

**ONLINE FOLLOW-UP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: EXPLORING
PLATFORMS TO DECONSTRUCT INEQUALITIES IN TEACHER
ACCESS TO BEST INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES**

A Record of Study

by

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ABSTRACT

Teachers in rural areas need equitable access to professional development to develop their instructional capacities and efficacy. Moreover, the teachers in this district work in rural schools with little access to professional development and resources. Teachers for a Better Belize (TFABB) is a non-profit organization that provides free face-to-face professional development for the teachers in this region. Even with volunteers visiting throughout the year, teachers in this region need more support with content and pedagogy. This study aims to discover if an intervention of follow-up online professional development added to face-to-face professional development will help to develop teachers' capacities and efficacy. This study will utilize qualitative methods through the use of surveys, interviews, discussions and observations. TFABB volunteers will gain insight into whether this follow-up online professional development lives its mission as an organization and decide if it should be added to future work.

DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to my family. First, to my husband, Greg, who supports me in all of my endeavors, especially when difficult. You are an extraordinary partner, and I am grateful and blessed beyond measure to travel this life with you. Second, to my children, Tobin and Patrick, who I hope always find, live and enjoy their own personal passions throughout all the seasons of their lives.

Also, to my dogs: Jake, who sat with me in all of my early planning work for TFABB. And, to George, who sat with me throughout all of this study, from beginning to end. Both dogs were good listeners and a comfort to me, always.

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CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES

Contributors

This record of study was completed independently by the student under the supervision of a record of study committee. The committee consisted of co-chairs Dr. Radhika Viruru and Dr. Robin Rackley and committee member Dr. James Laub, all from the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture, and outside committee member Dr. Malatesha Joshi, Professor, Educational Psychology.

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There were no outside funding contributions associated with this record of study.

NOMENCLATURE

COP	Community of Practice
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ELL	English Language Learner
PD	Professional Development
PSE	Primary School Examination
oPD	Online Professional Development
TFABB	Teachers for a Better Belize

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES	v
NOMENCLATURE	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. The Problem Space	1
1.2. The Problem of Practice	2
1.3. Roles and Personal Histories	6
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	9
2.1. Theories	9
2.2. Relevant Literature	9
2.3. Most Significant Research and Practice Studies.....	14
2.4. Significance of Literature Review	16
3. PROBLEM SITUATION	18
3.1. The Problem Situation	18
3.2. My Journey in the Problem Space	20
4. PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	26
4.1. Audience	26
4.2. Ideal Scenarios/Vision	26
4.3. The Real.....	27
4.4. Consequences for the Audience.....	28
4.5. My Role	29

5. THE SOLUTION.....	30
5.1. Possible Solutions	30
5.2. Input from Others.....	33
5.3. The Proposed Solution.....	35
6. METHOS	37
6.1. Statement Regarding Human Subjects and the Institutional Review Board	37
6.2. Guiding Questions, Informaiton Collection Methods and Rationale for Methods	37
6.3. Instruments and Analysis.....	43
6.4. Timeline	45
6.5. Issues of Reliability, Validity, Confidentiality, and Other Ethical Concerns	46
7. RESULTS	47
7.1. Results.....	47
8. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS.....	65
8.1. Limitations	65
8.2. Trustworthiness.....	65
8.3. Conclusions.....	69
8.4. Scholarly Significance of the Study.....	72
REFERENCES	74
APPENDIX A STATEMENT OF IRB DISPOSITON OF THE PROPOSED STUDY	79
APPENDIX B INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TFABB VOLUNTEERS ..	80
APPENDIX C SURVEY FOR TFABB VOLUNTEERS	81
APPENDIX D SURVEY FOR BELIZEAN TEACHER PARTICIPANTS	83
APPENDIX E POST-INTERVENTION QUESTIONS FOR TFABB VOLUNTERS ..	85

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 7.1 Results of Question Related to Videos.....	61
Figure 7.2 Results of Question Related to Lessons' Alignment with TFABB Workshops.....	61
Figure 7.3 Results of Question Related to Professional Development Timeline	61
Figure 7.4 Results of Question Related to Lesson Generation	62
Figure 7.5 Results of Question Related to Perceived Support.....	63
Figure 7.6 Results of Question Related to Knowledge Growth.....	63
Figure 7.7 Results of Question Related to Participant Recommendations	64
Figure 7.8 Results of Question Related to Future Participation	64

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 3.1 Rank-Ordered Table of Values, Conversants, and Illustrative Statements.....	21
Table 6.1 Goals, Objectives, and Activities Associated wth the Problem Solution	39
Table 6.2 Guiding Questions, Data Collection Methods, and Rationale for Methods	41
Table 7.1 TFABB Survey Results July 2017.....	69
Table 7.2 TFABB Survey Results August 2017.....	60
Table 7.3 TFABB Survey Results October 2017.....	60
Table 7.4 Belizean Teacher Survey Results July 2017.....	60

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Problem Space

Student literacy achievement scores are low for the Belizean children living in rural areas, specifically in the Toledo District in Belize; it is an impoverished, rural area in the southernmost district of the country. Students from the rural villages of Stann Creek and Toledo score lower on the Primary School Examination (PSE) than the other districts in Belize (Vairez, Hermond, Gomez, & Osho, 2017). For the cycle of poverty to be broken in this region, known as the “forgotten district,” students must learn to read and write well so they can navigate the 21st century successfully. For the past thirteen years I have worked for a non-profit organization, Teachers for a Better Belize (TFABB). Since 1997, the mission has been to create a partnership between TFABB volunteers and Belizeans, in the Toledo District, that provides quality professional development for its teachers.

Although student literacy achievement scores have risen some years since our work together began, and there are signs of improvement with some children from this district scoring as well as peers on country examinations, there continues to be a tremendous need for improvement in the literacy skills for the children in this region. Across the years, in regards to professional development, the partnership between TFABB and the Belizean teachers encompasses many components, including district workshops, village workshops, classroom visits, and, for three years, a partnership with Peace Corps volunteers living in three villages to promote sustainable, on-going work. TFABB’s goal is to have a structure for professional development that is sustainable and

on-going all year, between TFABB's volunteer visits to Belize. A consistent problem for TFABB as an organization is to support Belizean teachers between our visits.

In this study, I aim to uncover if an online professional development module will strengthen teachers' efficacy for making research based instructional choices for their students. My study will investigate the effectiveness of this online professional development component and how it helps the sustainability of our partnership with the Belizean teachers. I aim to discover if this online component helps the Belizean teachers to implement the instructional practices that the TFABB volunteers share in the summer workshops with more fidelity and if the TFABB volunteers find that the online component is effective through viewing the videos and the teachers' participation.

At the end of the study, I will learn if TFABB volunteers find the online professional development to be valuable in helping us to live our mission of helping Belizean teachers to move their instructional practices forward; moreover, I will look to answer the question of whether or not the TFABB volunteers find the online professional development module a tool that they will utilize themselves in the future.

1.2 The Problem of Practice

1.2.1 Context/setting. Education in Belize is compulsory and free until secondary school. Historically, the students in the Toledo District score the lowest out of the districts in Belize (Näslund-Hadley, Alonzo, & Martin, 2013). Since our partnership's formation, some years, the children in the Toledo district score higher than 1 or 2 other districts. Additionally, individual students within the Toledo district are scoring as high as their peers across the country on the state examination. Furthermore, our observations of teacher instruction and student work suggest that our work positively affects the

Belizean teachers' instructional choices. In the region of Toledo, there is the least amount of professionally trained teachers than any of the other districts in the country ("Education in Belize," 2019). Teacher access to training and professional development is problematic. Better access to professional development may help increase the number of students who go on to attend secondary school. Currently, only forty-five percent of secondary aged children attend school. Effective primary education is critical for the children in this region. It is only possible through quality teachers.

Furthermore, Belizean teachers and their students all speak English as their second language. Creole, Garifuna, Kekchi, Mopan and Spanish are the Belizean teachers' and students' first languages (Ravindranath, 2007). TFABB volunteers are acutely aware of the daily challenges that Belizean teachers face. It is common for teachers to walk 2 hours to work or live away from their families during the week to stay in the village where they teach. Personally, I know that many teachers catch early busses in the morning and arrive home late in the evenings, spending little time with their own children and struggling to complete their daily chores or laundry, without washing machines, and cooking. Classes are often multi-aged and large. Basic resources are scarce and paper books do not last long in the climate.

1.2.2 Initial understanding. Teachers for a Better Belize (TFABB) is a non-profit organization that seeks to solve the problem of inequitable professional development opportunities for rural teachers. Currently, the partnership between TFABB and the Belizean teachers is strong. For over two decades, TFABB provides many forms of professional development for Belizean teachers, including district workshops, village workshops, classroom visits, and, for three years, a partnership with Peace Corps

volunteers living in three villages to promote sustainable, on-going work. TFABB's ultimate goal is to empower Toledo's teachers to teach their students well so they are able to obtain educational and economic success.

1.2.3 Relevant history of the problem. The problem for this study has evolved over time with continued higher expectations for sustainable and systemic work from the TFABB volunteers. Since 1998, TFABB has provided professional development for the teachers in the southern district of Belize. The partnership has continued to strengthen over the years. What began as a summer camp for children in a remote village has turned into a well-structured face-to-face professional development inside of district workshops, regional workshops, school workshops and classroom-based coaching for preschool through eighth grade teachers and administrators. The Ministry of Education and TFABB have a strong partnership. Both organizations' ultimate goal is to eliminate the cycle of poverty in this region that is known as "The Forgotten District." This partnership has thrived through overall strong communication between the two groups, especially during our face-to-face visits. Across the years, TFABB's contact with Belizean leaders between TFABB volunteer visits to Belize has included face-to-face meetings, letters, phone calls, emails, and now Facebook. However, on-going communication between TFABB volunteers and teachers in Belize in between face-to face visits is a problem; the Belizean teachers participate in face-to-face professional development, return to their classrooms to try new instructional practices and develop questions that are not answered until the next face-to-face visit.

In the past several years, access to technology is becoming more obtainable to Belizeans in this region. The Ministry of Education's office now has a small computer

lab for teachers to utilize during their visits to town. Additionally, numerous schools now have the internet. With technology becoming more available to the Belizean teachers, partnered with the common practice of online learning, my proposed solution is to introduce an online professional development component to work with Belizean teachers in between our face-to-face visits. I hope to learn if this online component will help our problem of communication with Belizean teachers between face-to-face visits.

Furthermore, I hope to learn if this component will make our work together more sustainable and fluid with Belizean teachers by providing a platform for questions and discussions about instructional practices. Providing an online component may help the Belizean teachers to implement new instructional practices more consistently, and across the school year, instead of waiting several months for the next TFABB volunteers' visit. Our goal is to help Belizean teachers build their knowledge and efficacy of teaching practices. Offering online professional development modules throughout the school year may equip Belizean teachers with knowledge and support they need to feel confident in choosing and implementing research based instructional practices with their students.

1.2.4 Stakeholder groups and values. Teachers for a Better Belize's team consists of qualified, dedicated educational faculty members, school leaders, and teachers who are all willing to support this study. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education supports our work. The newly created computer lab in the Ministry of Education's office in Toledo will allow for this on-line professional development to occur. Moreover, several teachers who are volunteering to participate work within school buildings that have access to the internet. Additionally, their principals are eager to participate in this online professional development with their teachers. Most principals in the Toledo District are

teaching principals. A principal's role in Belize encompasses all aspects of leadership within the town or village, with the teachers and the students. Historically, Belizean principals look to TFABB for guidance in how to lead their teachers through example; the Belizean principals are instructional leaders within their communities. TFABB provides both instructional and leadership professional development due to the principals' request of needing support in all aspects of their daily roles. These principals and teachers are advocates of our partnership as most participate in TFABBs workshops and believe that TFABB supports them by sharing best instructional practices, supplies, and, for some, building improvements.

1.3 Roles and Personal Histories

1.3.1 My background. My role as the researcher will be to design and implement a study that follows thoughtful procedures that include surveys to the TFABB volunteers to take, during and after the study, as well as surveys for the Belizean teacher participant to take during and after the study. Additionally, I will interview TFABB volunteers and have discussions with members to gain their insights into this follow-up online professional development structure. The surveys for the TFABB volunteers aim to realize if they believe that the online professional development videos and group discussion platform positively affect the Belizean teachers from beginning to end of the online module. After the study, I will conduct in depth interviews with the TFABB volunteers to gather information about their viewpoints of this online professional development striving to answer the question of if this tool should be utilized in the future to help TFABB meet its goals as an organization. Furthermore, I will offer a final survey to

TFABB members to gather their reflections and opinions from beginning to end of this study.

My background will help me to implement a strong study. As a volunteer, I am entering my fifteenth year of providing face-to-face professional development to Belizean teachers in this region. Traveling back and forth to Belize countless times, getting to know the real, daily challenges of teachers in a developing world country and embracing that the world is advancing through technology, offering new opportunities and possible resolutions to better address problems, inspires me to explore and contribute ideas of ways we can better serve one another, and our future generations, regardless of location. In regards to different forms of research design, I successfully completed the following courses: Qualitative Research Methods in Curriculum and Instruction, Mixed Methods Research in Curriculum and Instruction, Teaching and Learning Data and Uncertainty Concepts, Problem Based Research Framework, Trends in Data Management and Analysis, and Methods and Models for Evaluation of Programs. Moreover, currently, I am a classroom English Language Arts teacher with the knowledge of how to authentically use best instructional practices, connecting theory to practice, and how to provide quality professional development for adult learners. Additionally, I have experience on various online platforms. As a teacher, I utilize the platform of Canvas with my students. Being an online student and teacher who appreciates online learning, combined with the knowledge of best instructional practices, will help me create a solid online professional development component. I aim to use this online platform as a way to support Belizean teachers to learn instructional strategies and feel confident to integrate them into their daily teaching.

1.3.2 My field-based mentor. Teachers for a Better Belize is a nonprofit organization that works “to help equip Toledo's preschool and primary-school teachers and principals with the training, supplies, and facilities they need to help their students achieve educational, and ultimately, economic success” (“Teachers for a Better Belize,” 2019, para. 3). Dr. Hickey, President of TFABB’s Board and Professor and Department Chair: Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at University of Texas at Tyler, believes that the pilot group must be teachers who are committed to their profession. Participating in my online professional development must be beneficial for the teachers as it is more work for them, added on to the daily struggles of their contexts. Moreover, it must be doable for the teachers. An asynchronous type of setting may be more realistic for our North American teachers who are willing to partake but also hold full time jobs themselves. Additionally, Dr. Hickey suggests the follow-up component to have a clear beginning and ending, lasting no longer than a few weeks; short modules will be most practical for both the TFABB volunteers and the Belizean teachers.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Theories

The theory that grounds this intervention is that teacher professional development is the best approach to preparing our students as they enter the 21st century workforce.

Teachers need on-going support to ensure they are working to their fullest capacities and have high efficacy that allows them to confidently make wise decisions for their students.

The second theory that grounds this intervention is that in today's technological age, online professional development (oPD) is an excellent platform to reach all teachers.

Small learning communities can be established inside of oPD. oPD can provide teachers access to dialogue that promotes reflection and processing of ideas. Collaboration with peers, with guidance from a coach can strengthen teachers' content knowledge and understanding of the latest pedagogy. Within these small communities, teachers have the opportunity to shape and reshape their thinking about instruction for their students. These thoughts are the impetus behind the third theory that teachers who have access to a strong coach and a supportive community can work to strengthen their capacities and efficacy.

2.2 Relevant Literature

Teachers in rural areas need equitable access to professional development to cultivate their instructional capacities and efficacy. Studies find correlations between access to supportive professional development communities and teachers with high efficacy. Moreover, studies suggest that teachers with high efficacy tend to be good problem solvers and innovative with their instructional practices when working with students which leads to student achievement (Bandura, 1993; Corrkett, Hatt, &

Benevides, 2011). Teachers make instructional decisions all day long. For teachers to be equipped to make sound decisions for their students, they need strong content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, along with a deep understanding of child development. Studies focusing on teachers' beliefs and attitudes find that there is a strong association between teachers' high efficacy and student achievement (Abernathy-Dyer, Cheek, & Ortlieb, 2013; Chu & Garcia, 2014). Through well-structured content and pedagogically rich professional development, teachers have the opportunity to build their capacities to confidently approach the instructional decisions. High efficacy is connected with high confidence and success (Bandura, 1993). Furthermore, researchers suggest that teachers need support so they are capable of teaching content to diverse learners in the classroom (Chu & Garcia, 2014, Tschannen-Moren & Johnson, 2011). Researchers contend that focusing on the development of teachers and their knowledge of how to teach is a critical component to be addressed for student achievement (Barrett, Cowen, Toma, & Troske, 2015; Darling-Hammond, LaFors, & Synder, 2001; Ravitch, 2011; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Teachers are alone in their classrooms to navigate standards, curriculum, assessments, learning styles, classroom management, and their students' diverse needs. Many teachers seek professional development that fosters opportunities to learn research-based instructional practices inside of collaborative forums. Moreover, teachers want time to discuss and reflect upon how research-based practice can fit inside their specific contextual needs (Collet, 2012; Dash, Kramer, Masters, & Russell, 2012). For teachers in rural schools, access to the latest research, support from mentors and colleagues is challenging to find.

2.2.1 Professional development. All children deserve capable and confident teachers. Teachers need on-going support to best meet the needs of their students. Professional development of reading teachers is an in-depth, continuous process (Price & Sailors, 2010). Regardless of the platform, certain themes emerge from research that illuminates necessary components for effective professional development. Researchers contend that professional development must be designed to construct both content and pedagogical knowledge, be accessible, allow for collaborative discourse, promote reflective practice, provide choice, honor contextual needs, encourage the development of teachers' individual styles, and is culturally responsive (Burkett, Cunningham, Dell, Molitor, & Presta, 2014; Chu & Garcia, 2014; Collet, 2012; Collins & Liang, 2012; Darling-Hammond, LaFors, & Synder, 2001; Fleming, 2014; Geldenhuys & Oosthuizen, 2015; Morewood, Ankrum, & Bean, 2010). All forms of professional development have the potential to be a change agent for teachers if it is thoughtfully designed.

2.2.2. Online professional development. With advancements in technology, Online Professional Development (oPD) platforms are forming to offer teachers support. oPD has the potential to be accessible, resourceful and afford a chance for teachers to have a social environment to find and construct meaningful knowledge of content and pedagogy (Burkett et al., 2014; Collins & Liang, 2012). A skilled leader will establish an online Community of Practice (CoP) that provides individuals a chance to escape the isolation of a classroom and find a virtual supportive group that feels comparable to face-to-face professional development. For teachers to adopt new ideas, shift perspectives and confidently make informed changes to their instructional practices, they need access to a professional development community that provides solid content and pedagogy

knowledge, a space for reflection, encourages group discussions while meeting personal needs (Burns, 2010; Collins & Liang, 2012; Dash et al., 2012; Dixon, McLean, & Verenikina, 2014; Green & Cifunter, 2008; McCullough, 2012). Teachers, especially those in rural regions, need this platform of professional development.

2.2.3 Professional development, andragogy and coaching. For effective professional development to take place, regardless of platform, the leader must understand andragogy, and create an environment that honors how adults learn. Adult learners have specific needs that must be honored for engagement and effective professional development to occur. Learning must allow for self-direction, practical experiences to be included and valued, collaboration, and real-life immediate applications to solve problems (Castleman, 2015). When working with adults, a leader must create a professional development plan that meets content, program and personal goals of participating teachers. The complexity of effective professional development is multi-layered, and even more so when the platform is online.

In addition to understanding adult learners, educational research reveals that the leader of oPD must be a skilled coach who holds the ability to create an environment that equally focuses on group and individual goals. (Collet, 2012; Fleming, 2014; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). A coach must hold understandings of educational policy, curriculum, instruction assessments, classroom structures and diverse environments to find success with teachers. Most importantly, a coach must value and work to form trusting relationships. For teachers to engage in open and honest dialogue with a coach and peers, trust is imperative. A coach must approach teachers with care and honesty so difficult

conversations take place, allowing for reflection and growth (Lowenhaupt, McKinney, & Reeves, 2014; Toll, 2009).

Cognitive Coaching is a form of coaching that guides teachers towards reflection and self-monitoring (Garmston, Linder, & Whitaker, 1993). Incorporating Cognitive Coaching strategies into professional development presents teachers the chance to make informed and autonomous decisions about their own learning and instructional choices. This reflective process empowers teachers to evaluate and consider how best instructional practices will look within their style, the context of their classroom environment, and with their students.

2.2.4 Literacy instruction. Teachers need support in how to effectively teach students how to read. Just like professional development must be tailored to the individual needs of teachers, so must reading instruction for students. Reading instruction cannot take place only inside of a whole class setting. Teachers must utilize direct instruction inside of small group instruction. Students need opportunities for cooperative learning and independent reading experiences throughout the school day (Hoover, 2011). Teachers need to be knowledgeable so they can be wise and flexible with the instructional choices they make for their students. Students need engaging instructional structures to nurture and develop their reading skills (Denton, 2012). One of the most effective instructional structures that can be utilized inside of a whole or small group structure is the Read Aloud. Teachers who utilize the Read Aloud well have the capacity to build students' vocabularies by giving "the students the meaning of a word in the text; he or she provides examples of ways that the word can be used; then, he or she asks students to use the word in a sentence of their own" (Berebitsky, Carlisle, & Kelcey,

2013, p. 1362). The Read Aloud is a powerful teaching tool to help students build their vocabulary base and learn multiple meaning words, especially for an English Language Learner (ELL).

Online professional development communities have the potential to provide support that is accessible, personalized, collaborative, reflective and rich in content and pedagogy (Collins & Liang, 2014; Dash et al., 2012; Dixon et al., 2014). With access to technology, teachers in rural regions now have the chance to find the quality professional development they seek to build their capacities and efficacy.

2.3 Most Significant Research and Practice Studies

The following studies are the most significant research and practice studies related to my current project:

- Abernathy-Dyer, J., Cheek, E.H., & Ortlieb, E. (2013). An analysis of teacher efficacy and perspectives about elementary literacy instruction. *Current Issues in Education, 16*(3), 1-12.
- Bandura, A. (1993). Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning. *Educational Psychologist, 28*(2), 117-148.
- Barrett, N., Cowen, J., Toma, E., & Troske, S. (2015). Working with what they have: Professional development as a reform strategy in rural schools. *Journal of Research in Rural Education, 30*(10), 1-18.
- Burns, M. (2010). Not too distant: A survey of strategies for teacher support in distance education programs. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education, 11*(2), 108-117.

- Collins, L.J. & Liang, X. (2014). Task relevance in the design of online professional development for teachers of ELLs: A methodology study. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education, 15*(3), 268-281.
- Corrkett, J. Hatt, B., & Benevides, T. (2011). Student and teacher self-efficacy and the connection to reading and writing. *Canadian Journal of Education, 34*(1), 65-98.
- Denton, C.A. (2012). Response to intervention for reading difficulties in the primary grades: some answers and lingering questions. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 45*(3), 232-243.
- Dixon, R.M., McLean, F.M., & Verenikina, I. (2014). Bringing it to the teachers: Building a professional network among teachers in isolated schools. *Australian and International Journal of Rural Education, 24*(2), 15-22.
- Geldenhuys, J.L. & Oosthuizen, L.C. (2015). Challenges influencing teachers' involvement in continuous professional development: A South African perspective. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 51*(10), 203-212.
- Green, M. & Cifunter, L. (2008). An exploration of online environments supporting follow-up to face-to-face professional development. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education, 16*(3), 283-306.
- Morewood, A.L., Ankrun, I.W., & Bean, R.M. (2010). Teachers' perceptions of the influence of professional development on their knowledge of content, pedagogy and curriculum. *College Reading Association Yearbook, 31*, 201-219.

- Näslund-Hadley, E., Alonzo, H., & Martin, D. (2013). *Challenges and opportunities in the Belize education sector*. (Report No. IBD-TN-538). Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank.
- Price, L. & Sailors, M. (2010). Professional development supports the teaching of cognitive reading strategy instruction. *The Elementary School Journal*, 110(3), 301-322.
- Ravindranath, M. (2017). Transnational Endangered Language Communities and the Garifuna Nation. *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics (WPEL)*, 22(1), 59-79.
- Tschannen-Moren, M. & Johnson, D. (2011). Exploring literacy teachers' self-efficacy beliefs: Potential sources at play. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(4), 751-761.
- Vairez, M., Hermond, D., Gomez, F. & Osho, G. (2017). Factors that contribute to the disparity in academic achievement of students from southern Belize. *Caribbean Quarterly*, 63(1), 83-108.

2.4 Significance of Literature Review

This literature assisted in framing the problem by illuminating what research has been done to support teachers' need for professional development. When imagining a solution, the literature encompassing online professional development (oPD) and coaching is essential in determining if the intervention is effective. oPD has the potential to create virtual communities that feel as though they are face-to-face. For communities to strengthen and students' needs to be met successfully, teachers' needs must be addressed through professional development. oPD is an excellent option for teachers in

rural regions. oPD, led by a knowledgeable facilitator who understands how adults learn, has the potential to support teachers so they are able to make research based instructional choices for their students; thus, enabling students to be successful. Knowledgeable teachers are equipped to serve their students well. oPD may be an important contributing factor in creating efficacious teachers and students, regardless of its location.

3. PROBLEM SITUATION

3.1 The Problem Situation

3.1.1 Learning more. In regards to professional development, the partnership between TFABB and the Belizean consistently receives positive feedback from the Belizean teachers participating in district workshops, village workshops, classroom visits, and, for three years, a partnership with Peace Corps volunteers living in three villages to promote sustainable, on-going work. TFABB's goal is to have a structure for professional development that is sustainable and on-going all year. Although the Peace Corp relationship is an example of how we worked to offer on-going support throughout the year, the Peace Corp volunteers are not professional teachers and so this is not a solution.

Through initial interviews and meetings with other TFABB volunteers, it is unmistakable that each of us wants to have more contact with the Belizean teachers to offer support between our face-to-face visits. One TFABB volunteer wishes we could do more follow-up work with teachers. She states her belief that Belizean teachers acquire great ideas at the workshops but teachers get busy and do not follow through on the ideas with their students. This volunteer asserts that more support for Belizean teachers throughout the school year would help them to implement more of the newly learned practices/strategies with their students. Another TFABB volunteer shares that Belizean teachers sometimes email her after the workshops. With no structure in place to respond to the emails, she finds that the emails are inconsistent and there is usually a great length of time between emails, containing random questions. TFABB volunteers all express a desire to add to our current structures of professional development. Each member

interviewed holds an interest in utilizing technology to assist us in meeting our goal of supporting Belizean teachers in their instructional choices.

3.1.2 Problem or dilemma. In actuality, professional development is a dilemma due to the many layers that must be considered, including people, context, vision, and resources. For twenty years, TFABB collaborates with the Ministry of Education and the teachers so our work plans align with the requests of our Belizean friends; however, although our plans are created from data, they are never “neat solutions” (Cuban, 2001, p.12). Although the goal of our work remains the same across our years of work, the plans we make tend to have resolutions to situations in which we manage and continually reevaluate “because circumstances and people change” (p.12) consistently. TFABB volunteers note that this past summer there was a large group of new, young teachers. This is directly connected to the government of Belize changing the teacher certification requirements. With these new guidelines, many teachers are retiring. This is an interesting fact that will inevitably affect our work. All of the volunteers are educators and understand a teacher’s struggle to meet the differing needs of their students in any context. Moreover, there is no easy way to support teachers who lack a solid educational background themselves, speak English as a second language and teach students who also speak English as a second language, teach large multi-aged classes and have access to few resources. Nothing about our work is a simple problem “in which a gap is found between what is and ought to be” (Cuban, 2001, p. 4). Instead, we understand it to be a dilemma and we strive to create solutions to areas inside of the dilemma. TFABBs desire to offer on-going support to the Belizean teachers cannot be solved with the addition of an online component to our face-to-face workshops. However, the addition of an online

component may assist in “managing recurring dilemmas” (p. 12) we face in our goal to provide professional development for Belizean teachers.

3.2 My Journey in the Problem Space

3.2.1 Considering alternative viewpoints. Through my conversations with TFABB volunteers, it is definite that everyone shares the same vision for our work; volunteers give their time to share best instructional practices for the teaching of reading and writing. Each volunteer emphasizes that solid reading and writing skills gives people more opportunities and choices in life. Although there are no opposing values, one slight opposing viewpoint that surfaces is volunteers' perspective on how much our work impacts the lives of the Belizeans. When combining the information from past evaluations and these conversations with volunteers, it seems that volunteers change their minds based on their last visit. For example, one volunteer shares how excited she is to know a certain village is utilizing information shared in past workshops; however, in the same conversation she expresses her desire to see more concrete evidence of teachers consistently utilizing the instructional practices we discuss in our workshops. Consistently across conversations, some volunteers' perspectives seem more positive about the effects of our work but all desire for more contact with the Belizean teachers to offer more support.

Table 3.1 Rank-Ordered Table of Values, Conversants, and Illustrative Statements

Rank	Category and Value	Conversant	Illustrative Statement(s)
1	Personal Value: Relationship	Joyce Kim Anne Jennifer	<p>“My first year of TFABB, I had 16 preschool teachers all day for five days, by myself. But I realized quickly that I wasn’t really by myself. I found that everyday several teachers would come a few minutes early to help me set up or stay a few minutes late to help me clean up the classroom.”</p> <p>“I feel that I have developed a deep partnership with the early childhood teachers and ministry representatives.”</p> <p>“I believe that I have built a good relationship with the Belizean teachers. I think that they trust me and know that I want to help them in any way I can.”</p> <p>“I believe we have spent time building solid relationships with the Ministry of Education and with the teachers.”</p> <p>“I have worked with many of the teachers for twenty years. We trust each other. We know each other. We care about each other and want to know that each of us is well.”</p>
2	Professional Value: Passion for current and authentic learning	Joyce Kim Anne Jennifer	<p>“I think one of the keys of our partnership is the mindset that we take into every workshop and meeting. I know for me, that mindset is “what can I learn?”</p> <p>“I think maybe that is what I bring to the organization....a passion for early childhood, a passion for professional development for teachers, and a dedication to build relationships instead of simply delivering training.”</p> <p>“I also feel that my literacy background and reading specialist certification is beneficial to the workshops. I am currently teaching literacy groups all day, so I speak from recent experience.”</p> <p>“I believe I am better and better at understanding the needs of the teachers and working with their resources and system of teaching.”</p> <p>“I am able to share my knowledge through a classroom teacher’s lens. Moreover, I am able to understand current best practices and transfer this knowledge in a relevant way for the teachers, understanding their day to day context-resources and student needs. I am always cognizant of the needs of the teachers we work with as English Language Learners themselves as well as their students.”</p>

Conversants in Table 3.1 had the following roles in the situation.

- Joyce- Professor at Baylor University who specializes in Early Childhood Education (ECE), volunteering for TFABB since 2008 who connected with TFABB after traveling with a colleague to Belize in 2007-both wanting to become more involved in the Toledo District in Belize.
- Anne Early Childhood Education specialist, volunteering since 2008. Anne and Joyce are past colleagues and Joyce asked Anne to join our group to share her expertise.
- Kim Reading Specialist, volunteering since 2008. Kim works with intervention literacy groups and understands the needs of struggling learners who live in poverty. She is a past colleague of another TFABB volunteer who asked Kim to join our team to share her deep knowledge of reading instruction.
- Jennifer Second Grade teacher, volunteering since 1997. Jennifer is an expert in early childhood learning; she is passionate about literacy instruction and draws from over 30 years of classroom experience in her work for TFABB. She is a founding member of TFABB and has been a strong influence inside of the organization, understanding why we originated, all the details of our work across the years and holds a vision for the future of our work.

3.2.2 The evolution of my current understanding. From my initial interviews and meetings with other TFABB volunteers, and advice from my mentor, Dr. Hickey who recently visited Belize, I believe that an online professional development component to TFABBs work must be tested. TFABB volunteers all hold full time jobs and life is full

for each of us. Our daily commitments seem to just grow. During our last meeting, the volunteers expressed a deep desire to know if this concept of online professional development will be effective, and possibly, eventually, change the structure of our face-to-face professional development. All of the TFABB volunteers are committed to our work, and the prospect that we might be able to effectively support our Belizean friends from our homes here in North America is exciting.

Recently, Dr. Hickey visited and met with Belizean leaders, curriculum leaders at the Ministry of Education office in Punta Gorda and principals from various villages, in the spring of 2017. Dr. Hickey was able to have approximately 30 teachers commit to participating in this online professional development. The Belizean leaders and teachers showed tremendous interest in this online professional development opportunity. One principal shared that he envisioned teachers watching the videos together in his school so that they would be able to talk about the content presented in the videos and how they planned to implement the practices with their students.

4. PROBLEM STATEMENT

4.1 Audience

The audience for this study includes the volunteers for Teachers for a Better Belize (TFABB). TFABB volunteers will offer input into the set and structure of this follow-up online professional development structure before and during this study. Furthermore, the TFABB volunteers will gain insights and form opinions on whether this follow-up online professional development structure aligns with TFABBs mission and helps us to meet our goals.

4.2 Ideal Scenarios/Vision

The problem for this study has evolved over time with continued higher expectations for sustainable and systemic work from the TFABB volunteers. Since 1998, TFABB has provided free professional development for the teachers in the southern district of Belize. The partnership has continued to strengthen over the years. What began as a summer camp for children in a remote village has turned into well-structured face-to-face professional development inside of district workshops, regional workshops, school workshops and classroom-based coaching for preschool through eighth grade teachers and administrators. The Ministry of Education and TFABB have a strong partnership based on trust. Both organizations' ultimate goal is to eliminate the cycle of poverty in this region that is known as "The Forgotten District." This partnership has thrived through strong communication between the two groups. Across the years, TFABB's contact with Belizean leaders between TFABB volunteer visits to Belize has included letters, phone calls, emails, and now Facebook. However, although the relationship is

strong, continued communication between TFABB volunteers and teachers in Belize in between face-to face visits is a problem. Belizean teachers will participate in face-to-face professional development, return to their classrooms to try new instructional practices and develop questions that are not answered until the next face-to-face visit, which could be a whole year later.

In the past couple years, access to technology is becoming more accessible to Belizeans in this region. The Ministry of Education's office now has a small computer lab for teachers to utilize during their visits to town. With this new structure in place and the common practice of online learning, I wonder if TFABB can introduce an online professional development component to our partnership with the Belizean teachers. I wonder if this online component will help our problem of communication with teachers between face-to-face visits by providing teachers on-going support throughout the year. I wonder if this component will make our work together more sustainable and fluid if teachers have a platform to ask questions or discuss findings that arise immediately as they are implementing new instructional practices, instead of waiting several months, or even as long as a year, for the next TFABB volunteers' visit.

Our goal is to help Belizean teachers build their knowledge and efficacy of teaching practices. Developing the teachers so they are confident in their knowledge and skills is the most important way to reach students in these rural, impoverished villages that have schools with little material resources.

4.3 The Real

With our current situation of only providing face-to-face professional development, Belizean teachers do not have the support they need throughout the school

year to implement the research based instructional practices learned during our workshops together consistently and with a deep understanding of the purpose of the instructional practice. This limited access to professional development affects the teachers' capacities and efficacy to best teach their students in settings with limited resources and many additional challenges such as poverty and English as a second language. Even if teachers have access to this follow-up online professional development opportunity, will the Belizean teachers be able to grasp the information being shared online?

4.4 Consequences for the Audience

In my opinion, the audiences that will benefit from this study are far-reaching. First, the participating teachers of this study and their students will benefit from additional professional development that is content and pedagogically rich, while culturally and contextually mindful. Next, the Ministry of Education and Teachers for a Better Belize's partnership will strengthen as we work together to try an innovative intervention in an effort to best reach the students' needs in the Toledo district through their teachers. Additionally, all professional development providers will benefit from the information learned about online learning, through the creator's and the professional development providers' lens. This study will be of interest to anyone pursuing an understanding about 21st century online learning. The larger goal of this study is to create equitable access to quality professional development to all people, regardless of location and socio-economic status.

Specifically, I believe that this added online follow-up professional development component has the potential to strengthen TFABB's work and enrich our partnership with

the Belizeans. Ultimately, this added structure to our work could help TFABB live its mission of helping Belizean teachers move forward with their instructional choices, obtaining our ultimate goal of helping children in this region of Belize, empowering them with strong literacy skills to enable them to break the current cycle of poverty.

4.5 My Role

My role will be to create this follow-up online professional development. I will use information from work and exit surveys as I construct this online professional development. Furthermore, I will develop interview questions and surveys for TFABB members to complete, sharing their thoughts, opinions and ideas about this online professional development. I will engage in discussions with the TFABB members throughout this process to collect as much relevant data as possible. Also, I will offer surveys for participating Belizean teachers to gather more information about this online professional development. These interviews, surveys and discussions will allow me to evaluate how effective this online follow-up professional development structure is in helping to strengthen TFABBs work with the Belizeans. The results, as a whole, of this follow-up online professional development component will be shared with all stakeholders to determine if this online professional development component is worthwhile and should be added to our face-to-face professional development for Belizean teachers.

5. THE SOLUTION

5.1 Possible Solutions

Teachers in rural areas need equitable access to professional development to develop their instructional efficacy. Students, regardless of their location, deserve teachers who have a strong repertoire of research based instructional practices to utilize to meet their students' diverse needs. Classroom teachers, especially those with few resources, are more likely to be successful with their students if they are confident in their knowledge of teaching pedagogy so they are able to make instructional decisions that are best for their students. Teachers in the southern district of Belize work with minimal access to professional development and resources. Teachers for a Better Belize (TFABB) is a non-profit organization that provides face-to-face professional development for the teachers in this region. Even with years in which volunteers are visiting several times throughout the year, teachers in this region need more support with content and pedagogy.

5.1.2 Solution 1. Teachers in the southern district of Belize have less formal teacher training and access to professional development than teachers in the United States. Even with face-to-face professional development at least one to three times a year from TFABB volunteer teacher trainers, teachers in this region ask for more support as they work to help their students to become proficient readers and writers. As an organization, TFABB would like to answer this request for more knowledge and support from the Belizean teachers. To create a more sustainable, on-going teacher training support system, I will implement an online follow-up professional development module

to a small group of Belizean teachers. It will be a short, no more than a few weeks, online module of synchronous professional development that aims to promote collaborative conversations around research based instructional strategies. The focus will be research based literacy instruction, also known as evidence-based instruction, building off of the previous summer's face-to-face professional development session. Evidence based instruction is explicit teacher instruction, intensive in time dedicated to reading instruction across the day, and systematic, following a specific scope and sequence of instruction that is taught in an orderly manner (Ritchey, 2011). I will support the teachers in how to create higher level questions for students, understanding that these teachers have finite resources and need support with how to develop students' comprehension skills with limited resources.

The teachers will complete a survey during and after the online module. Additionally, TFABB members will complete a survey during and after the online module to determine if they believe that the online professional development module is feasible for them to create and implement in the future, and to gain their perspectives on if the online professional development module aligns with our mission and has the potential to strengthen our work, considering their interactions/comments/questions inside of the Google document that will follow each meeting.

5.1.2 Solution 2. Teachers in the southern district of Belize have less formal teacher training and access to professional development. Even with face-to-face professional development at least one to three times a year from TFABB volunteer teacher trainers, teachers in this region need more support as they aim to meet their students' diverse needs. As an organization, TFABB would like to better meet the needs

of the Belizean teachers by providing on-going professional development throughout the year. To create a more sustainable, on-going support system, I will implement an online professional development module to a group of Belizean teachers. This second possible solution is to create an asynchronous online professional development module, lasting no longer than a few weeks, focusing on research-based literacy instructional strategies, building off of past face-to-face professional development. This module of online professional development will offer videos containing me sharing research-based literacy instructional strategies. The videos will include me modeling lessons to show what the strategy lesson looks like using a Read Aloud inside of a mini-lesson. The participating Belizean teachers will have the chance to view and review videos that will be available via a private YouTube account.

Concurrently, I will open a conversation on a Google Document for all participating Belizean teachers to engage in conversations about the information shared in the video. The Google documents page will be a platform for conversations to evolve between the teachers, their colleagues and me, encouraging questions and reflections about the instructional strategies shared in the video. This document is a space for teachers to think, question, reflect, and collaborate. The intent is to provide a platform for teachers to make meaning of the information shared so they are able to integrate new ideas into their personal catalog of teaching strategies, while honoring their individual context, students and teaching styles. This asynchronous conversation will allow teachers to seek support as they attempt new strategies, knowing that I am there to answer their questions in a timely manner, instead of at our next face-to-face meeting that may not occur until the following year.

After the first and final weeks of this intervention, I will ask all TFABB volunteers, who will have access to viewing this online module as it occurs, and Belizean teachers to complete a survey. The survey will address four categories, which align with my research questions. The four categories include questions targeting accessible technology, instructional strategies, teacher support and perspectives/reflections.

After the online professional development module intervention, I will conduct in depth interviews of TFABB volunteers. The interviews will include open-ended questions, associated with the four categories on the surveys. Finally, throughout the entire intervention, I will keep a reflective journal, documenting descriptive and reflective observations as I aim to discover and understand the value of this follow-up online professional development structure.

5.2 Input from Others

5.2.1 Stakeholders' input. The input from my stakeholders supports my solution to create an asynchronous online professional development module for a small group of Belizean teachers. All stakeholders agree that a small group will help us to understand if this structure helps the Belizean teachers utilize research based instructional practices. Every TFABB member feels strongly that our relationships with Belizean teachers is the center of our work. Several volunteers state that more contact, communication across the school year would help us to better understand the needs of our Belizean teachers as they teach their students. Furthermore, TFABB members think that creating videos to archive for Belizean teachers to refer back to during the year would be beneficial to the Belizean teachers. Moreover, short professional development modules with small groups of

Belizean teachers will help to meet the Belizean teachers' personal needs inside of their context.

Prior to speaking with my TFABB colleagues, I imagined the synchronous solution would be best. However, the reality of the TFABB volunteers' daily jobs and the thought that technology may fail at certain times shifted my thinking. I believe that that solution 2 is feasible and the benefits of utilizing videos that we can archive is an exciting concept for the TFABB volunteers.

5.2.2 Classmates' input. My classmates believe that most teachers walk away from an original professional development session full of ideas, but when reality sets in, they fall back into the same pattern of teaching as before participating in the professional development. The follow-up professional development is important for maximizing impact and sustained change. Moreover, teachers need support through ideas especially from teachers with more experience and teachers that are trailblazers and try different instructional strategies. YouTube, Google Documents, Google Hangout or Skype may be useful tools.

5.2.3 Field advisor's input. Dr. Hickey is in agreement with the reality that TFABBs problem is a dilemma. Dr. Hickey believes that the pilot group must be Belizean teachers who are committed to their profession. Participating in my online professional development group must be beneficial for the teachers as it is more work for them, added on to the daily struggles of their contexts. Moreover, it must be doable for the teachers. Dr. Hickey is eager to participate in viewing this online professional development. He is in support of this study to discover if the Belizean teachers will follow through with their participation in this online module, and if their participation

positively affects their instructional choices and feeling of being supported by TFABB volunteers. Additionally, Dr. Hickey is curious to learn if other TFABB volunteers find this online professional development module concept to be an effective tool that they would like to lead in the future.

5.3 The Proposed Solution

5.3.1 Informing the solution. Previous work and data collection have led me to believe that TFABB needs to adjust its work to include an online component to allow for more communication with Belizean teachers between face-to-face workshops. TFABB volunteers are passionate about our partnership with our Belizean friends. All stakeholders want to provide Belizean teachers on-going, more “in the moment” support and we believe that new technologies in Belize will allow for a wisely structured online component of professional development.

5.3.2 The final solution. TFABB volunteers would like to have more opportunities to support Belizean teachers as they aim to meet their students’ diverse needs. I will create and provide a short online asynchronous professional development module to a group of Belizean teachers. I will create short videos that contain modeling of research-based literacy instructional practices. I will incorporate higher level questioning strategies inside of this support for teachers, understanding that resources are limited. A favorable outcome would be that the TFABB volunteers find an online professional development structure to be valuable to our work and that TFABB volunteers would like to lead online professional development structures in the future. However, I understand that “results should closely refer to the theory, being careful not to adjust the theory to results and evidence, but the opposite, that is, results and evidence

should be associated with the theory” (Dresch, Lacerda, & Miguel, 2015, p. 1121).

Although I am eager to ascertain information that will help TFABB better meet its goals, I am entering this study with the understanding that this intervention may or may not be considered effective by TFABB members.

6. METHODS

6.1 Statement Regarding Human Subjects and the Institutional Review Board

A preliminary review of the methods for collecting information from human subjects determined that the methods proposed for this study did not meet the federal definition of “human subjects research with generalizable results.” As the proposed information gathering methods were within the general scope of activities and responsibilities associated with my current position, I was not required to seek human subject research approval; this was decided in May of 2016.

6.2 Guiding Questions, Information Collection Methods and Rationale for Methods

6.2.1 Guiding questions. The following questions guide this study:

1. How does online follow-up professional development contribute to TFABB living its mission and reaching its goals?
2. What factors of online follow-up professional development impact the process of creating research based and accessible online professional development?
3. How does online follow-up professional development contribute to TFABB addressing its challenges to best support Belizean teachers as they make instructional choices with their students?

6.2.2 Collecting data. For data collection, I planned to follow the case study method, using surveys, analysis of discussions, and analysis of interviews. Additionally, I used information gathered from reading anonymous teacher exit surveys from our face-

to-face professional development. Before the intervention was put into place, I interviewed TFABB volunteers about their experiences as volunteers.

During the intervention, I created a space on Google Documents that was to be a place for Belizean teachers to discuss, reflect and ask questions about the instructional practices shared in the video. I asked TFABB volunteers to view the online discussions between the Belizean teachers and myself. I asked TFABB volunteers to complete a survey after the first week of this intervention, aspiring to gather their perspective on the online professional development module. Simultaneously, I asked each Belizean teacher participant to complete a survey after the first week of the intervention, collecting data about their perspectives of the online professional development module.

The surveys for both the TFABB volunteers and the Belizean teachers addressed the following territories:

1. Accessibility and ease of use of technology.
2. Literacy instructional practices/strategies shared within the online professional development.
3. Perspectives/feelings about the level of support this online professional development provides Belizean teachers.
4. Perspectives/reflections about the online professional development module.

After the intervention, I conducted interviews of TFABB volunteers, gathering their viewpoints and assessments of the online professional development module, seeking to learn if they find this to be an effective tool for TFABB to embrace and utilize.

Additionally, I asked TFABB volunteers to complete a final survey at the end of the study to provide them an opportunity to share any final thoughts.

Throughout the study, I kept a personal reflection journal, documenting my observations, reflections and thoughts that materialized and developed as the study took place. This journal was analyzed but it only served as a place for reflection, discovery, themes and ideas to emerge, and develop.

Table 6.1 Goals, Objectives, and Activities Associated with the Problem Solution

Goal	Objective	Activity
<p>I. TFABB volunteers will assess an online follow-up professional development component to determine if it positively affects work with Belizean teachers.</p> <p>2. Belizean teachers will participate in an online follow-up professional development component, focusing on literacy best instructional practices.</p>	<p>1. TFABB volunteers will observe the asynchronous online professional development as it unfolds.</p> <p>2. Belizean teachers will participate in an online professional development module.</p>	<p>1. Provide TFABB volunteers access to view the asynchronous online professional development, focusing on reading comprehension instruction. TFABB volunteers will complete a survey after the first and last week of the intervention. Conduct interviews of TFABB members.</p> <p>2. Provide Belizean teachers with an online asynchronous online professional development, including literacy instructional lessons for teachers to learn, try-out and reflect upon within the group. Concurrently with the video, teachers will be asked to participate in conversations inside of a Google Document</p>

6.2.3 Rationales. Surveys, documentation of discussions, and interviews will help to create a solid case study. These methods will be effective in allowing me to “gather accurate information not lost by time” (Creswell, 2013, p. 98). Collecting from multiple sources will help me to identify themes and make conclusions as to if the intervention is

effective (Creswell, 2013). This study aims to discover if TFABB would better meet its goals, as an organization, if an online professional development component is added to our repertoire of structures used to provide teacher training for Belizean teachers.

Conducting a qualitative study in the form of a case study will help TFABB address its goal of providing year-round support for Belizean teachers as “the hallmark of a good qualitative case study is that it presents an in-depth understanding of the case” (p. 98). A case study “is a method that, when properly carried out, provides an understanding of certain phenomena in depth” (Dresch et al., 2015, p. 1118). Through surveys, discussions, and interviews, this case study will allow for triangulation of data. Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, and Neville (2014) define triangulation as “a qualitative research strategy to test validity through the convergence of information from different sources” (p. 545). This study intends to provide TFABB members with a thorough investigation of whether this intervention is deemed effective, allowing the organization to conclude if they will adopt this structure of professional development.

Table 6.2 Guiding Questions, Data Collection Methods, and Rationale for Methods

Guiding Questions	Data Collection Methods	Rationale for Methods
<p>1. How does online follow-up professional development contribute to the mission of TFABB?</p>	<p>After the first and final weeks of the intervention, offer a Likert scale survey to Belizean teachers and TFABB volunteers.</p> <p>During the interventions, Belizean teachers will be asked to participate in a Google Documents asynchronous discussion.</p> <p>After the intervention, conduct interviews of TFABB volunteers.</p> <p>Have an outside researcher account for any bias.</p>	<p>The Likert scale survey will allow for descriptive statistics, which will produce the mean, illuminating the perspectives' of TFABB volunteers and Belizean participants.</p> <p>The Google Document will provide insight into the teachers' thoughts, questions, learning, and growth. This will allow for the Constant Comparative Method; coding is a means for themes and categories to emerge</p> <p>The interviews, and member checking interview method will provide in-depth descriptions of the situation; knowledge is constructed through experiences and with colleagues. This will allow for the Constant Comparative Method; coding is a means for themes and categories to emerge.</p> <p>Multiple data collection methods will allow for triangulation, which has the potential to lead to more knowledge about the problem and the effects of the intervention on the problem. Member checking by an outside researcher who is unfamiliar with the study will take place to account for any bias.</p>

Table 6.2 Continued

Guiding Questions	Data Collection Methods	Rationale for Methods
<p>2. What factors impact the process of creating research based online follow-up professional development?</p>	<p>After the first and final weeks of the intervention, offer a Likert scale survey to Belizean teachers and TFABB volunteers.</p> <p>During the interventions, Belizean teachers will be asked to participate in a Google Documents asynchronous discussion.</p> <p>After the intervention, conduct interviews of TFABB volunteers.</p> <p>Have an outside researcher account for any bias.</p>	<p>The Likert scale survey will allow for descriptive statistics, which will produce the mean, illuminating the perspectives' of TFABB volunteers and Belizean participants.</p> <p>The Google Document will provide insight into the teachers' thoughts, questions, learning, and growth. This will allow for the Constant Comparative Method; coding is a means for themes and categories to emerge</p> <p>The interviews, and member checking interview method will provide in-depth descriptions of the situation; knowledge is constructed through experiences and with colleagues. This will allow for the Constant Comparative Method; coding is a means for themes and categories to emerge.</p> <p>Multiple data collection methods will allow for triangulation, which has the potential to lead to more knowledge about the problem and the effects of the intervention on the problem. Member checking by an outside researcher who is unfamiliar with the study will take place to account for any bias.</p>

Table 6.2 Continued

Guiding Questions	Data Collection Methods	Rationale for Methods
<p>3. How does online follow-up professional development support Belizean teachers as they make instructional choices with their students?</p>	<p>After the first and final weeks of the intervention, offer a Likert scale survey to Belizean teachers and TFABB volunteers.</p> <p>During the interventions, Belizean teachers will be asked to participate in a Google Documents asynchronous discussion.</p> <p>After the intervention, conduct interviews of TFABB volunteers.</p> <p>Have an outside researcher account for any bias.</p>	<p>The Likert scale survey will allow for descriptive statistics, which will produce the mean, illuminating the perspectives' of TFABB volunteers and Belizean participants.</p> <p>The Google Document will provide insight into the teachers' thoughts, questions, learning, and growth. This will allow for the Constant Comparative Method where coding is a means for themes and categories to emerge</p> <p>The interviews, and member checking interview method will provide in-depth descriptions of the situation; knowledge is constructed through experiences and with colleagues. This will allow for the Constant Comparative Method, coding is a means for themes and categories to emerge.</p> <p>Multiple data collection methods will allow for triangulation, which has the potential to lead to more knowledge about the problem and the effects of the intervention on the problem. Member checking by an outside researcher who is unfamiliar with the study will take place to account for any bias.</p>

6.3 Instruments and Analysis

6.3.1 Protocols and instruments. To begin, I reviewed past exit surveys that Belizean teachers have taken at the end of face-to-face workshops, focusing on summer 2016. Then, I conducted interviews with the TFABB volunteers. I led the interviews with guiding questions that included:

1. How long have you been involved with TFABB, and how did you get involved?
2. What do you believe TFABB does well in regards to our partnership with the Belizean teachers and leaders?
3. What is something that you believe that you personally do well as a volunteer for our organization, TFABB?
4. What is something that you wish would go smoother with our TFABB work?

After the first week and the last week of the intervention, I asked TFABB volunteers and Belizean participants to take a Likert scale survey. During the intervention, I provided a Google Document as a space for questions, discussions and support for the Belizean teachers as they viewed, reviewed and reflected upon the information shared inside of the videos. Following the intervention, TFABB volunteers were asked to participate in discussions and interviews. Throughout the study, I kept a reflection journal to organize my observations and thoughts in one space.

To keep these instruments reliable, I confirmed that the questions corresponded with the guiding question's overarching realms of accessible technology, research based instructional practices, teacher support, and overall perspectives of the intervention. Additionally, Dr. Joshi, a committee member, suggested I put a time limit on the surveys to ensure reliable, valid responses.

6.3.2 Analysis of data. I used the constant comparative method to analyze the data collected during this intervention. I read, and reread the data, and took notes to explore all ideas that emerge. This process allowed me to ascertain "the larger thoughts presented in the data" (Creswell, 2013, p. 184) to unveil themes and create categories.

Next, I strived to “build detailed descriptions, develop themes or dimensions” (p. 184). Finding themes, categories and patterns in the data illuminated overall important information to answer the question of if my proposed solution assuages TFABB’s problem and is a structure that we should adopt as an organization to better meet our goals.

6.4 Timeline

- **May 2016**

No IRB is necessary for this study.

- **September 2016-April 2017**

Reviewed past exit surveys completed by Belizean teachers at the end of face-to-face professional development. Reviewed past professional development provided for the past twenty years, focusing on my own presentations since 2004.

Interviewed TFABB volunteers, speaking in-depth with them about their work, challenges and successes inside of the work, and their hopes for TFABB’s future as an organization. Spoke with field supervisor, in-depth, about this intervention and the best structure to use to uncover data that will provide the answer to if this solution is effective in helping to solve our problem. Met with TFABB board members several times to discuss this intervention and its structure. Met with TFABB volunteers as a group to discuss this intervention and its structure. Dr. Hickey, my field supervisor, visited Belize in the spring of 2017 and was able to form a group of Belizean teachers to agree to participate in this intervention.

- **June- September 2017**

Implement intervention; collect data.

- **July-December 2019**

Analyze data; formulate findings; complete Record of Study.

6.5. Issues of Reliability, Validity, Confidentiality, and Other Ethical Concerns

I did not foresee issues of reliability, validity, confidentiality or any other ethical concerns. The specific results from this study were used by TFABB volunteers to decide if this solution would help alleviate our problem as an organization.

6.5.1 Reliability. I reviewed my survey and interview questions to ensure they were clear and aligned with my guiding questions.

6.5.2 Validity. I reviewed my survey questions to ensure the questions would provide adequate data. Dr. Joshi suggested that surveys have a time limit to ensure validity. I utilized the method of member check interview to verify information gathered in interviews with TFABB members was trustworthy. Furthermore, I used the constant comparative method when reviewing the transcripts of the Google Document to ensure all themes and important information emerge.

6.5.3 Confidentiality. Information gathered from this intervention was only used by TFABB volunteers to determine if the solution was effective to resolve our organizational problem.

7. RESULTS

7.1 Results

To begin this study, I contacted TFABB volunteers with the invitation for them to contribute to this study by viewing the online follow-up professional development, completing surveys, participating in interviews and discussions to share their ideas, opinions, and perspectives as to the effectiveness of this intervention. Some of the volunteers have not been involved with TFABB for several years and I did not hear back from these volunteers throughout the study. Board members were part of discussions before, during and after this study was conducted. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of online follow-up professional development, aiming to uncover if this structure aligned with TFABBs mission to be added to TFABBs future work with Belizean teachers to help us meet our organizational goals.

The study was guided by three questions:

1. How does online follow-up professional development contribute to the mission of TFABB?
2. What factors impact the process of creating research based online follow-up professional development?
3. How does online follow-up professional development support Belizean teachers as they make instructional choices with their students?

The first question that guided this study asked how online follow-up professional development contributed to the mission of TFABB. Across discussions, surveys and interviews, the TFABB volunteers shared that the content followed our mission and

shared best instructional practices. In the last survey, sent after the intervention was completed for some time, a TFABB volunteer answered that she felt the videos were able to share best instructional practices via this online structure. This volunteer answered, “Yes, it was what we’ve been doing for years. Thanks!” Additionally, she added, “I liked that the videos were fairly short, and that there were mechanisms for teachers to discuss the strategies with Marie.” Another TFABB volunteer stated that she felt the videos needed to be shorter, “more specific and concise.” Before I started this intervention, fellow TFABB volunteers felt that 15-20-minute videos on instructional practices was a good plan; however, after viewing the videos, volunteers suggested videos should be shorter to, “keep attention” of the participants. Easy access to shorter videos was an idea that continued to emerge in the TFABB volunteer surveys; another TFABB volunteer commented, “This technology is easy for me to access in the U.S., but I’m curious to see how easy it has been for the Belizean teachers. Also, I believe the videos should be shorter and focused. This will also help for people with limited broadband.” This idea of shorter videos supports TFABB’s mission to offer professional development that meets the needs of the Belizean teachers. Moreover, this idea of creating shorter videos informed the second and third guiding questions as well by offering information about factors to consider when creating the videos, such as the cost of the technology and its impact on teachers choosing to view the videos, and the length of videos, keeping Belizean teachers’ attention when viewing to learn ideas of best instructional practices.

Two Belizean teachers commented, “Yes, it would be beneficial so we can review on our own time.” This supported the idea of asynchronous professional development. The other Belizean teacher stated, “Yes; great idea if time.” This comment supports the

recommendation to shorten videos as the Belizean teachers are busy and time is valuable. A TFABB volunteer elaborated on the idea of shorter, more focused videos and recommended that we should choose one specific topic to create a course containing a collection of 5-minute videos that build off of one another. She suggested topics be as specific as “nonfiction reading strategies, classroom library, independent reading, book choice, or setting up a classroom.”

As an organization, our mission is to help Belizean teachers move forward with their instructional choices for their students. Moreover, our mission is to meet Belizean teachers’ needs inside of their context. In an anonymous survey administered to the Belizean teachers during an August professional development workshop, I asked the teachers to share additional thoughts on the back of their surveys; one Belizean teacher shared this on the back of their survey, “I believe it would be very beneficial for those of us that has internet access. I’ve used other videos as a resource to help enhance learning in my class. This might also help to get new ideas on how I can use different strategies for learning.” Another Belizean teacher wrote, “I think this would be beneficial for teachers who have question on certain content and could be used as reference.” Another Belizean teacher mentions the importance of the work matching Belizean standards, “Yes it would be beneficial as long as it goes online with our Belize Learning outcomes. It would be excellent.” Another teacher commented, “I think the video is helpful for me to look at my strength and weakness of my own lesson.” From both TFABB volunteers and Belizean teachers, their comments illuminate that the concept of this online professional development structure aligns with TFABB’s mission of helping Belizean teachers to move forward with their instructional choices. From both groups, TFABB members and

Belizean teachers, overall, comments suggested a belief that this online professional development would support TFABB mission of helping to advance Belizean teachers in their instructional choices, while supporting Belizean teachers inside of their context.

New ideas emerged throughout this intervention that TFABB members had not considered before. In the past, we have been engaged in discussions as to what technological tools might be best, and realistic, for a possible online component to be added to our work with Belizean teachers. The second guiding question of this study asked what factors impact the process of creating research based online follow-up professional development. Before the intervention took place, our TFABB Board brainstormed ideas and members shared possible ideas based on knowledge of research and past experiences. Suggestions were made that Belizean teachers must pick up their paychecks from the Ministry of Education's office in the town of Punta Gorda where there is access to a computer lab. As a whole, our Board believed that Belizean teachers would take advantage of the computer lab to participate in an online follow-up professional development session. Although Belizean teachers frequent the Ministry of Education building, the invention revealed that the Belizean teachers did not utilize the computer lab to participate.

Before the intervention, TFABB volunteers felt that Google Documents are easy to use and would be a good platform to generate instructional conversations to build teachers' teaching efficacy. However, one volunteer shared that several Belizean teachers told her, during past face-to-face work, that they did not want to open a new Gmail account. Moreover, during discussions and interviews of TFABB volunteers, concern was expressed with the idea of using Google Documents as an open forum for teachers to

ask questions and have discussions about best instructional practices. One volunteer shared her experiences during workshops that the Belizean teachers do not like to put their professional ideas down on paper for others to see. This volunteer felt that an open forum such as Google Documents might feel unsafe for the Belizean teachers, and, in her opinion, to any teachers new to this form of communication, to share their ideas openly. This volunteer went on to share that she believed that the Belizean teachers might fear others' judgments of comments or questions; for this reason, she felt that the Google Documents structure would not be successful.

Furthermore, this volunteer was insightful in sharing the thought that the Belizean teachers were not currently using Google Documents regularly; subsequently, she believed that a resource like Google Documents would have to be introduced within face-to-face professional development before using it as a tool with the Belizean teachers would be an effective technological tool. Another TFABB volunteer stated in a survey, "There is an issue getting the teachers to participate. The technology being used needs to be simple and not require creating new accounts to access it. This has a lot of potential once the bugs are worked out." This statement supports the idea that Google Documents may not currently work; however, with instruction on this platform, TFABB may be able to consider this forum for professional development.

The intervention uncovered that the Belizean teachers did not want to create a new electronic mail account with Google and no one participated in discussions inside of the Google Document. Instead, the Belizean teachers who participated used their current email accounts, not wanting to open a new account with Google, to correspond with me to share their questions.

TFABB members believed that Belizean teachers would most likely use their phones to access email and videos. Several volunteers felt optimistic about the idea of Belizean teachers having access to email and videos via their phones in an asynchronous structure. Across TFABB, volunteers consistently shared in discussions and interviews that they had witnessed more and more Belizean teachers to have phones with them all the time. During visits, volunteers have witnessed Belizean teachers using their phones. Hence, TFABB volunteers made the assumption that Belizean teachers would use their phones to utilize email and view videos to take part in online professional development. Furthermore, TFABB volunteers found the idea of Belizean teachers using their phones to be attractive since this would give the teachers the opportunity to participate whenever convenient to them. Additionally, TFABB volunteers believed that the online professional development would offer support in an inexpensive way on Belizean teachers' schedules.

Contrary to the other TFABB members, one TFABB volunteer felt skeptical of this idea of phone use, and, although curious about the outcome, expressed concerns with the Belizean teachers using any form of technology on their own for online professional development. At this point, this volunteer was not sure of the root of her skepticism but the idea of Belizean teachers using their phones for online professional development was not the simple solution many of us imagined at the beginning of this intervention. Although Belizean teacher participants did utilize their phones during this intervention, on my face-to-face visit I learned that utilizing phones to view videos may cost more money than I had realized, and viewing videos on YouTube may not work due to the participant's particular phone plan and internet access. This was an important factor that

my TFABB colleagues and I had not thought of before this intervention took place. From surveys administered to TFABB members, easy access to shorter videos was an idea that emerged. A TFABB volunteer commented, “This technology is easy for me to access in the U.S., but I’m curious to see how easy it has been for the Belizean teachers. Also, I believe the videos should be shorter and focused. This will also help for people with limited broadband.”

TFABB volunteers favored the idea of utilizing the platform of YouTube for the videos and making the videos private for only the TFABB members and Belizean teachers to view. At the beginning of the first data collection, Belizean teacher participants emailed me that they could not find the videos on YouTube. As a result, I decided to make the videos public on YouTube to learn if this would help them to locate the videos. Once I changed the settings to public, the participants were able to find the YouTube videos to view. TFABB volunteers were able to see the number of views on each video but were unable to know exactly who the viewers were necessarily.

In a survey administered to TFABB volunteers after the intervention was complete, one TFABB volunteer appreciated that the study revealed information she did not know before the study, “The feedback was that the Google Docs is not a good tool for the Belizeans.” Another TFABB member shared that she was hopeful that even if technology did not seem to be accessible or user friendly during this intervention that she believed younger teachers in the future would be more capable in utilizing technology and access may continue to advance with time. She felt the technology utilized during this intervention did show promise for future; in her survey she stated, “Yes, especially since more and more teachers will have internet access and more are younger with

internet savvy.” This TFABB volunteer felt this intervention to show promise for the future effectiveness of online professional development.

Consistent with TFABB volunteer responses, data gathered from an anonymous survey administered to Belizean teachers at their August summer workshop in Toledo supported this idea that technology can be a problem; however, as time goes on, certain forms of technology might work for online professional development. One Belizean teacher stated, “I think that is a great idea, but for schools in the areas that have internet connections.” Another Belizean teacher commented, “I agree that other volunteers from TFABB share their teaching method on YouTube. My school does not have access to internet no electricity.” Other teachers’ comments showed that access to the internet is inconsistent, “Didn’t know about the technology on YouTube but I am willing to research it and see how best I can use the information. I will definitely visit that site.” One teacher stated, “I have used YouTube before.” While another Belizean teacher stated, “Sounds interesting but hard copy of lesson should be available.” Another Belizean teacher commented, “The video can be helpful to view once I have access to the internet.” While another Belizean teacher stated, “I live in a village, no internet to view video. But it would be a great idea.” From these comments, it supports the ideas that TFABB members noted that access and knowledge of how to utilize technology differs. Also, if TFABB plans to use technology in the future, we must train teachers on how to access the information and be cognizant that short videos might be more accessible due to streaming costs. Furthermore, we must be sensitive to the reality that some teachers have no access to the internet and are seeking access to professional development that does not rely on the internet.

In addition to accessibility, the second question that guided this study sought to learn if research based instructional practices could be shared successfully via an online structure. Videos were created to align with all past TFABB work, which has always directly aligned with the Belizean standards. Before beginning this intervention, my goal was to follow TFABB's mission of ensuring that all of our work generates from the Belizean teachers' needs in regards to meeting their students' needs. Thus, I created the videos week to week based off of the questions from the Belizean teachers, combined with knowledge of the Belizean standards and TFABBs past work. TFABB volunteers shared that they believed the videos did in fact share research based best instructional practices that have been a part of our work for years. Several new ideas came through on the surveys and inside of the interviews and discussions, before and after this intervention. One TFABB member suggested, "perhaps do some of the videos in a classroom." Another TFABB member commented that offering videos from inside of a classroom would support our mission to create work authentic to the Belizean teachers' needs for their students. Another TFABB volunteer stated, "It is a great first try, I think the idea of online instruction is awesome. Perhaps next time do all the videos about the same topic and find out from the participants what they want that topic to be so maybe more people would participate in the Google Doc. Maybe film some of the videos in a classroom with real students or go online and find videos that have already been shot on the topic to reduce your workload." A third TFABB volunteer followed a similar idea thread to other TFABB colleagues and stated in a survey, "I absolutely love the idea of creating online PD videos for Belizean teachers to watch. Since we are unable to make consistent visits throughout the school year, this is a great way to provide them with

examples of best practices. I would suggest creating some videos within a classroom using our students so that the Belizean teachers can see it in action. Great job, Marie.”

One TFABB volunteer shared, after viewing two videos, “I’ve only seen the first two videos, and they didn’t have much concrete content. I am assuming the later ones will!”

The third guiding question for this study sought to learn if an asynchronous approach to online professional development strengthens TFABBs work of supporting Belizean teachers as they make instructional choices with their students. I began this study wondering if an online structure could help TFABB to effectively share best instructional practices via technology, helping us to overcome the challenge that we face related to cost of travel, and lack of support between visits. Originally, before I began this online follow-up professional development intervention, other TFABB volunteers and I discussed the idea of having Belizean teachers “meet” me online at a certain time. There were discussions about utilizing Skype, or some type of platform that would allow me to meet with the Belizean teachers at the same time. However, after further discussion and advice from others, I decided that asynchronous would meet the Belizean teachers’ schedule and it was decided that more teachers would be able to participate if it was asynchronous, enabling teachers to participate when they had access to internet and it fit inside of their daily schedule. One TFABB volunteer stated, “It’s so easy for anyone to get on whenever they have time. No need to spend thousands of dollars for face workshops. Google Docs are easy. I hope Belizean teachers take advantage of this professional development.” One Belizean teacher shared in their survey, “lessons are helpful and I learnt how to teach better.” Additionally, another Belizean teacher commented, “will continue to use and encourage others to do the same.” These comments

suggest that although participation of the online follow-up was limited, the few teachers who participated felt it useful.

This data provided evidence that this online structure might help TFABB address some of its challenges in its pursuit to support Belizean teachers. However, for TFABB volunteers to put the energy into this structure, more Belizean teacher participation is necessary. In the final survey to TFABB volunteers, one member stated support for the online structure with some adjustments. When answering the question as to whether this online professional development helps TFABB support Belizean teachers, the volunteer stated, “This depends on the buy-in. If they recognize that it provides value, they will continue. And, there needs to be accountability for change.” Another thought shared by a TFABB volunteer addressing if this might help us as an organization support Belizean teachers in their instructional practices stated, “It could, if offered from credit and perhaps structured as modules.” This same volunteer shared thoughts as to whether this helps TFABB move closer to addressing some of our issues stated, “This one didn’t work as well as hoped, but gave good info for future.” This volunteer went on to state, “Yes; because we really need to provide support throughout the year (Without making multiple trips, expensive trips).” Answering this same question, another volunteer stated, “I’m not sure if it solves the problem entirely, but it certainly goes a long way toward that.” Moreover, another volunteer commented, “It has that potential if there is follow-through.” Another TFABB volunteer shared, “TFABB’s goals are to effect change, so the online modules support that goal.” All of these comments suggest that some TFABB volunteers are interested in the online structure as long as shifts are made to encourage

more participation for the effort that it takes to create quality online professional development.

However, differing viewpoints did develop as a result of this study. One TFABB volunteer shared in a discussion after the intervention, “Gosh, it’s a fantastic idea, and then it did not work.” This volunteer stated in the exit survey, “I really did think it would work when I was first introduced to the idea. Unfortunately, the teachers are not taking advantage of this PD opportunity.” Furthermore, this volunteer stated in the exit survey, “I didn’t see a lot of evidence of the Belizean teachers leaning the instructional strategies.” This volunteer went on to share, “I think the only way that it would work is if we had the Belizean teachers sign up to take part in the online PD. If I did create my own online PD, I would want video clips of how the strategies were being used in the classrooms. I really believe the teachers needed to see how it works with students and not just be told different strategies.” Another volunteer’s comments followed these ideas of more focused professional development sessions and offering credit for participation. This volunteer stated, “make the modules more specific and concise. Offer the modules for credits that all Belizean teachers need.” From conversations, interviews and surveys, the study revealed that TFABB volunteers would like to offer videos that include students in real classrooms. Also, professional development sessions should have a specific focus, offering the Belizean teachers their required continuing education credit. The results suggest that TFABB volunteers did not believe that the structure of this online professional development showed evidence of Belizean teachers learning research based instructional strategies in their classrooms. However, the results suggested that the videos did include research based instructional practices. Furthermore, with adjustments to the

online structure in the future, it was suggested that TFABB volunteers and Belizean teachers believed that this online professional development structure could be effective in supporting Belizean teachers to make wise instructional choices with their students.

The results suggested that the few Belizean teachers who participated found the online follow-up professional development to be helpful in informing their instructional choices. TFABB volunteers generated possible solutions to the lack of participation from the Belizean teachers during this study. Within discussions, interviews and surveys, TFABB volunteers shared ideas of ways to garner better participation. TFABB, as an organization struggles with the cost of travel to provide face to face professional development, coupled with the fact that the August timeframe for the Belizean teachers' professional development now conflicts with most school academic calendars in the United States. Both these obstacles are in the way of TFABB fulfilling its mission. The possible solution of offering online professional development for teacher professional development credit was a new and big idea as a result of this study. This was not an idea that had been considered before this study.

Table 7.1 TFABB Survey Results July 2017

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Accessible Technology	33.3%	58.3%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Research Based Instructional Strategies	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Teacher Support Through Professional Development	58.3%	25.0%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Perspectives on Online Professional Development	16.7%	58.3%	8.3%	16.7%	0.0%	100.0%

Table 7.2 TFABB Survey Results August 2017

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Accessible Technology	40.0 %	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Research Based Instructional Strategies	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Teacher Support Through Professional Development	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Perspectives on Online Professional Development	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Table 7.3 TFABB Survey Results October 2017

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Accessible Technology	41.7%	58.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Research Based Instructional Strategies	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Teacher Support Through Professional Development	58.3%	47.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Perspectives on Online Professional Development	41.7%	41.7%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Table 7.4 Belizean Teacher Survey Results October 2017

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Accessible Technology	6.7%	24.8%	63.8%	3.2%	1.4%	100.0%
Research Based Instructional Strategies	5.9%	19.7%	73.4%	1.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Teacher Support Through Professional Development	5.1%	20.3%	73.2%	1.4%	0.0%	100.0%
Perspectives on Online Professional Development	9.6%	20.7%	68.9%	0.7%	0.0%	100.0%

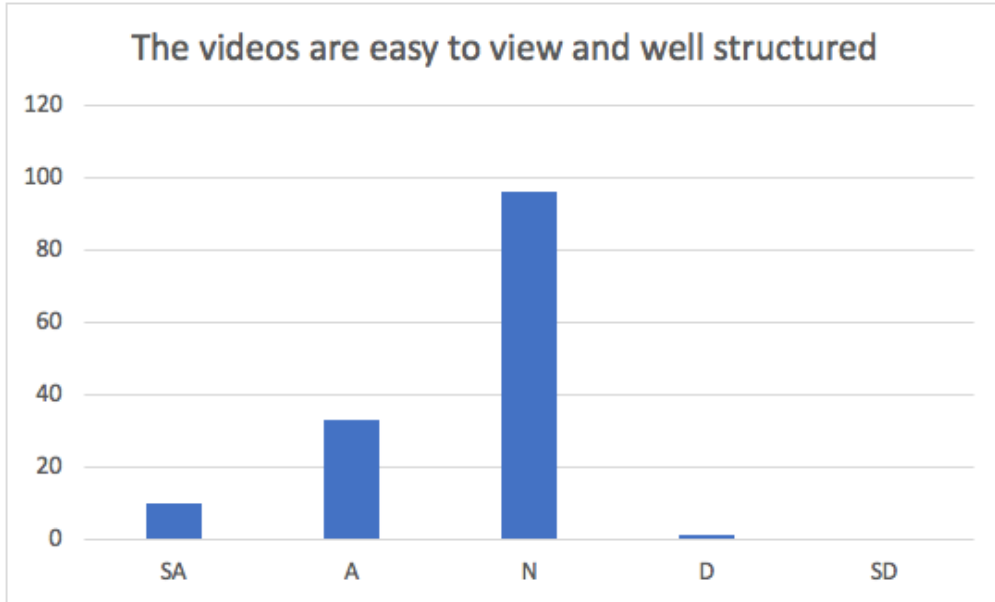


Figure 7.1. Results of question related to videos.

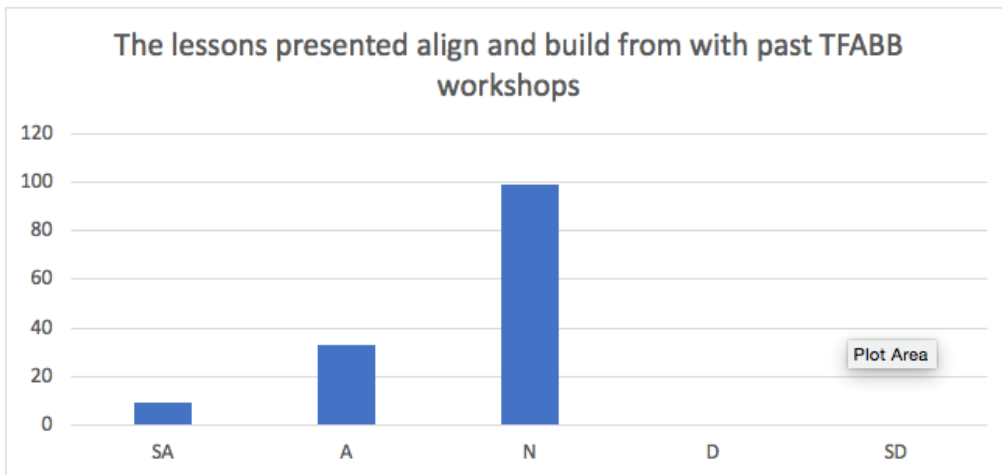


Figure 7.2. Results of question related to lessons' alignment with TFABB workshops.

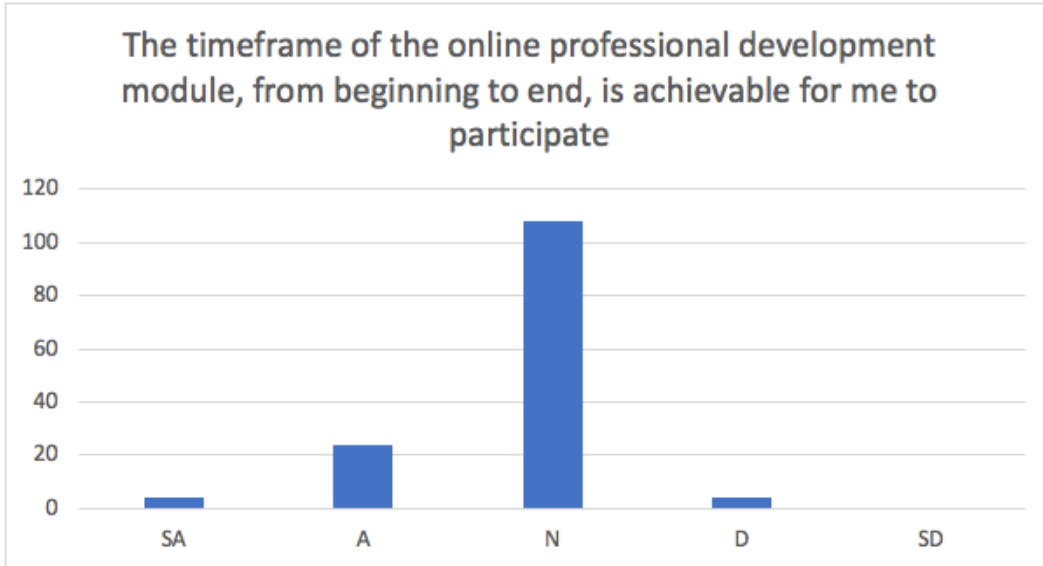


Figure 7.3. Results of question related to professional development timeline.

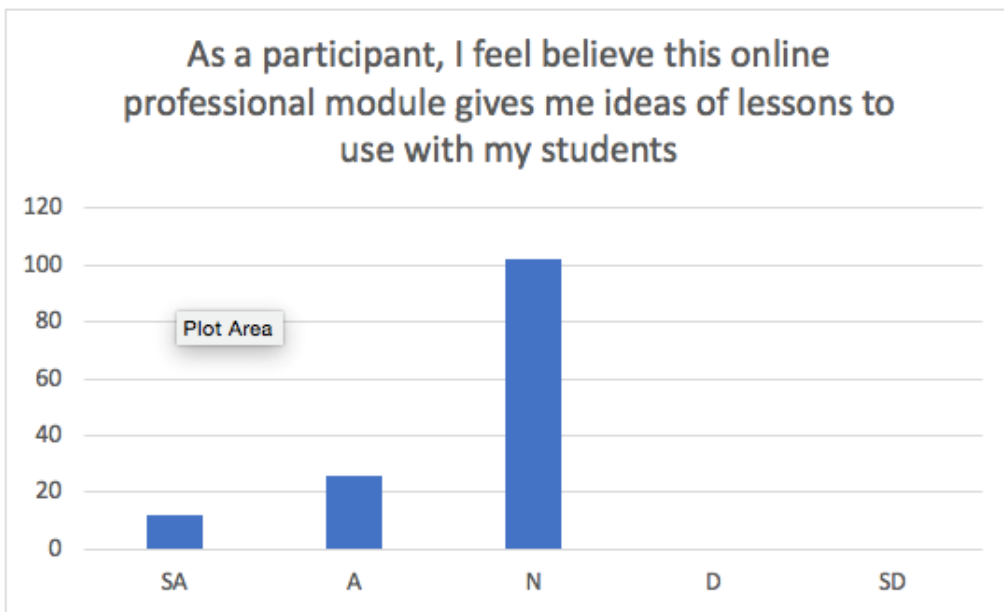


Figure 7.4. Results of question related to lesson generation.

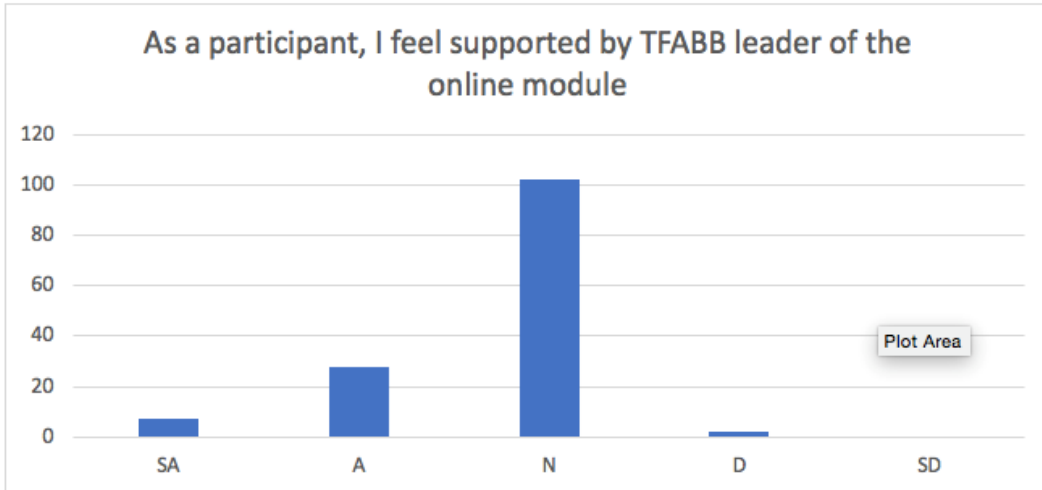


Figure 7.5. Results of question related to perceived support.

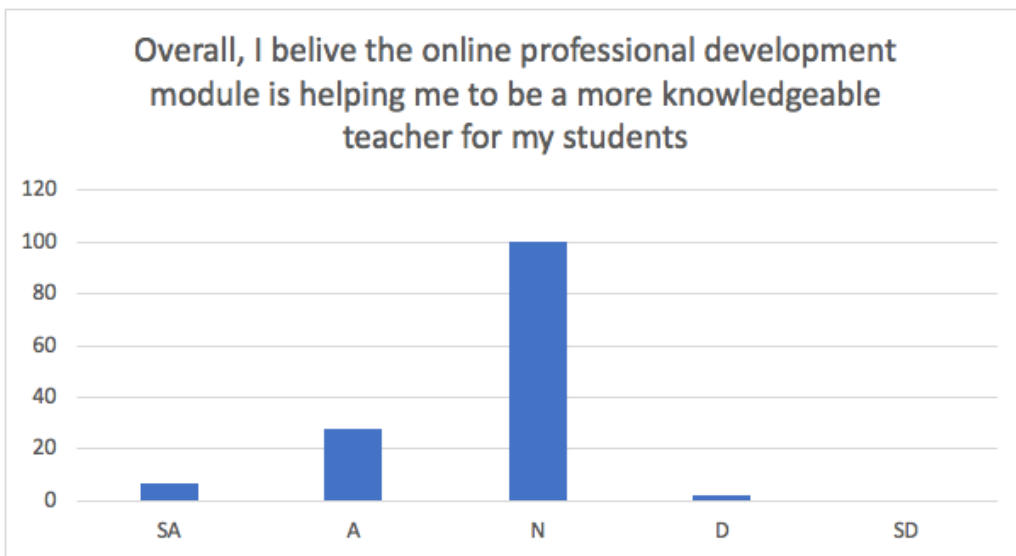


Figure 7.6. Results of question related to knowledge growth.

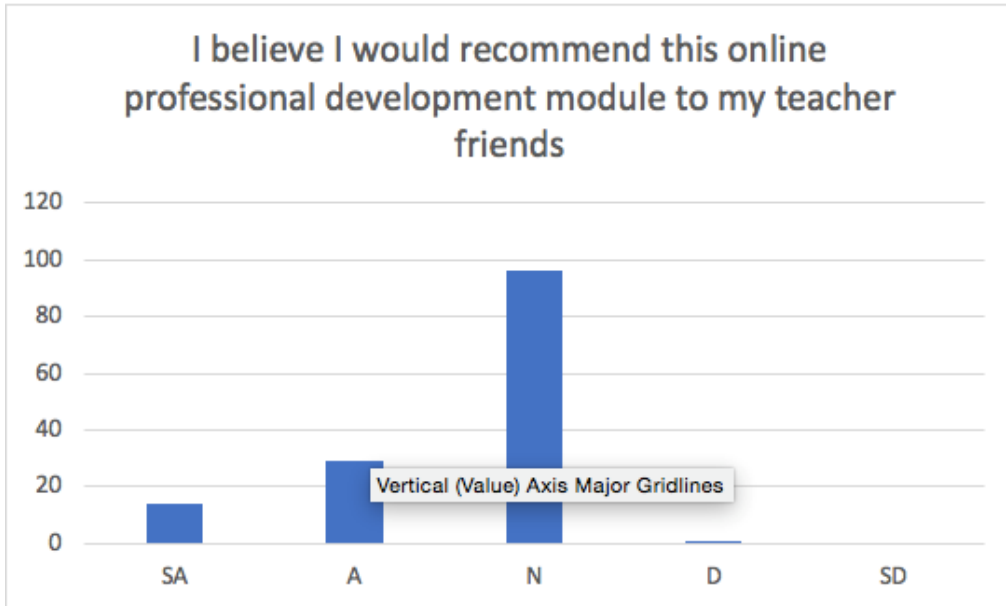


Figure 7.7. Results of question related to participant recommendations.

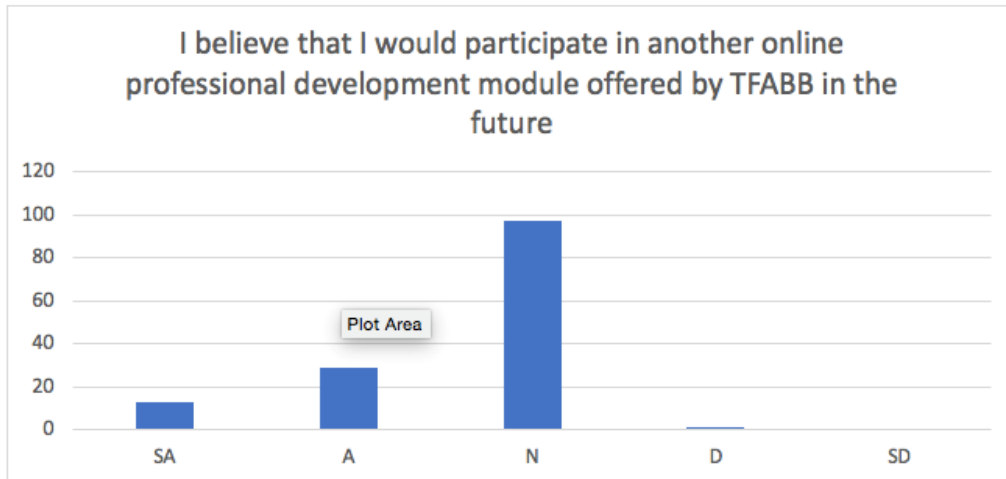


Figure 7.8. Results of question related to future participation.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Limitations

There are several limitations to this study to be noted. The participation of Belizean teachers in the follow-up online professional development was low, much lower than anticipated. Having so few Belizean teachers participate in the study makes it a very small-scale study and this should be considered when reviewing results and conclusions.

Another limitation to the study is that not all of the TFABB volunteers completed the surveys, participated in discussions, conversations and interviews. However, the volunteers that did participate in the study are founders and key decision makers for the organization of TFABB. All participants in this study are volunteers which makes it difficult to have consistent participation.

A third limitation to this study is my own personal biases. My desire for this study to be deemed as useful to TFABB is a bias that I was aware of throughout the entire process; however, it is a bias that should be noted by my audience.

8.2 Trustworthiness

When I began this study, the goal was to learn if an online follow-up professional development structure would support TFABB's work with Belizean teachers. Across over two decades, TFABBs work has shifted, and changed based on the Belizean teachers' needs. After the first administration of my online follow-up professional development intervention, and talking with Dr. Viruru, I decided to administer additional online professional development sessions for the purpose of collecting more data, aiming to follow the criteria for quality qualitative research.

As a qualitative researcher, I chose to address significant obstacles that the organization TFABB struggles with while aiming to fulfill its mission (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). Administering multiple online professional development sessions within this study allowed for data to be collected, including opportunities for observations at different times of the year, conversations and discussions to evolve, and, for surveys to answer specific questions regarding accessible technology, instructional strategies, teacher support, and perspectives/reflections. According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), a study is deemed trustworthy if it allows for persistent observation. The structure of my study, multiple methods of data collection, across time, gave the TFABB volunteers and me the opportunity to observe and reflect about the follow-up online professional development across time, and different times of the year. Furthermore, the structure of my study allowed for the process of data triangulation, defined as “using multiple data resources in time, space and person” (p. 121). During the study, as questions were answered, significant themes emerged, as well as more questions. For example, across sources, this study revealed that the technology perceived as accessible to Belizean teachers was not as usable as thought before the study. By administering an anonymous survey to Belizean teachers during a face-to-face visit in August during their in-service workshop, information was revealed, and correlated between TFABB volunteers and Belizean teachers; the results illuminated that even though Belizean teachers have cell phones, data usage cost money. The cost of phone data usage to view online professional development had not been considered before this study. This information leads to several important conclusions, including that online professional development videos must be short. Furthermore, questions developed regarding how to make the online professional

development more enticing for Belizean teachers to want to participate. Even if professional development videos were shorter, there is still a cost for phone data. Through data and method triangulation, as well as member checking, offering TFABB members a chance to participate in a final survey and access to viewing this paper, an important idea came to light; TFABB should pursue a partnership with The Ministry of Education and offer Belizean teachers their necessary continuing education credits for participating in online professional development. Although this idea was new when considering the structure of online professional development, offering credit for participation in TFABB professional development was consistent with our past work; during TFABB's August face-to-face professional development workshops, Belizean teachers earned their necessary continuing education credits. This was an incentive for the Belizean teachers to participate in our August professional development workshops. Not only did they have access to learning quality, research based instructional practices but they earned their required continuing education credits to continue in their teaching position.

For qualitative research to be considered quality, it has to be relevant and transferable, across contexts (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). In alignment with past TFABB work, this idea of offering on-going teacher education credit is sensitive to the Belizean teachers' context; they must obtain continuing education credit to hold their teaching positions. Coincidentally, offering an online professional development structure to acquire this credit within shorter video segments would help Belizean teachers to acquire what they need, offering added value to paying money to use phone data. Moreover,

providing shorter videos would require less usage of phone data, which is less money spent by Belizean teachers.

The idea of looking closely at the causes of unforeseen problems/failures within a study is transferable to all groups. For instance, when new problems emerge, a researcher should consider the context for which the study is taking place. Honoring the context for which people live is necessary for authentic and valuable work to exist. Likewise, organizations that are looking to serve others from a distance may benefit from the results of this study. Although technology seems accessible to all with the rising use of cell phones around the world, this study suggests that different parts of the world offer different cell phone plans for data usage, and it is necessary to consider ways to overcome this obstacle. The results of this study reveal a need to think about ways to utilize technology that works for people, regardless of location in the world.

The administration of surveys was a method utilized to address dependability and confirmability to ensure that the conclusions were “grounded in data” (Korstjens and Moser, p. 122, 2018). The use of surveys ensured the collection of exact words and thoughts of the TFABB volunteers and Belizean teachers, outside of conversations, discussions and interviews. This data revealed through the surveys offered TFABB information to formulate possible next steps for work with the Belizean teachers.

Korstjens and Moser (2018) stress the importance of a researcher “being self-aware and reflective about your own role in the process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting the data, and in the preconceived assumptions” (p. 123). Throughout this study, I kept notes of conversations, discussions and interviews. Keeping concrete notes allowed me to stick to the data. Additionally, I named my own biases related to TFABB

and this study. Entering this study, I was self-aware that I am emotionally invested in TFABB's work; I am extremely interested in finding ways for TFABB to actualize its mission. Throughout the study, I kept a personal journal to process my observations, always grounding my reflections in data.

8.3 Conclusions

Overall, participation lessened across three tries for this intervention. However, although the participation was low, this study revealed important ideas about which technological tools would best support a follow-up online professional development structure for TFABB. During post discussions, interviews and survey results, TFABB volunteers felt it beneficial to learn that the Belizean teachers did not utilize the computer labs or Google resources. In a survey, one TFABB volunteer commented on the importance of utilizing simple technological resources, "There is an issue getting the teachers to participate. The technology being used needs to be simple and not require creating new accounts to access it. This has a lot of potential once the bugs are worked out." Another volunteer shared her belief that the study helped to reveal that the technology used worked well stating in a post intervention survey, "Yes, especially since more and more teachers will have internet access and more are younger with internet savvy." Additionally, another TFABB volunteer shared, "The feedback that the google docs is not a good tool for Belizean." We learned that phones are helpful; however, viewing videos may be costly and difficult to do depending on the Belizean teachers' provider and cell phone plan. In a completed survey, a Belizean teacher shared, "The video is there. I can retrieve it for review. Awesome." This comment supported the information uncovered that the public YouTube videos were accessible. A few TFABB

volunteers shared their belief that the videos must be 5 minutes or shorter in the future as we know the Belizean teachers are able to access yet we must be mindful of how much data it takes to view videos. We learned that it costs money to view videos, even with access to a free website like YouTube, TFABB volunteers must keep respect that viewing videos may be costly via personal phones. Also, TFABB volunteers shared that time should not be wasted on trying to set up open discussions online. Instead, a focus should be on making short accessible videos and holding conversations via email with Belizean teachers. The cost and access to a working internet may have been factors in the lack of participation in this follow-up online professional development structure; however, TFABB volunteers believed that technology is evolving everywhere, including Belize and younger teachers are more savvy and possibly willing to spend more money on their phone plans.

Even with multiple tries to provide online follow-up professional development, the Belizean teachers did not participate. In fact, the teachers participated less across the attempts to provide this structure of professional development. Less than 10 Belizean teachers participated in the first round of professional development, with only one teacher showing signs of engagement through questions. The second round had less participation, with the third attempt, endeavored right after a visit to the Toledo district, having no participation. Even with the follow up sessions occurring at different times of year, this study revealed to TFABB that the Belizean teachers were not participating in the online structure, even though they conveyed interest in a survey taken before the final attempt of online follow-up professional development, Belizean teachers did not participate in the next session offered.

From pre and post interviews of TFABB members, three larger ideas/themes emerged; the need for authentic, research based work that successfully moves Belizean teachers forward in their instructional choices, accessibility to ongoing research based professional development, and, finally, providing professional development to Belizean teachers that helps them meet their continuing education requirements were repeated as important factors for TFABB members, and their visions for how our work should look presently and in the future.

The purpose of this study was to consider if TFABB members should create an online professional development component, in addition to face-to-face work. In pre intervention interviews, TFABB members shared that they felt confident that this online structure aligned with our mission, with the format of the study providing Belizean teachers professional development determined by their requests, including research based instructional practices and this structure would have little financial impact on TFABB.

In post intervention interviews TFABB members expressed that they were surprised that the online follow-up professional development structure was ineffective. With little to no participation from the Belizean teachers, it became unmistakable that this structure of online professional development should not be an area of focus for TFABB members currently. The study proved to be beneficial to TFABB as an organization because the information uncovered reveals ways for us to pursue online professional development successfully in the future.

In completing this study, it illuminates the importance of creating professional development that meets the needs of the participants. So often, energy, time and money are spent in creating professional development opportunities for teachers that includes

quality information; however, the delivery is ineffective; thus, the professional development is ineffective, wasting valuable energy of the creators, money, which is difficult to obtain, and time, which should be used wisely to keep both professional development providers and teachers highly engaged in the important work of education for our future generation. TFABB leaders are thoughtful, always, in how to best live its mission and be good stewards of funds. The results of this study help TFABB to consider structures never utilized before that would be effective in moving the Belizean teachers' practices forward for their students, and financially sustainable.

8.4 Scholarly Significance of the Study

This study reveals and reminds educators of the importance of evaluating professional development based on how effective it is in meeting the needs of the participants. Effective professional development is a problem within the world of education that must be examined for students' needs to be met. Furthermore, this study offers ideas for other non-profit organizations to reflect upon as they make decisions on how to best utilize their resources in the creation of future plans that align with their mission and meet their goals. Additionally, this study adds to the research of considering ways to utilize technology as a means to provide effective professional development. In creating this intervention, the quality and length of the videos was a concern for TFABB members. Moreover, even if people have access to technology, we must consider if the technology is authentically accessible and user friendly for participants. Even with many people having their own personal cell phone, it appears that additional costs may occur when viewing videos, making the accessibility limited for the participants since it costs money to view videos. This information uncovered speaks to creating shorter videos and

asks the question of how to create shorter videos that contain research based instructional tools. Finally, this study lends to more research on how to garner consistent participation for asynchronous online professional development so that it effectively moves teachers forward in their instructional choices.

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APPENDIX A

STATEMENT OF IRB DISPOSITION OF THE PROPOSED STUDY

No IRB necessary for study

Email communication from Dr. Radhika Viruru on May 16, 2016

“Howdy. We received word yesterday that you do not need to pursue IRB approval for your

proposed studies. This is on the understanding that you will stick with what you proposed and not attempt to publish it or otherwise generalize it. In that case you would need to get approval from the IRB.”

APPENDIX B

INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TFABB VOLUNTEERS

How long have you been involved with TFABB, and how did you get involved?

What do you believe TFABB does well in regards to our partnership with the Belizean teachers and leaders?

What is something that you believe that you personally do well as a volunteer for our organization, TFABB?

What is something that you wish would go smoother with our TFABB work?

APPENDIX C

SURVEY FOR TFABB VOLUNTEERS

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey in the next 24 hours about this online professional development module. Read each statement and rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement. The rating is:

SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, N-No Opinion, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree

The technology utilized is easily accessible.

SA A N D SD

The videos are easy to view and well structured.

SA A N D SD

The instructional strategies presented align and build from with past TFABB workshops.

SA A N D SD

I find the instructional strategies shared to be useful.

SA A N D SD

I find this online professional development module a platform that effectively shares instructional strategies.

SA A N D SD

I find this online professional development module as a space for teachers to find support.

SA A N D SD

As a TFABB volunteer, I would like to facilitate future online professional development modules for Belizeans.

SA A N D SD

Overall, I believe the online professional development module is effective in helping to share research based instructional practices and provide support for Belizean teachers.

SA

A

N

D

SD

Comments/Suggestions:

APPENDIX D

SURVEY FOR BELIZEAN TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey in the next 24 hours about this online professional development module. Read each statement and rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement. The rating is:

SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, N-No Opinion, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree

The technology utilized is easily accessible.

SA A N D SD

The videos are easy to view and well structured.

SA A N D SD

The lessons presented align and build from with past TFABB workshops.

SA A N D SD

The timeframe of the online professional development module, from beginning to end, is achievable for me to participate.

SA A N D SD

As a participant, I believe this online professional module gives me ideas of lessons to use with my students.

SA A N D SD

As a participant, I feel supported by the TFABB leader of this online module.

SA A N D SD

Overall, I believe the online professional development module is helping me to be a more knowledgeable teacher for my students.

SA A N D SD

I believe I would recommend this online professional development module to my teacher friends.

SA A N D SD

I believe that I would participate in another online professional development module offered by TFABB in the future.

SA A N D SD

Comments/Suggestions:

APPENDIX E

POST-INTERVENTION QUESTIONS FOR TFABB VOLUNTEERS

What were your overall thoughts about the logistics of this online professional development module?

Do you believe the technology utilized was effective (YouTube, Google Documents)?

Do you believe the instructional strategies shared with Belizean teachers aligned with our TFABB work in the past?

Did you see evidence of the Belizean teachers learning the instructional strategies, and implementing the strategies?

Do you believe that this online professional development module creates a space for Belizean teachers to feel supported as they work to become more knowledgeable teachers?

Specifically, what did you think was effective about this online professional development module?

Do you believe this online professional development module helps to solve the problem of on-going support throughout the year for Belizean teachers?

Do you believe that this online professional development module helps TFABB as an organization meet its goals more effectively to share knowledge and support Belizean teachers in forming their understanding of research based instructional practices?

Would you create your own online professional development module and facilitate it for Belizean teachers in the future?

What are additional suggestions, thoughts, and concerns that you have with this online professional development structure?