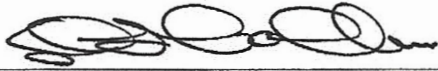
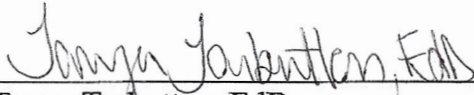


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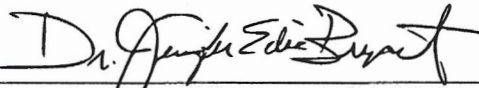
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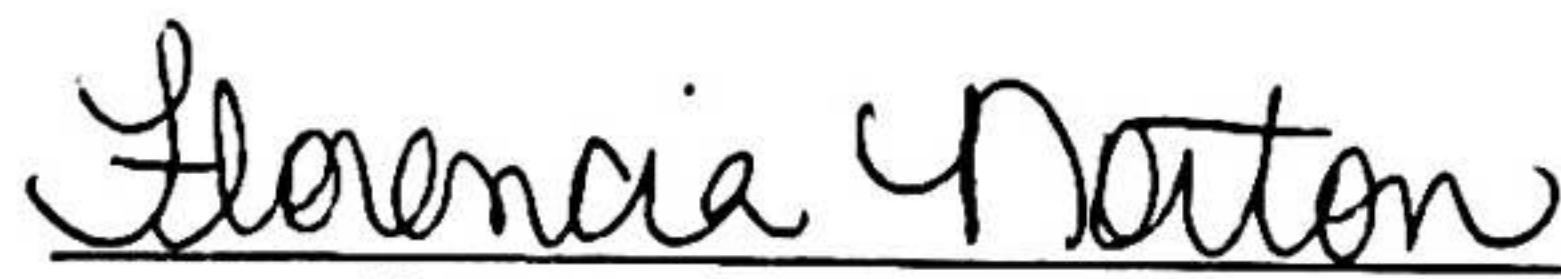
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TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT MOTIVATES THEM TO PURSUE
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY

by

Florencia Norton

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative single-subject case study investigated teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development. The research focused on one school district in New Jersey with participants from elementary, middle, and high schools. The district administrator in charge of professional development was also interviewed. Individual interviews and district professional development catalogs were used to collect data. This study identified factors that motivate teachers to engage in professional development, which include student achievement, compensation, past experiences, and collaboration. The study explored current research about motivation and best practices in professional development and sought to determine which components are the strongest motivation in the pursuit of professional growth. The conclusions drawn from this study were that teachers are motivated to pursue professional development when it benefits their students, provides them with resources and materials, values their time, and allows them to identify a need for and choose their programs.

Keywords: professional development, motivation, student achievement, programs

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CHAPTER 1

Professional development is the ongoing development of resources and practices that educators learn throughout their careers (Avidov-Ungar, 2016). Through professional development, teachers form their professional identities and gain the opportunities to practice what they have learned in the classroom by expanding their expertise (Avidov-Ungar, 2016). Professional development is an essential part of an educator's career, as it allows teachers to discover and stay current with innovative educational practices and changes made to their work environments (Avidov-Ungar, 2016). Teachers can gain a deeper understanding of learning processes, which will drive their instruction and meet students' needs (Avidov-Ungar, 2016). Effective professional development programs link teachers' content with practice (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017). By giving time for training and feedback, effective professional development provides ongoing learning opportunities for teachers (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017). These effective programs should be long-term and allow for teacher reflection, collaboration, and adjustment of practice (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017). Quality teaching and active professional development practices that focus on student achievement outcomes have become essential for educators as the pressures of test scores, standards, and accountability have increased (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Teachers are responsible for students' achievements, as new diverse needs continue to emerge (Powell & Bodur, 2019).

Background of the Study

Professional development programs for teachers can impact student programs and, ultimately, their success. Teacher attitudes about professional development programs are varied, and leaders should understand what drives teachers to pursue professional development, so that programs can be tailored to meet teachers' needs (Claudia, 2015). Professional development that

is meaningful and transformative should be designed to meet teachers' motivations, requirements, and partialities (Bautista, Toh, & Wong, 2018). Although there are logistical needs that districts may have to meet in their professional development implementation, teachers' needs should always be considered from the beginning of planning (Bautista, et al., 2018).

To evaluate teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development, districts should consider what items factor into practical professional development. These factors may include salary, time, attendees, and topic. Administrators can identify the needs by interviewing teachers (Claudia, 2015). Educators and policymakers can gain and use this understanding to improve motivation, practice, and programs (Claudia, 2015). Professional development programs that take teachers' input into account can potentially advance the field of education, shift teachers' mindsets to being more open to staying current with research and practice, and empower teachers to take risks with their instructional practices (Khan et al., 2016). Moreover, these professional development programs enable schools to implement innovative teaching models, encourage sharing of resources among colleagues, and enhance professional practice that may need improvement (Khan et al., 2016). Motivation is a crucial component of maintaining and developing educational learning programs and policies (Claudia, 2015).

The positive impact that professional development has on school communities can be understood at a deeper level by considering teacher professional development and the minimally researched motivational factors that drive teachers to pursue it (Mathieu, Tannenbaum, & Salas, 1992). Herzberg's (1959) theory acknowledged workplace motivators and the idea that different things impact work situations, such as salary, relationships, policies, and job security. Studying these motivators and how they connect to professional development determines the program

(Herzberg et al., 1959). Successful, well-known, and driven teachers display a higher motivation to pursue professional development, primarily when they view their environment, relationships, and pay as a decisive factor in their work (McMillan, McConnell, & O'Sullivan, 2016).

Herzberg's two-factor theory shows the connection between motivators like the internal factor of potential for growth and the factor of salary (McMillan et al., 2016).

When there are incentives implemented by educational leaders, teachers can be motivated to participate by the potential for recognition from administration (Herzberg, 1968). Concerning professional development, this is illustrated when district-implemented initiatives cause teachers to engage in professional development (McMillan et al., 2016). The conceptual framework for this study used Herzberg's (1966) theory, as it applies to motivation and teacher professional development.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers may or may not be motivated to pursue professional development, and research to determine causation is limited (McMillan, McConnell, & O'Sullivan, 2016). There is a link between motivation and successful professional development for teachers throughout their careers (Durksen, Klassen, & Daniels, 2017). Teachers require different learning opportunities tailored to their environments. Some may include district-mandated curriculum or classroom initiatives or collaborative models such as grade-level planning and research of new and innovative practices (Durksen et al., 2017). Collaboration and expert-led workshops are models that have been shown to increase teachers' motivation to pursue professional development as opposed to one-on-one models (Durksen et al., 2017). Teachers' perceptions of professional development are a vital component of programs, initiatives, and student achievement (Rutherford, Long, & Farkas, 2017). Teachers are motivated to continue their professional

growth when the opportunities offered to them connect with their educational philosophies (Avidov-Ungar, 2016). There is still a need to study the motivating factors of professional development programs for teachers so that continuous learning can occur (Durksen et al., 2017).

There is a link between behavior and mindset in professional development (Wan-Shuai, Xiao-Wen, & Yu-Mei, 2019). Teachers' philosophies and growth drive their motivation to pursue professional development (Wan-Shuai et al., 2019). When teachers seek development to grow professionally, their students have more well-rounded educational experiences, which support the home-school connection and improve the overall quality of life (Wan-Shuai et al., 2019). When teachers can see the positive effects of professional development on students, they are more likely to accept the opportunities afforded to them for growth (Wan-Shuai et al., 2019). Though there is evidence of effective professional development models, some teachers still perceive it unfavorably (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). There is a lack of research on educators' motivation to pursue professional development (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Focusing on the research related to teachers' motivations to pursue professional development can drive effective, sustained changes to teacher professional development programs in a way that will keep teachers engaged (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018).

The motivators for teachers to continue to strive for professional growth and improvement of practice change throughout their careers. There is a paucity of research on why the changes occur (Durksen et al., 2017). Teachers may or may not be motivated to continue learning, which adds to the complexity of teacher motivation research (Durksen et al., 2017). Additional investigation on teacher motivation is necessary because examining teachers' perceptions and tailoring the professional development according to teachers' identified needs may help to create positive, active classrooms (Torsney, Lombardi, & Ponnock, 2019).

Professional development is often driven by district mandates with little input from teachers and a lack of consistency and planning. Teachers' involvement may lead to a better understanding of the impact professional development has on practice, and student academic achievement, especially as educators all over the world face difficulties in finding effective professional development and improving student outcomes (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Powell and Bodur (2019) discussed that teachers' involvement in professional development research contributes to the understanding of their experiences and can enhance programs, practice, and achievement. Stakeholders should acknowledge that all professional development should involve the consideration of teachers' needs and plans that support teachers' goals for growth in teaching and learning (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Teachers are motivated to pursue professional development that is free of personal conflicts, such as the location of the program, other attendees, or time that the professional development is held if it conflicts with their schedules (Biggsby & Firestone, 2017). While most teachers feel that professional development is a productive use of their time, they require more opportunities to cover unfamiliar material (Stormont & Young-Walker, 2017).

Dincer (2019) found that when teachers exercised autonomy in their classrooms, there is a connection between independence, job satisfaction, and motivation. Teachers acknowledge that lifelong professional development is critical to success. Still, their commitment to a program is contingent on their perceptions of whether their time and effort are being appropriately utilized, and if they can integrate learning into practice (Su, Feng, & Hsu, 2018). Teachers' abilities to self-direct their learning and support with necessary resources influence motivation to pursue professional development (Su, Feng, & Hsu, 2018). High levels of pressure and stress affect how teachers perceive their level of freedom and their relationships with colleagues, which must be researched with other needs that will affect their motivation for professional growth

(Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to engage in professional development, and what they need for their professional development in terms of models, times, and whether the learning can be applied to teachers' classrooms. While teacher motivation has been considered an essential component of education, further research must be conducted to drive future professional development (Khan et al., 2016).

Using a qualitative case study research design, I explored teachers' perceptions of what motivates them and what they need from professional development by collecting data from teacher interviews and a list of district professional development offerings to report case descriptions and common themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Case studies explore certain conditions and how they are linked to their real-life contexts by studying individual participants and finding commonalities within what is being analyzed (Yin, 2014).

For in-depth data collection in this case study, teacher interviews, district administrator interviews, and a list of professional development programs provided by the district were utilized (Yin, 2014). Conclusions were drawn based on the data, including interviews and professional development artifacts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I connected the different design components and their effects on each other (Maxwell, 2013). This single case study provided a more precise focus on teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development.

Research Questions

The study used the following research questions:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of their motivations to pursue professional development?
2. What do teachers perceive they need from their professional development?

3. How have past experiences in professional development affected teachers' motivation?

Expected Outcomes

One of the expected outcomes of this study was providing teacher input into the types of professional development offered, as opposed to top-down decisions, by the district office. Additionally, I expected that teacher participation in professional development would be impacted by motivating factors such as salary, time, and scheduling. Finally, it was anticipated that the participants in this study would report that various professional development delivery systems should be utilized to effectively meet the needs of teacher growth.

Theoretical Framework

Herzberg et al. (1959), discussed that factors such as salary, relationships, policies, and job security could result in a decrease in motivation. Still, they cannot ensure that this will always be the case. Thus, extrinsic and intrinsic motivators, and how they interact, should be studied continuously to determine their effectiveness (Herzberg et al., 1959). McMillan et al. (2016) associated this concept with educators by using the example of a popular, successful, ambitious teacher who shows higher motivation to pursue professional development, especially if they are satisfied with their work environment, salary, and relationships. Herzberg et al.'s., (1959) two-factor theory illustrated the link between internal motivators such as “recognition, achievement, and the possibility of growth,” and hygiene factors such as “salary, interpersonal relations, and personal life” (McMillan et al., p. 153, 2016).

Table 1. 1

Herzberg et al. (1959) Summary of job-attitude factors (McMillan et al., p. 153, 2016)

Motivators	Hygiene (contingent) factors
1. Recognition	1. Salary
2. Achievement	2. Interpersonal relations
3. Possibility of growth	3. Supervision-technical
4. Advancement	4. Company policy/administration
5. Responsibility	5. Working conditions
6. Work itself	6. Personal life
	7. Status
	8. Job security

Although there are teacher requirements and expectations regarding professional development, it cannot be assumed that teachers will be equally motivated to pursue professional development continuously (Ng, 2018). Thus, those who view professional development as an obligation will not see the benefits of it (Ng, 2018). Consequently, it is imperative to analyze what motivates and sustains teacher engagement in professional development (Ng, 2018). To evaluate teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development, trends in what teachers view as effective professional development should be considered. Claudia (2015) discussed that professional development programs could impact student achievement, but the research on teachers' motivations to pursue them is lacking. Through interviews and discussions with teachers, a need for collaborative opportunities among teachers and professional development programs to meet their needs, including continuous growth and learning, was highlighted (Claudia, 2015). School districts must find ways to train and mentor teachers to improve their skills and maintain a high level of motivation. One way is to offer expanded opportunities for mentor-teacher collaboration on significant activities like making assessments and examining students' work (Palermo & Thomson, 2017). These activities can

increase teachers' perceptions of how professional development improves practice (Palermo & Thomson, 2017). Considering motivating factors such as continuous learning, the potential to affect students' lives and society positively, and finding steady jobs, can be used by districts to drive their professional development (Claudia, 2015). Teachers' motivation is vital to the maintenance, development, and policymaking for teachers' careers (Claudia, 2015).

Mathieu, Tannenbaum, and Salas (1992) discussed that motivational factors for teacher professional development were not highly researched; however, it could provide a deeper understanding of the positive impact that professional development has on stakeholders. To determine workplace motivators, McMillan, et al., (2016) identified Herzberg's (1966) theory as one that accounts for intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Being satisfied or dissatisfied at work are not opposing views. Instead, different components will affect each job situation (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959).

Herzberg (1968) discussed the differences between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic movement, which often results from leadership's implemented incentives. Intrinsic motivation can be misidentified when teachers pursue professional development that is imposed by the district rather than chosen by the teachers (McMillan et al., 2016). The conceptual framework for this study used Herzberg's (1959) theory, as it applies to motivation and teacher professional development.

Herzberg's (1959) theory said that factors such as salary, relationships, policies, and job security could result in a decrease in motivation. These factors cannot ensure that teachers stay permanently motivated and should be studied to determine their effectiveness (Herzberg, 1959). It was expected that teachers would perceive that these factors affected their motivation to participate in professional development. Professional development should be balanced and meet

the needs of students and teachers (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017). Su, Feng, and Hsu (2018) discussed that teachers understand the value of professional development, but they need to feel that their time is valued and used productively. Torsney et al. (2019) expressed the need to study the qualities of teachers who are more likely to create positive, active classrooms, and their motivations to pursue professional development. Teachers' motivation is vital to the maintenance, development, and policymaking for teachers' careers (Claudia, 2015).

The responses to interview questions were analyzed to determine which motivators teachers perceived drove their professional development participation. It was expected that the data would support the needs of different types of professional development that will meet the demands of teachers.

Significance of the Study

There is a paucity of research on teachers' motivation to pursue professional development (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). More research on teachers' motivation is necessary to comprehend and improve professional development programs and increase teachers' engagement in professional development (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Although we are working toward a greater understanding of engaging models of professional development to improve practice, teachers still lack access to good quality programs (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017). That is, researchers are always looking to understand why teachers volunteer for professional development, so educational leaders must receive guidance on implementing programs that encourage teachers to join (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017). This study explored teachers' perceptions of what influences their motivation for professional development by including kindergarten through twelfth-grade teachers. These teachers were asked about their motivations for pursuing professional development and what they needed from their programs. This study proposed that

focusing on teachers' perceptions of motivating factors in professional development programs would provide a deeper understanding of effective professional development. These interviews may help to change future professional development by aligning more closely with what teachers identify as their needs and preferences (Khan et al., 2016).

Definition of Terms

The following terms are included as they relate to professional development and motivation:

Professional learning: Essential opportunities for the achievement of professional goals and effective use of time and money for educators and leaders (Aldosemani, 2019). It is significant to consider educators' opinions about professional development to recognize the types of programs they prefer (Bozkuş & Bayrak, 2019). Giving teachers time to address issues and providing models for best practices in the form of work-based learning, along with discussions, videos, and resources throughout professional development to support the implementation of teacher changes will be carefully explored in this study (Hodges, Kulinna, Lee, & Kwon, 2017).

Professional development: While the definition is similar to that of professional learning, the regionally accepted term is professional development.

Motivation: Whether teachers participate in professional development programs depends on whether they feel their time and effort are being appropriately utilized. If they can implement their learning into their daily practices, motivation will be essential (Su, Feng, & Hsu, 2018). Bigsby and Firestone (2017) said that teachers are motivated to pursue professional development when it is free of conflicts, balanced, and meets the needs of students and teachers (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017). This study will look at motivation exploring perceptions of what motivates the

teachers in the study to pursue professional development.

Two-factor theory of motivation: Motivators in the workplace are found within the job itself and result in harder working staff members (Herzberg, 1959).

Hygiene factors: These can be salary, safety, relationships, and work environments that are not found within the job; instead, they encompass it (Herzberg, 1959). When hygiene factors are not present, staff will not be motivated to work as hard (Herzberg, 1959).

Motivation to learn: The driving factors for teachers to pursue balanced professional development to meet students' needs (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017).

Intrinsic Motivation: When referring to teachers' professional development, intrinsic motivation means that teachers' focus is on the process of teaching, which will drive professional growth and teacher autonomy (Wan-Shuai et al., 2018).

Extrinsic Motivation: Extrinsic motivation does not impact changes to instruction. Instead, it is related to outside factors such as social relationships and how specific tasks benefit the individual (Palermo & Thomson, 2018).

Reflection: To increase resources and knowledge and meet all learners' needs, teachers should reflect on professional development (Azizah et al., 2018). Reflection is a necessary component that every teacher should implement in their practice (Azizah et al., 2018). By examining their motivations, the participants can determine how their professional lives were affected. Reflection can lead to improvements in professional development (Azizah, Nurkamto, Drajati, & Tosriadi, 2018). Data from interviews and district professional development schedules will allow for an understanding of specific motivators to pursue professional development.

Limitations

A study's limitations can hinder the results and are often related to the research design (Simon & Goes, 2013). In qualitative research, limitations refer to validity and reliability because of the research setting (Simon & Goes, 2013). Qualitative research happens in the environment where the phenomena occur; thus, replication becomes difficult (Wiersma, 2000). Since findings are mostly specific to the case and require further research to determine whether they can be replicated, they are not generalizable (Simon & Goes, 2013). The potential time that individual interviews, transcription, and analysis can take is extensive, but extensive interviews will illustrate a detailed picture of teacher perceptions (Gillham, 2000).

Limitations are out of the control of the researcher (Simon & Goes, 2013). A possible limitation of this study was that the teachers' perceptions are not generalizable to other teachers because the teachers are in the same district, and many of their perceptions are district-specific (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Another limitation was that if teachers do not feel that they are allotted enough time to meet and collaborate for professional development, it will affect their perceptions (Powell & Bodur, 2019).

Delimitations

Simon and Goes (2013) discussed that delimitations are a result of limits placed on the study by the researcher. In this study, the specific district where the research was conducted, and the participants were delimitations driven by the researcher. This study specifically focused on kindergarten through twelfth-grade teachers in a large, diverse district and their perceptions of motivation through their experiences in that district. Generalizability may have been limited based on region, individual educator experiences, opinions, and demographics of their districts. Findings from this may highlight an ongoing need to study teachers' perceptions of what

motivates them to pursue professional development in different settings and topics.

I was employed in the district where the interviews were conducted and was a colleague of the participants. The established personal relationships could be a problem and raise ethical issues, as they could potentially affect answers given by the participants (McGinn, 2018). To avoid such issues, I used reflexivity and remained neutral and assured them of confidentiality (Creswell, 2013). Reflexivity refers to the researcher's position in a qualitative study by noting their background, experiences, and potential biases concerning the research process (Creswell, 2013). There was an established professional relationship, as I was employed as a teacher in the district for 13 years. Additionally, I collaborated with the superintendent on committees and initiatives. Participants were made aware of the study's voluntary and confidential components before the interviews (McGinn, 2018). They were asked for honest answers about their real thoughts regarding their perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development.

Assumptions

Assumptions are, to some extent, out of the control of the researcher. However, they are required for the study to advance (Simon & Goes, 2013). In this study, I needed to assume that the participants would provide honest answers to the interview questions. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of their answers and ensured to keep the data secure throughout the duration of the study.

Summary

Preparing effective professional development programs that will motivate and engage teachers is difficult since the research on why teachers participate in professional development is scarce (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017). Professional development has a direct effect on student success, so there is a need for deeper understanding (Claudia, 2015). Training resources need to

be available to educators to stay current with the ever-evolving educational policies and initiatives and motivate teachers to advance in their careers (Claudia, 2015). Though there is some research on teachers' preferences for professional development programs, there is little research to support what motivates teachers to pursue it (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Further research is required to understand what motivates teachers to pursue professional development and result in programs that will drive achievement and best practices.

Chapter 2 includes a review of the literature that links several factors to perceptions, motivations, and professional development. These factors include: mindset, student achievement and educational experience, teacher autonomy, the differences between veteran and novice teachers, the importance of teacher input in professional development programs, meeting teachers' needs, reflection, ways to improve professional development, modeling best practices, providing resources, technology resources, expert-led professional development, job-embedded professional development, professional learning communities, and collaboration. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology, design, population, instrumentation, data collection and analysis procedures, limitations, and delimitations, and expected findings. In Chapter 4, the data collected, findings, and the themes found in connection with the research questions are illustrated. A summary and discussion of the results concerning the literature are discussed in Chapter 5, with implications for future practice and research.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Teacher knowledge and current training are crucial to the improvement of schools, quality of education, and student achievement (Day, 1999). Professional development involves learning experiences and organized activities that directly or indirectly help the person, group, or school, and improve the quality of education (Day, 1999). Whether individually or collaboratively, professional development allows teachers to reflect, develop, and evolve in their commitments to education (Avidov-Ungar, 2016). Through professional growth, teachers can gain and advance in their critical knowledge, development of skills, and emotional intelligence to progress in practice and pedagogy throughout their careers (Day, 1999). Teachers' professional development opportunities are an essential means of achieving professional goals; thus, they become a sound investment of time and money for educators and leaders (Aldosemani, 2019). McCray (2018) claimed that professional development allows educators to provide students with a premium education. Still, there is a potential decline in professional collaboration, focus, and implementation when professional development becomes a requirement for teachers (McCray, 2018). That is, when teachers attend district-mandated professional development, they require ongoing guidance, resources, expectations, and reflection, which may not be available in one-time programs (Aldosemani, 2019). Despite the existing evidence of effective professional development models, some teachers' feedback continues to question the effectiveness of district-mandated programs (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Research on educators' motivation to pursue professional development is minimal (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018).

Avidov-Ungar (2016) showed that teachers' perceptions and motivations to pursue professional development are related to their educational philosophies and can be intrinsic and extrinsic. Expert teachers favored motivators such as professional growth through increasing

knowledge, skills, and responsibilities. In contrast, others were driven by desired higher-level positions both in and out of their schools. Teacher motivation is an essential part of teaching and learning, but the components that affect it must be examined to continue to drive future professional development (Khan et al., 2016).

Although there is a proven link between motivation and achievement, the dynamics of motivation should be researched further (Marzano, 2003). To gain a deeper understanding of teachers' perceptions of motivations to pursue professional development, teachers' needs must be considered (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). Engaging teachers in assessing their professional development programs results in higher intrinsic motivation for social and pedagogical growth. Teachers feel more valued in their roles, have a higher interest in professional development, and when changes are made through teachers' feedback, they feel more valued (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). Including teachers' input in professional development is useful for teachers and supports their learning, collaboration, and classroom application of new strategies (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). Motivated teachers can generally engage students in education; however, while teacher motivation is key to the teaching and learning process, many teachers are not highly motivated (Khan et al., 2016). Khan et al. (2016) examined components that affected teacher motivation and found that teachers need to engage in effective professional development while being respected and compensated based on their expertise. Differentiated professional development should be implemented to meet all teachers' needs keeping motivations and preferences in mind (Khan et al., 2016). Consistent with previous research, veteran teachers were more motivated to continue growing professionally (Bautista, Toh, & Wong, 2018).

A variety of designs were used for each of the studies in this review. The majority used qualitative methods through interviews and questionnaires, while some used mixed methods with

surveys and analysis of the data collected. In several studies, documenting what motivates teachers to pursue professional development required participant interviews to reflect on the topic (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Interview questions followed answers from a previously completed teacher questionnaire, which discussed professional development experiences and descriptions of learning styles (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). When teachers are motivated, their focus is centered around the teaching process, which can continue to drive growth (Wan-Shuai et al., 2019). It is worth exploring the professional development process and teacher motivation to increase teachers' professional growth (Wan-Shuai et al., 2019). The hour-long interviews were recorded and transcribed for analyses (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018).

Many resources exist that can support teacher professional development, but more research is needed to determine what motivates teachers to pursue professional development. Kleickmann, Tröbst, Jonen, Vehmeyer, and Möller (2016) studied the effects of expert-scaffolded professional development for teachers, which focused on their philosophies, motivations, best practices, and achievement. Scaffolded professional development was preferred over self-study in terms of teacher philosophies and motivation, best practices, and student achievement (Kleickmann et al., 2016). This review of the literature focuses on teacher motivation, teachers' perceptions of professional development, and professional development concepts. This literature review focused on mindset, student achievement and educational experience, teacher autonomy, and the differences between veteran and novice teachers as they relate to teacher motivation. Additionally, teachers' perceptions were described through the research on the importance of teacher input in professional development programs, meeting teachers' needs, and the role of reflection in education. Finally, professional development was highlighted by identifying ways to improve professional development through the modeling of

best practices, providing resources such as technology, and implementing expert-led professional development. Moreover, the importance of job-embedded professional development, professional learning communities, and collaboration were named.

Teacher Motivation

Studying motivation tells us why someone does something (Marzano, 2003). Motivation refers to teachers' philosophies and professional growth and highlighted its importance in supporting professional development (Wan-Shuai et al., 2019). The problem is, despite the existing evidence of effective professional development models, the feedback from some teachers continues to question the effectiveness of programs (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Many of the teacher professional development requirements rely on quantity over quality, which deters teachers from pursuing engaging and rewarding opportunities (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018).

Teacher motivation as the central idea of professional development requires future research to focus on factors beyond the current understanding. Researchers must integrate what drives teachers to pursue learning opportunities to build a strong foundation that includes theoretical and practice-based knowledge of teacher professional development (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). For instance, Durksen, Klassen, and Daniels (2017) discussed the link between motivation and teachers' learning. They found a need for varied and differentiated learning opportunities, standard mandated workshop models, and collaborative professional development programs as necessary components of teachers' professional development (Durksen, Klassen, & Daniels, 2017). The positive effects of motivation on professional learning, especially when it is collaborative, were highlighted. The need for more opportunities to integrate expert knowledge that differs from the one-to-one model was emphasized (Durksen, Klassen, & Daniels, 2017). Teacher educators, administrators, and researchers should study ways in which the necessary

factors of professional learning can motivate teachers throughout their careers (Durksen, Klassen, & Daniels, 2017).

Research on educators' motivation to pursue professional development is minimal (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Understanding personal motivational styles and their role in carrying out challenging tasks can provide control over motivation and achievement (Marzano, 2003). When teachers achieve their objectives, the sense of accomplishment and fulfillment motivates them to continue to set goals and work to achieve them (Marzano, 2003). Thus, future research on teachers' professional growth should include motivational factors, as they are critical for effective professional development (Turksen et al., 2017). Therefore, this study will focus on teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to continue professional development. Further research is needed on teachers' motivation to understand and effectively change teacher education programs and ensure teachers' engagement in professional development (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). The research within this review of the literature highlights several critical facts regarding what motivates teachers to pursue professional development. These sections are: Mindset, student achievement and educational experience, teacher autonomy, and the differences between veteran and novice teachers

Mindset

Marzano (2003) said that there is a lot to be learned from the research and theory on motivation that can be useful for educators. The willingness to engage in educational tasks comes from a drive developed to strive for success and avoid failure (Marzano, 2003).

Additionally, Wan-Shuai, Xiao-Wen, and Yu-Mei (2019) discussed that professional development connects behaviors and mindset. A growth mindset is centered on the belief that people can make changes based on things they value (Dweck, 2006). People with a growth

mindset can potentially take charge of their learning and motivation (Dweck, 2006). Educators who have a growth mindset can utilize professional development to learn and understand best practices rather than achieve high test scores. For those who have a strong drive for success, daunting tasks may not be perceived as an obstacle, where those who have the drive to avoid failure may feel challenged by simple tasks (Marzano, 2003). Failure avoidant people are also challenging to motivate due to highly emotional needs to obtain a level of self-worth, though it may not be the case for everyone (Marzano, 2003). Rather than allowing difficult or tedious professional development programs to decrease their motivation, those with a growth mindset can maintain their motivation by thinking in terms of learning (Dweck, 2006). Another factor that can keep motivation is to make the learning into fun (Dweck, 2006). Those with a fixed mindset will rely solely on talent and view themselves as a finished product rather than a work in progress and will not take charge of their motivation (Dweck, 2006).

Student Achievement and Educational Experience

Professional development can be defined as activities that should support and increase teachers' practices. Many educators experience professional development to improve instruction that results in higher levels of student achievement (Noonan, 2019). Teacher motivators for pursuing professional development were identified in several studies. Quality professional development experiences can nourish teacher practice and student engagement through self-efficacy and teamwork if embedded in the job (Turksen et al., 2017). Moreover, through a motivational analysis, Wan-Shuai et al. (2019) found that: self-improvement can improve students' experiences; teachers can apply their learning to lessons that students enjoy, parents feel supported, and colleagues want to use; and career advancement and quality of life. Teachers found value in professional development and saw how it could benefit students, so they

gradually accepted the learning experience (Wan-Shuai et al., 2019).

Professional development that tackles philosophies and practices helps shape teachers' pedagogies while assisting them in achieving actionable goals and providing them with an invitation to change (Doubet & Southall, 2018). Furthermore, when teachers feel that their schools promote a positive, collaborative climate of professional growth, they will be motivated to engage in professional development (Turksen et al., 2017). Educational leaders can help support student success and best practices through professional development. Teachers understand that their principal's knowledge can positively impact their instruction and can be used to effectively design professional development and improve student achievement (Kindall, Crow, & Elsass, 2018).

Professional development for teachers has been an ongoing area of research and policy (Bellibas & Gumus, 2016). Teachers often express dissatisfaction with the number of professional development opportunities and the quality available to them, which can result in teachers' practices suffering, consequently affecting student achievement (Bellibas & Gumus, 2016). However, when changes are made to professional development programs, if the changes are perceived as positive, teaching practices improve (Kisa & Correnti, 2015). Thus, professional development should be implemented using student observations to determine needs and plan activities that address teachers' practices and help to solve their professional problems (Bozkuş & Bayrak, 2019).

Teacher Autonomy

To evaluate teachers' perceptions of what motivates them, there is a need for effective practices and policies that utilize motivating factors for teacher engagement (McMillan, McConnell, & O'Sullivan, 2016). Reeves (2004) noted the importance of holding teachers

accountable for learning to transform educational policies into meaningful classroom and district practices. Changes should not always come from the federal level; instead, teachers can be motivated to make immediate changes to improve learning and leadership in their classrooms (Reeves, 2004). Likewise, McMillan et al. (2016) focused on motivating and inhibiting factors involved in professional development and found that teachers demonstrate a strong motivation to drive their professional development.

There is a relationship between independence and teachers' job satisfaction and motivation (Dincer, 2019). Although school authorities, policies, or families can impact teachers' autonomy, teachers should still exercise it to some degree (Dincer, 2019). Teachers experience a high level of autonomy in pedagogy and limited autonomy in curriculum and professional development (Dincer, 2019). Consequently, many teachers feel that professional development is a good use of their time, but they think they need more opportunities to cover unfamiliar material (Stormont & Young-Walker, 2017).

Evaluation can also support improving teacher professional development by providing reflection and feedback (Conley, Smith, Collinson, & Palazuelos, 2016). However, it may result in high work pressure, which is linked to lower perceptions of teachers' experiences of freedom at work. Nonetheless, higher pressure impacts collegial relationships since teachers feel closer to their peers (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019). Conley et al. (2016) analyzed teachers' perceptions of control and teacher evaluation standards when offered a choice of being evaluated by a peer or an administrator. The purpose was in response to calls for teacher evaluation to evolve into a form of professional development benefitting all stakeholders (Conley et al., 2016). Aside from the accountability factor of teacher evaluation, there has been growing acknowledgment of the potential value of the assessment and professional growth (Conley et al., 2016). Depending on

the chosen evaluations, different factors contributed to successful experiences and job satisfaction (Conley et al., 2016). When the teacher perceives higher control over their environments, they are more willing to be evaluated (Conley et al., 2016). The most reliable support of job satisfaction came from the teachers who chose to be assessed by their administrators, due to their perceived control over their practices and choices (Conley et al., 2016).

Veteran Versus Novice Teachers

Perceptions of professional development differ between novice and veteran teachers (Mahmoudi & Özkan, 2015). While research suggests that teaching careers can be divided into stages with different reasons to participate in professional development, it does not provide anything specific as to how teachers in various stages make sense of professional development and practices for professional development (Topkaya & Yelik, 2016). Still, further research on teacher professional development motivation in all phases of an educational career is needed because meeting teachers' professional development needs is more likely to create positive, active classrooms (Torsney, Lombardi, & Ponnock, 2019). In the existing research, there is evidence of differences between years of experience and professional development perceptions in that veteran teachers prefer longer and continuous professional development (Noonan, 2019). Where veteran teachers value discussions with colleagues, sharing materials, integrating resources, and coordinating homework practices, novice teachers value sharing materials with colleagues, ensuring standards for assessing students, and utilizing the same content in instruction (Mahmoudi & Özkan, 2015). There is a connection between educational beliefs and professional development experience (Noonan, 2019).

Chiong, Menzies, and Parameshwaran (2017) examined why long-serving teachers with

ten or more years of experience are motivated to stay in the profession. While most research focuses on why teachers leave, there is a need to understand positive motivators and how they change over time (Chiong, Menzies, & Parameshwaran, 2017). Motivational patterns were complicated and influenced by school-level and policy factors (Chiong, Menzies, & Parameshwaran, 2017). Regardless, veteran teachers were also massively motivated by professional growth and investment in students' success (Chiong, Menzies, & Parameshwaran, 2017). Consequently, innovation and expertise in teaching come from the engagement of teachers in professional development. Committed educators who hold strong professional identities show the highest level of participation in learning (Ng, 2019).

As teachers become more experienced, their intrinsic motivations for growth and learning increase, but their extrinsic reasons also increase over time (Chiong, Menzies, & Parameshwaran, 2017). Conversely, Marušić, Jugović, and Lončarić (2017) researched the motivation of beginner teachers and how it develops throughout the start of their careers. As teachers become more experienced, they become more intrinsically motivated to take a proactive learning approach (Marušić, Jugović, & Lončarić, 2017). The differences between less experienced teachers can be attributed to the process of professional growth and its effect on self-efficacy and educational philosophy (Marušić, Jugović, & Lončarić, 2017). The focus of educators' professional responsibilities is teaching and learning and studying teachers' perceptions about their work is influenced by experience (Marušić, Jugović, & Lončarić, 2017).

Teachers' Perceptions of Professional Development

Teachers' perceptions and motivations to pursue professional development are related to their values, beliefs, and ideologies (Avidov-Ungar, 2016). Mckeown et al. (2019) found that when professional development includes components valued by teachers such as personalized,

interactive professional development with experienced leaders, enough opportunities for practice, differentiation, and resources, they would see growth in the overall quality of teacher practice and student work. Thus, teacher perceptions of professional development are essential in the implementation of programs and practices and student outcomes (Rutherford, Long, & Farkas, 2017).

Researching teachers' perceptions are not without limitations. For instance, Palermo and Thomson (2019) found that self-reported data decreased the evidence supporting the effects of professional development programs (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). Additionally, not all the participants answer every question, resulting in a non-response bias and a social desirability bias, as some teachers may have explained according to their perception of a correct response (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). Self-reported data was also a limitation when teachers were asked to respond to questions about professional development experiences retrospectively, resulting in a more homogenous pattern of responses than may have occurred with pre- and post-measures (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). Also, Powell and Bodur (2019) conducted a multi-case qualitative study that analyzed teachers' perceptions of a job-embedded professional development program, in which participants reflected on their experiences by answering questions. They were interviewed as an opportunity to offer suggestions on improving the design and implementation of their professional development. Similar limitations were found (Powell & Bodur, 2019). All of the interviewed teachers reported that they had been differentiating instruction before the implemented professional development program, which could have shaped their views, especially if they responded based on their desire to be "correct" or get new information (Powell & Bodur, 2019).

Another limitation of studying perceptions is whether studies can be generalized to

teachers from different departments and districts (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Furthermore, there are differences in perceptions of teachers who volunteer for studies and those who do not (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Results of studies that use teacher volunteers cannot be generalized to those who do not volunteer, as they may differ in their motivations to make changes to their practices through professional development (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). Lack of generalizability can also occur with the specific professional development activities on which the researchers focus since there are a variety of experiences in which teachers could take part (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Certain professional development situations studied can be shaped by differing contexts (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Several studies saw the issue with generalizability regarding where the participants were chosen. Bellibas and Gumus (2016) selected their participants from only four schools for their qualitative research, noting that it could result in additional questions about the quantity and quality of professional development programs available to teachers in other schools.

Teachers' perceptions of professional development across different schools and countries need to be studied (Bellibas & Gumus, 2016). Durksen et al. (2017) studied professional learning for teachers in Alberta, so their results are also trying to generalize to populations outside of that province. Participants were recruited from individual districts, but it was not determined whether their professional development was significantly different from other Alberta schools or whether their demographics and teaching experience affected their perceptions (Durksen et al., 2017).

Teacher Input

Ensuring that professional development supports overall growth requires an active role for teachers to design their opportunities based on their needs, motivations, and accessible

resources (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Likewise, Su, Feng, and Hsu (2018) identified two main factors that influence a commitment to professional development: teachers' ability to self-direct their learning and support with necessary resources. Teachers are more engaged and motivated by professional development when it addresses an issue in their classroom that they have identified and chosen (Mohammadi & Moradi, 2017). When teachers want to participate in professional development, they find it more useful than those who join as a requirement (Parsons et al., 2019). Research on in-person professional development supports higher buy-in when participation is voluntary (Parsons et al., 2019). Furthermore, Bozkuş and Bayrak (2019) focused on providing professional development to improve practice through a dynamic professional development approach that considered educators' opinions about professional development problems. Data collected from students to determine the professional development levels of their teachers provided valuable feedback, which teachers used to develop action plans facilitated by professional development leaders (Bozkuş & Bayrak, 2019).

Research shows that teachers are disappointed by and fail to make the most out of professional development despite the time and money devoted to it (Noonan, 2019). Allowing for differentiated professional development opportunities, then asking for teachers' reflective input, can allow for an understanding of the factors that impact teachers' perceptions of the programs. For instance, Noonan (2019) analyzed three case studies of teacher identity and teacher learning, which differed in the content taught, who facilitated, and the community with whom they worked. The model used in the research was a better illustration of teachers' experiences with professional development and could facilitate better analysis and design (Noonan, 2019).

It is imperative that professional development activities are not only seminars but that

they allow teachers to conduct their research (Yurtseven, 2017). Guberman and Mcdossi (2019) claimed that teachers experience teaching, researching, and leadership throughout their careers. Although research supports the need for teacher learning and leadership, teachers struggle to balance these two aspects of education (Guberman & Mcdossi, 2019). Consequently, teacher research and support need to continue so that connections can be made, and issues can improve (Guberman & Mcdossi, 2019). Research-based professional learning is necessary for the preparation of teachers to implement interdisciplinary practices, as well as to find ways for teachers to design successful professional development (Herro & Quigley, 2017).

Meeting Teachers' Needs

Teachers recognize that lifelong professional development is essential. Still, their commitment to a professional development program depends on whether they feel their time and effort are being appropriately utilized and that they can implement their learning into their daily practices (Su, Feng, & Hsu, 2018). Large amounts of money are budgeted for professional development every year, but many of the programs are not differentiated and personalized to improve teaching practices (Yurtseven, 2017). professional development should be balanced and meet students' and teachers' needs (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017). Powell and Bodur (2019) discussed that when learning can be directly applied to the context, it significantly impacts the practice. Likewise, Bigsby and Firestone (2017) found that teachers were motivated to pursue professional development that is free of conflicts, especially related to time. Social implications, such as being in the program with a friend or mentor, can also be motivating (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017). professional development should be worth teachers' time, and they should find value in gaining knowledge to support their teaching (Topkaya & Yelik, 2016). Not considering teachers' needs will affect their motivation to grow professionally (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019).

Reflection

Reflection can be a way to improve professional development (Azizah, Nurkamto, Drajati, & Tosriadi, 2018). Moreover, teachers who report high social and epistemic values through self-reflection are more likely to pursue professional development activities (Torsney et al., 2019). Additionally, teachers recognize that professional development can help them stay current by reflecting on new and innovative teaching methods, focusing on how they perceive their professional development experiences, and looking at why they may seek to grow professionally (Topkaya & Yelik, 2016). Teachers should be asked what professional development practice means to them, to understand the extent that they are aware of what to do to grow professionally (Topkaya & Yelik, 2016).

Teachers must engage and focus on professional development to increase their resources and knowledge and meet the needs of all learners (Azizah et al., 2018). Reflection is a necessary component that every teacher should implement in their practices and a way for teachers to think of things that have occurred after teaching students (Azizah et al., 2018). Reflection allows teachers to look back on the material taught in the classroom, if the lesson was successful, how students performed, and the reasons why learning and mastery did or did not occur. Azizah, et al. (2018) focused on reflection through journaling and its impact on teaching. Teachers can use journal reflection to gain input relating to the teaching-learning process. This feedback can be used to address issues from education, solve problems, and improve teaching practices (Azizah et al., 2018).

Conducting qualitative research that puts teachers at the forefront by observing them and reflecting on the observation can give opportunities for continuous research to understand how teachers' preferences can inform best practices (Reeves, 2004). Reflection requires analysis of

one's practice as well as collaboration with colleagues to maximize accountability (Reeves, 2004). Through reflection, educators can review popular practices and determine their effectiveness (Reeves, 2004). Collaboration between students and educators is a necessary factor of reflection to improve teaching and learning (Reeves, 2004). Though it can be perceived as a daunting amount of work, it is an integral part of shifting the priorities from tallying test scores to analyzing practices that will result in improvements to education (Reeves, 2004).

Although reflection can be an effective means of studying teachers' perceptions, requiring participants to respond to measures retrospectively can result in retrieval errors that could skew participants' responses incorrectly (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). Studies should focus on teachers' perceptions and reflections before, during, and after professional development to note changes that occur over time and understand how professional development affects practice (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). Bellibas and Gumus (2016) studied teachers' perceptions of best practices in professional development and similarly found issues with a lack of insight through teacher retelling. A more in-depth investigation of the effectiveness of professional development programs required more research into best practices of specific activities for the teacher to support and drive student learning (Bellibas & Gumus, 2016). Researchers can address the issue of retrieval errors by comparing the effects of different professional development programs on teachers' practice and student success by conducting observations and follow-up questions simultaneously (Bellibas & Gumus, 2016).

Professional Development

Positive professional development experiences will support effective instruction and provide ideas for best practices. Different approaches to improving professional development that increases teacher engagement and autonomy are needed (Powell & Bodur, 2019).

professional development can be improved by personalizing it based on experience and expertise to increase teachers' ownership of their learning and addressing needs while integrating problem-solving to promote reflection and understanding (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Teachers view professional development as essential to their practices, but they have expressed that some professional development activities do not allow substantial learning (Gomez & Ford, 2017). Providing better and more frequent opportunities for professional development programs is essential to the growth and education of students (Gomez & Ford, 2017). The amount of professional development is as vital as the topic, so dosage must be considered in the implementation of professional development with a mix of colleagues and experts in specific subjects to run professional development training (Gomez & Ford, 2017). Teacher's motivation is vital to the maintenance, development, and policymaking during teachers' careers (Claudia, 2015).

Improving Professional Development

The purpose of professional development is to allow teachers to learn new and updated instructional practices and methods, grow, and improve their practices, and collaborate with colleagues (Mahmoudi & Özkan, 2015). To comprehend how professional development positively affects practice, we must first understand its basics (Mahmoudi & Özkan, 2015). Improving teacher education programs should be a priority, and districts should proactively include teachers' input to meet their needs, maintain engagement, and improve student achievement (Gomez & Ford, 2017). One way to do this is by providing better and more frequent opportunities in professional development programs that are essential to the growth and education of students (Gomez & Ford, 2017).

Improvements to professional development can be made by evaluating teachers' needs

through research. There has been a push for districts to improve teacher professional development by utilizing teacher evaluations of programs; however, there are not many resources to facilitate these evaluations (McChesney & Aldridge, 2018). McChesney and Aldridge (2018) described the development and support of a tool to assess how teachers perceive the impact of professional development on their students and practice. This evaluative resource was cost-effective, did not require much time, and was supported by the research (McChesney & Aldridge, 2018). Teachers participated by evaluating a variety of professional development through the tool, which proved to be simple for them to self-report data (McChesney & Aldridge, 2018). Different factors that impact professional development were examined, resulting in a more in-depth evaluation of teachers' perceptions over traditional assessments (McChesney & Aldridge, 2018). The researchers confirmed that utilizing their questionnaire to evaluate the professional development program provided an in-depth look into teachers' perceptions of their professional development (McChesney & Aldridge, 2018). The evaluation tool is a useful technique with which education systems can gather information about the impact of professional development programs (McChesney & Aldridge, 2018). Likewise, Yurtseven (2017) investigated teachers' metaphoric perceptions about professional development. Metaphors were used to allow people to describe their opinions more easily (Yurtseven, 2017). Using this framework, the metaphors resulted in 11 categories, with objects like computers used the most. Like computers, teachers needed updating to fit the demands of our changing world. Those teachers did not view professional development positively, but as a complicated waste of time (Yurtseven, 2017). The basis of that maybe that teachers did not feel supported in their improvement efforts (Yurtseven, 2017).

Modeling Best Practices

Best practices can be modeled through professional development. Teachers should reflect and research based on their motivation, self-efficacy, and perceptions of program practices (Peters-Burton, Merz, Ramirez, & Saroughi, 2015). Peters-Burton et al. (2015) used a model of best practices that motivated teachers to believe in their students' potential accomplishments and shaped scientific thinking and inquiry instruction. As a result, teachers started the professional development with high self-efficacy in teaching science and maintained it in the months following the intensive portion of professional development. Afterward, teachers changed their thinking to believe that students could learn through inquiry and pass state-mandated tests (Peters-Burton et al., 2015). Cognitive apprenticeships were effective in intrinsically motivating teachers and students (Peters-Burton et al., 2015).

Project-Based Learning

Using Project-Based Learning (PBL) in professional development, teachers reported a more concise understanding of their content, and facilitation for collaboration and technology in the integration of other content areas (Herro & Quigley, 2017). Teachers perceive PBL in their professional development as a beneficial way to change their practices (Herro & Quigley (2017). Shernoff, Sinha, Bressler, and Schultz (2017) found that professional development focused on PBL is an effective means of teaching curriculum-aligned lessons, with significant shifts in concept and pedagogy. Teachers note that a PBL professional development model is beneficial to their growth and essential to their development of collaborating to support the implementation of standards through PBL (Shernoff et al., 2017). Modeling PBL approaches is beneficial for teachers because they feel empowered to share the sense of accomplishment of solving real-world problems with students in the classroom (Shernoff et al., 2017).

Blended Learning

Luebeck, Roscoe, Cobbs, Diemert and Scott (2017) studied K through 12th-grade teachers and their reactions to a blended learning professional development program, noting an increase in teachers' performances and the professional development's considerations and practice in conjunction with a blended learning approach. Through a blended learning approach to professional development, teachers' knowledge of content increased, as did their high-quality resources, knowledge of standards, and collaborative connection with colleagues (Luebeck et al., 2017). Teachers have needs such as autonomy, relatedness, and competence in their work. Teachers need to feel that these needs are met through frequent professional development opportunities (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019).

Hardin and Koppenhaver (2016) surveyed K-12 teachers regarding a flipped professional development model because of a decrease in professional development participation in their school. Flipped professional development consists of instruction where teachers engage in professional development at home and apply their learning to their classroom practices while receiving guidance from experts (Hardin & Koppenhaver, 2016). Upon surveying teachers' professional development needs and reviewing literature for best practices, Hardin and Koppenhaver had teachers volunteer to attend one or more of three professional development programs and used the results to evaluate the structure and content of the professional development (Hardin & Koppenhaver, 2016). Teachers viewed flipped professional development as useful, which increases the chances of continued engagement in future flipped professional development opportunities (Hardin & Koppenhaver, 2016). Flipped professional development programs are cost-effective and include research-based best practices (Hardin & Koppenhaver, 2016). The flipped model should be studied further as an effective alternative

professional development program (Hardin & Koppenhaver, 2016).

Providing Professional Development Resources

Often, there is a lack of resources in the post-professional development period. Teachers need additional time and support to implement what they learn. Failure to afford them time could hinder the proper implementation of the professional development program (McCray, 2018). Moreover, following undergraduate education, many teachers find that gaining resources, support, and assistance is difficult. As a result, teachers' perceptions of professional development are impacted (Yurtseven, 2017). Yurtseven believed that teachers should be given a required budget of money, time, and resources for continuous professional development, and they should be empowered to conduct their research (Yurtseven, 2017). When professional development and occupational expertise align, the result is an abundance of professional resources for staff and students (Khan & Kiran, 2018).

Technology Resources and Models of Professional Development

Integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education settings has interested teachers recently (Qasem & Viswanathappa, 2016). Teachers should collaborate and develop strategies that will meet their learners' needs, and ICT is a useful tool (Qasem & Viswanathappa, 2016). Blended learning has become successful in teacher professional development in both online and live settings by improving professional development and providing increased flexibility and access in a more cost-effective way (Qasem & Viswanathappa, 2016). Teachers are also using social media for professional learning (Hashim & Carpenter, 2019). Educational leaders should analyze how colleague interactions in schools serve to motivate social media use and how they can use the information to best support optimal methods of social media (Hashim & Carpenter, 2019). These factors can provide useful

information for education leaders and researchers interested in teachers' social media use, first by providing a framework for considering why and how teachers engage with social media (Hashim & Carpenter, 2019). Teachers' use of social media can improve student achievement and increase job satisfaction, collegiality, and leadership (Hashim & Carpenter, 2019). Social media has been at the forefront of voluntary online professional development created for teachers by teachers (Rodesiler, 2017). A 5-week online professional development program was evaluated and revealed that participants felt that designing and running a voluntary online program provided them with the opportunity to address teachers' professional needs (Rodesiler, 2017). Opportunities to engage in online professional development through social media increased teachers' confidence and formed a basis for future professional development programs (Rodesiler, 2017).

Although it is in its early stages, online professional development and collaboration can support teaching practice and student achievement (Macia & Garcia, 2016). Various online professional development models offer different topics, sizes, skills, and online conversations to drive the social and educational aspects of professional learning (Macia & Garcia, 2016). Teachers use what they learn through their online networks to share things they have learned, experienced, and used (Macia & Garcia, 2016). These conversations can bridge gaps in research and practice by streamlining the implementation of research-based knowledge to teaching practices and strengthen teachers' theoretical knowledge (Macia & Garcia, 2016). Teachers value learning new strategies, ideas, and techniques through active professional development participation (Macia & Garcia, 2016).

Morgan (2019) said that teleconferencing is a useful educational tool. Although technological collaboration has limitations, interacting with technology such as Zoom and

Google Meet for online education can enhance and improve learning (Morgan, 2019). As educators increase their knowledge of its use and benefits, teleconferencing will continue to evolve (Morgan, 2019). When these resources are implemented soundly, they can assist with achieving academic goals, increase and develop self-efficacy, and form and nurture relationships among stakeholders (Morgan, 2019).

Expert-led Professional Development

There is research to support the types and qualities of professional development that teachers prefer. For instance, professional development, which is expert-led and ongoing with support, allows teachers to perfect their practices ensuring professional and student growth (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Teachers find professional development experiences are powerful and useful when experts present them and provide opportunities for reflection (Noonan, 2019). Collaboratively, teachers can benefit from grade-level targeted professional development that pays special attention to individual teachers' needs. Such needs include expert teachers' strategies, model lessons, and ongoing support and feedback throughout the year rather than one-time professional development sessions (Kindall et al., 2018).

Job-embedded Professional Development

Teachers prefer to learn while working if it does not take away from best practices and students' learning (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Thus, they should be given time to address issues and provide modeled best practices in the form of work-based education, discussions, videos, and resources throughout professional development to support the implementation of teacher changes (Hodges, Kulinna, Lee, & Kwon, 2017). Learning through application to ensure the highest quality learning experiences for their students, and continue to motivate teachers' learning, is essential (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Furthermore, job-embedded professional

development is preferred over an online format when more than one session is offered, including reflection questions (Powell & Bodur, 2019).

Professional Learning Communities and Collaboration

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) are a cohesive and cooperative peer-learning approach used to create a collection of teaching methods and tools (Avidov-Ungar, 2018). Ensuring success in professional learning communities, increased principal involvement, improved professional development communities, and the amount of time they require must be considered (Avidov-Ungar, 2018). Professional development communities have been the focus of a lot of research, which shows that they can be useful in improving teaching practice and affect long term changes (Avidov-Ungar, 2018). PLC's are essential in school-wide improvements, higher student achievement, and increased collaboration (Avidov-Ungar, 2018). PLC's play an integral part in teachers' professional development (Vangrieken, Meredith, Packer, Kyndt, 2017). Vangrieken et al. (2017) systematically reviewed research on teacher communities and identified them as formal, containing a pre-set schedule, and formative. A variety of stakeholders are involved in professional development and significantly impact teacher communities through their differing perspectives and involvement (Vangrieken et al., 2017). PLC's can potentially result in leadership supporting stakeholders and positive group dynamics with trusting and respecting members (Vangrieken et al., 2017).

Teachers' knowledge is critical to effective professional development practices (Castañeda-Londoño, 2017). Peer-coaching can help teachers gain a deeper understanding of themselves as educators. Although they can have anxiety about receiving feedback from peers, they will gain a deeper understanding of their professional selves (Castañeda-Londoño, 2017). Claudia (2015) discussed the need for opportunities for collaboration among teachers and

professional development programs to meet their needs, including continuous opportunities for growth and learning. Zwart, Korthagen, and Attema-Noordewier (2015) found that teachers feel positive when asked to coach for professional development, including increased chances for autonomy, and increased confidence in the implementation of professional development initiatives. Utilizing teachers' expertise as a basis for coaching could motivate growth in teachers and schools (Zwart, Korthagen, & Attema-Noordewier, 2015). Thus, programs such as Edcamps, participant-driven forms of teacher professional development, are becoming increasingly popular in education (Carpenter, 2016). Carpenter (2016) studied Edcamps and their positive effects on practice, especially as they relate to the literature on professional development and collaboration. Edcamps allow teachers to receive strategies from colleagues and appeal to teachers who are motivated by having those they know also attending, opportunities for learning and growth through engaging discussions, networking, and convenience (Carpenter, 2016). The environment, autonomy, and technology used in Edcamps are appreciated by teachers (Carpenter, 2016).

Summary

Research on why teachers participate in professional development is lacking, so little guidance exists to prepare effective programs that will motivate teachers to join (Bigsby & Firestone, 2017). Since teacher professional development can directly affect student achievement, it is essential to understand the role of motivation (Claudia, 2015). As education and the world continues to change and evolve, strategies and resources should be available to train teachers as they advance through their careers in a continuous process that occurs over time (Claudia, 2015). This review sought to explore teacher perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development, including types of professional development, intrinsic and

extrinsic motivators, and the stages in their careers. Although research has been done on teachers' perceptions of professional development and professional development preferences, little research exists on their motivations to pursue it (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). Further research is needed regarding what motivates teachers to pursue professional development to ensure best practice and effective programs.

According to Ng (2019), innovation and experience in teaching come from teacher professional development. Cluster analyses of the connection between teachers' professional selves and continuous professional learning showed that committed educators who held strong professional identities displayed the highest level of engagement in education, with teachers who had medium and weak levels of professional selves following (Ng, 2019). Follow-up interviews found that strongly committed teachers shared their aspirations toward strong identities, but weakly-committed teachers discussed apprehension about a heavy workload and the outcomes which they feared (Ng, 2019). Cooper (2019) considered how pedagogical knowledge plays a role across different stages of educators' careers. Teachers' perceptions could motivate teachers to think of whether specific ideas apply to them and their content, or if they can provide new ways of professional growth in practice with a universal language centered around professional development (Cooper, 2019). To grow professionally, teachers must reflect, which requires learning new ways to discuss how to acquire a deeper understanding and knowledge to apply to their resources (Cooper, 2019). Cooper (2019) presented data supporting the idea that prior knowledge and philosophies were developed through individual paces and experiences. Theories evolve through what teachers' pay attention to and why (Cooper, 2019).

Teachers can benefit from expert teachers' strategies, having model lessons for best practices, and receiving ongoing support and feedback throughout the year, since they find it

difficult to implement their learning from one-time professional development sessions (Kindall, Crow, & Elsass, 2018). These ideas can be used to design professional development effectively and improve student achievement (Kindall, Crow, & Elsass, 2018). The level of specialization is a significant factor in determining teachers' professional development motivations, needs, and preferences, with the more experienced teachers being the most motivated to continue growing professionally (Bautista, Toh, & Wong, 2018). There is a collective mindset that one-size-fits-all professional development is less likely to develop teacher growth and that professional development should be differentiated to meet all teachers' needs (Bautista, Toh, & Wong, 2018). Bautista, Toh, and Wong (2018) analyzed professional development motivations, needs, and preferences of teachers based on their level of specialization in education. The survey data indicated that three groups of teachers had different motivations to pursue content-specific professional development, different needs for future training, and various thoughts about professional development programs and formats (Bautista, Toh, & Wong, 2018).

Teachers are more intrinsically motivated towards social and pedagogical growth through professional development (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). Palermo and Thomson (2019) studied the motivational characteristics of teachers in a large-scale performance assessment program. They engaged in professional development through assessment by writing items and reviewing them with scoring criteria (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). The results showed that teachers were feeling valued and positive toward professional development, which enabled changes to their instruction and assessments. Through interviews, teachers highlighted the knowledge gained from the assessment program and its translation into practice (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). The program's changes proved to be an essential outcome, showing that large-scale assessment programs as professional development were useful for teachers and supported their learning,

collaboration, and classroom application of new strategies (Palermo & Thomson, 2019).

Kindall, Crow, and Elsass (2018) studied how school leaders and professional development positively or negatively influence effective teaching practices. Teachers found their principal's knowledge to positively impact their instruction (Kindall, Crow, & Elsass, 2018). Negative perceptions of professional development based on district or building goals instead of personal goals were expressed. The benefits of grade-level targeted professional development that pays special attention to individual teachers' needs were identified (Kindall, Crow, & Elsass, 2018). Mandated reform must come with consistent professional development practices throughout district schools (Kisa & Correnti, 2015). There is evidence of successful implementations, by some schools, of school improvement plans and changes in teaching practices; however, there have been difficulties throughout the process (Kisa & Correnti, 2015). Schools that offered reform-aligned professional development in content and practice saw growth from students and teachers and showed a need to support professional developers to target practices that stem from a reform (Kisa & Correnti, 2015). Schools must be clear on the guidelines for maintaining fidelity to interventions to see a rise in student growth (Kisa & Correnti, 2015).

Changing teacher professional development is required to help teachers with curriculum and practices (Hodges, Kulinna, Lee, & Kwon, 2017). Teachers have expressed the lack of time to address content. However, when the content was shown to them through work-based learning, the support helped teachers to implement the material learned (Hodges et al., 2017). Hodges et al. (2017) found that teachers feel more comfortable using this type of professional development approach, which has also shown positive student results and supported the implementation of teacher changes with discussions, videos, and resources throughout the project (Hodges et al.,

2017). This literature review indicated studying teacher motivation to pursue professional development can influence: mindset, student achievement and educational experience, teacher autonomy, the differences between veteran and novice teachers, the importance of teacher input in professional development programs, meeting teachers' needs, reflection, ways to improve professional development, modeling best practices, providing resources, technology resources, expert-led professional development, job-embedded professional development, professional learning communities, and collaboration. Based on this literature review, which used a conceptual framework using Herzberg's (1959) theory as it applies to motivation and teacher professional development, there is a reason to believe that exploring what motivates teachers to pursue professional development, will result in relevant findings.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This qualitative case study focused on teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development. As stated in Chapter 1, this study was based on the conceptual framework of Herzberg's (1959) theory, as it applies to motivation and teacher professional development. Each participant engaged in this reflective process by analyzing their motivations to pursue professional development. This study can add to the paucity of research on motivation and professional development and be used to change professional development programs to maximize teacher engagement (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). This qualitative case study examined teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development. Creswell and Poth (2018) discussed that qualitative research uses theory and interpretation to inform research problems that individuals assign to a social or human issue. Qualitative research is flexible as opposed to fixed and does not follow a strict order stemming from a beginning decision (Maxwell, 2013). This study followed a similar path that evolved based on the open-ended discussions with participants.

The problem is that teachers may or may not be motivated to pursue professional development, and there may be a lack of professional development resources at their disposal (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). This study explored teachers' perceptions of what influences their motivation for professional development, resulting in effective professional development changes. Qualitative research often studies social justice issues and ways to change the preexisting condition of the study topic (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Social justice connects with this study because teacher professional development should be directly linked to teachers' experiences and perceptions (Mohammadi & Moradi, 2017).

Creswell and Poth (2018) asserted that qualitative research is ever-evolving because it

has less to do with the researchers' decision to highlight the origin of the question and more about making progress on what already exists. Studying teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development through data collection, including individual interviews to research their different ideas and beliefs, will consider various useful and engaging professional development angles. This chapter will describe the qualitative research framework, case study approach highlighting educational researchers' works, and the setting and participants. Methodologies, the rationale for specific data collection, and ethical considerations will be included.

The research questions were constructed to understand teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development. More robust comprehension of how theory and practice connect to professional development can be attained (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018).

Through this case study, the following research questions were asked:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of their motivations to pursue professional development?
2. What do teachers perceive that they need from their professional development?
3. How have past experiences in Professional Development affected teachers' motivation?

Research Design and Rationale

This study explored teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development and what they need for their self-directed and district-driven professional development. Further research must be conducted on teacher motivation to drive future professional development (Khan et al., 2016).

A case study research design was chosen to explore teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue and what they need from professional development. Data was collected from multiple sources, such as teacher interviews and district professional development

programs that have been offered to report teachers' perceptions and common themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Yin (2014) discussed using case study research to investigate certain conditions and their connections within their real-life contexts. This study reflected a single subject, case study research design, by looking deeply at individual participants while finding commonalities within the analyzed data (Yin, 2014). Single case studies may contain subcategories within a more extensive model being investigated, or they can be studied within, between, or across the subunits (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Based on past research, some themes about teachers' motivations to pursue professional development that could emerge were: Teachers may be motivated to influence students' learning and needs, collaborate with colleagues on shared concerns and areas of growth, improve practice and self-efficacy, address issues for which they are accountable, seek out continuous learning opportunities, learn about topics in which they are interested, and make use of available funds and resources for professional development (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018).

Multiple sources should be utilized for in-depth data collection in case study research (Yin, 2014). Different sources that were used included: interviews, open-ended surveys, professional development schedules, and teacher reflections about their professional development experiences, and conclusions were drawn based on the data from the interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Maxwell (2013) discussed that to design a qualitative study, the design must be fluid based on connections made by the researcher between the different design components and their effects on each other. This single case study provided a more precise focus on teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development.

Pilot Questions

Maxwell (2013) discussed that pilot studies could be designed to test methods and

understand ideas and theories. In this study, pilot interviews were conducted with seven teachers from a different district. The teachers provided general feedback, which helped streamline the interview questions. The pilot interviews resulted in combining several items to ensure that the ideas were not repetitive.

Setting and Participants

This case study's target population was 10 to 15 elementary, middle, and high school teachers from a local school district and the district administrator responsible for the organization and implementation of professional development. These teachers had experience with different professional development types, such as integrating technology into practice, specific content area professional development, district-mandated initiatives, virtual professional development, and self-directed programs. There are personal and professional differences in engagement and motivation, depending on years of experience (Durksen et al., 2017). When focusing on professional development influences, it is crucial to consider differing perspectives in various stages of an educational career (Durksen et al., 2017). Durksen et al. (2017) said that findings have shown that most mid-career teachers demonstrate higher levels of motivation and commitment than those who are later in their careers. Thus, teachers in this study had at least four years of teaching experience with at least four years in the district. The school district is in a northeastern state's suburb in a large community with various socioeconomic levels. There are approximately 11,695 students that attend this district, and the student-teacher ratio is 12:1. The student body is comprised of the following student demographics: 46.8% white, 28% Hispanic, 18.1% African American, 3.1% multiracial, 3.7% Asian, 0.1% Native American, and 0.1% Pacific-Islander. The district includes 17 elementary, three middle, and three high schools.

The superintendent was contacted via email to request permission and approval to

conduct the study. When the superintendent granted permission, he notified the board that it was taking place. Once the university approved the study, the building principals were emailed and informed about the study. Prospective participants were selected through a recruitment email, which included the criteria for years of experience. Once teachers responded with interest, I verified that they fit the requirements, selecting 12-15 teachers from the pool of volunteers. I attempted to get a good representation of years of experience and content areas through the participants. In anticipation of teachers declining to participate or needing to withdraw from the study for any reason, the number of eligible participants who were contacted was doubled. The district administrator who organizes and implements professional development was approached for an interview via email. The email included the criteria of at least four years of teaching experience, with at least 4 of the years being in the district where the study will be conducted. Additionally, the email described the study and the approximately 30 minutes that was allotted for the interviews.

Sampling Procedures

Purposeful sampling was used, with each of the chosen participants having at least four years of experience, with at least 4 of those years in the district. Creswell and Poth (2018) discussed that purposeful sampling should provide rich data and details on the subject being studied. The purposefully selected samples' information allowed for a deeper understanding of the research questions because I chose the participants who had experience in the area being researched (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Instrumentation and Measures

Each participant engaged in an approximately 30-minute interview (Appendix A; Appendix B). Due to restrictions from Covid-19, the interviews were conducted virtually via

Zoom or in person, as permitted by district and state policy. The purpose of interviews was to construct a knowledge base by interacting with the interviewee (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). These interviews focused on understanding teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development and what they need from their professional development by collecting their opinions and reflections. Through a qualitative interview, understanding this subject contributed to the full understanding of their experiences and needs (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

The interview protocol was designed to engage educators in sharing their opinions and describing what can be added to the research on teachers' motivations to pursue professional development. I looked at the interviews and analyzed them to deeply explore and find new information (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Qualitative methods were used to study teacher perceptions because it allowed for assessing how people understand experiences, build their world, and rate their experiences (Creswell, 2013). This qualitative method helped discover emerging themes (Creswell, 2013). In this study, my role in the interview allowed the participants to shape the process by responding in an open-ended discussion pertinent to his/her situation. The interview was conducted and analyzed in a series of concrete steps that included planning and designing, conducting the interview, transcribing, analyzing the content, and determining the validity and reliability (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Understanding the case study topic must be done within the context of teachers' experiences and situations (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). A deeper understanding of the research topic was gained by collecting data directly stemming from teachers' experiences in their schools. Lists of previous professional development programs offered in the district were also be collected to provide an inside look into the district's program (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Teacher interviews and documented

professional development offerings contributed to the district's professional development program's findings and history.

Reliability

Yin (2014) said that replicating a study by following the same methods and achieving the same findings is known as reliability. In a case study, reliability is established by following the appropriate protocol and reducing bias and errors (Yin, 2014). Following the protocol ensured that the procedures could be repeated (Yin, 2014). Documenting the processes used during this study was another way to ensure reliability (Yin, 2014). In this study, reliability was achieved by ensuring that replication could be completed under different contexts and participants. A draft of the data was returned to the participants. They reviewed and verified the findings and evidence and included new evidence that had not been collected initially. This is referred to as a member check (Yin, 2014). Case study research guidelines were followed, and thorough and accurate records were kept, such as transcribed interviews, emails, and notes taken during the study.

Validity

Patton (2002) discussed that using various data sources would allow for a deeper understanding and validity of the results. This study included interviews and the collection of professional development schedules provided by the district. Construct validity was established with various data sources, resulting in a credible study (Yin, 2014). Following the interviews, recordings were reviewed and transcribed, providing an opportunity for reflection. Transcripts were thoroughly examined for accuracy and to facilitate the critical self-reflection process to ensure that the collected data were credible and dependable (Patton, 2002).

Data Collection

The qualitative methods used for data collection were teacher interviews, a selection of documented professional development offerings, and an interview with the district office administrator charged with professional development program implementation. Recruiting was done through an email request to the superintendent for permission and approval to conduct the study. When permission was granted, district elementary, middle, and high school teachers. The teachers were selected. These teachers fit a mix of years of experience with professional development. Building principals were contacted and asked for email addresses for all teachers. Participants were selected through an email that included professional development and district experience criteria. They contained a description of the study, participant requirements, and the time allotted for each component. Between 10-15 eligible teachers were contacted. Interviews were on a volunteer basis; therefore, they were not contacted again if a teacher did not respond.

After the interviews were conducted, participants' responses were analyzed using thematic analysis (Creswell, 2013). Thematic analysis identified themes through reading, coding, and sorting codes into common groupings, then into themes (Creswell, 2013). Coding consisted of reading the transcribed interviews and noting ideas that emerge through reading (Tesch, 1990). Each interview was studied to determine what it was about, and notes were taken (Tesch, 1990). I made a list of the topics that arose, grouped like topics, and sorted them into columns such as major and frequent ideas, unique thoughts, or considerations, and leftover or infrequently mentioned (Tesch, 1990). Returning to the data, the topics were condensed into codes and wrote them next to the appropriate areas of the text (Tesch, 1990). Once abbreviations for each category were chosen, the codes were alphabetized, and the data was preliminarily analyzed and recoded (Tesch, 1990). The professional development schedules and

data were used to support the themes and provide a picture of the district's professional development practices and programs.

The self-reflective interview questions were intended to provide a clear idea of the participants' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development and what they need from their professional development. Additionally, the documented professional development offerings helped highlight professional development practices and programs they had experienced. These components allowed me to have basic knowledge when interviewing the participants.

Data Analysis

In this case study, interviews were recorded and transcribed. Interviews were conducted online due to restrictions of the COVID 19 pandemic. Zoom with video representation turned off was used to ensure an audio recording only. Interviews could be analyzed when they were in written form (Gillham, 2000). Interviews were transcribed by carefully listening to the recordings and stopping to notate valuable ideas to the case study, a concept referred to as substantive statements (Gillham, 2000). Following the transcription of the interviews, content analysis was conducted (Gillham, 2000).

There is a process that can be followed when analyzing interview data (McCracken, 1988). The researcher should read and take notes on the transcribed interviews, including substantive statements, followed by observations and groupings based on the transcripts, referred to as coding (McCracken, 1988). Gillham (2000) discussed that categories should be followed by any substantive statements noted during the review of the transcripts for the data to be conceptualized. Categories were combined, added, or removed as the list was formulated (Gillham, 2000). Categories and statements were placed into a spreadsheet for the organization

(Gillham, 2000). Following this step in the process, I looked for patterns and connections within the data (McCracken, 1998).

Themes became evident while looking for connections and formulating coding patterns in the last two steps (McCracken, 1988). Themes are statements of meaning found in almost all the data or one that has a substantial impact (Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner, & Steinmetz, 1991). Themes were examined by studying participants' responses and my notes, followed by reviewing any themes that emerged throughout all interviews to determine significant themes (McCracken, 1988). The major themes answered the research questions and were used as the basis for the results section (McCracken, 1988).

Ethical Issues

Attention to ethical concerns in qualitative research is vital (Maxwell, 2013). Ethical concerns should appear in all facets of research, including formulating research questions and validity matters (Maxwell, 2013). To ensure that ethical considerations are seriously considered during the study Brinkmann, and Kvale (2015) offer a model. The participants should know and understand the purpose, risks such as volunteering personal time, and benefits that could arise from the study, also known as informed consent (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). A letter of consent was presented to and signed by participants as well as receiving verbal instructions (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). As part of the model, confidentiality was maintained with the study results, and any identifying participant data was not disclosed (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Beneficence means avoiding the risk of harm to participants by increasing the potential benefits, which in this study included contributing to the possible improvement of their district's professional development program (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). I had the task of ensuring that the study was honest, objective, and fair; otherwise, the results could be questionable (Brinkmann & Kvale,

2015). A draft of the data was returned to the participants for review and verification of the findings. This process is referred to as member checks (Yin, 2014). Ethical considerations were maintained throughout the study.

Qualitative research includes a level of bias (Yin, 2014). In this study, I believed that allowing teachers to drive their learning and making professional development as convenient as possible would motivate them. I was open to evidence discovered in the study that showed other motivating factors for pursuing professional development. Yin (2014) discussed that reducing bias in an investigation can be achieved by sharing findings with colleagues and addressing any possible explanations for the conflicting evidence. To minimize bias, I followed this noble practice. Conflicts of interest occur when personal or financial factors result in bias or lack of objectivity (McGinn, 2018). No financial connections were present that can be determined to be a conflict of interest for me or the participants. If a participant did not feel comfortable answering a question, they were able to skip it. There were no foreseeable risks and no possible benefits for the study participants, other than expressing their preferences for professional development. No false or misinformation was given to the participants during the investigation (McGinn, 2018).

Summary

The case study methodology used to study teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development has been explained in this chapter. The literature supports the idea that research on educators' motivation to pursue professional development is minimal, and that teachers are more engaged and motivated by professional development when it addresses an issue in their classroom that they have identified and chosen (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018; Mohammadi & Moradi, 2017). Using the conceptual framework of factors affecting

motivation (Herbzbberg, 1959), the goal was to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' perceptions of motivations to pursue professional development, by considering their opinions, through assessments of their professional development programs (Palermo & Thomson, 2019). The case study included 10-15 participants. Data was collected through individual interviews and district professional development schedules. The data was examined and analyzed to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The research questions in this study focused on teachers' perceptions, motivation, needs, and experiences and how they relate to professional development to understand how professional development programs can be tailored to meet the needs of teachers and improve student achievement. Since qualitative research is fluid, and is not rooted in a preconceived decision, open-ended discussions were utilized (Maxwell, 2013). Open-ended questions were chosen for this study to engage participants in sharing their views and illustrating ideas that could contribute to the research on motivation and professional development. Each participant was asked questions about positive and negative professional development experiences, effects of professional development programs on students, ideal professional development schedules, and the differences between district mandated programs versus self-selected professional development opportunities. Additional information was obtained from the district's curriculum and instruction website to review professional development initiatives and programs related to their experiences. Findings from this single-subject case study are depicted in this chapter, beginning with information and district demographics. The findings are followed by the answers to the research questions and an explanation of the coding results. A summary is presented at the end.

The school district used in this study is in a large suburban community in central New Jersey. The district includes 17 elementary, three middle, and three high schools. Approximately 11,695 students attend this district. The school has a 12-to-1 student-teacher ratio, and 14.7% of teachers are employed in their first or second year of teaching.

There are approximately 499 English Language Learners, 39.4% are eligible for free and reduced lunch. School districts in New Jersey who have 35% or more of their enrolled students

in the low socioeconomic demographic qualify for Title I funding. The school district used in this study receives Title I funding for 6 of its schools. The purpose of Title I funds is to improve disadvantaged students' academic achievement by providing resources that can support student improvement and growth (New Jersey Department of Education, 2019). These resources include attendance initiatives, behavioral support, technology, community and parental involvement, and comprehensive activities to promote overall school improvement, such as teacher professional development, to address participating students (New Jersey Department of Education, 2019).

The district employs a director of curriculum and instruction, who is referred to as Participant 1. This district-level administrator plans and implements district-wide professional development programs that are mandated and voluntary. Along with content area curriculum supervisors, the director chooses the presenters, locations, topics, and times of offered professional development programs. Furthermore, the director of curriculum and instruction approves out of district professional development requests.

Appova and Arbaugh (2018) discussed teachers' motivation to pursue professional development, and the effect that certain deficits of programs, such as a lack of resources, impact participation. The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to engage in professional development, and what they need for their professional development in terms of models, times, and whether the learning can be applied to teachers' classrooms by conducting teacher and district administrator interviews. Twelve teachers were interviewed from all three levels (four elementary, four middle, and four high). Participants' years of teaching experience are highlighted in Table 2.1

Table 2. 1*Participants' Years of Experience*

Participant	Position Level	Years of Experience
1	District Administrator	25
2	Elementary School Teacher	16
3	Middle School Teacher	16
4	Middle School Teacher	25
5	Elementary School Teacher	7
6	Elementary School Teacher	18
7	Middle School Teacher	12
8	High School Teacher	15
9	High School Teacher	10
10	High School Teacher	17
11	Middle School Teacher	6
12	Elementary School Teacher	32
13	High School Teacher	26

Finally, a review of professional development programs provided by the district was conducted. This review included eight different professional development events. In this chapter, the results of the research are summarized by three research questions and themes that arose from the data analysis as it relates to teachers' perceptions, motivations, needs, and professional development experiences. The research questions were as follows:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of their motivations to pursue professional development?

2. What do teachers perceive they need from their professional development?
3. How have past experiences in professional development affected teachers' motivation?

Interview responses were coded, and patterns and connections within the data were found and used to identify significant themes to answer the research questions. Participants were given the following definitions to differentiate between district-mandated and self-selected professional development:

District implemented professional development: Professional development that has been chosen by district administrators with mandated directives.

Self-selected professional development: In or out of district PD chosen/implemented by the teacher.

As Creswell and Poth (2018) discussed, the results of the data evolved from the open-ended discussions. The purpose was to expand on the existing research as opposed to the origin of the question. Additionally, follow-up prompts were prepared to ensure that participant responses were optimal and limiting single-answer questions (Creswell, 2009).

Findings of Qualitative Research

This single-subject case study investigated teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development. Data gathered through the individual teacher and district administrator interviews were used to evaluate the factors that impact teachers' participation in professional development programs and initiatives. Using interviews and documented district professional development offerings, insight was gained into how certain motivating factors influenced teachers' professional development participation. Interviews were transcribed and data were analyzed. The themes, patterns, and substantive statements from participants were recorded. Creswell (2009) suggested that it can be beneficial to provide participants with

completed transcripts and a complete picture of the data. Thus, participants were given a copy of Table 3, which included the themes and subcategories identified through analysis. Each participant received a copy of Table 3.1. Participants were asked for feedback on the accuracy of the themes and subcategories. Participants indicated that the themes and categories accurately reflected their responses to the interview questions. Table 3 provides the major themes found from the interviews of the 12 participating teachers and one district administrator.

Table 3. 1

Themes Found Across Data

Research Questions	Themes
What are teachers' perceptions of their motivations to pursue professional development?	Compensation Graduate credits or certification Professional development hours Engaging Topics Teacher evaluation Mindset
What do teachers perceive they need from their professional development?	Collaboration Student achievement Teacher input and teacher choice Resources Teaching experience

How have past experiences in professional development affected teachers' motivation?	Administrative Involvement Covid-19 professional development response District professional development program Follow-through Positive/negative experiences
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Synopsis of Data

Overall, the teachers' agreed that past professional development experiences affected their motivation to continue engaging in programs. It was the teachers' perceptions that positive professional development experiences met their needs and benefited students. This coincided with Noonan's (2019) research on professional development and its positive effect on instructional practices and student success. Participant 2 discussed that professional development that was meaningful to her affected her students' success because she was able to learn the material on a deeper level and implement it in her practice. Along with past experiences involving motivation, Participant 5 explained the importance of the topic being presented when choosing professional development:

The ones that I have liked concentrated a lot on social-emotional learning. So, I have gone to a few sessions where we are not discussing academics and helping the students as people, which is a massive part of what I try to do every day.

Participant 12 stated that her motivation narrowed down to whether or not she learned something that she needed to know, and whether the information was useful, applicable, and something that could be readily used, such as resources that could be implemented in practice. Palermo and Thomson (2019) asserted that teachers will feel valued when they are asked for feedback and

their input is implemented. Likewise, Participant 9 discussed the importance of teachers' professional development needs affecting motivation by stating that districts should consider teacher input in planning to improve the level of engagement at district-presented professional development programs. Participant 9 said that often, they are not given options that they would identify as a need, and it results in low engagement and a lack of participant focus' during the program. The themes that emerged in this study are discussed below in relation to the research questions.

Research Question 1: What Are Teachers' Perceptions of Their Motivations to Pursue Professional Development?

During the interviews, participants were asked what motivating factors engage them in certain professional development programs over others. Participants discussed the role of financial compensation, graduate credits or certifications, professional development hours, engaging topics, evaluations, and a mindset that focuses on the benefits of professional development, and why these are significant.

Compensation

The participants frequently discussed compensation as a motivating factor. The district in this study paid staff in the past to attend professional development but have recently eliminated it. Participant 5 explained that she participated at every possible opportunity because the money was a significant motivator. Participant 5 added that she could not recall many of those sessions because the topic was not what motivated her; instead, it was financial compensation. Furthermore, Participant 5 stopped going to voluntary district professional development when the district stopped paying teachers to participate.

Some participants discussed that the compensation was not their only motivator;

however, it made them feel valued as educators, as they spend an extensive amount of time outside of work planning effective instruction. Participant 4 explained that often teachers spend time in the summer when they are not receiving their salaries, engaging in professional development. For instance, Participant 4 attended a week-long program during her summer break at the request of her principal. Participant 4 described her experience by saying, “We also were not compensated for this personal time. So, it was an entire week that we were not paid a penny, and we were expected to be on, to not pay any attention to our families for six hours a day.” Participant 6 supported the idea that compensation is a motivator that makes teachers feel valued because she perceived it as their time being respected; thus, she took the learning more. Participant 13 believed that since professional development is required to grow as an educator and should be implemented in the job, that districts should allow teachers the time and compensate them for it.

Participant 1, the district administrator, explained the reasoning behind the district not financially compensating teachers to attend professional development:

We had many staff getting approved to attend PD, a lot of staff were getting approved for continuing education, but I did not see the return to the district. I always feel that there should be an understanding that it helps you grow and help others succeed. I found that there were things perhaps that were put in place that were getting people to attend, but not for professional learning reasons. So when I reflected on that, a person at the end of a cycle could have made X number of dollars for attending. Still, I don't know if that is necessarily enhancing the overall vision and shared understanding of professional learning. So what I saw, in the end, was a lot of timesheets that people signed because they got paid to go to professional development, and while that is not bad, I did not feel

that that was the best way to use title funds. If you are paying folks and the return is excellent, that is one thing, but when you are paying folks, just because it is a quick way to make some money, it is not sufficient.

Most of the participants expressed that although being financially compensated would benefit, it is not the only motivator for pursuing professional development.

Graduate Credits or Certifications

In addition to professional development hours, teachers in the district can pursue professional development for graduate credit or certifications. Teachers shared that the programs that resulted in certificates were immediately implemented in their practice because they were continuous and supplied teachers with resources that could be directly applied. Additionally, along with tuition reimbursement for self-selected graduate and certificate programs, the district partnered with a local college to motivate teachers to pursue professional development in teacher leadership. These graduate programs are paid for by the district. Participant 1, the district administrator, shared the logistics of the program and how the participation impacted the district:

We formed yet another partnership with TCNJ in running an inhouse teacher leadership endorsement program. We had over 20 teachers sign up for that program, and almost all of them returned to the course. The dean of TCNJ and I co-presented and unpacked the teacher leader model standards and talked about the role of teacher leadership. We connected it to professional learning and what our district is doing. Teachers signed up for that program, even though it's evenings and on their own. Now, granted, we pay their tuition for them through tuition reimbursement, but I don't think any of them did it for the tuition reimbursement. I think some of them saw themselves as aspiring teacher leaders and wanted to obtain a formal endorsement. Incidentally, the course that they are in right

now is on professional learning.

The professional learning course that teachers are taking as part of their teacher leadership certification explains the processes and benefits of professional learning communities. Thus, the course is run collaboratively. The certifications that result in some professional development programs impact the entire district, as teachers' salaries increase with additional college credits. Furthermore, they can implement best practices to promote student achievement, and they gain the resources to lead their schools and share the knowledge they have achieved.

Professional Development Hours

New Jersey teachers are required to complete 20 professional development hours every school year. Teachers earn professional development hours by participating in district professional development days, faculty meetings where professional learning, such as book studies, takes place, and any other professional development workshops in which teachers participate. The district in this study offers four mandatory professional development days throughout the school year. While the teachers acknowledged that hours were necessary when choosing professional development sessions, it was not something that they factored into their choices, since they can complete the goal through mandated district programs. Participant 10 said, "the district has stepped up their program to provide multiple opportunities regularly to do the professional development hours."

Engaging Topics

Participants 2, 3, and 12 all acknowledged that the most engaging and motivational topics they pursued were from out of district, paid presenters; however, these programs are not frequently approved by their administrators. Additionally, the district is working towards a robust professional development program that allows teachers to choose the topic they would

like to attend. Participants shared that anything tailored explicitly to the curriculum or the development of specific age groups is highly attractive to them. For instance, Participant 2 is an early childhood teacher and prefers to choose anything related to brain and child development. As a middle school music teacher, Participant 3 discussed her motivations to attend professional development sessions, such as the state music conference, which provided her with resources to retain students in the school band and garner interest in the less popular instruments.

Many participants discussed that students face many issues because of their environments, such as social media pressures and racial inequality (Participants 5, 7, and 10). Thus, many participants said they are motivated to engage in social-emotional professional development to support their students. Participants shared that to educate the whole child and connect on deeper levels, they need to learn about practices that will help the needs of every student. Participant 7, a middle school special education teacher, highlighted a social-emotional program that she attended and her motivation to continue to learn about it:

We do a lot of social skills and a lot of emotional regulation. We use zones of regulation. It is a big part of our program. My students are very bright, but the main reason is that they lack social skills and how to connect with others. So, that was something that I know I could use, and I took it, and I ran with it. I wanted to know everything about it. I took a deep dive and educated myself as much as I could. If I know this is something that is going to work, I take it and run with it.

Several teachers highlighted mindfulness as a social-emotional practice that they are motivated to pursue further. Participant 7 said that she attended follow-up presentations because she connected with the topic and its effects on her students and practice. She converted her practice to include a mindfulness-based classroom to help her autistic students accomplish

emotional regulation.

Participant 5 was motivated to learn more about social-emotional learning because it allowed her to connect with her elementary students. This social-emotional professional development allowed Participant 5 to view things from her students' perspectives. Moreover, she was able to understand students' issues in the 21st Century, such as cyberbullying, and the best ways in which to support them. Participant 5 described a program in which teachers had to brainstorm ways to connect with students:

One thing that stuck out to me was being able to discuss what is different for a student in 2020 than for a student in 1995. From 1995 to 2020, the range of problems we had and things that we were exposed to and knew about, the music we were listening to was wildly different. So, we were able to think about our experience first, what their background is, and what school and socializing and life looks like for them as opposed to what it looked like for us. We were able not only to see the differences but think about how it affects them.

Making connections with students was an area that many participants acknowledged as essential to their professional growth and students' success. Professional development that addresses students' environments and their effect on achievement allows teachers to support students.

To educate themselves on how the current political climate is affecting students, Participant 1, the district administrator, discussed culturally responsive teaching in the district's professional development program:

We have a substantial focus right now on cultural responsiveness and race inequity.

Particularly in our district, we are purchasing a book for every staff member in the entire

district. So, it will almost be their own personalized, professional learning journey. And while I cannot bring 2000 people into an auditorium to discuss the book, I can give them some resources. If they want to consult with a coworker or run their reflective journal on where they are with this, we can do that.

Participant 7 described her motivations to continue to learn about culturally responsive teaching on her own and incorporate race and grief into her lessons. Participant 7 said, “I’m working on my personal, professional development about incorporating race discussions into the classroom and appropriate history. That’s something that I’m just doing on my own because that’s what I feel the need to do.”

Like Participant 7, Participant 10 expressed the motivation to educate himself about culturally responsive teaching as it relates to student achievement, as well as the importance of the district implementing this topic as a focus. Participant 10, through the district partnership with the local college, participated in a book study on culturally responsive teaching. He was motivated by the district’s plan to provide continuous professional development on this topic. He felt that they were given sufficient time to read the book, take notes, and plan the integration of the material. Moreover, Participant 10 shared that this initiative motivated him to share the learning with his colleagues to learn to be aware of cultural differences and use the awareness to strengthen practice and engage all students in their academics.

Teacher Evaluation

Another topic that was identified by participants was professional development on their teacher evaluation model. Participant 13 elaborated on the need to offer continuous, yearly opportunities on the district model of teacher evaluation:

I would think right in September that they should have professional development about

how we will be evaluated that year. We should have just like a small professional development to talk about what areas we are covering this year, what they are looking for, and how it should look. I think that they should maybe give us some examples of the lessons and the type of teaching points they are looking for right away, so that way, you can start planning your lessons.

Participant 1, the district administrator, said that district administrators look for strategies learned in professional development sessions when they evaluate teachers. Participant 10 acknowledged this by explaining that during post-observation conferences with administrators, it helps receive constructive feedback to drive instructional practices. Furthermore, Participant 10 said that he is motivated to grow when clear expectations are going into the observation, which can be achieved by providing teachers with professional development refreshers on their evaluation model.

Mindset

The district in this study has planned a robust professional development program to shift teachers' mindsets to motivate them to pursue professional development. Marano (2003) said that teachers are willing to participate in educational activities that will help them grow professionally because of a motivation to succeed. Similarly, Participant 6 attended a district-mandated program that motivated her to begin her school year positively. The program occurred at the beginning of the school year and united all district elementary teachers to discuss the importance of a positive mindset. The combination of an effective presenter and being surrounded by colleagues motivated Participant 6 and ensured that she was in a positive mindset to start the school year. Participant 6 recalled the experience of the program and how it shifted her mindset. Participant 6 said, "I was not in the best mood going in there, but I thought it was

cool. I thought about how I could engage my students and have them choose their attitudes. It was a mandated program that I thought was helpful and light.” Likewise, according to Participant 9, although professional development is intensive at times, it should always be enjoyable and should still feel like fair use of teachers’ time. For Participant 9, the teacher leadership professional development program encompasses that idea by giving him something to feel excited about, while also allowing him to move forward with something to return to his students. Another shift in mindset occurred when Participant 10 attended a professional development session on structured learning that positively impacted her students. The training was district-provided, but when she saw how it improved her instruction, she chose to pursue the full structured learning certification independently.

Despite the district making progress on shifting mindsets, there are still components of professional development that discourage teachers. Participant 1, the district administrator, discussed the importance of promoting a positive mindset about professional development by asking teachers to be in charge of their professional learning while making them feel valued as professionals. Several participants discussed how the timing of professional development affects their mindsets. For example, Participant 2 said that when they have to attend professional development at the beginning of the school year, it is hard to be focused and motivated because of the amount of work that starting the school year entails. Participant 2 said, “When we are going to many sessions, it feels like slamming one thing after another, and there's no time to breathe. It just breeds anxiety, and then you're jumping into the school year.” Additionally, Participant 3 said that when professional development programs feel like a compilation of “time fillers” such as ice breakers, she is less likely to engage.

Valuing time was identified by many participants as affecting their mindsets toward

professional development. Participant 13 said:

It is very upsetting to a teacher when we have a little free time, for instance, at the beginning of the school year, and they want us to go to all these sessions. We need time to get our classrooms together. We need time to get our lessons going and prepare. How could we possibly teach our classes if we did not put the time in to get our classrooms ready? So, I think that when they are just coming up with PD to fill your time is very disheartening and upsetting to the entire teaching population. You want your time to be valued and your position to be valued.

Participants 6, 7, and 9 agreed that their colleagues often influenced their mindsets. For example, Participants 6, 7, and 9 discussed that when those around them are outspoken about their negativity towards participating in professional development during after-school faculty meetings, it affects their motivation to focus on the learning.

Participants were asked to discuss how attending professional development on a school day, which requires them to plan for a substitute teacher, affects their mindset and engagement. Teachers like Participant 2 felt that taking a professional development day that requires a substitute helps feel valued and invested in the program because it is usually an entire day of focusing on an idea that will improve instruction. Participant 6 equated it to being compensated for attending professional development and said, “it was something that I felt was important and kind of helped me.” Furthermore, Participant 8 elaborated that when he has a substitute teacher to attend professional development, he is in a more positive mindset. Usually, it is a topic that pertains explicitly to his work as opposed to a district-mandated program where he is focused on what he “could be accomplishing with this time.” According to Participant 12, taking school days for professional development helped her feel valued in her practice.

It is different because you are treated like a professional. The sessions have materials, it is all planned out, and they give you the rationale about their program. It is not a quick thing where you have an hour, and then you have to move on to another thing. They take the time to develop the background knowledge, the rationale, and the information you need. Then they get into the crux of the matter, and in the end, they give you all the good stuff that you can apply when you need it.

Dweck (2006) noted that growth mindset is based on people acting on what is important to them. The positive mindset that teachers expressed for professional development programs that occur during a school day seemed to be linked to feeling valued as educators.

Other participants said that they are having difficulty focusing when they are uneasy about how their students are performing in their absence. Moreover, Participants 5, 7, and 10 discussed the lack of substitute teachers for special education classrooms. In their experiences, when they have planned for substitute teachers, they are often pulled to work in the general education classrooms, leaving their students to miss their mandated special education class times, which are required by Individualized Education Plan modifications. Likewise, Participant 4, as a basic skills teacher, is often used as a substitute when classroom teachers are attending professional development sessions. Being taken away from her students has caused a negative shift in her mindset, as she associates programs that occur during a school day as time away from her basic skills students. However, Participant 4 acknowledged that when she has attended such programs and planned for a substitute, it has been rewarding and productive.

Aside from the lack of focus attributed to student concerns with a substitute teacher, Participants 13 discussed the level of planning that a professional development day entails:

We usually have five to six different classes. I have to get all the sub-plans ready for that,

come back to all of the work, organize it, grade it, and take care of any discipline problems. Whereas if it is a school-based day, you can enjoy the professional development session. You do not have all these underlying things in your brain. I hate to take the days off all the time, but when they a lot them as a professional development day and have substantial professional development choices, I think that is a better way to go.

Likewise, Participant 7 shared the impact on her mindset when her administrator has asked her to attend a professional development program during the school day. Participant 7 shared that in this case, she found herself unfocused and working on other things on her computer because she only attended the sessions as a request from her principal. Moreover, Participant 7 had a negative mindset and resented that she needed to leave her students with a substitute teacher when she knew how to handle their challenging behaviors. Furthermore, Participant 7 added that it becomes frustrating when preparing for a day away from her students, and professional development is not useful or does not pertain to her content or practice. Participant 7 added that if it were a session that she was interested in and want to attend, then she would take that chance and do it while ensuring that her students were prepared. Participant 10 agreed that professional days off are not taken unless she is mandated. Participant 10 admitted that if professional development were offered during the day requiring a substitute versus an afternoon or evening session, she would choose to attend later to ensure that she would not leave her students.

Summary of Research Question 1

Research question 1 asked what teachers' perceptions are of what motivates them to pursue professional development. Participants agreed that financial compensation, graduate credits or certifications, professional development hours, engaging topics, evaluations, and a

mindset that focuses on the benefits of professional development are all motivators to pursue professional development. While Participant 1, the district administrator, acknowledged the goal of the district to include many of these components, they eliminated financial compensation from their professional development program.

Research Question 2: What Do Teachers Perceive They Need from Their Professional Development?

Professional development programs that include teacher identified needs or other factors that teachers perceive as valuable, the result will be improved practice and student growth (McKeown, et al., 2019). When participants were asked what they need from their professional development, they identified opportunities for collaboration, the potential to improve student achievement, the chance to choose and provide input, and receiving resources that support learning. Moreover, there were some similarities and differences between the perceptions of novice, intermediate, and veteran teachers. The following represent themes that emerged from the interviews.

Collaboration

Collaboration, articulation, networking, and professional learning communities were mentioned and discussed by all participants. Moreover, Participants 2, 5, and 10 described the development of professional learning communities in their schools. Participant 1, the district administrator, said that the impact of collaboration during professional development had been more common language, about best practices and initiatives, being used across the district and departments. Participant 1, the district administrator, said, “I find that I can have a conversation with more teachers now, more than three years ago, about things because I can draw upon what

they learned in professional development, knowing a lot of them were in attendance.”

Collaborating with colleagues throughout the school year, specifically regarding curriculum, was a necessary practice for Participant 2. For her, it was a way to revisit how to address specific student best and curricular needs and gather resources and suggestions from colleagues.

Moreover, Participant 3 discussed the benefits of cross-curricular articulation because it resulted in building peer to peer relationships and contributed to their school program and practice.

As an instrumental music teacher, Participant 3 addressed how her program has benefited from professional development collaboration to ensure that the band program is consistent across all grades in the district. Thus, colleagues share resources and materials and explain why they were or were not successful. Finding materials that students enjoy has allowed the program to thrive and retain students in the band. Participant 3 added that vertical articulation is an effective way to learn what elementary, middle, and high school students experience. Still, she expressed that they do not have many opportunities to collaborate. The continuity and follow-through were also identified by Participant 5 as essential to her professional growth. Participant 5 said that she would find it useful to learn from her colleagues if they could know about specific topics continuously and frequently throughout the school year. Eventually, according to Participant 5, “you would become somewhat of an expert in something, or a colleague could come to you and ask you about it. I think that that would be the most useful.”

Participants 2, 6, 9, 11, and 13 discussed the benefits of department and content area collaboration for professional development, and why they are more motivated to learn from those colleagues, since there is a common understanding about their students’ needs. Participant 6 recalled a professional learning community where a teacher from a different district was invited to collaborate with the basic skills team:

The teacher came to talk to us and give us some strategies and ideas. It was a hands-on workshop which validated that what we were doing was effective, while constructively telling us how we could make changes. She was showing us what she does, which was more collaborative. It felt like we were respected, and it also did not feel like a waste of time. I learned a few things that I can do with my students.

Other participants shared the implementation of professional learning communities as a school practice, so the learning was continuous. Participant 13 discussed that collaborating with her small department was beneficial, as every colleague had an area of expertise that could be shared at department meetings and immediately implemented. Learning from colleagues as a form of professional development was an area that had been explored by participants.

Participant 11 noted that trust needs to be in place for the learning to occur because personal connection is conducive to learning. Trust was a component also noted by Participant 9, who said that he could give and take constructive criticism from colleagues because of the trust they have built working together. They are all working toward a common goal of helping their students succeed.

Participants preferred learning in collaborative groups because it broke up the monotony that they sometimes experienced in professional development in addition to learning from each other. Participants 3 and 10 said that when they attended professional development programs that utilized various collaborative models such as small groups, large groups, and partner activities, they could hear from many different colleagues, allowing multiple perspectives on the content. As Participant 2 continued, “we were all working together and hearing a message together.”

Book studies and graduate courses were also collaborative ways in which participants

contributed to their professional development. Participant 1, the district administrator, explained that many district teachers have begun to collaborate on book studies, which were like the professional learning community environment, in that it is not a one-time presentation. District teachers have sustained book studies over several weeks and successfully continued the practice virtually. Participant 1, the district administrator, continued that through book studies, “one can create a professional learning community experience to gather a common body of information that follows you, and then you use that to make some more change.” Besides book studies, some participants are enrolled in graduate courses with school colleagues. Articulating while they are at work has contributed to their growth. Participant 9 recalled his collaborative practices with colleagues and the similarities to professional learning communities. While his approach has been less formal, he has connected with these colleagues in a mutually beneficial way.

Most participants noted the benefits of collaborating with colleagues, and Participant 11 discussed the preparation that planning these opportunities entail. For example, Participant 11 designed a peer coaching format for professional development in classroom management. She asked for volunteers to participate and identified the people that self-identified a weakness in that area. Administration shared who they felt were strong in classroom management, along with volunteers who thought that they were strong in that area. Participant 11 implemented small professional learning groups, so the teachers who needed help could be observed by their peers. The goal was to focus on classroom management and then follow a colleague within the district.

Furthermore, Participant 11 planned a debrief at the end of the school year to analyze any improvements that occurred and a potential continuation into a book study. Participant 5 is motivated by these types of professional development opportunities because it is a way to discuss the content together rather than having information presented. Additionally, Participant 5 said

that when teachers can identify a topic of interest and monitor and learn about it throughout a school year, it adds to their resources, and they can reflect on and see it in action. Participant 6 agreed and noted that this action research type model would be welcome in her building.

Student Achievement

Across the board, every participant shared the common goal of supporting their students and ensuring their success. As the district administrator in charge of professional development, Participant 1, the district administrator expressed the priority of implementing high-quality professional development to ensure improved student achievement. By modeling an emphasis and appreciation for professional development, Participant 1 has experienced a shift in the culture of valuable professional development in the district. The change in culture and thinking as it relates to professional development is what Participant 1 attributed to a rise in teacher motivation in the district. As Doubet and Southall (2018) found, professional development has the potential to shift pedagogical philosophies through positive changes and goal setting. Participant 2 agreed that the “presentation had become the practice,” and if the sessions that teachers attend are tailored to fit their needs, that thinking will continue. The result, Participant 2 noted, is that when teachers are invested in professional development, the effects will be seen in the classroom.

The theme of modeling best practices through professional development was discussed throughout the interviews. Participant 3 said that valuable professional development experiences have led to a well-rounded classroom that is unique, beneficial, and positive for her students. This coincided with the research by Kisa and Correnti (2015) which said that making positive changes to professional development programs that teachers agree with will improve educational practices and experiences. Furthermore, Participant 4 elaborated:

The best professional development programs are the ones that you can take things back to your classroom and use them. Sessions that allow us to time to create materials that we can take back with us, but they have to be realistic materials and realistic expectations that help us to engage our students. You want to focus on what the students are interested in and work in your objectives, but it always has to be high interest for them, or you are going to lose them.

Participant 4 added that the professional development sessions that have helped her students the most are model best teaching practices. For example, allowing students to work in groups, implementing high-interest activities with choices, and promoting excitement about the content. Participant 5 supported the idea of modeling best practices by explaining that she used ideas that she learned during professional development to motivate her elementary students to read.

Participant 13, a high school special education teacher, recounted a district initiative that needed professional development for success. The program was for multiply disabled students and needed a new life skills curriculum named Community Based Instruction. The entire special education department attended the professional development, as they were tasked with taking small groups of students into the community to teach skills such as grocery shopping, banking, and going to the gym. Through intensive professional development, Participant 13 said they have become “totally involved in this to learn how to best suit the students.” Likewise, Participant 7 expressed how professional development sessions on mindfulness resulted in better emotional self-regulation with her population of autistic students.

Along with life skills and social-emotional learning, Participant 8 discussed the importance of technology professional development programs and student achievement. For his

high school English students, Participant 8 was able to learn about, make, and implement Google tools for education in his practice. These resources impacted his students' success because through technology-based assessments, he could form higher-level thinking questions, which allowed his students to think and problem solve critically. Participant 9 shared the same thinking and discussed that these implementations because of professional development are intended to benefit the students, which motivates him to continue to find these resources. Participant 5 recounted an elementary workshop that gave them technology-based math manipulatives to share with students, and that students could use on their own. These resources, which were all received through professional development, contribute to the educational experience. To continue to offer these opportunities, Participant 12 said:

Administratively, I feel like paying attention to how people learn or why they learn; I think this is key for our growth, and then for our students' development. Without teacher growth, you do not have student growth.

The solution that Participant 12 offered was to ensure that staff is getting the best professional development for the sake of the students. She said, "if it is not connected to student learning, instruction, or children's needs, then it should be revisited."

The reoccurring theme in these interviews was how professional development had improved student achievement. Participant 2 said, "any professional development that was meaningful to me, affected my students' success." For example, as an early childhood teacher, Participant 2 values brain and child development. Thus, if a topic were essential to her, it would impact her students' experiences. It was her interest in these broader topics that led to her understanding that her practices and what she does in her classroom will affect her students' growth. Likewise, she acknowledged that professional development in more specific topics such

as curriculum would lead to a more successful implementation for her students. As Participant 4 said, teachers inherently want to do what is best for their students, so they will generally agree to attend any programs that can be potentially helpful.

Curriculum-based professional development can also affect students' academic success, but it is crucial to consider the duration and intensity of this training. Participant 6 discussed how a week-long training she attended on Orton Gillingham motivated her to "dive right in." Soon after that, she saw an improvement in her students' phonics and reading abilities, which motivated her to continue to try differentiation strategies. She said, "I had a positive experience because they were learning differently, and they saw that I was excited about it, and it made it fun." Participant 7 also found success with her students' reading abilities after attending a week-long training on multisensory reading. She emphasized that the duration of the training was an important component, as sometimes they are not fully trained in specific initiatives. The intensity of the training allowed her to be confident in her abilities to implement multisensory reading. She continued that "it's so profound and impacted my education as a teacher, that I used those same skills to help my son, who is struggling with reading."

Professional development played a role in how many of the participants assisted struggling students. Participant 8 attended a session where he received training on strategies to help high school students receive a double dose of English class. Additionally, he was given suggestions about alternative assessments to support these students, such as project-based learning and motivational strategies to ensure their success. Helping struggling students was also something that for which Participant 11 sought training. She recounted a program that she attended, which occurs annually and certifies teachers to restrain a student who exhibits certain behaviors like eloping or aggression. Participant 11 discussed the idea that many strategies

should be tried before physically restraining a student. This training gave her those resources, as she was working with students who were displaying those behaviors. The training was presented by a school psychologist, who, according to Participant 11, made it clear and easy to implement if the appropriate protocols were followed. As participant 11 said, “I want to be the best I can be for them.” Changing practices to improve student achievement was cited by Participant 9 as the primary assessment of the effectiveness of professional development to help struggling students.

Many participants cited goal setting as an essential factor for student achievement. Participant 12 said that to meet their goals, they need professional development. As the goal for students is set, Participant 12 refers to the resources that she has gathered through different professional development sessions she has attended. As an instructional coach, she uses these resources to present professional development to the teachers in her school:

Suppose you want your teachers to grow because, without the teacher's growth, you are not going to get the student growth. So, we need to address that. Actionable goals are a perfect way to do that as a district. For example, if we know across the board, fifth graders are doing poorly with specific standards, and they usually tend to be clustered like that, why not support the teachers in those clusters? Give them a half-day over or some professional development where they can come and work, and explore what that standard means, what the kids should know before they get there, what they should know when they leave, and how are you going to do that.

As these goals are set, teachers and administrators can look for professional development to support students and teachers. When teachers pursue professional development to improve in their practices, their students' experiences will improve (Wan-Shuai et al., 2019).

Teacher Input and Choice

Many of the participants acknowledged that in recent years, their district has begun to allow them more choices when it comes to professional development. Dincer's (2019) research supported the importance of teacher independence to drive their professional development. Equally, Participant 9 enrolled in a teacher leadership graduate program provided by the district to achieve continuous professional development. Participant 2 said that being granted permission to attend out of district professional development has been helpful, as they are tailored to her unique, pre-kindergarten content. That is, when they are mandated to participate in specific programs, they are often not geared toward early childhood teaching. Likewise, when allowed to choose and attend professional development, Participant 3 has had more success in district programs such as statewide conventions. As a music teacher, she has benefited the most from music-centric programs. Participant 4 offered a solution to the choice component of professional development planning by noting that teachers should be planning these sessions, as they can identify their own needs. As Participant 6 contributed:

The district professional development where everyone is going, I feel like it is a one size fits all. They are trying to train us all on the same thing, but not everyone needs that.

Even though there are choices in there, it still feels like it is not catered to our needs. Participants 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 10 seconded the idea that some of the offered choices are not specific enough to meet every teachers' professional development needs. Participant 7 explained the importance of teachers finding something that directly pertains to them so that there is a value found in every different position.

Despite not offering enough choices for every position, Participant 10 acknowledged the progress made in the last three years. She said there had been improvements in the

implementation of choice and getting feedback from teachers about what types of professional development they need. Participant 12 shared why the choice offerings have been successful by saying that they are useful because they give the background information and the rationale for why specific practice is beneficial. Moreover, in her experience, many of these sessions offer resources that can be implemented quickly and easily. Participant 1, the district administrator, said that the choice programs are also successful because they are well-managed in every component, including one central location that will hold all of the chosen professional development programs. The management practices ensure ease for teachers to attend every session they choose in the same place, so they are all together.

The participants agreed that different factors motivate them to pursue professional development. The participants indicated that they value when districts ask for teacher input regarding professional development because it ensured that they could pick a session that met their self-identified needs. For example, Participant 13 responded, “I like when they do surveys, and they ask what areas of professional development would be most beneficial to you?”

Participant 11 elaborated:

I would say that the number one thing is to get input from the teachers that you are planning professional development. I understand that some professional development has to be done. I know that there are those that we have to go to and listen to. Still, as far as anything, that's not like that, I would say, do a survey, send out a Google form, get feedback from the teachers on what they want to learn about because that is how you are going to get the most value from professional development because they are going to show up. They are going to show up; they are going to participate. They will learn something and hopefully then apply it to their class because it is something that they

asked for.

The teachers all stated that their district has recently begun to give them more choices for professional development based on surveys and program evaluations. Participant 1, in his role as the district administrator, said that he reads every workshop evaluation conducted by the teachers to ensure quality professional development.

Resources

Having the ability to leave a professional development session with resources that can be readily implemented was a high priority for many participants. McCray (2018) discussed the essential practice of affording teachers the time to implement their professional learning; however, Participant 4 cited the lack of time for teachers to gather materials as one reason why she values professional development programs that supply resources. She said that such programs allowed her to have whatever she compiled at her professional development and immediately begin using it with her students. Participant 4 added, “As soon as I went into my room, the bell rang, we're ready to go, and the kids got excited about it.” Participant 5 expressed similar ideas and valued resources such as websites or manipulatives that can be used and added grouping strategies as a valuable resource. Participant 5 attended a session where they learned how to group kids by standard abilities, grades, and many other factors that she had not otherwise considered. These were easily and quickly implemented in her practice.

While it is beneficial for teachers to implement resources quickly, Participant 12 also said that understanding the resources is equally important. At first, she never really considered why these tools were useful, but there was always a rationale. For her, it was necessary and helpful to reflect on the resource, for example, if a teacher could find math games useful, or if students would need to reflect in a reading journal. Additionally, Participant 12 expressed the importance

of returning to resources at necessary times, even if they have not been used before. For instance, their district uses iReady to assess students and support their learning needs. The district provided teachers with a professional development opportunity to analyze a resources toolbox for this program. This toolbox analysis proved to be a practical resource when the district switched to remote learning during the Covid-19 pandemic because teachers were already familiar with the resources and were able to implement them as needed. Participant 12 said, “often we have resources at our fingertips, but we are not always aware of and using them to their fullest advantage.”

Veteran, Intermediate, and Novice teachers

The level of experience of the participants in this study ranged from 6 to 32 years. For data collection, novice teachers ranged from 1 to 10 years, intermediate teachers ranged from 11 to 20 years, and veteran teachers were 21 years and above. As it related to professional development, several factors differentiated the needs of teachers depending on the years of teaching experience. The veteran participants in this study, including the district administrator, discussed professional development in a way that showed they used their expertise to support their colleagues who may not have as many years of experience. All four veteran participants led district professional development and noted the motivation to continue to learn different types of strategies to support their students. While the veteran teachers continued to be eager to learn, they all identified that they preferred professional development that compensated them financially or with allotted time during the day. They were not as motivated to attend professional development that was on “their own time.”

The intermediate teacher participants were more motivated by professional development to attend with colleagues, especially those with whom they were closer in age. Participant 7 said

that she learned a lot from her co-teacher as they were close in age and shared the same values. As a result, she felt that she had the freedom to make changes and take risks as opposed to someone “who had been there for a long time did not want to change or receive help.” The characteristics of veteran colleagues recurred throughout the interviews with intermediate participants. Participant 8 noted that some of his veteran colleagues were not familiar with many technology-based professional development programs. Thus, it did not help them to “sit through them.” Likewise, Participant 10 said:

We have much older staff in our building, so they needed help transitioning over to all the Google tools. Additionally, going back further, there were a lot of the older teachers who were not using Smart Boards yet; they were still using a whiteboard.

Although the veteran participants in this study did not express that they were hesitant to change their practices, the consensus among intermediate teachers was that the veteran teachers were “set in their ways,” or demonstrated an unwillingness to change.

Like veteran teachers, intermediate teachers discussed their hesitation to pursue professional development in their time. Participant 7 expressed that since many of the voluntary, in-district professional development opportunities occur after school, she is unable to attend as she has three children who she tends to after her workday is finished. She said, “my regular life gets in the way of attending those sessions.” Participant 8 shared the concerns and said that parenting and coaching make it difficult to pursue as much professional development as possible. Nonetheless, he seeks out opportunities to learn on his own by reading online articles. He added that if the professional development opportunities are not district-mandated, he is not likely to attend. Still, if it is something that he can engage in after his children have gone to sleep, he will attempt it.

The novice teachers focused less on teacher leadership and supporting colleagues and more on learning and growing; however, Participant 9 had the unique circumstance of becoming a teacher at 50 years old. As a result, he viewed his life experience as an asset that he used to advise his colleagues on the importance of professional growth, something that every novice participant valued. While many of the participants focused their professional development on curriculum-based initiatives and student achievement, the novice teachers' interviews centered more on connecting with their students and meeting their social-emotional needs. Moreover, their motivations seemed to be linked to collaborating with and learning from colleagues.

Summary of Research Question 2

Collaboration, student achievement, choice and teacher input, and receiving resources were professional development needs identified by the participants. Novice, intermediate, and veteran teachers identified similar and different needs through their interviews. While the district surveys teachers and asks for their post professional development feedback, it was unclear if their input is used to drive the programs.

Research Question 3: How Have Past Experiences in Professional Development Affected Teachers' Motivation?

The participants were asked to reflect on positive and negative professional development experiences. Through these, several themes emerged that demonstrated the effects of past experiences on motivation to pursue additional professional development. Among these were: administrative involvement, the Covid-19 professional development response, the overall district professional development program, program follow-through, and positive and negative experiences.

Administrative Involvement

Participants discussed their administrators' involvement in the school's professional development. Participant 1, the district administrator, said that many building level administrators were asked to present professional development, a job primarily done by curriculum and instruction supervisors. These building administrators, according to Participant 1, have a passion for professional development and a desire to give back to their teachers. Each cycle of district professional development is comprised of at least two to three principal presenters. Participant 1 stated that it sends a message that professional development is vital to all stakeholders. As a district administrator, Participant 1 also presents during each cycle to continue to model the best professional development practices. Some of the participants explained that the professional development sessions presented by principals were some of the more positive experiences. Participant 2 attended several sessions where principals presented initiatives that had been piloted in their schools. According to Participant 2, the principals already knew the material and logistics. This knowledge made it, so it was engaging and helpful to see what the initiatives looked like in practice.

In addition to discussing the administration's role in presenting professional development, participants expressed their experiences with administrators attending sessions. Most participants had not participated in a session where their principals or supervisors were present, and their responses varied between positive and negative perceptions. For example, Participant 2 shared that she has attended sessions with supervisors but has experienced late arrivals or lack of focus, such as working on other things. Participant 2 continued:

You feel embarrassed during it, which interferes with me being invested in the material.

I would say principals should not go if they are not interested. It is more beneficial for them not to be there.

Participant 6 shared the same perception of her administrators attending professional development with teachers. The principal had participated in a week-long workshop with staff; however, she did not participate in the first day and arrived late to the following sessions. Participant 6 said it made her feel uncomfortable, which negatively impacted her participation in the session.

While some perceptions of administrator attendance in professional development were negative, others were supportive and positive. Participant 3 understood that her supervisor, who oversees the district fine arts department, has many different roles which are time-consuming. Thus, she understood that her supervisor might not be available to attend sessions. Participant 3 acknowledged that her supervisor always listens to feedback from the department regarding professional development and organizes sessions based on teachers' needs. Participant 12 discussed the importance of administrators attending professional development:

Principals should be attending because they need that knowledge to know how to lead their teachers and improve practice; However, their lack of expertise makes my job more difficult because they do not understand what the expectations are.

Additionally, Participants 4 and 5 found it helpful when administrators attended professional development sessions, discussing that it was both enjoyable and rewarding to engage in discussions and articulation alongside their principals.

Support from supervisors was something that Participant 7 discussed by saying that her direct supervisor, as well as the head of her department, "show up for us." Not only do they

attend sessions, but they grant permission for their teachers to attend follow-up professional development sessions, especially when they see the potential success in practice. Likewise, Participant 13, who belongs to the same department, shared a positive perception about strong administrative support. The supervisor attends many professional development sessions with the teachers, as she likes to learn about new initiatives and brainstorm with the teachers to come up with new ideas. Moreover, Participant 13 explained that often some of the supervisors who attend the sessions have to buy in because it is an initiative that they have implemented.

Covid-19 Professional Development Response

In the Spring of 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic caused the closures of all school districts in New Jersey. As teachers switched from in-person schooling to virtual instruction, they needed to find educational tools that could be implemented virtually. As a result, the district in this study provided opportunities for teachers to participate in professional development on these virtual tools. In the Fall of 2020, schools in New Jersey reopened. Participants were asked to reflect on their professional development experiences prior to the reopening of schools. Participant 1, as the district administrator, switched the professional development program to entirely virtual but feared that engagement would decrease. Enrollment in these virtual programs increased as teachers looked for ways to help their students during the pandemic. The district saw over one thousand registrations for virtual professional development. Participant 1 attributed the increase in enrollment to the flexible schedule of virtual learning. That is, teachers were able to access the programs on their own time.

The participants agreed that offerings during closures from Covid-19 were helpful, and they were motivated to gain as much from them as possible. Participant 2 benefited from the specific learning tools that were offered because she could implement the learning immediately

into her virtual instruction. Participant 3 explained that she and her colleagues learned how to set up virtual classrooms for their various classes through the training offered by the district.

Participant 10 elaborated:

The district was phenomenal with the virtual professional development when we went to remote learning. They said they would continue with the virtual, even when we can go back in person because they saw how well that worked, and a lot of people utilized it.

Despite the resources gathered by some participants, others felt that they would always instead participate in in-person professional development to get the most from the material.

Participant 13 acknowledged the abundance of professional development resources available virtually during the pandemic; however, she was disappointed that it was not continuous. That is, it was a one-time video that she did not feel provided sufficient resources and support for virtual teaching. She said, “we have to have comprehensive training on this stuff. The training cannot be just something that you walk into the library and say, I want to do that with my class. We need serious training.”

Participant 9 said that the district put a lot of effort in ensuring that teachers had the necessary resources to navigate remote learning during Covid-19; however, he said they could have also benefited from professional development on maintaining student engagement:

Student engagement resulting from Covid has been seriously diminished because I was getting 99% of my students were engaged in my work, and they were succeeding. Then we closed on March 13th; I had 35% of the students never contact me a single time. It is not right, and the kids do not benefit from it.

Participant 12 benefited from some of the virtual professional development, but like Participant 9, she felt that some of the programs offered tried to include too much material,

confusing. She noted that some of the presenters did not stay on task, which hindered the presentation and decreased her focus. Table 4.1 shows participants' favorable and unfavorable responses regarding their professional development experiences during the Covid-19 school closures.

Table 4. 1

Participants' Responses to Professional Development During Covid-19 School Closure

Participant	Favorable Responses	Unfavorable Responses
Participant 1 (District Administrator)	“Prior to COVID and remote learning things were really robust. So, when I switched all of our PD to virtual, I was at first like, oh gosh, what if participation dips? It actually went up higher. As of last week, we had close to a thousand registrations just for summer PD.”	
Participant 2	“When we had remote learning, going to professional development sessions that were specifically about virtual learning, how to use tools that I could use in remote learning right then and there were more beneficial to me.”	
Participant 3	“I have heard from other people that there have been some fantastic PD sessions, especially in the most recent weeks with the whole virtual learning. A lot of teachers have had many trainings on setting up the different virtual classroom websites, but I have not tried any of them yet. I'm still struggling to get to know Google classroom, but my district seems to be very current with whatever needs are important at the time.”	
Participant 4		“A lot of the material was shown quickly, and I know that circumstances now don't allow us to meet in person,

Participant 5

but I think there's such a benefit to being in person with people, having that human contact. You know, I went into teaching because I did not want to sit behind a computer all day at a desk. You know, you want to interact and have personal interaction. We also were not compensated for this personal time. So, it was an entire week that, you know, we were not paid a penny and we were expected to be on, to not pay any attention to our families for six hours a day."

"I ask myself, what do I want from PD? I respect it. I know it is important for sure with this upcoming school year. I know they bumped back the start. So there's all this PD for teachers and, I got angry hearing that because I'm still anxious. That is a whole other thing that I'm like, is this going to be in person? Are we going to get the virus getting this PD? I do feel like as a teacher, we're not really being respected or asked how we feel about any of this."

Participant 8

"The things that I learned, I was able to implement, right away whether it was while we were doing some of the remote learning and I was able to send out some of the forms or make quizzes from professional development that was offered. Not only did it make it easier on me, but I think I was able to do a little more instead of just being basic in my questioning. It definitely helped with them."

Participant 9

"We are not allowed to use Zoom with the kids anymore, so now everybody's going to use Google Meet. We are having another PD on Google Meet. How do you transition from Zoom to Google

	<p>Meet? So, all of these technical issues, that because of the world we live in and how fast paced and how fluid everything is right now, it's very difficult to keep up with it. So they're doing their best to keep the professional development on technology, people that are doing these presentations are doing their best to keep up with what the needs of the teachers are, and the district is doing the best I can to keep up with the needs of students.”</p>	
Participant 10	<p>“They were phenomenal with the virtual stuff when we went to remote learning. They even sent out that they're going to continue with the virtual, even when we can go back in person because they saw how well that worked and a lot of people utilized it.”</p>	
Participant 11	<p>“I am always looking for something new, something that's going to stick for me and help me. I've been taking a lot of virtual opportunities. A lot of companies are offering free webinars on Google slides and HyperDocs, so I've been taking some of that stuff.”</p>	
Participant 12		<p>“Based on this past spring, I think the district pulled it together and realized that teachers needed a lot of support with the virtual learning. They did offer many opportunities, some of those sessions were very well organized, usable and user friendly. Some of them went a little off tangent and tried to throw in too much and got very confusing, even for people who knew what they were doing and kind of taking it as a refresher.”</p>
Participant 13		<p>“Over the summer we had tons of PD sessions through, via YouTube on how to use all these different virtual venues. So that was helpful, but again, not so much professional. They were</p>

using in district people that are good, but they're not facilitating that teachers should do this type of thing. It was a little bit of a waste of my time to watch some of these because it didn't help me very much. They are one time videos but it's taped and then you can go back to it if you need to, which is semi helpful.

Through reflection and feedback, Participant 1, the district administrator discussed ways that the district had considered making improvements to their professional development program. He acknowledged that one session might not be long enough to understand the material in-depth but is considering making some sessions double the amount of time.

District Professional Development Program

The participants in this study contributed many details about their district's professional development program. Settings, topics, and practices were discussed, and the impact on the teachers and students. Moreover, participants discussed mandatory and voluntary programs and their motivations and perceptions of them.

District-wide Professional Development Days

Participants differed on their feelings about district-wide professional development days. On these days, students do not attend school, and teachers can choose from several programs to attend throughout the day. These programs are split up into four sections, two occurring in the morning, and two presented in the afternoon. Usually, there are specific locations for each level. For example, elementary teachers attend all their sessions at one of the high school buildings. Participant 1, the district administrator, noted that choosing an ideal location that will meet the needs of teachers takes a lot of planning; however, Participants 3, 5, and 6 discussed the level of

stress associated with attending separate locations for professional development. Since they are in a large district, many teachers attend at one time, which makes parking, navigating the building, and sitting in “uncomfortable” classrooms a negative experience. Participant 6 offered that some district professional development days should allow teachers to stay in their schools.

Many participants discussed that they do not see the benefit of district-wide professional development days. Participant 9 said that the district model is not continuous, as it is usually offered one time. Additionally, he discussed that it would be more beneficial to be held accountable for applying the knowledge. Participant 2 noted that professional development days are long, so by the end, it is difficult to pay attention and focus on the presentations. She also added that people “do not want to be there.” Participant 6 agreed and said that the professional development days feel like they are “one size fits all.” Although there are choices, she felt that the sessions were not specifically tailored to her role as an elementary basic skills teacher. Participants also added that these days feel rushed, as the sessions are short and move quickly. Some participants expressed that they would instead use the time to complete tasks such as grading and planning. Furthermore, participants shared that some of their colleagues will take the day off, so they do not need professional development.

The choice and pace were appreciated by Participants 7 and 13, as they felt it was beneficial to see many sessions and choose what topics they would like to continue exploring. Likewise, Participant 8 noted that it is sometimes challenging to identify professional development needs, so the district’s offerings could serve to engage in various topics of which they would not have otherwise known. Participant 11 said:

I think there is something to be said for learning quickly. We get our learning from a peer, and we can go to something else that interests us. So, you can kind of feel it out and say I am not interested in this, but it is only an hour and 15.

Participant 1 shared his rationale for changes that he made to the district professional development program; he said that he used previous experiences working in a pre-kindergarten through the twelfth-grade program and brought it to the current district plan. The plan included adding to the course options to allow for more choices for teachers. Participant 12 acknowledged that these changes were primarily available to teachers through surveys and feedback on the training teachers wanted to attend.

Teacher Presenters

In-district teachers present most of the programs offered in the district's professional development model. Participants appreciated that their colleagues share knowledge and resources but discussed that these sessions are not always useful. Participant 3 called teacher presentation options repetitive. Participant 11 said:

It is always nice to hear what somebody else does and hear what works for them and get insight in that way, which is a definite strength in our program. The negative is that the same people tend to present repeatedly, and they tend to present the same thing. So, you are stuck taking things you do not want or that look like the best of the worst on the list because no more teachers are participating in presenting.

The repetition was also attributed to programs not being completely tailored to teachers. For instance, Participant 4 said that although they can choose from various programs, the high demand ones fill up quickly, and the district supervisors place teachers in programs that have

room. Participant 5 said that it is stressful trying to get into individual sessions. Thus, they often end up in sessions that they have already attended. Participant 4 added:

Sometimes the district has us sit in sessions because they do not know where else to put us; they are workshops that we have sat through three times before. We must be there because it is during the school day, and that is the session that we were put in a certain cohort to work. I could have read you the program because we have sat through it three times before.

Among the participants, the majority said that they preferred professional development sessions that were presented by experts in their fields.

Out of District Presenters

The participants were asked to discuss positive professional development experiences. Most of them shared sessions which were presented by educators hired from outside the district. Participant 11 said that the intensity of one training made it beneficial. She said that the trainer made the teachers practice and held them accountable for their learning throughout the two-day session. Participants 2, 3, 7, 12, and 13 discussed specific sessions that they were able to attend, where out of district presenters focused on their learning. Mostly, the participants noted that these were engaging and rewarding because they were specifically geared to the attendees.

Moreover, although the district paid to send the teachers to the programs, the teachers had chosen the topics and requested to attend. Participant 13 discussed that when presenting certain topics such as supporting students' social-emotional needs, experts should be invited to present. She felt that these presenters could better plan the presentations, which would increase the level of teacher engagement.

Participant 1 said that in keeping with the district culture of valuing choice and professional development, he could ideally approve every teacher's request to attend out of district programs. Nevertheless, there are "roadblocks" that he cited, which make approval difficult.

If I see an amazing out of district professional learning session for you, and it is \$150 and one penny or more. The board meeting has already passed when you come to me; I cannot approve of you because the code requires board approval if it is over a threshold. So those would be things that hold me back. Not because the district does it, but because it is required. So, I find myself in my role that when the PD request comes through, and it is out of the district, the first question I have to say is the date of the professional session? And then the second question is, how much is it? And it is not to micromanage the money or to say yes or no, but I know that I can only work within those confines.

The participants in this study had experienced approval and denial of out of district professional development, and they discussed that the opportunities to attend sessions that require payment are infrequent.

Follow-Through and Consistency

Every participant in this study discussed the importance of follow-through for continuous professional development. Participant 1 said that he recognized the need to continue to offer programs, especially as new staff, is hired each year. Moreover, Participant 1 acknowledged the need to provide professional development programs offered in the Fall district professional development day to the Spring program. Participant 2 discussed the appeal of refresher courses about her professional development, specifically sessions based on the curriculum.

Although Participant 1, the district administrator, acknowledge that improvements needed to be made in follow-through, this proved to be an area of frustration for the teacher participants in this study. Participant 3 stated that there are no follow-up sessions. Participant 5 agreed:

You are getting two hours on one topic, and then it is never brought up again. It is up to you to implement these things or pursue these things. So if it were up to me, we would be able to pick one or two things that we are particularly interested in and wanted to pursue, and every time we had professional development, it would build further on that.

The follow-up sessions were a priority for Participant 6, who said it would be beneficial for new teachers to receive formal training on their curriculum materials. Presently, all teachers are not getting the same support and resources. Participant 13 experienced a similar situation when the district had an influx of new teachers in one of the high schools. These teachers, according to Participant 13, would have benefitted from professional development on their school attendance and grading program to begin the school year with basic knowledge of an everyday resource. Likewise, the “one and done” method, as referenced by Participant 9, has been mostly employed and is not the way that teachers in the district prefer to receive professional development. He said, “they need to make it ongoing.”

Positive and Negative Professional Development Experiences

Presentation Practices

Participants shared many different experiences with professional development that they found positive and negative. The positive experiences were linked to how easily they could be utilized in practice and how engaging the presentations were. As Participant 1, the district administrator, said, the presenters must be engaging to ensure that teachers do not become bored

and resentful. Through feedback, Participant 1 can identify which presenters could benefit from improving the practice and provide feedback for those presenters. Participant 1 elaborated:

The learning talent cannot come from just one group, but you must have a solid vetting process. So, if you apply now to be a presenter, your application is reviewed. It's a document that talks about what you'd like to present what participants will learn by the end of the session, what training or knowledge you have in this area. After it is approved, I still review the draft or shell of the presentation because I want to have a standard of excellence across the district.

The main issue that participants had with poor experiences was when presenters read off a Powerpoint presentation. Participant 2 said that it is not only about the content; rather, it is about the presentation itself. As Participant 12 described, "reciting PowerPoint presentations would be something that wasn't useful. There is no knowledge gained, no resources that could be applied; it is just there." As Participant 4 discussed, the personal connection to the presenter and colleagues in professional development sessions allow for a more positive experience, which she has not gained from a lecture style of presentation.

Other experiences that participants discussed were those when they were either not provided with resources or they were not given training on complete programs. For example, Participant 6 recalled a workshop where there were no materials to support implementing a schoolwide reading program. Thus, teachers were in a session where the presenter spoke softly, and they were not able to refer to visual aids or materials. She recalled that teachers began to talk throughout the presentation, and some left the room altogether. This experience resulted in a lot of resistance to implement the reading program. On the other hand, Participant 11 had a positive experience during a school-wide initiative, because her entire school attended a three-

day training. Since the teachers were receiving the information at the same time, they could be motivated to work together towards a successful implementation.

Expert Presentations

Despite the negative experiences, Participant 10 had taken best practices from presenters and used them when she presented in-district training, which she discussed was a benefit for her colleagues in attendance. Nonetheless, most of the positive experiences recounted by participants occurred during out of district professional development sessions. Participants 2, 3, 4, 5, and 12 all discussed that their most rewarding experiences for them were ones they attended outside of the district. These also had the highest impact on their students, as they provided the most resources, support, and continuity.

The logistical components such as provided meals, a day “away” from school, and content about their specific roles were additional benefits. Additionally, the presenters in these sessions were experts in their field, and participants felt more confident that they were getting the appropriate information. As Participant 6 said, “this is their thing.” Likewise, Participants 10 and 13 discussed professional development where educators from the state Department of Education worked alongside them to model best practices. The teachers supported this program, as they knew that these educators’ specific roles were to teach best practices. There was a level of trust that increased engagement and motivation.

The motivation to continue to pursue certain professional development topics, according to Participant 7, stems from positive experiences. Participant 7 discussed that from attending a professional development session about working with students with autism, she wanted to immerse herself in the strategies that were discussed. She and her colleague requested to attend, and after being approved, they experienced a rewarding program:

We wanted so badly to do this. So, we left our houses at 5:30 in the morning. We did not get back until seven o'clock at night, but it was awesome, and the presenter was amazing. We just got so much from it, so much so that she had different manuals. So, we took a whole bunch so that we could turnkey and turn it into a presentation, develop information so that we could share and teach everybody what we learned.

Sales Presentations

Some of the participants in this study have attended presentations where companies train staff on their educational materials. The experiences for participants varied between positive and negative. For example, Participant 13 attended professional development for an online textbook, which she found positive because of the resources that were given, which were directly connected to the content. Additionally, Participant 12 benefited from product professional development presentations, as she felt that they showed teachers things that their products were capable of, that they may not have otherwise known.

Professional development product presentations were also frustrating for some of the participants. Participant 8 experienced several, as his school had multiple presentations from the same company. He discussed that these presentations were the same each time they came, with perhaps one or two different components. Moreover, they were for programs that the teachers were not buying into because they felt that the district funds could be used for learning that the teachers identified as needed. Participant 8 noted that with some of these types of presentations, the presenters are not educators. Thus, the teachers are hesitant to trust the content when they know that it is solely to sell a product. These negative connections that he has made to product presentations have resulted in Participant 8 and his colleagues feeling like their time is not respected, thus turning them off using the materials. Participant 12 added that she does not want

to leave these sessions thinking that it was a waste of time; rather, she wants to feel motivated to pursue that learning further.

Summary of Research Question 3

When asked to reflect on past professional development experiences, the themes of administrative involvement, the Covid-19 professional development response, the overall district professional development program, program follow-through, and positive and negative experiences emerged. Participants cited their preferences for certain programs such as expert-led trainings and the negative effects of poor presentation practices and topics that do not relate to their content.

Summary

Chapter 4 discussed the findings of the three research questions. The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' perceptions of their motivations to pursue professional development by analyzing their past experiences, self-identified professional development needs, and what motivates teachers to pursue professional development. This chapter answered the three research questions:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of their motivations to pursue professional development?
2. What do teachers perceive they need from their professional development?
3. How have past experiences in professional development affected teachers' motivation?

This single-subject case study used individual interviews, and catalogs of the district offered professional development to gather the data.

The participants were purposefully selected to participate in the study as the district employed them for four or more years in three different levels (elementary, middle, high school), and would be able to offer answers to the research questions. These teachers volunteered to be a

part of the study by participating in interviews. The participants included four elementary, four middle, four high school teachers, and one district administrator in charge of the professional development program in a large, suburban school district in New Jersey. All 13 educators had varying levels of experience.

In this case study, data were gathered through individual interviews and a catalog of district professional development. The individual interviews were conducted virtually as a result of Covid-19 restrictions and involved only one teacher at a time. The interviews were recorded using the audio-only feature on Zoom with the participants' permission. Specific questions were asked to guide the interviews, but they were semi-structured and conversational. Transcripts of the interviews were analyzed by taking notes, establishing categories based on the notes, finding patterns from the categories, identifying themes within the data, and finding themes across all data sources.

The data showed that teachers perceive that they are motivated by financial compensation, graduate credits or certifications, professional development hours, engaging topics, evaluations, and a mindset that focuses on the benefits of professional development. Participants identified that they needed their professional development to be collaborative, conducive to student achievement, value teacher input and provide choice, supply resources, and focus on the needs of teachers based on their years of teaching experience. As Doubet and Southall (2018) discussed, allowing teachers the freedom to take risks by pursuing professional development that includes philosophy and practice will lead to the achievement of student goals. Likewise, the collective past experiences of participants provided data on teachers' motivations to pursue professional development by highlighting that administrative involvement, the district professional development program, follow-through and continuity of initiatives, and positive and

negative experiences all impact future motivation. Moreover, the data from the interviews showed how Covid-19 affected teachers' motivations to pursue professional development by demonstrating that teachers were more likely to engage in professional development to help maintain students' success during remote instruction. This data is supported by Mohammadi and Moradi's (2017) findings which said that teachers are motivated by professional development programs that address issues that teachers have identified themselves. Ensuring preparation for remote instruction during Covid-19 was cited by all participants as a priority topic for professional development.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this qualitative single-subject case study was to investigate teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development and what they need from their professional development. This study used individual teacher interviews, documented professional development program offerings, and a district administrator interview to determine why teachers pursue or buy into certain professional development programs.

Limited research exists as to why teachers are or are not motivated to pursue professional development (McMillan, McConnell, & O'Sullivan, 2016). Throughout teachers' careers, their motivation to participate in professional development is impacted by how engaging the program is (Durksen et al., 2017). Additionally, these programs must be specifically tailored to their environments. Different types of professional development programs include district-mandated initiatives, colleague collaboration, and articulation, or the implementation of new practices (Durksen et al., 2017). Research has shown that teachers are motivated by workshops led by experts in the field and include opportunities to collaborate with colleagues (Durksen, et al., 2017). Teachers' perceptions of their motivations to pursue professional development must be considered to successfully implement professional development programs that benefit student growth and achievement (Rutherford, Long, & Farkas, 2017). When teachers' educational philosophies correlate with professional development opportunities, they will be motivated to participate and grow professionally (Avidov-Ungar, 2016). The need to examine motivations for professional development programs is vital to the continuous learning of teachers (Durksen et al., 2017).

A case study methodology was used to answer the research questions. Participants in this study were interviewed individually. The teachers were asked questions to gain insight into how

their past professional development experiences, both positive and negative, impacted their motivations to continue pursuing professional development. Creswell (2009) said that open-ended responses give the participants more possibilities for responding. Thus, while being guided by the questions, the interviews followed a semi-structured format as the participants answered. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants and transcribed for analysis.

The data were analyzed from the interview transcripts, and an inductive analysis approach was used. The analysis procedure included: taking notes in the margins of the transcripts, creating categories based on the notes, and highlighting patterns from the categories. Categories were created to summarize the data and then depict the main themes (McCracken, 1998).

Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the findings, the implications for practice, recommendations for further research, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study, and conclusions. The results indicated that teachers perceive their motivations to pursue professional development: benefitting their students, increasing student achievement, and making them feel valued as educators by tailoring programs to their contents and interests while being mindful of their time. Moreover, the results showed the impact of past professional development experiences, whether positive or negative, on future motivation.

Review of Procedures

A single-subject qualitative case study approach was utilized, resulting in the collection of qualitative data. First, qualitative data was gathered through individual teacher and district administrator interviews and evaluated the factors that impacted teachers' participation in professional development programs and initiatives. Second, documented district professional

development offerings were analyzed to see how the program is structured and to provide a clearer picture of the types of sessions the district teachers have experienced. Three research questions guided the research of this study. These questions included:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of their motivations to pursue professional development?
2. What do teachers perceive they need from their professional development?
3. How have past experiences in professional development affected teachers' motivation?

Three major themes were identified: Teacher motivators for professional development, teachers' professional development needs, and the effect of past professional development experiences on motivation.

Research Question 1: What Are Teachers' Perceptions of Their Motivations to Pursue Professional Development?

The qualitative results of this study add to the research by Khan et al. (2016), which found that teachers need significant professional development that makes them feel respected and compensated. Khan et al. (2016) found that professional development programs must meet all teachers' needs while keeping motivations and preferences in mind. In addition to the research by Khan et al. (2016), this study identified six factors that teachers perceived as impacting their motivation to pursue professional development. These factors included: compensation, acquiring graduate credits or certifications, earning professional development hours, attending programs with engaging topics, earning high teacher evaluations, and maintaining a positive mindset while participating in professional development. Ultimately, if teachers' perceptions of programs included components that made them feel valued and respected, they were more inclined to pursue additional sessions.

This study's findings indicated that understanding what teachers perceive as motivating factors to pursue professional development is essential to maintaining high levels of teacher engagement in programs. The data showed that if districts consider factors that can motivate teachers to not only participate in but also focus on professional development, they may have higher levels of participation and buy-in from teachers, which can result in improved student achievement. According to the respondents, teachers want to feel valued and respected as professionals, whether it is through compensation, feedback, providing relevant information, or programs that are tailored to their content. Since the district administrator interviewed in this study acknowledged that they had removed financial compensation from their professional development program, it would be recommended that the administrators meet with teacher representatives to discuss the benefit of reimplementing it. Providing opportunities for teachers to pursue professional development programs that compensate them financially, with graduate credits or professional development hours, can shift teachers' perceptions and impact mindsets and participation.

Professional development topics should be engaging and identified by the teachers as necessary to support their students. For instance, Participant 1 noted a large increase in teacher motivation during the Covid-19 remote learning period. The increase can be attributed to teachers being motivated by supporting their students in a virtual context. Additionally, participants in this study identified a need for professional development on culturally responsive teaching. They pursued their own professional development by finding research and practices to implement in their classrooms. The district attempted to support the push for culturally responsive teaching through the purchase of a book for every teacher; however, the book was not identified and had not been distributed. The lack of professional development on culturally

responsive teaching supplied by the district supports the participants' responses about a lack of follow-through in their professional development program.

Considering teachers' perceptions of what makes them feel valued requires understanding professional development's effects on motivation (Appova & Arbaugh, 2018). This study supports the notion that teachers will pursue programs that promote a positive mindset toward professional growth through topics that directly apply to the content being taught. There is a potential to earn something, such as high evaluations or compensation. For example, one participant only pursued sessions that provided financial compensation; another participant is pursuing a post-graduate certification paid for by the district. Another expressed the need for training that addressed the specific components of teacher evaluations. These factors that teachers perceive motivate them to pursue professional development influence participation in programs.

Research Question 2: What Do Teachers Perceive They Need from Their Professional Development?

Teachers need to see that their students will benefit from their professional development. As stated in Chapter 2, many educators' goal is to improve instructional practices to improve student achievement (Noonan, 2019). This study supported Noonan's (2019) findings and added that teachers prefer collaborative programs that include resources and the ability for teachers to choose their professional development. Moreover, there were differences between the professional development needs of novice teachers (1 to 10 years), intermediate teachers (11 to 20 years), and veteran teachers (21 years and over). For example, for veteran and intermediate teachers, the time of day of the professional development sessions was a priority; however, for novice teachers, their focus was collaborating with colleagues. Years of experience

is significant in determining teachers' professional development motivations, needs, and preferences. The higher the years of experience, the more motivated the teacher will continue growing professionally (Bautista, Toh, & Wong, 2018). Bautista, Toh, and Wong's (2018) findings were supported in the study, as the veteran participants all expressed the desire to continue learning. These responses indicated that being aware of the different needs of teachers is imperative in motivating participation.

Wan-Shuai et al. (2019) discussed that teachers value professional development when they find the benefit for their students. Participants in this study had the common goal of supporting their students and ensuring that their academic goals were met. For instance, Participant 1, the district administrator, planned a professional development district program to provide the improvement of student achievement. Moreover, participants agreed that when teachers feel that professional development is a productive way to support their students, the benefits will be evident in the instructional practices and student achievement. Teachers must be able to choose and identify their professional development based on their needs and preferences.

Mohammadi and Moradi (2017) argued that teachers are more motivated to participate in professional development when it is something that they have chosen based on a self-identified need in their classrooms. The findings of this study align with Mohammadi and Moradi. The results indicated that when teachers choose professional development sessions to attend voluntarily, they are more likely to implement the learning into their practice. They are more likely to continue to participate in professional development programs that follow similar guidelines. The district in this study implemented teacher evaluations following professional development workshops. The district administrator reported that he reads all of the evaluation feedback to ensure quality professional development that meets the needs of the teachers;

however, the participants in the study discussed that they have yet to see their feedback integrated into their programs. These dissonant views would be an opportunity to improve the professional development program by forming committees of teachers and administrators to ensure that the input is utilized.

Yurtseven (2017) said that teachers should be provided with resources to continue implementing their professional development into their instruction. Programs that provide materials and resources for teachers to immediately implement following a professional development session allow students to benefit from what the teacher has learned. Moreover, this study showed that teachers feel that providing resources and teaching materials at professional development sessions makes maximum use of teachers' planning time, as they are readily prepared with materials.

Research Question 3: How Have Past Experiences in Professional Development Affected Teachers' Motivation?

Wan-Shuai et al. (2019) linked professional development with behaviors and mindset. Likewise, this study showed that teachers' past experiences, whether positive or negative, will impact their motivation to pursue professional development. Administrative involvement, the district professional development program, and whether or not there is follow-through following the professional development all play a role in affecting motivation. Moreover, teachers' professional development experiences during the closures due to Covid-19 impacted their learning as they prepared for the school year.

When schools were forced to switch to remote instruction during the Spring of 2020, teachers were required to plan their lessons using many online resources. Without sufficient time for planning and professional development, districts offered resources and sessions while

school was occurring. The participants in this study, while all affected by the closures, had different perceptions about their district's response to Covid-19. Table 3.1 shows the favorable and unfavorable feedback regarding professional development during remote schooling. Most participants noted that the district offered many opportunities to learn about different online resources that could be used for instruction. These responses were consistent with the findings that teachers are motivated to pursue professional development when it benefits their students, and when teachers identify needs specific to their classrooms. Participants felt unfavorably regarding the one-time videos offered for professional development during Covid-19, which coincided with the findings in this study that participants felt their district professional development program lacked follow-through.

Participants in this study discussed both positive and negative professional development experiences. Positive experiences mostly included expert-led sessions where teachers were provided resources for their students. Additionally, teachers valued programs that were specific to their content. For example, participants 2 and 3 both cited experiences that focused on early childhood development and instrumental music. Moreover, negative experiences included being placed in mandatory sessions that did not pertain to the teachers. Participant 5 discussed that as a special education resource room teacher, she attended sessions focused on science and social studies when she is a language arts and math teacher. Not only does this negatively affect teachers' focus, but it results in a negative mindset toward district-mandated professional development, as these are the instances that placed teachers in random programs.

Kindall, Crow, and Elsass (2018) found that teachers value the expertise of their administrators. Likewise, participants in this study cited that they learned a lot and had positive experiences when administrators presented district-mandated professional

development. Reasons included that when giving new district initiatives, administrators had logistical knowledge of these programs in practice. Thus, teachers were engaged and focused on learning. Although participants in this study valued administrative presentations and expertise, they had not had much experience with supervisors attending training alongside teachers. Moreover, this was viewed as a way to “keep tabs” on teachers and was perceived unfavorably.

Teachers benefit from expert strategies, model lessons, and ongoing support throughout the year, and have difficulty implementing their learning from one-time professional development sessions (Kindall, Crow, & Elsass, 2018). This study supported this idea through participants’ responses regarding their district professional development program. Though participants agreed that they were given many choices to choose their professional development, they discussed little to no follow-through on these programs. Often, their district professional development consists of one-time workshops. Participants in this study expressed the need to have continuous opportunities to learn, implement, and reflect on the learning to maximize student achievement and professional goals. Using the idea of follow-through to design professional development effectively and improve student achievement is essential for improving programs (Kindall, Crow, & Elsass, 2018).

Implications for Practice

This study took place in a large school district serving approximately 11,695 students with a 12-to-1 student-teacher ratio, and 14.7% of teachers employed in their first or second year of teaching. The district’s director of curriculum and instruction and the curriculum supervisors for each content area in the elementary and secondary divisions are responsible for planning and implementing the district’s professional development program. Moreover, the director of

curriculum and instruction is tasked with approving any out-of-district professional development requests. Throughout a typical school year, teachers must participate in two district-wide professional development days. Furthermore, there is a catalog of offerings in which teachers can participate voluntarily.

The findings of this study revealed that teachers are motivated to pursue professional development when they can determine that it will positively affect their students. This includes being supplied with resources, ensuring it is on-going, and being a valuable use of their time. Not allowing teachers the appropriate amount of time, resources, and support will impede the effectiveness of the professional development program (McCray, 2018).

These results indicate a need for allowing teachers to identify their own needs and choose the professional development sessions they are to attend to maximize the level of engagement and growth. With minimal research on teacher motivation for professional development, planning, and implementing effective professional development programs should include teacher input. Including teacher input in the planning of professional development programs will improve the learning, maintain engagement, and increase student growth (Gomez & Ford, 2017). District administrators charged with programming can survey, interview, or ask teachers for feedback. Thus, topics, personal preferences, and presentation styles can be considered in the planning process.

It is essential to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' motivations to effect student success directly. Teachers should be compensated and empowered to continue professional development by providing them with the necessary resources that they identify (Yurtseven, 2017). Training resources and current, innovative professional development practices must be included to motivate teachers and ensure professional growth.

District administrators and educational organizations that provide professional development must research teachers' motivation to comprehend and improve professional development programs and increase teachers' participation. Moreover, they must take account of meetings teachers' needs through their programs to ensure that the learning affects the students. Understanding why teachers participate in professional development will lead to implementing programs that encourage teachers to join. Closely aligning professional development programs with what teachers identify as their needs and preferences can increase participation will improve practice and student achievement.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study included participants from only one large school district in New Jersey that serves a diverse student population. Broadening the study to include more school districts across the country is recommended. Interviewing teachers in various districts across the United States will strengthen the results of the study by including more teachers from districts that vary in size, location, student populations, and demographics. Teacher interviews would provide a deeper understanding of whether or not district practices and policies and demographics affect teachers' motivation to pursue professional development. Additionally, including teachers' years of experience is recommended in the interview portion of the study. Knowing whether the participants are novice, intermediate, or veteran teachers impacts their perceptions of motivations to pursue professional development. A longitudinal study is also recommended to determine how perceptions and motivations change throughout teachers' careers.

Another recommendation is to interview building principals in the district, as much of the professional development experiences in this study included learning within individual schools such as faculty meetings. Additionally, it is recommended to examine the responses to Covid-19

remote instruction and culturally responsive teaching by schools in other areas of the country. For example, districts in the Northeast can study the practices on the West Coast. A final recommendation is to study the differences between general education teachers in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies versus special education teachers and specialists such as Music, Art, and Technology teachers. Studying these differences could help determine how differences in smaller departments affect experiences and feelings of value in-district professional development programs.

Limitations

There were limitations in this study related to the research design. Since this was a qualitative study, the research was based on the environments where the teachers experience most of their professional development. Thus, replication may be difficult, or it may require further research to determine if it can be replicated. A limitation of this study was that the teachers' perceptions are not generalizable to all teachers. The teachers who participated in this study worked in the same district, so many of their perceptions were district-specific. For example, the district in this study frequently uses teacher presenters, which were frequently mentioned by participants; however, this may not be a practice used in all school district programs. Another limitation was that while there were many volunteers from the elementary level, the middle and high school volunteers were minimal. With only four for middle and four for high school, the teacher content area choices were limited. For instance, four secondary participants were special education teachers, while two were specialists in music and technology. Thus, professional development experiences could have differed from their general education colleagues. It is unknown if the sample of the study is relative to the whole population of teachers who work in this district.

Delimitations

The district used in this study and the participants were delimitations. Since participants taught in kindergarten through twelfth grade in the same district, their perceptions were specific to their experiences in that district. Thus, generalizability may have been limited based on the location of the district, individual experiences, philosophies, and demographics of the district. Findings from this study demonstrated a need to study teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development in different settings and topics.

Since I was previously employed in the district where the interviews were conducted, and I was a colleague of the participants, the established personal relationships could have affected the answers given by the participants. Reflexivity was used to minimize the likelihood that responses would be affected by previous collegial relationships. Furthermore, I remained neutral and assured participants of confidentiality. This district was included for convenience. Another delimitation was years of teaching experience. The minimum years of experience required to participate in the study were four years in the district since teachers in New Jersey are tenured after four years. The minimum experience requirement ensured that there would be a substantial amount of experience to use as a reference. Only teachers and one district administrator were used in the study to focus only on teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to pursue professional development. The district administrator interviewed was in charge of the entire professional development program. No other staff members or students participated.

Summary of the Study

Based on the results from this study, teachers are motivated by receiving resources that can be used in instruction, strategies, and practices that improve student achievement, and feeling that their administrators value their time and expertise. Past experiences with professional

development shape these perceptions. Participants 4 and 12 valued anything that could be immediately implemented into their practice, while Participant 7 expressed that she sought out many opportunities on her own to enrich her students' educational experiences. Every participant in this study expressed the desire to feel valued when it came to their past and future professional development experiences. Many felt that their time needed to be valued by mandating less required professional development and allowing more time for collaboration. Additionally, participants wanted to feel valued by attending professional development specific to their content and practice as opposed to being placed in a random session because there are no specific sessions available.

Conclusions

Student achievement is directly linked to professional development (Claudia, 2015). Thus, to ensure that teachers continue to pursue professional development opportunities, it is essential to understand what factors motivate them and to provide guidance to effectively prepare programs (Biggsby & Firestone, 2017). The findings in this study were consistent with the research on professional development and teacher motivation. First, Cooper (2019) found that teachers' educational philosophies and expertise are shaped through their experiences. Likewise, the participants in this study noted how positive and negative professional development experiences drove their choices to pursue future programs.

Novice, intermediate, and veteran participants in this study noted some differences in what motivated them to pursue professional development. For instance, intermediate teachers discussed not pursuing sessions outside of working hours, while veteran teachers said that they were motivated by the potential to learn things that they could use to teach their colleagues. Bautista, Toh, and Wong (2018) found that veteran teachers are the most motivated to learn,

which coincided with the veteran participants in this study. Moreover, these findings were consistent with Kindall, Crow, and Elsass's (2018) research which showed that it is beneficial for teachers to learn from the strategies of expert colleagues and receive continuous feedback rather than obtain instruction from one-time programs.

Colleague collaboration strategies and needs for professional development can be used to create professional development that will positively impact student achievement (Kindall, Crow, & Elsass, 2018). The findings in this study demonstrate that teachers are motivated by any professional development that directly and positively impacts their students' success. Moreover, collaboration was frequently identified as a positive component of professional development.

Bautista, Toh, and Wong (2018) discussed that teachers' specializations should be considered, as the motivations and needs may be different than teachers in other content areas. Participants in this study frequently noted that many times, they were placed in random professional development sessions, because no sessions that were specific to their content were offered. Moreover, research shows that there is no such thing as one-size-fits-all professional development program and placing teachers in these programs will not result in teacher growth (Bautista, Toh, & Wong, 2018). Participants in this study would benefit from collaborating with department colleagues on content specific areas, rather than attend a mandated session that may not be relevant to their specializations. Implementing grade-level targeted professional development that focuses on specific teachers' needs would be more beneficial to growth (Kindall, Crow, & Elsass, 2018). Additionally, district administrators and teachers should collaborate to determine the most effective way to integrate teacher input into their program. According to the data from the interviews, although teachers are asked for feedback, it is not always reflected in their professional development program.

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of what motivates them to engage in professional development, and what they need for their professional development in terms of models, times, and whether the learning can be applied to teachers' classrooms. Using a qualitative case study research design, I explored teachers' perceptions of what motivates them and what they need from professional development. Through in-depth data collection, including teacher interviews, a district administrator interview, and a list of professional development programs provided by the district, conclusions were drawn. Based on the data, various components were linked, and I was able to determine their effects on each other.

The data collected indicated that teachers are motivated to pursue professional development when it benefits their students, provides them with resources and materials, values their time, and allows them to identify a need for and choose their programs. Differences between the motivations of novice, intermediate, and veteran teachers to pursue professional development were also found.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Teacher Interview Questions

- District Implemented professional development: professional development that has been chosen by district administrators with mandated directives.
 - Self-selected professional development- In or out of district professional development chosen/implemented by teacher.
1. Consider your three best professional development experiences. They can include different or like content and/or formats. Why did these experiences have such a positive impact? What made them effective and memorable, or how did it impact your instruction?
 2. In reflecting on these positive experiences, how has the knowledge gained impacted your students' successes?
 3. What made those professional development experiences successful? Or what did you like best about those sessions?
 4. When reflecting on these experiences, how do they compare to other professional development sessions that your school district provides? (times held, in person/virtual, topic, compensation, etc.)
 5. Now think about your three least satisfactory experiences with professional development. Explain why these left a negative impact on your experience or how specifically did the content not meet your needs as a teacher.
 6. In your opinion, what are the strengths of your district's professional development program? What improvements can be made?

7. Do you feel your experience would be different if teacher input were integrated into district-driven professional development? Explain.
8. How do you feel that having professional development on school days and getting a sub versus having designated non-student days differ in your professional development experience?
9. Describe your ideal schedule and how to plan topics for professional development on an annual basis?
10. Anything else you would like to share about professional development?
(administrative follow through; administrator knowledge of topics covered in professional development; do the principals attend the professional development sessions with you?)

Appendix B: Administrator Interview Questions

1. As the teacher interview results are shared with you, how do you reflect on the findings?
2. How do your own experiences with professional development impact your decisions on district professional development?
3. How have they impacted your teachers' successes in reflecting on these experiences and the resulting professional development decisions?
4. How much do logistics such as times held, in person/virtual, topic, compensation, factor into your decisions of what programs to offer/require?
5. Have you experienced professional development topics, programs, or anything else that did not meet your teachers' needs or result in lower engagement/buy-in levels?
6. In your opinion, what are the strengths of your district's professional development program? What improvements can be made?
7. Do you feel your experience would be different if teacher input were integrated into district-driven professional development? Explain.
8. Anything else you would like to share about professional development?
(administrative follow-through; administrator knowledge of topics covered in professional development; do the principals attend the professional development sessions with teachers?)