Warren-Kring, 2006; McKinnet et al., 2006; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2004; McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson, & Robinson, 2008). These kinds of research findings affirm the rationale for the provisions provided by the "promise" of effective professional development for teachers, especially urban teachers.

The search for the "formula for success" drives research towards pin pointing a focus for the argument for professional development. Students learn only when teachers are professionally trained continually using the promises as the foundation for necessity. The study now shifts to the "problems" with the "promise" of professional development.

The "Problem" with Professional Development

Bureaucratic Push for Professional Development

Urban school reform places an enormous emphasis on professionally developing a teacher task force equipped to transform the lives of urban school students within the classroom. However more often than not, professional development provided to teachers fall short of impacting change in the classroom for a variety of reasons. Since *A Nation at Risk* (USDE, 1983) was published, the central premise for a "theory-of-action" (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Smylie, 1996) is that problems of schooling are due in large part to lack of direction, excessive

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discretion, and low accountability within the educational system that claims these conditions can be corrected through external regulation and bureaucratic control (Rowan, 1990; Smylie, 1996). There is evidence and research (Etzioni, 1964; Smylie, 1996) that this theory is naïve and incomplete because organizational bureaucratic control sanctions, work rules & regulations are largely ineffective in professional and semiprofessional organizations, such as schools, where work is uncertain, non-routine, and requires employee judgment and flexibility (Etzioni, 1964; Smylie, 1996).

Little (1993) examined fit among five streams of reform and prevailing configurations of teachers' professional development and argues that the dominant training-and-coaching model—focused on expanding an individual repertoire of well-defined classroom practice—is not adequate to the conceptions or requirements of teaching embedded in present reform initiatives (Little, 1993, p. 433). Subject matter collaboratives and other emerging alternatives are found to embody principles that stand up to the complexity of reforms in subject matter teaching, (1) equity, (2) assessment, (3) school organization, and the professionalization of teaching. The principles form criteria for assessing professional development policies and practices (Little, 1993, p. 433).

Professional development opportunities are often birthed out of mandated school improvement strategies and although policies focused on regulating and legislating behavior, at best the only outcomes may be (1) to increase the consistency of subject matter taught (Cohen & Spillane, 1992; Smylie, 1996), (2) increased teacher devotion to time and effort towards teaching testing material (Darling-Hammond & Wise, 1985; Smith, 1981; Smylie, 1996) and (3) influencing instructional strategies (Smylie, 1996). Frequently, teachers see them less as an imperative to change their practice than as something to be done over and above their current

work (Black, 1994; Wilson & Corbett, 1990; Smylie, 1996); a problem inherent in bureaucratic controls which is just one aspect of the possible problems with professional development.

Complexities of How Teachers Learn

Professional development is difficult to define as effective due to the complexities of how teachers learn and the impact such learning has on classroom instruction. Research based determinations of the elements of professional development are extremely important and can be accessed in abundance. However, much of the research results have yielded disappointing results with teacher professional learning activities often being characterized as ineffective (Hanushek, 2005; Sykes, 1996; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). The problem stems from researchers employing simplistic conceptualizations of teacher learning and failing to consider how learning is embedded in professional lives and work conditions (Borko, 2004; D. Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Timperly & Alton-Lee, 2008; Opfer & Pedder, 2011); the Z-Axis and uncontrollable autonomy (Illich, 1981):

> "We believe the professional development effects literature has committed an epistemological fallacy by taking empirical relationships between forms of activity or task (e.g., being activity based), structures for learning (e.g., collaboration between teachers), location (e.g., situated in practice), and so on, and some measure of teacher change to be teacher learning" (Opfer & Pedder, 2011 pp. 377).

Opfer & Pedder (2011) researched professional development framing their reviews of research in the ways elements of three (3) subsystems (the teacher, the school, and the learning activity) interact and combine in different ways and with varying intensities to influence teacher learning. Their research concluded that scholars must adopt methodological practices that focus

on explanatory causality and the reciprocal influences of all three subsystems. Kruse et al. (1995) wrote,

> "Growth of the school-based professional community is marked by conversations that
> hold practice, pedagogy, and student learning under scrutiny…rich and recurring
> discourse promotes high standards of practice, and both generate and reinforce core
> beliefs, norms, and values of the community. In other words, talk is the bridge between
> educational values and improved practice in schools" (Kruse et al, 1995 p.30).

Even when the consensus among researchers about the benefits of professional learning communities which could possibly be presented as an example of explanatory causality and reciprocating influences of the suggested subsystems, most research still describes what networks have to offer in general terms, and not so much what people actually do within a network and the strategies they develop to maintain their relationships (De Laat & Schreurs, 2013). The empirical approach describing networked learned behavior, detailing the qualities involved is what continues to be lacking in research (De Laat, 2012; De Laat & Schreurs, 2013). Opfer and Pedder (2011) refers to this preference as the process-product approach; a reliance on an absent variable versus presence measurement variables. Leiberman and Grolnick's (1996) investigation of 16 U.S. networks identifying the balance act between inside and outside knowledge, centralization and decentralization , and inclusivity and exclusivity of membership (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). In other words, current effective professional development literature has a tendency to cleave to the deep desire for linear outcomes. A cluster of "if-then" labor intense approaches to teacher learning which optimistically results in huge impacts on instructional practices. Relationships between variables are often curvilinear- too little and learning will not occur, too much and it is counterproductive or negative (Nuthall & Alton-Lee, 1993; Opfer &

Pedder, 2011). Regardless of how strong these relationships between forms of activity and teacher change may be, they do not address the ultimate causal question-why? (Marsh, 1982 p.102). Teacher learning must be conceptualized as a complex system with various dynamics of social behavior interacting and combining in different ways, rather than an event (A. Clarke & Collins, 2007; Collins & Clarke, 2008; Curtis & Stollar, 2002; Davis & Sumara, 2006; Hoban, 2002; Marion, 1999; Weaver, 1948; Opfer & Pedder, 2011).

Ignoring the complexity (problem) of teacher learning leads to focus on the micro context (individual teachers or individual activities or programs) to the exclusion of influences from meso (institutional) and macro (school system) contexts (Bore & Wright, 2009; Bottery & Wright, 1996; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). As schools develop a growing dependency on research-based practices to assist in creating professional development programs that work , Stollar, Poth, Curtis, & Cohen (2006) stresses the important characteristic of the complexity of teacher learning; it evolves as a nested system involving systems within systems (Opfer & Pedder, 2011).

Urban School Reforms, Professional Development, and Implications of Leadership

Building upon these complex systems made of quicksand, the discussion transitions from teacher learning complexities in a "normal" school setting to teacher learning in urban schools taxed with external factors created by societal ills and cultural norms. Urban school reforms, like all school improvement initiatives, are primarily standards-based reforms which include high standards, curriculum frameworks, and new approaches to assessments aligned to those standards which generates new expectations for teaching and student performance (Bybee, 1993;

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 1991; National Research Council, 1996; Webb & Romberg, 1994; Desimone, Smith, & Ueno, 2006). Although teachers generally support high standards for teaching and learning, many teachers are not prepared to implement teaching practices based on high standards (Cohen, 1990; Elmore, Peterson, & McCarthey, 1996; Grant, Peterson, & Shojgreen-Downer, 1996; Sizer, 1992; Desimone, Smith, & Ueno, 2006). Even more problematic in urban schools is attracting and retaining quality educators (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Graziano, 2005; Haberman, 2005; McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson & Robinson, 2008). Additionally according to Darling-Hammond (2000), urban high poverty students are taught by more new, under-prepared, and less experienced teachers, which contributes to the disparities in achievement among majority and minority populations (McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson & Robinson, 2008). Professional development in urban schools then, requires even more of a financial commitment to attract, recruit, equip, and ultimately retain quality teachers. Not only is professional development at the core of school improvement efforts, it is the single largest monetary investment in school reform (Desimone, Smith, & Ueno, 2006).

In the mid- 1980's, university teacher programs answered the call and the Professional Development School movement ignited fresh partnerships between universities and school districts by assuming the responsibility to equip new teachers in educating urban youth (McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson & Robinson, 2008). Furthermore, considering the complexities of how teachers learn and equipping new teachers, who in some federal incentive programs did not intend to enter the teaching profession at all, urban schools are faced with the incredible task of creating professional development programs that impact instructional practices, school improvement initiatives, and ultimately increasing student achievement.

McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson & Robinson (2008) research is based on the effects of the internship experience in teaching in high poverty schools and the study resolves teaching in urban schools is particularly overwhelming and challenging, especially if colleges of education provide a traditional teacher education program that focuses on universal requirements and generic processes (Haberman, 1996, 2005; McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson & Robinson, 2008). Haberman (1995, p.2) wrote:

> "Completing a traditional program of teacher education as preparation for working in this emotional cauldron [urban, high-poverty schools] is like preparing to swim the English Channel by doing laps in the university pool" (Haberman, 1995, p.2).

Many teacher candidates new to the urban environment experience culture shock or experience an unhealthy attitude of trying to "save" the children (Kincheloe, 2004; McKinney, Haberman, Stafford-Johnson & Robinson, 2008) and lack the rigor required to teach complex content in which urban education takes place (Kincheloe, 2004 p.14).

Not only do urban teachers experience extraordinary challenges disseminating subject area content in urban schools, but urban school leaders are under tremendous pressure to increase student achievement to retain their jobs. In an educational context where school and district performance is of increasing focus, it's essential for leaders at all levels of the educational system to focus on improving student performance. Leaders at all levels of the educational system are mandated to productively seek to improve the quality of learning opportunities and student performance, no matter how challenging the circumstances (Knapp, Honig, Plecki, Portin, & Copeland, 2014, p.242). The pressure for both district leaders and school leaders alike to perform is restructured, retransmitted, and played out in teacher development sessions.

Due to the enormity of urban school factors and ills, it is imperative that the focus remain on the impact these factors have on the teachers. Current literature and these critical issues that plague urban teachers too often swallow the voice of the teacher which is a non-negotiable for this case study. The review of literature and research will conclude with a brief discussion of professionalism and the complex ideologies which accompany that ideology.

Professionalism: An Ideology of Perspective

Professionalism is one word saturated with multiple and complex ideologies dependent on perspective. This section explores the concept of professionalism and the complex systems of thoughts encountered on the journey to define it. The position of professions and professionalization as a significant theme in social sciences seems increasingly complex as relations with varying occupational groups develop in uncertain and ambiguous ways (Thomas & Hewitt, 2011). Views of professionalism from managerial and labor personnel are grounded in extreme differences of perspective. Professions have been cast as forces of resistance against government bureaucracy and managerial interference by some and as conspiracies of self-interest by others (Thomas & Hewitt, 2011, pp.1373). In this section, a brief discussion of professionalization and de-professionalization will be examined in the literature not as competing or opposing forces, but in collaboration to develop a unified picture of such complex systems of professionalism.

Professionalism

Teachers are the gate-keepers of its traditions and culture and facilitators of evolution…teachers above all professionals, must, almost by definition, be intellectually active, authoritative, lively, critical, reflective, flexible and ever attentive to the constant and changing demands of the young and the society for which they are being prepared (General Teaching Council Trust, 1993: section F, paras 1; Bottery & Wright, 1997, p.7). Scott (2008) summarizes professions in two broad categories: functionalist, with professions providing and preserving expertise to best serve the interest of clients; and conflict-based, where professional standing and self-interest is challenged and fought over (Scott, 2008;Thomas & Hewitt, 2011, pp.1374). Since the 1970's the conflict lens has been at the forefront, especially in the medical profession as exemplified in the theory of re-stratification (Abbott, 1988; Freidson, 1984, 1985, 1986; Mahmood, 2001; Sheaff, Smith & Dickinson, 2002; Thomas & Hewitt, 2011), which sees actors defending and reshaping their work in response to external pressures, such as managerial reforms (Thomas & Hewitt, 2011). Teacher professionals are also mostly viewed through the lens of conflict-based as well. Seddon (1994) states teacher professionalism as situating and shaping of teachers day-to-day practice developed in a new framework of teachers' terms and conditions of employment and these changes also redefine the rights of teachers and their unions to participate in the determination of the conditions and character of the education industry and its core business, educational work (Seddon, 1994 p.225; Seddon & Spaull, 1997, p.289).

Friedson (1984) suggests academic literature in the 1960's definition of professionals by accepting the professionals' adherence to a code of ethics designed to place the client at the center of concern, through descriptions of the life and work of individual paragons (Friedson, 1984;Carr-Saunders & Wilson, 1933; Bottery & Wright, 1997, p.8). Since then, there has been

an increasingly critical stance, which sees professionalism as but a manifestation of occupational

strategy aimed at monopolizing practices, leading to increased power and financial reward

(Collins, 1990; Bottery & Wright, 1997, pp. 8). The distinction between professions and other

occupational groups are not as obvious and it has been argued in literature that the role and status

of professionals has to be understood in relation to other occupational groups, as hybrid forms of

professionalism emerge (Doolin, 2002; Iedema, Degeling, Braithwaite & White, 2003;

Noordegraaf, 2007; Thomas & Hewitt, 2011, p.1374) and traditional boundaries between groups

are questioned with new ones constructed (Lamont & Molnar, 2002; Montgomery & Oliver,

2007; Thomas & Hewitt, 2011, p. 1374). Noordegraaf (2007) cites studies that suggest that the

changes around 'persecuted' (Farrell & Morris, 2003) professional groups such as doctors,

provide opportunities for the professionalization of other groups, such as nurses, social workers,

(Thomas & Hewitt, 2011) and even teachers. The socio-cultural aspects of professional change

and the ways in which professional identities are forged and maintained need to be better

understood, as they are central to the renegotiated orders that emerge (Doolin, 2002;

Montgomery & Oliver, 2007; Scott, 2008; Thomas & Hewitt, 2011).

These ecological changes of professions establish the industrial relations perspective.

Industrial relations fundamentally concerns the way people behave in the context of work, both

as individuals and as members of groups (Dabscheck & Niland, 1981, p.5; Spaull, 1997, p. 290).

It uses identifiable processes and develops a framework of rules which temporarily

accommodates industrial conflict and establishes working relationships between employees and

employers (Spaull & Hince, 1986, pp. 5-14; Spaull, 1997, p. 290). There are two types of rules

that operate the industrial relations systems; 'substantive rules' which benefit the employees

(terms and conditions of employment) or employers (managerial prerogatives) and 'procedural

rules' establish the means by which substantive rules are to be established and/or changed (Dabscheck & Niland, 1981, p. 27; Spaull, 1997, p. 290). This critical discourse analysis focuses on the struggles to fix meaning in discourse and on ways in which competing discourses, such as managerialism and clinical professionalism, are reshaped and socio-capital for occupational actors emerge (Nederveen Pieterse, 1995; Doolin, 2002; Thomas & Davie, 2005; Thomas & Hewitt, 2011). Understanding such discourse helps shape the identities and relations of social actors and groups with others through both discursive practice and the idea of articulation which is important to the construction of meaning within social contexts (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Thomas & Hewitt, 2011). Often, the construct of opposition of a concept within a social context helps to shape the concept itself, thus the next section expands into a brief discussion of de-professionalization.

De-professionalization

Autonomy, (or the lack thereof) government interference, management, and curricular freedom are emergent themes in the complex conceptualization of de-professionalization. Using intensive data on developments in In-Service Education and Training (INSET) priorities in secondary education, Bottery and Wright (1997) argue that though professional development of teachers is crucial to the quality of instruction which improves a society these same developments have led to an increasing de-professionalization of teaching. In their research, Bottery and Wright (1997, p. 82) contend that the role of the teacher profession is preparing itself for either a democratic, critical and emancipating role or the functional, 'market-driven/technical rational role'. On one hand, progressive ideas are dangerously taught in a free democracy and on

the other hand, teachers are forced to recruit students due to competing schools casting professionals in a commercial light by "selling services" thus effectively reducing their status as professionals. Bottery and Wright (1997) research suggested INSET was characterized by:

- Implementation, skill based matters at a level of 'technical rationality'

- Short termism

- 'just-in-time' training

- Training, not education

- Absence of macro-social consideration

- Lack of critical input

- Heavy central direction (Bottery & Wright, 1997 p.11)

The rationale of the research was to see if the perceived teachers' de-professionalization in the state sector through short-term 'implementation' INSET could be attributed to government policy. Data revealed that government policies were only partially attributed to de-professionalization and instead there was seemingly a failure on the part of both schools and teachers to seek a deeper understanding of the concept of professionalism itself (Bottery and Wright, 1997). It was also discovered that serious consideration for teachers to understand the 'ecological' dimension of teaching in its social, economic and political trends, and their impact upon education were also factors of contribution to de-professionalization.

Similar to Bottery and Wright (1997), Spaull (1997), in a study of the state education Industry in Victoria, Australia, argued that de-professionalization of school teaching has occurred through a number of managerial interventions. This study focused on the erosion of teachers' rights and conditions of employment through the attempted deregulation of the state of

education Industry in Victoria (Spaull, 1997). Through a long and fierce battle of the teacher unions to stop the assertion of managerial prerogatives in Victorian Government reforms that favored teacher unions, the High Court decisions still assisted in the erosion of teacher awards and extended the potential extent for further de-professionalization.

This notion of defining professionalism utilizing the deeper meaning of de-professionalization assists in the development of the bigger picture of the internal complexities that accompany its conceptualization. These struggles between all parties involved somehow often translate into unforeseen economic issues as well. Erickson (1982), Cochran and Glahe (1997) wrote:

"Needs are met by one's own labor, the exchange of one's labor for the labor of others, or by receiving the voluntary gift of labor of others. Americans have, for most of their history, attempted to provide education, not by economic means, but primarily through taxation, compulsory attendance, and government control of schools. Education has been provided by the political means: the expropriation of the wealth of others in an attempt to set up the one best system, a free (tax supported), open to all government-operated school system run by professionals" (Erickson, 1982, p.393; Cochran and Glahe, 1997, p.256).

Professionalism and de-professionalization are often characterized by sets of regimented rules either presented in concert or unraveling conceptualizations of what should be. Though past studies have addressed both concepts in depth, the voice of the teacher as a professional is missing from professional development research. Even more so, a deeper probe of defining professionalism from the perspective of the individual is lacking in current research. In this

critical case study the perspective of the urban educator, who is constantly being mandated to be

developed as a part of every school improvement plan in the nation, was given the opportunity to

speak. The next chapter discusses the methodology used to explore the phenomenon of the

individual experiences of urban educators.

Chapter 3

Methodology

A Qualitative Approach

The qualitative approach to research emphasizes a meaning or in-depth focus on a particular school of thought. It emphasizes a focus on people's subjective experiences and interpretations of the world (Web Center for Social Research Methods, 2014, p.1). This qualitative approach cares deeply about how the world appears to others. A qualitative approach also seeks to empower individuals' stories with the goal of understanding how they how make meaning within their social world (Hesse-Biber, 2010). In this case study, the perceptions of teachers as professionals after experiencing excess professional development is the phenomenon studied by the researcher and therefore an appropriate qualitative method for this research. The role of the researcher in this study was to determine if excessive professional development affects the way teachers view themselves as professionals.

Research Design

This case study combined a qualitative participatory action research method with a first-person critical action case study to introduce a first-person action case study. Case studies are a form of qualitative descriptive research that studies individuals or groups using interviews, surveys, and observations as methods of data collection (Web Center for Social Research Methods, 2014, p.2). Critical action research formalizes teacher inquiry and allows teacher researchers to study classroom practices in a systematic and intentional manner optimistically sharing all acquired knowledge with the larger educational community (Manfra, 2009, p. 95).

This kind of research design actively exchanges the lens of professional researchers with research participants to produce relevant research sensitive to the complexities of contextual and relational reality (Davis, 2008; Manfra, 2009, p. 95).

According to Reason and Bradbury (2001), participation is the defining characteristic of action research based on a view of the world that consists "not of things but of relationships which we co-author" (Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Arieli, Friedman, & Agbaria, 2009, p. 264). Participatory action research (PAR) typically refers to this relationship as the meeting of two groups- "researchers" on the one hand and the "community" or the "people" on the other (Hall, 2001; Park, 2001; Arieli, Friedman, & Agbaria, 2009, p. 264). However, within this framework, researchers act as committed facilitators, participants, and learners rather than distanced, neutral observers, analysts, or manipulators (Arieli, Friedman, & Agbaria, 2009, p. 264). Thus, action research can be seen as involving a particular kind of interpersonal relationship that blurs boundaries between traditional roles of the researchers and the researched (Arieli, Friedman, & Agbaria, 2009, p. 264).

First-person action research extends that same lens and engages the teacher-researcher in a deeply reflective state producing newly formulated qualitative data and outcomes. First-person action research situates the researcher in the position of a participant. It is a method used to identify "what" went wrong and "why", acknowledging multiple actors, and deciding to critically discuss oneself (Arieli, Friedman, & Agbaria, 2009, p. 268). This research method incurs two sets of data: (1st set of data) state reform district teacher interviews and PD observation sessions and (2nd set of data) the researcher's "notes-to-self" as data. Initially, only the first part of the data would be utilized, but as first-person action research asserts along the

path of discovery, analytical reflective practices are credible forms of data collection in qualitative research.

Research Method: First-Person Action Case Study

In this qualitative case study, the first (1ˢᵗ) theory of critical action was to determine the effects of excess professional development on urban teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals; the second (2ⁿᵈ) theory of action, using a first-person participatory action research method, exposed the internal phenomenon and transformations of the researcher to generate actionable knowledge from the researcher's notes called 'notes-to-self'. The outcome is the introduction of a first person action case study to the field of education qualitative research. These reflections will be recorded in italic to visually assist in the transitions between both data sets.

Building on the research of Arieli, Friedman, & Agbaria (2009) *The Paradox of Participation in Action Research* involving Jewish researchers and a Palestinian Arab non-governmental organization in Israel, this method employs an action science research method for joint critical reflecting on the existing relationships within the data and analyzing the data from reflection. These researchers set out to analyze community relations between Jewish and Palestinian Arab leadership groups. The researchers then embarked on a reflective practice after each session to critique the personal errors and conflicts amongst themselves which was deemed credible data. Their research presents two 'theories of action'; one aimed at explaining the paradox of participation and one for dealing with it more effectively. The intent was to expose the internal phenomenon and/or errors of the researcher to generate actionable knowledge (Arieli, Friedman, & Agbaria, 2009, p. 263).

The Dual Roles of the Researcher

The initial role of the researcher was to earnestly seek the existence of a correlation between the amounts of professional development and teachers' perception of themselves as professionals after participating in large amounts of professional development sessions. Participatory approaches aim to promote participation of people whose voices have not been heard though often targeted by policies, programs, or research. They attempt to help people reflect on the constraints of social structures that limit their self-development and self-determination (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000; Goto, 2010, p.1). Teachers in the state reform district are at-will, non-union employees whose voices are often heard, but not considered.

The role of the researcher as a participant was implemented after initial data collection was completed and the personal notes were deemed "actionable knowledge" (Arieli, Friedman, & Agbaria, 2009, p. 263) to be included as data. "Notes-to-self" are documented notes intended by the researcher to re-create the interview space and moment for the sole purpose of recollection. The initial intent of "notes-to-self" was to increase accuracy in data analysis and reduce bias. It was later determined after all the initial data was compiled, that the researcher's "notes-to-self" were valuable and credible data sources. The initial role of the researcher was to view teacher perceptions of professionalism and excess PD through the eyes of the participants; the later dual role of the researcher as participant sought to discover and interpret a purer concept of life-long learning and critical reflective practice using a first-person narrative.

After each session with responses from colleagues, the "notes to self" revealed another phenomenon. It revealed the need to analyze critique, disaggregate, and construct the 'new' experiences transpiring within the researcher. Hereafter referred to the "Damascus Moment", this

epiphany exposed the impact 18 years of PD had on the researcher. Thus the first- person action research method was implemented and recorded in italics. On the next page, Figure 2.0 serves as a graphical representation for the process steps used for the two-part methodology.

Figure 2.0 Methodology Process Steps

Explored teacher perceptions of what they felt a teacher professional actually was…

Discussed and observed current district professional development and teacher preparation programs

Part (I)Complied data to develop findings narrative, major themes, and triangulation of data sources
Part (II) Complied data & findngs in the 'notes to self'; construction of additional narratives and minor themes

Summarized findings , implications of research, and recommendations for the field utilizing theoretical framework

Process Steps

Description of Setting

The State Reform District (SRD) is a highly controversial state-wide reform school district created to turn around the academic performance of the state's lowest-achieving schools. The SRD currently oversees 15 schools in the largest urban school district in the state, including

nine elementary/middle schools (three of which are charter schools) and six high schools. (www.icansoar.org, 2014) In 2009, the troubled urban school district charged with non-compliance of NCLB mandates for Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) and enacted the following measures:

- Reconstituted 41 schools that were failing under the No Child Left Behind guidelines
- *Interviewed 635 school administrators to determine who the school and district leaders would be
- Required approximately 2,500 teachers, aides and counselors of troubled schools to reapply for their positions
- Closed 29 schools, saving millions of dollars in operational expenses
- Reduced central administration staff by 72 percent to focus more resources on schools
- Initiated the historic Emergency Student Achievement Summer School Academies, attracting some 33,000 students (Wasko, 2009).

Hence as an alternative to the troubled urban school district, the state reform district offers a student-centered model of teaching and learning that allows teachers to personalize the education of each child. Students are self-paced according to mastery of core content areas as an alternative to traditional schools where students are promoted by grade-level content standards. It is a system created to remove the dictatorship of time and an academic calendar. Teachers are engaged in a blended learning environment of both online learning and direct instruction in a flexible 210 calendar year verses a traditional 175-180 day school year. Also, 95% of the

resources are directed to the operations of the individual state reform member schools

(www.icansoar.org, 2014).

Toxicity of the State Reform District

A large urban city is only as successful as its school district. The city in this case study was emerging from bankruptcy and several philanthropic organizations suggested a portfolio district be established to address the troubled urban school district to assist in the resurrection of the city's renewal. A portfolio school district is a nationwide movement to shift the role of central administration in large urban districts from directly managing schools to overseeing a portfolio of schools consisting of a diverse mix of schools, i.e. for-profit, non-profit contract schools, charters schools or autonomous traditional public schools (Mason & Arsen, 2014, p. i). Mason and Arsen (2014) records in depth, the failed attempt to begin a portfolio district as well as its severely ineffective implementation PD practices in this case study. According to Mason and Arsen (2014) the objectives of the SRD was to:

- Turn around the lowest performing 5% of the schools throughout the state
- Establish a new governance authority in the large urban city that could evolve to include most of the city's public schools modeled after New Orleans portfolio management district
- Create an entity which could benefit all students in the state by promoting educational innovation and new instructional models outside the system of traditional public schools

Instead what occurred was:

- The establishment of the SRD outside of the legislative process through an InterLocal Agreement (ILA) between the emergency manager of the large urban school district and

the regents of an authorizing state university. The SRD was hastily designed in private

meetings, so there was no opportunity for public vetting and refinement that typically

takes place in the legislative process.

- The ILA established the SRD as a new type of school district with broad purposes and

    powers. No limitations were placed on the number of schools who could participate and

    no mention of strategic planning centered around how the SRD would address low

    performing schools

- The SRD was not "officially" the statewide reform district, however the media portrayed

    it as the proposed solution to low performing state schools. Only 15 schools were place in

    the SRD by the emergency financial manager, a single person hired by the governor to

    determine the direction of the school district (Mason & Arsen, 2014, p. iii)

This hostile politically charged environment intended to promote education innovation is

where this case study set the stage for how such educational innovations have impacted the urban

teachers who were mandated to implement such innovation. Excessive amounts of professional

development were required to ensure the SRD would be successful. Unfortunately, urban

teachers in the SRD were exposed to toxic and enormous amounts of PD with no structure,

support, or curriculum aligned with clearly communicated state educational policies. As hastily

as the SRD was established, even more hastily were urban teachers expected to deliver miracles

with no fish and no loaves of bread. The lowest performing students were dumped in the hands

of a wide varying degree of unexperienced teachers and a small amount of veteran teachers to

perform such miracles.

Professional Development in the SRD

Professional development agendas for the most part are district-wide and local school administrators must adhere to the content of the agenda as set by district officials, so participants are exposed to the same amounts of professional development regardless of grade level. District-wide professional development sessions are also offered to teachers quarterly, as teacher turnover remains problematic. The Professional development of teachers is the top priority within the SRD as teachers are recruited from surrounding local school districts, Teach For America (Federally funded teaching recruitment program), and colleges/universities around the nation. SRD teachers adhere to a rigorous professional development calendar that consists of 14 full PD days and each third Wednesday is designated for Data analysis and abbreviated PD.

The main elements of the SRD 2014-2015 academic calendar years are as follows can be viewed in Figure 3.0

Figure 3.0 SRD 2014-2015 Calendar

K-8: 209 instructional days
• HS: 207 instructional days*
• Predictable and regular breaks allow for staff to plan and prepare
• Professional development offered on first two days of each 5-day break
• Regular data analysis meetings will occur on every third Wednesday of each month (1/2 day)
• Total of 37 vacation days, 14 PD days (half days not included)
[Graph shown: Instructional Days, Professional Development Days, Holidays, and Testing]
(icansoar.org, 2014)
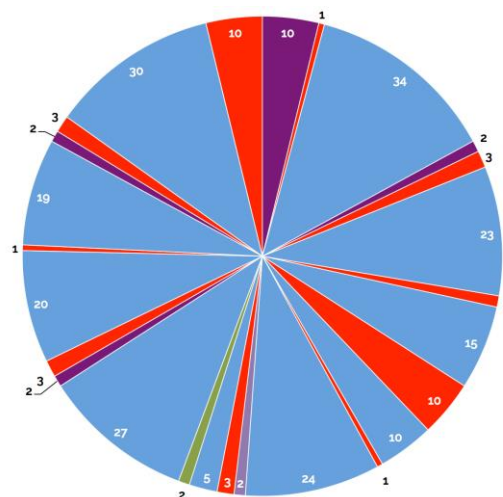
The State Department of Education only requires 5 days of professional development for teachers and an additional 5 days for first-year teachers The SRD academic calendar exceeds the State Department of Education mandated amount by nine (9) days for experienced teachers and four (4) days for first year teachers in the category for full day PD. This does not include the abbreviated PD every third (3rd) Wednesday, 1-3 hours designated for data analysis. By comparison, all states are allowed autonomy in determining PD requirements for teachers. The five states surrounding the SRD in this study do not specify PD days, however state codes did require some form of established PD programs be present in schools and used for evaluation which contributes to the unique policy requirements in the SRD. In this qualitative first-person action case study, it is this academic calendar and the highly diversified population of teachers which makes this small sample of teachers' key in exploring the effects of excess professional development on urban teacher perceptions of professionalism.

Special Note

Teachers (participants) in the SRD are also required to develop and maintain an electronic portfolio on a school improvement program called PD360 and TRIG Modules. PD360 is an online resource tool that creates a professional network of teachers around the nation. PD360 videos resources, reflection questions, and portfolio development are closely monitored on the local and district levels, as the Teacher Incentive Fund (Performance based funding to teachers) is distributed each spring based on the previous academic year digital portfolio. Technology Readiness Infrastructure Grant (TRIG) modules were implemented in the 2013-2014 academic school year and are classroom readiness online courses teachers are urged to complete within the school year. There are 10 modules ranging from orientation to State standards to diverse learners and data analysis. To date, SRD has not included TRIG modules as a

requirement for the digital portfolio. This case study will exclude the discussion of both PD360 and TRIG modules as it may impact results in the study because of monetary incentives for completion. However, participants are exposed to additional professional development activities in both instances.

Another Special Note: State Teacher Professionalism Requirements

States have adopted their own teacher professionalism requirements and it was important to review these requirements before reporting the findings. The state Code of Ethics & oath are listed below and was deemed valuable in correlation to teacher professionalism and high morality discussed in the next chapter as required by the state.

State Professional Educator's Code of Ethics (MDE, 2003)

Preamble: Society has charged public education with trust and responsibility that requires of professional educators the highest ideals and quality service. The State Board of Education adopts this Code of Ethics to articulate the ethical standards to which professional educators are expected to adhere in their job performance. Ethical Standards: The following ethical standards address the professional educator's commitment to the student and the profession.

1. **Service toward common good.** Ethical Principle: The professional educator's primary goal is to support the growth and development of all learners for the purpose of creating and sustaining an informed citizenry in a democratic society.

2. **Mutual respect**. Ethical principle: Professional educators respect the inherent dignity and worth of each individual.

3. **Equity.** Ethical principle: Professional educators advocate the practice of equity. The professional educator advocates for equal access to educational opportunities for each individual.

4. **Diversity.** Ethical principle: Professional educators promote cross-cultural awareness by honoring and valuing individual differences and supporting the strengths of all individuals to ensure that instruction reflects the realities and diversity of the world.

5. **Truth and honesty**. Ethical principle: Professional educators uphold personal and professional integrity and behave in a trustworthy manner. They adhere to acceptable social practices, current state law, State & national student assessment guidelines, and exercise sound professional judgment.

It is stated in the Revised School Code, Act 451 of 1976, that a teaching certificate is valid only if the following oath or affirmation is: signed, notarized, and a copy filed with the superintendent of schools of the school district in which the teacher expects to teach:

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the constitution of the United

States of America and the constitution of the state and that I will faithfully discharge the

duties of the office of teacher according to the best of my ability

(MI Revised School Code, Act, 1976; MDE, 2003)

Participants (Teachers and Researcher as Participant)

Teachers in the State Reform District are highly diversified in age, race, gender, and experience and the SRD is in its third year of operation which assisted greatly in attaining a "fresh" outlook of urban professional development. Interview participants were district-wide with teacher availability being the primary source for sampling. Participant teaching experience

ranged from 3 years to 31 years of teaching experience of both genders. Participants were of African American and Anglo-Saxon descent.

Portrait of Participants

Participants in the study and concealment of their identity was a priority for the researcher; therefore only a "snapshot" portrait of the participants is provided and the guidelines as set forth by the University Institution Review Board (IRB) regarding protection of human subjects from unauthorized disclosure, tampering, or damage by (1) omitting names from interviews and observations and (2) destroying the data once the research study is submitted were followed accordingly. Subject areas taught was not disclosed as this factor is easily identifiable and a risk for employment. The researcher placed herself in an "at-risk" position of employment as well, therefore some details about participants were intentionally omitted to protect both participants and the researcher. Below are brief descriptions of each research participant:

Participant # 1 ("Osceola"): A single female of Anglo Saxon descent. She was employed with the SRD through the Teach for America program which recruits college graduates in a variety of disciplines for core content positions in urban school districts with critical shortage areas such as mathematics, science, and foreign language. Teachers render 2-3 years of contractual service in exchange for Federal Loan Forgiveness Programs. Hereafter referred to as "Osceola", has been teaching for almost three (3) years.

Participant #2 ("Marguerite"): A 39 year old, single mother of African American descent. She has been employed with the SRD for two years, but has over 10 years of teaching experience.

She has worked in urban school districts across the Metropolitan Detroit area. Hereafter referred to as "Marguerite".

Participant #3 ("Winona"): A 41 year old, single mother of African American descent. She has been employed with the SRD for 2 years, and this is her first teaching experience. Hereafter referred to as "Winona".

Participant #4 ("Oscar"): A 32 year old single male of Anglo Saxon descent. He has been with the SRD for one year, but has over five (5) years of teaching experience from charter schools in the Wayne County area. Hereafter referred to as "Oscar".

Participant #5 ("Ernest"): A 34 year old single male of African American descent. He has been with the SRD for six (6) months, but has over nine (9) years of teaching experience with the large urban school district. Hereafter referred to as "Ernest".

Participant #6 ("Frank"): A 54 year old married (father) male of African American descent. He has been with the SRD for 3 months and had actually given his two (2) week resignation notice. He granted the interview on his last day of employment. He had over 15 years of teaching experience in large urban schools, charter schools, and alternative education programs with "at-risk" youth. Hereafter referred to as "Frank".

Participant #7 ("Ethel"): A 56 year old widowed female (mother) of African American descent. She was a retired large urban schools teacher with over 30 years of experience. She has been

with the SRD for four (4) months. She also has a law enforcement background. Hereafter referred to as "Ethel".

Unknown Participants- There are two male participants who filled out a brief questionnaire at a district-wide PD whose backgrounds are unknown, but whose responses will be noted as interview data. See Appendix for Questionnaire.

Portrait of Researcher as Participant

I am a 41-year old African American single mother of one teenage son. I am certified by the state of Michigan to teach secondary mathematics (EX) and science (DX). I am also a state certified school administrator grades K-12. I have taught mathematics and science at the college, middle school, and high school levels in charter, public, and private schools for over 18 years, three (3) of those years as an assistant principal with the SRD and large urban schools. I have a Bachelor's degree in Physics, a Master's in Education Administration, and this research study was in pursuit of a Doctorate of Philosophy in K-12 Education Administration. I am currently a teacher with the SRD.

Data Collection

Interviews

Teacher interviews seek to elicit facts about the beliefs, attitudes, and [in this case] perceptions about professionalism in urban education. Seven (7) teacher interviews were

conducted for this study. Each interview varied in length 20-45 minutes during a 3 month time period of December through February. Four (4) out of seven (7) interviews took place in the same school during teacher preparation periods. The other three (3) took place at district-wide professional development sessions during session breaks/lunch. A brief description of each participant is provided at the end of this chapter. In Table 2.0, the interview questions are listed, rationale for question and the relationship to the research question is shown.

Research Question

- What impact does the amount of teacher professional development have on urban teachers' perceptions of professionalism, as well as their practice?

Table 2.0 Interview Question Descriptions

Research Question	Rationale	Relationship
How do you define teacher professionalism?	This question explores what professionalism means to the teacher and decreases subjectivity. It is a personal definition steeped in beliefs, attitudes, and background in teacher education.	It is important for the researcher to establish a "sense" of what professionalism is to determine if it impacts how they view themselves as professionals.
What does it mean to be professionally developed?	This question explores the teacher attitudes about teacher learning and growth.	It is important for the researcher to explore how teachers view professional development, teacher learning, professional growth, and the role it plays in their perception of themselves as professionals
Compare and contrast your post-secondary teacher education courses with your current professional development experience	This question encourages the teacher to reflect on teacher preparation courses intended to "shape" the teacher as a professional and make a comparative analysis with their current experiences with professional development.	It is important for the researcher to create a "standard" of professional development to gauge teachers' perceptions of professional development experience to determine how the amount of PD could impact that perception.
Which do you prefer and why?	This question explores the preference of the teacher.	It is important for the researcher to examine preferences for an in-depth analysis of whether PD, specifically excess PD, effects your preference, hence your perception

Observations

Direct Professional Development Observations in a 90-day period. Marshall and Rossman (1989) define observation as "the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study" (Rossman, 1989, Kawulich, 2005, p. 79). Participant observation involves "actively looking" (Kawulich, 2005, p.5) that assists the researcher to observe increased areas of interest in the study in its natural setting. The researcher conducted six (6) professional development session observations during this 90-day period both local and district-wide (three [3] full PD days and three [3] partial PD which can be found in the appendix. Table 3.0 describes how professional development observations were conducted and categorized for data collection.

Table 3.0 Description of Observations

Activity	Amount of Time spent on each activity	Professional Dialogue	Teacher Engagement Beginning/Ending
Detailed description of activity and activities objective	Detailed recording/reporting of time spent on each activity	Record teacher participation, collaboration, questions and/or concerns	Record only observable behaviors, i.e. posture, alertness, focus, external activities, cell phone usage

Data Analysis

Descriptive Data Analysis was the pathway used to determine what the relationships are among variable data sets. By one common definition (Polkinghorne, 1983), all these methods rely on linguistic rather than numerical data, and employ meaning-based rather than statistical

form of data analysis (Elliot & Timulak, 2005, p.147). Descriptive analysis emphasizes

understanding phenomena in their own right and creates unlimited emergent description options

for the researcher to discover (Elliot & Timulak, 2005). Successful descriptive analysis is often

based on the discovery of a new phenomenon or ideology; in this case discovering the voice of

urban educators as professionals, its strength or its actual existence and the voice of the

researcher as participant. Interviews and direct observations were used to allow such descriptions

to emerge. Interview responses and observation data were recorded exactly as they occurred to

ensure validity and trustworthiness. The researcher did not add or negate any responses during

data collection or data analysis.

Chapter 4

Data Collection and Analysis

Summary of Findings

The demand for more teacher professional development is an increasing epidemic, especially in low-performing schools and school districts. During interviews and observations with intense dialogue, three (3) major themes emerged from interview and observation data: (1) Teacher perceptions of professionalism are equated with high morality, (2) Professional growth is driven by expectations and rewards, and (3) Excessive PD forces teachers to become defenders of the teaching profession. The data below reveals how excessive PD has negative impacts on urban teachers' perceptions of professionalism.

Recall in Chapter 3, first person action research allows the researcher to insert themselves into the study as a participant. In this study, after initial data collection was completed, a phenomenon [as known as the "Damascus Moment"] was discovered in the researchers' notes taken during interviews, hereafter referred to as "notes-to-self", which resulted in a unique methodology combination. The research design introduced a first person action case study explained in detail in Chapter 3. Three (3) minor themes emerged: (1) The resiliency of the researcher in the teaching profession had bred a sense of righteous indignation, (2) Emancipation and freedom are essential to professional growth, and (3) The large amounts of impoverished teacher PD sessions discourages teacher retention and places urban school teachers on the endangered teachers list. Below, minor themes are situated immediately after each major theme.

Presenting the minor themes in this manner was a systematic approach to present the first person participatory approach under the framework of each major theme.

Teaching Profession = High Morality

Teacher perceptions of professionalism are rooted in an extremely elevated sense of morality. In this case study, teacher professionalism is equated with high morality. All teachers interviewed equated teacher professionalism was with high morality by all teachers interviewed. Holding high standards of behavior during interactions with students, staff, and parents was an undeniable theme within the data. For example, Osceola, a Caucasian woman who came to the district from Teach for America, felt strongly that being a teacher meant she was held to a higher standard. As she explained, "Because being a teacher is a high position of authority, our behavior must be on a higher standard." Despite being one of the newest teachers interviewed in the study having taught in the district for about three years, Osceola nonetheless already typified the perspective of other teachers. Similarly, Oscar, another new teacher in the district, related his thoughts on the high standards he was held to as a teacher to the relationships he was able to build with students and stuff. According to Oscar, "how you portray yourself in front of students and staff determines how genuine you are…kids can tell if you are real or fake." Ernest, a teacher with almost ten years of teaching experience, related his thoughts in a similar way, noting that being professional meant, "acting in such a way that you are respected by staff, students, and parents." All three (3) interview responses emphasized behavior and characteristics of behavior standards that demand exceptional and genuine expectations. It was important to Osceola, Oscar, and Ernest to be perceived as professionals who welcomed the role standards of morality played in their perception of professionalism.

This sentiment was also discussed by another new teacher in the SRD, Winona. An African American woman who, at age 41, was just in her second year of teaching, related the idea of professionalism similarly to Oscar and Osceola, saying, "it is your mannerisms, the way you carry yourself around the students and co-workers." Winona too felt the call of duty professionalism charges as the raised bar of high morals hover over the way in which she governs herself in front of students and colleagues. Morality or "teacher dispositions" is defined here as professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities (NCATE, 2008; Neilson, 2015, pp. 86-87). These findings highlight a call of duty that recasts teachers as moral agents and elevate teachers into a realm of hero-like status.

Speaking to another aspect of the high morality standards the teachers felt compelled to uphold, Marguerite, in her second year of teaching in the SRD of her ten year teaching career, related the idea of professionalism with truthfulness, explaining that "teachers who demonstrate honesty and discretion exude professionalism." Marguerite's response reiterated the requirement for exemplary behavior standards. Even more evident in the findings in these responses are often self-imposed moral attributes. Marguerite's responses were also imperatively inferred as something a teacher *must do*; the "non-negotiable" of professionalism founded by morality.

Continuing the theme of teachers who equated professionalism with morality was the most veteran teacher who participated in the research study. Ethel, an African American woman who came out of retirement after 30 years of teaching to take a position in the SRD, suggested that teachers "articulate and behave in such a way that is effective." Perhaps a bit more pragmatic in her definition than some of the other teachers, Ethel nonetheless typified in her response a perspective very much in line with those expressed by the other teachers.

These responses depict teachers as beacons of light in a dark world, especially in urban school settings. None of the responses correlated content knowledge or instructional techniques with professionalism. Palmer (1998) observed technique is what educators rely upon until the "real" teacher shows up…the recognition of the importance of the "real" teacher, that who we are- our values, our beliefs, our personalities- matters a great deal in the classroom, much more than technique, motivates the current focus on disposition in the classroom (Palmer, 1998; Neilson, 2014, pp. 86).

Importantly, the teachers did not only connect the idea of high moral standards with classroom practice. The data also revealed that these high moral standards must be exemplified beyond the classroom into the community. Getting right to the issue, Marguerite recalled:

"You can't just go everywhere and be seen in places that you know aren't right and expect to be considered a professional. I am always running into past and current students at church, grocery store, and their always shocked to see you in their community, as if we are not people" (Laughing out loud)

The delicacy of the responsibility that accompanies high moral standards is indicated in Marguerite's delight and an acute awareness of life in the outside world cautious of the standards of morality. She was aware of how perceptions of who you are can easily be linked to where you go or what you do. In addition, moral dispositions are a developed feature of what a teacher is and does, what teachers already have as opposed to what they are coming into, and what a teacher is becoming in a moral sense (Burn year, 1980; Osguthrope, 2008, pp. 289).

Osceola had a similar perspective, but related her ideas more generally, suggesting, "You have power over people and you have it until something happens, or you do something that they feel the need to take it away from you." Here, Osceola alludes to the notion of stakeholders gifting teachers with power; conditional power which can be removed at any time by the giver. It presents the moral dilemmas held in any culture, with emphasis in this study on urban school culture. Note again, the awkwardness of Marguerite's response to former or current students, "as if we are not people." Please remain mindful she began her response with a self-imposed responsibility "you just can't go anywhere", but Osceola gives the rationale for the internal struggles with perceptions of professionalism teachers face when she discusses power is "at will" and can be given and taken away without warning. Osceola emphasizes how power is "at-will" and can be given and taken away without warning. Jonathan Haidt (2012) has identified six clusters of long-term adaptive challenges that confront human beings, positing that each is associated with an area of moral dilemmas that people hold in every culture: (1) care/harm, (2) fairness/cheating, (3) liberty/oppression (4) loyalty/betrayal, (5) authority/subversion, (6) sanctity/degradation (Haidt, 2012; Brueggemann, 2014, pp. 213). These high moral standards are also visible actions and attributes.

This presence in the community had other important implications, as Oscar noted in an excerpt from his interview. "Whether you attend student activities, like games, students are proud to see you there." Oscar highlights in this interview excerpt the vested stock placed in perceived professionalism. Students were "proud" to see their teacher positively contributes to increased power as a perceived professional. Students perceive you to be a teacher who is willing to sacrifice personal time to spend watching or attending school activities outside of the classroom. Though perceived as being highly moral or professional, the duality of being humane

builds relationships far beyond the classroom. The data showed teachers embraced their roles with great pride and satisfaction. It is implicit within the role of the public sector professionals that they need to consider the nature of their role, not only within an organization, but within a societal context as well as precisely. The public domain is a necessary focus for the promotion of collective life as opposed to the prosecution of interests (Bottery & Wright, 1996, pp. 87).

Teacher professionals embrace their identity as a role model within the school and the community. Engaging explicitly in, rather than shying away from, moral assessments offers one crucial communicative bridge between sociological insights and public dialogue (Brueggeman, 2014, pp. 211). Recall Frank, a 54 year old African American male whose past experience spans over 15 years working with high-risk youth and alternative education. In his experience, Frank asserts that expectations as an urban teacher professional exceed far beyond just a career selection. Passionately Frank emphasizes "it's a calling, not just a job. How you conduct yourself affects how you build relationships with colleagues and students." Once again, it is the call of duty called out by morality for the sake of professionalism. The call to high morality affects perceptions of professionalism for those who answer. Building relationships with colleagues posits morality within the societal context of community teachers need to survive. Most of the teachers viewed teacher professionalism and morality within a much broader and larger societal context. It is what Wolfe (1989) refers to the sociality of morality. Wolfe (1989) suggests that successful sociology of morality will (1) interrogate the ontological status of the concept, (2) examine the context for the construction of morality, and (3) assess the viability of moral claims (Wolfe, 1989; Brueggemann, 2014, pp. 213).

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Teacher perceptions of professionalism are affirmed through networking and interaction with colleagues. Studies suggests that secondary school reforms, even when widely embraced by a staff, are unlikely to yield improvements at the level of the classroom without a means to foster in-depth interaction, mutual support, and professional learning opportunity among subject-domain teachers (Little, Horn, & Bartlett, 2000, Little, 2003, p.185). All interviews revealed that developing a rapport with all stakeholders and being a team player also contributed to the high morality in teacher professionalism. Oscar expressed his desire for community and the dependency on colleagues to participate with the team, "you are responsible to catch curve balls all the time; in order to do that you have to talk to each other and be able to become a team player quickly." Oscar embraces the importance of communing with one another if teachers are to succeed. The same sentiment is the basis for professional learning communities and the importance of true dialogue within those communities. The ideology of teachers, especially urban teachers being in this together is indicated by Oscar's use of the word team. Catching curve balls implies to the unpredictability of teaching and the moral obligation to support each other without hesitation. Teachers who are able to establish this rapport quickly and successfully are affirmed through interactions with colleagues and all agreed that networks of professionals are easily established. Osceola, like Oscar, also placed value on teacher interaction. Osceola said,

"I learn more from talking with other teachers; it's that feeling of I am not alone that I get when I talk to other teachers; I need that. I want that. I want someone to teach me how to be a better teacher…only other teachers know what I am going through and can tell me how to do that."

Again, Osceola desperately sought validation and affirmation from her colleagues, especially since she was just in her third (3rd) year as an urban teacher. The cry for help to survive for Osceola could only be found in someone on the same team who understood her challenges within the classroom. External classroom support through networking was viewed as the most appropriate method of addressing the need to network. Just in her second year of teaching, Winona recognizes how crucial relationship building is, especially as it related to classroom practices. In the interview she states,

"You have to establish relationships with other teachers, because you need to learn the client; teachers talk to each other about students and something may be working well with one student in another classroom that helps me approach the same student in my class."

The client refers to the students who are being provided with instructional services. There are several clients with varying degrees of aptitude for learning, as well as multiple demands to teach large quantities of curriculum material with minimal time, it becomes more effective and efficient to share information about the client, especially approaches to student learning, with a colleague. Six (6) out of seven (7) teachers interviewed perceived teacher networking as one of the most valuable tools to the profession of teaching.

Not only is networking an essential component of what the teachers desired, but during the interviews, the conversations easily transitioned to time management concerns during PD sessions. Marguerite preferences the value of how her time should be spent. Visibly frustrated, Marguerite's response "I would much rather sit and discuss ways to handle little Johnny with a

teacher who has a success rate with Johnny, than discussing another program focused on test preparation." The notion of "time spent" emerges here as how and what she would rather be doing than what is currently offered in professional development. Observations 1 & 3 (See appendix) also revealed teacher focus and engagement at high levels when professional dialogue occurred.

In the next section, the researchers' notes exposed a specific hidden bias towards teachers. According to the data thus far, those who are perceived as highly professional are also those who are deemed highly moral, but "who makes the team?" Though their responses embraced professionalism equated with high morality, my perceptions of them as professionals subconsciously questioned their right to feel that way. The next section is a first person recollection and in-depth analysis of such undercover bias, despite every researcher's intent to reduce bias to the point of non-existence. As stated in chapter 3, researcher's notes, known in this study as "notes-to-self", revealed internal findings within the researcher which were deemed as data and "actionable knowledge" by the researcher as participant. This is the first revelation in the "Damascus Moment."

Researcher as Participant (Teaching Profession= High Morality)

Resiliency = Righteous Indignation

The resiliency of the researcher in the teaching profession had bred a sense of righteous indignation. Righteous indignation according to dictionary.com (2015) refers to contempt combined with a feeling that it is one's right to feel that way. Knowledge does not guarantee action, and yet, we want to inspire our students (future teachers) to become certain kinds of teachers and not others, even if our conceptions of "good" teaching admit disparate notions of

what that entails (Neilson, 2015, p.86). As sample selection began, access and availability drove the selection process. However looking back, I recalled being more excited about some interviews than others. As a researcher, a request for an interview was extended to SRD teachers known and unknown and whenever the opportunity presented itself, especially as this research exposed negative impacts of SRD PD practices which could have jeopardized employment. Still, there were some teachers I wanted to "get to" first. I wanted the young, fresh perspectives of educators that I considered "good" or demonstrated great promise in the field. The "Damascus Moment" as a teacher-researcher was first noticed in the comparative analysis of "notes-to-self" with Osceola and Winona, I wrote:

Notes-to-self (Osceola) "she was visibly excited to share…not afraid to confront the issues…clearly frustrated" verses (Winona) "textbook and safe responses…classic…kind of suspicious of what I'm doing and where this is going…told her for Ph.D., …she let her guard down a little more"

I desired more deeply to hear from Osceola, whereas I knew Winona would speak as if her job was on the line. Winona is one who questions nothing and accepts everything. Somewhere in my 18 years of experiences, I had developed a habit or disposition to gravitate to teachers who I deemed as "good". CAEP Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting (2013) has adopted the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education's (NCATE; 2008) definition, which describes dispositions as "Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities" (CAEP, 2013; NCATE, 2008; Nielson, 2015, p.86).

In my notes-to-self for Earnest descriptive words to assist in recreating that space during the interview revealed some peculiar critiques about what Earnest was saying. In my notes-to-self for Earnest, I wrote, "answers were short… to the point…lacked depth…interview conducted at district-wide PD over lunch…he was cognitive of time." Comments such as "not afraid" (courage) and "excited" were attributes I associated with "good" teachers. By comparison, comments such as "textbook/classic" and "lacked depth" are not necessarily negative by definition, but I tend not to gravitate to teachers who show signs of these attributes. Somewhere I developed a habit or disposition of accessing "who's who" quickly, especially since I have taught in 14 different schools out of those 18 years. Looking to the Deweyan concept of habit, Dewey refers to the wide variety of responses, patterns, and ways we engage in our worlds both physical and mental ones. Furthermore, for Dewey, habits are a way of thinking about selfhood (Neilson, 2015, p.88). Due to multiple school transitions in my experience, I necessitated the need for resiliency [survival even] and the habits formed produced righteous indignation. "Who made me the judge?" The 'Damascus Moment' made after all interviews were completed laid the foundations for such discovery without compromising the findings in the initial investigation.

The finding of righteous indignation correlates with teacher participant perceptions of teacher professionalism and morality. I subconsciously perceived high moral attributes like courage and enthusiasm for the field as teacher professionalism. My longevity in the field granted me the 'right' look forward to some interviews in comparison to others. I will affirm that each form of data granted insight on the impact of excess PD on urban teacher professionalism, but it was the documented interaction with colleagues that permitted new constructions for learning and the impact of teaching in urban schools for over 18 years.

Moving forward, the next section transitions back to the action case study to explore the second (2ⁿᵈ) major theme: professional growth is driven by expectations and rewards. These findings are also part of the initial set of interview and observation data.

Professional Growth is driven by Expectations and Rewards

The expectation for professional growth or development of teachers should be a structured path to success with clearly defined expectations for teachers. Teacher expectations and by extension, the expectations of managers, college admissions personnel, health professionals and so on- has the potential to be a major contributor to social inequalities associated with race, sex, social class (Jussim & Harber, 2005) and in this data, the professional growth of teachers. The teachers desired and end to a justified means. Interview data showed seven (7) out of nine (9) teachers felt like current professional development sessions fell extremely short of clearly defining professional expectations for teachers, thus the path to successful teaching was non-existent. Osceola has the least teaching experience and she craved structure and direction in PD sessions. There is a deep desire for structure in Osceola's response expressed here,

"PD falls short every time, we spend so much time focusing on teacher shortcomings and test scores…you don't care enough about my development to produce a quality professional

development for me…at least at the post-secondary level we do a lot of collaboration and sharing, here we are robbed of that."

Osceola paints a very grim and graphic picture of what is happening to her sense of professionalism during PD sessions. Growth is hindered when vital constructions of satisfaction are dismantled. Observation data affirms Osceola's deprivation and yearning for a better use for PD. The frustration shown again in Osceola's response of "not caring enough for her development" indicated the impact high-stakes testing driven PD is having on teachers' sense of professionalism. Observation PD data consistently screams the same message; these are the scores, these are the scores we need to get, this is the way we are going to get the scores, which clearly you are not executing properly or we would have the scores we need, so it must be your fault we are failing.

Both in Osceola's response and in all observation data, teacher shortcomings are highlighted much too often in PD sessions which most assuredly nurtures a spirit of defeat. Not being allowed to even share and her notion of being robbed is just an example of how even a "new" teacher experiences PD with the intent of growth, but exits the PD exasperated due to another excessive withdrawal on their sense of professionalism. Professional growth or development should be rewarded by providing access to specific needs of individual teachers. A comprehensive plan requires an ongoing cycle of reflection, documentation, assessment, and analysis of teaching and learning. (Tofade, Abiate, & Fu, 2013, pp. 2) Observation data revealed several PD sessions as atypical "honey-do" lists from the district, especially in preparation for ACT standardized testing.

Teacher preparation programs at post-secondary institutions also inadequately prepared teachers in this case study for the extreme situations that accompany urban schools with low socio-economic status. The reason is that the functions performed by effective urban teachers of students in poverty are undergirded [not taught in traditional programs] consisting of coherent vision, is humane, respectful, caring, and is a non-violent form of gentle teaching (Haberman, 1995, pp. 777). Oscar, who has over five years of experience in charter schools in Wayne County, was visibly angry about both teacher preparation programs and current SRD practices. Oscar makes a comparative analysis of the differences between current PD sessions and teacher preparation programs and depicts teacher preparation programs as the lesser of two evils in this response,

 "neither really prepared me for what I was about to face here, but at least I got a degree out of it…I mean, my courses were freaking useless, but at least I got credit for it and a certificate/degree! Here, I don't get anything."

Minimally, the ends did eventually justify the means. Oscar demonstrates the resolve most college students face in pursuit of career requirements capitalism dictates. Post-secondary education was deemed "freaking useless" for the demands teaching, and in this case urban teaching, placed on teachers, but "at least I got credit for it." The notion of "at least" indicates that a minimal reward for effort is enough to complete a task (Certificate/degree). It serves as an incentive to stay the course even when the realization occurs [after the fact] what was learned was not at all helpful on the job. The PD in this case study was continual, excessive, and lacked

true depth capable of impacting positive change in instruction. Data reflects the dissatisfaction with district focus PD sessions with minimal time allocations for teacher input and networking. Educators should have a plan, based on self-reflection and feedback from a variety of sources, to develop professionally in all areas of responsibility (Tofade, Abiate, & Fu, 2013, pp.2). Seven (7) out of nine (9) teachers adamantly expressed how much of their time is wasted because of the total disregard for the value of structured paths to professional growth. Frank compared it to an inadequate imitation of university life. As Frank was ending his partnership with the SRD, he expresses his disgust in this response,

"It is a watered-down version of what the university would try to do with us. It lacks the meat and potatoes of what true professional development is. At least the university made attempts to embrace diversity and open your mind to things, but here it is geared to what we have to do for the state and how we have to keep up."

Though perceived as attending a poor teacher preparation program, Frank does credit universities for making an honest effort to prepare teachers for the demands of urban teaching. In his response a minimal "head nod" to universities placed and even more negative perception of what he was receiving in current PD sessions. The implication here is that "we don't even get that." PD lacks substance and depth. Again, PD is an unending road of deficient, excessive, and useless information void of rewards. Similarly to Osceola's previous response, Ernest prescribes to notions of robbery as well. Ernest highlights his experience of PD deficits in the following response,

"I always feel cheated, like everything given to us is a district mandate, another program brought to us because someone wants to make money…we are just going through the motions with little results of our efforts, or at least we really don't get a chance to see what those results really are because there is no follow-up or follow through… I'm just going through the motions, waiting for the end so I can go home."

Here, feeling cheated indicates again a withdrawal from a sense of professionalism. Minimally, Ernest would like to see the results of his efforts as a reward or incentive to stay the course, but the lack of follow-through and consistency impedes even that small crumb of success. The glimmer of hope teachers are making in the lives of young people who systemically fail to meet any state standards or measurements of success is often negated, lost, or forgotten in excessive PD. The frustration with wasted time and resources were compounded when activities occurred in excess, but the preference for college programs advanced again as the lesser of two evils. There are four dimensions of excellence that programs claiming to prepare teachers for children of poverty can and should be accountable for: 1) the individuals trained should be adults; 2) they should have a demonstrated ability to establish rapport with low-income students of diverse ethnic backgrounds; 3) they should be admitted as candidates based on valid interviews; and 4) practicing urban teachers who are recognized as effective should be involved in selecting candidates (Haberman, 1995, pp. 778).

Post-secondary teacher preparation programs were given, for the most part, positive attributes and again all interviews reinforced the importance of interactions and intellectual exchanges with colleagues. Ethel clearly expressed her preference for teacher preparation

programs. As a seasoned teacher with over thirty years of experience and a former law enforcement officer establishing a network with partners and colleagues was essential to her professional development, but she credits on-the-job training as the most effective approach. According to Ethel, "post-secondary education did give us a chance to network with other professionals, but it lacked that hands-on in-depth experience." Learning by doing is emphasized in Ethel's response accompanied by the need to exchange intellectual property with other professionals. Again, establishing professional networks is a reward for committing to sticking and staying. It is the reward like Osceola implied earlier, "only other teachers can teach me how to be a better teacher." Establishing a rapport is essential to empowering professionalism and it is a rewarding experience for teachers to exchange intellectual property as shown in the data.

"Hands-on" experience is a key element in teacher professional growth. Fullan (2001) describes the process as follows: Real change, whether desired or not, represents a serious personal and collective experience characterized by ambivalence and uncertainty, and if the change works out it can result in a sense of mastery, accomplishment and professional growth. The anxieties of uncertainty and the joys of mastery are central to the subjective meaning of educational change, and to success or failure thereof. (Fullan, 2001; Struyvan, Dochy, & Janssens, 2008, pp.69-70) In contrast, two (2) out of nine (9) participants appreciated the professional development sessions because of their lack of experience in post-secondary teacher education preparation courses. Winona, with only two (2) years teaching urban youth experience under her belt, valued the directives current PD offered. Winona preferred the "checklist" approach to professional development and her response depicts that preference,

"I like them because they tell me exactly what I am supposed to be focused on to help my kids pass these state tests. I am used to instructing adults and I came here without a clue on how to relate to kids, so I appreciate the straight forward approach the PD gives us here…just tell me what to do."

Winona appreciated the direct "honey-do" lists district PD sessions offered. The lack of familiarity with post-secondary teacher preparation courses interfered with her ability to make a comparative analysis required by the interview question. Recall in chapter 3, the SRD had very creative ways to employ instructors like Winona without state teaching certifications which increases the necessity to train and fill the void of a structured teacher preparation program. As stated in the interview data, teacher preparation programs can be "hit" or "miss" and may not influence instructional practices, so teachers like Winona have no basis to compare current SRD PD sessions. Like Oscar, Osceola, Frank, and Ernest, Ethel reiterates the failure of colleges to prepare her for the urban experience; however she does applaud districts for their efforts to offer best practices. Unlike Winona, Ethel completed a teacher preparation program, but her response resembles Winona's preference for unfiltered directives. According to Ethel, "college did not have a clue about what was going on in these classrooms, they only speculated, at least they try to give you some self-directed tools to manage this chaos."

Ethel grants the benefit of the doubt to district PD who tries to render some kind of assistance among the chaos seen in urban schools. The urban experience of persistently low-student performance and increased teacher expectations (chaos) was expressed with visible exasperation and helplessness. Each interview was passionately filled with disappointment. Five

(5) out of seven (7) preferred college preparation courses that assisted at minimal in the development of their philosophy, however it too fell extremely short of preparing them to be teaching professionals, especially in an urban setting. Recall Oscar's response, "at least I got credits and certified for it". The focus again is the "reward" or "gain" teacher program completion yields. All teachers expressed a deep desire for immediate resolutions to current classroom practices that only hands-on experience could provide.

Their preferences also revealed the value of professional dialogue which occurred more in their teacher preparation course, but please note that two teachers (two [2] out of seven [7]) denounced the existence of any college textbook that would prepare teachers for the urban school experience. Interestingly, both teachers' perceptions were similar, despite the stark contrast in their teaching experience; Winona- 2 years teaching experience and Ethel- 30 years teaching experience. All teachers referenced "hands-on" or "on-the-job" training is the best way to grow professionally. One (1), Osceola, out of seven (7) suggested a peer mentoring group, but all revere the value of teacher interactions. The observation data also revealed teachers were more attentive in the professional development sessions that were linked to their teacher performance and evaluations. In this respect, teachers and teacher training programs are interesting subjects. On one hand, they are teacher-students in the process of change when experiencing new teaching methods or assessment modes; on the other hand, they are to serve the function of teachers implementing change in practice (Struyvan, Dochy, & Janssens, 2008, p.70).

The interview and observation data sparked the hidden restraints excessive PD imposes on professional growth. In the next section, the researchers notes, kindred emotions of dissatisfaction and the overwhelming need to dismantle every obstacle that hinders growth was resurrected. It was discovered during the "Damascus Moment" that professional growth cannot

exist in the absence of freedom. Once again, I transition into a first person action research approach that allows critical analysis of notes intended to recreate the space in which data was recorded. In my pursuit of my doctoral degree, I found something that excessive PD had captured without my permission, my voice.

Researcher as Participant (Professional Growth is driven by expectations and reward)

Emancipation and Freedom are essential to professional growth

Emancipation and freedom are essential to professional growth, especially when you are unaware you were bound. Eighteen (18) years of PD. Eighteen (18) years a slave. Bound to district demands, state mandates, and federal laws implemented and amended by each new White House resident. During the interviews, I recall feeling an overwhelming sense of relief. The feeling was identical to a sunny 75 degree day in Michigan after experiencing a long winter of subzero temperatures. Emancipation is usually a rallying cry we associate with revolutionaries, intellectuals and oppressed peoples (Hault, Perrer, & Spicer, 2014, p.24). Much new-wave management discourse places inordinate emphasis on emancipatory themes such as self-discovery, freedom and rebellion (Fleming, 2009; Hault, Perrer, & Spicer, 2014, p.24). Emancipatory themes are present in many forms of modern management theory, which frequently 'is concerned with freeing employees from unnecessarily alienating forms of work or task organization (Alvesson and Willmott, 1992; Hault, Perrer, & Spicer, 2014, p.24). Recall in chapter 4 earlier findings, five (5) out of seven (7) participants expressed a deep exasperation and frustration with the PD provided by both their teacher preparation programs and the SRD. The essential research question was birthed out of that same frustration I felt as a seasoned

veteran of the profession. There was a deep desire to remove the possible jadedness and bias

within the study 18 years in urban schools can build.

Again, I taught and was taught in 20th century schools and witnessed the birth of 21st

century schools; schools with more technology than I had ever experienced. When I joined the

SRD, I wanted to be a part of the "new" way of instructing students. In the SRD, teachers are to

be facilitators of online learning and were (at first) prohibited from direct teaching methods

[since then a blended learning model is accepted]. Teacher evaluations were based, and even

now to a smaller degree (not too much smaller), on the usage of digital resources and the

availability of those resources. Considerations of the severe socio-economic issues such as

extremely low attendance rates, lack of access to internet/computers in poverty stricken

communities, and the large special education population who attend these DPS/State designated

low performing schools were criminally ignored.

As stated in Chapter 3, the SRD inherited the lowest performing schools from the lowest

performing school district in the state, DPS. And we, the teachers, were charged to stand in the

huge gap where both districts had failed. Large amounts of teacher PD serves as the SRD's only

response to increasing student achievement. SRD district officials are comprised of non-native

leaders who are trying to adjust to the forever amended State Department of Education school

codes and highly charged political climate regarding public schools in the city. There was

immense comfort in knowing that I was not alone and that I was not crazy as documented in my

notes-to-self for Ethel and Oscar. The PD experience here was too much. In my notes-to-self for

Ethel I wrote, "The worst experience ever in after 31 years" and notes-to-self for Oscar I wrote,

"Dumped on a lot….swearing…visibly upset."

The phrase used to document the interview space and moment was "dumped on".

Dumped carries a negative connotation and its origin was my focus. They were angry. I was

angry and for me, where there is anger there is truth. It was teacher oppression in the purest

form. Unfortunately, I allowed the constant negation of the loud cries of urban teachers to

suppress my voice over an 18 year period. Like a wild horse, I had been broken and

domesticated to be used at will. My "notes-to-self" revealed a pattern of that suppression

through the voices of the participants. In five (5) out of seven (7) of those interviews, these

emotions rekindled the voice I had buried. The "notes-to-self" insisted I research and reconstruct

the journey to locate when my professional growth ceased. Below, I trace back to the gravesite

and moment I decided to be silent and bury my sense of professionalism.

I was an active participant in the teacher union before and during the great

reconstitution of Detroit Public Schools in 2009. As stated earlier in this chapter, the

reconstitution of large urban schools was a result of schools' non-compliance with No Child Left

Behind and not meeting Annually Yearly Progress (AYP). The great reconstitution began in 2008

with three (3) high schools and one (1) elementary school. One neighborhood school, of which I

was a teacher and building union representative fought long and hard to make the community

and staff aware of the fate of neighborhood schools. A local news article documented my fight.

Gilberti (2008) wrote,

"At a recent union meeting, a contingent (that was me) of Mumford High School teachers

angrily confronted Federation of Teachers President Virginia Cantrell over the union's silence

and inaction over the physical deterioration and the lack of safe conditions in the

schools…Following the betrayal of the 16-day teachers strike in 2006, Virginia Cantrell replaced Janna Garrison as DFT Local 231 president" (Gilberti, 2008).

The following year as prophesied, forty-one (41) schools were either closed or renamed, administrators dismissed, and all staff members were forced to seek jobs within the district on their own because we were betrayed by our union. As I retrace the origin of my self-imposed imprisonment, this was the point of "voice-captivity". I was fighting for teachers who did not want to fight for themselves. I was out there on a limb seemingly alone and so went the ship. I left the classroom and the union and sought fulfillment as an administrator. Keep silent, keep quiet, and look out for yourself. Defeat had silenced my voice as a teacher and discredited my stance, but it made a terrible mistake it did not destroy me.

Thoughts of a better life haunted me daily, especially when participating in PD sessions that made me feel stupid. In my notes-to-self for Frank a secret envy of his freedom emerged. In my notes-to-self for Frank I wrote, "this is his last week with the SRD…speaks of future application schools that respect him for what he does…appear hostile…former administrator for at-risk youth…pressured from all directions."

I was jealous of Frank. Out of these notes emerged a desire to be free from the chaos described in earlier findings. Looking back, I remembered feeling jealous of his departure. I wished I could just free myself, but I never believed in chance. I have always believed in my path as being intentionally designed just for me. As a single mother, I depend greatly on that path to provide for my son and myself. In depth analysis of my "notes-to-self" removed the scales from my eyes to help me see how my perceptions of professionalism and professional growth had been stagnated. Instantly, I was emancipated and free. The "Damascus Moment" had come full circle.

The desire for emancipation from the drudgeries of organizational life is often an important force, which drives many entrepreneurs (Goss et al., 2011; Rindova et al., 2009; Hault, Perrer, & Spicer, 2014, p.24). Like Frank, I am in search of a place where teachers' voices are heard, valued, and considered as professionals. The time to resurrect my voice is at hand.

Transitioning back to the action case study, we explore the final major finding in this study. In the next section, the data revealed that teachers in this study created a professional teacher identity without support from PD sessions. These professional identities came under heavy attack and scrutiny and teachers were forced to defend the professional identity that no one helped to build.

Defenders of the Teacher Profession

Professional teachers are forced to explore, discover, and shape effective teaching practices on their own and then defend the existence of that professional identity. Pre-service teacher education and the early years of teaching are seen as a crucial period in the formation of teacher identities, as novice teachers try to 'make their work match their personal vision of how it should be, whilst at the same time being subjected to the powerful socializing forces of the school culture (Flores & Day, 2006; Gu & Benson, 2015, pp.210). All data, with emphasis on observation data revealed the disconnection of professional development sessions and teacher professional growth. Ethel, the veteran teacher with over 30 years, credits her self-determination for implementing effective teaching practices. Ethel affirmed that she was self-made. Her determination is expressed in this response, "who I am as a teacher professional was who I created without guidance. I expect professional development to provide me with the current best

practices, strategies, and initiatives, with any and every resource necessary to raise student achievement." Ethel affirms the "sink or swim" culture dominating urban instructional experiences. For Ethel, the expectation for PD is for the district to do everything in its power to assist in teacher success. Raising student achievement has taken a back seat to teacher development and all attention has been refocused on the teachers who teach them, especially in urban schools.

Preparation for high-stakes testing dominated the observation data in all six (6) observations. Training teachers to teach to the test [ACT] was the push in every session. High-stakes testing, by its very definition, is the most extreme form of testing, for it results in the most direct, far-reaching set of consequences for the test taker (Ydesen, 2014, p. 97). Urban teachers in this case study, especially urban high school teachers in the SRD, were subjected to a high-stakes, volatile assessment atmosphere that drove PD sessions. Regarding high-stakes testing Ydesen (2014) wrote:

"In most cases, contemporary high-stakes testing is precisely the notion against which Dewey railed. It becomes a centrally devised and administered evaluation tool that is counterproductive to advancing democracy in education, because it tends to stifle pupil individuality and delimit learning with its focus on educational goals dictated from the outside" (Dewey, 1903; Ydesen, 2014, p. 98).

American public education is obsessed with finding the anecdote for raising student achievement in urban schools and in this study that obsession was magnified. Teachers receive the brunt of that obsession and the multiple student assessments are disguised as documented

ways to determine teacher effectiveness or ineffectiveness. Recall, Osceola vividly tells of PD filled with highlights of teacher shortcomings, thus students and parents are often relieved of their responsibilities to contribute to learning. The summation of failure points directly to the teacher with assessment data as documentation. Teacher identities are attacked. These identities were formed in "trial by fire" teaching experiences. Recall earlier in this chapter in Ethel's 31-year veteran response, "Who she is as a professional is who she made herself to be without guidance". This attack on her professional identity is now unwarranted, especially since no one helped her to get where she is now. Teacher identity involves both identification with teaching as a profession and, beyond this, perceptions of the kind of teacher one attempts to be in a particular context. This involves both performing the work or 'role' of a teacher and 'the deeper sense of "embodiment" related to identity' involved in 'the full adoption and expression of a professional identity through the person, or the self" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Gu & Benson, 2015, pp.188). The development of this identity as a teacher is important in 'securing teachers' commitment to their work and adherence to professional norms' (Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, & Bransford, 2005; Gu & Benson, 2015, pp.188).

Professional dialogue was heightened in two instances as recorded in the observation data: (1) If teacher integrity was attacked or (2) teacher performance was questioned. Beijaard et al. (2000) argue that professional identities are derived from combinations of the ways teachers see themselves as subject matter experts who base their profession on 'subject matter knowledge and skills', pedagogical experts who base their profession on 'knowledge and skills to support students' social, emotional, and moral development', and didactical experts who base their profession on 'knowledge skills regarding the planning, execution, and evaluation of teaching and learning processes' (Gu & Benson, 2015, pp.188). In either occurrence, in all six (6)

sessions, teachers became increasingly verbal, extremely defensive, and highly engaged in the activity for the sake of defending their identity. Six (6) out of seven (7) interviews revealed a "sink or swim" culture that expects teachers to "figure it out" on your own and do it quickly because your effectiveness will be evaluated. Discomfort emerges in the response by Ernest, who recall had only been with the SRD for six (6) months, but with DPS for nine (9) years. Despite his short tenure with the SRD, Ernest has already noticed the attack on his professional identity in his response, "I feel like I'm just winging it and I'm being held to the fire for what I did or did not figure out on my own."

For Ernest, his frustration is similar to students who have to take a test on material they have never seen and then held accountable for successful completion of the test. SRD has been building the plane while flying it; a phrase used often to describe the inexplicable. Yet, the excessive PD has had nothing but negative impacts on teacher perceptions of professionalism which works adversely with its intent. Teachers in this study felt like they had to make it up as they go along. Constructing new identities is not essentially considered negative until you are often judged by what you did without a template or structured framework. Throughout these findings, Osceola has repeatedly defended her professional identity and her disgust for the lack of support for teachers like herself who are new to the field. The exasperation of Osceola is heard, seen, and felt in her response,

"I want professional development to teach me what my school expects of me…clear expectations with a structured path to success. When I began, I craved a place to start…like clear curriculum and someone there to ensure I am on task with what is expected from the vision.

There should be an alignment of the curriculum and how I get there; then you can tell me if I'm doing it right or wrong because I know what the standard is."

Here, Osceola describes entering a marathon without a start or end point with no checkpoints in between. Her frustration longs for someone to tell her not only is she winning the race, but is she even running in the right direction, not to mention is she gaining ground. Is she growing? Part of her disappointment is how the SRD began an entire school district without a set curriculum in the first year. Only online programmable software where teachers could author their own course was offered along with the training to utilize the software. In theory, teachers would be granted total autonomy to create online lessons. However key elements of Michigan Department of Education standards were not emphasized and regretfully not distributed to new teachers. Veteran teachers in the SRD had a huge advantage regarding student achievement. At minimal, rich experience with state content assisted in the construction of online courses. By year two (2), SRD adopted large urban school curriculum and remnants of textbooks left behind in the takeover were approved for use in a blended learning environment. Teachers repeatedly expressed discontentment with teacher "performance" as an attack on their teacher professionalism. District mandates and teacher expectations were not aligned with teachers' perceptions of key elements for professional development.

Five (5) out of seven (7) teachers revealed in the interview that you have to accept the "lack of cares and concern" for what teacher professionals really need as the norm. District and school leaders play a critical role in the design and provision of teachers' professional development activities (e.g., Elmore & Burney, 1997; Scribner, 1999; Desimone, Smith, &

Ueno, 2006, p.180). To make informed policy and program decisions about professional development, district and school leaders need to know whether professional development programs are currently reaching the teachers who need them most (Desimone, Smith, & Ueno, 2006, p.180). Osceola questions the credibility of those in charge of PD. According to Osceola,

 "And in this district often from people who are not qualified to tell us what to do. I want to be creative, but my creativity is stagnated because I am afraid that I will be yelled at because it's not what the district wants to see… I feel like my creativity is stagnated and the demands made on me as a professional are unrealistic. We are being left alone to ourselves to figure it out and we are being robbed of sharing opportunities."

Recall, Osceola craved mentorship from veteran teachers. She sought professional relationships with teachers who had survived in the urban chaos. The SRD intentionally sought administrators and teachers from various backgrounds in search of a "fresh outlook" on education in large urban areas. The goal was to dismantle and disrupt traditional education. The result was a total disrespect of how valuable urban teacher experiences are to urban students; experiences Osceola longed for as an essential element for her success. The leadership in the SRD had little knowledge of the hostile political and educational environment in Michigan and has made feeble attempts to stay afloat. Teachers like Osceola scrambled for footing. Their lack of knowledge of basic educational practices allowed Osceola to deem them as "unqualified" to tell her what to do, so she must defend and protect her professional identity from those who have no clue about what it means to exist as an urban teacher professional. Ernest expresses a similar distrust and even creates a conspiracy theory. Similar to Osceola's response Ernest said, "This is

not about me, this is about money and lining the pockets of people who come up with ideas they can sell and track to school districts, especially in poor districts where grant money is flowing."

Ernest introduces the conspiracies and skepticism teachers have towards district, state, and federal entities whose public intent is to increase student achievement, but the undercurrent always flows back to money. He mentions how socially disadvantaged school districts are considered poor, but actually grant rich. Urban schools are filled with grants for seemingly every situation experienced in poverty stricken neighborhoods from food programs to student opportunities, but Ernest still questions if these resources are actually providing services or just paying vendors.

The economic sphere intrudes into most other domains of social life, and the historical balance between the market, the state, and civil society has been disrupted. Instead of three domains with enough coherence and power to contain the logic and pressures of others, most institutional milieu is increasingly dominated by the economic (Harvey 2005; Persell 1994; Wolfe 1989; Brueggemann, 2014, pp. 213-214). One result is that the market has colonized morality. If it is profitable, it is "good" (Sandel 2012; Satz 2010; Brueggemann, 2014, pp. 214). This disconnect builds barriers grounded in resentment and the search for better options. Given the centrality of teachers' professional development to school improvement efforts and the amount of money spent on it at national, state, and local levels, increasing our understanding of how state, district, and school administrators can best provide and deliver professional development is a worthwhile endeavor (Desimone, Smith, & Ueno, 2006, pp.181).

Oscar reaffirms the need for districts to redirect the management of time and resources. Like Osceola and Ernest, Oscar's reiterates the cry for resource management in his response,

"I would much rather spend my day exchanging tales and strategies for "what-to-do-when" stories, rather than the "how to pass the test" sessions we are doing…look, quit cramming ACT prep down my throat, get me the equipment I need for my classroom, hell fix the copy machine for God's sake!"

Oscar is also frustrated with the waste of money and time. There is a keen awareness among teachers that money is available, but as indicated here by Oscar is being used inappropriately. Education outsiders cannot fathom the absence of basic functioning equipment in urban schools and Oscar emphatically expresses his need for essentials to maintain a functioning classroom. Oscar also expresses his deep anger for where they "do" spend the money exclaiming how ACT PD is "stuffed down his throat". Again teachers are keenly aware that PD costs money, so to spend money on excessive PD is deemed as a lack of care and concern for what teachers really need. Similarly, Frank is very dissatisfied with resources and time management. Frank, who is at the end of his SRD journey said, "We are supposed to be staying current with best practices, but all this online self-directed stuff is just a way to eat up the time." This response indicates the total disregard for how time spent translates into degradation of teacher perceptions of professionalism. Frank implies here that the district does not value what teachers really need regarding professional growth. The data depicts the non-existence of professionalism perceived by the district, hence the deficient PD sessions.

Teachers who decide to remain develop a resiliency for redundancy. Educators are now expected, by and large, to adopt 'best practice' as defined by somewhat remote industry standards rather than work to develop 'good practice' through professional collaborative work (Brown, Seddon, Angus, & Rushbrook, 1996, pp. 311). The observation data (see Appendix) revealed

informational redundancy. All three (3) full day professional development sessions included ACT preparation, data analysis, and action plans for success on the ACT. One (1) out of six (6) professional development sessions devoted a segment that encouraged professional dialogue about breaking barriers to success and reflective practices. Three (3) out of six (6) professional development sessions included segments about school-wide and teacher performance evaluations. The district-wide professional development was devoted to navigating and training for online programs. Two (2) out of six (6) professional development sessions included segments of teacher collaboration for the implementation of project-based learning.

The data reflects devotion to testing urban school students [teachers] are subjected to on a daily basis. The increasing domination of the market as the center of an institutional order and symbolic sphere, however, has now weakened such countervailing institutions, the collective values they espoused, and what Brueggemann (2014) refer to as *moral software*—that is, the capacity for individuals to make wise decisions about how to spend their time, energy, money, and other resources in ways that are healthy for society and themselves in the long run (Brueggemann, 2014, pp.214). Over a 90-day period, fifty percent (50%) of the sessions were devoted to ACT preparation and action plans. Another thirty percent (30%) was devoted to mandated district performance tests. About nineteen (19%) was split between teacher evaluation and district-wide training and only one percent (1%) was devoted to teacher reflective practices (See Observation Data –Appendix). On the following page, Table 4.0 is a Matrix of Findings and sources for data triangulation for the upcoming summary and analysis in Chapter 5.

Table 4.0 Matrix of Findings and Sources for Data Triangulation

Major Findings	Interview	Observations	Notes
Category I: Teacher Professionalism = High Morality			
1. **Teacher perceptions of professionalism are rooted in an extremely elevated sense of morality**	* *	*	* *
2. **Teacher perceptions of professionalism are affirmed through networking and interaction with colleagues**	*		*
3. **Teacher professionals embrace their identity as a role model within the school and the community**			
Category II: Professional Growth is driven by expectations and rewards			
4. **The expectation for professional growth or development** of **teachers should be a structured path to success with clearly defined expectations** for **teachers**	* *	* *	* *
5. **Professional growth or development should be rewarded by providing access to specific needs of individual teachers.**	*		
6. **"Hands-on" experience is a key element in teacher professional growth**			

Category III: Defenders of the Teaching Profession

7. **Professional teachers are forced to explore,   *   ***
   discover, and shape effective teaching practices
   on their own and then defend the existence of
   that professional identity   *
8. **Teachers who decide to remain develop a**
   resiliency for redundancy.

In the final summary of findings section below, the "Damascus Moment" called for one (1) last transition back to the first person action research method. The researchers' notes revealed the crisis urban schools are experiencing and about to experience on an exponential scale. Teachers in this study were looking for a way out and I identified with their sentiment greatly. Below is a brief recapturing of my deep desire to leave in my 'notes-to-self' and the deep void left in urban schools if urban teachers on an even larger scale feel the same way.

Researcher as Participant (Defenders of the Teaching Profession)

Urban School Teachers are an Endangered Species

The large amounts of SRD impoverished teacher PD sessions will result in decreasing teacher retention rates and places urban school teachers on the endangered teachers list. Recruiting quality urban teachers is an awesome task, but retaining quality teachers becomes an even greater task. According to Stotko, Ingram, and Beaty - O'Ferrall (2007),

"In the debate about urban school effectiveness and teacher quality, one proposition has emerged as indisputable: The success of urban schools depends heavily on the quality of the teachers who serve the schools and the administrators who support the teachers. Unfortunately, urban school district recruitment policies are often not aligned with research and practical knowledge about urban teacher effectiveness; thus, the best candidates are often ignored, neglected, or otherwise discouraged. In order to achieve challenging goals for student achievement, urban school districts must tailor their recruitment and retention efforts to address the characteristics and motivations of potential urban teachers" (Stotko, Ingram, and Beaty – O'Ferrall, 2007, p. 30).

As stated earlier in this chapter, the "notes-to-self" for Frank indicated Frank was in his last week with the SRD. Oscar expressed similar aspirations to leave and search for a better situation. In my "notes-to-self" for Oscar I wrote, "wished he had another opportunity somewhere… keeps resumes' in his desk."

The note-to-self for Oscar exposed his desire to escape. I recall that Oscar kept his resume' in his desk indicating his search for employment. One can only defend their professional identity until it either breaks or is preserved through transition. Osceola had already acquired another position. It was confirmed that she was leaving and hopes that her new position would embrace her as a professional. Osceola, as a new instructor, came, to Detroit to impact the lives of young people through the Teach for America. For Osceola, her goals resembled missionary work. She did embrace her new experiences as an urban teacher, but in my notes I recorded her

disgust of the lack of "professional" treatment in her short tenure with the SRD. In my notes-to-self for Osceola I wrote, "visibly set on not returning...repeated disgust."

In just three (3) years, excessive demands placed on her by the SRD is "not worth" staying. This internal pressure is compounded with negative student and parent dispositions regarding education and learning, disproportional salaries and promotion opportunities, and all of the socio-economic ills that accompany disadvantaged youth, including threats of violence and high instances of personal property theft. More recent studies indicate that because of high teacher demand and low teacher supply, poor urban school districts have higher rates of teacher attrition and deal with more pressing teacher shortages (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996; Haberman & Rickards, 1990; Imazeki, 2002; Shen, 1997; Rinke, 2011, p.640), replacing up to one fifth of their entire faculty each year (Ingersoll, 2001; Rinke, 2011, p.640). Furthermore, in one study, all teachers sampled who moved from one school to another transferred into a school serving a wealthier student population (Johnson, 2004; Rinke, 2011, p.640). This often leaves poor, non-White, low-performing students with the least skilled teachers (Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002; Rinke, 2011, p.640) and makes it difficult to staff urban, high school classrooms especially in critical shortage areas like mathematics and science (Rinke, 2011, p.640).

I am an endangered species. I love watching my students learn mathematics, especially advanced concepts they feared at the beginning of the course. The SRD is so politically charged by state law makers, that the fate of the SRD hangs in the balance even today. In the past three (3) years with the SRD, I have witnessed teacher turnover that I never would have imagined in all my years of teaching. The top salary for teachers with 5 years of experience or more is $65K. This salary is competitive with the large urban district's top tear with a Master's pay rate before

concessions. Surrounding school districts offer higher competitive salaries and a better quality

of life. However, there is much to learn and navigate with the SRD than any other surrounding

school districts. For example, I currently have six (6) different usernames/passwords for six (6)

different district-mandated digital programs. Teacher PD's included training for all of them

district-wide. School building PD sessions involve the same trainings and additional training for

standardized tests. As stated in chapter 3, the electronic portfolio that we submit for evaluation

on PD360 must have videos we have watched along with reflection and follow-up questions,

uploaded videos of instruction in our classroom, lessons we created throughout the year, parent

communication logs, PD activities, student survey activities, and student growth data just to

name a few.

Many teachers feel their loads are excessively heavy and that great inequity exists in the

assignment of their load (Homegrain, 1961, p. 88). Teacher load consists of the actual classroom

teaching assignment and those out of class duties directly related to the assignment such as

preparing lesson materials and grading those materials with assessments (Homegrain, 1961, p.

88). Cooperation activities include committee work, meetings, and school sponsorships of clubs

and activities (Homegrain, 1961, p. 88). I personally confess that I do not encourage my son to

pursue the teaching profession for fear of him experiencing the escalated levels of abuse from

administrators, parents, and students. This abuse is sometimes extreme in an urban school. This

year alone, I have had one (1) attempt of a group of students to jump me, and over 15 instances

of the B!@# word. I have witnessed gang fights, teenage pregnancy as a norm, casual drug use

and two (2) known suicide attempts. In no way am I suggesting these situations do not occur in

suburban schools, however compile that list with attacks on professionalism in staff meetings,

and a never ending PD calendar, the point of exhaustion peaks by Thanksgiving.

Urban teachers have become small remnants of our society that once embraced social justice and held positions of honor. Traditional values of respect for schooling have faded into a consumer oriented demand for schooling that promises to lift families into an increasingly elusive prosperity (Gordon, 2005, p. 459). As a result of student disengagement and falling achievement levels, governmental reforms are being implemented that are more open and less oriented, focusing on individuality and creativity (Cave, 2001, 2003; Choy, 1999; Ishizaka, ned; Gordon, 2005, p. 459). The SRD implemented a student-centered learning model intended to promote student learning at their own pace; however, it did not incorporate the need for grade-level distinction and required credits for graduation. I implemented student-centered learning early in my teaching career when I was able to establish meaningful relationships with students that were so in depth that I knew the variety of ways my students learned and I addressed each need with vigor. There are others like me in the SRD, however in this study we are an endangered species.

 Below, Table 5.0 is a graphical representation of Major Themes and how the researcher as participant themes fit into the major themes discovered in the findings. This table was categorized the notes-to-self after each interview.

Table 5.0 Categorization of "Notes-to-Self"

Teacher Participants	Major Theme 1 Teacher Professionalism=High Morality (or moral issues as a whole)	Major Theme 2 Professional Growth is Driven by Expectations and Rewards	Major Theme 3 Defenders of the Teaching Profession
Osceola	Courage, enthusiastic	Affirmation, relief, emancipation, freedom, acquittal	discouraged

		from a bondage sentence	
Marguerite	N/A	Respected, powerful	discouraged
Winona	Empathy (cluelessness)		Empathetic, sympathetic
Oscar	N/A	confirmation	Impoverished, hopelessness
Ernest	Self-righteous, judgmental, determination	N/A	Despair, defeated
Frank	jealousy	emancipated	abandonment
Ethel	Admiration, confusion (why did she return after retirement?)	Affirmation, approval	N/A

Chapter 5

Summary of Findings, Recommendations, and Conclusions

The purpose of this first person action case study is to address the lack of research that critically explores the impact the amount of professional development has on urban teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals, as well as their practice. The demand for more teacher professional development is an increasing epidemic, especially in low-performing schools and school districts. Three (3) major themes emerged from interview and observation data: (1) Teacher perceptions of professionalism are equated with high morality, (2) Professional growth is driven by expectations and rewards, and (3) Excessive PD forces teachers to become defenders of the teaching profession. This case study indicates that too much professional development has a negative effect on a teacher's sense of professionalism which ultimately impacts instructional practices. This first person action case study also allowed the researcher to insert herself as a participant in the study. In this first person approach, three (3) additional findings or minor themes emerged: (a) The resiliency of the researcher had bred a sense of righteous indignation, (b) Emancipation and freedom are essential to professional growth, and (c)

Urban school teachers are an endangered species. In this chapter, I will summarize the findings using Illich's (1981) three dimensional theory of development, make recommendations to school districts and future research, and conclude the study.

Research Question

This first-person action case study was driven by one primary research question:

- What impact does the amount of teacher professional development have on urban teachers' perceptions of professionalism, as well as their practice?

Again, Why Illich? (1981)

Since NCLB (2001), great emphasis has been placed on teachers and their professional development as the key to increasing student achievement. "Fix the teachers…fix the schools" is the reigning rhetoric that drives on-the-job teacher training, especially in urban schools. Teacher professional development intends to grow the teacher and enhance effective instruction, but Illich (1981) suggests the acknowledgement for the need for development carries a negative connotation which naturally opposes the intent of PD at its core. According to Illich (1981) the origin of "development" indicates a continual need for evolution because its original state is unacceptable; but unacceptable by whose standards. The desire for standardization drives the obsession of American public education [especially in urban schools] to "do something"; however these PD resolutions are themselves damaging and in this study excessively damaging. Illich (1981) asserts that every community has a characteristic attitude towards others. The concept of the "alien" (the teacher) introduced within this theoretical framework as the demand to "rescue" is imposed by one community (the district) to others (the teachers). According to Illich (1981)

"The perception of the alien as someone to be saved is part of an evolving view on the functions of institutions. The alien as object of help comes from the attributions of motherly functions to the 4th century church" (Illich, 1981).

A summation of examples given in the "alien" concept is such that of a "wild" man introduced to 4th century Western Europe who defines his "lack of culture" as uneducated. In this case, urban teacher professional development is the districts poor attempt to "rescue" teachers from themselves which results yield perceived degradation of teacher professionalism. This is the lens in which these findings and interpretations are viewed.

Findings and Interpretations

Teacher Professionalism = High Morality

Teacher perceptions of professionalism are rooted in an extremely elevated sense of morality. The data reaffirms how teachers perceive themselves as "gate-keepers of its traditions and culture and facilitators of its evolution…teachers, above all professionals, must be intellectually active, authoritative, lively, critical, reflective, flexible and ever attentive to the constant and changing demands of the young society for which they are being prepared" (GTCT, 1993: section F, paras 1 and 4; Bottery & Wright, 1997 p.7). One teacher in this study expressed that the "power over people" handed to her is and will never be taken lightly.

Previous research, especially urban teacher research, emphasizes a few characteristics of effective urban teachers:

- Their consistent integration of the technical dimensions of teaching with the moral, cultural, and political dimensions

- Their demonstration of an explicit commitment to social justice, made real by continual struggle about what it means and how it is carried out by the youth they instruct

- Their view of learning as a social and dialogical inquiry within communities of practice

(Quartz and TEP Research Group, 2003, p.102)

All of which are undeniably high moral attributes which in this study is equated with teacher professionalism, but there is a huge gap in the amount of research that addresses what happens when that "power of professionalism" is attacked and even diminished to the point of non-recognition. As teachers in this study embrace their identity as a role model in both the school and community they service, at what point does de-professionalization or in this case "demoralization" take its toll on an ever decreasing population of urban teachers. At what point do the undesirable externalities exceed the benefits and hence becomes counterproductive? (Illich, 1981) Again, utilizing the theoretical framework of Illich (1981) as the lens, the basic theme of Illich's criticism is that the institutions and technologies of modern industrial society (its "tools") become independent over against people so that their constant growth has only negative effects (brainwashing education, sickening medicine, time-consuming acceleration) and increasingly harms the autonomy of individuals (Ziai & Jakobeit, 2009). Mirra and Morrell (2011) called for a theoretical shift in how educators, politicians, and policy makers think about the purpose of education in democracy by reevaluating theories of schooling and democracy. Analyzing a particular learning community that conceptualizes teachers as public intellectuals, their work exposed dehumanizing practices that prevent teachers from helping their students develop powerful literacies and civic skills. According to Mirra and Morrell (2011),

"Considering the recent narrowing of student success indicators to standardized test scores and the proliferation of the one-size-fits-all, "teacher-proof" instructional programs based on a similarly narrow and politicized vision of evidence-based research, teachers have been increasingly stripped of their professional integrity and defined as failures in need of rehabilitation or replacement" (Mirra & Morrell, 2011, p.409).

This study eloquently addresses the challenges of thought concerning the reevaluation of the role of education and how society reveres educators within that role. More importantly, this research joins the impact of such theories with democracy and teachers as civic agents within that democracy. Mirra and Morrell (2011) powerfully denounce the treatment of teachers as mere transmitters of standardized content knowledge, which is rooted in the discourse of neoliberalism, but like most education research fails to highlight the perception of the urban teacher.

In this critical case study, the observations and interviews witnessed the "stripping of integrity" or "certified degradation" (Illich, 1981) during professional development. In this study, teachers demonstrated absolutely no confidence in either district officials or school administrators to create a quality professional development, recall one teacher even questioned if they cared at all. Current research must journey further than descriptions and explanations and courageously confront the possible implications the absence or decrease of the moral compass defined in this study as urban teacher professionalism.

Morality can be found on what Illich (1980) defines as the z-axis in his three (3) dimensions of development; it is the place where teachers in this case choose to be moral or professional. More so, Illich's (1980) theory plays out as the x-axis houses social hierarchy and

political authority (SRD district officials) and the y-axis houses those who are affected by technical choices (urban teachers). It is on the z-axis where the nature of human satisfaction is at issue (Illich, 1980). This critical action case study assists Illich (1980) in the legitimacy of his views.

Teachers also expressed a deep preference for more interactions with colleagues, especially those considered more seasoned "Moral Agents" who have traveled the same path in the same environment and lived to tell the tales. Exchanging tales and strategies for "what-to-do-when" stories, rather than "honey-do" lists was preferred throughout the findings. Horn & Little (2010) investigated how conversational routines, or practices by which groups structure work-related talk, function in teacher professional communities to forge, sustain, and support learning and improvements, but fails to address what happens to the teacher as a perceived professional is silenced and subjected to top-down conversations of "how-to", instead of collaborative conversations of "we-should". Though, it cannot be proven (and current research is saturated with attempts) that effective professional development enhances teachers as "moral agents or teacher professionalism", surely it can be deduced from this case study that stripping teachers of their integrity as professionals could not be beneficial to best teachers practices and ultimately student success.

Professional Growth is driven by Expectations and Rewards

The expectation for professional growth or development *of* teachers should be a structured path to success with clearly defined expectations *for* teachers. Just as teachers have expectations for their students, in this study teachers reveal a craving for a standard of expectations as well. The teachers in this study not only respect structure, but require it for

professional growth. The "sink-or-swim" culture in urban education does not contribute to increased morality, thus it impacts teachers' perception of themselves as professional. Teachers expect professional development to provide them with the current best practices, strategies, and initiatives, with any and every resource necessary to raise student achievement.

Most research identifies teacher professional learning as the main ingredient for increasing teacher quality and improving the quality of student learning, but the professional development effects literature has "committed an epistemological fallacy by taking empirical relationships between forms of activity or task (e.g., being activity based), structures for learning (e.g., situated in practice), and so on, and some measure of change to be teacher learning" (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). According to Opfer and Pedder (2011), process-product literature has dominated the literature on teacher professional learning and that domination has limited their ability to explain the phenomenon. Their review demonstrates the ways the elements of three subsystems (the teacher, the school, and the learning activity) interact and combine in different ways and with varying intensities to influence teacher learning, but does not address the impact the combination has on teacher perception of professionalism, especially when experiencing activities in excess.

All data also revealed a deep discontentment with college preparation courses as well. This society embodies the old adage…those who can do- "do", and those who can't "teach". It is a disclaimer by many that anyone can teach or be taught to teach and it is reflected in various university and college preparation programs around the country. All interviewed unanimously agreed that *nothing* could have prepared them for the urban school experience accept "hands-on" experience. Current research recognizes the inconsistency of knowing how to prepare teachers for urban school. Quartz and TEP Research Group (2003) reports on one effort to curb urban

teacher attrition through a nontraditional approach to urban teacher education, induction, and ongoing professional development. Using quantitative five-year teacher retention data for urban educators, this research helps reframe the professionalization of the teaching debate to fit urban school realities, but negates the relevance of the personal experiences of new teachers in an urban school environment central to that debate. "The new teacher education would not add on to or supplement existing structures and paradigms but fundamentally reinvent them by taking a resource rather than a deficit perspective on diversity" (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Quartz & TEP Research Group, 2003 p. 102).

Again, much can be deduced from the findings that teachers in this study preferred college courses, considered to be professional development, rather than the current professional development sessions experienced. Plainly, teachers preferred to endure a course that was not helpful, rather than the current experience that should be contributing to their professional growth. It cannot out right be said that teacher professionalism perception is decreased, but the news cannot be considered a *good thing either*. Though the intent of this study was not to focus on compensation or rewards, it would be foolish not to acknowledge the levels of attentiveness during the observations when sessions involved evaluations of performance. Professional dialogue also increased when discussion of TIF money (mentioned in chapter 4) was mentioned during the sessions i.e., digital portfolio development and PD360 performance evaluations.

Defenders of the Teaching Profession

Professional teachers are forced to explore, discover, and shape effective teaching practices on their own and then defend the existence of that professional identity with no help from professional development sessions. PD sessions often highlighted teacher shortcomings and

teachers failure to fix the problem. Teachers in this study were left alone to create a professional

teacher identity and then defend it when it comes under attack. Illich (1981) describes this

phenomenon as "shadow work". Development {Professional Development} implicates the need

for a suggested transformation of the specimen or person needed to be developed producing a

shadow economy that nurtures degradation (Illich, 1981, p.2).

This shadow work occurs parallel to the work seemingly in the forefront. As the district

seeks to "professionally develop" teachers (according to standardized test scores achievement) in

desperate need of rehabilitation, teachers are working to protect and defend the professional

identity they have built. And so, if there are teachers, especially new teachers, being inducted

into this "sink or swim" urban education culture without a life jacket and then subject this newly

created professional identity to attack during professional develop sessions, then the perceptions

of themselves as a professional indirectly impacts their classroom practices. Plainly, if the

teacher has given what is perceived to be their best and *that's not good enough*, then a "culture

of failure" is planted and festers with time. Teachers then are forced to defend their

professionalism or face degradation.

Most bureaucratic structures, like schools, adopt an industrial relations perspective in

order to operate effectively. "Industrial relations fundamentally concerns the many ways people

behave in the context of work, both as individuals and members of groups (Dabscheck & Niland

1981, p.5; Spaull, 1997, p. 290)…it uses identifiable processes and develops a framework of

rules which temporarily accommodates industrial conflict and establishes working relationships

between individual employees and employers" (Spaull & Hince, 1986 pp. 5-14; Spaull, 1997, p.

290). This research describes accurately what is happening, however fails to address how it may

make teachers feel as professionals to have to "prove their professionalism" constantly. The data exposes teacher coping mechanisms; referred hereafter as teacher resilience, also shadow work.

Teachers who decide to remain develop a resiliency for redundancy. The data reflects devotion to testing urban school students (teachers) are subjected to on a daily basis. Over a 90-day period, fifty percent (50%) of the sessions were devoted to ACT preparation and action plans. Another thirty percent (30%) was devoted to mandated district performance tests. About nineteen (19%) was split between teacher evaluation and district-wide training and only one percent (1%) was devoted to teacher reflective practices.

Again, these professional development practices exhibit the current dominance of thought in research based on "process-product conceptualization of causality: that effective professional development will improve teacher instructional practices, which will result in improved student learning" (Opfer & Pedder, 2011). It is the research path this study intentionally tried to avoid. Too many "what works" conversations are silencing the teacher voice in research, because the focus rapidly transitions to "proof" which ultimately lands the discussion in the whirlpool of student outcomes. Research often disregards how these professional developments, especially in excess, effect teacher perceptions as professionals. 'Traditional learning formats such as one-time workshops and conferences, what Ball (1994) described as "style shows," are less likely to lead to teacher change." (Hawley & Valli, 1999; Opfer & Pedder, 2011)

Teachers in this study responded to both verbal and non-verbal criticisms of their professionalism by either communicating their discontent verbally or developing a "protective shield" that wards off all arrows that attempt to crucify their professional identity. Though research literature like Mirra and Morrell (2011) discussed previously in this chapter, explains the dynamic of why teacher professional identities may be under attack, current research fails to

address the impact of having to "defend" teacher professionalism, especially in urban schools with excessive professional development practices. The clear picture of socio-economic barriers urban teachers face, compiled with excessive professional development steeped in technical rationality and accusations of failure *must be painted*. Again, this case study cannot definitively state defending teacher professionalism and guarding oneself from PD redundancy impacts teacher perceptions as professionals and practices negatively, but it could not be a good thing.

Recommendations

- ❖ *Teacher Professionals as Moral Agents*. The SRD and other urban school districts alike should push beyond technical requirement professional development sessions that sustain survival and elevate professional development that nurtures moral growth through teacher collaboration, content level interaction, and "hands-on" experiences in reasonable amounts. This is not a solution for effective professional development, but it could not hurt the way teachers view themselves as professionals.

- ❖ *Professional Growth is driven by Expectations and Rewards.* The SRD and urban schools districts alike should develop alternative measureable standards and expectations of achievement apart from standardized tests and reward teachers who achieve and surpass these standards. As districts mandate teachers to develop multivariate assessments for diverse learners, so should districts create multivariate standards of successful teacher development as well. This is not a solution for increasing professional growth in urban teachers, but it could not hurt having an alternative standard of measurement other than standardized tests.

❖ *Defending the Teaching Profession*. The SRD and urban school districts alike should develop a data-driven analysis system that indicates teacher exhaustion and excess professional development. Indicators can include monitoring teacher absenteeism and teacher surveys of professional development forums. This may decrease the need for true teacher professionals to defend themselves against negative criticisms brought on by teachers who are not highly moral or in this case professional. Also developing a more inclusive teacher selection process. Highly qualified teacher professionals recognize other highly qualified teachers as moral agents and are more likely to assist in selecting the best fit for that educational community, thus decreasing the need for excess "watered" down professional development that insults the intelligence of most educators. This does not imply that teachers are trophies of moral perfection, but it could not hurt to have a recognized and respected professional on the panel for future candidates.

Researcher Reflections

Silencing the "AMEN CORNER" in the heart of the researcher was the most difficult task in conducting this case study, until the researcher experienced the "Damascus Moment." Suppressing feelings of degradation that initially birthed the inspiration of this case study was only achieved through sincere pursuit of genuinely wanting to know how other teachers felt after hours of professional development; hence the title, "Are We Dumb Yet"? The researcher has been an urban educator for eighteen (18) years and was extremely interested in the viewpoints of unexperienced (or not much experience) teachers in the field towards how professional development effects their sense of professionalism and how they define professionalism. The "Damascus Moment" enabled the researcher to resurrect the teacher voice and trace experiences

of degradation via "notes-to-self" after Part I was completed. The researcher affirmed that the frustration is real and the status of the teaching profession is diminishing in this free-market, consumer based educational community. The researcher was surprised to discover how fear of unemployment can also play a role in teachers' decisions to participate in research, thus the author has developed an even deeper respect for education researchers who have to "find a way" inside to uncover hidden truths that could shape educational policy.

Suggestions for Further Research

The results in this study suggest more research be conducted in the areas of teacher identity and the impact it has on aspects of the school community. Increased first-person participatory action studies are also encouraged at the scholarly level to heighten the sense of transformational learning and intellectual growth that could possibly be taking place unknown to the researcher. Another research suggestion is to investigate how colleges and universities have addressed the special preparation needs of future urban school teachers and what kind of collaborations are occurring between researchers and practitioners to address the gaps during student-teaching internships. This research could be expanded to other urban school districts in a comparative analysis to determine if these negative impacts are isolated to just the SRD or are other urban teachers experiencing excess exposure to professional development. Again, the researcher was surprised to discover how the fear of unemployment effects study participation, so please be careful to conduct a study that will not result in participant termination. The researcher, to date, is still employed with the SRD.

Summary and Conclusion

This first person action case study critically explored the effects of excess professional development on teacher perceptions' as professionals; an effect which could impact implementation of innovative educational strategies and ultimately student achievement. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to address the lack of research that critically explores the impact the amount of professional development has on urban teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals, as well as their practice. Illich's (1980) three dimensional theory of development was the theoretical framework used in this study and the results supported the notion that excess professional development is counter-productive, nurtures an environment of degradation, and negatively impacts teacher perceptions of themselves as professionals. The existing literature eloquently describes the rationale of the events and the frequency of de-professionalization experiences, but stops short of explaining how de-professionalization may effect teacher perceptions of themselves as well as their practices.

The interviews, observations, and notes-to-self data concludes that excess professional development negatively impacts teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals which implies negative impacts on their practice as well. Chapter 5 concludes this case study and the findings produced three (3) major themes: (1) Teachers equate professionalism with a high sense of morality, (2) Professional growth is driven by rewards and expectations, and (3) Teachers transform into defenders of the profession. This first person action case study also allowed the researcher to insert herself as a participant in the study. In this first person approach, three (3) additional findings or minor themes emerged: (a) The resiliency of the researcher had bred a sense of righteous indignation, (b) Emancipation and freedom are essential to professional growth, and (c) Urban school teachers are an endangered species. Recommendations are given to

district officials to consider when creating a professional development programs for urban

teachers. Suggestions for further research have been given in the area of teacher identity and

urban teacher preparation courses.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Professional Development Observations

Table 6.0 OB #1 (Full day 8:30 am – 3:30 pm)

Activity	Amount of Time Spent on Activity	Professional Dialogue	Teacher Engagement Beginning/Ending
Data Overview: Instructional coaches present ACT data in comparison to district. The intent	45 minutes	N/A	Start: Attentive End: Proud (Gains were made, returning teachers visually excited)
Open Dialogue about the barriers to excellence. Instructional coaches encouraged responses and reflections from staff on service population	35 minutes	Heated exchanges are made over effective instruction, enablement of students, integrity	Start: Focused End: Extremely tense
College Readiness Skills. Instructional coaches discussed alignment of classroom activities with ACT/MME. MDE strands to Common Core Standards	(Break) 2 hours	N/A	Start: Visual fatigue End: Lacked focus, teachers grading papers, in/out room, on laptops, cell phones
ACT action plans and	2 hours	3 out of 12 teachers	Start: Groans

implementation time line (11 grade teachers only). Project Based brainstorming activity and strategies. Teachers placed strategies of PBL on posts around the room		were asked to share ideas	End: focused

Table 7.0 OB #2 (Full day 8:30 am – 3:30 pm)

Activity	Amount of Time Spent on Activity	Professional Dialogue	Teacher Engagement Beginning/Ending
Agenda modified. Stop and complete district mandated survey. Delayed start	50 minutes	Technical concerns over survey. Received/not received. Completed not completed	Start: Compliant to Principal directives End: focused
MME Strand Analysis. Instructional coaches reviewed content on MME. Curriculum alignment to ACT Content Standard specific breakdown	2 hours	N/A	Start: Visual fatigue End: Visual fatigue
Action Planning. Teachers were grouped by content to share ideas. ILP's for each student should be assembled (Building administration directive)	(break) 1 ½ hours	Teachers collaborated about individual learning plans for students. How to complete the task of assembling student portfolios. "Correct way"/ "unacceptable way" of doing things	Start: Fatigue End: Visual exhaustion, grading papers, cell phone usage and laptop use increased
Comments- Principal ensured directives should be followed	30 minutes	N/A	Start: focused End: Visual exhaustion, little eye contact

Table 8.0 OB#3 (Full Day 8:30 am – 3:30 pm)

Activity	Amount of Time Spent on Activity	Professional Dialogue	Teacher Engagement Beginning/Ending
Greeting/Opening Remarks by Assistant Principal. Discussed upcoming walk-through evaluations on PD360. Rubric and components of evaluation discussed. Domains 2 and ; Classroom Culture and Content Knowledge	1 hour	Questions concerning PD360 technical issues. There were a couple of "what if" questions, i.e. what if I'm testing? Or what if you observe a class that is clearly oversized, will considerations be made?	Start: Focused End: Focused
Diversified Members Credit Union presentation (Partnership with local school) offerings of benefits of becoming a member	20 minutes	Locations and policy requirement questions, benefits and interest rates	Start: Focused End: Not as focused, but respectfully attentive
Lead teacher presentation on the 5-essentials survey. This survey is based out of the University of Chicago commissioned to grade urban schools with the city of Detroit (all urban schools-source of commission unknown). Lead teacher informed staff of rubric. Lead teacher also presented a Power school tool for	1 ½ hour	Questions were asked about how the U of Chicago survey became so important. Where or who pays them to evaluate urban schools.	Start: Fatigue End: focused

Activity			
classroom management and parent communication			
District survey. Staff are expected to complete survey with 100% compliance	(Break) 20 minutes	Discussion of consequences, when will survey be distributed	Start: Focused End: Focused
Project Based Learning, Roll-out (Building level directive) Teachers are expected to implement projects across the curriculum. It will be a part of evaluation	2 hours	N/A	Start: Fatigue End: Extreme fatigue

Table 9.0 OB #4 (Partial 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm- District Wide)

Activity	Amount of Time Spent on Activity	Professional Dialogue	Teacher Engagement Beginning/Ending
Troubleshooting BUZZ (EAA online course content software) new users get comfortable with navigating through curriculum content on BUZZ. How to load and upload content and videos for students to view	30 minutes	New users asked questions. Presenters and teachers exchanged in one on one feedback on how to better use the program	Start: Somewhat fatigued, but focused End: Extreme fatigue
Advanced BUZZ operations. For advanced user navigations	30 minutes	Advanced users had troubleshooting questions. How to discover new ways to use programs	Start: Somewhat fatigued, but focused End: Extreme fatigue
ALEKS- EAA designated mathematics software for math teachers only. Math teachers supplement ALEKS for BUZZ. Gradebooks and Objectives reviewed	30 minutes	Math teachers only discussed district expectations for program usage.	Start: Somewhat fatigued, but focused End: Extreme fatigue
Imagine Learning/EdReady. Online programs that prepare students for	30 minutes	Professional exchange over assessment all teachers must take before	Start: Somewhat fatigued, but focused End: Extreme fatigue

standardized testing procedures and programs. Imagine learning K-8/ EdReady HS		implementation. Discussion on how the data can be used to guide instruction	

Table 10.0 OB #5 (Partial 1:45 pm – 4:00 pm)

Activity	Amount of Time Spent on Activity	Professional Dialogue	Teacher Engagement Beginning/Ending
Orientation of Achievement Series End of Course Assessment. All teachers in core academic courses will be required to administer an end of course test. This test was originally to be given at the beginning of the school year, but was not. WebEX meeting with district official	1 hour	Brief discussion of district expectations	Start: Focused End: not focused, grading papers, cell phone usage, in/out of room
Performance Series testing and calendar testing dates. Instructional coaches discussed when the next round of testing will begin	1 ½ hour	N/A	Start: Fatigue End: Extreme fatigue

Table 11.0 OB #6 (Partial 1:45 pm – 4:30 pm)

Activity	Amount of Time Spent on Activity	Professional Dialogue	Teacher Engagement Beginning/Ending
Collaboration of general education and specialized services by lead teachers. Teachers stressed laws that protect special needs students and reiteration of modification of assignments to address student achievement	1 ½ hour	Heated exchanges over ethics and integrity, enablement, teachers rights, students who "milk" the system; teachers asked what should be done, lots of accusations exchanged between administrators, specialized services staff and general education teachers	Start: Focused End: Visual anger and extremely tense
The "Perfect Portfolio". Lead teacher guided staff on how to create a digital portfolio that impacts your teacher incentive funding utilizing PD360	45 minutes	Teachers are still heated from discussion, no dialogue	Start: Angry End: Angry

Questionnaire

A Professional...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Needs continual reminders about fulfilling responsibilities to students, parents, and administration					
Can be relied upon to initiate and complete tasks					
Misrepresents or falsifies actions and/or information, for example, regarding students, grades, classroom practices, experience, etc.					
Is resistant or defensive in accepting criticism					
Remains aware of their own inadequacies					
Resists considering or making changes if recommendations are from an external source, i.e. education consulting firms, state/district level administration					
Does not accept responsibility for errors or failure					
Is overly critical/verbally abusive during times of stress					
Demonstrates confidence in both content-knowledge and classroom practices					
Lacks empathy and is often insensitive to students' needs, feelings and wishes or to those of the family, and administration					
Deems it necessary to establish a rapport					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
with students, families, and administration to raise student achievement					
Displays inadequate commitment to honoring the wishes and wants of the patient					
Demonstrates the ability to function within a team even when there is disagreement on policy/procedures.					
Lacks sensitivity to the needs, feelings and wishes of colleagues					

(Derived from American Board of Internal Medicine, 2001)

Questionnaire (cont'd)

At our school, Professional (Learning) Development …	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
is focused on student outcomes (not just individual teacher needs)					
is focused on and embedded in teacher practice (not disconnected from the school)					
is informed by the best available research on effective learning and teaching (not just limited to what they currently know)					
is collaborative, involving reflection and feedback (not just individual inquiry)					
is evidence based and data driven (not anecdotal) to guide improvement and to measure impact					
is ongoing, supported and fully integrated into the culture and operations of the system – schools, networks, regions and the center (not episodic and fragmented)					
is an individual and collective responsibility at all levels of the system (not just the school level) and it is not optional					
is appropriately scheduled to meet the needs of the instructional staff					
is essential to my growth as a professional					
spends too much time on activities and/or tasks that do not impact classroom practice					
is more of a burden than a blessing					
is excessive and often seems counter productive					

(Derived from Department of Education and Training, 2005)

Interview Questions

- How do you define teacher professionalism?
- What does it mean to be professionally developed?
- Compare and contrast your post-secondary teacher education courses with your current professional development experience.
- Which do you prefer and why?

Michigan State University- Institution Review Board

Informed Consent Form

Research Title: A CASE STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF EXCESS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN URBAN SCHOOLS

You are invited to join a research study to look at the effects of excess professional develop has on teacher perceptions of professionalism. The decision to join, or not to join, is up to you.

This qualitative case study critically explores the effects of excess professional development on teacher perceptions' as professionals and the voice of teachers in urban schools is the key element in this investigation.

If you decide to participate you will be asked to: (select as many options as you like)

- o Participate in an interview that will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. (5-7 questions)
- o Participate in a survey that will take 5-7 minutes. (10 questions)
- o Participate in professional development observations indirectly.

The investigators may stop the study or take you out of the study at any time they judge it is in your best interest. They may also remove you from the study for various other reasons. They can do this without your consent. You can stop participating at any time.

RISKS

This study involves absolutely no physical, social, and mental risks of any kind. It is a request of your opinion that will be kept anonymous both during and after the completion of the study.

There may also be other risks that we cannot predict.

BENEFITS TO TAKING PART IN THE STUDY

It is reasonable to expect the following benefits from this research are an intellectual conversation regarding your perception as a professional. However, we can't guarantee that you will personally experience benefits from participating in this study. Others may benefit in the future from the information we find in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We will take the following steps to keep information about you confidential, and to protect it from unauthorized disclosure, tampering, or damage by (1) omitting names from interviews, surveys, and observations and (2) destroying the data once the research study is submitted.

Name (Print)	Signature	Date

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