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Claudia Vela

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, claudia.vela02@utrgv.edu

Velma D. Menchaca

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, velma.menchaca@utrgv.edu

Hilda Silva

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, hilda.silva@utrgv.edu

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University Faculty Perceptions of Professional Development: Impact and Effectiveness

Clauda Vela, Velma D. Menchaca, and Hilda Silva

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine faculty perceptions of the effectiveness and impact of professional development programs and activities in the areas of teaching, research, and service. This qualitative phenomenological study was conducted in a four-year Hispanic-serving institution in South Texas. It focused on exploring tenured and tenure-track faculty perceptions and experiences of their participation in professional development to help them meet tenure and promotion expectations. Analysis of data showed that faculty had mixed feelings about the workshops and training sessions that were offered on campus. However, networking, collaboration, and access to resources and technology were practices that enhanced their professional experiences. Further research needs to be conducted to learn more about why some faculty decide not to participate in faculty development or professional development activities on campuses.

Introduction

In all institutions of higher education, effective professional development is necessary to support the complex roles of faculty members. A university or college's quality relates to faculty work and their contributions to teaching, research, and service. Institutions that design interventions to address student academic success focus on faculty development. Essential education improvements seldom occur without professional development (Guskey (2014). As faculty members transition into their careers, they encounter different expectations and needs in their roles faculty members. New faculty have indicated that it is difficult to balance the

expectations of their new role and execute the different responsibilities as new faculty members (Boman et al., 2013; Sorcinelli et al., 2006). Challenges of non-tenure track faculty include lower salaries, less scholarly research, and fewer opportunities to participate in departmental governance (Thedwall, 2008). Junior faculty face the challenges of being on tenure track. Midcareer faculty members face the expectations of academic leaders to assume more leadership, administrative, and service duties as they try to maintain the same enthusiasm about their teaching and research (Cavazos-Vela et al., 2019). Yet, many senior faculty members often find themselves amid new innovations and technologies, and less satisfied with their careers due to lack of recognition, collegiality, or administrative leadership (Russell, 2010). Evaluating the effectiveness of continued professional development opportunities that for college and university faculty is crucial to understanding how faculty participation impacts and leads to change and increased student learning (Fink, 2013; Guskey, 2002).

Faculty Development in Teaching, Research, and Service

Faculty members' expertise and commitment contribute to students' success, shape the nature of research, and impact the community in and out of the institution (Sorcinelli et al., 2006). Kezar and Maxey (2012) explained that faculty positively influence their students' interest and engagement in their studies partly because of their passion for their fields. However, good teaching does not happen overnight; it requires knowledge, skills, and effective preparation and training. In higher education, professional development is a form of organized support on campus to help faculty members develop as instructors, scholars, and citizens (Sorcinelli, 2007). Professional development sessions or workshops can range from general orientation sessions to brown bag lunches, reading groups, formal and informal workshops, online training on pedagogy, research, and more. Professional development is a continuous, systematic, and

integral process to improving learning and practice (Cavazos-Vela et al., 2019; Elliot, 2014). According to Hunzicker (2010), professional development must be supportive, job-embedded, instructionally focused, collaborative, and ongoing. Similar research on the topic is coherent with Hunzicker's findings (Díaz-Maggioli, 2004; Hord, 1997; Malik et al., 2015). Malik et al. (2015) assessed the perceived effectiveness of professional development programs in higher education. They concluded that they should be practical and designed to address the daily classroom problems of students.

Professors in higher education progress in their careers by demonstrating the highest standards in teaching, research, and service (Gentry & Stokes, 2015). Their performance in these three categories is the basis for recommending tenure, promotion, and merit-based salary increases. Attendance in teaching workshops, state/national/international conferences, and seminars on appropriate course areas, including online teaching training and certifications, is part of the expectations for tenure and promotion and post-tenure review for faculty. Research on tenure-track and tenured faculty members' workplace satisfaction indicates that faculty satisfaction also depends on the professional development opportunities available on campus (Rosser, 2004; Russell, 2010).

Faculty Development for Teaching

Faculty teaching development programs vary in structure and function. They depend on financial support, human resources such as staff support and faculty time, and also campus resources such as other faculty development programs within the institution (Lancaster et al., 2014). However, there are topics to be addressed in a faculty development effort that emphasizes teaching, learning, and assessment: syllabus/course design, writing objectives, constructing assessments, rubric design, grading strategies, student motivation, learning disabilities,

classroom management, active learning, presentation and communication skills, self-reflection, and searching and evaluating evidence (Lancaster et al., 2014).

Administrators on many campuses use extrinsic rewards to increase faculty involvement in professional development to meet accountability demands and raise faculty productivity (Hardré, 2014). For example, some of the extrinsic rewards were in financial support such as travel funds to conferences, payments for conference registrations, stipends for attending certain sessions. Also, the support could also be in reference to release time with approval of department chairs (Lian, 2014). For faculty to meet the learning needs of a diverse student body, they need to keep up to date with new developments in their fields, the characteristics of their students, and the facilitation of learning offered by technology (Ambrose et al., 2010; Sorcinelli, 2007). Research shows that faculty participation in professional development activities positively affects classroom pedagogy, student learning, and the overall culture of teaching and learning on a college or university (Condon et al., 2015; Sorcinelli et al., 2006). As online and hybrid courses continue to increase in higher education, faculty require new knowledge and skills to develop courses and teach in this mode.

Faculty Development for Research

Research in higher education has established that productivity, scholarship, and collaboration are central to faculty work in higher education institutions (MacLeod et al., 2011; Royal et al., 2014). Today, faculty development centers in research universities provide opportunities for faculty to do original creative research in their disciplines and teaching by promoting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). Teaching and learning centers support faculty members who want to participate in SOTL projects (Gillespie & Robertson, 2010). Mentoring programs encourage experienced faculty members with research skills to share

their expertise with those who need assistance in increasing research productivity (Rush & Wheeler, 2011). Higher education institutions offer research development services tailored to the faculty's mission and needs.

Faculty Development for Service

Promotion and tenure decisions are generally based on teaching, research, and service. Ward (2003) identified two different forms of service in higher education: internal service, which refers to service tied to shared governance, and external service, which is a means for institutions to inform people outside academia about what they do to meet societal needs. Internal service includes serving on internal committees and advisory boards, mentoring and advising students, and administrative duties, while external service includes consulting service learning and community and civic learning (Ward, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

Research indicates that faculty professional development improves faculty performance and student success in higher education (McKee & Tew, 2013; Rutz et al., 2012). Evaluating the effectiveness of continued professional development opportunities provided to college and university faculty and administrators is crucial to understand how faculty participation impacts and leads to change and increased student learning (Fink, 2013; Guskey, 2002). This study investigated faculty perceptions of their participation in professional development activities in teaching, research, and service at a four-year university. Research on faculty's perceived effectiveness and impact of faculty development can build awareness of its significance and its critical role in the ongoing growth of faculty members and institutional success.

The following research questions were used in this study.

1. What characteristics of professional development are found to be beneficial by faculty members?
2. What is a positive or negative experience faculty had regarding professional development opportunities for teaching, research, or service?
3. How have faculty implemented changes as a result of professional development?

Theoretical Framework

Three factors influence instructors' success in the classroom: knowledge, skills, and training (Cooper, 2004). Through training, faculty can improve teaching practices, innovate, and adopt and implement change (Hall & Hord, 2011; Smith et al., 2003). The theoretical framework used to illuminate the understanding of professional development processes for adult learners in higher education, the researchers utilized the adult learning theory, andragogy. Even though no single theory can explain how adults learn, learning theory, andragogy, can explain how educators learn, understand, and put into practice the findings from scientifically based research (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Andragogy tries to identify how adult learners learn and what professional developers do to involve them in the learning process; in other words, it is the "art and science of helping adults learn" (McGrath, 2009). McGrath (2009) wrote that Knowles's vision of andragogy presents the learner as self-directed, independent, and responsible for their learning. Faculty members' motivation to attend the program affects the effectiveness and success of professional development.

Method

A qualitative phenomenological study investigated faculty perceptions of their participation in professional development activities in teaching, research, and service. The survey

assessed faculty opinions toward professional development opportunities at the university. Surveys were delivered online to tenured faculty members and faculty on the tenure track.

Participants

Purposeful sampling was used to obtain a sample “believed to be representative of a given population” (Gay et al., 2012, p. 135). The participants for this study were faculty members who had taught at the university at least three years. The participants were either an Assistant, Associate, or Full Professors and were either tenured or on tenure-track.

The study included 168 faculty members from a Hispanic-serving institution in South Texas. Of the participants, 52.4% (n = 88) of participants were male, 45.8% (n = 77) were female, and 1.8% (n=3) did not indicate whether they were male or female. From the surveys submitted, 55.4% (n = 93) of participants stated to be White, 22.6% (n = 38) Hispanic, 10.1% (n = 17) Asian, 4.8% (n = 8) Black, and 4.8% (n = 8) Multiracial. Furthermore, 2.4% (n = 4) of participants did not indicate their ethnicity. Participants consisted of tenured faculty 56.5% (n = 95) and tenure-track faculty 41.1% (n = 69) while 2.4% (n = 4) of participants did not indicate whether they were tenured or on tenure track.

Furthermore, 40.5% (n = 68) were assistant professors, 34.5% (n = 58) were associate professors, and 23.2% (n = 39) were full professors who taught in different departments while 1.8% (n = 3) of participants did not indicate their rank. Most participants were employed in higher education for 11 or more years, 53.6% (n = 90), while 16.8% (n = 28) stated 6-10 years and 28.0% (n = 47) stated 1-5 years. However, 1.8% (n = 3) of participants did not indicate their years of employment in higher education. Also, 44.0% (n = 74) mentioned having taught 10 or more courses in the last three years, while 35.7% (n = 60) expressed having taught 6-10 courses,

and 18.4% (n = 31) stated 1-5 courses while 1.8% (n = 3) of participants did not indicate how many courses they had taught in the last three years.

Participation in Professional Development

Among the surveys submitted, 91.7 % (n = 154) of participants had participated in the following professional development activities: workshops, conferences, peer observation, book clubs, webinars, departmental meetings, and publications. Also, 6.5% (n = 11) expressed they not participated in professional development activities in the last three years. Yet, 1.8% (n = 3) did not respond to this item. However, 47.6% (n = 80) of participants mentioned having attended 1-5 professional development activities, while 31.0% (n = 52) attended 6-10 activities, and 18.5% (n = 31) stated 11 or more activities. Yet, 3.0% (n = 5) did not respond to this item.

Most participants, 45.8% (n = 77) taught only face-to-face campus classes, 8.9% (n = 15) taught only online courses, 6.0% (n = 10) taught only hybrid courses, and 11.3% (n = 19) and taught both campus and online courses. Furthermore, 11.3% (n = 19) taught both campus and hybrid courses while 0.6% (n = 1) taught both online and hybrid courses, but no campus courses. However, 8.3% (n = 24) taught campus, online, and hybrid courses, and 1.8% (n = 3) of participants did not indicate which teaching modes they taught. For descriptive purposes, most faculty, 52.4% (n = 88), taught some combination, including online or hybrid classes.

Data Analysis Procedures

Participants' transcriptions were analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) phenomenological method (Creswell, 2007). The data were collected, organized, and exported it to an Excel spreadsheet file. The data were divided into three different worksheets in Excel: one for teaching, another one for research, and the third one for service. Recorded responses included all survey responses that were 100% completed by the participants and partially completed responses that

had been closed out. Exported data allowed us to view how individual participants answered each question in the survey. The responses in progress or incomplete were deleted to begin the analysis via Qualtrics.

Secondly, the data were explored and reduced into themes through coding. This process allowed the researchers to obtain the overall feeling of the transcriptions. The researchers analyzed each set of data separately, first trying to get a general sense of the data and then fully engaging in the data to develop “both a big and little mental pictures of what was happening in the research situation” (Rovai et al., 2013, p. 33). Then, the researchers removed redundancy in the codes and simplified the list by counting the frequency of codes (Rovai et al., 2013).

When clustering the participants’ responses, themes were developed. Significant phrases or statements were identified that pertained to the lived experiences of professional development opportunities for teaching, research, and service from each survey. Some faculty used this section on the survey to describe experiences that, although related to their work in academia, they did not relate to their experience with professional development. These statements were not included in the data analysis but were used to develop the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

Results

The following analysis presents the data from the survey. The participants were asked three open-ended questions that addressed the research questions. Pseudonyms were used to protect the participants.

Teaching

The survey demonstrated that faculty considered professional development for teaching favorably. One faculty member indicated: “They are opportunities to discuss and share

experiences with colleagues” (Cory, Associate Professor, College of Education), while another participant mentioned: “It helps me a lot. It helps me deliver live experiences to students and have them better understand their class subject” (Lu, Assistant Professor, College of Engineering and Computer Science). However, a few instructors had mixed feelings about their experiences. One participant felt that the resources obtained from attending a professional development activity were more valuable than the session itself. He stated,

I don’t know that any of these professional development sessions have been especially useful in changing my behavior and leading to improved performance in the classroom. However, there have been a few books given to participants in some of these sessions that I found very interesting and useful; they allow for deeper engagement with ideas about teaching and learning and about productivity as a scholar, which is really important for the success of a younger person like me (Joe, Assistant Professor, College of Sciences).

On the other hand, faculty motivation to learn seemed important when it was about teaching with technology. Online, hybrid, or Teaching over Instructional Television (ITV) professional development and institutional support offered by the Center for Online Learning and Teaching Technology (COLTT) resulted in faculty satisfaction with their teaching experience and commitment to what they did in their classes. In this study, a few faculty considered professional development in this rubric particularly useful. One faculty member commented, “COLTT provides excellent workshops” (Joseph, Associate Professor, College of Education).

Further analysis showed that even though training is offered within the university by different departments and teaching centers, many faculty sought out professional development opportunities outside the institution. “I attended weeklong conferences out of state. Really immersing myself overtime and focusing helped the most” (Iván, Associate Professor, College of

Liberal Arts). Other faculty members reported that learning through field trips, being Board members, and attending meetings were productive for their professional development.

Last month's visit by a delegation from a university in Peru. Not sure if it was intended as professional development, but I learned a lot about different perspectives on education, and it helped me think of my own teaching in new ways. (George, Assistant Professor, College of Liberal Arts)

Some faculty members reported negative feelings towards those professional development activities they were forced to attend. There were occasions when the planned professional development activities do not meet faculty's expectations or individual needs based on their discipline; as a result, faculty attend sessions that are perceived to be ineffective for their learning or teaching. One faculty member pointed out: "They (administrators) do not ask us about our preferences and needs; they come up with some sessions and ask us to attend" (Jane, Assistant Professor, College of Health Affairs). Another faculty member stated: "(P.D.) it hasn't really made a difference for me" (Carlos, Assistant Professor, College of Education).

"Professional development activities planned and implemented with faculty's needs in mind are beneficial because they are derived from real-life needs, allowing the participants to choose the content and process of learning" (Díaz-Maggioli, 2004). Additional support after a professional development session on new teaching technologies seemed to be necessary, as other participants indicated in the survey. "(My experience) slightly negative; I was told software would work in a certain way and promised support. Software did not work as I was told and was not pleased with the support I got" (Mark, Professor, College of Sciences).

Research

From the surveys submitted, a few faculty reported that being autonomous in their development and being responsible for their learning was necessary for their research (Loon, 2016). Many participants thought professional development has helped them improve; however, the learning has occurred outside the university, mainly in conferences. One faculty member indicated,

(I) attended and presented at state-level conference in my field. I met people who do similar research and who could also help me in my service (as well as research and teaching). I think the university must not continue to discount or downplay state-level conferences. (Eve, Associate Professor, College of Liberal Arts)

At the same time, another faculty member stated, “Attending conferences, research symposiums have helped me network, something that it is difficult to do within my department sometimes. It was through this networking that I started a collaboration with researchers outside the university” (Tom, Associate Professor, College of Business and Entrepreneurship).

Half of the participants in this study indicated that they find professional development opportunities for research beneficial to their work and career advancement. One participant explained,

I attended a publishing session at a conference two years ago that gave me tips, ideas, and contacts for future research articles, and I was introduced to the acquisition’s editor of an academic press who gave me guidelines about submitting a book proposal. I now have a book contract with that publisher and working on the book. (Maria, Professor, College of Liberal Arts)

One challenge faced by professional developers and professional development centers was to find ways to address the needs and expectations of faculty who had vast experience in

research and publication. One faculty questioned, “How to write an abstract, really? I have 100 published articles, and I need this workshop?” (Kate, Associate Professor, College of Liberal Arts). Another faculty member explained,

I attended a course about research tools. I think it was called ‘5 Tools for Research;’ It was not very helpful in my opinion. The content was about basic database skills that any student should know already-certainly information a faculty member would already know. (Mary, Associate Professor, College of Health Affairs)

A different participant stated, “How to have a productive summer. Just indifferent and useless since I already had 27 productive summers before being required to attend this workshop” (Mark, Professor, College of Liberal Arts).

Service

Contribution in service is an essential criterion for promotion and tenure decisions. Although it varies by discipline, faculty members are expected to serve their community and participate in university-wide service, including service to the profession or discipline, and administrative and committee service in the department, college, and university. In this sense, universities stress the importance of training faculty in service learning and community engagement pedagogy. This training helps faculty understand how to address community-identified needs while developing academic skills and commitment to a community. Nevertheless, from the surveys submitted, only 6.42% considered faculty development for service sufficient, positive, or effective.

From the surveys submitted, a few faculty responded to receiving valuable information on university resources that helped them with their service. One faculty member indicated, “I participated in the leadership institute. I think it was a great opportunity to learn more about the

university and its resources. I became actively involved in service after this” (Doris, Assistant Professor, College of Liberal Arts). Another participant explained, “I’ve been able to learn about the resources offered to meet my service needs” (Lola, Assistant Professor, College of Education). Another faculty stated: “

I have participated in numerous professional development opportunities that have impacted and influenced my desire to conduct my own professional development sessions as part of my service. I have applied what I have learned in order to hopefully develop an effective experience with my colleagues. (Patty, Assistant Professor, College of Liberal Arts)

There seem to be a few challenges in service. A few participants thought that it is difficult for faculty to advance in their careers in higher education if they are more productive in service, but not in research. Alan, Assistant Professor from the College of Sciences explained, “This doesn’t really seem to apply. We’re mostly cautioned not to give too much of ourselves and leave no time for our research and teaching.” There was another faculty member who indicated the opposite.

Working across departments and colleges is a necessity here. But there are so many disincentives from doing so. People often do not recognize service beyond one’s own department. While I want to be involved in cross-department and cross-disciplinary service, I have ended up doing vastly more service than other faculty, particularly senior faculty, who seem to do virtually no service yet have secure positions. (Jen, Associate Professor, College of Liberal Arts)

Also, one participant stated, “Too much service expectation spread across too few faculty members” (Brad, Associate Professor, College of Liberal Arts). Lack of awareness about the

training available on campus is another challenge mentioned by a participant, “I’d like more email offerings on service training. Would like more information on what is happening on campus” (Carl, Assistant Professor, College of Health Affairs). Additionally, one participant explained that he is not normally aware of what was offered outside his own department. Even though most of these experiences were not related to the professional development opportunities that had been offered at the university, they described how some faculty felt about service.

Findings

The findings from this study revealed that most faculty perceived professional development sessions to be beneficial to their teaching. Outcomes such as support and community are important to understand previous research conducted by Diaz-Maggioli (2004) and Guskey (2014) who indicated that faculty who attend professional development activities tend to see the value in them. One faculty member described his experience in this study, “(PD) it helps me a lot. It helps me deliver live experiences to students and have them better understand their class subject” (Luna, Assistant Professor, College of Engineering and Computer Science). The findings support previous research that suggests that when faculty meet and work on teaching and learning issues, they develop empathy, increase collaboration between disciplines, and increase general awareness of the complexity of teaching and learning (Cox, 2004).

However, Guskey (2014) considered that professional learning for educators had a mixed history. This study confirmed what was stated by Guskey (2014) in the area of teaching. Data revealed that an important number of faculty felt they have changed their teaching productivity as a result of the support given through professional development. The discrepancy in these results might relay in the fact that faculty who do attend professional development sessions more often tend to be more positive toward those opportunities because they find a space to share and

receive from other participants who might be experiencing the same issues in their classroom. Nevertheless, there is a generalized belief that faculty professional development is unrelated to improvement in student outcomes or achievement (Hines, 2009). This might explain in part why some faculty in this study felt reluctant to attend professional development. However, it is important to highlight the importance of the support faculty received from personnel and the resources that faculty indicated to be beneficial to their teaching. This can explain why 106 faculty who did attend workshops and training on campus still reported a sense of support and community in their institution.

Previous research has stressed that faculty reported a sense of alienation and dissatisfaction when they lacked resources, research support, or office space (Hart, 2011). It was surprising to learn that from this study, 6.5% (n=11) of faculty stated they had not attended any professional development sessions in the last three years. The literature on professional development indicates that important improvements in education must include professional development (Brock, 2010; Guskey, 2014; McKee & Tew, 2013). McKee and Tee (2013) stressed the relationship between faculty development and job satisfaction. These researchers found that the lack of faculty support by administrators contributes to feelings of alienation, and dissatisfaction. Further research might explore how faculty have experienced overall workplace change in our university. Further research could also explore faculty perceptions of job satisfaction for teaching, research, and services on our main campuses. Further research needs to be conducted to understand why faculty choose not to participate in professional development activities and how to compensate faculty who attend.

From the surveys submitted, participants reported that being autonomous in their learning was important to their research. This finding is consistent with previous research in adult learners

which states that faculty are self-directed, ready to learn, experienced, task-centered, and intrinsically motivated (Hunzicker, 2010). This finding might explain the reason why some faculty did not feel they had received the support they needed. They did find that needed support and connections in the conferences they attended in their fields.

However, other faculty reported feeling positive toward professional development opportunities for service. One participant indicated, “As new faculty, I did not know where to start, so attending professional development helped me familiarize with institutional policies and find spaces in the community to begin serving” (Ayon, Professor, College of Sciences). Cox (2004) stressed the challenges faculty on tenure-track report before achieving tenure. They include stress-related health problems and a lack of community. This study found that faculty perceive a higher level of support and satisfaction when they are part of a learning culture.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this research study, the following recommendations are made for faculty, academic administrators, and faculty developers. Previous research stresses that faculty consider research their top priority; however, they spend more time on teaching and service (Chen, 2015). Data from this study suggest that faculty are expected to be more productive in research than in teaching and service. While research is important to advance in one’s field, good teaching is expected from every university professor no matter his or her rank. In this sense, academic leaders are an important force to encourage faculty to look for new learning opportunities on campus (Lancaster et al., 2014).

On many occasions, faculty members perceive a lack of shared governance where decisions are frequently made from the top down. Faculty developers should work with academic administrators to determine faculty’s needs in their discipline and plan accordingly. Thus,

professional development should be data-driven. The academic centers in charge of providing professional development must create a strong partnership with deans and chairs from the different departments to gain their trust and support. Further research should focus on determining faculty needs in teaching, research, and service.

A recommendation is to have at least two follow-up sessions after the first workshop, which is in most cases informative. Major efforts have been made to help faculty improve their research productivity. Data from the study suggest that the writing workshops or sessions have shown to be beneficial for faculty. However, for teaching and service, it would be important to follow up with faculty, not only to provide them with further support, but also to understand the impact the new learning has on faculty's practice in the long term. Additionally, peer review of teaching must be standardized in all departments. Peer evaluations have been shown to help improve teaching and foster collegiality among members.

When peer review of teaching is incorporated into university practices and culture, it has the potential to facilitate reflective change and growth for instructors (Siddiqui et al., 2007). Further research might explore how faculty learning communities impact faculty development outcomes for teaching, research, and service. Faculty reported having invested time attending conferences outside the university. Based on this finding, another recommendation was to allocate funding for professional development opportunities where faculty present at conferences or attend as participants.

Conclusion

In this study, there was a significant positive correlation between faculty development for teaching and service and perceived levels of support and community. A positive correlation was also found between professional development for service and faculty perceived levels of skills

and productivity. Overall, these results indicate that in this university, teaching and service are two areas where faculty receive support in different stages of implementation. As mentioned before, results from this study provided insights into characteristics of professional development that are important for faculty in terms of teaching, research, and service. Nevertheless, other questions have emerged from this research: What can a university do to engage faculty in the culture of the organization? How can the organizational culture be changed through professional development? How can departments and faculty work together in a single direction?

Faculty development in higher education is an area that is overshadowed by other aspects of the work environment such as job satisfaction, communication between administrators and faculty, resources for research, and support of colleagues (Olsen, 1992). The work environment could improve if more faculty and administrators attended professional development. Olsen's study on why faculty leave a university is as current as it was in the 90s. The findings revealed that faculty who decided to leave a university reported a sense of overall alienation and dissatisfaction. In this regard, findings from this current study support Olsen's research in the field. Findings indicated that faculty members who did attend professional development activities identified practices to improve their professional experience. Faculty also reported positive feelings of support and community when attending professional development on campus and away from it. This finding is consistent with previous research from Fink (2013) and Eaton et al., (2015) which indicate that the implementation of effective professional development interventions by teaching and learning centers enhance faculty's overall learning experiences.

In conclusion, it is evident that faculty and administrators in institutions of higher education understand the importance of faculty development. Faculty assume that they will receive some formal faculty development, instructional development, and/or teaching

improvement services albeit in varied modalities. This type of support of faculty is a win for both faculty and administrators. Faculty feel valued as they look to administrators to give them the tools needed to be successful in the classroom. Administrators, in turn, can be seen as part of the solution as being a part of designing the landscape for students' success.

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