

Raising Stakeholder Voices: A Formative Tool for Strengthening PDSs

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ABSTRACT: Although PDS success has been widely reported within the research literature, missing from the literature are studies of formative tools that facilitate PDS implementation and development using stakeholders' collective perspectives. The purpose of this study was to understand how a participatory process, referred to as InQuiry, can be used for collecting, organizing, and examining educator perspectives. This study illustrates how we developed and used a formative tool and how the findings contributed to our collective understanding of the PDSs' current strengths and areas for improvement. The research questions guiding this study included, "How could the InQuiry process using Q-Methodology be used to capture shared educator perspectives regarding the PDS network's development?" Three strong factors were identified: "A Focus on University/ PDS Teacher Candidate Preparation," "A Focus on Culturally Responsive Education," and "A Focus on Furthering Education." These factors represented shared stakeholder perspectives and indicated areas of strength as well as signaled areas for further partnership growth.

Over the past three decades, universities have increasingly integrated Professional Development Schools as a vehicle for providing an integrated and aligned clinical context for teacher education programs. At the onset, Goodlad (1990) and Holmes (1995) recognized the need for an organizational structure that could support the cultivation of strong clinical contexts for learning to teach. Lucero (2011), concurred with both Goodlad (1990) and Holmes (1995), as he described PDSs as "clinical laboratories for effective instruction that involve University professors as theoretical and pedagogical experts; School administrators as curricular leaders in their buildings; and PK-12 teachers are the practitioners of theory" (p. 42-43). Building on the work of Goodlad (1990) and Holmes (1995), Darling-Hammond (1998) described PDSs as spaces where learning becomes: 1) experimental; 2) grounded in teacher questions; 3) collaborative; 4) connected to and derived from teachers' work with their students; and 5) sustained, intensive, and connected to other aspects of school change. Each of these definitions include the collaborative nature of PDS and recognize the multiple stakeholders required to engage in this multifaceted work. These descriptions laid the groundwork for the decades of PDS work that have followed.

After almost two decades of PDS work, the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) recognized the need to provide additional clarity in order to strengthen the multifaceted work. As a result, NAPDS created the *Nine Essential* (NAPDS, 2008) to focus attention on the foundation needed to create these strong clinical contexts. The nine required PDS essentials include:

1. A comprehensive mission that is broader in its outreach and scope than the mission of any partner and that furthers the education profession and its responsibility

to advance equity within schools and, by potential extension, the broader community;

2. A school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community;
3. Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need;
4. A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants;
5. Engagement in and public sharing of the results of deliberate investigations of practice by respective participants;
6. An articulation agreement developed by the respective participants delineating the roles and responsibilities of all involved;
7. A structure that allows all participants a forum for ongoing governance, reflection, and collaboration;
8. Work by college/university faculty and P-12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings;
9. Dedicated and shared resources and formal rewards and recognition structures.

In combination, these essentials form the foundation of strong and sustained PDS contexts.

Today, after three decades of PDS work, many Colleges of Education have built PDS networks as vehicles for creating strong clinical experiences yet we know less about how well each of those networks have actualized these nine essentials and the fundamental groundwork laid by Goodlad (1990) and the Holmes Group (1995) so many decades ago. Although the number of PDS networks continue to expand, little discussion is focused on the on-going formative assessment along the way that is needed to sustain PDS work (Wade, 2020). A formative assessment tool designed to foster collaborative stakeholder

conversation about the nine essentials could help PDS networks identify current assets as well as areas for future growth.

A Need for Formative Evaluation

Given three decades of PDS work and the natural ebb and flow of organizational change, PDSs, like other complex organizations, need opportunities to review and renew their commitment towards each of the Nine Essentials. This process requires engaging in some form of regular formative, self-assessment to assure PDSs are fulfilling their full mission and guide their progress towards the Nine Essentials. In the field of practice-based teacher education, there is increasing recognition of the inherent complexity of interorganizational PDS collaboration (Yendol-Hoppey et al., 2011) and third space implementation (Beck, 2016). Formative evaluation offers PDS a rigorous assessment process designed to identify assets and weaknesses as well as influences on the progress and effectiveness of implementation efforts. Formative evaluation enables researchers to explicitly study the complexity of implementation in order to suggest ways to strengthen context, adaptations, and response to change. If we are to sustain PDSs as a vehicle for high quality teacher preparation, then we must be sure that we have formative tools that require stakeholders to collaboratively self-assess to identify assets and areas for improvement that will help the PDS community more fully implement the PDS vision.

To date, much of the PDS research has taken a descriptive or summative perspective intended to provide examples or offer results to assess whether a program or a part of the program has been successful. For example, much of the research conducted focuses on describing PDS participant role development (see, e.g., Little, 2011; Suh & Fulginiti, 2012), the impact of a professional development network on leadership development and school improvement goals (see, e.g., Helms-Lorenz et al., 2018; Carpenter & Sherritz, 2012; Rieckhoff & Larsen, 2012), and overall program success (see, e.g., Petrosko & Munoz, 2002; Polly et al., 2015). Many of these studies examined the outcomes and impacts of PDS partnerships. Most of these studies utilized qualitative methods such as observations, interviews, and focus groups (e.g., Carpenter & Sherritz, 2012; Oliveira, 2013). Quantitative methods like surveys and pretest/post-test comparisons were also utilized (e.g., Helms-Lorenz et al., 2018; Petrosko & Munoz, 2002). There are many advantages to using these methods to examine PDS partnerships, yet the research is not necessarily useful for individual program improvement.

Formative evaluation is a method for assessing the status of a program while the program activities are forming and in progress (Nelson-Royes, 2015). The formative evaluation focuses on understanding where the program is in implementing the activities within the PDS partnership, rather than the direct and indirect outcomes of these activities. Formative evaluation provides opportunities for groups to take corrective action and make mid-course improvements before the culmination of the program (Zukoski & Luluquisen, 2002). In our exploration of the literature, only two studies explicitly focused on formative

evaluation. A study conducted by Hall et al. (2020) explored successes and failures in implementing a Culturally Responsive Evaluation approach using a formative evaluation of a district-university partnership. The lessons learned from this study was that formative evaluation is important to draw attention to the intersections between the cultural characteristics of the evaluation and how the evaluation contributes to educative insights. In a second study, by Hall and Freeman (2014), explored the use of shadowing in a formative evaluation of a professional development school that was interested in deepening role development. They found that the use of shadowing helped to understand PDS roles and how shadowing could be used as a tool for formative evaluation.

Although formative evaluation has been offered as a tool for strengthening components of PDS implementation and development, missing from our PDS literature are studies which focus on the intentional use of formative tools to capture the collective perspectives of PDS stakeholders related to the partnership's progress with the goal of strengthening the partnership. A formative participatory process would allow PDS stakeholders to collaboratively examine the status of the current PDS partnership in relation to the *PDS Nine Essentials*. This formative process would facilitate stakeholders' collective engagement in reflective practices that allow practitioners to examine the current PDS and make changes for improvements (Essential #4), engage in and public sharing of the results of deliberate investigations of practice by respective participants (Essential #5), and create a structure that allows all participants a forum for ongoing governance, reflection, and collaboration" (Essential #7). The process supports the sustainability and evolution of the partnership.

This study provides a formative process and a tool, referred to as InQuery [sic], to the PDS community that can be used to strengthen and deepen PDS work, challenging ourselves to fully realize the complete PDS mission. The capitalized "Q" represents the use of Q-methodology as a tool for strengthening PDS development (Militello et al., 2016). Cormier (2020) recently explored the use of the Q-Sort, a component of Q-methodology, as a tool for developing a Cultural Proficiency Continuum within a professional development school network. His formative tool was useful in providing the opportunity to systematically examine teacher candidates' cultural competence within a PDS network. Drawing on a similar methodology and process, the formative tool created and examined in this study moves beyond looking at a targeted area, such as cultural proficiency, and focused on understanding the broader PDS development in relation to the *Nine Essentials*.

If institutions who rely on PDSs to provide clinically based teacher preparation fail to engage in formative reflective practices to better understand the assets and needs of their partnership, they run the risk of program fatigue and failure. Formative reflective practices, like InQuery, encourage the examination of the implementation process and the impacts of programs. The purpose of this study was to better understand the PDS network's current implementation stage by developing

and exploring a participatory process for collecting, organizing, and examining participating stakeholder perspectives.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that underpins this study includes Participatory Evaluation, Community Learning Exchange, and the InQUIRY/Q-Sort Process. In combination, these concepts organize the essential elements or ideas involved in the formative evaluation process explored in this study.

Participatory Evaluation

Participatory evaluation is an approach that involves stakeholders in the evaluation process. Through engaging in participatory evaluation, stakeholders learn more about the organization and about themselves in the context and situation in which they are participating (Cooper, 2017). Fundamentally, participatory evaluation is about sharing knowledge and building the evaluation skills of program beneficiaries and implementers, funders, and others (Rossman, 2000). It is important to note that participatory evaluation is not simply a matter of using participatory techniques, it is about rethinking who initiates and undertakes the process and who learns or benefits from the findings (Guijt & Gaventa, 1998). If learning and change are the intended focus of evaluation, extended involvement and collaboration between stakeholders is required through dialogue, critical reflection, and negotiation (Cooper, 2017).

A participatory evaluation process is well aligned with PDSs as both require the premise of collaboration. In a PDS the participatory evaluation process provides stakeholders the opportunity to fill gaps in the literature because it is reflective and action-oriented. The partnership stakeholders are afforded the opportunity to reflect on project progress and generate knowledge that resulted in being able to apply the lessons learned. The participatory evaluation process is formative, focusing on the program activities while the program is in progress (Nelson-Royes, 2015) allowing groups to take corrective action and make mid-course improvements (Zukoski & Luluquisen, 2002). Additionally, the process honors the perspectives, voices, preferences, and decisions of all stakeholders including the least powerful and most affected stakeholders and program beneficiaries (Rossman, 2000). The formative process used in this study relied on the authentic integration of participatory evaluation.

Community Learning Exchange

The Community Learning Exchange (CLE) provides a theoretical lens for gathering and examining the perceptions of participants within the study, conceptualizing the PDS partnership as the community and the participants of the study as the members of that community. The CLE seeks to create a collaborative, community-based, multiracial, and intergenerational dynamic exchange of ideas, events, and strategies for

school and community change. These exchanges offer experiences that facilitate individual and collective learning, leading to concrete action (Guajardo et al., 2016). CLEs are built on the premise that the learning process is initially social.

At the core of the CLE are five Axioms. These axioms are: (1) learning and leadership are a dynamic social process; (2) conversations are critical and central pedagogical processes; (3) the people closest to the issues are best situated to discover answers to local concerns; (4) crossing boundaries enriches the development and educational process; and (5) hope and change are built on assets and dreams of locals and their communities. The theoretical framework of this study was based on these CLE axioms which created a lens in which the interaction and relationships within a PDS partnership was viewed, specifically focusing on the premise that learning is a social exercise and it is through that socialization process that perceptions emerge. The interaction and socialization of university and school partners are based on mutual respect and the idea of learning reciprocally.

The first axiom, “Learning and leadership are a dynamic social process” recognizes leadership as a collaborative action with all participants having something to contribute. Recognizing this axiom, the voices of participants within the PDS programs are treated with equal importance and focusing on voices which are normally not heard or dismissed as unimportant. The axiom “Conversations are critical and central pedagogical processes” speaks to creating a safe space where participants could share their stories. This space allows participants to develop a trust in their stories and value the perceptions derived from it. The axiom, “The people closest to the issues are best situated to discover answers to local concerns” recognizes that the participants’ perceptions directly involved within the PDS partnerships are important when making program decisions.

Establishing an environment where all voices are valued and participants feel safe to share their perceptions, aligns with the axiom “crossing boundaries enriches the development and educational process.” Participants, through the interactions with different members within the PDS community are positioned to “decenter the status quo and the traditional ways of knowing” (Guajardo et al., 2016, p.26). Finally, acknowledging that “hope and change are built on assets and dreams of locals and their communities” places an emphasis on the assets found within the context, which allows the participants to visualize the possibilities that exist, due to the gifts and ideas that they brought to the table. The CLE approach used within this study provides for a collaborative exchange of ideas within the partnership context.

InQUIRY

InQUIRY is a participatory approach for understanding stakeholder perceptions that was developed to support program stakeholders and funders interested in improving their collaborative work. Militello et al. (2016), coining the term InQUIRY, explained that the process of synthesizing stakeholder voices “is

achieved by fully engaging stakeholders as participants in the collection of individual beliefs and the subsequent analysis of their collectively held beliefs” (p.89). The InQuery process relies on participant involvement and contributions at each step of the evaluation process. Participants help create the research instrument, are a part of the data collection and sorting, engage in actual analysis of the data, and then determine how to apply and apply the results to improve their work. As such, the process elevates the voices of all community members.

The Q-Method is a data collection process embedded in inquiry that is completed in five steps. The process includes: (1) defining the domain of discourse on the selected issue, (2) developing a set of statements, (3) selecting the participants representing different perspectives, (4) having the participants complete the Q sort process, and (5) analyzing the findings. The *Q methodology* helps ascertain participants’ perceptions using a Q factor and, when coupled with the InQuery process, provides a protocol for sharing the factor findings with the participants. The process includes collaborating with like-minded groups and across groups to interpret perspectives. The process engages participants in a genuine, thoughtful feedback process that provides both qualitative and quantitative data to empower participants to identify useful findings (Militello et al., 2016). The InQuery Process coupled with Q methodology used within this study provides a multistep sequence for participant input before, during, and after data collection.

In combination, participatory evaluation, community learning exchanges, and the InQuery process that includes Q-methodology provides a conceptual framework for this formative evaluation process. This research brings to the PDS literature a potential new methodology referred to as InQuery which utilized a modified version of Q Methodology (Mckeown & Thomas, 1998). By combining the concepts of Participatory Evaluation, Community Learning Exchange, and InQuery Coupled with Q methodology, the human experience related to PDS stakeholder perceptions can be captured in a way that examines the implementation and progression of the PDS program within the specific local context.

Context

In 1991, the University of North Florida’s (UNF) professional development school network evolved out of a three-year project between Jacksonville’s Alliance for Tomorrow’s Teachers (AT&T) and UNF. The primary purpose of this project was to restructure UNF’s College of Education’s clinical component of the teacher preparation program while simultaneously assisting urban elementary schools in Clay and Duval counties to produce increased K-6 student achievement and reduce beginning teachers’ attrition rate when working in urban schools (Fountain, 1994). Not unlike other PDS networks across the nation, the scope of this university-school partnership has expanded, shifted, strengthened, and weakened over a 25-year period.

In 2016, the University of North Florida embarked on an exercise to rejuvenate and elevate the PDS partnership with a continued commitment to working with Title I urban schools. At this time the PDS work spanned two school districts, with three PDSs in each district, coupled with a charter school and a private school for a total of eight K-12 schools. During the next few years, the partnership reinvested in the network by strengthening a relationship with district and school administrators, hiring a PDS Director and putting resources into place to assure university and hybrid teacher educators.

The result of this reinvigorated collaboration was a renewed infrastructure and a set of shared goals that reflected key ideas found in the Nine Essentials. According to UNF’s PDS Network (2019), UNF’s PDS partnerships are built on the foundation of research and evidence based practice utilizing seven tenets: (1) to enhance the educational experience of all children; (2) engage in high quality collaborative teacher candidate preparation; (3) ensure high quality induction of new teachers; (4) develop the next generation of school and UNF based teacher education; (5) support school leaders’ professional growth; (6) stimulate in UNF teacher educators professional growth; and (7) facilitate teacher professional growth.

Recognizing that the partnership wanted to create explicit and renewed attention to these goals coupled with building a culture of research and on-going partnership renewal, the program leadership believed that a formative evaluation tool would facilitate stakeholder collaborative learning and goal setting to inform strategic planning and ultimately, partnership development. This study shares the development and exploration of a participatory process for collecting, organizing, and examining participating stakeholder perspectives with the goal of informing next steps in PDS development.

Methodology

This study utilized *InQuery* as a participatory process to examine the current state of a professional development school’s implementation with an interest in promoting progress towards the program goals and nine essentials. The research questions guiding this study were “How could the InQuery process using Q-Methodology be used as a formative tool for capturing shared educator perspectives regarding the current stage of the PDS development?” and “What perspectives are identified as a result of using this formative tool?”

Participant Selection

This study utilized a purposeful sample technique. The purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses (Etikan et al., 2016). The use of purposive sampling in a Q Methodology study involved the researcher seeking the widest array of perspectives around the topic at-hand and sets out to find people who hold views representing that wide array (Watts & Stenner, 2012). This involved identification

Table 1. Participants in Study

<i>Participants' Roles</i>	<i>Participant Sorters</i>	<i>Participants at Reflective Retreat</i>
UNF Teacher Candidates	14	6
Mentor Teachers	7	3
Principals	3	2
Resident Clinical Faculty	3	2
Professors in Residence	4	3
UNF PDS Administrators	5	2
Totals	36	18

and selection of individuals or groups of individuals that are proficient and well-informed with a phenomenon of interest (Creswell & Plano Clark, (2011). As a result, participants included those who hold a cross-section of roles within the PDS network, including professors-in-residence, school administrators, mentor teachers, clinical supervisors and interns. Q Methodology, according to Smith (2001), does not need large numbers of subjects for it to reveal a characteristic independently of the distribution of that characteristic relative to other characteristics.

The participants for this research consists of faculty, staff, and teacher candidates of the University of North Florida's College of Education and Human Services, along with their counterparts from eight partnership schools within two districts. The total population of potential participants for the study included 50 UNF education interns placed within eight professional development schools, 20 PDSs principals and assistant principals, 20 mentor teachers, eight resident clinical faculty assigned to coach and supervise interns, and 10 professors in residence whose role is to engage in professional development and facilitate education courses at the PDS.

The invitation resulted in 36 participant sorters. These 36 sorters reflected a balance between different roles held within the partnership: 14 UNF interns, seven mentor teachers, three principals, three resident clinical faculty, four professors in residence, and five UNF PDS administrators. Of these 36 sorters, 18 participated in phase two, which was a reflective retreat to examine the collective results of the sorting process. Table 1 provides an overview of the initial participant pool, phase one participants, and phase two participants.

Data Collection and InQuery Phases

The Q methodology involved three different phases of data collection. The first phase focused on instrument development and is referred to as the communication concourse development. The second phase involved the Q sorting and analysis of data. The third phase required participants to come together to engage in a reflective dialogue about the factors.

Phase One: Communication Concourse Development. As a part of the instrument development, the initial 50 participants were invited to respond to the prompt: *List the aspects of PDS partnership that receive your greatest focus.* This data, complemented

by participant demographic information, produced a collection of over 100 opinion statements. During phase one, the collection of opinion statements provided by participants during the concourse development phase was combined with another set of statements gathered from the professional literature related to PDS. These statements, culled by the researcher, involved extracting statements which reflected the scope of partnership work primarily derived from the NCATE standards for PDS partnerships, NAPDS *Nine Essentials*, and additional professional literature which focused on PDS partnerships. Drawing on the data gathered through the 100 plus opinion statements and the 50 statements reflecting the literature, a representative Q sample and instrument was created. This reduction of statements to create the concourse involved eliminating repeated statements, combining similar statements, and discarding statements impertinent to the initial prompt. This process yielded 36 distinct opinion statements which became the Q Sample found in Table 2.

Phase Two: The Q-Sort. In phase two of the research, the 50 participants were asked to perform a Q sort of the opinion statements comprising the Q Sample, of which, 36 participants actually performed the Q Sort. To perform a Q Sort, participants were invited to first sort the Q Sample statement into three groups: (1) statements that are *like* their perspectives, (2) statements that are *unlike* their perspectives, and (3) statements that fall *somewhere in the middle* or that they are *unsure* of. After this initial sorting, participants were asked to make finer distinctions reflecting their perspectives by placing the Q Sample statements within a symmetrical sorting grid resembling a semi-normal distribution. Participants were prompted to sort the Q Sample statements with the prompt: "What best represents your perspective regarding aspects of PDS partnership that you are most currently focused on?" Finally, each participant was asked to elaborate on why they chose the three statements that were most like and unlike their perspective.

The next step in Phase Two was data analysis. Following the collection of participants' Q Sort, each Q Sort was entered into a Q Methodology software package called *PQMethod* (Schmolck, 2012). After the sorts were loaded, the *PQMethod* was utilized to facilitate a 3-part statistical procedure which included: (1) correlation, (2) relationship between correlation, and (3) the identification of distinct factors which represent composite perspectives shared by individual sorters. These factors were then represented by factor arrays which resembled an individual Q Sort (see figure 1). In the Factor array the numbers within the grid represents the numbered statements (see Table 2).

Next, the researcher examined and made holistic meaning of the composition of the factor arrays in order to generate an understanding of the perspectives they represent. This involved examining the holistic patterns that exist among the configurations of Q Sample statements, within the respective factors. In addition to the factor arrays, the researcher used post sort responses and demographic and background information affiliated with participants' sorts who loaded significantly on the resultant factors. These post sort responses were a vital part

Table 2. 36 Q sample statements

<i>Number</i>	<i>Statement</i>
1	Using a shared approach to candidate preparation
2	Establishing/Strengthening a school–university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community
3	Providing quality educational support to interning student-teachers: It’s important that while participating as a PDS mentoring teacher that I can help the next generation of interning teachers acquire the knowledge and experience needed to transition into a professional setting as seamlessly as possible.
4	Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need
5	Building relationships with mentor teachers and student teachers
6	Engagement in and public sharing of the results of deliberate investigations of practice by respective participants
7	The PDS partnership producing outcome data that drive changes in how P–12 students, candidates, faculty, and other professionals learn
8	Building mentor teacher capacity
9	PDS investigating how PDS is impacting student’s success in grades and attitudes
10	Establishing and encouraging collaboration between PDS and university faculty
11	Strengthening relationships between university and PDS
12	The PDS partnership engaging with other institutions and policymakers to influence policies and practices related to PDS work
13	Encouraging the use of reflective practice by all participants
14	Encouraging learners to use their new knowledge to inform practice
15	Establishing communication mechanisms to disseminate information to various stakeholders within the PDS partnership and to other constituent groups
16	PDS partners presenting data to the professional and policymaking community showing the ways in which they have decreased the gaps in achievement
17	Encouraging Partner institutions to change policies and practices as a result of work done in PDSs
18	Furthering the education profession and its responsibility to advance equity within schools
19	Being committed to multi-racial and multicultural education
20	Providing multiple avenues for collaboration between PDS partnership members
21	The PDS partner institutions playing a leadership role in the larger community
22	Helping to ensure full engagement of Families, community members, policymakers, and the business community
23	Ensuring that family members of PDS students are fully informed as stakeholders in PDS work
24	PDS partners engage family members in focusing on identifying students’ needs.
25	The PDS partnership functions as an extended learning community for all participants, including faculty, family members, and other community, district, and university members
26	Partner schools celebrating diversity
27	Establishing a school environment prepared to enculturate learners for participation in a democratic society
28	Engaging non PDS affiliated faculty in the PDS work- encouraging faculty to research with the PDS teachers and administrators
29	Engaging in the development of the Residence clinical faculty
30	Ensuring that the use of university resources provided are maximized
31	PDS partner institutions provide leadership in shaping the discussion about public accountability
32	PDS partner institutions create mechanisms to disseminate curricula in the university and school programs that reflect issues of equity and access to knowledge by diverse learners
33	PDS partners model for the professional community the ways in which they teach from multicultural and global perspectives that draw on the histories, experiences, and diverse cultural backgrounds of all people
34	Fostering leadership from within the classroom
35	Enhancing the PDS school’s performance as measured by state accountability processes (e.g. Florida school grades)
36	Coaching the teacher candidates

of the Q Methodological procedure, for they aided the later interpretation of the sorting configurations (and viewpoints) captured by each of the emergent factors (Watts & Stenner, 2012), since it allowed the participants to provide their own idiosyncratic understanding of the items being sorted, since it asked sorters to were asked to conceptualize why they sorted statements under the +4 (statements that were most like their

perspective) and -4 (statements that were most unlike their perspective) columns in the grid.

Three significant factors were identified as a part of the Q-Sort. The factors included: “A Focus on University/ PDS Teacher Candidate Preparation,” “A Focus on Cultural Responsive Education,” and “A Focus on Furthering Education” (see Table 3). All 3 factors expressed a shared perspective of being currently

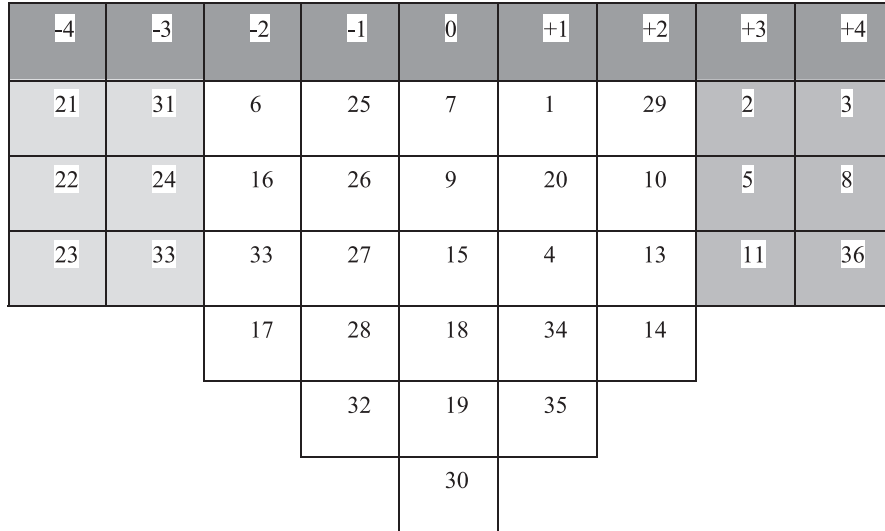


Figure 1. Factor Array Representing Factor 1

focused on the development of teacher candidates and highlighted that the current partnership existed between the university and the PDS, and excluded collaboration with the community and other education partners. What differentiated these factors from each other was the context in which participants visualized their current focus. Participants who identified with Factor One perceived their focus as the university/PDS providing developmental support for teacher candidates. This support was exclusively provided by the “experts” within the university and the PDS. Participants who identified with Factor Two perceptions were divergent due to their focus on developing teacher candidates to be culturally responsive. Finally, participants who identified with Factor Three, while very similar to Factor One, emphasized a focus on strengthening teaching and learning through the use of data and research.

Phase Three: The InQury process. The InQury process engaged 18 of the 36 phase two participants in a reflective retreat that used a protocol to develop a deeper understanding, feelings and opinions around the sort. These 18 participants consisted of 6 intern teachers, 3 mentor teachers, 2 resident clinical faculty, 3 professors in residence, 2 school administrators

and 2 UNF PDS partnership administrators. This reflective retreat utilized in the InQury process focused on the Q methodology factors to engage the participants in a protocol. The goal of the protocol was to develop a deeper understanding of thoughts, feelings and opinions around the sort to better understand the factors. Working together in groups according to the factor they loaded on, the participants discussed the following five questions:

1. What do you notice about you and the others in your PDS family? Who are you? What do you do? What do you seem to have in common that may have influenced your views on this topic similarly?
2. Work together to analyze your family sort. Discuss and record here and also on a poster. What is the story your collective card sort tells you about your shared perspective of the aspects of PDS partnership that you are most focused on at this current stage of your PDS partnership?
3. What are the implications of this perspective for: Principals, Teacher Candidates, Resident Clinical Faculty, Professors in Residence, PDS Administrators?

Table 3. Overview of Factors' Shared Perspective

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Shared Perspective on aspects of PDS currently focused on	development and support of teacher candidates within the PDS	development and support of teacher candidates within the PDS	development and support of teacher candidates within the PDS
Purpose for current focus	Fulfillment of the university purpose and goals, ultimately benefiting the university and its programs	developing teacher candidates using a culturally responsive lens, in order to serve a multicultural world	furthering the education profession, through the use of data and improving the capacity of all stakeholders
Shared Perspective on aspects of PDS least focused on currently	Collaboration with family and community	Collaboration with family and community	Collaboration with family and community

4. Five years from now what do you hope the focus of your PDS partnership will be? What would be the three +4 and three +3 if you would sort again in 5 years' time?
5. What needs to happen within your partnerships for change to happen?

Although this process entailed asking the participants to interpret the emergent factor array, participation in these conversations did not require participants to possess any knowledge about factors or factor analysis (Militello et al., 2016). After participating in discussions within their factor groups, participants were then asked to participate in a whole group discussion. During this whole group discussion, participants were privy to the perceptions and rationals behind the sorting process of the other participants who loaded on factors.

At the conclusion of the reflective retreat, these participants were asked to reflect on the entire InQuery process by responding to 3 statements. These responses were given anonymously. These questions included:

1. Briefly describe how this InQuery process helped further your understanding of what you perceive to be the current areas of focus of the UNF PDS partnership.
2. Now, briefly describe how this InQuery process helped further your understanding of what other perceive to be the current areas of focus of the UNF PDS partnership.
3. Overall, how useful was the process in helping you understand your own and other's perspective regarding the current areas of focus of the UNF PDS partnership.

Findings: Participants' Perspectives Regarding the InQuery Process

This study explored the usefulness of InQuery, as a Participatory Process, to examine educator perspectives on the aspect of the PDS partnership most focused on by their Professional Development School Partnerships, at its current stage of implementation. At the conclusion of the reflective retreat, participants were asked to reflect on the entire InQuery. By using the CLE axioms as the lens for which post reflective retreat responses and researcher observations of the InQuery process was analyzed, 3 themes emerged. These themes were: InQuery as a reflective process; the broadening of perspective through the InQuery Process; and the InQuery Process as a planning tool.

Lessons Learned

The study participants held a wide array of partnership roles and brought their perspectives to the table to inform a formative evaluation that would guide their future work. The process rests on the CLE axiom that those who are closest to the work are best informed to enhance the work. In response, this study explored the usefulness of InQuery, as a formative evaluation and participatory process, to examine educator perspectives on their PDS partnership efforts. A thematic analysis of the post reflective retreat (phase 3) data and researcher observations of

the InQuery process resulted in three lessons: InQuery as a reflective process; the broadening of perspective through the InQuery Process; and the InQuery Process as a planning tool.

Lesson One: InQuery as a reflective process. Overall participants, who took part in the entire InQuery process, found the process as helpful and useful. Participants mentioned that the InQuery process gave them a much-needed opportunity to move beyond their own role to reflect on the entire PDS Partnership. This, according to the participants, was unique since they are rarely expected to reflect outside of their individual roles within the PDS partnership. Examples of this behavior are evidenced in comments such as "very rarely do I think about the entire PDS partnership. I am usually focused on my day-to-day activities. I think this process brought us back to the depth of the PDS mission." This was particularly important as during the sorting process participants' perspectives were highly influenced by the individual roles that they played within the PDS partnership.

Examples of this behavior are evidenced in comments such as "the sorting process really helped me to prioritize what I thought the current focus was. I had to make tough decisions on what was the most focused on and least focus on." This finding is in accordance to Smith (2001) who stated that with Q sorting people give a subjective meaning to the statements and by doing so reveal an important subjective viewpoint or personal profile (Brouwer, 1999). By using personal experiences informed by role, the participants were able to reflect and conceptualize their perspectives related to PDS implementation.

According to Militello et al. (2016), during the InQuery process, participants develop a new normative language around a topic through the introspective process of the individual sorts (understanding of self). The normative language that evolved through InQuery reflected the perceptions of those entrenched in this PDS context and as stated in the CLE axioms, "the people closest to the issues are best situated to discover answers to local concerns" (Guajardo et al., 2016, p. 25).

Lesson Two: Broadening of Perspective through the InQuery Process The InQuery Process allowed participants to broaden their individual perspective. Similar to Guajardo et al. (2016), these "conversations are critical and central pedagogical processes" (p. 24). The value of reflective conversations became evident in discussion data at the retreat and on the post retreat questionnaires. During the retreat, participants commented that the discussions within their family groups and between other family groups, allowed them to both validate and broaden their perspective. According to Militello et al. (2016), "what begins as an individual experience becomes a group activity through the InQuery process. When participants are grouped into families with members who have similar viewpoints, positive discourse ensues" (p. 105). As stated by Militello et al. (2016), "Knowing that their family members share viewpoints allows participants to communicate more openly and effectively, resulting in a deeper understanding on the phenomenon in question" (p. 105). Examples of this behavior are evidenced in comments such as "sharing out of each group's perspective at the reflective retreat

provided me with the reasoning behind their responses that might have differed from mine.”

That said, participants also felt that the ability to hear from others outside of their family groups gave them the opportunity to hear the rationale behind how others sorted, which allowed them to develop a deeper understanding of the shared perspectives expressed by other family groups. This deeper understanding enriched and broadened their individual perspectives, as stated in the CLE axiom, “crossing boundaries enriches the development and educational processes” (p. 26). The development of this deeper understanding from discussions, is a signature characteristic of the InQuery Process. By broadening their perspective, the participants developed a holistic understanding of their PDS partnership. In their post reflective retreat questionnaire, the participants expressed that they were able to broaden their own perspective from a narrow viewpoint influenced by their role or by the PDS for which they were assigned to a viewpoint which encompassed the entire PDS partnership. Examples of this behavior are evidenced in comments such as “this process allowed me to consider the vantage point of the other individuals involved in the PDS work.”

According to Cooper (2017), through engaging in participatory evaluation, stakeholders learned more about the organization and about themselves in the context and situation in which they are participating (Cooper, 2017). In the case of this study, the reflective retreat, facilitated through the InQuery process, was very useful to the participants, since it was through the discussions at the reflective retreat that their shared perspectives evolved. This step in the InQuery process supported by Q methodology, CLE principles, and participatory evaluation, generated stakeholder dialogue, critical reflection, and negotiation of ideas.

Lesson Three: InQuery Process as a Planning Tool. Finally, the participants emphasized the usefulness of the InQuery process for future planning purposes. According to Militello et al. (2016), through the InQuery process participants develop a focus on the actionable work that can be done to better the whole community. Study participants expressed that the process gave them an insight on where they were as a partnership and therefore gave them a focal point from which they could create an action plan for future foci. Examples of this behavior are evidenced in comments such as “it made me think of specific actions that were needed to move the PDS work forward.”

The CLE axiom, “hope and change are built on assets and dreams of locals and their communities” (p. 27), explained that’s by identifying, naming, and constructing the assets within your communities, participants would start to view their work and communities in different ways, and as a result they begin to build hope and see possibilities. Many of the participants suggested that the InQuery process was considered useful since the process could be re-administered in the future to examine the aspect of the PDS partnership. After which a comparison could be made from one point in time to another to determine if the foci had changed or remained the same.

Discussion

According to Polly et al. (2015), there is a need for a systematic process for both educator preparation programs and P-12 schools to use in the evaluation, refinement, and enhancement of the PDS development process. This 25-year-old, formerly nationally recognized partnership is an example of a PDS network that needed renewal. The formative, participatory evaluation benefited this partnership which has found itself once again at a beginning PDS stage (NCATE, 2002). By only focusing on the development and support of teacher candidates, the purpose of the PDS relationships was reduced to merely an extension of the teacher preparation program of the university, rather than a collaboration between university, PDS and the broader community to further education and influence policy, through practice and research.

This conclusion led stakeholders to question, “What would it take for the PDS partnership to transcend beyond being merely a teacher preparation program?”; “What do the leaders within the partnership need to do to further the focus of the PDS partnership?” and “How could the university adjust its curriculum within the teacher preparation programs to become culturally responsive and community orientated?” Although this group benefited by an opportunity to “begin again” and renew their work using the InQuery Process, how would an on-going commitment to formative evaluation in this partnership keep them from losing their way. A common vision, revisited annually using the InQuery process might “motivate people to take action in the right direction, even if the initial steps are personally painful” (Kotter, 2012, p.71).

Although the development of the Q sample established in this study was time consuming, the instrument (including mostly statements from the literature presented on PDS partnerships, NCATE standards for PDS partnerships and NAPDS *Nine Essentials*) could be adapted by other partnerships and used to implement the InQuery process as a formative evaluation tool within their unique context. This process could help benchmark progress or simply examine the perspectives of partnership stakeholders to ensure alignment with NAPDS standards. On the other hand, the PDS partnerships could personalize their Q sample by collecting concourse statements from their members, making the process more relevant for their individual partnerships. These personalized statements could then be combined with those concourse statements derived from the NCATE standards and NAPDS *Nine Essentials*. Regardless, findings from the InQuery process could be used as baseline data for formulating action plans and future foci. This InQuery process could then be repeated throughout the different stages of implementation in the PDS partnership to monitor progress.

The formative process was also important to identify blind spots in the PDS work. Not only did the InQuery process reveal what *was* focused on but the results from this study also bring into perspective what *was not* focused on revealing potential blinders that the PDS stakeholders may be facing. The high correlation between all 3 factors emphasized the current focus of the PDS on

the development and support of the teacher candidates, but missing was the incorporation of the broader community (NCATE, 2001) as an active partner and the recognition that their work was not influencing policy, curriculum, research, and practice. The stakeholders needed to further explore why these aspects were not currently a partnership focus.

The implementation of the InQuery process also revealed that the perceptions of the participants were influenced by the roles that they held within the partnership and the schools in which they work. These factors did not influence the shared perception on the aspect most focused on, which was the support and development of the teacher candidates. However, it often influenced the participants' understanding of purpose. While a common focus for any organization is necessary to achieve their set goals, perceptions were influenced by the role itself and the context in which the role holder works. For example, if it is deduced that one focus of the partnership should be culturally responsive teacher preparation, then serious consideration should be given to which schools are chosen to become a part of the partnership.

Finally, the results of this study emphasized the usefulness of the InQuery process, as a means to examine stakeholder perspectives. All participants that engaged in the entire InQuery process emphasized that the process provided them with an opportunity for self-reflection and an expansion of their original ideas. They also expressed that they broaden their insight into the different roles held by members of the partnership. This study supported the findings of Militello et al. (2016), which

stated that the InQuery process as an evaluation tool fulfills the need for: understanding participants' perceptions; exploring some quantifiable metrics, and participating in the analysis of evaluation findings. Overall, the InQuery process shows promise as a formative tool for facilitating ongoing PDS growth and development. ^{SUP}

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