

TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF A MANDATED STAFF
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN THE STATE
OF OKLAHOMA

By

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The purpose of this study was to ascertain teacher perceptions of the mandated staff development program in the state of Oklahoma. Additionally, the study was designed to determine if significant differences existed in the perceptions of teachers when grouped according to demographic variables selected for the study. It is hoped that the results of this study have contributed to a greater understanding of the perceptions of teachers in the state of Oklahoma concerning the mandated staff development program.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The American educational system has been alternately praised and criticized for its successes and failures. These criticisms are often directed toward education in general, and more recently, toward the quality of education in this country. The attainment of a quality education has come to be a value. For many people, this attainment has been equated as the beginning of success.

In recent years, however, dissatisfaction with public education has been on the increase. The public now demands more accountability from all phases of education. Teachers are expected to increase learning at each level of instruction, while at the same time keeping current with new techniques and curriculum changes in their respective fields. In the last decade, many states have enacted more rigid standards for both student graduation and teacher certification. Legislative action has also been focused on staff development and other mandated programs designed to increase teacher competence.

Staff development can be a vital part of shaping the outcomes of quality education. The state of Oklahoma has recognized this need for quality education and in 1980 enacted legislation in the form of House Bill 1706, which contained provisions to better ensure quality education. One intent of this legislation was to establish a staff development procedure whereby the teachers of the state of Oklahoma would

continue their education beyond initial licensing and certification. The bill also addressed funding of the staff development program and contained a provision for each school district to submit a staff development plan annually to the State Board of Education. Section 3 of the bill is as follows:

Each school district shall receive an appropriate amount of funds for the exclusive purpose of in-service teacher education staff development. Such funds shall be used for in-service teacher education and staff development during the school year 1980-1981. These funds shall be expended for in-service programs and planning staff development programs within guidelines outlined by the Professional Standards Board and as approved and adopted by the State Board of Education. All funds provided local districts after the school year 1980-1981, shall be provided by and subject to the approval of plans submitted to the State Board of Education by each local district no later than July 1, 1981. Such plan shall conform to planning and implementation guidelines outlined by the Professional Standards Board and as approved and adopted by the State Board of Education, including provisions for the development of staff development guidelines in each local district as established by local district committees, as defined in this act, and approved by each local district. Beginning with the school year 1981-1982, the revised plans of each school district for the succeeding year shall be submitted by May 1st of each year (Oklahoma Sessions Laws, 1980, p. 675).

All teachers in Oklahoma are now involved in the staff development portion of House Bill 1706. Staff development has become a vital part of the continual improvement of the competence of teachers. The programs provided to teachers are intended to result in the improvement of the education of students.

It was decided to sample the population to evaluate more fully the perceptions of personnel most actively involved in the staff development program. These perceptions could then be analyzed, resulting in a better understanding of the staff development program as the teachers had been experiencing it.

Need for the Study

House Bill 1706, an act passed by the 1980 Oklahoma Legislature, provides for a mandated staff development program for all teachers in the state of Oklahoma. The purpose of the staff development portion of the bill is written as follows:

It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Legislature to establish a staff development procedure whereby all teachers of the state continue their education beyond initial licensing and certification by the state to ensure that the children of the state are taught by professional educators, fully trained in their areas of expertise (Oklahoma Session Laws, 1980, p. 680).

Oklahoma has also made a commitment to fund the staff development program and millions of dollars have been allocated for this purpose. This mandate affects all of Oklahoma's teachers on an annual basis, with large amounts of revenues providing the funding for the program. Such an all-encompassing program with dedicated funding should be assessed and carefully analyzed to provide the best possible program for teachers and the best possible value for the finances expended. A vital part of this assessment should be the perceptions of the people most closely tied to the staff development program--the teachers of the state of Oklahoma.

Teacher attitudes and/or perceptions are needed to assess the program to determine answers to the following questions:

1. How effective is the staff development program according to teachers in the state of Oklahoma?
2. What is the current status of the program from a teacher's viewpoint?
3. What direction should the program take to provide the best possible opportunities for the future?

This study also broadened the data base of teachers' perceptions of the staff development program and provided data to evaluate the program, as well as providing suggestions for the improvement of the various facets of the program.

Statement of the Problem

A school district's staff development plan is to provide the means for the continuous improvement and enrichment for the teachers of each school district. The problem to be addressed is the lack of information on teacher's perceptions of the staff development program. An assessment of the perceptions of teachers is necessary to provide direction for improvement in the staff development program.

With regulations requiring large amounts of teacher input mandated by House Bill 1706, it would be to the benefit of those persons actually charged with the development and regulation of staff development programs to have a knowledge of how teachers view these experiences. This assessment could both strengthen and broaden the data base currently in existence concerning the status of staff development programs in the state of Oklahoma.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered by this study:

1. How do teachers perceive the staff development program in the state of Oklahoma?
2. Do significant differences exist in perceptions of teachers when grouped according to the following demographic variables:
 - a. Sex

- b. Age
- c. Grade(s) primarily taught
- d. Number of years teaching experience
- e. Highest degree held
- f. Size of school district

Significance of the Study

Much has been written concerning the development and organization of staff development programs in general. This study was designed to assess teacher perceptions of the staff development program in the state of Oklahoma.

Those individuals and/or groups responsible for planning and organizing staff development activities at the local school district level might find the results significant for their use in preparing future staff development programs. State Department of Education officials who are responsible for the administration, evaluation, and improvement of the staff development program on a statewide basis might utilize the findings of the study for the improvement of the program.

Future researchers in the area of staff development might find the results significant when contrasted and compared to results of other studies in the area of staff development. This study attempted to obtain as accurate an account as possible of teacher perceptions of staff development activities within the state of Oklahoma.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations of the study were recognized:

1. This study was limited to classroom teachers employed in Oklahoma public schools for the 1984-85 school year.
2. This study did not include the selection of teachers from the following groups:
 - a. Teachers employed by private schools
 - b. Teachers employed by dependent school districts
 - c. Teachers employed by area vocational technical schools
3. Selection of the participants for the study and distribution of the survey instruments to the participants was not direct.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are provided for terms that have been used in conducting this study:

House Bill 1706: An education bill passed by the 37th Legislature of the State of Oklahoma in 1980.

Perception: "The process of getting to know the environment by means of the senses" (Engle and Snellgrove, 1974, p. 518).

Staff Development: "A wide range of professional activities for teachers which contribute to their enhancement, enrichment, and growth, as well as contributing to the improvement of instruction" (Johnston and Yeakey, 1977, p. 230).

Organization of the Study

This study was organized into five chapters. An introduction, statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, definition of terms, and need for the study have been presented in Chapter I. Chapter II provides a review

of selected literature related to the areas of staff development and inservice education. The methods and procedures utilized to conduct the study are presented in Chapter III. Chapter IV presents and analyzes the data collected. Chapter V concludes the study and contains the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

Summary

Staff development is recognized as a primary means of assisting teachers in the areas of personal and professional development. Through the enactment of House Bill 1706, Oklahoma has developed regulations and fundings for a statewide staff development program. These governing regulations dictate that teachers in Oklahoma shall participate in a mandated staff development program.

The primary purpose of this study was to ascertain how teachers perceive the staff development program in the state of Oklahoma. A sample of teachers currently teaching in independent public school districts was surveyed by use of a mailed questionnaire. The data gathered from this survey resulted in a description of teacher perceptions of the staff development program.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Inservice education has gained the attention of several audiences within the past few years. Dillon (1976) stated:

Today, staff development has much broader implications and is generating widespread interest. National organizations that have recently published reports on the topic include the National Education Association, the National School Public Relations Association, and the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education (p. 165).

Both inservice and staff development are currently viewed as one possible solution to the decline of the public schools. Edelfelt (1977), in addressing the situation, stated:

Teachers, other educators, and the public have in various ways indicated that this is the time to give attention to the career-long development of public school personnel if we are to have the quality of schools this nation needs (p. 10).

As both times and teachers change, the need for knowledge in a variety of areas is magnified. Ogletree and Allen (1976) stressed the need for inservice education by stating:

In-service education is a vital part of the educational process for classroom teachers. The professional preparation of teachers is a continuing process, and self-renewal must occur if teachers are to remain abreast of changing needs of society and of students. Effective in-service programs should help the teacher meet these changing needs (p. 47).

The interest shown toward inservice education has not been limited to educators and the general public. Several state legislatures have focused their attention on both the quantity and quality of inservice at the state level. Harris (1980) supported this interest in inservice by stating:

There has been a genuine flurry of interest in inservice education at the state level in recent years, especially since 1975. In concert with unions, school districts, colleges, and the federal government, ISE has not been a high-priority concern with state legislatures or departments of education until recently (p. 197).

Need for Staff Development

Inservice is becoming an area of concern to people both within and outside of education. Edelfelt (1974) reported that teachers want to continue to improve and be current. A 1973-74 National Education Association (NEA) assessment of teachers' needs indicated that they want changes and improvement in inservice education so that it more adequately meets their needs (Edelfelt, 1974). While inservice is seen as one way to improve schools, it is not viewed as the only way to improve schools. Concerning the public's dissatisfaction with schools, Ehrenberg and Brandt (1976) reported:

Much is being said and written about the crisis in American education. Causes for the crisis may not be fully understood, but many people feel that vast expenditures for education are not producing enough literate, problem-solving individuals. Members of the public are saying with increasing frequency and frustration that they are not satisfied with their schools (p. 205).

Inservice is often seen as an integral part of education. Inservice is now more and more a part of the total school year with a variety of programs offered, rather than a one-time program offered at

the beginning of the school year. Brimm and Tollett (1974, p. 521) stated that "in-service education has long been recognized as a vital part of the educational process for the classroom teacher." Addressing inservice and staff development as an integral part of education, Wood and Thompson (1980) stated:

The 1980s will be the decade of staff development just as the 1960s and 1970s were the decades of curriculum development. We have an abundance of curriculum and instructional plans; we now need to put them into operation in our schools. The Rand Corporation report on federally supported programs for educational change points out that if schools are to install our improved plans, and perhaps even to survive, the 1980s must be the decade of staff development (p. 374).

Currently, inservice is increasing in importance and there is a need for inservice in our schools. It is essential to recognize the need for inservice in an age of declining job markets for teachers, a declining student population, and an increased emphasis on educational accountability from the American public. Arends, Hersh, and Turner (1978) identified three reasons why the demand or need is increasing:

First, with declining enrollments and related reductions in the work force, schools must emphasize developing current human resources over hiring new ones. Second, as the demands for educational reform (e.g. instruction in basic skills, career education, integration of more pluralistic student groups into the mainstream) have grown louder, more schools have attempted to implement new programs that require new attitudes and skills on the part of current staff. Third, traditional practices for organizing inservice education and times of scarce resources have rendered many would-be providers of inservice impotent (p. 196).

Another reason inservice is increasing in importance is teachers need to keep as current as possible with the changing needs of their students. Dillon (1976) found three reasons for the increased emphasis on staff development:

- (a) the declining birthrate and resultant decline in teacher turnover,
- (b) public dissatisfaction with the achievement of many students, and
- (c) general societal pressures that impinge on the schools (p. 165).

Today's society demands more than ever that teachers be competent and the degree of competency needed to be effective is never sufficient. Teachers must therefore make a continuous effort to keep current with curriculum changes. Galloway (1972), in addressing the necessity of inservice education, stated:

It is well known that teachers who serve the young in our schools have varying degrees of educational experience. Teachers soon learn that regardless of their degree programs it is necessary to continue their professional development. A bachelor's degree is not enough, a master's degree is better but not sufficient, and a doctorate is laudatory, but represents no guarantee of final preparation. In a word, inservice education is necessary for all (p. 273).

Teacher Involvement in the Staff Development Program is Essential

A recurring theme that is present in the literature is that teacher involvement is crucial to the success of a staff development program. Too often, staff development and inservice programs are planned for teachers rather than with teachers. Marshall and Caldwell (1984) stated that if inservice programs are to be meaningful, teachers must take the responsibility for assessing their own strengths and weaknesses, developing plans for improvement, and measuring their progress. Research findings by Brimm and Tollett (1974) indicated that 93% of respondents surveyed in a statewide study in Tennessee

reported that teachers need to be involved in the development and evaluation of in-service programs. Edelfelt (1974) stated that teachers want a voice in determining staff development programs because they know most directly the problems teachers face. Teachers are also likely to be more interested in the staff development program if they feel they have some involvement in the decision-making process. Ingersoll (1976) emphasized the necessity of teacher involvement in the staff development program by stating:

To fail to include the teacher in the decision-making process lacks sense for a variety of reasons: (a) when teachers are involved at the choice point, they are more likely to carry their interest into actual training; (b) it fails to make financial sense to offer something that has little relevance to teachers' needs; (c) to make all the decision at an administrative level is little more than patronizing (p. 169).

Concerning teacher involvement in the planning of staff development programs, Johnston and Yeakey (1977) noted:

The time is past when administrators can unilaterally decide the content and format of SDPs and expect them to be effective. No longer can there be planning for teachers. There must be planning with teachers. Teachers will take educational reform and change seriously only when they are responsible for defining their own problems and delineating their own needs (p. 235).

Mangieri and McWilliams (1976) stated:

While consensus among educators is that staff involvement plays a significant role in the success of any inservice program, the fact remains that this practice is more the exception than the rule. In reality, most inservice programs have been planned on the basis of one or two factors: (a) the administrator's personal perceptions of the district's inservice needs; and/or (b) the availability of resources at the local college of education level (p. 110).

Lawrence (cited in Zenke, 1976), in a monograph prepared for the Florida Department of Education, stated:

Teachers are more likely to benefit from in-service programs in which they can choose goals and activities for themselves, as contrasted with programs in which the goals and activities are pre-planned (p. 181).

Beneficial inservice programs are those that are planned with regard for the needs of teachers. Shared decision making between administrators and teachers in addressing and identifying needs for a staff development program is the most positive course of action. Teachers will be more committed to the staff development program if they have been involved in planning and feel that they have some control over the staff development program.

Criticisms of Staff Development and Inservice Programs

While inservice has attracted much attention in recent years, it has also attracted much criticism. Byrne (1983) reported that teachers have sought self-improvement utilizing a variety of approaches. However, what has been lacking is the consistent, uniform approach to staff inservice that accounts for faculty development in terms of individual and school system needs and goals. Realizing that teachers often view inservice from a negative point of view, Harris and Bessent (1969) noted that many in-service programs suffer from the following:

- (1) Inappropriate activities--selected without regard for purposes to be achieved.
- (2) Inappropriate purposes--a failure to relate inservice programs to genuine needs of staff participants.
- (3) Lack of skills among program planners and directors who design and conduct instructional improvement efforts (p. 15).

There are also teachers who criticize inservice education, not because they approach inservice with a negative attitude, but because they want inservice to be more meaningful. Mackie and Gervais (1977) stated that traditionally, inservice programs were either nonexistent or poorly conceived, and of little value to educators.

Howey (1976, p. 102) reported that "inservice education in many respects resembles a patchwork quilt." Brimm and Tollett (cited in Ogletree and Allen, 1976) found most inservice programs poorly planned, inadequately executed, and lacking valid evaluative procedures. Wood and Thompson (1980), in addressing deficiencies and criticisms of inservice education, wrote:

The most common defects reported are poor planning and organization, activities that are impersonal and unrelated to the day-to-day problems of participants, lack of participant (teacher and administrator) involvement in the planning and implementation of their inservice, inadequate needs assessment, and unclear objectives (p. 375).

Expressing a similar viewpoint, Yeatts (1976, p. 417) stated: "Inservice education has frequently meant make-do programs initiated from the top down with little regard for what the individual classroom teacher perceives as his or her needs and competencies." Inservice education has often been found to be lacking and certainly has had little impact on the classroom teacher in a large number of cases.

Studies Relating to Teacher Attitudes and/or
Perceptions Toward Staff Development/
Inservice Education

The literature is well documented concerning the need for teacher involvement and teacher input into successful staff development

programs. For proper evaluation to be made of any staff development program, it is also necessary to assess teacher attitudes and/or perceptions of the staff development program. Hendee (1976) suggested that teacher perceptions were essential to planning staff development programs by stating: "Some person designated as a 'staff developer' and given sufficient time and authority to act should be assigned the specific responsibility of planning programs emanating from perceived needs" (p. 163). The data base of teacher attitudes and/or perceptions of staff development programs is limited, but some studies have dealt with this essential phase of inservice.

Ainsworth (1976) surveyed 732 teachers in Prince George's County, Maryland, and found that 60% of those surveyed indicated a greater concern for quality inservice presentations than about the possibility of pay or credit for their attendance. Ainsworth also noted:

The five qualities mentioned by more teachers were: practicality (79.5%), support and encouragement (56.2%), systematic program (48.6%), variety (45.9%), and teacher-sharing (42.5%) (p. 107).

Teachers in the study also expressed a desire for inservice programs on techniques and methods in their particular area and on their particular level of instruction. Similarly, Ngaiyaye and Hanley (1978) surveyed 228 teachers in the Chicago Public Schools and reported: "They did prefer meetings organized and arranged for teachers of similar grades, disciplines, or programs, than those arranged for all teachers, without regard to their grades or disciplines" (p. 306). Ainsworth (1976, p. 108) further reported that "the most frequently mentioned quality of inservice programming was support and encouragement."

Brimm and Tollett (1974) conducted a statewide research study in Tennessee with one of two purposes for the study being to ascertain teacher attitudes toward inservice education programs. Results of the study indicated that an overwhelming majority of teachers prefer some sort of individualized inservice education program. Yet another finding was that teachers want some group inservice programs to be conducted. Over three-fourths of the respondents felt that attendance at system-wide inservice activities is desirable and should be required of all teachers. Concerning the utility of staff development programs, classroom teachers felt strongly (90%) that one of the primary purposes of inservice programs should be to help the teacher upgrade his classroom performance. The teachers surveyed also indicated that one of the important ways to judge the effectiveness of an inservice program is its usefulness in helping teachers to cope more successfully with their professional tasks. The survey also indicated that inservice activities do not suffer from insufficient funding and that adequate follow-up to determine the effects of inservice activities does not exist. In a survey conducted of 112 Oklahoma teachers, Simms (1983, p. 28) found that "a significant number of respondents acknowledge their need for continual engagement in activities which foster professional growth and improvement." Johnston and Yeakey (1977) surveyed both administrators and teachers in New Jersey and found that small group instruction was preferred, with sessions of half-day duration scheduled on school time. The majority of respondents favored academic credit versus stipend as compensation for attendance and both groups agreed that attendance should be mandatory. Ford (1985), in a survey of Oklahoma superintendents, found that

"additional compensation should be available for teachers participating in staff development activities, but not an 'across the board' compensation" (p. 80).

Various Methods of Providing Staff Development Programs

Methods used to provide staff development programs for teachers vary widely from school district to school district. One of the biggest concerns concerning the implementation of staff development programs is when the meetings are to be scheduled. Edelfelt (1977) suggested the following when consideration is given to the scheduling of inservice education:

The working lives of teachers are too heavily scheduled with teaching students in classes to have much left for inservice education. If inservice education is to become an integral part of the teacher's job, it must be moved into the schedule of the day (p. 13).

Ehrenberg and Brandt (1976) stated that most districts schedule staff development on personal time rather than on district time. School districts must continue to search for ways to schedule staff development as an integral part of the required operation.

Zigarmi, Betz, and Jensen (1977, p. 547) reported that "the most-used type of workshops (one-day regional workshops involving several school systems and after-school workshops) were judged to be the least useful by respondents." In addition to the scheduling of the time for inservice activities to take place, the model through which these activities take place is of primary importance. One model for professional growth is to have the teachers enroll at the local university for three or four credits. Another model is to ask the university to

give an extension course in the school district at a time convenient for teachers to attend. Yet another model, described by Fox and Griffin (1974), allows districts to select teams of teachers and administrators who work together on a problem of their choosing. This model, named the "inter-institutional model," combines resources of the university, the local school district, and the state department of education. The problem is identified before the workshop begins and is addressed during 16 four-hour, once-a-week sessions.

Another model used for staff development purposes is the "inter-visitation model." This model provides for teachers to visit other teachers' classrooms and for interaction to occur both before and after the presentation. Gersten (1979), in reporting on the results of an intervisitation model, stated that it led to "the integration of human resources which shaped fresher, more original thinking, which led to viable lessons" (p. 533). In recent years, the process of "coaching" has come to be recognized as another tool for staff development. Joyce and Showers (1982) reported that coaching is one element that can be used to assist teachers when attempting to transfer a new model into their active repertoire. According to Joyce and Showers, coaching is utilized after the study of theory, the observation of demonstrations, and practice with feedback. Coaching is used to provide companionship, to help each other learn to teach the appropriate responses to their students, to discern the optimal uses of the model in their courses, and to provide one another with ideas and feedback.

Factors in a Successful Staff Development Program

Staff development and inservice programs vary from state to state and from school district to school district within states. Some of the variance can be attributed to the various state legislatures that mandate staff development programs for every school district within a given state. Variance also is the result of different levels of funding for staff development programs, different needs of teachers within school districts, and varying staff development models that are utilized from district to district. Various research studies have determined, however, that while there are variables that necessarily exist, there are also qualities and characteristics that are deemed desirable for inclusion in staff development programs. Ainsworth (1976) found that the five qualities mentioned by more teachers were: practicality, support and encouragement, systematic program, variety, and teacher-sharing. Holly (1982) interviewed 102 teachers from urban, rural, and suburban Michigan school districts and found that the most important factor determining the value teachers placed on an inservice education activity was its personal relevance. Byrne (1983) made four assumptions concerning inservice:

First, inservice at the local level must primarily be teacher oriented and teacher centered. Second, the program must be characterized by diversity and flexibility. Third, the program should result in a planned, sequential activity for each individual in which one inservice activity is linked to another, and one year's program is linked to that of the following year. Finally, inservice should be well prepared around those specific training requirements that each individual sees as important and relevant to his own professional development (p. 2).

Hall (1983) surveyed 330 teachers in Oklahoma and identified four

essential factors in staff development programs which were: credit, involvement, choice, and relevancy. Ehrenberg and Brandt (1976) reported the factors involved in the implementation of a staff development program are time, money, and commitment.

Hendee (1976) listed the following as major elements in staff development: recognizing need, assigning someone to be responsible to search out all available resources, making certain there is a well-thought-out approach clearly articulated, and including staff members in the planning and evaluating of activities.

Johnston and Yeakey (1977) concluded:

Research reveals that the most effective SDPs are those which include cooperative administrative and staff planning, flexible goals, available resources, accountable implementation, effective communication and follow-up evaluation (p. 235).

Certainly, it is clear that inservice meetings which are mindful of both strengths and needs of participants can bring about positive attitudes which carry over into practice in the classroom.

Summary

Staff development has received a great deal of attention on the local, state, and national levels. The need for staff development has been emphasized in the review of literature. This felt need has evolved into a legislative mandate in many states, including Oklahoma. Perhaps the one area of a staff development program that is crucial to its success is that of teacher involvement. Teachers are more willing to accept those programs they have had a part in formulating.

Criticisms of staff development programs are numerous and will continue to be numerous if staff development is handled in a haphazard,

ineffective manner. The review of literature itemized several factors for a staff development program to be successful. These factors must be incorporated if staff development is to reach its fullest potential. This review of literature will assist the researcher in determining teacher perceptions of the staff development program in Oklahoma.

CHAPTER III

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Design of the Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain teacher perceptions of the mandated staff development program in the state of Oklahoma. Additionally, the study was designed to determine if significant differences existed in the perceptions of teachers when grouped according to demographic variables selected for the study. As detailed in Chapter I, these demographic variables are sex, age, grade(s) primarily taught, number of years teaching experience, highest degree held, and size of school district.

This chapter will detail the method and procedure used for the study and will include the following sections: Population, Sample, Instrumentation, Data Collection, and Analysis of Data.

Population

A total of 457 independent public school districts was identified as the population for this study. The population of school districts was identified through use of a list which ranked all school districts in Oklahoma according to their 1983-84 average daily attendance. This list was provided by the Oklahoma State Department of Education Data Center.

Sample

The sample for this study was selected utilizing a random sample technique. The population of school districts was stratified to ensure that school districts of all sizes were represented. A stratified random sample was determined to result in a more representative sample of the school districts in Oklahoma. Since a stratified random sample was desired, the population of districts was first divided into four groups. This grouping of independent public school districts was done on the basis of the 1983-84 average daily attendance for each district. Group 1 included the largest 115 independent public school districts based on average daily attendance for the 1983-84 school year. The average daily attendance for these districts ranged from 919 to 42,078. Group 2 included districts whose average daily attendance ranged from 445 to 915. Group 3 school districts ranged from 268 to 443 average daily attendance. Group 4 represented districts whose average daily attendance ranged from 85 to 267. Groups 2, 3, and 4 each contained 114 independent public school districts. It was determined that approximately 5% of all independent public school districts should be included in the sample. Therefore, using the table of random numbers in Bartz (1981) (Table L of Appendix 2), 24 independent public school districts were randomly selected to be included in the sample. This selection process resulted in six school districts being selected from each of the four groups.

The group of certified and licensed teachers that represented the 24 randomly selected school districts included 512 elementary teachers and 647 secondary teachers, for a total of 1,159. This group was

identified through use of the Oklahoma Educational Directory, 1984-85. It was further decided to sample 50% of the total group of 1,159 teachers. Demographic data were also collected on this group of teachers.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in the study was a modified version of the "Teacher Attitude Toward In-Service Education Inventory" developed at Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, Tennessee (Brimm and Tollett, 1974). The original inventory instrument was modified in several ways for this study. Since Oklahoma law mandated that all teachers shall participate in a statewide staff development program, it was decided to change the terminology on the questionnaire from "in-service" to "staff development." This change in terminology was carried out for two reasons. First, for the purpose of this study, inservice is viewed as a part of staff development, with staff development being a concept much broader in scope than inservice. Secondly, the questionnaire was designed to assess teacher perceptions of the staff development program and it was felt that the change in terminology would be more congruent with the language and vocabulary of Oklahoma teachers in regard to the mandated program.

A review of related literature was undertaken to determine what qualities authors in the areas of staff development and inservice deemed important to a staff development or inservice program. This review constituted an analysis of 58 professional journal articles and/or books written in regard to the areas of staff development and/or inservice education, and resulted in the identification of 21

qualities being mentioned as important to a staff development and/or inservice program. The 34 statements on the original inventory were then analyzed by the researcher in terms of the 21 qualities derived from the review of related literature. From this analysis, it was determined that 9 of the original 34 statements were not congruent with any of the 21 qualities as identified in the literature. This resulted in 25 statements that were to be included in the questionnaire for this study. Five additional statements were added to the pool to make a total of 30 usable statements for the questionnaire. These additional five statements were created in the five areas that were identified by the researcher as the most often mentioned qualities of a staff development and/or inservice program through the review of related literature. The 30 statements were then randomized and assigned a new number for the questionnaire, utilizing Table L of Appendix 2 in Bartz (1981).

Response categories for demographic data were also included on the questionnaire. Demographic data were gathered for two purposes-- first, for the purpose of accurately describing the sample in the study, and secondly, the perceptions of teachers concerning the staff development program in Oklahoma were analyzed in terms of the demographic variables to determine if significant differences existed. These demographic variables were sex, age, grade(s) primarily taught, number of years teaching experience, and highest degree held. The selection of sex as a demographic variable was made to determine if the responses of female teachers varied significantly from the responses of male teachers. Underwood and Underwood (1977) attempted to analyze the needs and concerns of junior high school and middle school

teachers for the purpose of giving direction to inservice activities and found that female teachers viewed professional growth problems as significantly more difficult than did male teachers. Von Eschenbach and Noland (1982) conducted a study of 60 graduate social studies teachers designed to ascertain their perceptions of inservice training preferences for social studies education. Utilizing the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient to analyze the data, it was determined that male social studies teachers' order of preferences concerning two areas did not correlate with female social studies teachers' order of preferences.

Age was selected as a demographic variable to determine if significant differences existed in the perceptions of teachers when analyzed by categories of age. Johnston and Yeakey (1977, p. 230) stated: "It has often been said that the needs of teachers and administrators tend to vary with age, sex, and professional life." It can be determined from an analysis of the data whether teacher perceptions of the staff development program vary with age.

Grade(s) primarily taught was selected as a demographic variable to determine if significant differences existed in the perceptions of teachers when analyzed by grade(s) taught. Ingersoll (1976), in a study of 745 teachers designed to assess inservice training needs through teacher responses, found the responses of elementary school teachers varied from both junior high and senior high school teachers. The study suggested that sufficient differences existed between elementary and secondary school teachers to support differentiated training within inservice settings. Mann (1978), in a description of trainee characteristics of teachers, stated: "The higher the grade

level, the more resistant to training was the teacher" (p. 214), indicating that perhaps secondary teachers would be less positive in their perceptions of the staff development program than elementary teachers.

The number of years teaching experience was selected as a demographic variable to determine if significant differences existed among groups of teachers in their perceptions of the staff development program. Turner (1970) suggested that inservice supervisors should be aware of the varying needs of teachers when grouped according to years of teaching experience. Denmark (cited in Turner, 1970) suggested grouping all teachers in a given school system into one of three groups for purposes of inservice education: (1) the beginning teacher, (2) the more experienced teacher, and (3) the veteran teacher. Donlan (1982) found in a study of teachers selected for summer writing projects that "Teachers with more experience may have more positive attitudes toward staff development than do teachers with fewer years experience" (p. 7).

The highest degree held by teachers was selected as a demographic variable to determine if significant differences existed in the perceptions of teachers when analyzed by highest degree held. In addition to the five demographic variables on the questionnaire, a sixth demographic variable (size of district) was added to determine if significant differences existed in the perceptions of teachers when analyzed by size of district. The demographic variables selected were thought to be among the more important variables that could be included in the study by the researcher as well as members of the doctoral committee. A Likert-type scale was used for the 30 statements

on the questionnaire. Teachers selected to be included were asked to respond to each statement by circling one of the four responses listed. These responses were: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD). Values of 1, 2, 3, and 4 were assigned to the responses, with 1 being strongly disagree and 4 being strongly agree.

The questionnaire was further revised through recommendations for improvement from the doctoral committee and through suggestions obtained from a pilot study. The pilot study included two additional independent public school districts not included in the sample for the study. In one of the two school districts, all elementary teachers were asked to participate in the pilot study. In the other school district included in the pilot study, all secondary teachers were asked to participate. The result was that 22 elementary teachers and 16 secondary teachers participated in the pilot study, resulting in several improvements to the questionnaire. All questions were further reviewed for understanding and clarity of meaning.

Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered in the spring of 1985. The initial contact with each of the 24 randomly selected independent public school districts was with the superintendent of each district. On April 10, 1985, packets containing information about the study were mailed to each of the 24 superintendents. Included in the packet was a letter to each superintendent explaining the purpose of the study and requesting support for the study in their school district. An enclosure requesting their approval and signature for the study to be

conducted in their district was included, along with the opportunity to request a copy of the results of the study. A stamped, addressed envelope was also included for return. A sample letter to building principals which provided the instructions for distribution of the questionnaires to the selected teachers in their building was included to inform the superintendents of the method of distribution of questionnaires to his/her faculty. A sample enclosure for the building principal to request a copy of the results of the study was also included. In addition, a sample copy of the questionnaire that was to be distributed to 50% of the district's faculty was included for the superintendents' information. A follow-up telephone call to all superintendents not returning the signed enclosure was initiated on April 19, 1985. Telephone calls were made to all 11 superintendents that had not responded by returning the enclosure as of April 19, 1985. A 100% response was received from all 24 superintendents granting permission for the study to be conducted in their school districts.

As soon as permission was received from the superintendent to conduct the study, a packet was mailed to each building principal in the school district. Included in the packet was a letter of instructions for distribution of the questionnaires to the selected teachers and an enclosure for the principal to indicate if a copy of the results of the study was desired. A stamped, addressed envelope was also provided for the principal's return of the enclosure. In addition, a sufficient number of questionnaires, along with individual stamped, addressed envelopes, were included for distribution to the selected teachers. The number of teachers in each building was identified through use of the Oklahoma Educational Directory, 1984-85.

Additional questionnaires were included to be certain sufficient quantities were received at each building. Follow-up in the form of a postcard was initiated to building principals 10 days after the packets had been mailed. Only those principals with building return rates of 100% were not mailed a postcard. Additional follow-up in the form of a letter to the building principal was mailed seven days after the postcard was sent, if a building had less than a 50% return rate. The sample selected included 24 independent public school districts, which represented 28 elementary schools, 11 junior high or middle schools, and 24 high schools. In addition to the three grade configurations presented, organizational structures were also represented as elementary/junior high, junior high/senior high, and elementary/junior high/senior high. Returns were received from 21 elementary schools, 11 junior high/middle schools, and 19 high schools. No returns were received from seven elementary schools and five high schools. A total of 411 questionnaires were returned. The number of teachers included in the sample was 580, yielding a return rate of 70.86%.

Analysis of Data

The data from the questionnaires were coded, punched on data cards, and scored by computer, using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS). The data analysis included four major areas. The first of the areas was that of a frequency distribution for each of the demographic variables. Second, a mean was generated for each of the 30 statements which reflected perceptions of all the respondents. Third, for the purpose of analysis, the 30 statements were grouped into seven categories. Selection of the seven categories was based in part on a review

of related literature which offered general headings or areas of staff development programs. Selection of the categories was also based partially on the identification of the 21 qualities that were mentioned as important to a staff development and/or inservice program. Finally, additional refinement for the seven categories was accomplished through suggestions offered by members of the doctoral committee. These seven categories are as follows: Effectiveness, Evaluation, Expectations, Scheduling, Support and Encouragement, Teacher Involvement, and Utility. Means were then generated for all respondents for each of the seven categories. Finally, the six demographic variables were checked against the seven categories to see if a significant difference existed by the use of an analysis of variance.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

As stated in Chapter I, the research study was designed to ascertain how teachers perceive the staff development program in the state of Oklahoma. These perceptions were obtained from responses to a survey questionnaire mailed to a selected group of teachers in Oklahoma in the spring of 1985.

All 457 public, independent school districts in Oklahoma were placed into one of four groups based on average daily attendance figures for the 1983-84 school year. From each of the four groups, six school districts were randomly selected for inclusion in the study. Data presented in Table I shows the average daily attendance range for each of the four groups, as well as the number of school districts in each group. The four groups were assigned an identification number, with group one being the group with the largest average daily attendance and group four being the group with the smallest average daily attendance.

The superintendents representing these 24 school districts were then contacted by letter requesting permission to conduct the study in their district. Permission to conduct the study was received from 13 superintendents within 10 days. Follow-up calls to the remaining 11

superintendents were initiated and permission to conduct the study was received within an additional 14 days. Once permission was granted by the superintendent to conduct the study, all building principals in that district were mailed a packet containing a letter of explanation, sufficient survey forms for their building, and instructions for distribution of the survey instrument to the building faculty.

TABLE I
GROUPING OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS BASED ON
AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE

Group Number	Average Daily Attendance Range	Number of Districts	Number of Districts Selected
1	919 - 42,078	115	6
2	445 - 915	114	6
3	268 - 443	114	6
4	85 - 267	<u>114</u>	<u>6</u>
Totals		457	24

The Oklahoma Educational Directory, 1984-85 was utilized to provide the names of all building principals, as well as names of individual schools. Follow-up to all building principals whose faculties did not have a 100% return on the distributed surveys was sent 10 days after the packets had been mailed. This follow-up was in the form of

a postcard that stressed the importance of the surveys being returned. Seven days after the postcard was sent, a follow-up letter was mailed to all building principals whose faculty had not returned 50% of the distributed surveys. Data presented in Table II indicate the number of elementary, junior high/middle schools, and high schools involved in the survey.

TABLE II
DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOLS BY GROUP

Group Number	Elementary Schools	Junior High/ Middle Schools	High Schools	Total Schools
1	10	6	6	22
2	6	2*	6	14
3	8	3*	6	17
4	<u>4*</u>	<u>0*</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>
Totals	28	11	24	63

*The small number of schools in these categories is due to different grade configurations of school organization in some districts.

Surveys were returned from 21 elementary schools, 11 junior high/middle schools, and 19 high schools. No returns were received from seven elementary schools and five high schools. Returns were received from 23 of 24 school districts.

Description of Respondents

Demographic data were gathered for the purpose of accurately describing the respondents in this study. The perceptions of teachers concerning the staff development program in Oklahoma were also analyzed in terms of the demographic variables to determine if significant differences existed.

The sample of 24 districts included a total of 580 teachers. From this sample, 411 questionnaires were returned, which represents a 70.9% return rate. Group 1 had the greatest number of respondents (199), while group 3 had the highest rate of return (80%). Data provided in Table III indicate the number of teachers in the sample from each group, the number of questionnaires returned, and the percentage of return.

TABLE III
QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE

Group Number	Number of Teachers	Number Returned	Percentage
1	278	199	71.6
2	155	109	70.3
3	95	76	80.0
4	<u>52</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>51.9</u>
Totals	580	411	70.9

Sex of Respondents

The sample consisted of 304 females (74.3%) and 105 males (25.7%) (Table IV).

TABLE IV
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY SEX

Group Number	Female	Male	Total
1	148	50	198
2	79	31	110
3	56	19	75
4	<u>21</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>26</u>
Totals	304	105	409*

*The total of Table IV is less than the total number of questionnaires returned, as two respondents did not indicate their sex.

Ages of Respondents

The ages of the respondents in this study were spread over a wide distribution, with 42.9% of the respondents in the 30-39 age range. The second largest category, 40-49, contained 101 respondents and represented 24.8% of the sample (Table V).

TABLE V
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE

Group Number	Under 25	25-29	30-39	40-49	50 and Over	Total
1	5	30	90	49	25	199
2	5	15	48	25	16	109
3	2	18	26	21	7	74
4	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>26</u>
Totals	15	67	175	101	50	408*

*The total of Table V is less than the total questionnaires returned, as three respondents did not indicate their age.

Grades Taught by Respondents

The data in Table VI indicate the grade(s) primarily taught by the respondents. The largest number of respondents taught grades 10 through 12, while the smallest number of respondents taught students in grades 4 through 6.

Years Teaching Experience

Data collected from the respondents concerning years teaching experience indicate that only 22.4% of the teachers in the sample have 16 or more years teaching experience. The largest category, 0-5 years teaching experience, contained the most respondents, with 123 (29.9%).

The smallest category, 21 years and over, contained 45 respondents (11.0%) (Table VII).

TABLE VI
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY GRADE(S)
PRIMARILY TAUGHT

Group Number	K-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	Total
1	63	33	47	54	197
2	26	17	22	40	105
3	17	11	20	21	69
4	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>26</u>
Totals	114	69	90	124	397*

*Only 397 of the 411 respondents indicated the grade(s) primarily taught.

Highest Degree Held

Data from the respondents concerning highest degree held indicate that the majority of the respondents (60.2%) hold a bachelor's degree, while 163 hold a master's degree (39.8%). One respondent did not indicate the highest degree held, and no respondent held the doctorate (Table VIII).

TABLE VII
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY YEARS
TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Group Number	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21 and Over	Total
1	51	49	52	25	22	199
2	34	25	32	8	11	110
3	26	18	11	11	10	76
4	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>26</u>
Totals	123	98	98	47	45	411

TABLE VIII
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY HIGHEST
DEGREE HELD

Group Number	Bachelor's	Master's	Total
1	125	73	198
2	63	47	110
3	40	36	76
4	<u>19</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>26</u>
Totals	247	163	410*

*One respondent did not indicate the highest degree held.

Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question One

Research question one was stated as follows: "How do teachers perceive the staff development program in the state of Oklahoma?" The results are reported in Tables IX through XVIII and in the accompanying summary.

Results. The data indicated that the teachers in the state of Oklahoma perceived the staff development program in a positive manner. All 30 items on the questionnaire were analyzed in terms of the number of responses for each of the four choices. These responses were grouped into two general categories. The first category combined the two responses of "agree" and "strongly agree." The second category combined the two responses of "disagree" and "strongly disagree." The first category is regarded as generally positive, while the second category is generally regarded as negative. The perceptions of the respondents could then be examined by combining the responses into a generally positive/negative format. This data, as well as the percentage of respondents that generally agree or disagree with each item, are included in Table IX. As indicated in Table IX, five items were reversed so that means of all the items could be compared. An item stated in the negative was recoded to show a response indicative of a positively worded statement. It can be seen that the respondents perceived all but two of the items as positive. The items not regarded as positive were items 8 and 17. A total of 9 of the 30 items were perceived as being positive at a level of 90% or greater. Item 9

TABLE IX
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES BY AGREEMENT/
DISAGREEMENT AND PERCENTAGE

Item Number	SA/A	%	SD/D	%
1. Teachers should receive some re-lease time for staff development activities.	379	92.4	31	7.6
2. Appropriate evaluation techniques to determine the effectiveness of the staff development program are used in my district.	303	74.4	104	25.6
3. Staff development training seems to be more effective when the total school district staff is simultaneously engaged in a given activity.	235	58.0	170	42.0
4. One of the most important ways to judge the effectiveness of a staff development program is to note whether the teacher uses the results of the training in his/her classroom	343	83.9	66	16.1
5. The real test of a staff development program is whether it helps the teacher to cope with his/her professional tasks more successfully.	385	94.4	23	5.6
6. The objectives of staff development programs in my system are specific.	309	76.1	97	23.9
7. Most staff development activities should be carried on within the school in which the teacher works.	252	61.6	157	38.4
8. Transfer of concepts presented and skills taught in staff development programs to the problems of daily classroom life is minimal.*	212	52.6	191	47.4

TABLE IX (Continued)

Item Number	SA/A	%	SD/D	%
9. The teacher should have the opportunity to select the kind of staff development activities which he/she feels will strengthen his/her professional competence.	407	99.0	4	1.0
10. Teachers in my school district receive administrative support and encouragement in all phases of the staff development program.	369	90.4	39	9.6
11. Most staff development programs do not seem well planned.*	73	17.9	335	82.1
12. Staff development should relate directly to problems encountered in the classroom.	256	62.6	153	37.4
13. Teachers should be afforded some degree of individualization based on their perceived needs when attending staff development programs.	392	96.8	13	3.2
14. Every teacher should be required to participate in some staff development activities designed to build a team spirit within his/her school.	319	78.8	86	21.2
15. Sufficient consideration has been given to the needs of teachers in planning the staff development program.	302	74.8	102	25.2
16. More staff development activities should be scheduled during the school day.	206	51.5	194	48.5
17. There is adequate follow-up to determine the effects of staff development activities in my system.	158	39.4	243	60.6
18. Most staff development programs arise from a study of the needs and problems of teachers.	307	76.0	97	24.0

TABLE IX (Continued)

Item Number	SA/A	%	SD/D	%
19. Many staff development activities do not appear relevant to any felt needs of the teacher.*	151	37.5	252	62.5
20. Our staff development programs seem to suffer from a lack of financial support needed to carry them out.*	132	33.0	268	67.0
21. Teachers need to be involved in the developing of purposes, activities, and methods of evaluation for staff development programs.	400	98.5	6	1.5
22. A staff development program should include teachers sharing usable ideas and instructional techniques with other teachers.	397	97.8	9	2.2
23. The primary purpose of staff development education is to upgrade the teacher's classroom performance.	360	89.3	43	10.7
24. Staff development programs must include activities which allow for the different interests which exist among individual teachers.	398	98.8	5	1.2
25. Attendance at some system-wide activities should be required of all teachers.	275	67.7	131	32.3
26. One of the most motivating staff development activities is an opportunity to become acquainted with new teaching practices or innovative programs.	386	95.5	18	4.5
27. If more teachers were involved in planning staff development programs, teacher commitment to them would be greater.	289	71.7	114	28.3

TABLE IX (Continued)

Item Number	SA/A	%	SD/D	%
28. Most staff development programs are virtually useless.*	105	25.7	304	74.3
29. We need to have more small group activities at staff development meetings.	256	63.7	146	36.3
30. The use of innovations presented in staff development programs is often a function of the support received from school administrators.	322	81.1	75	18.9

*These items were reverse scored.

received the most positive percentage (99.0%), indicating that teachers feel they should have the opportunity to select the kind of staff development activities they feel will strengthen their professional competence. The total responses for each item vary, due to the fact that not all teachers in the sample responded to all of the items. The number of responses varied from a low of 397 for item 30 to a high of 411 for item 9.

Perceptions of the teachers in the sample were also analyzed by comparing the means of each of the 30 items. Values from one to four were assigned to each of the 30 items on the questionnaire, with a value of one assigned to the response "Strongly Disagree" and four assigned to "Strongly Agree." A mean score above 2.50 was regarded as

generally positive, while a mean score below 2.50 was regarded as generally negative. A comparison of the means of the 30 items yielded a rank order of all items from most positive to least positive. Table X reports the mean for each of the 30 items, as well as the rank order of the perceptions of the respondents in terms of a continuum from most positive to least positive.

Preliminary analysis of the means of the 30 items indicated that all but two of the items had a mean above 2.50. Item 17 had the lowest mean (2.34), while item 8 had a mean slightly higher (2.43). Item 9 had the highest mean (3.64). There were also four ties in the rank of the items.

Perceptions of teachers concerning the staff development program were further analyzed by placing each of the 30 items into one of seven categories dealing with staff development. The seven categories are as follows: Effectiveness, Evaluation, Expectations, Scheduling, Support and Encouragement, Teacher Involvement, and Utility.

The first category, Effectiveness, is composed of five items. The percentage of agreement and disagreement with each item is listed in Table XI. The percentages listed indicate agreement with each item, except item 8.

In the area of Evaluation, respondents felt that appropriate evaluation techniques were being utilized (74.4% agreement). Respondents further agreed that most staff development programs had been well planned. However, perceptions of teachers clearly indicated that follow-up to determine the effects of staff development is inadequate (Table XII).

TABLE X
MEAN RESPONSES AND RANK ORDER OF
QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

Item Number	Number of Respondents	Mean	Rank
1. Teachers should receive some release time for staff development activities.	410	3.32	4
2. Appropriate evaluation techniques to determine the effectiveness of the staff development program are used in my district.	407	2.86	16
3. Staff development training seems to be more effective when the total school district staff is simultaneously engaged in a given activity.	405	2.68	26
4. One of the most important ways to judge the effectiveness of a staff development program is to note whether the teacher uses the results of the training in his/her classroom.	409	3.04	11
5. The real test of a staff development program is whether it helps the teacher to cope with his/her professional tasks more successfully.	408	3.31	5
6. The objectives of staff development programs in my system are specific.	406	2.87	15
7. Most staff development activities should be carried on within the school in which the teacher works.	409	2.71	23
8. Transfer of concepts presented and skills taught in staff development programs to the problems of daily classroom life is minimal.*	403	2.43	29
9. The teacher should have the opportunity to select the kind of staff development activities which he/she feels will strengthen his/her professional competence.	411	3.64	1

TABLE X (Continued)

Item Number	Number of Respondents	Mean	Rank
10. Teachers in my school district receive administrative support and encouragement in all phases of the staff development program.	408	3.21	9
11. Most staff development programs do not seem well planned.*	408	2.93	13
12. Staff development should relate directly to problems encountered in the classroom.	409	2.76	22
13. Teachers should be afforded some degree of individualization based on their perceived needs when attending staff development programs.	405	3.27	6
14. Every teacher should be required to participate in some staff development activities designed to build a team spirit within his/her school.	405	2.97	12
15. Sufficient consideration has been given to the needs of teachers in planning the staff development program.	404	2.85	18
16. More staff development activities should be scheduled during the school day.	400	2.55	28
17. There is adequate follow-up to determine the effects of staff development activities in my system.	401	2.34	30
18. Most staff development programs arise from a study of the needs and problems of teachers.	404	2.81	21
19. Many staff development activities do not appear relevant to any felt needs of the teacher.*	403	2.62	27

TABLE X (Continued)

Item Number	Number of Respondents	Mean	Rank
20. Our staff development programs seem to suffer from a lack of financial support needed to carry them out.*	400	2.69	24
21. Teachers need to be involved in the developing of purposes, activities, and methods of evaluation for staff development programs.	406	3.26	8
22. A staff development program should include teachers sharing usable ideas and instructional techniques with other teachers.	406	3.33	3
23. The primary purpose of staff development education is to upgrade the teacher's classroom performance.	403	3.21	9
24. Staff development programs must include activities which allow for the different interests which exist among individual teachers.	403	3.35	2
25. Attendance at some system-wide activities should be required of all teachers.	406	2.83	19
26. One of the most motivating staff development activities is an opportunity to become acquainted with new teaching practices or innovative programs.	404	3.27	6
27. If more teachers were involved in planning staff development programs, teacher commitment to them would be greater.	403	2.86	16
28. Most staff development programs are virtually useless.*	409	2.82	20
29. We need to have more small group activities at staff development meetings.	402	2.69	24

TABLE X (Continued)

Item Number	Number of Respondents	Mean	Rank
30. The use of innovations presented in staff development programs is often a function of the support received from school administrators.	397	2.90	14

*Coding was reversed on these items so that means could be compared.

The six items that are included in the category of Expectations indicate general agreement with this area of staff development. Item 9 reflects a 99% agreement of the respondents. Additionally, items 13, 24, and 26 all represent agreement by the respondents with the items at a level of 95.5% or higher (Table XIII).

Items dealing with Scheduling are shown in Table XIV. While the percentage of each item is generally that of agreement, the range is from a high of 92.4% for item 1 to a low of 51.5% for item 16.

Items dealing with the area of Support and Encouragement are presented in Table XV and the percentages generally indicate agreement with each of the items. Item 10 represents the highest percentage of agreement (90.4%), indicating teachers perceive they receive administrative support and encouragement in all phases of the staff development program. The other items also indicate a positive attitude on the part of teachers concerning support and encouragement for the staff development program.

TABLE XI
 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TO TEACHERS'
 PERCEPTIONS IN REGARD TO EFFECTIVENESS OF
 THE STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Questionnaire Items Regarding Effectiveness	SA/A %	SD/D %
3. Staff development training seems to be more effective when the total school district staff is simultaneously engaged in a given activity.	58.0	42.0
4. One of the most important ways to judge the effectiveness of a staff development program is to note whether the teacher uses the results of the training in his/her classroom.	83.9	16.1
6. The objectives of staff development programs in my system are specific.	76.1	23.9
8. Transfer of concepts presented and skills taught in staff development programs to the problems of daily classroom life is minimal.*	52.6	47.4
23. The primary purpose of staff development education is to upgrade the teacher's classroom performance.	89.3	10.7

*This item was reverse scored.

The five items which are included in the area of Teacher Involvement also indicate agreement with the items on the part of the respondents. Respondents indicated by 98.5% agreement that teachers need to be involved in the developing of purposes, activities, and methods of evaluation for staff development programs. Similarly, teachers also

indicated by a percentage of 97.8 that a staff development program should include teachers' sharing usable ideas and instructional techniques with other teachers (Table XVI).

TABLE XII
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TO TEACHERS'
PERCEPTIONS IN REGARD TO EVALUATION OF THE
STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Questionnaire Items Regarding Evaluation	SA/A %	SD/D %
2. Appropriate evaluation techniques to determine the effectiveness of the staff development program are used in my district.	74.4	25.6
11. Most staff development programs do not seem well planned.*	17.9	82.1
17. There is adequate follow-up to determine the effects of staff development activities in my system.	39.4	60.6

*This item was reverse scored.

Respondents indicated general agreement with the items regarding Utility of the staff development program that are contained in Table XVII. Over 94% of the respondents agreed that the real test of a staff development program is whether it helps the teacher to cope with his/her professional tasks more successfully. Respondents also

indicated agreement that staff development should relate directly to problems encountered in the classroom.

TABLE XIII
 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TO TEACHERS'
 PERCEPTIONS IN REGARD TO EXPECTATIONS OF THE
 STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Questionnaire Items Regarding Expectations	SA/A %	SD/D %
9. The teacher should have the opportunity to select the kind of staff development activities which he/she feels will strengthen his/her professional competence.	99.0	1.0
13. Teachers should be afforded some degree of individualization based on their perceived needs when attending staff development programs.	96.8	3.2
14. Every teacher should be required to participate in some staff development activities designed to build a team spirit within his/her school.	78.8	21.2
24. Staff development programs must include activities which allow for the different interests which exist among individual teachers.	98.8	1.2
25. Attendance at some system-wide activities should be required of all teachers.	67.7	32.3
26. One of the most motivating staff development activities is an opportunity to become acquainted with new teaching practices or innovative programs.	95.5	4.5

TABLE XIV
 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TO TEACHERS'
 PERCEPTIONS IN REGARD TO SCHEDULING OF THE
 STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Questionnaire Items Regarding Scheduling	SA/A %	SD/D %
1. Teachers should receive some release time for staff development activities.	92.4	7.6
7. Most staff development activities should be carried on within the school in which the teacher works.	61.6	38.4
16. More staff development activities should be scheduled during the school day.	51.5	48.5
29. We need to have more small group activities at staff development meetings.	63.7	36.3

In addition to comparing the percentage distributions of all items within a given category, it was felt that means for the seven categories would also yield information that would indicate agreement or disagreement. Table XVIII lists each of the seven categories, along with means for each category. These means were computed utilizing the scores from all of the respondents. Since all means are above the 2.50 level, it is generally considered that teachers are in agreement with the items in a category and generally feel positive toward the staff development program.

TABLE XV
 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TO TEACHERS'
 PERCEPTIONS IN REGARD TO SUPPORT AND
 ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE STAFF
 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Questionnaire Items Regarding Support and Encouragement	SA/A %	SD/D %
10. Teachers in my school district receive administrative support and encouragement in all phases of the staff development program.	90.4	9.6
20. Our staff development programs seem to suffer from a lack of financial support needed to carry them out.*	33.0	67.0
30. The use of innovations presented in staff development programs is often a function of the support received from school administrators.	81.8	18.9

*This item was reverse scored.

Research Question Two

Research question two was stated as follows: "Do significant differences exist in perceptions of teachers when grouped according to the following demographic variables: (a) sex, (b) age, (c) grade(s) primarily taught, (d) number of years teaching experience, (e) highest degree held, and (f) size of school district?" The results are reported in Tables XIX through XXIV and accompanying summary.

Results. An analysis of variance was calculated for each of the seven categories to determine if significant differences existed when

respondents were grouped according to each of six demographic variables. The .05 level of significance was established. Significant differences were found in four of the demographic variables. In all, nine findings that were significantly different were revealed for the four demographic variables, with no findings of significant difference discovered for the remaining two demographic variables.

TABLE XVI
 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TO TEACHERS'
 PERCEPTIONS IN REGARD TO TEACHER INVOLVEMENT
 IN THE STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Questionnaire Items Regarding Teacher Involvement	SA/A %	SD/D %
15. Sufficient consideration has been given to the needs of teachers in planning the staff development program.	74.8	25.2
18. Most staff development programs arise from a study of the needs and problems of teachers.	76.0	24.0
21. Teachers need to be involved in the developing of purposes, activities, and methods of evaluation for staff development programs.	98.5	1.5
22. A staff development program should include teachers sharing usable ideas and instructional techniques with other teachers.	97.8	2.2
27. If more teachers were involved in planning staff development programs, teacher commitment to them would be greater.	71.7	28.3

TABLE XVII
 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TO TEACHERS'
 PERCEPTIONS IN REGARD TO UTILITY OF THE
 STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Questionnaire Items Regarding Utility	SA/A %	SD/D %
5. The real test of a staff development program is whether it helps the teacher to cope with his/her professional tasks more successfully.	94.4	5.6
12. Staff development should relate directly to problems encountered in the classroom.	62.6	37.4
19. Many staff development activities do not appear relevant to any felt needs of the teacher.*	37.5	62.5
28. Most staff development programs are virtually useless.*	25.7	74.3

*These items were reverse scored.

Data related to the analysis of variance for demographic variable number one are presented in Table XIX. Three of the categories showed significant differences at the .05 level (Effectiveness, Evaluation, and Expectations). A comparison of the means of the scores by females and males revealed a score of 2.86 for females and a score of 2.77 for males in the category of Effectiveness. The higher score for females indicates a more positive perception toward the effectiveness of the staff development program than of their male counterparts. Similarly, females had a score of 2.74 for the category of Evaluation, while

males scored 2.63. In the category of Expectations, females also had higher mean score than males, with scores of 3.24 and 3.16, respectively.

TABLE XVIII
MEAN RESPONSES FOR THE SEVEN CATEGORIES OF
THE STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Category	Mean
Effectiveness	2.84
Evaluation	2.71
Expectations	3.23
Scheduling	2.82
Support and Encouragement	2.94
Teacher Involvement	3.03
Utility	2.88

Information concerning the analysis of variance for the second demographic variable, age, is contained in Table XX. The results of the analysis of variance showed a significant difference for the category of Scheduling. However, when the Scheffé Test was applied to determine where the significant difference was located, the significance did not show up. Values of P were higher than the acceptable

level of .05 for the other six categories when compared to the demographic variable of age.

TABLE XIX
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR DEMOGRAPHIC
VARIABLE ONE: SEX

Category	DF	SS	F	P
Effectiveness	1	0.75257599	6.20	0.0132*
Evaluation	1	0.99251798	4.06	0.0447*
Expectations	1	0.62463862	4.68	0.0311*
Scheduling	1	0.31427804	1.88	0.1715
Support and Encouragement	1	0.27860641	1.71	0.1914
Teacher Involvement	1	0.33908242	2.58	0.1089
Utility	1	0.60909686	3.61	0.0581

*(p < .05)

The analysis of variance calculated for the demographic variable Grade(s) Taught against the seven categories of a staff development program revealed significant differences in both Evaluation and Teacher Involvement. A significant difference was found in the category of Evaluation between respondents that teach grades K-3 and respondents teaching in grades 7-9.

TABLE XX
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR DEMOGRAPHIC
VARIABLE TWO: AGE

Category	DF	SS	F	P
Effectiveness	4	0.54424191	1.12	0.3452
Evaluation	4	1.65461384	1.68	0.1548
Expectations	4	0.50467406	0.94	0.4434
Scheduling	4	1.87033734	2.85	0.0237*
Support and Encouragement	4	0.53976042	0.82	0.5134
Teacher Involvement	4	0.22991073	0.43	0.7838
Utility	4	0.70187710	1.03	0.3907

*(p < .05)

A significant difference was also found between respondents that teach grades K-3 and respondents teaching grades 10-12. In both instances, mean scores for respondents teaching grades K-3 were significantly higher than mean scores for respondents teaching grades 7-9 and for respondents teaching grades 10-12. The mean score for the three groups of respondents are as follows: K-3 ($\bar{x} = 2.86$), 7-9 ($\bar{x} = 2.58$), and 10-12 ($\bar{x} = 2.65$). In the category of Teacher Involvement, it was determined that respondents teaching in grades K-3 perceived teacher involvement in a significantly more positive fashion than did respondents teaching grades 7-9. The mean score for respondents teaching in

grades K-3 was 3.10, while the mean score for respondents teaching grades 7-9 was 2.95. Data for the analysis of variance for Grade(s) Taught are presented in Table XXI.

TABLE XXI
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR DEMOGRAPHIC
VARIABLE THREE: GRADE(S) TAUGHT

Category	DF	SS	F	P
Effectiveness	3	0.89950352	2.46	0.0612
Evaluation	3	4.69351386	6.54	0.0003*
Expectations	3	0.37389087	0.91	0.4355
Scheduling	3	0.53141918	1.06	0.3679
Support and Encouragement	3	0.89783327	1.85	0.1349
Teacher Involvement	3	1.46708291	3.78	0.0109*
Utility	3	0.92572912	1.86	0.1335

*(p < .05)

Table XXII contains data for the analysis of variance for the demographic variable Years Teaching Experience. No significant differences at the .05 level were discovered between Years Teaching Experience and the seven categories of a staff development program.

TABLE XXII
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE FOUR: YEARS TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Category	DF	SS	F	P
Effectiveness	4	0.62389356	1.28	0.2787
Evaluation	4	1.27454998	1.29	0.2742
Expectations	4	1.01688690	1.91	0.1084
Scheduling	4	0.78995201	1.18	0.3172
Support and Encouragement	4	0.58377429	0.89	0.4679
Teacher Involvement	4	0.40767477	0.77	0.5423
Utility	4	0.51559531	0.76	0.5522

The analysis of variance for demographic variable five is presented in Table XXIII. No significant difference was found for any one of the seven categories when respondents were grouped according to each of the six demographic variables.

Data presented in Table XXIV indicate that significant differences exist in mean scores of respondents when Size of District is one dimension and Effectiveness is the other dimension. However, the location of the difference was not revealed when the data were subjected to the Scheffé Test. A significant difference at the .05 level was also calculated for the category of Support and Encouragement. The Scheffé Test revealed that respondents in group 1, the group

containing the largest school districts ranked according to average daily attendance, were significantly more positive in their perceptions of Support and Encouragement for the staff development program than were respondents in group 4, the group containing the smallest school districts. The mean score for respondents in group 1 was 2.99, while the mean score for respondents in group 4 was 2.72.

TABLE XXIII
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE FIVE: HIGHEST DEGREE HELD

Category	DF	SS	F	P
Effectiveness	1	0.15240913	1.25	0.2649
Evaluation	1	0.12579389	0.51	0.4774
Expectations	1	0.12335571	0.92	0.3387
Scheduling	1	0.15067489	0.90	0.3434
Support and Encouragement	1	0.02724865	0.17	0.6837
Teacher Involvement	1	0.13291639	1.02	0.3138
Utility	1	0.27795246	1.65	0.1998

TABLE XXIV
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR DEMOGRAPHIC
VARIABLE SIX: SIZE OF DISTRICT

Category	DF	SS	F	P
Effectiveness	3	0.98907517	2.72	0.0432*
Evaluation	3	1.56522992	2.12	0.0956
Expectations	3	0.60434995	1.50	0.2115
Scheduling	3	0.71581309	1.43	0.2314
Support and Encouragement	3	2.17959006	4.57	0.0039*
Teacher Involvement	3	0.82020390	2.10	0.0982
Utility	3	0.22746779	0.45	0.7242

*(p < .05)

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study had as its primary purpose to ascertain teacher perceptions of the mandated staff development program in the state of Oklahoma. The study was also designed to determine if significant differences existed in the perceptions of teachers when grouped according to the following demographic variables: sex, age, grade(s) primarily taught, number of years teaching experience, highest degree held, and size of school district.

The sample for the study consisted of 24 independent public school districts in the state of Oklahoma. The sample was part of a stratified random sample and represented school districts that ranged in size according to average daily attendance figures from 104 to 2,265.

The instrument used for the study was a modified version of "Teacher Attitude Toward In-Service Education Inventory" developed at Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, Tennessee, by Brimm and Tollett (1974). The questionnaire, which was mailed to the respondents' building principal for distribution, consisted of two sections. The first section was designed to secure demographic data. The second section of the questionnaire was designed to assess teacher perceptions of the staff development program in Oklahoma.

The analysis of data involved frequency distributions for each of the demographic variables. Means were generated for each of the 30 items by group size, as well as for the total group of 411 respondents. Means were also generated for each of the seven categories of a staff development program by group size and for the total group of respondents. Additionally, the seven categories were checked to see if significant differences existed when the group was categorized by each of six demographic variables. The findings of the study are summarized below and are reported separately for research questions one and two.

Research Question One

Research question one was stated as follows: "How do teachers perceive the staff development program in the state of Oklahoma?" The findings reported in Chapter IV indicated that the teachers in Oklahoma perceived the staff development program in a generally positive manner. The respondents indicated that they generally agreed with all but two of the 30 items on the questionnaire. The items that were not regarded as positive by the respondents are items 8 and 17. A total of 13 of the 30 items were perceived in a positive fashion by the respondents at a level of 80% or greater.

Mean scores were also used to compare the degree of positive or negative response to each of the 30 items. Values from 1 to 4 were assigned to each of the 30 items on the questionnaire, with a value of 1 assigned to the response "Strongly Disagree" and 4 assigned to "Strongly Agree." Mean scores were computed for each of the 30 items using responses from all 411 respondents. A mean score above 2.50 was

regarded as generally positive, while a mean score below 2.50 was regarded as generally negative. A comparison of the mean scores of the 30 items indicated that all but two of the items had a mean above 2.50. Item 9, "The teacher should have the opportunity to select the kind of staff development activities which he/she feels will strengthen his/her professional competence," had the highest mean of the 30 items (3.64). Item 17, "There is adequate follow-up to determine the effects of staff development activities in my system," had the lowest mean of the 30 items (2.34).

Means for each of the seven categories of a staff development program were also generated using responses from the respondents. Each of the seven categories had a mean score above 2.50, indicating that teachers are in agreement with the items in the categories and generally feel positive toward the staff development program. Means for the categories ranged from a low of 2.71 for Evaluation to a high of 3.23 for Expectations.

Research Question Two

Research question two was stated as follows: "Do significant differences exist in perceptions of teachers when grouped according to the following demographic variables: (a) sex, (b) age, (c) grade(s) primarily taught, (d) number of years teaching experience, (e) highest degree held, and (f) size of school district?" An analysis of variance was calculated for each of the six demographic variables checking for a significant difference against each of the scores of the seven categories of a staff development program. Significant differences were found in four of the demographic variables, all of which were

significant at the .05 level. A total of nine findings that were significantly different were calculated for the four demographic variables. Two of the demographic variables had findings of no significant difference. Female respondents were significantly more positive in their perceptions of the staff development program than were male respondents. Females were significantly more positive in the categories of Effectiveness, Evaluation, and Expectations. Respondents teaching grades K-3 were more positive than respondents teaching in either grades 7-9 or 10-12 when analyzing the category of Evaluation. It was also determined that teachers of students in grades K-3 perceived the category of Teacher Involvement significantly more positively than did respondents teaching in grades 7-9. A significant difference was also found between respondents in group 1 and respondents in group 4 when analyzing the category of Support and Encouragement. The respondents in group 1 were significantly more positive than were respondents from the smallest school districts. Additionally, two other findings of significance at the .05 level were discovered. However, when the Scheffé Test was applied, the location of the significance was not disclosed.

Conclusions and Implications

Several conclusions and implications were formulated based on the study, and are reported in two separate parts. The first part contains the conclusions and implications based on research question one; the second part is based on research question two. One conclusion that can be drawn from the findings of research question one is that teachers in Oklahoma perceive the mandated staff development program

in a positive manner. This perception could be explained, in part, by the fact that the staff development program is funded through the Oklahoma State Department of Education and provides for quality programs to be brought to local districts. This is in sharp contrast to the inservice sessions of the last decade, where financial support depended on the local superintendent of schools. Teachers also feel that they have benefited from some of the experiences gained through the staff development program and that some teacher needs are being met. Positive teacher perceptions of the staff development program have also been brought about by the regulation that states that teachers must have the majority membership of the staff development committee. This majority membership gives the teachers some measure of control over the direction of the staff development program in each school district.

A second conclusion that can be drawn from the findings is that teachers feel very strongly that they should have the opportunity to select those staff development activities which they feel will strengthen professional competence. Teachers realize that the staff development program in each school district is a program for the total population of teachers, but they desire a degree of individualization within the group plan. Teachers would prefer to have a choice of speakers and/or topics rather than attend one required meeting for the entire district each time a staff development program is presented. Teachers realize some meetings and programs will be mandatory, but whenever possible, they want to select the meeting they think will improve their professional competence.

Teachers in Oklahoma also are of the opinion that adequate follow-up is lacking to determine the effects of the various staff development activities. Teachers are often left to their own resources and initiative to implement useful ideas and techniques gained from staff development programs. Assistance to teachers to implement new ideas or teaching techniques is generally not available. Few districts, if any, have designated personnel to assist teachers in follow-up efforts.

In a similar position, teachers feel least positive toward the category of Evaluation of a staff development program. The evaluation of the staff development program is seldom tied to long-range goals or objectives, but exists in small segments and does not constitute nor adequately reflect a total evaluation.

A final conclusion based on the findings of research question one is that teacher expectations of the staff development program are very high. One partial explanation is that since funds are available for staff development activities, the programs should be above average in content and utility. Teacher expectations might also be high since the program is mandated and is maintained on a statewide basis. Teachers also feel, in varying degrees, that the program is beneficial which, in turn, increases teacher expectations.

The findings of research question two support the conclusion that female teachers are generally more positive in their perceptions of the staff development program than are male teachers. Another conclusion that can be drawn is that respondents teaching in grades K-3 are more positive than teachers at the secondary level. This more positive perception of the staff development program on the part of

respondents teaching in grades K-3 could be explained, in part, by their receptivity to more staff development programs due to their generalized orientation rather than the more specialized orientation which secondary teachers possess. This is further expanded by the fact that teachers of grades K-3 are required to teach several subjects, while secondary teachers are limited to one or two. This difference may be related to teaching level, but gender may have little or nothing to do with it.

Finally, it can be concluded that teachers in the largest districts are of the opinion that they have a greater degree of support and encouragement than do teachers in the smallest school districts. Perhaps because of the size difference, change becomes less personal and more bureaucratic in the larger districts. Since change appears to be more natural, teachers perceive a greater degree of support and encouragement for innovations and new teaching techniques gained through staff development activities. Teachers in small school districts often share programs in a staff development cooperative and may feel that other districts' needs are being met at the expense of their own. Teachers in larger school districts may also perceive a more individualized staff development plan due to increased efficiency of staff development finances.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions of the study. Recommendations are made for practice as well as for further research.

Recommendations for Practice

1. Local staff development committees should attempt to identify the factors that create positive or negative perceptions of the staff development program on the part of teachers. Although teachers have a positive perception of the staff development program, local staff development committees should attempt to promote those factors that bring about positive perceptions toward the staff development program on the part of teachers.

2. Options in attending staff development activities should be available to teachers whenever possible. While it is often desired that all teachers in a school district attend a single activity, teachers should also be afforded some discretion in the attendance of staff development programs.

3. Local staff development committees should create a systematic follow-up program to determine effects of the various staff development activities. Periodic follow-up efforts will result in a higher degree of efficiency for implementation of new teaching techniques and ideas. One method to accomplish this follow-up would be to survey the teacher three months after the activity to determine the degree of implementation of ideas gained from staff development activities. Another method that could be used would be to ask the presenters to address this idea before they leave. More time and energy should be spent on follow-up activities.

4. Local staff development committees should formulate and utilize proper evaluation techniques, both for long- and short-range goals and objectives. Accurate data concerning evaluation and feed-

back are essential if the staff development program is to be improved. A written evaluation completed by all participants at the end of a staff development activity is one method of conducting an evaluation. Another method to determine the long-term effects of staff development activities is to have the participants evaluate the activity at its end, and again at some future time, such as the end of the school year.

5. The highest quality staff development program possible should be made available to meet high expectations on the part of teachers. Teachers' high expectations can be satisfied with equally high quality staff development programs.

6. Staff development presenters should be made aware of the findings that female teachers are generally more positive in their perceptions of the staff development program than are male teachers. If presenters of staff development programs are knowledgeable of this data, workshops could be organized which better meet the needs of the audience.

7. Staff development programs should be presented with an elementary or secondary orientation whenever possible. The divisions of elementary and secondary would provide greater congruence of staff development activities with teacher interests and levels of certification.

8. Local staff development committees should take steps to ensure that teachers have the necessary support and encouragement for the various aspects of the staff development program. Support and encouragement of the teachers to implement what they have learned from staff development activities is vital to the success of the program.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Similar research to this study should be conducted in the future to gain the perceptions of the teachers in the state of Oklahoma concerning the staff development program. Additional information gained could then be used to provide guidance for the direction that the program should take. Additional research could be conducted at intervals to keep current with the perceptions of teachers concerning the staff development program.

2. Future research should attempt to gain insight as to whether or not teachers have the opportunity to select the staff development activities which they feel will strengthen professional competence. Teachers should enjoy some degree of freedom in the selection of staff development activities.

3. Research should be conducted to determine if sufficient follow-up techniques are being utilized. This information could then be used to assist local staff development committees in follow-up activities and techniques.

4. Additional research should be conducted that will identify the reasons teachers feel least positive toward evaluation of the staff development program. Once these reasons are identified, better evaluation methods and techniques can be utilized to evaluate the staff development program.

5. Further research should be done that will identify specific qualities of staff development programs that lead to high expectations on the part of teachers. Once these qualities are identified, a high level of expectation can be maintained among teachers.

6. The study indicates a need to determine the factors that contribute to females being more positive in their perceptions of the staff development program than are males. These factors will expand the data base of research concerning the mandated staff development program.

7. Additional research should be conducted that will identify the reasons that respondents teaching in grades K-3 are more positive than teachers at the secondary level. This research will contribute to a greater understanding of perceptions of teachers regarding the staff development program.

8. An in-depth study that will identify the reasons teachers in smaller school districts feel they have less support and encouragement than do teachers in larger school districts should be conducted. This information could then be analyzed to determine specifically why teachers in smaller school districts feel they do not have as much support and encouragement and could also generate ideas for additional support and encouragement.

This study was conducted to determine teacher perceptions of the mandated staff development program in the state of Oklahoma. Teachers generally were positive in their assessment of the program, and the staff development program was determined to be effective. Additional research needs to be conducted to expand the data base currently in existence and to provide answers to questions not fully answered by this study.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
CORRESPONDENCE

April 10, 1985

Dear

The state of Oklahoma currently has a limited data base dealing with teacher perceptions of staff development programs. A study is now being conducted that is concerned with the perceptions of teachers toward the staff development program on a statewide basis. Your school district has been randomly selected for inclusion in the study. The results of this study will help provide direction for improvements to be made in the staff development program.

This letter is to request your support in allowing those persons randomly selected to participate. The instrument to be used is enclosed for your information. Please sign the attached enclosure, for your approval, and return in the stamped, addressed envelope as soon as possible. When the enclosure with your approval is received, packets containing the questionnaires will be mailed to each principal in your district for distribution. Fifty percent of the teachers in your district will be asked to complete the survey. A letter of instructions to each principal will be enclosed and the same is enclosed for your information. Results of the study will be made available if you will indicate your desire on the enclosure.

Neither individual teachers nor school districts will be identified and all returns will be treated as confidential. Thank you for your consideration in helping us conduct this survey. Your valuable assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Richard Strahorn
Research Associate
Oklahoma State University

Dr. Kenneth St. Clair
Professor of Educational Administration
and Higher Education
Oklahoma State University

I grant approval to conduct the survey described in the enclosed letter in my school district. I understand that fifty percent of the teachers employed in this school district will be chosen at random to participate in the survey.

(Check one):

_____ I desire a copy of the results of the study.

_____ I do not desire a copy of the results of the study.

Signature
Superintendent of Schools

April 10, 1985

Dear Principal:

The state of Oklahoma has a limited data base dealing with teacher perceptions of staff development programs. A study is now being conducted that is concerned with the perceptions of teachers toward the staff development program on a statewide basis. Your school district has been randomly selected for inclusion in the study. The results of this study will help provide direction for improvements to be made in the staff development program.

Approval to conduct this survey in your district has been granted by your superintendent. You are asked to cooperate in the study by distributing the enclosed questionnaires to fifty percent of your teachers using the following method. First, begin with an alphabetized teacher list and select the teacher whose name appears at the top of the list. Second, select every other name until fifty percent of your faculty is selected. The result will be that the teachers selected to participate in the study will be those whose names appear in the odd numbered positions. When selection of the teachers is completed, please distribute the questionnaires to the selected faculty members and have them returned in the envelopes provided. Results of the study will be made available if you indicate your desire on the enclosure and return it in the stamped, addressed envelope.

Neither individual teachers nor school districts will be identified and all returns will be treated as confidential. Thank you for your consideration in helping us conduct this survey. Your valuable assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Richard Strahorn
Research Associate
Oklahoma State University

Dr. Kenneth St. Clair
Professor of Educational Administration
and Higher Education
Oklahoma State University

_____ I desire a copy of the results of the study.

_____ I do not desire a copy of the results of the study.

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Principal:

Approximately ten days ago you received a packet of staff development questionnaires to distribute to your faculty. I would like to thank you for your cooperation and remind you that the completed surveys are crucial to the study. Thanks for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Richard Strahorn

May 6, 1985

Dear Principal:

Recently you were mailed a packet of staff development questionnaires designed to assess teachers' perceptions of the staff development program. Your building was selected to be included in the study. The sampling for the survey included only a very small percentage of the schools in the state, making it imperative that as many of the surveys mailed out must be completed and returned as is possible.

As of this date, only a small number of the surveys mailed to your building have been returned. I would ask that you encourage the teachers in your building that were given surveys to complete and return them at the earliest date. Additional surveys are enclosed if they should be needed. I appreciate your cooperation with this study and hope that you and your faculty have had a successful school year.

Sincerely,

Richard Strahorn

RS:ds
Enclosures

APPENDIX B
RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Code No. _____

STAFF DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Teacher:

Your assistance is needed to gather data concerning the staff development program. You have been selected at random to represent your district in this study, and prior permission has been obtained from your superintendent for you to participate. This information is part of a state-wide survey and will be used to assess teacher perceptions of the staff development program. The following is a questionnaire designed to gather information concerning the staff development program in your school district. We are asking that you respond to the questions regarding the staff development program in your school district by completing this questionnaire. While each questionnaire is coded for research purposes, your responses will be kept confidential and no attempt will be made to identify you or your school district.

Section I

DIRECTIONS: Please respond to the below listed areas by checking the appropriate response.

1. Sex:
 - a. Male _____
 - b. Female _____
2. Age:
 - a. Under 25 _____
 - b. 25-29 _____
 - c. 30-39 _____
 - d. 40-49 _____
 - e. 50 and over _____
3. Grades you primarily teach: (check only one category)

a. Grades K-3 _____	c. Grades 7-9 _____
b. Grades 4-6 _____	d. Grades 10-12 _____
4. Number of years teaching experience prior to this year:

a. 0-5 years _____	d. 16-20 years _____
b. 6-10 years _____	e. 21 and over _____
c. 11-15 years _____	
5. Highest degree held:
 - a. Bachelors _____
 - b. Masters _____
 - c. Doctorate _____

Section II

DIRECTIONS: Please respond to each of the following statements by circling one of the four responses listed. Circling your choice of response will indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD) with each statement.

	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
1. Teachers should receive some release time for staff development activities.	SA	A	D	SD
2. Appropriate evaluation techniques to determine the effectiveness of the staff development program are used in my district.	SA	A	D	SD
3. Staff development training seems to be more effective when the total school district staff is simultaneously engaged in a given activity.	SA	A	D	SD
4. One of the most important ways to judge the effectiveness of a staff development program is to note whether the teacher uses the results of the training in his/her classroom.	SA	A	D	SD
5. The real test of a staff development program is whether it helps the teacher to cope with his/her professional tasks more successfully.	SA	A	D	SD
6. The objectives of staff development programs in my system are specific.	SA	A	D	SD
7. Most staff development activities should be carried on within the school in which the teacher works.	SA	A	D	SD
8. Transfer of concepts presented and skills taught in staff development programs to the problems of daily classroom life is minimal.	SA	A	D	SD
9. The teacher should have the opportunity to select the kind of staff development activities which he/she feels will strengthen his/her professional competence.	SA	A	D	SD
10. Teachers in my school district receive administrative support and encouragement in all phases of the staff development program.	SA	A	D	SD
11. Most staff development programs do not seem well planned.	SA	A	D	SD
12. Staff development should relate directly to problems encountered in the classroom.	SA	A	D	SD

	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
13. Teachers should be afforded some degree of individualization based on their perceived needs when attending staff development programs.	SA	A	D	SD
14. Every teacher should be required to participate in some staff development activities designed to build a team spirit within his/her school.	SA	A	D	SD
15. Sufficient consideration has been given to the needs of teachers in planning the staff development program.	SA	A	D	SD
16. More staff development activities should be scheduled during the school day.	SA	A	D	SD
17. There is adequate follow-up to determine the effects of staff development activities in my system.	SA	A	D	SD
18. Most staff development programs arise from a study of the needs and problems of teachers.	SA	A	D	SD
19. Many staff development activities do not appear relevant to any felt needs of the teacher.	SA	A	D	SD
20. Our staff development programs seem to suffer from a lack of financial support needed to carry them out.	SA	A	D	SD
21. Teachers need to be involved in the developing of purposes, activities, and methods of evaluation for staff development programs.	SA	A	D	SD
22. A staff development program should include teachers sharing usable ideas and instructional techniques with other teachers.	SA	A	D	SD
23. The primary purpose of staff development education is to upgrade the teacher's classroom performance.	SA	A	D	SD
24. Staff development programs must include activities which allow for the different interests which exist among individual teachers.	SA	A	D	SD
25. Attendance at some system-wide activities should be required of all teachers.	SA	A	D	SD
26. One of the most motivating staff development activities is an opportunity to become acquainted with new teaching practices or innovative programs.	SA	A	D	SD

	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>
27. If more teachers were involved in planning staff development programs, teacher commitment to them would be greater.	SA	A	D	SD
28. Most staff development programs are virtually useless.	SA	A	D	SD
29. We need to have more small group activities at staff development meetings.	SA	A	D	SD
30. The use of innovations presented in staff development programs is often a function of the support received from school administrators.	SA	A	D	SD

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE
SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.

Thank you for your cooperation in conducting this study. Your
valuable assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Richard Strahorn

Richard Strahorn
Research Associate
Oklahoma State University

Kenneth St. Clair

Dr. Kenneth St. Clair
Professor of Educational
Administration and Higher Education
Oklahoma State University

APPENDIX C

IDENTIFIED QUALITIES OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT
AND/OR INSERVICE EDUCATION

IDENTIFIED QUALITIES OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND/OR INSERVICE EDUCATION																					
	Adequate Financing	Building Level In-Service	Coaching	Evaluation Techniques	Field Agents	Goal: Improve Professional Perfor- mance	Goal: Improve Student Learning	Group Oriented	Individualized In-Service	Innovative Programs	Linking of In-Service Activities	Practicality	Release Time	Relevant Programs	Small Group Activities	Specific Objectives	Support and Encouragement	Teacher Involvement	Teacher Sharing	Variety (Diversity & Flexibility)	Well-Planned Programs
Author																					
Ainsworth, Barbara												X				X	X	X	X		
Arends, Richard; Hersh, Richard; and Turner, Jack	X				X																
Berliner, David			X																		
Bishop, Leslee J.				X										X			X				
Brimm, Jack L. and Tollett, Daniel J.	X			X					X	X		X	X	X	X		X				X
Byrne, Robert				X					X		X			X			X		X		
Dillon, Elizabeth A.				X													X				
Dillon-Peterson, Betty	X	X	X	X					X						X	X	X	X	X	X	
Edelfelt, Roy A.	X				X								X				X		X		
Edelfelt, Roy A.						X											X		X		
Ehrenberg, Lyle M. and Brandt, Ronald S.	X						X						X								
Finnegan, Harry	X			X			X	X	X	X		X				X		X	X		

Author	Adequate Financing	Building Level In-Service	Coaching	Evaluation Techniques	Field Agents	Goal: Improve Professional Performance	Goal: Improve Student Learning	Group Oriented	Individualized In-Service	Innovative Programs	Linking of In-Service Activities	Practicality	Release Time	Relevant Programs	Small Group Activities	Specific Objectives	Support and Encouragement	Teacher Involvement	Teacher Sharing	Variety (Diversity & Flexibility)	Well-Planned Programs
Fox, Robert S. and Griffin, Don A.																	X				
Gersten, Leon			X	X													X	X	X		
Goodlad, John I.	X	X										X					X	X	X		
Harris, Ben M.									X							X		X			
Harris, Ben M.	X		X	X				X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Harris, Ben M. and Bessent, Wailand	X			X					X			X				X		X			
Heath, Earl J.				X			X					X				X	X				
Howey, Kenneth R.									X												
Howey, Kenneth R.; Bents, Richard & Corrigan, Dean						X	X		X									X	X		
Howey, Kenneth and Joyce, Bruce	X											X					X				
Hughes, Carolyn Sue																	X				
Ingersoll, Gary M.									X				X					X			

Author	Adequate Financing	Building Level In-Service	Coaching	Evaluation Techniques	Field Agents	Goal: Improve Professional Performance	Goal: Improve Student Learning	Group Oriented	Individualized In-Service	Innovative Programs	Linking of In-Service Activities	Practicality	Release Time	Relevant Programs	Small Group Activities	Specific Objectives	Support and Encouragement	Teacher Involvement	Teacher Sharing	Variety (Diversity & Flexibility)	Well-Planned Programs
Johnston, Gladys Styles and Yeakey, Carol Camp				X									X					X			
Joyce, Bruce and Showers, Beverly			X														X		X		
Joyce, Bruce and Showers, Beverly			X																		
Larson, Vera M.		X					X	X	X									X			
Lieberman, Ann and Miller, Lynne	X	X		X					X								X	X	X		
Mangieri, John N. and McWilliams, David R.																		X			
Mangieri, John N. and Kemper, Richard E.				X												X		X			
Mohlman, Georgea G.; Kierstead, Janet & Gundlach, Mae			X				X	X				X			X		X		X		
Ogeltree, Earl and Allen, Betty		X		X					X				X					X		X	
Rogus, Joseph F.	X		X	X												X	X	X			
Rubin, Louis	X	X	X	X		X			X				X			X	X	X	X		
Rubin, Louis J.		X		X					X				X	X		X	X	X	X		

Author	Adequate Financing	Building Level In-Service	Coaching	Evaluation Techniques	Field Agents	Goal: Improve Professional Performance	Goal: Improve Student Learning	Group Oriented	Individualized In-Service	Innovative Programs	Linking of In-Service Activities	Practicality	Release Time	Relevant Programs	Small Group Activities	Specific Objectives	Support and Encouragement	Teacher Involvement	Teacher Sharing	Variety (Diversity & Flexibility)	Well-Planned Programs	
Ruff, Thomas P.										X								X				
Turner, Harold E.													X					X				
Underwood, Barbara and Underwood, Robert						X			X													
Wood, Fred H. and Thompson, Steven R.			X										X		X			X	X			
Yeatts, Edward H.				X					X									X				
Zenke, Larry L.		X																X				
Zigami, Patricia; Betz, Loren and Jensen, Darrell										X								X	X			
TOTALS	13	8	10	18	2	3	7	4	4	17	3	2	3	13	6	5	11	15	31	14	9	1

2
VITA

Richard Michael Strahorn
Candidate for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Thesis: TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF A MANDATED STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
IN THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, August 24, 1945,
the son of Mr. and Mrs. Guy T. Strahorn.

Education: Graduated from Midwest City High School, Midwest
City, Oklahoma, in May, 1963; received Bachelor of Arts
degree in Education from Central State University in Janu-
ary, 1968; received Master of Education degree from Central
State University in August, 1971; completed requirements for
the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University
in May, 1986.

Professional Experience: Teacher/Coach, Jarman Junior High
School, Midwest City, Oklahoma, 1968-74; Counselor/Coach,
Jarman Junior High School, Midwest City, Oklahoma, 1974-75;
Teacher/Coach, Del City High School, Del City, Oklahoma,
1975-76; Assistant Principal, Del City High School, Del
City, Oklahoma, 1976-79; Principal, Blackwell High School,
Blackwell, Oklahoma, 1979-81; Assistant Superintendent,
Blackwell Public Schools, Blackwell, Oklahoma, 1981 to
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