PRACTICES IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
DOES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ENHANCE TEACHER EDUCATION?

by

DALILA MIHIC VROOM

B. Arts., The University of British Columbia, 1988
B. Ed., The University of British Columbia, 1990

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Department of Social and Educational Studies

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

September 1996

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of _Educational Studies_

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date _Oct. 4/96_

DE-6 (2/88)

PRACTICES IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:
DOES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ENHANCE TEACHER EDUCATION?

by

DALILA MIHIC VROOM

B. Arts., The University of British Columbia, 1988
B. Ed., The University of British Columbia, 1990

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Department of Social and Educational Studies

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

....

....

....

....

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

September 1996

© Dalila Mihic Vroom, 1996

ABSTRACT

Using ethnographic research methods, this study examined a group of elementary teachers' immediate and past perspectives on professional development based on their personal experiences. The study explored the teachers' conceptions of education and professional development. It analyzed the teachers' specific professional development needs and situations and attempted to provide some insights into what they believed is occurring in one British Columbia school district.

The guiding research question was: Does professional development enhance teacher education? All of the teachers interviewed firmly believed that their professional development endeavors did enhance their education. The guiding research question was followed by interviews which centered upon four sets of thematic questions dealing with education and professional development.

The results of these interviews provided the findings that: education was defined on a personal level, separate from the teachers' jobs, and professional development was defined as inservice or training. The teachers seemed to equate professional development with workshops / courses and thus, failed to realize the scope and options which were possible to them as various forms of professional development such as: networks, collaboratives, district / university partnerships, teacher as researcher and practical inquiry. Teachers seemed unaware of the latest professional development innovations which may signify that they may not be accessing educational journals or professional libraries.

Overall, it was evident that the teachers interviewed needed and wanted to engage in collective experiences that would reflect in their practice and would not be limited to curricular inservice.

This study provides insights about teachers' professional development and in turn their conceptions of education. Building on the study, researchers might explore a number of research questions, including: Are there any criteria as to what counts as "good" professional development? How can dialogues be established between the researchers and the teachers? What needs to occur in order for a change to happen whereby the teachers' visions become a reality so that they will be able to reflect on varied viewpoints which may in turn change, enhance or validate their classroom practice?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my immense gratitude to all of those who made my dream, the completion of my Master's Thesis, possible:

First, to the members of my graduate committee, to **Dr. Gaalen Erickson** and **Dr. Tom Sork**, for their helpful suggestions and remarks about my writing; and especially to **Dr. David Coulter** who took me on as a graduate student and who persevered with me through many drafts. I will always be grateful for his wisdom, guidance, suggestions, but most of all his patience and availability.

Second, to **Maria Mihic**, my mother, for her positive encouragement and never-ending faith. To **Eva Wieczorek**, my dear friend and colleague, for her on-going assistance and proficient contributions all of which were impossible to measure.

Third, to **Vlatko Milkovich**, my brother-in-law, for his expert computer advice / skills. To the **Mission teachers**, for offering their valuable time for participating in the research study and to **School District #75** and the **Mission Teachers Union** for granting and supporting my Educational Leave.

But most importantly, **Robert Vroom**, my husband, for his endless patience, continued support and understanding throughout my whole masters program.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

THE PROBLEM

The field of education is a dynamic one that is constantly being reevaluated both internally and externally. Though some of the recent changes seemed politically rather than educationally motivated, the individual teacher must remain current with the innovations and incorporate them into his / her practice in a personalized manner in order to improve their classroom for the students. Thus, teachers must have the opportunity to choose and design their professional development in order to internalize the innovations and learn to adapt them in a style that is most effective. Though education involves enabling the students to function within society it is up to the teachers to interpret what this means. Though learning outcomes are, more and more, being mandated, the vehicles through which they are delivered are not. Therefore, professional development should provide teachers with the opportunity to reflect on their practice in a way that is consistent with their beliefs about education.

Continuous development of all teachers is the cornerstone for improvement and reform (Fullan, 1991, p. 315). Professional development and school development are inextricably linked. Teachers' professional development has been conceptualized as an on-going, life-long endeavor, as "the sum total of formal and informal learning experiences throughout one's career from preservice teacher education to retirement" (Fullan, 1991,

p. 326). Teachers' professional development has been examined from different perspectives, some looking at its relationship to teaching quality, school improvement and student achievement, others at its policies and practices, yet others focusing on factors that constrain and factors that enhance the opportunities for professional development (for example, Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Lieberman, 1995, Richardson, 1994; Cohen & Ball, 1990; Lieberman & Miller, 1990; Zeichner, 1991).

The above mentioned studies examine teacher professional development in a context of educational change. They acknowledge the fact that professional development for teachers must be reformed along with other educational reforms. They analyze those factors that provide new and alternate means of successful teacher professional development, and those factors which confine them. However, there is a need for a study which will delve into teacher's thoughts in order to determine *their* conceptions, attitudes and idealizations of education through professional development. This short term study examines teachers' immediate, and past, perspectives on professional development based on their personal experiences. It is important to note that most of the teachers interviewed seemed to view professional development as a set of programs / workshops rather than as an ongoing process. Thus, workshops, conferences, self directed inquiries etc. became synonymous with professional development whether or not it developed the participant professionally. This study analyzes teachers' specific professional development needs and situations and provides some insights into what is indeed occurring in the educational system.

THE STUDY

The following sections describe the study under the headings: the purpose, background, research questions, significance, method, and analysis of the study.

A. The Purpose of the Study

Professional development is referred to as "one of the most promising and powerful routes to growth on the job, to combating boredom and alienation, to school improvement, and to satisfaction , [which] has gotten a bad name due to poor experiences of past inservice which were not relevant to meet all of the changes"(Fullan, 1991, p. 318). However, people still seem to pin their faith on its potential, probably because it makes such obvious, intuitive sense (Fullan, 1991). Yet, after any professional development there never seems to be any kind of follow through as to its effectiveness. Do teachers tend to return to their familiar ways of doing things, or to practice the new ways privately so as not to expose their own inadequacies to peers and supervisors? Are teachers more satisfied with their efforts and attempts to put ideas into practice when there is a convenient source of help or when they are able to share in the event that problems are encountered? Do teachers feel that they are lone innovators? Does professional development contribute to accomplishing the teacher's educational intentions?

It seems ironic that a profession that is geared to major innovations in methodology, to encourage students to learn material and to develop to their fullest potential cannot seem to utilize these same principles to educate themselves. Basically,

professional development as it is now is mostly based on "do as I say" rather than "do what I do"; whereas, optimum learning takes place through modeling, sharing of experiences and through reinforcements within a time frame that varies from individual to individual. For this thesis, the ideal model of professional development of teachers is defined as ways to enhance and enable change through innovation in educational skills, practices, and understandings.

The purpose of the study is to understand elementary teachers' conceptions and ideals about education and the role that professional development plays within it. It is a short term project involving interviews with seven elementary teachers and discusses their experiences, attitudes and beliefs on this topic. This study has implications for the literature on teacher development and for the literature on educational reform. Its significance is in enriching the knowledge about professional development practices of elementary teachers, their perceptions of ideal models of professional development and whether current research is evident in the manner of its delivery.

B. Background of the Study

British Columbia's teachers have been faced with constant change within their profession over the last few years. *The Year 2000* (B.C. Ministry of Education, 1990) was a major change in education whose implementation began in the late 1980s. It altered basic concepts that dealt with the learner and learning, curriculum, assessment and evaluation. Before this program could be fully implemented a provincial election changed

the direction of the educational reforms. The Year 2000 name was dropped and aspects of it were replaced with other modifications, especially those that dealt with evaluation. Aspects dealing with curriculum were also reevaluated and the *Integrated Resource Packages*, known as IRPs, were mandated in 1995. The IRP is a functional overview document that provides some of the basic information that teachers require in order to implement a course such as Science, Math and Personal Planning (B.C. Ministry of Education, 1995). A common feeling amongst teachers was that just when they felt comfortable with a new policy, the ministry made another change. The expectations for reform became confused with conflicting expectations, mixed messages and chaos (Wideen, 1994, p. 1). Teachers have to find ways to personalize the changes and interpret them in a manner that will enhance their abilities as teachers in their classrooms. This study tries to understand the degree to which this is accomplished through professional development.

C. The Research Question

The purpose of this study is to understand teachers' conceptions and idealizations about education and the role that professional development plays within it. The research questions focus on the complex and significant concept of teachers' professional development. The following question will guide the research: How does professional development enhance teacher education? This research question will be addressed by examining the form and content of the responses from the interviews. The interviews are centered around the following thematic questions:

1. What does education mean to you? What does professional development mean to you? How are they connected?

2. What is the purpose of professional development? Do you feel that the professional development available to you today addresses your concerns and interests in education? Explain.

3. Describe your best and worst professional development experience. Why do you think it was effective or ineffective?

4. Do you agree with this statement, "studies show that most professional development activities do not lead to change in practice." Why or why not?

D.   Significance of the Study

Many of the studies about change processes or reform within schools tend to refer to the need for teachers to rethink their own practice and for teachers to move away from the conventional, unconnected way of learning through direct teaching to learning both inside and outside of schools by being involved in individual, collegial and communal learning (Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Lieberman; 1995). Moreover, many existing studies describe the difficulties and complexities of bringing about change within the school and end up by summarizing the factors that need to be taken into account (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992; Fullan, 1991; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Richardson, 1990; Lieberman, 1992; Hammond, 1993). However, because these factors are interconnected, simply identifying these factors and attempting to take them into account has not always resulted in effective changes. The focus of the research pertaining to change has moved from viewing teachers as recalcitrant and resistant to change to examining the structure of the organization and personal attributes of teachers that affect whether or not they implement new practices.

This study has implications for the literature pertaining to teachers' conceptions of professional development and education, since it identifies the teacher's conceptions of professional development and the role they play in contributing to the teacher's educational intentions. Studies make reference to clashing policies, layered dictates, competing paradigms and the shortchanging of resources (Hammond, 1992; Wideen, 1994). Other studies promise models for connecting school renewal and the reform of teacher education through teacher as researcher, school / university partnerships and collaboratives / networks (Lieberman & Miller, 1990; Lieberman, 1992; Lieberman and McLaughlin, 1992). Based on seven teacher's conceptions, perspectives and attitudes about professional development, the analysis of the data extends the above mentioned notions further by trying to understand the degree to which actual teachers' are or are not showing evidence that the current research is being actualized within the classroom in a manner which effects the students.

E. Research Methods

This case study describes elementary teachers' conceptions, issues and concerns about professional development. This qualitative research consists of one primary method of data collection - interviews. The participants were interviewed once and the interviews were tape recorded. In this study, the researcher was the interviewer.

The site of the study was the School District #75 (Mission), which is located in a small rural area of British Columbia, Canada. Actual interviews took place at the teachers' preference of time and location.

F. Data Analysis

The tapes from the interviews were transcribed and analyzed. The analysis of the data were based on grouping and coding the transcripts according to common themes. Groupings may change as new categories emerge. Decisions about the coding and grouping were made on the basis of the literature about teachers' professional development. To avoid bias and misinterpretation of the data and to verify the categories and themes the participants were asked to respond to early drafts of the thesis.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CHAPTERS

There are five chapters in this study. The first three chapters lay out the foundation upon which the study was based. They include the introduction (Chapter One), literature review (Chapter Two), and methodology (Chapter Three). Chapter Four focuses on the teacher interviews. It examines and analyses the personal perspectives of the participants. Lastly, Chapter Five discusses the conclusions and recommendations of this study, and suggests implications for further research about teachers' professional development.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines three bodies of literature which pertain to teachers and learning. The first deals with why teachers have to learn. It focuses on a background of understanding education through professional development, the Year 2000, shifts in education and establishing provincial goals through IRPs. The second deals with how teachers learn. It focuses on established models of teacher development and includes the following sections: effective vs. ineffective education efforts, supports for teacher learning, opposing school reform theories, funding cutbacks, teacher knowledge and skill development models, understanding how professional development occurs and what affects it. Finally, the third section deals with changes that would enhance the ways that teachers could, and some feel should, learn. This section redefines the structure of teacher learning into two general models - the teacher as researcher and networks. The teacher as researcher model also includes practical inquiry. The network model also includes peer coaching and mentoring, collaboratives and partnerships.

Why Teachers Learn: Educational Change and Challenge

A. Background

Education is not a static discipline, rather it is a normative concept dependent on a particular society. Education

> ... is concerned with the sort of learning that a person requires *qua* person and not just in some specific capacity. It will consist in the development of those forms of awareness and skills which he/she will require generally in facing the various facets of the human condition in the natural, interpersonal, and socio-economic worlds which he has to inhabit.
>
> (Peters, 1983, p. 42-43)

Thus, the purpose of educating children involves "initiating the young into sharing the norms, values, and commitments that govern social life and determine both the distinctive identity of the group and of the individual within it" (Egan, 1992, p. 642). Furthermore, "education is really about how best to live in our society and therefore, is inevitably concerned with questions of worth and value" (M.A.S.S. Discussion Paper, 1991, p. 3). Society sets the expected norms and educators interpret them. Moreover, the concept of education can also be viewed as

> ... the provision of means to fellow human beings enabling them to structure their experience in ways that continually enlarge knowledge, reasonable belief, understanding, autonomy, authenticity, and sense of place in the past, present, and future of the human race.
>
> (Fenstermacher, 1986)

Basically, as Kieran Egan (1992, p. 642) so succinctly puts it, "*education* is ... a rather messy concept." This "messy concept" is what teachers are expected to deal with on a daily basis and thus, they must be able to define and redefine, for themselves, what

education means. This study focuses on one manner in which to do this - professional development.

To fulfill the notion of education, teachers are constantly learning. According to theorists, in order to educate students, teachers need to: (a) socialize students to prevailing social norms and values (Durkheim, 1956), (b) ensure that students accumulate significant knowledge to attain a truer view of the world and experience (in Egan, 1992) and (c) fulfill the potential of each stage of life in accord with ones natural development (in Egan, 1992). Further, in order to be effective, teachers need to keep themselves current in the many different educational practices that occur simultaneously with change. In order to personalize the manner in which the changes occur within their own classrooms, teachers also need to choose and design their professional development. Educational changes may be mandated by the ministry of education and the school board, but the manner in which they are delivered is not. Thus, professional development provides teachers with the choice, and that choice is based on the teacher's notion of education both of their students and of themselves.

The province of British Columbia has undergone tremendous educational changes in the last few years which teachers have had to adapt to with varying degrees of success. Between 1987 and 1988, Sullivan (B.C. Ministry of Education and Sullivan, 1988) conducted the Royal Commission study and *The Report of the Royal Commission on Education* was published. This report, based on information gathered from students, parents, teachers, administrators and ministry officials, presented a mission statement:

"the purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy" (B.C. Ministry of Education, 1989, p. 6). This report contained 83 recommendations on how the education system could be improved and provided the impetus towards the changes which are still being made in the educational system in British Columbia today. The response to the Sullivan report is the *Year 2000.*

B. The Year 2000

Wideen (1994) states that the *Year 2000: A Curriculum and Assessment Framework for the Future* was a program based on a progressive philosophy of student-centered learning based upon the Sullivan Report (which became a ministry directive in 1988). Though some would argue that the Year 2000 was not entirely reflective of the Sullivan Report, the argument became moot with a change of government in the spring of 1994. The Premier of the province, Mike Harcourt, called for a 'back to the basics' move. This was yet another shift in government notions of what education is. Though the whole premise of the Year 2000 was not totally ignored, many changes occurred when the name was dropped. For instance, instead of just reporting to parents through detailed anecdotal accounts of student progress in a report card, letter grades were also added for grades 4-7 in the elementary program. Thus, the extensive feedback from teachers, parents and ministry officials, which had been "diluted" from the Sullivan Report by the Year 2000, was now further altered in order to appease the voters. The changes which many districts

had begun to implement were canceled and new changes emerged. Just as the notions of education varied, so did the curriculum changes. Wideen (1994) makes reference to one Coquitlam teacher who took the time to document 26 proposed curriculum changes coming from the Ministry and the district in a single year. Wideen states that Ministries of Education change their perspective on reform to suit the politics of the day; an emphasis is placed on progressive education one year and back to the basics the next. Consequently, teachers are unsure of what educational changes to implement since any upcoming elections may once again be followed by educational changes. Thus, teachers also feel the need, more so than ever, for training to keep current with the educational directives.

C. Shifts in Education

Today in British Columbia, shifts in education and conflicting pressures are occurring simultaneously. These contradictory messages may be confusing to teachers due to the different notions of education. According to Wideen, teachers and principals may be left frustrated and angry; however, this does not deter outsiders from attempting to reform schools again and again (p. 2). Today, pressures for change have taken on more serious overtones as nations struggle with difficult social and economic problems. Wideen argues that in the 1960s there was a perceived need for more scientists for the space race. Just as the 'curriculum reformers', who based their reforms on political grounds did in the 1950s and 1960s, governments and the corporate sector today in the 1990s express the concern that Canada is in economic crisis and that the solution lies in better education (National, 1991). The curriculum packages that emerged in the '50s and '60s provided

new ways and new models of teaching in selected curriculum areas; however, they did not solve problems that faced teachers (Wideen, 1994, p. 12). Today, 'curriculum reformers' perceive a need to make our nation competitive by producing skilled workers to run the economic machine and high paying workers who will consume the products produced. Wideen claims that Western countries need to compete in a global market place and schools must provide the work force to fuel it (p. 6).

Hence, school improvement had to occur which valued having teachers 'own' the process of reform. Wideen (1994, p. 7) asserts that "schools would improve from within as those within them began to understand the milieu in which they worked, identified problems within it, and began to solve those problems." These changes are predicated on a shift in power from those at the top to principals and teachers on the bottom. Yet, the changes proposed by the B.C. Ministry of Education occurred without any such ownership.

D. Establishing Provincial Goals Through IRPs

To try to once again involve teachers in the educational reform process numerous draft versions of IRPs for field-testing and discussion were distributed to B.C. teachers by the Ministry. Teachers were "invited" to respond to the documents by sending in their ideas and suggestions for improving B.C.'s education system based on their personal notions of education. Some examples of these documents, which came out between 1990 and 1994, are: a handbook for educators entitled *Criterion-referenced Evaluation:*

Getting Started, two volumes of *Thinking in the Classroom: Resources for Teachers,* Evaluation handbooks and Reference Sets for Reading and Writing, *Guidelines for Student Reporting, Guidelines for The K-12 Educational Plan,* etc. In June of 1995, the *Integrated Resource Packages* known as IRPs for Mathematics, Personal Planning and Science were distributed to every teacher in British Columbia. The IRP is a "functional overview document that provides some of the basic information that teachers will require in order to implement the course" (Ministry of Education, 1995). The documents consist of

1) provincially prescribed learning outcomes, 2) suggested instructional strategies for achieving the outcomes, 3) suggested assessment strategies for determining how well students are achieving the outcomes, and 4) provincially recommended learning resources. In 1996, the province will distribute *Integrated Resource Packages* for the remaining school subjects. This new concept of education is followed with provincially - mandated curriculum and methods of instruction which are designed for British Columbia's teachers to implement in their classrooms within a defined timeline. One of the purposes of the IRPs is to "set" a curriculum that will standardize learning outcomes throughout the province, whereas before, much of the curriculum was left to the teachers' discretion. Now, the choice had become mandated and many teachers past curriculums had to be totally revised. Teachers had been expected to comment and collaborate on these directives yet when the final documents were distributed, very little revision had been done. These contrasting expectations, which are often proposed simultaneously, provide very mixed messages. Wideen (1994, p. 12) states that "most reforms have been unmanageable [and] most have not worked." His advice is to not take proposals for

reform that come from high places too seriously; rather, to take seriously personal notions of reform and build on that. Before the implementation of any reform there is a need to establish provincial goals.

One of the rationales for establishing provincial goals, such as the IRP directives, was the belief that "schools can be made to improve if standards are set and incentives established that force school employees to pay attention to them" (Hammond, 1990). This line of thinking assumes that problems exist either because educators don't have precise enough targets to aim for, because they aren't trying hard enough, or both. Hammond claims that the problem is not that educators lack direction and will, but ... "that they work within a dysfunctional organizational structure that has made inadequate investments in the knowledge and tools they need to address students' needs" (p. 287).

Furthermore, Hammond (1993) proposes that this century's movement into a high-technology Information Age demands a new kind of education and new forms of school organization. Since the world is changing, B.C. students need to be trained in the area of high technology, such as computers and robotics, in order for our country to be able to compete with global markets. Hammond points out that the teacher's job is no longer to "cover the curriculum" but to enable diverse learners to construct their own knowledge and to develop their talents in effective and powerful ways (p. 754). Hammond notes that policy makers are devising efforts to develop the capacity of schools and teachers to be responsible for student learning and responsive to student and community needs, interests, and concerns. Even though the philosophy behind the new educational changes was based

on those of the Year 2000 which support Hammond's beliefs, the structure of the IRPs shift the teacher's responsibility to, once again, "cover the curriculum."

In order to meet both the philosophical and practical sides of British Columbia's trends in education teachers must have available the educational opportunities that will provide them with the understanding and tools so that they can adopt a more complex approach to teaching, one which "requires that teachers combine deep knowledge of subject matter and a wide repertoire of teaching strategies with intimate knowledge of student's growth, experience and development" (Shulman, 1987). Furthermore, this on-going education of teachers must model the methods that they themselves will use to teach others.

HOW TEACHERS LEARN:

ESTABLISHED MODELS OF TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of maintaining professional development for teachers is to provide an avenue for teachers to develop their notion of education. Some may argue that professional development is solely to keep the teachers current with the training which focus on how students' needs must be met. The *student as a learner* is the key, according to Joyce and Showers (1995). They see the teacher's work as "interacting with students so that learning and development occur, and student learning is at the heart of professional interaction" (p. 68). Professional development should help teachers understand the notion of education that they are using. This is one of the most important reasons for professional development.

Lieberman and Miller (1990) define what they mean by *professional development;* they see the teacher as a "reflective practitioner" about education, someone who has a tacit and formal knowledge base and who then builds on that knowledge base through on-going inquiry and analysis, continually rethinking and reevaluating values and practices. By *teacher development* they mean "continuous inquiry into practice" about education, the renewal of schools and in effect, culture building (p. 107). Thus, teacher development is an on-going process, not one scheduled and resolved in a single workshop. Hammond (1993) defines professional development as a type of practitioner knowledge that can inform teacher's judgments in complex situations. She claims that such knowledge can be sustained by investing in on-going professional development. Fullan (1991, p. 326)

defines professional development as "the sum total of formal and informal learning experiences throughout one's career from preservice teacher education to retirement." He states that professional development is change - in learning materials, in skills and practices, in thinking and understandings - development, and improvement. The impact of professional development depends on a combination of motivation and opportunity to learn. In addition, Fullan claims that "there is no single strategy that can contribute more to meaning and improvement than on-going professional development" (p. 318). All of these definitions express a need for the teacher's *on-going* professional development to be one of thinking about what they mean by education.

A. Effective / Ineffective Education Efforts

District policy makers seemed to believe that somehow, without training, teachers and administrators will have developed a wide range of strategies to accommodate students' learning styles (Joyce and Showers, 1995). Continuous development of all teachers is the cornerstone for meaning, improvement and reform. Yet, if the professional development of teachers is the key to school improvement then why do most programs fail (Fullan, 1991)? According to Fullan (1991), the general endorsement of in-service education means nothing without an accompanying understanding of the characteristics of effective, as compared with ineffective, in-service education efforts. Lieberman and Miller (1990, p.106) state that the term in-service education has come to be synonymous with training and implies a deficit model of teacher training. "Nothing has promised so much and has been so frustratingly wasteful as the thousands of workshops and conferences that

led to no significant change in practice when teachers returned to their classrooms" (Fullan, 1991, p. 315). This was evident within British Columbia during the years previous to the implementation of some of the aspects of the *Year 2000.* Fullan summarizes the reasons for in-service failure: ineffective one-shot workshops, topics which are not teacher selected, little follow-up support for ideas and practices, infrequent evaluation, rarely addressing individual needs and concerns and a profound lack of any conceptual basis in the planning and implementing of in-service programs that would ensure their effectiveness (p. 316). Fullan's findings could be easily applied to the inservice provided currently within the B.C. school system to address the many changes.

B.   Support for Teacher Learning

Nelson and Hammerman (1995) and Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) propose that "teachers are required to teach in ways that they may have never taught before and perhaps may never have experienced as students," as well as having "to rethink their own practice" in areas such as student evaluation and reporting to parents in order to match their notion of education. Implementing the changes successfully depends on the teacher "accomplishing the serious and difficult tasks of *learning* the skills and perspectives assumed by new visions of practice and *unlearning* the practices and beliefs about students and instruction that have dominated their professional lives to date" (Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995, p. 597). Hammond and McLaughlin feel that despite the fact that teachers need to: (1) have support in acquiring new skills or knowledge, (2) reflect critically on their practice and (3) "fashion new knowledge and beliefs about content,

pedagogy and learners" (Prawat, 1992) few occasions and little support exist in the teacher's environments for such professional development. By having support, reflecting on practice and fashioning new knowledge / beliefs teachers are better able to understand the notion of education that they are using. Unfortunately, there is no convenient source of help or sharing when problems are encountered (Fullan, 1991). These needs are not at all met through set workshops and training sessions which are the traditional cornerstones of professional development. The three listed needs are crucial, yet missing from the system.

The effort to reform British Columbia's schools requires a variety of practices that would support teacher learning. Hammond (1993) makes two assumptions about the best way that teachers learn, either through direct instruction by outsiders or through their own involvement in defining and shaping the problems of their practice through their notions of education. Teachers learn in the same manner that students learn. For instance, we need to model the ways that we understand about how students learn, meaning that students learn by: seeing, hearing, discussing and doing. Resnick (1991) provides evidence that learning theorists and organizational theorists are teaching us that people learn best through active involvement and through thinking about and becoming articulate about what they have learned. If this is the case, then what about high school students who are still being taught through a lecture format? Also, why is this not occurring in most professional development? In order to learn in this way, more time must be incorporated into professional development for the various learning styles to be utilized collectively.

C. Opposing School Reform Theories

Hammond (1992) acknowledges that there are different school reform theories which are working simultaneously. One theory focuses on tightening the control of the system by adding more direction through courses, tests, directive curriculum, standards and sanctions. This approach assumes that there is a lack of focus, direction and effort on the part of school personnel, rather than a lack of knowledge, capacity, or organizational support for developing alternatives (Hammond, 1992, p. 22). Standardized grading and standardized tests are developed to match the curriculum. This theory reflects the changes which are currently occurring in British Columbia regarding the new IRPs (Instructional Resource Packages). Yet, another theory proposed by Hammond states that "effective teaching techniques will vary for students with different learning styles, with differently developed intelligence's, or at different stages of cognitive and psychological development; for different subject areas; and for different instructional goals" (p. 757-758). She notes that far from following standardized instructional packages, "teachers must base their judgments on knowledge of learning theory and pedagogy, of child development and cognition, and of curriculum and assessment" (Hammond, 1993, p. 758). What is missing from her proposal is the fact that teachers base their judgments on their notions of education. Thus, professional development must reflect these areas.

D. Funding Cutbacks

Meanwhile, capacity building mechanisms such as staff development programs, professional development, support for school innovation and networks are experiencing funding cutbacks. Hammond (1992) provides evidence of state budget cutbacks when she describes the teacher centers of New York state's professional development capacity which were nearly eliminated. A similar situation exists in British Columbia where "ambitious and well-intentioned reforms are under way while programs that provide the capacity for people to learn new practices are cut back" (Hammond, 1992, p. 22). For instance, budget cuts have eliminated the Mission School District's teachers' Resource Center and reduced the availability of a mentor program in 1994. How are B.C. teachers supposed to remain current with the continuous educational changes when funding for professional development is not a priority?

Funding for professional development in B.C. schools has also come from site-based grants; however, site-based management and decision making require highly educated and well-prepared teachers who can make sound decisions about curriculum, teaching and school policy (Hammond, 1992, p. 754). Teachers must be given the opportunity to examine their notions of education and to discuss their educational intentions with their colleagues. This will enable them to make sound decisions. Thus, professional development must come from the teachers themselves. Top-down directives

are based on the presumption that teachers cannot be trusted to make sound decisions about curriculum and teaching (p. 755). Thus, if Hammond's view of the learning process is to come about, the model of professional development that is in place in British Columbia must change. Currently, teachers are expected to change their beliefs, knowledge, and actions as a result of a change process that consists primarily of the issuance of a statement and the adoption of new regulations (p. 756). But does this actually happen?

E.   Teacher Knowledge and Skill Development Models

Teacher knowledge and skill development was the focus in most of the established models because they are training models. Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) claim that "in some people's eyes these are not part of the solution to improving our schools, they are a part of the problem." They provide four criticisms of this approach. (1) knowledge and skills are usually imposed on teachers on a top-down basis by 'experts' from outside their own school. Hargreaves and Fullan maintain that (2) teachers view top-down reform as a problem of undue confidence and certainty that is often invested in the findings of education research. Furthermore, (3) overconfidence in the research / skill based training approach to teacher development forecloses teacher's disagreement on the methods to which they are exposed and (4) they tend to overemphasize particular aspects of teacher development (p. 3-6). Yet, Hargreaves and Fullan do not discount the knowledge and skills approach to professional development as being totally ineffective because they feel that it is an important component of the teacher development process. They propose three

components to promote the knowledge and skills approach. The first component would see that resources are invested more in skill development than in personal growth. They do not mention the fact that resources should be invested in helping teachers understand the notion of education that they are currently using which, in turn, leads to growth and personal development. The second would ensure that staff development resources are not disproportionately allocated to trainers rather than learners. The third would see that knowledge / skills based training would tend to concentrate staff development on school subject and curriculum areas. Professional development is not teacher training, it is giving teachers the opportunity to develop and reflect on a practice that is consistent with their beliefs about education. Hargreaves and Fullan note that critical reflection takes time and encouragement. Creative experimentation with instruction and improvement may be unlikely if changes are implemented from the outside by a heavy-handed administrator. Richardson (1992) reminds us that most teachers have been participating in top-down educational processes for most of their lives. Thus, some have become jaded and view professional development as a waste of time. Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) summarize by stating that skills-based, top-down directed staff development "consumes too much time, energy and resources within teacher development as a whole" (p. 6) and that other solutions must be sought.

F. Understanding How Professional Development Occurs and What Affects It

Raymond, Butt and Townsend (1992) argue that in order to begin to facilitate teacher development it first must be understood as to how it already occurs. This involves addressing a number of value questions that deal with education, such as:

* What are the major substantive sources of teacher development?

* What helps or hinders changes and growth in teachers?

* What events, contexts, conditions and relationships have a telling impact on teachers professional knowledge and practice?

* How can we foster teacher development in a way that allows for healthy individuality as well as collegiality?
                                                (Raymond, Butt and Townsend, 1992, p. 150).

Raymond, Butt and Townsend fail to explain what they mean by some of the concepts that they use, such as: "development", "growth", "impact" and "healthy." These terms need to be further clarified.

Jackson (1992, p. 64) also provides for ways in which professional development occurs. The first he calls "the way of know-how." This is when someone tells teachers how to teach or teach better than they're presently doing, advice that says 'do this', 'don't do that', 'do this rather than that', with a lot of good advice coming from other teachers in the form of tips and suggestions. The second he calls "the way of independence" (empowerment). This is where freeing teachers to function as relatively autonomous professionals increases independence (p. 65). The third he calls "the way of role accommodation." This is an area which many teachers deem important, but very little is done about it. This method focuses on relieving teachers of psychological discomfort by

helping them come to terms with the demands of their work and allows them to handle the psychological stresses of their work. It involves giving teachers encouragement, support, sympathy, respect and, in extreme cases, therapy (p. 65). Upon talking with teachers they mentioned that they very rarely receive encouragement or support. Many felt that they were on their own. The fourth strategy of teacher development he leaves unnamed because he has difficulty coming up with an exact term. He describes this one as helping teachers transform their visions so that they can see more than they did. It is an attempt to deepen and broaden their insights (p. 66). That is what some would call 'education' or perhaps informed learning, which is an important reason for professional development. These strategies are sound and appear to be ideal in order to facilitate a teacher's individual development. However, professional development continues to be "workshops and in-service" with little or no time given for teachers to develop their personal notions of education. These strategies may also be impractical due to the province's on-going cuts in educational spending. In order to facilitate teacher growth, it is evident that there must be an environment for people to share the understanding for the importance of developing ones notion of education through professional development.

Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) also acknowledge that any implementation of effective professional development cannot happen in isolation; there are various factors that affect individual teacher development. These factors include items such as: shortage of planning time, being away from class (which is difficult for peer coaches), meager resources and supplies, restricted access to release time, the investment of money in expert trainers rather than on those being trained and the provision for effective leadership to

support and promote teacher development (p. 13-14). Hammond (1993) states that time is rarely available for lesson / unit planning, for working with other colleagues on changes in the school organization, for meeting individually with students or parents, for clarifying personal notions of education and for working on the development of curriculum or assessment measures - activities not considered part of the teacher's main job. Hammond fails to mention that teachers also need time for other activities such as: marking, coaching teams, running clubs, counseling students, resolving student conflicts, and fund raising. Most importantly, teachers need time for talking and thinking about education. In informal discussions with teachers it was evident that they felt time constraints. From nine to three o'clock teachers are teaching students in the classroom, so the only other times available for other activities are early mornings, lunches or after school. Teachers often feel overburdened with the many varied tasks that they are to accomplish in a given day. Yet, in most cases the professional development that is offered to help teachers deal with the factors stated above occurs in "one shot" workshops, workshops which many teachers feel are inadequate.

ENHANCING TEACHER LEARNING:

REDEFINING THE STRUCTURE

Though individual teacher development can be considered a traditional form of professional development, the current literature definitely changes the focus of how personal teacher development *should* occur. No longer can effective professional development occur with only a prescribed curriculum-based, ministry-mandated outcome. This is due to the fact that past methods for enhancing teacher learning have proven to be inadequate and unproductive. Rather, the literature concurs that the teachers themselves must guide the development based on their notions of education.

According to Hammond and McLaughlin (1995, p. 598), professional development has shifted from the old models of *preservice* or *inservice* training to creating new images of what, when and how teachers learn. They feel that these new images require a corresponding shift from policies that seek to control or direct the work of teachers to strategies intended to develop schools' and teachers' capacity to be responsible for student learning. Teachers need to work together, take ownership and reflect on their practice, but most importantly teachers need to discuss their notions of education with their peers. Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) state that the old notion of inservice training or dissemination (the top down models) should be replaced by possibilities for knowledge-sharing and problem-solving amongst teachers in their daily practice. To serve teachers' needs effectively, professional development must allow teachers to engage in cooperative experiences in addition to provide teachers with the opportunity to "share what they

know, what they want to learn and to connect their learning to the contexts of their teaching" (Hammond and McLaughlin 1995, p. 599). Sharing their understandings of education and working cooperatively will enable teachers to enhance their learning through growth and improvement. Talbert and McLaughlin (1994) point out that teachers are learning from "belonging to professional communities that extend beyond classrooms and school buildings" such as: school / university collaborations engaged in curriculum development, change efforts, or research; teacher-to-teacher and school-to-school networks; partnerships with neighborhood-based youth organizations; and teacher involvement in district, regional or national activities (Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995, p. 599).

Teachers must be given the time and resources to participate in the various non-instructional activities that are increasingly open to them. According to Zeichner (1991), one way to do this is to provide teachers with time during the school day to engage in non-instructional tasks. The non-instructional tasks would help teachers understand their notion of education and assist them in accomplishing their educational intentions. All efforts to develop professional development should; therefore, be judged by whether they contribute to accomplishing teachers' educational intentions. "Time is required for teachers to undertake professional development as part of their normal responsibilities. Time for teachers can only be bought by rethinking the ways in which schools are staffed, funded and managed" (Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995, p. 603). Another way is to educate the teachers who work in the schools for what will be educative for the students. Zeichner (1991, p. 372) states that teachers "need to be provided with training that will

enable them to assert their views in the face of claims of professional expertise." Barth (1990) notes that the relationships among the adults in a school are critical in determining the character and quality of education for students in a school and have called for the creation of collaborative work environments in public elementary and secondary schools that encourage continued learning for adults as well as students.

Lieberman (1995) claims that by constructing a continuum of the actual practices that encourage teacher growth and enhance teacher learning, it can be seen that such a continuum moves from "direct teaching" (i.e., district run workshops, districts hiring consultants to help with "implementation") to practices that involve "learning in school", to a variety of kinds of "learning out of school" at other settings. This change from "teaching" to "learning" is significant because it implies that teacher development opportunities must become integral to the restructuring of schools. Lieberman (1995, p. 592) states that "the process of restructuring schools places demands on the whole organization that make it imperative that individuals redefine their work in relation to the way the entire school works, thus the system of professional development must also be redefined to parallel education reform." However, is B.C.'s professional development being redefined and restructured to reflect these ideas? This study examines this question, since Hammond, Ancess and Falk (1995) state that studying individual teachers deepens the understanding of how teachers acquire the experience that encourages them to grow and change in the context of school reform. The following sections outline techniques for getting teachers to work together and to converse: teacher as researcher, practical inquiry, networks, peer coaching / mentoring, collaboratives and partnerships.

A. Teacher as a Researcher

The teacher as a researcher model of enhancing teacher learning is defined by Wideen (1994) as a practicing professional who identifies her or his own problems and seeks ways of solving them. The teacher can improve some aspect of his/her own teaching and grow professionally in the process. "The interest in teacher as researcher comes from a simple desire to improve schools and teaching" (p. 11) by increasing dialogue and conversation amongst teachers. Yet how can an elementary classroom teacher become an effective researcher? Lieberman and Miller make the case that there are five essential elements of building a culture of support for teacher inquiry; these include:

> (1) norms of colleagueship, openness, and trust;
> (2) opportunities and time for disciplined inquiry;
> (3) teacher learning of content in context;
> (4) reconstruction of leadership roles; and
> (5) networks, collaborations and coalitions.
>
> (Lieberman and Miller, 1990, p. 107)

Joyce and Showers (1995) in writing the chapter entitled "The Individual Practitioner as the Source of School Renewal" claim that the teacher's role is to "deliver" education. They completely miss the fact that in order for teachers to convey education, they need to understand what their notion of education is. Their notion of education seems to be as a "commodity" that can be conveyed or delivered. Their notion is implicit in their language. They go on to say:

> ...teachers have had to teach themselves most of what they
> know borrowing ideas from their colleagues as they can.
> Time to study is not built into their paid duties and in most

settings they get very little help from sources external to the school, though they are the most knowledgeable people about the problems they face. Providing them with the resources and opportunities to strengthen their skills and help them carry our their work in a reflective, inquiring mode makes very good sense.

(Joyce and Showers, 1995, p. 4)

Self understanding is a criterion for the teacher as researcher approach. For writers like Nias and Leithwood (1989), the process of personal development that underpins teacher development has three important dimensions: (1) one's development as a person progresses through different stages (for instance a young teacher to maturity), (2) human life cycle comprises characteristic phases of development that embody typical concerns, and (3) professional development issues specific to the teachers' career of promotion (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992, p. 7,8). Teachers at different points in their life cycle have characteristically different orientations to change and improvement as well as different needs in terms of professional development (p. 8). Hargreaves and Fullan fail to mention that teachers at different points in their lifecycles also have different notions of education. By encouraging individual professional development through the model of the teacher as researcher, these dimensions can be considered.

i. Practical Inquiry

Richardson (1994) adds to the understanding of professional development by discussing a form of research on practice known as *practical inquiry*. Practical inquiry is a way of getting to self understanding since it focuses on helping teachers reflect on their own beliefs, personal practical knowledge, and on their own practices. In addition, it

gives people a chance to think and talk about what education is. Practical inquiry is conducted by practitioners to help them understand their contexts, practices, and, in the case of teachers, their students. Richardson claims that it is more likely than formal research (at the graduate level) to lead to immediate classroom change. The focus of the research in this field is to understand how teachers make sense of teaching and learning the material provided within professional development. She claims that research conducted by teachers may be more useful to teachers for improvement of practice; rather than, teaching activities, practices, and curricula that are suggested or mandated by those who are external to the setting (i.e., administrators, school district officials, policy makers, and/or staff developers).

B. Networks: Forming Professional Communities

The aspect of teachers helping teachers think and talk about education can be furthered through networking. The most important change within the literature on enhancing teacher learning through professional development deals with the manner in which new knowledge is exchanged and supported. Ann Lieberman and Milbrey McLaughlin, writing in the May 1992 *Phi Delta Kappan*, add to our understanding of networks. They claim that networks create professional communities by inspiring teachers' problem-solving, risk-taking, ownership and leadership. In this period of intensive school reform, authors McLaughlin and Lieberman (1992) point out that when traditional inservice training and staff development have been shown to be inadequate, networks can provide fresh ways of thinking about teacher learning. They claim that "the

popularity of networks suggest that teachers stay away from conventional staff development activities -or attend only if required- not because of a lack of interest in professional growth but because the inservice training formats fail to meet their needs" (p. 673). Traditional inservice programs may provide practical and innovative ideas that excite teachers and inspire them to attempt to implement what they have learned within the classroom, yet without support of a network the attempts may tend to be unsuccessful.

McLaughlin and Lieberman (1992) describe the Foxfire Teacher Outreach Network which was introduced to teachers in a one week summer workshop in the United States. During this time teachers became "active learners, participating the way students do: choosing a project, planning, doing the work, assessing the outcomes" (p. 674). Teachers experienced shared activities and tried the Foxfire approach in their classrooms and then sought professional affiliation within the network. According to McLaughlin and Lieberman, Foxfire teachers kept in touch with one another and with the mission of their educational collaboration through publications, correspondence and electronic communication (p. 674). The strength of such networking is that it provides constant, accessible reinforcement to the teachers who are attempting new innovations, the same way that students find support with their peers when learning new things.

McLaughlin and Lieberman (1992) claim that successful networks share the following common features: focus (a sense of identity), variety (of activities), discourse communities (that encourage exchange among teachers) and leadership opportunities. In addition, they state that networks provide the support, knowledge, and encouragement

necessary for teachers to implement innovative ideas. Yet, some of the networks greatest strengths may turn out to be their biggest difficulties. Some difficulties may occur in the areas of :

- Quality: It is difficult to test and review the quality of teachers' new ideas and innovations.
- Stability: Foundations that fund networks see their role as providing seed money or risk capital - not indefinite maintenance.
- Overextension: As more and more people join, networks soon find themselves overextended.
- Goals: Goals of networks must be to the teachers themselves - not to some outside agents.

(McLaughlin and Lieberman, 1992, p. 675-676)

However, simply by becoming aware of such difficulties networking teachers can guard against them.

McLaughlin and Lieberman (1992, p. 677) argue that contrary to cynical generalizations about teachers' lack of enthusiasm for staff development efforts, teachers *are* willing and eager to be involved in activities that challenge them and that promote their professional growth. Professional growth means moving towards a certain direction. What is not known is whether the direction is good or bad. By being given the chance to discuss one's notions of education with other teachers, one can share and compare ideas. Sharing ideas helps to understand oneself and the degree of one's personal growth. Given the network opportunity, the authors say that teachers can and will make significant changes in their practices and perspectives on teaching and learning. Networks concentrate on building communities of teacher/ learners, and building these from the ground up.

In short, McLaughlin and Lieberman (1992) note that teacher networks can transform practice and create professional communities by inspiring teachers to solve problems, take risks, assume ownership of their teaching, and exercise leadership in their schools. They emphasize the fact that conventional professional development is not as effective without the opportunity to follow through within a network.

McLaughlin and Lieberman (1992) claim that by joining informal groups, teachers can develop stronger voices to represent their perspectives, learn to exercise leadership with their peers, use their firsthand experience to create new possibilities for students through collaborative work, and develop a community of shared understanding of their notions of education that enriches their teaching and provides intellectual and emotional stimulation. As opportunities increase for professional learning that moves away from the traditional inservice training mode and toward long-term, continuous learning in the context of school and classroom and with the support of colleagues, the idea of professional development takes on even greater importance (Lieberman, 1995, p. 596).

Through the development of a strong network, a strong learning enriched school can develop. A learning enriched school is one that helps teachers understand the notions of education that they are using. Susan Rosenholtz (1989), in her study of the school as a workplace, distinguished between schools that are learning-enriched and learning-impoverished. *Learning-enriched schools* had "collaborative goals at the building level, minimum uncertainty, positive teacher attitudes, principal support of teachers to the point of removing barriers, and support for collaboration [read networking] rather than

competition." Whereas, *learning-impoverished schools* had "no clear or shared values, were places where teachers rarely talked to each other, where work was perceived as routine, and where self-reliance and isolation flourished" (Rosenholtz, 1989, p. 80-81). However, the reality of the situation for most teachers suggests that collaborative efforts often get squeezed out by the press of daily classroom reality, lack of time and the culture of the school (Hargreaves, 1990).

i. Peer Coaching / Mentoring

Peer coaching is one aspect of limited networking. It is an innovation that can combat the problems of isolation which occur in a learning impoverished school. In addition, peer coaching is helpful in enhancing teacher learning daily. Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) acknowledge that training teachers to train other teachers, coach and support each other is good. Such coaching requires a radical change in relationships between teachers, and teachers and administrators (Joyce and Showers, 1995, p. 125). There are many benefits of peer coaching. For instance, peer coaching is quick and immediate. If a teacher requires assistance on a particular problem or some form of advice, that teacher can seek out another teacher; whereby, a response can be obtained instantaneously. In addition, peer coaching is convenient; the teacher who has a question can ask the teacher next door, or another down the hall. Peer coaching is going on in all B.C. schools in an informal manner, since most teachers at one time or another seek advice from their colleagues. Its effectiveness can be greatly enhanced if teachers are trained in this manner of networking.

Another facet of peer coaching is mentoring. Mentoring refers to classroom teachers working with student teachers, and/or to classroom teachers working with beginning teachers. Thus, professional development stops being a "one-shot workshop event" and becomes on-going, immediate and relevant. Anderson and Shannon (1988) trace the concept of mentoring and offer the following definition:

> [Mentoring is] a nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development (p. 40).

Through the program, teachers are involved with the process of planning instruction, watching each other work with students and thinking toward the impact of their behavior on the learning of their students. Fullan (1991, p. 308) states that "behind mentoring is the goal of developing and retaining skillful teacher-leaders close to the classroom, and generally providing opportunities for teachers to have more fulfilling and impactful careers - possibilities that remain underdeveloped or lost in the traditional individualism of teaching [professional development] and schools." The main difference between peer coaching and mentoring is that peer coaching is of short duration and can occur between numerous teachers; whereas, mentoring is an on-going, caring relationship between a teacher and one assigned mentor that occurs over the course of one year. Upon speaking with several teachers, many stated (during the interview) that mentoring is extremely helpful and useful - it is a beginning teachers' lifeline. The mentor program enhances professional development since it is concerned with helping teachers deal with current issues of classroom teaching. The teacher mentor program is being applied in many states

and provinces; however, it is unfortunately being cut in many jurisdictions (such as Mission) due to budget restraints.

ii. Collaboratives

Lieberman (1992) discuses the concept of dialogues at another level. She presents a new organizational form for teacher learning which, though similar to networking, takes on a greater scope. These are called *collaboratives*. She defines collaboratives as teachers (from cities across the country) who come together to work on a particular subject. What Lieberman does not mention is the fact that when teachers come together to discuss subject matter their notions of education may be inadvertently revealed as the participants in the discussion utilize the information they bring in and receive from other participants. Thus, their notions of education may become clearer through different perspectives. She argues that collaboratives provide greater technical and personal support than that provided by either universities or districts. She identifies the Urban Math Collaborative as an example. She states that collaboratives help encourage innovative norms even as they are closely connected to classroom work. In addition, teachers, often reluctant to lead in their own schools, find that the collaboratives are places where they are more willing to take leadership roles as teachers of others, as workshop leaders or informally, as teachers who have experimented with new ways of teaching and want to share them (p. 721). Collaboratives focus on subject matter, decentralize staff development, and encourage teachers to construct knowledge about subject matter based on their notions of education. This is an alternative to traditional staff development models delivered to teachers by districts or through university course work.

Collaboratives involve university and educators in building new knowledge, as well as in teaching and supporting each other. Changing teaching practice is not only the invention of powerful teaching ideas but the engagement of teachers in their own learning as adults, on *their turf,* where both universities *and* schools have opportunities to lead and learn (p. 721).

iii. Partnerships

New approaches, such as district-university partnerships, attempt to refocus teacher development so that it becomes part of an overall strategy for professional and institutional reform. School / university partnerships have strengths and weaknesses. According to Lieberman (1992, p. 152) the strength may be that they can build bridges between organizations that differ appreciably in structure, function, and ways of thinking and working. The weakness stems from the fact that these new groups and structures grow from activities which are not necessarily an integral part of teacher's daily working lives. Collaboration puts pressure on both groups to listen, negotiate, and create together - this may cause discomfort. In the Greater Toronto area school districts and universities have formed a partnership. Fullan (1991, p. 321) states that "the goal is to design and carry out a variety of activities that make the professional and staff development continuum a reality, and that link classroom and teacher development with school development by coordinating and focusing the efforts of the district and the universities." This brings together the ideas of many disciplines, methodologies, and ways of working with school people that expand the notion of educational research and practice and enhance teacher learning. Lieberman (1992) claims that partnerships put the practical

work of teachers, students, and community at the center of our work as researchers:

involving them as colleagues and researchers, collaborators and describers, observers and

activists.

Summary of Chapter Two

The literature indicates that there is a strong need for enhancing teacher learning due to the constantly changing nature of educational reform, especially pertaining to British Columbia. Teachers need the opportunity to think about and discuss their notions of education. This can be done through professional development. The effect of teachers distancing behavior, which is evident in many schools, can be detrimental to a teacher's practice; hence, professional development is a valuable means of getting teachers together to increase their dialogue. Furthermore, the literature outlines top-down directives and traditional teacher development. Researchers presented the varying methods available to ensure quality professional development, such as networks / collaboratives, and teachers' development through becoming "teachers as researchers." By understanding one's personal notions of education one can then begin to deal with the magnitude of changes within the current educational system.

What are B.C. teacher's educational intentions? What are teachers' conceptions of professional development, both currently practiced and idealized? How is professional development linked with teachers accomplishing their intentions? Is professional development meeting the needs of B.C. teachers, especially during these times of educational reform? These questions are examined in the study by focusing on a group of elementary teachers who are involved in the on-going process of understanding their notions of education. The next chapter focuses on the methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of the study was to investigate current conceptions, attitudes and idealizations on professional development for seven elementary teachers currently working in the Mission School District of British Columbia. Through the use of taped personal interviews, the study tries to understand whether current theories on professional development were in evidence in any manner in the daily life of teachers "in the trenches." The following eight sections of site, time and length of study, participants, methods of data collection, data analysis, reliability, validity and limitations of the design provide the details of the research methods used.

SOURCES, SETTING AND METHODS FOR DATA COLLECTION

A. Site

The general site for the study was a rural, public school district which is located in the heart of the Fraser River Valley of British Columbia, Canada. It is within commuting distance to a major urban area. The District site has 7002 students of mixed socio-economic backgrounds (including Native Indian), of which sixty per cent (4264) are

elementary.[1] English as the first language spoken is predominant; however, there is a growing population of ESL students, primarily East Indian.

The specific interview sites were varied for each participant, depending on convenience. The participants were asked, by the researcher, to give their preference for a meeting location, date and time.

B. Time and Length of the Interviews

The length of the interview varied depending on how much information each participant offered. A pilot interview was conducted to get some sense of the amount of time it would take to cover the questions. The interviews were conducted over the course of two weeks, with no more than two days between interviews, in order to keep the information current.

C. Participants

An ad in the Mission Teacher's Union newsletter was used as the basis for obtaining participants. The ad asked for elementary school teachers to voluntarily participate in the study. This strategy was used to obtain genuine volunteers, teachers who were willing to talk about professional development, rather than pressured volunteers.

---

[1] Figures obtained from School District #75, Mission School Board Office, February 14, 1996.

The elementary school teachers were currently teaching full time and thus, had the opportunity to engage in personal, staff, district, provincial, national or international professional development depending on their personal choice and on the same allocated professional development funding of $155.00 per teacher / per year (part time teachers and teachers on call are allocated less, thus they were not included in the study). If a teacher chose not to spend their allocated funds each year they could accumulate their money for up to three years enabling them to attend a more costly workshop (i.e. three day out of province conference). Each of the subjects had the opportunity, in the 1995-1996 school year, to attend five days of professional development of which two were designated for community interaction days, one was designated for a provincial event, and the remaining two were for local or school based activities. Furthermore, each teacher was able to get a teacher on call paid for by the district for one full teaching day in order to take part in additional professional development.

Seven elementary school teachers were involved in the study. Six of the teachers were female and one was a male. Their teaching experience encompassed from five to thirty seven years. There was one teacher librarian and six generalist teachers who taught all of the subjects from grades one to seven.

The participants are briefly introduced at this point so that it is easier for the reader to follow the Research Findings chapter that refers to the participants and their statements from the transcribed interviews. Their names have been altered to keep their anonymity.

- Ana has been teaching for ten years. She has taught in a total of eight schools. Throughout her career she has taught primary students from kindergarten to grade three as well as being a librarian. She has four undergraduate degrees in History and English, as well as library apprenticeship training through college. Ana is continuously taking additional courses because she is interested in post secondary studies.

- Jim has been teaching for five years. He has taught all of the curriculum subjects for grade six, seven and a split six/seven. He has taught in a total of three B.C. schools throughout his career. He holds three bachelor's degrees in Arts, Business Administration and Education. Jim is not planning to further his education at this time because he currently holds a category 5+ on the Teacher Qualification Salary (TQS) pay scale, and the difference in pay between a category 5+ and a Masters degree, category 6 at the top of the scale, is quite small, so he says that it would not make any sense to him financially.

- Sam has been teaching for six years. She has taught in four schools throughout her career. Currently, she is a teacher librarian who teaches all grades from kindergarten to grade seven. She relieves teachers for their preparation time. She has also taught high school English. Sam has a Masters degree in Education and plans to take more courses in the specialty areas of information / technology and history because she feels that this is an integral part of her job; whereby, she needs to "keep on top of it."

- Kate has been teaching for twenty five years. She has taught in six schools throughout her career. She was once a kindergarten teacher and once an intermediate teacher. The last few years she has taught mostly lower intermediate. She has a Bachelor of Education degree which took her fourteen years to acquire because when she started teaching one could teach with grade 13 and a professional year. Kate is not interested in taking any more courses because she likes her time off and her freedom.

- Dana has been teaching in one school for six years. She has taught grades five and six. She has a Bachelor of Education and a Bachelor of Science. Dana is not planning on taking any more university courses because there is no incentive for her to do so. It would cost her more money and there would be not much of a difference in her salary. Like Jim, she is currently near the top (category 5+) of the TQS pay scale.

- Jill has been teaching for fifteen years. She has taught in seven schools throughout her career. She was trained in Europe where she started her teaching. She then moved to Canada where she taught in Alberta and B.C. Usually, she taught grade four; however, she also taught primary grades two and three, in addition to intermediate grades five and seven. She has an English Teacher's Certificate and, by Canadian standards, three years of university after high school. Jill is presently on category 4 of the pay scale and will not bother to further her education because she has other interesting things to do with her life.

- Finally, Sue has been teaching for thirty seven years and is retiring this year. She has taught in eight schools throughout her teaching career, located both in Alberta and British

Columbia. She has taught all grades over the years; however, she has recently taught grades three and four. Sue holds a Bachelor of Education degree (which she obtained last year) and is not planning to further her education because she feels that she would not benefit from that at this point in time.

The teachers taught all kinds of students in the public school system: "whomever came along" (Kate); "students with learning disabilities, regular students, designated and non-designated" students (Sam). Throughout their careers, the teachers had taught in a number of schools, some at only one, and others as many as eight schools. It is interesting to note that:

- the junior teachers had moved more frequently than the older teachers. This may be due to personal reasons or because their positions were changed due to district job restructuring,

- the more experienced teachers seemed to have less formal education which may be linked to the standards of the past and the educational opportunities for women at the time,

- the junior teachers may not have considered careers in education as their primary educational goal, but rather, took courses in fields that they first considered for their careers,

- this group also was composed mostly of females. Though things are changing in the field of education with more males entering elementary, both in intermediate and primary areas, the fact remains that the majority of teachers at these levels are mostly predominately female.

Given these points it can be surmised that the group of participants in this study represents a diversity of the elementary teaching population and; therefore, bring in different experiences and viewpoints when answering the questions.

D. Methods of Data Collection

In this study, the interview was the primary data collection source. Interviews, which are widely used in qualitative research, can be defined as a unilaterally-led conversation with a purpose. Ethnographic interviews are based on open-response questions to obtain data of participant meanings - how individuals conceive of their world and how they explain or "make sense" of the important events in their lives (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993, p. 423-426) especially those dealing with professional development. The interview allowed the participants to take the time to reflect upon the issues discussed in the study.

The questions covered three areas: why teachers learn, how teachers learn and how to enhance teacher learning. The questions were open-ended and were phrased to allow for individual responses. Having unstructured questions allowed the interviewer greater latitude in asking broad questions in whatever order seemed appropriate (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993). The combination of questions was decided upon to obtain their perception of the world, yet they allowed scope for probing and clarification.

1. What does education mean to you? What does professional development mean to you? How are they connected?

2. What is the purpose of professional development? Do you feel that the professional development available to you today addresses your concerns and interests in education? Explain.

3. Describe your best and worst professional development experience. Why do you think it was effective or ineffective?

4. Do you agree with this statement, "studies show that most professional development activities do not lead to change in practice." Why or why not?

E. Data Analysis

Inductive data analysis is a synthetic process which allows categories and patterns to emerge from the data rather than being imposed on the data prior to data collection (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993, p. 592). The analysis entailed four levels of transformation of the data. The first level of transformation was producing transcripts of the interviews from the recorded tapes. The second level of transformation entailed identifying categories for coding the data. The focus of these coded units was to establish specific reoccurring qualities, characteristics, subjects of discourse, or concerns expressed. The third level of transformation was a close examination of the coded categories to discover and analyze themes dealing with professional development that emerged. Themes were defined as topics or stories that participants referred back to during the interview. The fourth level of transformation was examining the themes beyond one interview, analyzing the ways recurring stories were represented amongst several of the participants. This analysis identified the themes, dealing with education and professional development, within the individual interviews and then synthesized these themes in order to provide some explanation of how teachers view professional development and

education. This type of study enables others to anticipate, but not predict, what may occur in similar situations (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993, p. 508).

F. Reliability

The main question of reliability in this study dealt with the consistency of the researcher's interactive style, data recording, data analysis and interpretation of participant meanings from the data. Schumacher and McMillan (1993, p. 387) list strategies to minimize threats to reliability within this study. The threats include: researcher role, informant selection, social context, data collection strategies, data analysis strategies and analytical premises. In addition, Schumacher and McMillan (1993) list the following data collection strategies to increase the reliability between the researcher and the participants: verbatim accounts, low-inference descriptors, multiple researchers, mechanically recorded data, member checking, participant review and negative cases or discrepant data. Three of these strategies, verbatim accounts, mechanically recorded data and participant review, were used by the researcher while completing the interviews and the analysis in order to attempt to maintain the reliability of the study. First, literal statements of the participants and quotations from the interview documents were used as verbatim accounts in the Research Findings, Chapter 4. Second, the verbatim accounts were obtained by the use of a tape recorder. Third, the respondents were given the opportunity to view a copy of the transcripts; however, they declined.

G. Validity

Validity refers to the degree to which the explanations of phenomena matches the realities of the real world. The construct validity is grounded in the teacher's notions of professional development as they experienced it. In this case the internal validity of this qualitative study depends upon the degree to which the interpretations and concepts have mutual meanings between the participants and the researcher including such points as the participants' language and the subjectivity of the researcher. Since the researcher is also a teacher within the district and has also been involved in the activities described by the participants the mutual meanings and language are shared. The subjectivity of the researcher was constantly considered and self monitored.

H. Limitations of the Design

Though the study was designed to fulfill its purpose, there were certain limitations within its framework. As in all interview situations, the biases of the interviewer may influence the data. The interviewer in this study was a full time working elementary teacher in the Mission district, and as such, may have had personal biases. The interviewer may have asked leading, biased questions to support a particular point of view; or the interpretations may have been inaccurate. By being aware of the situation the interviewer took precautions to minimize this situation.

Other limitations to this study could have been due to the response effects by the respondent, interviewer and procedure. Possible respondent effects may be the following: suspicion, indifference, not motivated to cooperate, hostile to the research, wants to

please the interviewer, wants to present him/herself in favorable terms or simply does not have the information being sought. Potential interviewer effects may be: uncomfortable with the person he/she is interviewing or with the environment of the interview, allowing own opinions to influence what one hears, unable to establish rapport and having stereotypes about what people are like and what they will say. Conceivable procedural effects can be the following: the manner in which the study is explained, the method for gaining respondent's cooperation, the place where the interview is held, presence of other people during the interview and the length of the interview (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993).

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THREE

This chapter laid out the research methods used in the study both to collect data and to interpret it in order to investigate current conceptions, attitudes and idealizations on professional development for seven elementary teachers, and to examine whether or not professional development is, or can be, a useful aid in coping with the current onslaught of educational changes. The study was primarily concerned with the present, which is defined through the teachers' past experiences with professional development. Thus, to gather the data, a qualitative research method was used to access the understandings of professional development by seven teachers. Such ethnographic, qualitative research may also be valuable for developing future professional development models (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993).

In addition to being descriptive, the study was a grounded study dealing with the teachers' conceptions of professional development. The teachers' descriptions and interpretations were portrayed anecdotally, rather than through statistical analysis, in order to understand the social phenomenon of personal professional development from the participants' perspective. The results were acquired by taking the verbal accounts of the participants and by analyzing the participants' meanings (their feelings, beliefs, ideals and thoughts) for these situations, events and experiences.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter focuses on the findings of the study. The research findings were examined through six sections. The first section describes the interview. It addresses the context: when and where the interview took place and the interactions between the participants and the researcher. The second section outlines the teachers' answers to the questions dealing with definitions - of education and professional development. There appeared to be contradictions within the definitions given by the teachers themselves and the literature; these contradictions are pointed out. The third section deals with how teachers conceptualize their learning; it focuses on how teachers viewed professional development, how they perceived their needs in order to learn, and how they judged the professional development system currently in place. The fourth section discusses elements that teachers perceive would enhance their learning; it focuses on the elements other than workshop formats. The fifth section discusses elements that teachers perceive hinder their learning, such as the amount of government change and a lack of teacher focus while working towards unclear goals. The final section deals with changes that the teachers would like to see in order to enhance how they learn.

THE INTERVIEW

Before one engages in the specifics of the research findings, it seems useful to report on observations made during the interviews, regarding the participants and the effects of their responses, in a holistic sense. Upon the participants' request, the interviews took place either in the teacher's classroom or in the school's conference room which ensured their comfort with the environment of the interview location. All of the teachers seemed fatigued and a few stated that they felt "burned out." This could possibly be attributed to two circumstances: first, the time of the interviews, which occurred after a full day of teaching, and second, the time of the school year which included the last week in May and the first week in June, traditionally when the teachers are "wrapping up" the school year. The interviews took twenty minutes to fifty minutes. The participants indicated that the interview questions seemed difficult, often saying "these are hard questions" and "I have never really thought about it." All of the participants took their time in answering the questions which may have signified that they really had to think about the answers or that they were trying to formulate "professional" answers. Some participants seemed not to know the reply to a particular question and said so, while others gave an answer and asked the interviewer if their answers were acceptable or correct, even though the questions required personal responses and there were no correct or incorrect answers. This may signify that the participants wanted to present him/herself in favorable terms or perhaps that they thought that the interviewer had the answers to the responses and they were checking to see if the interviewer agreed with their statements. The interviewer; however, neither agreed nor disagreed with their statements. The

teachers were willing to talk openly and freely which may be due to the fact that, besides the participant and the interviewer, there were no other people present during the interview. Furthermore, it may have been due to the fact that they were talking to a peer rather than an administrator or someone they perceived as "out of the system." Many of the teachers were nervous about the tape recorder and wanted assurance of their anonymity. For this reason pseudonyms were used in their quotes. Nevertheless, it was felt that the teachers had made an honest effort to do their best in the interview which may be attributed to the fact that rapport was established at the onset. They were motivated to cooperate and were pleasant to the interviewer. All of the teachers felt comfortable at the end of the interview and many had stated that they enjoyed their reflection on professional development based on their personal experiences.

WHY TEACHERS HAVE TO LEARN

As previously mentioned, in order to know why teachers have to learn one needs to understand the teacher's conceptions of education and professional development. The teachers had varying definitions of what the concepts meant to them, yet most were similar.

The teachers interviewed defined or explained *education* as:

- a well rounded person... open minded [person]... with [all the] social things in place, [and] willing to carry on learning... Education is not something that just happens at school... it is on-going and never-ending. (Jill)
- the taking in of knowledge, learning, like almost through osmosis... [Not only is it] educating other students, but for me... it is educating myself... [Education] is learning through a life time process... educating oneself to be a better person. (Ana)
- learning things that we will need for life... [so that] you can improve your way of life; (Sue)
- changing your behavior, learning to think about things in a different way... I mean if you are uneducated you will never get to the point where you can read between the lines and ask questions; (Kate)
- freedom on all different levels... freedom to have choices, to do what you want to do... it helps you gain confidence... gain a better chance of getting work or finding work... making more money... It is something no one can ever take away from you, you have it and it's yours; (Sam)
- the general process by which we gain the tools to function as a useful member in our culture... like the three R's... getting along and working with people in our society; (Dana) and
- preparing children to cope with society... it [also] means that I continue to grow and develop and become a better person and a better teacher... [opening] my mind to new ways of thinking, to new ways of teaching; (Dana)

Basically, the definitions given by most teachers did not concur with the literature (Egan 1992, Peters 1983, Fenstermacher 1986) which surmises that education deals with norms, ideas and values of society while constantly expanding oneself in order to make even better sense of the changes that occur. Most of the teachers seemed to have

difficulty expressing their viewpoints on education as succinctly as they might have like to, thus reinforcing Egan's definition that *"education* is... a rather messy concept." The teachers just skimmed the surface of the meaning of the concept in the literature.

It is interesting to note that most teachers answered the question, "What does education mean to you?" on a personal level rather than on a professional one. Only one, Dana, focused her answer to the question on children and on teaching. The other six made more general comments which focused on themselves as individuals and on their lives outside the academic community. Thus, education was not something they produced as part of a job, rather, they viewed it as an on-going, essential part of everyone's life in society.

It seems that teachers viewed education not as something they produced per se, but rather as something all inclusive, to the extent that it included their development as well. Generally, the teachers answered the questions on education not as "professional educators" but in a private capacity. Hence, when most of the seven teachers talked about education they separated it from their jobs as teachers. This may be due to the fact that these teachers regarded their work as a "job" and not as a profession. They saw themselves as teachers rather than as educators because education is all encompassing and the teachers may feel that they are only responsible for a certain aspect of it, and should not be responsible for the whole scope of education as defined by Egan (1992), Peters (1983) and Fenstermacher (1986).

However, when asked what professional development meant, most of the answers

focused on teaching, students and the implementation of the new, mandated IRPs. Thus,

when asked "What does *professional development* mean to you?" the replies included:

- any way in which a teacher tries to keep up with new techniques or just tries to learn something new or improve how they do things; (Jim)
- learning to do my job better... learning and practicing a variety of teaching techniques, learning about the resources that are available and how to integrate them [to] help kids learn... (and when asked to expand their answer:) Personal development, confidence building that is part of your personal growth... [and] feeling good about what you do; (Sam)
- any new growth that would occur that has to do with teaching... learning about teaching, learning about students, learning about myself... expanding my ideas, expanding on my knowledge and trying new things or seeing things in a different way [in regards to teaching]; (Dana)
- educating yourself to improve your skills in teaching... improving your teaching so that you become a better teacher or a better person; (Sue)
- any opportunity to grow, to learn new ways of doing things that will benefit you, but of course, as you teach... At a workshop you are also thinking: How will this fit in with what I am doing, How can I integrate this? Does it match up with my philosophy? Does it fit my ideas of what education is? ...And so, you are always being critical and analytical of what the professional development activity is going to do for you. ... it is important to realize that what one person sees as valuable [professional development], another person may not; (Kate)
- being given the opportunity to go spend the day with another teacher discussing a discipline I am interested in... being able to leave the classroom and become a student yourself and take in knowledge in some shape or form; (Ana)
- a multitude of things... besides workshops and working with colleagues... taking the time to do professional development that's at a different level and nothing to do with what you are teaching, but it just helps to refocus you to get things into perspective. (Jill)

The teachers' definitions were about the technique of teaching, focusing on how teachers

could be trained to do their teaching better.

Over all, professional development was not really seen as being "educational" as

most defined the term previously, but rather, it was viewed almost as a form of inservice

or training. When the teachers were asked to expand on their answers, the concept of

professional development being tied to personal growth did begin to be somewhat considered. Yet, when the teachers were specifically asked whether professional development and education were connected, they all answered yes, the two were connected. When asked how they *were* connected, the answers became short and quite vague: "yes, there was always a time where teachers were expected to go and study, take short courses and that kind of thing... so I think it has always been part of education;" (Kate) and "Education [referring to curriculum] is changing constantly because students are changing, there's new research about education coming out all of the time, society is changing... so that means that we need to develop professionally in order to keep up with those changes"(Dana). Obviously, though the teachers seemed to feel that education and professional development were connected in some theoretical way, their experiences with professional development in the past belied this. Most teachers felt that professional development and education were intertwined, but they considered professional development as a form of training that dealt with their careers rather than something that dealt with personal growth. Lieberman and Miller (1990) mirrored these findings when they stated that the term in-service education or professional development had become synonymous with training. It was also interesting to note that the teachers' definitions of professional development did not include any of the approaches which appeared in the literature (such as networking, peer coaching and mentoring). Yet, these concepts were mentioned repeatedly when answering the question dealing with their description of their ideal professional development, thus showing a knowledge of some of the more current educational trends. These trends were then included in the ways in which teachers saw as being the way things had to change in order to enhance learning.

It seems that teachers view their practice as unconnected to "education." They may separate the two due to the pressure of all the new IRPs and the new forms of assessment which they are expected to implement. Therefore, education now becomes synonymous with narrow conceptions of curriculum and training for the "new" curriculum becomes of foremost importance. The teachers interviewed seemed to have a good understanding of education, yet this understanding did not seem to connect to their concepts of professional development. Thus, it seems that the answer to why teachers have to learn, according to those teachers being interviewed, is not so much to be "educated" but rather to be technically more proficient teachers for their students. Joyce and Showers (1995) also mentioned this viewpoint when they argued that professional development kept the teachers current with the training proposed by studies which focused on how students' needs must be met.

One of the reasons that teachers are more concerned with the "training" aspect of professional development rather that with the "educational" aspect of professional development may be that most teachers are too busy doing the "job" of teaching rather than to the "profession" of teaching. Teachers may feel they are functionaries in large organizations rather than educators. Though some may argue that professionalism should be the focus of educators, there is currently no incentive for teachers to change within the district studied. Education has become a "job" for many teachers and not a profession, thus training for the job appears to be more important.

Professional development is not teacher training, according to Hammond (1993), yet most of the teachers interviewed thought of it as so and often used the three words simultaneously "professional development training" when describing their experiences. According to Coulter (1995) professional development should provide teachers with the opportunity to reflect on their practice in a way that is consistent with their beliefs on education; yet many of the teachers interviewed had not made that connection. Lieberman and Miller (1990) see the teacher as a reflective practitioner, though the teachers interviewed did not regard "reflective practice" as part of their professional development definition. What could this mean? Perhaps teachers need to critically reflect on what it is they are doing. Teachers need to become involved in a wider dialogue about their practice, a dialogue that goes beyond their realm of experience. Having access to professional journals in the schools, for example, might prove to be extremely helpful with this.

All teachers acknowledged the importance for them to continue learning throughout their careers and their lifetime; hence, the importance for professional development. All felt that continued learning was absolutely essential. Their reasoning was as follows:

- "if I don't do some kind of professional development or extra training I don't really think I will be able to teach. I think I need to learn for the rest of my life, not necessarily in education [but also in] interests that I might have" (Ana);

- "if we don't grow then we have nothing new to offer our kids... we would not be a good model for the students because they're expected to learn and to grow

continually. [Without further education] we become stagnant and bored, and that rubs

off in the classroom" (Dana);

- "things are changing all of the time so you have to try and keep on top of the stuff the

  best way you can" (Sam).

With perceptions that society, technology, and the work industry is changing (Wideen,

1994) and that new research continually appears on the latest educational practices,

teachers seemed to feel that they needed to continue developing professionally in order to

keep up. Yet, all teachers failed to be specific as far as what it is that they needed to

continue learning. In addition, they did not mention any criteria for "good" professional

development that they used to assist them in continuing learning. Each teacher had his or

her own notion of what continued learning meant. For example, going back to school to

do masters studies (Ana); taking more courses in specialty areas (Dana); post secondary

studies (Sam); more training in the form of workshops (Sue); and mentoring (Jim).

Fullan (1991) claims that most teachers do not benefit as much as they would like

to given the way most professional development presently is developed. This seems to be

confirmed by the teachers interviewed. In order for relevant learning to take place, most

of the teachers interviewed stated that definite changes had to occur within the current

professional development system in order to best facilitate how teachers learn. Changes

such as: an increase in hands on activities at workshops (Jill); topics that are relevant to

teachers and the students that they are currently teaching (Kate); positive, organized,

prepared, informed and approachable speakers (Sue); and increased time for networking with their peers and funding to professional development activities (Sam).

How Teachers Perceived Their Learning

This section deals with how the interviewed teachers judged the way that the professional development they experienced either helped or hindered their learning process. It focuses on the perceived methods that the teachers said they needed in order to learn and whether the teachers believed that existing professional development changed their practice. Again, many contradictions arose dealing with the individual opinions about professional development.

When the teachers were asked whether or not they agreed with Fullan's statement that most professional development does not lead to change in practice five out of seven hesitantly agreed. The reason for the hesitancy may be based on the fact that the possibility of professional development changing practice *exists* for them; but they believe that the amount they receive and the sometimes overwhelming work load may prevent teachers from synthesizing the information and encompassing it within their teaching styles. They believe that professional development *could* change teachers practices if intensified. Teachers stated the following: "I can't say that professional development training really changes a teacher's life... I don't believe there is enough of it going on where it would change... [for] two days a year, they can't expect teachers to totally change" (Ana); "if it is something where someone says, 'you have to go, you have to do

this' it is less likely that people will do it... if you come away with some really fantastic idea, you probably want to take it and implement it... I have a long list of business that has to be done... so I haven't got to that yet, mind you, I will" (Kate). Kate feels that it is more likely that teachers will implement something if it is done within their school where they can network and move it into practice. This obviously involves a longer period of time whereby the teachers, attempting to change, receive support from their colleagues who are also "in the same boat." Thus, Kate knows that in order for professional development to be a positive influence a change must occur that will go beyond the one day workshop and extend the professional development to encompass weeks, months or even the full year. Hargreaves (1990) points out that the reality of the situation for most teachers is that collaborative efforts such as those yearned for by Kate often get squeezed out by the press of daily classroom reality, lack of time, and the culture of the school. Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) also pointed out that time for teachers can only be bought by rethinking the ways in which schools are staffed, funded and managed. The teachers found that they had little opportunity for collaborative efforts, yet they yearned for them. Perhaps then professional development would lead to a change in practice.

Based on the teachers' statements, through the years professional development consisted primarily of workshops which highlighted a guest speaker. The teachers interviewed found this style of presentation usually unacceptable as it did very little to motivate them or to provide an opportunity to learn methods that would change their practice. Fullan (1991) agrees stating that the impact of professional development depends on a combination of motivation and an opportunity to learn. One teacher spoke

of an American speaker who was "a little too sure that she had all the answers and in a way that made me feel that [the speaker] thought [the teachers present] did not have any answers... she did not really have a sense of what schools are and she did not really know the culture of the school." (Kate) The other mentioned an expensive speaker who was "very slick, very polished, [and said] nothing" that she could relate to. (Jill) Jill talked of professional development as a big industry that was too glitsy and too perfect with speakers who stood up and said, "...you do it my way, and I think the best way" and she said that she would rather talk to her colleagues. It is obvious that these teachers resent various attributes that the speakers such as: the way they talk, the way they look and what they say. For instance, an example of a professional speaker may be a person from the Bureau of Education or SkillPath Seminars, to name just two. These speakers, who were once educators themselves, are paid to travel the country and are trained to present numerous "quality" workshops. They present an organized "talk" that is well planned, usually informative, scheduled like clockwork and appear to "know it all." The confident speakers have a "professional" aura about them that goes from their well spoken, "higher-level" language, to their perfect hair, to the suits they wear, and to the manner in which they address public questions. According to Jill professional development has become a "big business", with speakers and presenters becoming professional facilitators. How this impacts on professional development is a gray area in the literature. Jim said that, "I think I have been to a couple [of workshops] where I kind of turned off part way through and didn't really pay attention too much because I was bored of it, probably too much talking and not enough doing." All teachers agreed that they did not want to go to a session and "sit there all day listening to a pile of theory... on how to do this and how to do that...

similar to what the government does" (Ana). They found that this existing form of professional development led to very little, if any, change in their classroom.

This manner of professional development where an "expert" presented findings was one thing that teachers were certain they *did not want - "a pile of theory"* (Jim). It is apparent that Jim would like a practical application of whatever it is that was presented to him. The worst professional development experience was "too much talking and not enough doing" (Jim); when "it was just a bureaucracy and not something that I wanted to be involved in" (Sam). Yet, teachers also said that they did not want to be told how to do things, instead they wanted, "a sort of a benchmark to guide my behavior and to recognize behavior in my students that I thought was positive. I wanted [someone] to help me understand what my philosophy [of education] was and why it was, and how was I going to work that into what I was doing in my day to day work" (Kate). It is quite evident that there are contradictions in the teachers' statements. On the one hand, teachers state that they do not want theory and they do not want to be told how to do things; however, on the other hand some say that they would like someone to help them understand their philosophy of education to provide guidelines for practice. But, in order to understand one's philosophy one has to uncover his/her theory of education. Teachers need to be involved in discussions of what professional development is about so that they can begin to identify some of their contradictions. If the expectations of what the professional development training workshops will deliver is stated and met then the teachers will not be surprised. Perhaps they will be more open to the information and will not "tune out."

Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) concur that teachers viewed top-down reform by experts as part of the problem in established professional development models and that undue confidence and certainty that is often invested in the findings of educational research further "turn teachers off" these forms of professional development. Two of those interviewed stressed this point by giving the following statements:

- "...I've been down to those Bureau of Education things, a couple of those in Vancouver, too slick, just too, I don't know, even down to the toothpaste smile. I'll be there the whole day and spend $150... and that was one of the poorest ones I have been to" (Jill);

- "... she was a little too sure that she had all the answers, and in a way that made me feel that we didn't have any answers... she was demeaning and humiliating to teachers" (Kate).

The teachers had such a negative reaction to these types of speakers. It appears as though a power relationship might be occurring because the teachers are reacting to being demeaned. But, were they? Perhaps the teachers were confusing their relationship with the speaker and professional development. Also, Richardson (1992) pointed out that with the top-down educational process teachers have become jaded and view professional development as a waste of time. For instance, if the teachers attend a workshop with a guest speaker presenting through a lecture format and the information that is presented is not presented "well" or if the teacher cannot apply what was said to his/her own class, then the workshop could be seen as a waste of time for that particular teacher. Ana clearly remembers her worst professional development, a workshop that was so bad that it

"was just an absolute, total waste of money." She felt that she might as well have "walked in there and walked out" because the guest speakers were neither prepared nor organized.

Though the top-down model of professional development was not one from which most of the teachers interviewed felt that they benefited, they did comment on the types of workshops that they did feel helped their learning process. All of the teachers stated that they were motivated to learn best when they had a combination of the four learning styles: listening, seeing, doing and discussing. They referred to these learning styles as "hands on" workshops:

- "...Real learning takes place when you're doing... [and] learning with other people" (Jim);

- "...I learn best through hands on experiences" (Ana);

- "...I found the group I was with... very interactive in terms of the way we discussed... a lot of things, I felt I gained a lot of understanding" (Sam).

McLaughlin and Lieberman (1992) claim that teachers need to be provided with fresh ways of learning - one way is by allowing teachers to be "active learners, participating the way students do: choosing a project, planning, doing the work, assessing the outcomes" (p. 674). The teachers unanimously preferred learning through a "hands on" tangible activity that could later be replicated in classroom teaching.

What they seemed to mean by hands-on was being actively involved. For example, during a science workshop the teachers preferred to complete the experiments that were being proposed as if they were the students. Thus, by taking an active part in the process

they were better able to discuss the concepts presented. Since the teachers had witnessed and experienced the activity they now knew what to expect when they would repeat that activity with their students. Therefore, once the teachers were presented with concepts or ideas at a workshop or through inservice, they then wanted to be given the opportunity to try them out so as to see how they worked, in other words, they wanted to be actively involved.

Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) provide the literature that supports the manner in which the teachers stated that they learned. They claim that "teachers learn by doing, reading, and reflecting (just as students do); by collaborating with other teachers; by looking closely at students and their work; and by sharing what they see" (p. 598). Most elementary teachers implied that it is the active, rather than the passive, learner who retains the information and gains confidence in their ability to utilize the material presented. However, learning is not generic. There is no one best way of learning because learning is very individualistic and contextual. Even though all of the teachers interviewed stated that they found this type of professional development most beneficial, this may not always be the case for all teachers. Some may be doing hands on activities who come back and say that, yes they were involved; however, they found that the "make and take" was a waste of time. Once again a contradiction is evident and the teachers' individuality comes forth.

One method of learning for one teacher may not be the same for the next. Also, the purpose of learning depends on what exactly it is that is being learnt. Some things

need to be learned through theory. The teachers interviewed preferred a more "practical" way of learning (does it allow for classroom contingencies? and does it fit my classroom situation?) stating that it motivates them more. They weren't clear about what "practical" meant. The teachers who were provided with the chance to try out the activities being presented stated that they benefited the most from this opportunity. As Prawat (1992) stated, by having support, reflecting on practice and fashioning new knowledge or beliefs, teachers are better able to understand the notion of education they are using. However, teachers should not be so quick to discount theory because it can be a valuable component of teaching.

Thus, the teachers interviewed suggested that certain formats that they had experienced within their professional development, such as "expert" speakers presenting non applicable findings attempting to instigate top down reform, hindered their learning. Furthermore, they perceived that the most beneficial professional development involved a combination of the four learning styles of listening, seeing, doing and discussing. Though these were the points that most of the teachers interviewed presented, it should be noted that individuality must be considered and that contradictory viewpoints occurred.

<u>ELEMENTS THAT TEACHERS PERCEIVE</u>

<u>WOULD ENHANCE THEIR LEARNING</u>

Even though they frequently referred to this method of learning, professional development through workshop formats was not the only vehicle in which the interviewed teachers saw their professional growth develop. This section will deal with other elements that the teachers perceived would help enhance their learning.

Within the workshop format teachers stated that in addition to doing the activity, the teachers stated that they wanted to be able to discuss the activity. This was one of the aspects that teachers felt increased their learning. Most teachers preferred learning with their peers (in partners or in groups), but stated that they rarely had the opportunity to do this because, more often than not, they worked in isolation. When given the opportunity to discuss the activity they were doing with others, they were more able to clarify uncertainties. Teachers want the opportunity to work with their peers. They would like the opportunity to work together, share, discuss and plan.

Some stated that they would like the opportunity to observe other teachers in their field. One teacher stated that she preferred "working together cooperatively... with a buddy... [because] working with teachers is the best way to learn, better than books" (Sue). She also stated that, "...if you are allowed to visit other classrooms... a picture is worth a thousand words... if you actually see other people working you learn a lot by watching" (Sue). The available literature often fails to mention the observation of other

teachers as a means for helping teachers grow and develop; though aspects of this may be connected to mentoring or peer teaching programs. Most teachers teach in isolation and they rarely get the opportunity to see their peers "in action."

One element that would enhance how teachers learn would be in the way the school's staff is encouraged to interact. A supportive role from people on staff was essential for Sam. She felt that:

> I think most people will put [professional development] into practice in some form, whether it's just in doing one little thing different, or if it's just taking a whole new approach to teaching... or whatever it may be. I think most people change somehow. I think it is only a few who may not change at all. The amount of change... will be very slow and very little, unless there is more support in terms of practical support... peer coaches. (Sam)

Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) acknowledge many benefits of peer coaching including the immediacy of the feedback. Joyce and Showers (1995) point out that if a teacher required assistance on a particular problem or some form of advice, that that teacher could seek out another teacher whereby a response could be obtained instantaneously. The convenience of peer coaching would help teachers to implement changes resulting from professional development more successfully since the professional development stops becoming "a one shot workshop event" and becomes on-going, immediate and relevant (Anderson and Shannon, 1988).

One teacher described his best professional development as being the teacher mentor program where "a brand new teacher gets [paired with] an experienced teacher

that helps them out. It was just tons of help; it was like real world- what am I going to do tomorrow- kind of help... which I thought for new teachers was extremely useful and really worthwhile" (Jim). Teachers felt that beginning teachers should work in partnerships with another teacher. Some suggested reinstating the mentor program while others suggested a provision which allowed for a beginning teacher to work with an experienced teacher, their buddy, for a year before they went into the classroom on their own. "I think it's a real shame the district has gotten rid of the mentor program, but it's understandable considering the financial times we are in" (Jim). In addition, teachers were concerned about the number of teachers that quit teaching after a couple of years; those teachers worked in isolation, felt discouraged and felt that they were no good. Working with a buddy would provide the beginning teacher with on-going professional development in the form of someone to talk to, who would help them when they felt unsure as to how to handle a certain situation. One teacher put it nicely, "I know people who have lost their jobs and other teachers who were not aware that they were even having difficulties, and by the time we found out, they had gone under, and it was too late to help them... so I think that is very important" (Sue). Anderson and Shannon (1988) pointed out the benefit of mentoring for the purpose of promoting professional and personal development. Fullan (1991) proposed that mentoring was an on-going process. The mentor program enhances professional development since it was concerned with assisting teachers deal with current issues of classroom teaching. Again, the teachers interviewed believed that they knew what changes were needed in order for effective, practice-changing professional development to occur. Unfortunately, the system which the teachers suggested i.e. mentoring, was deemed too expensive to be run by the school

district. Whereas before, both new teachers and their mentors were given time off during school hours to meet and discuss any pertaining issues on a monthly basis, but with the budget restraints this entire program was canceled.

Besides observing other teachers, another teacher mentioned that one thing that really helps teachers change their practice and grow as individuals is "just teachers talking to each other, and bringing their new ideas, networking and just talking about it... so I think those little interactions really help, small steps, you know, towards professional development" (Sam). In addition to networking with their peers, it is essential for teachers to network with other people such as administrators, professors, other professionals and other people in the community. If teachers only network with other teachers within the same school then they will focus on and reinforce the same viewpoints, thus possibly being prejudiced.

A missing element is the broadening of the teachers' horizon. What needs to occur is for teachers to confront other views of the situation by talking to other people about what counts as legitimate. The idea of collaboratives (Lieberman, 1992) plays a small role within the teachers' realm of experience; however, many teachers feel that they would like to join groups, "that's a way of networking with people who are teaching the same kind of things that you are, by joining groups... with people that are doing the same thing that you are... and having the same interests, and attending the conferences, you know just having the networking again, but in a broader sense" (Sam). Another teacher stated that "... what we need to do now is get together with teachers in the same grade levels and look at

a particular topic and look at how we're going to teach it" (Dana). All teachers stressed the importance of being with their colleagues for professional support. What is important is that "it's not just learning a new strategy or listening to a lecture, but the association with other professionals"(Dana). In order for teachers to be involved in a wider dialogue about their practice and gain new perspectives, they need to engage in conversation with other individuals that are beyond the teachers' realm of experience.

One way proposed by Lieberman (1992) involved district-university partnerships. One teacher interviewed stated that her best professional development experience was gained through doing her masters study because that is where she gained her confidence (Sam). She liked: her studies were interactive through numerous mind opening discussions with peers; she gained a good rapport with her peers and her experienced professors; her studies had practical applications of theories and ideas; she was able to implement what she had learned; and that she gained an understanding and knew which areas she needed to develop in and continue to work on. Though in the past, some school districts financially encouraged their staff to work towards their masters, but this became unfeasible due to budget cuts. However, the areas which Sam found most beneficial to her professional growth (i.e., experienced professors, practical applications of theories and ideas, studies etc.) can still occur if district-university partnerships (as proposed by Lieberman, 1992) are developed. Such collaborations may carry out a variety of activities that make professional and staff development continuum a reality (Fullan, 1991). Such partnerships would put the practical work of teachers along side researchers involving

them as colleagues (Lieberman, 1992). Thus, Sam can continue interacting at the same level which she found stimulating while in the elementary classroom setting.

Support is another significant aspect of helping teachers grow and change. Teachers feel powerless to implement something which they do not understand, yet for which they will be accountable. One teacher stated that, "what would help me right now is if I could be given some time, in-school time, to read over the IRPs and then to discuss them with my colleagues... that right now is at the top of my wish list, to read all of the new upcoming IRPs then discuss them with my colleagues, then maybe come up with a plan..." (Jill). What they would need is support from someone who is knowledgeable, about the IRPs for example, to help the teachers work through their many questions and uncertainties. All teachers feel anxious about this imposition since they know that they will be responsible, but they are unsure for what they are responsible. The teachers stated that they would like support from their peers, support from administration and support from the government. By support from their peers they meant, "working with other teachers and everybody getting together and supporting one another to try these new things [IRPs] and see what happens" (Kate). In addition, having a positive staff was found to be very helpful. By support from administration they meant, "a lot of positive input by the administrators" (Sue). By support from the government they meant an increase in the amount of time and money they are given for professional development specifically to work with the IRPs. Support is essential in all aspects of practice; however, specifically what kind of support? There have to be some guidelines as to what situations and outcomes are to be supported, because support is not possible in all cases.

For instance, the teachers did not stipulate what they would specifically need support in and how this support would come about. Perhaps their claims are generally based because they have worked in isolation, in their classrooms, for so long, that they would appreciate any "support" from anybody. According to the teachers interviewed and Rosenholtz (1989), teachers usually work in isolation; however, opportunities must be made for teachers to engage in discussion with their peers, because through discussion support can occur. Teachers are often contacted by administration or parents in "difficult" times; however, how often does anybody come to a teacher and say "I like the way you did this" or "You are doing a great job." When it comes to government support in the form of time and money, those are scarce commodities to come by with the province's growing debt. Will there ever be enough time or money for teachers to do all of the things that they want to do? How much is enough? Even the teachers themselves had a hard time answering this question. Furthermore, it was difficult to get the teachers to pinpoint exactly what they would use the time for. Again, individuals would utilize the time in many different ways, not all of them as "effective" as others.

Overall, teachers mentioned the tremendous need, and lack of opportunity, for working together with their peers either in partners or in grade level groupings, within and out of the district, with administrators, researchers, or other individuals within their community in order to begin to pursue different ways of enhancing their learning especially through professional development.

Elements That Teachers Perceive

Would Hinder Their Learning

Teachers found that the amount of government change was a major hindrance in their personal growth. One teacher stated that:

> you get a lot of demands from administration and the government is constantly demanding change... you feel boxed in, you have to do this, or you have to do that... its very difficult to become a good teacher. I think allowing the teacher to make decisions with regard to the amount of work for the classroom, some classes... work ahead, and others slow down and you have to be allowed to do that, otherwise you have a lot of difficulties, children are stressed and teachers are stressed. (Sue)

Thus, the teacher seemed to assume that the new IRP outcomes would be used to judge her performance as an effective teacher. The focus of her professional development would then be on finding ways to implement the government mandated materials rather than on other professional growth. Another teacher stated "our job is so busy, and particularly nowadays with all the changes happening and funding cutbacks and everyone is expected to do more, we're really struggling to get a handle on what should [the] focus be" (Sam). While still another noted, "I think at the moment what hinders change, growth and development is too many things [meaning the new Instructional Resource Packages and evaluation documents] coming down from the ministry too quickly I think the biggest problem we're facing is too much too quickly ...there's always change coming at us but not as fast and as heavy as it is now" (Jill). In short, teachers feel that they are "being given piles and piles and piles of 'stuff' from the government, that [they] have to implement, and not having the resources to do it. The government was constantly coming

up with things we should do and shouldn't do and coming up with all these binders [such as binders for the Year 2000 previously and for the new Instructional Resource Packages currently]" (Ana). Wideen (1994) noted that expectations for reform became confused with conflicting expectations and mixed messages. The teachers interviewed supported his findings. All of them needed the time to personalize the changes and interpret them in the manner that will enhance their ability to further education in their classrooms. This time would not necessarily be outside of their teaching schedule as learning takes place in the classroom for the teacher as well as the students. But the time they need is basically a buffer before the administrators expect a mastery of the mandated government materials. Nevertheless, time is not the only solution, teachers need to think of other things that could help them deal with the mandated change to their practice, such as accessing research journals and professional libraries or working with teachers who have piloted the programs.

Dana felt that teachers needed to "have a particular focus and work together with other teachers in the district or within other districts, who are all focused on the same goal." Dana speaks of a goal, yet she does not state what it is. Perhaps she and her staff do not have common goals; then, on the other hand, perhaps the district does, but she and others like her may not be aware of it. This seems a weakness; one cannot dispute the fact that focusing towards goal setting, implementing and reviewing is important, yet in so many cases, the teachers interviewed discussed working toward an ambiguous, non-specific, all encompassing goal of "education." Thus, since the goal or outcome to be reached is not definite, it is hard to get the teachers to provide input in developing

effective professional development in order to reach that goal. Education is an unclear journey; therefore, it is hard to decide what counts as professional development. Before teachers can set their goals with other district teachers and other professionals, they have to arrive at some conception and that comes from their journey, their journey being their education. Therefore, not only was time needed to personalize the changes, but also some teachers felt they needed to find a focus or goal in order to clearly define their needs for professional development; a focus so that they could feel that they were furthering their education and improving their teaching abilities by "keeping on top" of things:

> I know that it is a struggle I'm having right now... some people, I think, are more focused and are able to wade their way through and be clear about their focus. I think others who find it more difficult to focus may find it harder to find the time to do clear professional development in terms of focusing, understanding and having a clear direction and knowing what you need to know. It's just all the things that you need to do in you job, trying to put them into perspective, particularly now [with] all of the different ideas turning around [are making it difficult to focus]. (Sam)

Sam also stated that she was saddened by the fact that she thought "a lot of people don't understand what it is that we're supposed to be doing and it's difficult to get that message out, amongst all the other changes that are happening." Wideen (1994) stated that teachers have to find ways to personalize the changes and interpret them, yet without first making a concrete focus, or a defined goal, Sam, and other teachers like her, will continue to be frustrated and saddened about their situation.

The ways that teachers' learning can be enhanced is very individualistic. Yet, according to the teachers interviewed, teachers do not change their practices quickly no

matter what the government changes. They may feel the pressure of the mandates, but in reality, they do not change instantaneously, if they change at all. Perhaps many teachers do what they have always done once their classroom door is closed.

CHANGES TO ENHANCE HOW TEACHERS LEARN

ABOUT EDUCATION AND TEACHING

So how can this be altered? How can teachers be encouraged to further their learning through professional development? Some interviewees suggested that these questions can be partially answered by being given the opportunity to choose from a variety of workshops, by examining past professional development, by examining the validity of workshops and by examining the amount of time and funding provided to teachers.

The teachers interviewed stated that one change could be for the teachers to have access to a greater variety of workshops and courses that addressed their concerns and interests. Generally, teachers felt that the professional development by which they meant workshops available to them, within their district this year, had been one of the best because it was well organized and had a wide variety of programs and curricular topics that teachers could decide on to fit their personal interest. What teachers meant by "well organized" was a scheduled day with a key note speaker, snack breaks, pre-ordered luncheons, a meeting place with their peers, book displays in the gym for perusal or purchase and student ushers to lead teachers to their next workshops (for teachers that were unfamiliar with the building). Teachers stated unanimously that it was those workshops, which catered to the teacher's personal interests, that would "fall over into the way you are when you teach" and be taken to the students (Kate). Even if the workshop was self defense or financial planning, and totally unrelated to the curriculum, it would be

of benefit because the teacher would "come away with a positive attitude towards [themselves] and that reflects as to who you are as a teacher [and] bringing that positive demeanor to the classroom is important" (Kate). When some of the teachers mentioned that even workshops that are not related to the curriculum are valid, they made some interesting statements. Perhaps what they are doing is justifying what they like and find enjoyable versus what is educationally sound. Is a self defense workshop or a walk around a lake relevant to the actual students? Could this type of activity not be done on a day off? Is this time well spent? Do all workshops or teacher activities have to be relevant solely for the students or could they just benefit the personal interests of teachers? Where does one draw the line and who is responsible for setting it? Most teachers would argue that as they are the ones who determine whether the activity was a benefit to them most immediately, that they should be the ones who judge. Should there be established criteria as to what constitutes good professional development versus enjoyable activities? If there are to be such criteria - who should set them? Researchers? The district? Administrators? Teachers? Or a combination? again, this is a question that this study does not answer.

In addition to having access the teachers expressed the importance of choice, choosing workshops in their areas of interest. Some of the areas of interest included: information and technology, language, reading, math, science, report writing, and art, in addition to personal topics such as money management and self defense. As mentioned, teachers felt that this year there was a better selection of topics, that they were pleased with the fact that they could choose their sessions and the fact that even the key note

speaker was good. Some teachers mentioned the lack of workshops on the topics that they were interested in such as: social studies, physical and outdoor education, library and music. Whereas, other teachers found this year's professional day to be one of the best because there was a greater variety of workshops available. There was a discrepancy in their statements, some said that there was not enough variety and choice, "it would be great to see more happening in our district" (Ana) while others were happy with the number and choices that were available "there is quite a choice in professional development days... so there is no reason not to get something you're interested in" (Jim). Sue said that "even if you don't have enough choices, you can [inform the professional development committee] next year and ask them for the choices you would like on there... and often they send notices around asking if people have any suggestions." One teacher admitted that plenty was available but that they just had to have the initiative to go. Another teacher stated that, "professional development days should be based on our needs rather than having a bunch of topics available for us to choose from, just random topics that they have" (Dana). But all teachers recognized that "it's just healthy for everybody to get out of the classroom for a day, say hello, spend some time together in these workshops. They are good because you learn things that are worthwhile and can use in your classroom" (Jim). Over all, they stated that the professional development available addressed most of their concerns and interests; however, there was not enough of it. The teachers stated that they needed choice in selecting their professional development; however, they do not mention in any form how they actually judge it. They seem to be talking about their likes and dislikes though they do not appear to be judging the professional development on its educational value. There is no clear correlation between

liking a workshop and "improving" practice. A one day inservice is not likely to change one's practice. What is important is for professional development to assist teachers in changing their practice on an educationally sound basis.

By understanding some of the teachers worst and ineffective past professional development experiences changes can be made to avoid them in the future. It is important to know that some teachers had difficulty in pinpointing their worst professional development. They seemed to be speaking of professional development as events rather than as a process. When the teachers interviewed did mention some things that bothered them they all spoke exclusively of workshops - not personal development. For instance, Dana stated that, "I don't know if I've really had a bad experience because I've always learned something from the workshops." Dana then went on to describe a workshop where she had learned nothing new, the topic wasn't one that she was covering and where she did not have the same resources in her classroom to implement the material being presented. She took that workshop simply because she could not get the district workshop that she had signed up for due to the popularity of the topic and the limited space. Since her interest level was not there, the workshop was not that useful for her. Yet, before Dana had stated that she always found something beneficial from her professional development experiences. The reasons for this contradiction may be that a teacher does not have to be interested in order for the material to be useful. Dana obviously learned more from workshops that she was interested in, but she did realize that she had learned something. Even if the thing she learned was that "...you can take a day off for a workshop, and enjoy it, [so] it will be less stressful for your health, so I don't

think there's a worst one" (Sue). Here the teacher is indicating that there is no "bad" professional development because as long as she gets her enjoyable day off it is of benefit to her because it gives her a break from the classroom, and allows her a full day to interact with her peers in a "teacher" based setting. But does it count as being educational? Does not a weekend or a holiday do the same thing? Obviously both can be educational, yet McLaughlin and Lieberman (1992) do endorse peer interaction as an important tactic in legitimizing the activity.

One reason for all of these contradictions about the validity of workshops could be that while teachers realize a strong need for some sort of professional development, the only type that they are generally familiar with is the one or two day workshop format. Teachers equate these days as professional development and thus fail to realize the scope and options which are possible to them as forms of professional development; hence, the ambivalent and contradictory responses. Lieberman and Miller (1990) implied that workshops were based on a deficit model of professional development. Fullan (1991) also pointed out the frustrating waste of workshops. In order to change the workshop format, teachers need to be exposed to the various professional development models found in the literature (e.g., Hargreaves and Fullan 1992, Anderson and Shannon 1988, Rosenholtz 1989). In order for this to happen the district would have to reevaluate its professional development system and make a shift from the "delivery" process to reflection on practice. Lieberman (1995) claimed that teachers should be able to grow and move away from workshops that involve direct teaching to practices in professional development that involve learning. This change from teaching to learning, she goes on to say, is significant

because it implies that teacher development opportunities must become integral to the restructuring of schools.

One aspect of this reconstruction would be to provide time for professional development, regardless of the model of delivery, since a lack of time was a major concern for all of the teachers. Teachers felt that somehow they should be given " a little more time to do the things that they need to do to change" (Jim). It always seems to come down to time. How much time is necessary? Time for what specifically? Even if extra time is

given does that guarantee change? Teachers perhaps need to think about their practice in other terms besides strictly time. They felt that what happened to many teachers was that by the time they had carried out their daily classroom duties, little time and energy was left for reflection. Jim stated that "...you get so carried away with the day to day business, and the job, and the kids, and the classroom, by the time you've done your marking, and your planning, going out to read a book on how to teach better is not necessarily your first choice." In addition, one teacher claimed that she would like to have time to:

> ...be able to sit down, look [the IRPs] over, and discuss [them] and say gee, I like that bit, I'm gonna try that or that's a load of garbage, I'm not going to try that. So, just time to read and reflect and discuss [is needed. Time to] go with the things that you're happy with and leave the things alone that you aren't. Whatever you do, things in this job [are] a juggling act, you have to use some of your time and you certainly expect that the powers at be would allow you some time within your job, and paid for professional development as well. (Jill)

When asked how much time they would need a teacher responded, "any time at all that you put into growth is going to be helpful and positive, so it can be from a very small amount of time to years" (Dana). This teacher finds it difficult to define "any time" or "growth." Could that mean that she does not know how much time she needs or that she does not know what it is that would measure her growth? Even if she was given numerous hours of time that would not guarantee that she experienced growth. Time is symbolic, it can not be quantified because it is difficult to measure or predict how long it will take an individual to learn something. It all comes down to the teacher's notion of education as well as the district's notion of education. Again, individualism is apparent rather than collectivism. Teachers found it quite difficult to state an exact amount of time or to put a measure on it; however, all felt that they should be allocated school time, during the day. Many stated that before school was very difficult and that right after school they had so many other things to do or meetings to attend. Most were too tired to do anything after school and all preferred to spend time with their family. According to Zeichner (1991) teachers must be provided with time during the school day to participate in the various non-instructional activities that are increasingly open to them to assist them in accomplishing their educational intentions. What is evident is that teachers want to engage in their professional development during the school day rather than "on their own time." Is this always possible? A power relationship may be occurring here whereby the teachers want recognition that what they are doing is important; hence, some school time will be given for it. Some teachers even feel that they have put in many years of university and anything extra that they now do they should be paid for. Are people in other professions expected to train or develop on their own time? Is professional development

the teachers' responsibility, the districts or both? The teachers realized that the district could not afford too much time and that as professionals they could be expected to do "a lot of this stuff" in the summer, but where does one draw the line? They preferred not to use up their summer time; however, some teachers used their summers to take courses for personal interest. Jill was able to pinpoint the amount of time that she needed so she stated that she would require one half day of release time for each IRP. No justification for this figure was given. One teacher summed it up nicely by saying, "support is really saying that what we want you to do is important and we will help, therefore, allow you to take time during the school day to work on this..." (Kate). Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) also pointed out that time for teachers can only be bought by rethinking the ways in which schools are staffed, funded and managed.

Unfortunately, in order to give teachers the time they need, and want, an increase in government funding becomes a major issue. Today, the governments' ability to "pay" is limited due to cutbacks of many of its programs which are a direct result of the growing provincial debt. Teachers did not mind doing the odd thing in their own time (meaning after school, weekends and holidays), even at their own expense, if it was something that they were really interested in; however, they felt that if the Ministry of Education was imposing a new program on them (meaning the new IRPs), then the government should provide and pay for their training. Jill stated, "Victoria is telling us you have to do this, this, this and this... I don't see that I should be expected to pay my money and to give up my time to do my own inservice. But, if they are willing to go half way and say well gee, we'll pay for your sub, you pay for the course, then maybe we can meet half way."

Another teacher stated that teachers received $150 a year and a teacher on call to cover their class while they went to a workshop and "it's not as though you can't afford to go or can't find a sub..." (Sue). Again, variations were evident in the interviewees statements. Some teachers said that they could not afford to go because the professional development funds were low, while other teachers stated that they could. Why the discrepancy? Obviously what is adequate for some is inadequate for others. Some teachers are happy as long as they get some money while others will never have the amount of money that they feel they need.

Teachers agreed that they are given money for professional development; however, it is a small amount that only pays for one local workshop or conference. They felt that this was limiting compared to the numerous, more expensive conferences that they will never have the opportunity to attend, unlike the administrators who receive more money for professional development and get to travel to other cities and other countries to attend conferences. Once again teachers are referring to professional development as conferences which signifies the limited conception of professional development. How will more money make a difference within their practice? It seems as though there is a power issue occurring. Many teachers stated that they would like to attend at least two or three workshops / conferences a year. Though the majority of the teachers stated that they would need an increase in funding, one teacher stated that the funding was there, but that it just had to be used. Jim admitted that he should have spent his allocated professional development funds these last few years, but he hadn't. His reasoning was, "...all I would have to do is sit down and find something really good to go to and use my money and

organize for a sub, but I think what happens is I just get wrapped up with stuff and it just ends up not happening, at the end of the year I go, Ho, I haven't used my professional development money" (Jim). As already mentioned, some teachers need more money and may complain about its lack, while others do not even spend what they are allocated. Why the variation within this group of professionals? Perhaps what is important for some is less so for others. Besides workshops, teachers would also like to have some funding available for networking, mentoring, peer coaching and basically working with their peers. Currently there is no funding available for this. As long as teachers remain autonomous within their own classrooms, these contradictions will exist. Again, this study does not examine how the above mentioned questions can be decided. Rather, all that the study can do is to itemize these variations and show their existence.

What should be considered, is the collective experience that the seven participants had with professional development, the individualistic statements and the contradicting visions that the teachers carried. They felt that they knew what "worked" or did not "work" when it came to enhancing their own performance both within the classroom and as "educated" individuals. They often had complaints, yet they did not take any initiative themselves. They continued to envision professional development as being workshop based, yet they still brought out many concepts that concurred with the literature and explored many ideas which may, in turn, cause changes to occur.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FOUR

Teachers seem willing to be involved in activities that challenge them and that promote professional growth. The teachers interviewed have made various claims and statements as to why they should learn, how they learn, and what changes are necessary to enhance how teachers learn yet, many of their statements contradicted one another and the literature. They expressed various views on the current professional development system and their conceptions of how it enhances and hinders their learning. The teachers interviewed worked mostly in isolation; however, all of them expressed an interest and a need to get together with one another and other professionals to expand their notions of education. The teachers also wanted to discuss their issues of concern and what they themselves could do about it. The overall theme amongst the teachers was that if they "liked" something, such as a workshop, they then equated it with being "relevant" for them, but the two cannot necessarily be correlated. Chapter 5 will focus on concluding the research study and on recommending directions for further research.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND

DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Teaching is a career that requires a great deal of on-going reflection on practice. Professional development aims to provide teachers with the opportunity to reflect on their practice consistent with their beliefs about education. Since what counts as "education" is not fixed, so must professional development be continuously reformed. This study examined seven teachers' thoughts, conceptions, attitudes and idealizations of education and professional development. The teachers' perspectives on professional development were examined based on their personal experiences. The intent of this study was to enrich the knowledge of:

    (1) What is occurring in the school system today with regards to professional

        development practices of elementary teachers,

    (2) The teachers' perceptions of ideal models of professional development and

    (3) Whether current research is evident in practice.

An analysis of the literature pertaining to teachers' professional development served as the background perspective used in this study. Transcripts from the teacher interviews were analyzed in light of this literature. The conclusions and possibilities for further research that are described in this chapter are based upon the analysis of transcripts

of the interviews of seven elementary teachers. "Does professional development enhance teacher education?" was the question that guided the research. All of the teachers interviewed firmly believed that their professional development endeavors *did* enhance their practice which, in turn, was transferred on to their students and benefited them in "some way." The teachers found the interview questions thought provoking and took their time in formulating replies.

This chapter is divided into two sections: a statement of the conclusions / recommendations emerging from the research questions and a suggestion of the possible directions for further research stemming from this project. The first section is subdivided into four sections dealing with each of the four research questions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Does Professional Development Enhance Teacher Education?

In order to obtain an understanding of the guiding research question, "Does professional development enhance teacher education?" thematic questions within four areas were asked in the interviews. The first area dealt with defining education and professional development and if the two were connected and if so how. The teachers had varying definitions, yet all contained similarities. Education was defined on a personal level, that was separated from the job of teaching, rather than on a professional level. Meanwhile, when defining professional development the teachers interviewed spoke of inservices which focused of the instruction students and the implementation of the new,

mandated IRPs. The teachers interviewed often restricted professional development to meaning workshops and had various ideas about what constitutes professional development. In general, professional development was seen as a form of training that dealt with their careers rather than something that dealt with reflection on practice. The teachers interviewed felt that somehow professional development and education *were* intertwined and connected, but were not clear about how. The teachers' definitions of professional development did not include some of the significant strategies which appeared in the literature such as networking, peer coaching and mentoring, but they did appear when the teachers discussed their ideal professional development. Generally, the teachers were more concerned with the "training" aspect of professional development rather than with the "educational" aspect.

The teachers interviewed mentioned numerous changes that needed to occur within the professional development system that is currently in place, in order for them to enhance their learning. Their main options for what helped them change and grow were being given the opportunity, variety, choice, support, time, and funding to engage in professional development activities. What the teachers seemed to mean was that they would choose to have more professional development opportunities available to them for working collaboratively with their peers (by discussing, planning, examining, implementing new educational practices, evaluating) and for training in various areas by attending more "well organized" workshops both in and out of the district. In addition, the teachers interviewed stated that they would have liked to have access to a greater variety of workshops with numerous topics to choose from. The teachers expressed a need for

support from their peers (through working with one another), administration (through positive input) and the government (through an increase in time and funding for professional development activities). Generally, teachers wanted support to help them implement the new IRPs for which they are responsible. Yet, how much support is adequate for the teachers to change their practice and grow as professionals? What was missing from their claims was what *counted* as being "*good*" opportunity, variety, choice, support, time, and funding. However, even if teachers were "given" these items, it is unknown whether it would guarantee that teachers *would* develop their notions of education.

i. "Good" Professional Development

It is evident that the teachers' responses were individualistic. Teachers mainly spoke of what they, themselves, wanted and needed in order to enhance their performances both within the classroom and as "educated" individuals. But, each teacher had his/her own, personal view of what was "good" professional development for them, ranging from taking workshops, courses, graduate studies to nature walks, sports and traveling. What is meant by "*good*" professional development? What may be "good" professional development for one teacher may not necessarily count as being "educational." For instance, one teacher considered "good" professional development as walking around a lake, looking at the flora and fauna in order to "charge one's batteries"; whereas, an administrator or the general public may have a different view as to what is "good", educationally sound professional development. Perhaps what is needed is for the various involved groups to get together and discuss the perameters of what constitutes

professional development. Such discussions may then develop criteria for "good" professional development within districts, so that there is a coordination in the schools of teachers who continue learning.

Yet, these discussions must focus on a variety of questions. Are there any guidelines as to what counts as educational professional development? On what basis are those judgments made? Should guidelines be set or should teachers continue doing their own "thing" for professional development? Who should set the criteria or guidelines? Should teachers be able to decide on their notion of education individually or should "good" professional development be decided on collectively as a school district? If so, who defines "good" professional development? By what and whose standards is the definition made? The whole question of how professional development days are set and outlined on a district level, or even a school level may be the issue with establishing more "effective" professional development. This is an area which needs to be re-evaluated and was not discussed within this study.

ii. Directions for Professional Development

One way of developing criteria for what counts as educationally sound professional development that was discussed was the concept of having teachers develop a common focus and work towards implementing their goal by using professional development as a means to an end. This was an area of importance for the teachers and came up in their interviews, yet was not examined in this study and was lacking in the literature reviewed.

In terms of a focus, teachers stated that there was a lack of a point of convergence by the government and the teachers themselves due to the constantly changing educational directions. The teachers viewed their practice as unconnected to "education" and separated the two because of the pressure from the new IRPs from the ministry and from the new forms of assessment. The teachers connected education with curriculum, rather than viewing education as professional development, and felt that training for the new curriculum was the most important aspect because they were accountable for implementing it. Yet, they were unsure of this responsibility. Due to their uncertainties, the frustrated teachers could not find a focus as a consequence the direction of their professional development often became finding ways to implement the government mandated materials rather than on professional growth. Hence, they used their professional development for the purposes of teacher training when in fact, according to Coulter (1995) professional development should be used for providing teachers with the opportunity to reflect on their practice. How can this process be reversed so that teachers are using their professional development for what it was intended for- reflecting on practice?

It is interesting to note that the teachers themselves mentioned a need to "have a particular focus and work together with other teachers in the district and within other districts, who are all focused on the same goal" (Dana). Yet, she and other teachers did not state what the goal was. This may be due to the fact that they did not know what their focus should be. Instead, the teachers expressed the need for time to personalize the changes that they are dealing with. If the focus is unclear, then why do the teachers not

develop it themselves? There are influential teachers on many staffs that show leadership, whether it be positive or negative. So why are these teachers not initiating / influencing their schools to achieve this focus and direction?

One may argue that they do not take responsibility for themselves because they are too busy with their increase in workload due to overwhelming educational reforms through the application of new programs and the introduction of new curriculums. However, there is always an issue of workload, not only in teaching, but also in all other professions. There will always be some complaint by someone about the amount of work. The question is, what can be done about it? What is the ideal workload that will solve all of the problems? How can the teacher's workload be restructured or reexamined so that it is manageable to the point where teachers feel that they are doing a "good" job for their students? How can the stresses of teaching be decreased so as to reduce teacher "burnout"? In many cases, the managing of the workload, which is a stress factor of teaching, can be addressed through professional development if this is a goal that the teachers want to work towards.

B. Teachers Concerns and Interests

The second section of questions which were discussed dealt with the purpose of professional development and whether or not today's professional development addressed the teachers' concerns and interests in education. All teachers stressed the significance of professional development and talked about the importance for them to continue learning

throughout their lifetime and their careers in the form of "keeping up" with the latest educational practices. Yet, none of the teachers were specific as far as what it was that they needed to continue learning. It was evident that teachers were not accessing the current educational literature. Most of the teachers felt that the type of professional development that was mostly available (workshops which highlighted a guest speaker) did not provide motivation or an opportunity to learn in a manner in which they could learn best. Instead, they preferred content that was placed in a listening, seeing, doing and discussing context through "hands on" tangible activities. Variations were evident in their statements because not all hands on activities could be applied by all teachers due to diverse teaching styles or the materials presented being unrelated to the subjects that were currently taught. Moreover, some teachers were quick to discount educational theory because it was not seen as practical / useful whereas, others desired more theory. At the top of the list for teacher concerns and interests were: training for the latest educational reforms known as IRPs, a need/ interest in working with their peers, as well as associating with other professionals including researchers.

C. The Teachers' Perspectives on Effective / Ineffective Professional Development

The third area of research dealt with teachers describing their best / worst professional development and why it was effective / ineffective. Teachers easily spoke of their best professional development experiences which they considered as inservice in the form of workshops. Yet, the interviewed teachers did not mention any criteria for "good" professional development that they used to assist them in continuing learning; instead,

when asked, they continued to equate good professional development with good workshops. Most of the interviewed teachers felt that they did not engage in a really "poor" professional development (meaning workshops that did not enhance their practice in *some* way) because they always found that they learned something in a workshop, especially when they were given the opportunity to interact with their peers in a "teacher" based setting. But does that "something" count as being educational? Teachers had their own notions of education and independently decided what was "good' professional development. Variations were evident and the teacher's individuality came forth. It appeared as though no collective standards were agreed upon about what constituted "good" professional development. The interviewed teachers described which factors they thought lead to successful professional development and which factors limited their professional development. The teachers justified what they "liked" and found enjoyable as being educationally sound when describing their ideal professional development. They justified the time they used as being valid since they felt that their own well being influenced their interactions within their classroom thus benefiting their students. This justification seemed more like a rationale for the teachers to take a valid mental health day rather than professional development. Teacher development opportunities must become integral to learning about teaching thus furthering the education of students. Thus, as mentioned previously, deciding on effective and ineffective professional development (best / worst) should not be the sole property of the teachers, but should include others.

i. Dialogue and Community

This would seem welcomed by the teachers who themselves stated that they did not want to work in isolation when it comes to professional development. The teachers interviewed wanted to continue learning because they were in the field of education and they wanted to be able to share what they have learned with their students and with their staff. Sharing through discussions was viewed as an important form of learning for three reasons: it would provide alternate viewpoints, it would reinforce beliefs and/or actions and it could clarify uncertainties. Yet, what the teachers seemed to want (the opportunity to work with their peers) and what actually occurred (isolation within classrooms) were two different issues. Teachers mostly work in isolation (Rosenholtz, 1989). Yet, this contradicts what the teachers envisioned for their growth. What is it that needs to occur in order for a change to happen whereby the teachers' vision becomes a reality? To what extent is teacher dialogue occurring presently? The teachers interviewed wanted to work, plan and discuss certain issues together. The teachers were not specific about which issues, but they did mention, in general terms, things like problems, questions, concerns or simply thoughts that would come up daily or over the course of the school year. Teachers need to be given the opportunity to discuss and come to an agreement as to what they need to learn, what would in turn help them define professional development. Thus, the professional development days would be developed from a consensus and would fill a defined need. How can schools provide opportunities for such teacher dialogue?

The teachers interviewed stated that they wanted an opportunity to network and work with other teachers because that would allow them to be more focused toward goal setting, implementing and reviewing. This they judged would prove to be the most valuable professional development for them. They stated that peer coaching and mentoring were excellent ways of engaging in teacher dialogue. These forms of networking would engage teachers in dialogue which might help them to implement changes resulting from professional development more successfully. If so, then why do these strategies play such a small role within the teachers' realm of experience? The teachers interviewed mentioned that this was due to government cutbacks of previously funded programs. Anderson and Shannon, (1988) point out that professional development should stop becoming a "one shot workshop" and should become ongoing, immediate and relevant. How can schools be restructured to provide teachers with these professional development opportunities? Which opportunities would provide optimum conditions to build communities of teacher / learners?

Such communities do not seem to exist at the schools. Both the literature, and this study, confirm the fact that teachers work in isolation. Many teachers did not know what was happening in other classrooms in their own school, let alone in other schools. Many of their questions / concerns about their practice and their needs could be dealt with if there was an increase in teacher interaction through *critical* dialogue. What is meant by critical dialogue is not a conversation about who is going to coach volleyball this season, but rather, a conversation about pertinent issues that affect the teachers' practice, such as innovations in assessment. In order for this to occur, ways must be sought to break down

the isolation and build valuable relationships with other professionals. How does a school increase teacher dialogue? How can schools be restructured so that the teachers within them engage in dialogue that contributes to their conversation about education?

ii. Expanding the Dialogue

Another important facet of teacher dialogue is the fact that teachers need to be involved in a wider dialogue that goes beyond their realm of experience (Coulter, 1994). Professional growth requires dialogue with people who have different perspectives and ideas (Coulter, 1995). The reason for this is that if teachers only network with other teachers within the same school then they may focus on and reinforce the same viewpoints. Therefore, it is important for teachers to network with their peers, administrators, professors, other professionals and individuals within the community in an attempt to broaden the teachers' networking horizon. By broadening teacher dialogue to encompass the larger community, the purposes of schooling and the values that underlie education can be discussed. What needs to occur in order for teachers to confront other people's views of the situation? Participation in professional communities through school and teacher networks deepens teachers' understanding of education by assisting teachers in gaining new perspectives about their practice. One such collaboration amongst two professional communities is known as district - university partnerships.

It has been claimed that in order for teachers to develop and advance their notions of education, through continued learning, they need to engage in critical dialogue, particularly a dialogue that connects the information that is being *researched* at the

universities to the school staffs that should be *using* this information. Establishing a connection and communication with the local university is one way for the district and for teachers to gain access to professional literature. Researchers could and possibly should take part in a wider dialogue with teachers, perhaps by connecting with a school and sharing their discoveries with the teachers on a regular, scheduled basis. How can schools be restructured to allow for these types of district - university partnerships to occur? Are researchers sharing their findings with teachers or is their work ending up in professional libraries? In fact, are district - university partnerships currently occurring in British Columbia? If so, where and to what extent? If not, why not?

This is along the lines of what Lieberman (1992) proposes where some universities in the United States are forming partnerships with various districts within communities. She claims that this brings together the ideas of many disciplines, methodologies, and ways of working with school people that expand their notion of education and practice. In addition, she states that the practical work of teachers, students and community involves them as colleagues and researchers, collaborators and describers, observers and activists. Unfortunately, the cost of bringing in such researchers is usually too high for most schools to succeed in such an endeavor and if the researcher is brought in for the whole district, by the district, the effect is too broad.

In order to make changes that will enhance how teachers learn, teachers must restructure their perception of what counts as education to include the innovations to education being presented by researchers through being able to easily and conveniently

access this information through professional journals. The teachers interviewed mostly spoke of traditional staff development models such as workshops, conferences, or university course work. This may be due to the fact that these are the only types of professional development with which the teachers are familiar. However, the teachers did not speak of the newer models of professional development which are explained in the latest literature, such as: teacher as researcher, practical inquiry, collaboratives, district - university partnerships and professional libraries. These forms of learning were not referred to by any of the teachers, and thus they may be unaware of these innovations, that is, that teachers may not be accessing the current literature which proposes these and other professional development strategies. This may be because the reading of professional journals ranks low on the teachers' list of priorities. Yet, professional libraries cannot be discounted because they are indeed a valuable resource for learning. Therefore, many questions arise which could be examined in future studies, such as: What needs to occur in order for professional reading to come to the top of the teachers' list of priorities? Is professional literature available for teachers and to what degree? Are teachers aware of its existence? Where are these professional libraries and how much are they used by teachers? How are teachers to gain access to professional libraries and journals? Which teachers are accessing professional literature and to what extent?

In order to encourage this aide to professional growth, staffs must schedule it into their scheduled events. For example, one staff meeting a month could focus on new literature. Teachers need to be immersed in a wide variety of reading to inform their educational theory. By doing so they will obtain ideas of many disciplines and

methodologies which will, in turn, broaden their notions of education and expand their practice.

iii. Time for Professional Development

Reading the latest literature, developing criteria for "good' professional development, developing a focus, engaging in dialogue, networking and learning about educational issues takes time. Learning about teaching (what it is I value / believe and how I want to act) is a complex and time-consuming process that is made more successful by reflection that comes about for oneself, other colleagues and with students. The lack of time for professional development was a major concern for teachers. They felt that by the time they had carried out their daily classroom duties, little time and energy was left for reflection. The teachers stated that additional time was essential for them to plan, think, and examine their practice. However, when the teachers were asked how much time they needed they were vague. This may be attributed to the fact that the rate of learning and personal growth varies from individual to individual. Time for professional development cannot be rigidly quantified because it is difficult to measure or predict how long it will take an individual to learn something. Therefore, the questions become how much time is adequate for teachers to learn? How much time is adequate for teachers to engage in on-going professional development? Will there ever be enough time for teachers to do all of the things that they would like to do and who is to decide what is enough?

Time is a necessary factor, and its availability for professional development is often considered insufficient. Hammond (1993) claims that "released time" is rarely available for activities that are not considered part of the teacher's main job. Lieberman and Miller (1990) urge that opportunities and time be made available for teachers to be involved in continuous inquiry into their practice. How would one go about providing these opportunities for teachers? How does one organize time to benefit teachers so that they could accomplish their goals and intentions?

In addition to time for reflection, the teachers interviewed expressed a need for school time to be provided for the implementation of ministry directives. The teachers constantly mentioned that they felt that they did not have a good understanding of the new curriculum, now called instructional resource packages (IRPs) in addition to the new evaluation methods. The teachers were confused and had difficulty personalizing the changes. Thus, they wanted some time during the school day to read, discuss, share ideas, plan, implement and evaluate their efforts. Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) propose that time should be bought by rethinking the ways that schools are staffed, funded and managed. How can more time be provided to allow teachers to implement the new curriculum and to reflect on their educational practices? How is this time to be paid for?

Unfortunately, time requires money. Besides the "teaching" of students, the developing of individualized educational student plans, coaching and counseling, teachers state that they need to be given the time for other aspects of their "job" such as those already mentioned: developing criteria for "good' professional development, developing

a focus, engaging in dialogue, networking, mentoring, peer coaching, engaging in partnerships, learning about educational issues through professional libraries, implementing government mandates and learning through professional development endeavors. Already, one can see that the teacher's "job" has become enormous. How are teachers dealing with these numerous facets of their job? One thing is certain, all teachers want and need more school time; however, this would require an increase in government funding. Once again another major issue is raised - money. In these times of budget restraints, where is the money to come from? How much money would be required to give teachers release time? How much release time is necessary? What may be adequate release time for one teacher may not be for another, so how can the differences be accounted for?

D. Changes in Practice

These questions dealing with the adequacies of time and money become crucial especially in lieu of the fourth section which deals with whether or not the teachers agreed with the following statement, "studies show that most professional development activities do not lead to change in practice." Teachers tended to agree with this statement because they felt that the one or two workshops a year format made no significant change in their practice. Again, the teachers considered workshops as synonymous with professional development. They preferred ongoing inservice. Teachers equated workshops, conferences, and courses as professional development and thus, failed to realize the scope and options which were possible to them as various forms of professional development. Other models of professional development found in the literature included teacher as

researcher, practical inquiry, collaboratives and district-university partnerships. It is evident that teachers were unaware of these innovations and that they may not be accessing educational journals and professional libraries. Overall, the teachers were optimistic and felt that the possibility of professional development changing practice existed for them; but the limited opportunities they had and their sometimes overwhelming workload may prevent them from taking advantage of existing professional development and integrating what they learn with their teaching practice. Teachers felt that they would benefit by being involved in peer coaching, mentoring and networking with their peers and the teachers interviewed wanted to engage in collective experiences that would amalgamate their individualistic statements and share their varying visions. This is desirable because it allows for teachers to: reach some form of commonality, expand their knowledge base, produce food for thought with regards to their practice and focus on their professional growth. In order to make changes that will enhance how teachers learn, *teachers must restructure their perception of what counts as education.*

There was one important gap between the literature and what the teachers discussed. The literature states that teachers need to become researchers to open up the possibility for them to take a closer look at relationships and the school and to provide an understanding of their work as teachers and learners (Wideen, 1994; Lieberman and Miller, 1990; Joyce and Showers, 1995; Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992). Yet, the teachers did not find a need for this and did not even mention it in their interviews. It would seem that teachers who are involved in asking questions, will be more inclined to get answers and make better decisions to improve education for their students.

"What am I trying to accomplish?" is a question for all teachers. In order for teachers to know what kinds of professional development they will need to be engaged in to develop their practices, they need to come to a better understanding of their practice, including their concepts of education.

i. Reform and Practice

Many of the issues previously mentioned can be tied to the Ministry of Education's numerous / massive attempts at educational reform over the years. Wideen (1994) states that the shifts in education and the conflicting pressures have sent contradictory messages to teachers who have become confused, frustrated and angry. The teachers were struggling to implement mandated programs, such as the IRPs, yet they did not know exactly what it is that they were responsible for. Therefore, the teachers' focus for professional development changed. For instance, at the time of the interview teachers were more concerned with getting assistance with understanding and implementing the new curriculum than they were with individual professional growth. The teachers interviewed were having a difficult time in dealing with continuous educational reform. Some were trying to implement the IRPs while others chose not to commit to implementing the changes until the mandated times. However, all of the interviewed teachers commented on the fact that they did not receive adequate inservice for the IRPs and that they needed more in order for them to fully implement the IRPs successfully. Based on the discussions with the teachers it appeared as though the amount of inservice support for change did not match the degree of policy change. Currently, professional

development is not personal professional growth; instead it has become a means of finding ways of implementing government programs. How can teachers implement new programs while continuing their personal professional growth? Will the line between "training" ever be separated from professional growth by teachers? If so, how? What needs to occur for teachers to have the opportunity for both training and professional development? What support is available for teachers?

Hargreaves (1989) claims that for reform to be effective, teachers should be encouraged to consider and discuss educational theory by holding regularly scheduled meetings with their colleagues in other classrooms and schools. Based on the interviewed teachers statements, it was evident that they rarely discussed educational theory and that there was neither mention of any scheduled meetings within schools which allowed for dialogue about educational issues, nor mention of any reading / accessing of professional literature. How can the teachers get past their "survival mode" that they find necessary in order cope with the changes, and move into the area of professional development where they network and form partnerships in an attempt to discuss educational theory? As part of reform, regularly scheduled time should be allowed for the teachers to: (1) work collectively whether it be with their peers through coaching / mentoring or with other members of community through partnerships / collaboratives, (2) personalize and interpret government changes in order to enhance their ability to further education in their classrooms and (3) engage in conversations about education which provide a chance to examine issues in new ways by supporting teacher growth. Along with the time that is necessary for this to occur needs to come a provision within the reform for funding.

ii. Professional Responsibility

Throughout this study teachers have stated various concerns and have had numerous complaints which precluded them from seeing that professional development activities should lead to change in practice; yet, they have not taken the responsibility themselves to make the changes that they view as necessary within their schools. Instead they had "wish lists" or wanted "government" to give them this, that and the other. McLaughlin and Lieberman (1992) state that teacher practice can be transformed and professional communities can be created by inspiring teachers to solve problems, take risks, assume ownership of their teaching, and exercise leadership roles in their schools. Yet, they do not mention the need for teachers to use professional development as a means for developing their notions of education. This is a missing element from both the authors and the teachers interviewed. It appears as though teachers have not made the broader connection that goes beyond the teaching of curriculum and into the developing of oneself as a professional through continued learning about teaching.

In short, the main factors that hindered teachers' growth and personal change were their perception of the amount of mandated educational change, a lack of focus and an increase in their workload. Yet, the teachers interviewed stated that their practices did not change quickly no matter what the government mandated. They may have felt the pressure of the mandates, but in reality, they did not change instantaneously, if they changed at all. Perhaps many teachers do what they have always done once their classroom door is closed.

DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has brought out some questions about teacher professional development in a context of educational change. There were three areas which emerged from the study that require further investigation and research. The first is to explore what is "good" professional development; the second is to explore the ways in which teachers can be encouraged to exercise leadership in their schools in order to assist themselves and their peers in working towards developing their own notions of education; and the third is to explore various connections between district / university partnerships.

This study focused upon seven teachers conceptions, attitudes and idealizations of education and professional development. When asked what the teachers felt was their best professional development experience, many varied answers ensued. One recommended direction for further research would be to examine how to determine criteria for "good" professional development and by whom this criteria should be set, since the definition of "good" professional development can vary tremendously, including by which group is consulted (i.e. parents, teachers, tax payers, government officials, administrators, researchers, unions etc.). Furthermore, research might also consider who is to determine how the criteria will be met or whether it is being met. Researchers should also consider how the whole process of determining "good" professional development should evolve and whether a teacher's professional autonomy is enough to determine the criteria for personal professional development. All of these are important issues that require: both philosophical and empirical work.

Another factor to consider is the finding that teachers did not assume any ownership in developing their own professional development. It was beyond the scope of this study to examine ways in which teachers can be empowered to make changes and innovations so as to engage in critical dialogue about education. Further research might examine different models which would assist teachers in taking on the responsibility of making changes that would affect their practice within their schools. What would inspire teachers to take risks, solve problems and assume ownership of their own teaching? Do teachers view their careers simply as jobs or as professions? Does the answer to this last question affect whether professional responsibility will even be considered to be assumed? Do teachers fully understand how to discern between professional development and inservicing? How do you develop personal responsibility for professional responsibility? Furthermore, this line of research can examine who is responsible for educating teachers on how to be able to effectively differentiate on whether or not their professional development reflects on their practice.

This last statement generates questions in regards to various connections between teachers, districts and university partnerships. Because a masters degree was being pursued, this researcher spent many hours reading and reflecting on findings presented in the current research dealing with education. However, before being involved in this research very little time was spent reviewing educational material due to every day teaching requirements. The teachers interviewed did not even consider education journals as a source for personal professional development in order to assist in formulating the

practice within their classroom. Further research might examine ways in which information can be shared with those that it should affect by developing partnerships in education between the researchers and teachers. In order for district / university partnerships to succeed, both researchers and teachers must volunteer their time and services to each other. Yet, where does the impulse for this change begin? With the researchers? The teachers? The university? The school districts? Does the effectiveness of the partnership change depending on who initiates it? Who should be responsible for funding such endeavors? Research would also be necessary to determine the success and effectiveness of such partnerships. What criteria would be used to measure the "success" of such partnerships? Would the partnership benefit all parties equally or not?

Such questions ought to be addressed but are beyond the scope of this study. Studies that address such questions may further enhance teacher education and professional development.

CONCLUSION

The professional development system serves the needs of many teachers, both by nourishing the professional growth of individual teachers and by directly addressing student learning. However, it is how the teachers conceive their professional development, and how they define education, that determines whether these understandings affect their practice. Professional development can allow teachers to begin to understand their educational aims and grow professionally in order to help educate children.

A number of research questions were developed: Why do teachers have to learn? How do teachers learn? and What are the changes that would enhance how teachers learn? The answers from the seven teachers interviewed provided evidence that may help educators and district officials better understand why teachers engage in the types of professional development that they do and what other possibilities might be explored. An attempt was made to clarify the teachers' stances that drive their various conceptions of professional development and education. Awareness of teachers' conceptions of professional development and the forms of professional development in which they are involved might enable researchers to further their efforts in bringing other models of professional development to the attention of the teachers "in the trenches."

A strong link was posited between education and professional development. Readers are invited to examine their own beliefs on education and to search for ways to

design and conduct effective professional development in the future. Thus, the major goal for all educators is to increase student learning and this can be done by supporting the educators as they work together for their students.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, E. M., & Shannon, A. L. (1988). Toward a conceptualization of mentoring. Journal of Teacher Education , 39 (1), 38-42.

Barth, R. S. (1990). Improving school from within. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cohen, D., & Ball Loewenberg, D. (1990). Policy and practice: An overview. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis , 12 (3), 233-239.

Collective Agreement between the Board of School Trustees, School District No. 75, (1992, July to 1994, June). Mission and the Mission Teachers' Union, 61-62.

Coulter, D. (1994, September). Dialogue for development. Paper presented to the conference: Realities, restructuring, resources and renewal: Canadian Association of School Administrators Annual Meeting, Prince Edward Island, 1-21.

Coulter, D. (1995, October). The practice of praxis. Paper presented to the conference: Changing teachers in a changing world: Professional actions and cultures of teaching, Toronto, Ontario, 1-12.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1990). Achieving our goals: Superficial or structural reforms? Phi Delta Kappan , 72 (4), 286-295.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1992). Reframing the school reform agenda: New paradigms must restore discourse with local educators. The School Administrator , 49 (10), 22-27.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1993). Reframing the school reform agenda: Developing capacity for school transformation. Phi Delta Kappan , 74 (10), 753-61.

Darling-Hammond, L., Ancess, J., & Falk, B. (1995). Authentic assessment in action: case studies. New York: Teachers College Press.

Darling-Hammond, L., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1995). Policies that support professional development in and era of reform. Phi Delta Kappan , 76 (8), 597-603.

Durkheim, E. (1956). Education and sociology . (trans. and intro. Sherwood D. Fox). New York: Free Press.

Egan, K. (1992). The roles of schools: The place of education. Teachers College Record , 93 (4), 641-655.

Fenstermacher, G. (1986). <u>Handbook of research on teaching</u>. New York: Macmillan.

Fullan, M. G. (1991). The *new* meaning of educational change. (2nd ed.). New York: Teacher's College Press.

Hargreaves, A. (1989). <u>Curriculum and assessment reform</u>. Toronto: OISE Press.

Hargreaves, A. (1990). Cultures of Teaching". In Goodson, I. F. (ed.) (1990). <u>Studying teacher's lives</u> . London: Routledge.

Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. G. (1992). <u>Understanding teacher development</u>. New York: Teachers College Press.

Jackson, P. W. (1992). Helping teachers develop. In Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. G. <u>Understanding teacher development</u>. New York: Teachers College Press, 62-74.

Joyce, B. and Showers, B. (1995). <u>Student achievement through staff development: Fundamentals of school renewal</u>. New York: Longman Publishers USA.

Lieberman, A. (1992). Commentary: Pushing up from below: Changing schools and universities. <u>Teachers College Record</u> , <u>93</u> (4), 717-724.

Lieberman, A. (1992). School / university collaboration: A view from the inside. <u>Phi Delta Kappan</u> , <u>74</u> (2), 147-152,156.

Lieberman, A. (1995). Practices that support teacher development: Transforming conceptions of professional learning. <u>Phi Delta Kappan</u> , <u>76</u> (8), 591-596.

Lieberman, A., & Miller, L. (1981). Synthesis of research on improving schools. <u>Educational Leadership</u> , <u>38</u> (7), 583-586; Lieberman, A., & Miller, L. (1984). School improvement: Themes and variation. <u>Teachers College Record</u> , <u>86</u> (1), 4-19; Lieberman, A., & Miller, L. (1984). Teachers, their world and their work: Implications for school improvement. Alexandria, VA; Association for supervision and curriculum development; Lieberman, A. (1986). Collaborative research: Working with, not working on. <u>Educational Leadership</u> , <u>43</u> (5), 28-32; Lieberman, A. (1986). Collaborative Work. <u>Educational Leadership</u> , <u>43</u> (5), 4-8.

Lieberman A., & Miller L. (1990). Teacher development in professional practice schools. <u>Teachers College Record</u> , 92 (1),105-122.

McLaughlin M. W., & Lieberman, A. (1992). Networks for Educational Change: Powerful and Problematic. <u>Phi Delta Kappan</u> , <u>73</u> (9), 673-677.

<u>Michigan partnership for new education</u>. (1990). East Lansing: Michigan State University.

Ministry of Education. (1990). Year 2000: A framework for learning. British Columbia. Victoria, British Columbia: B.C. Ministry of Education.

Ministry of Education. (1991, 1993) Thinking in the classroom resources for teachers, Volume 1 and 2. Assessment, Examinations, and Reporting Branch. Victoria: British Columbia.

Ministry of Education. (1994). Guidelines for student reporting and Guidelines for the K-12 educational plan. Province of British Columbia.

Ministry of Education. (1995). Integrated resource package 1995: Mathematics K-7. Curriculum Branch, Victoria: Province of British Columbia. pp. III.

M.A.S.S. Communications. (1989, December). A M.A.S.S. Discussion Paper: Purposes of Education. 17 (1), 3.

National school tests urged by advisory group to PM. (1991, June). The Toronto Star, p. 10.

Nelson, B. S., & Hammerman J. M. (1995). Reconceptualizing teaching: The teaching and research program of the center for the development center. In McLaughlin, M. W., & Oberman. I. Professional development in the reform era. New York: Teachers College Press.

Nias, J. (1989). Primary teachers talking. London: Routledge. Leithwood, K. (1989). The principal's role in teacher development. In Fullan, M., & Hargreaves, A. (1991). Teacher development and educational change. Philadelphia: Falmer Press.

Oberg, A., & Underwood, S. (1992). Facilitating teachers self development: Reflections on experience. In Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. G. Understanding teacher development. New York: Teachers College Press.

Peters, C., & Rothenburger, I. (1994). Criterion referenced evaluation: Getting started. (Draft version for field-testing and discussion) School District #24, Kamloops: British Columbia.

Peters, R.S. (1983). Philosophy of Education. In Hirst, P. (1983) Ed. Educational theory and it's foundation disciplines. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Prawat, R. (1992). Teachers' Beliefs About Teaching and Learning: A Constructivist Perspective, American Journal of Education ,100 (3), 354-395.

Raymond, D., Butt, R., & Townsend, D. (1992). Contexts for teacher development: insights from teacher's stories. In Hargreaves, A. and Fullan, M. G., Understanding teacher development. New York: Teachers College Press.

Resnick, L. (1991). AERA presidential address, delivered at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, D. C., 1987; and Donald Schön, ed., The reflective turn: Case studies in and on educational practice. New York: Teachers College Press.

Richardson, V.(1990). Significant and Worthwhile Change in Teaching Practice, Educational Researcher, 10-16.

Richardson, V. (1992). The Agenda-Setting Dilemma in a Constructivist Staff Development Process. Teaching and Teacher Education, 8 (3), 287-300.

Richardson, V. (1994). Conducting Research on Practice. Educational Researcher, 23 (5), 5-10.

Rosenholtz, S. (1989). Teachers' workplace. New York: Longman.

Schumacher, S. and McMillan, J. H. (1993). Research in education: A conceptual introduction, (3rd ed.). New York: Harper Collins College Publishers.

Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. Harvard Educational Review, 57, (1), 1-22.

Sullivan, B. (1988). The report of the royal commission on education: A legacy for learners. Victoria: Province of British Columbia.

Talbert, J. E., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1994). Teacher professionalism in local school contexts. American Journal of Education, 102 (2), 123-153; and Lieberman, A. (1994). (ed.), The work of restructuring schools. New York: Teachers College Press.

Wideen, F. M. (1994, August). Conflicting expectations, chaos and school reform. Paper from Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, pp. 1-16.

Zeichner, K. M. (1991). Contradictions and tensions in the professionalization of teaching and the democratization of schools. Teachers College Record, 92 (3), 363-375.

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Practices in Professional Development:
Does Professional Development Enhance Teacher Education?

Interview Date: _____   Time: Start _____ End _____
Location: _____   Male or Female: _____
Tape Number: _____

I. Background Questions:

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. In how many schools have you taught altogether?
3. What grade or subject do you teach?
4. What types of students do you teach?
5. What level of education do you presently have? Are you planning to go further?
      Why or why not?
6. How do you learn best?
7. What helps or hinders changes and growth in teachers? ·

II. General Questions:

1. Do you feel that the professional development available to you today addresses your concerns and interests? Explain.

2. Describe your best professional development experience. Why do you think it was effective? Describe your worst professional development experience. Why do you think it was ineffective?

3. Do you agree with the statement "studies show that most professional development activities do not lead to change in practice". Why or why not?

4. What does education mean to you? What does professional development mean to you? Are they connected? Do you think that professional development is a necessity? Why or why not?

5. Is there anything else that you wish to add such as any comments or concerns about professional development that you feel are important and have not already been addressed?
* Would like a copy of the transcribed interview. Yes _____ No ____

APPENDIX III

INFORMED CONSENT

Practices in Professional Development:
Does Professional Development Enhance Teacher Education?

Having read the description of the project "Practices in Professional Development: Does Professional Development Enhance Teacher Learning?" in the letter from Dalila Vroom dated _____, I agree to a thirty to forty minute taped interview by her about professional development. I understand that I can refuse to answer any questions and may withdraw my participation at any time. I also understand that she will keep my identity in confidence in any work that stems from this project.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent form as well as the initial contact letter.

_____
Signature

_____
Date