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Titles, Experience, Identities, and Time: How the Early Career Stage is Defined by Educational Developers

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Abstract

Occupations often require a set of common characteristics and abilities in order for an individual to be successful (Super, 1990), and new professionals have to navigate much more than new offices, policies, tasks, and expectations to achieve that success. The authors sought to better understand the early career stage in the field of educational development, and this article reports on the findings of a subset of that research focused on the reported perceptions of what constitutes the early career stage by newer educational developers (EDs) in contrast with those who define themselves as experienced in the field. We collected participants' thoughts and perceptions about what constitutes early career for EDs using an online survey, and qualitative responses were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Aligning with Super's (1990) lifespan career development model, this exploratory research suggests there is no single, universal definition of what it means to be an early career professional in this field, and our findings suggest that self-concept is crucial in determinations of what it means to be an early career ED. Further, there is a distinction between being new to the field of educational development and being 'early career' in a broader sense; our findings suggest there is much more to feeling like an early career ED than the time spent in one's career. We discuss key themes that emerged around how participants constitute the notion of early career in educational development and offer some common vocabulary to identify and discuss experiences of early career professionals in the field. Our work may provide new opportunities for supporting onboarding and community building, and raises areas for further exploration.

Les professions exigent souvent un ensemble de caractéristiques et de capacités communes pour qu'un individu réussisse (Super, 1990), et les nouveaux professionnels doivent naviguer bien plus que de nouveaux bureaux, politiques, tâches et attentes pour atteindre ce succès. Les auteurs de cette étude ont cherché à mieux comprendre le stade de début de carrière dans le domaine du développement de l'éducation. Cet article rend compte des résultats d'un sous-ensemble de cette recherche axée sur les perceptions rapportées de ce qui constitue le stade de début de carrière par les nouveaux développeurs de l'éducation (ED) dans contrairement à ceux qui se définissent comme expérimentés dans le domaine. Nous avons recueilli les réflexions et les perceptions des participants sur ce qui constitue un début de carrière pour les urgences à l'aide d'un sondage en ligne, et les réponses qualitatives ont été analysées à l'aide d'une analyse thématique (Braun et Clarke, 2006). S'alignant sur le modèle de développement de carrière tout au long de la vie de Super (1990), cette recherche

exploratoire suggère qu'il n'y a pas de définition unique et universelle de ce que signifie être un professionnel en début de carrière dans ce domaine. Nos résultats suggèrent que le concept de soi est crucial pour déterminer ce que cela signifie être un ED en début de carrière. En outre, il existe une distinction entre être nouveau dans le domaine du développement de l'éducation et être « en début de carrière » dans un sens plus large ; nos résultats suggèrent qu'il y a beaucoup plus à se sentir comme un ED en début de carrière que le temps passé dans sa carrière. Nous discutons des thèmes clés qui ont émergé autour de la façon dont les participants constituent la notion de « début de carrière » dans le développement de l'éducation, et proposons un vocabulaire commun pour identifier et discuter des expériences des professionnels en début de carrière dans le domaine. Notre travail peut offrir de nouvelles opportunités pour soutenir l'intégration et le développement de la communauté, et soulève des domaines pour une exploration plus approfondie.

Keywords: Early career, educational developers, self-concept

Introduction

"Entry into the field did not a developer make." (McDonald, 2010, p. 42)

Higher education systems have become more complex (Boughey & McKenna, 2021; Clegg, 2009; Marginson, 2016; Trow, 2010) and the role of educational developers (ED) has evolved alongside (Chism, 1998, 2011; Gibbs, 2013; Laskar, 2021). The increasing number of areas of specialization continue to fragment what is still a developing field of practice and scholarship. EDs coalesce around the shared project to improve teaching, with the ultimate goal of facilitating the student learning experience, consequently improving the quality of graduates of higher education institutions (Shay, 2012). However, the ways in which this work is done varies across diverse contexts and institutional cultures. Much of the educational development literature focuses on the challenges of navigating these varied roles and responsibilities (Dawson et al., 2010; Davis, 2017; Gibbs, 2013; Taylor, 2006), including analysis of the characteristics of EDs at various career stages, and the ways in which EDs are socialized into the field (Dawson et al., 2017; Fraser, 1999; Green & Little, 2016; McDonald & Stockley, 2008; Timmermans, 2014; Vorster & Quinn, 2015).

EDs benefit from varied disciplinary and professional backgrounds (Green & Little, 2016) as the field does not have gatekeeping mechanisms as explicit as required credentials or professional experience (Fraser, 1999; McDonald, 2010). As a result, entry to the field is often happenstance; educational development is a profession that people tend to fall into rather than strategically seek (McDonald, 2010). The complexity of a growing field, along with the perceived diversity of entry points to the profession, means that new EDs, coming from a variety of disciplines, are more reliant on socialization to understand the work and their own identity as professionals (Fraser, 1999; McDonald, 2010; Roxå & Mårtensson, 2005; Vorster & Quinn, 2015). Despite the wealth of scholarship that explores the field of educational development, the experiences and unique challenges of navigating this work as an early career ED remain understudied. Our research seeks to explore this element of the ED's experience.
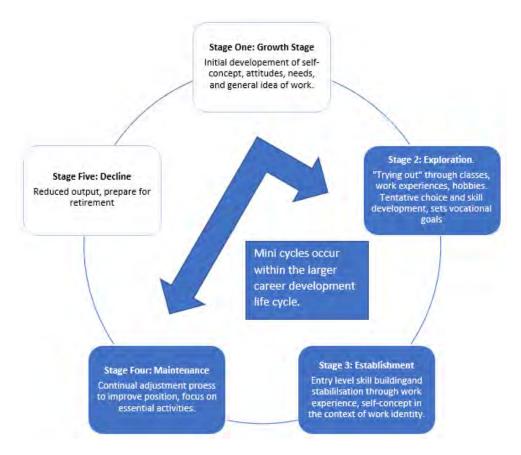
The purpose of this exploratory qualitative research is to a) examine how early career EDs define and view themselves in the context of their own experiences and b) unpack how EDs discuss their roles in the context of their broader career journey. Given the lack of an agreed upon definition about what it means to be an early career ED, this study intentionally required participants to provide their own definition of early career. This article — part of the larger research project based in Canada about early career EDs' experiences described above — addresses how EDs from various career stages perceive and define what it means to be 'early career.' Our study gathered the perspectives of EDs who consider themselves to be 'new' to the field, as well as those who identify as being beyond the early career stage.

Our article begins with a brief overview of Donald Super's (1990) lifespan career development model which serves as an explanatory model for our findings. After our methods section, where we provide details about our data collection and analysis, we discuss our research findings through the lens of Super's model to explore why participants may have associated certain factors with the boundaries of the early career stage in the field of educational development. The article outlines how using Super's model as a conceptual framework can illuminate how new EDs understand the early stage of their career.

Super's Lifespan Career Development Model

Given the exploratory nature of this study, we did not draw on a specific theoretical framework to inform the design of our research project. However, during the thematic analysis of our data, Super's (1990) lifespan career development model provided a contextual lens through which to view and make sense of our findings. According to Super (1990), the model is defined as "a loosely unified set of theories dealing with specific aspects of career development, taken from developmental, differential, social, personality, and phenomenological psychology and held together by self-concept and learning theory" (p. 199). This model is well established as a foundational or grand theory in the field of career development (Zacher et al., 2019). Figure 1 provides a simplified overview of Super's (1990) model, with stages most relevant to our findings highlighted in blue. It is important to acknowledge that this model points to a person-focused analysis of the early career phase, which we feel is appropriate given the emphasis of our research on individual experiences and definitions.

Figure 1

Overview of the Lifespan Career Development Model

Stage One: Growth Stage
Initial development of self-concept, attitudes, needs, and general idea of work.

Stage 2: Exploration.
"Trying out" through classes, work experiences, hobbies. Tentative choice and skill development, sets vocational goals

Stage Five: Decline
Reduced output, prepare for retirement

Mini cycles occur within the larger career development life cycle.

Stage Four: Maintenance
Continual adjustment proess to improve position, focus on essential activities.

Stage 3: Establishment
Entry level skill buildingand stabililsation through work experience, self-concept in the context of work identity.

Note. Adapted from Super, 1990. For a plain text version of Figure 1, please see Appendix C.

According to Super (1990), occupations often require a set of common characteristics and abilities in order for an individual to be successful. While there are differences among individuals, it is possible to look at careers and occupations as requiring common skills, knowledge, etc. that are tangible and intangible.

Developing and implementing occupational self-concepts, which are defined by Super (1990) as a way in which someone sees themselves in the context of their work and career, is a particularly important part of learning and progressing through one's career. As a result, individual development in a career context can, to a certain degree, be modelled, which suggests a pattern for early career ED experiences might also exist. We will return to this lens when we discuss our findings as it contextualizes our work.

Methods & Findings

Methods

The overarching research question that informed our research design was: How is early career defined in the context of educational development? Our work is motivated by our own experiences navigating the field as early career professionals, and our interest in identifying the needs of early career professionals in educational development in hopes of designing meaningful outreach and connecting programs. In reviewing the literature, we had not encountered an example of early career EDs defined. Consequently, in 2018, this group of authors facilitated a workshop asking EDs at the annual conference of the Educational Developers Caucus (EDC) — a now-dissolved national professional association—what it means to be early career in the field of educational development.

Based on feedback from the session, and informed by trends in the educational development literature, we developed a survey consisting of 13 questions to further investigate how early career is defined by EDs across Canada. These questions were reviewed for validity by five experts in the field of educational development through iterative feedback. The final survey was distributed to EDs across Canada via the former EDC listserv. The research team also forwarded the survey to colleagues in educational development positions, in addition to snowball sampling. EDs at any point in their career, or those in similar positions, were encouraged to complete the survey. We received 59 complete surveys.

The survey collected demographic data and contained open-ended questions on participants' educational development role and experiences (see Appendix A). Participants were asked if they consider themselves to be early career EDs. As we sought to explore the definition of early career ED, no definition was provided in the survey. Instead, participants were asked to define the term themselves and then asked why they felt they were or were not 'early career.' Depending on their response, branching questions followed to gather participants' narratives and insights around the meaning of early career in the context of educational development. Those identifying as early career were asked for their rationale for identifying as such and those who did not consider themselves early career EDs were asked to describe the early career stage in the context of educational development, and to identify the point they no longer considered themselves early career.

Survey Participants

The majority (71%) of our participants described their place of work as a public university, with 20% describing their institution as a college, 5% describing their institution as an Institute of Technology or Polytechnic, and 4% associated with other kinds of higher education institutions. Almost all the participants (98%) were from

Canada, with one participant identifying as being from the United States. The same percentage of participants were from Ontario and from prairie provinces (Alberta, Saskatchewan, or Manitoba), 36% respectively, with 8% reporting Atlantic Provinces (Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick), 8% from British Columbia, 8% from Quebec, and only one from a Canadian Territory (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut).

Educational development encompasses diverse roles and our sample reflected this. Most participants (71%) had educational, curriculum, teaching and learning, or faculty developer/consultant/specialist as their job title. Several participants (19%) reported titles indicating administrative leadership responsibilities such as Chair, Director, Associate Director, Senior Manager, or Academic Lead. The remaining participants (10%) described their job title as Instructor, Instructional Designer or Developer, Graduate Research Assistant, or Learning Strategist. Most report working in Teaching and Learning Centres (76%), with 14% situated in a Faculty/Division/School, and 8% working in an Institutional Office (e.g., Office of the Vice Provost). One participant reported being funded through a research project. For a comparison of the demographics of participants who self-identified as early career EDs vs. those who did not, see Appendix B.

Data Analysis

We used a six-phase approach to thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Maguire and Delahunt (2017). Responses to the open-ended questions related to defining early career in the context of educational development were coded using emergent coding, where our team, through discussion, developed the codes to best describe emerging themes. Each agreed upon theme is discussed in the findings section. Inter-rater reliability was established through peer-debriefing (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) agreement on coding for each statement. Our small sample size did not permit the use of inferential statistics to compare those who self-identified as early-career with those who did not. This research was reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta.

Findings

Temporal Expectations

According to 15 of 25 experienced EDs and 20 of 34 self-identified early career EDs, length of time is a vital component to the definition of early career in educational development. We received a range of time frames to indicate early career, from three to ten years of experience; five years of experience being the most cited transition point. Some experienced EDs noted the importance of relevant experience in educational

settings, while others emphasized full-time employment in educational development as being a requirement to satisfy the time-specific factor.

Relevant Experience

Most participants acknowledge the role of time in defining early career, but it appears that the critical piece is what experiences, relevant to educational development, occur within that time frame. Ten self-identified early career EDs described how, despite having extensive experience in relevant roles, working in a new context of educational development initiated an early career period for them. For example, one participant (2-30) noted:

> This is my first position as an education developer. I had been teaching faculty for 11 years before that. While I feel I am making a contribution and have expertise to offer, I still feel like I am learning every day on the job.

This quotation suggests that the need to adopt a different way of working, to learn about the implicit professional norms, and to navigate a role with a new perspective, outweigh one's experiences in relevant areas. The learning curve introduced by a change in context, whether it's transitioning from a faculty role (n=3), from K-12 (n=1), or from an international context (n=1), seems to be a key consideration for several early career participants. New contexts also apply when there are significant changes to one's role and responsibilities within the field of educational development (n=5).

In contrast, experienced EDs may refer to relevant experiences and conceptualize these experiences more broadly. For example, one experienced ED shared that relevant experience such as teaching, supervision, mentoring, and research may allow those new to ED to transition out of the early career stage sooner with a less steep learning curve.

Five experienced EDs touched on their engagement in a wide range of educational development activities as being critical for their career progression. For example, one participant (1-1) reflected on their transition out of early career:

> I think once I'd independently (and somewhat confidently) engaged in a range of educational development activities (e.g., consultation; program design, delivery, evaluation; event organisation; curriculum review) and felt I had a strong sense of the educational development literature.

While the experienced EDs saw the breadth of relevant experiences as an asset, it seemed to contrast with how early career EDs value their experiences when considering their career development and professional identity.

Developing a Professional Identity

Another common theme that arose from the analysis was defining early career in relation to one's personal and professional identity as an ED. Instead of experiencing a shift from new to experienced, as determined by the acquisition of knowledge and skills, our findings suggest that progressing through the field involves more. As one experienced ED participant (1-3) highlights:

> Early career educational developers do not yet identify as an educational developer as part of their persona (even if it is their job title).

On the other hand, early career EDs indicate that the nature of employment is also an important determining factor in self-identifying as an ED. For example, one early career ED (2-27) attempts to define their role in relation to the field by more than their title or job description:

> It is the first year I have had this title, even though I have been developing educational resources, presentations, and workshops for at least 5 years.

This participant identified a set of relevant experiences and associated skills that may be central to their success without being able to acknowledge themselves as being credible without a formal title. Both early (n=4) and experienced (n=3) EDs in this study contextualize the importance of the formalization of the role through titles when defining the professional self, as well as the need for experience.

Credibility and Confidence

Nine participant responses pointed to a clear yet complex connection between how they might both define themselves, and be perceived, as professionals within the field of educational development. How experienced EDs are perceived by colleagues and the larger ED community were also important factors that demarcate their transition out of being an early career ED. Early career participants grappled with their credibility and their perceived acceptance in the field. An emerging sense of confidence and proficiency in their ability to support higher education appear to be significant for early career EDs in seeing themselves as valuable contributors to the field. For example, one participant (2-15) noted:

> Although I have been involved in educational development for about 4 years, my work has been part time and project-based. My time has been spent mostly working with instructors, and I have not had the opportunity to step back and reflect on the profession in general and my role in it.

This may suggest an implicit expectation that early career EDs have around what kinds of experiences are deemed credible, which may be influenced and informed by their

different cultures, institutions, centres, and positions. Additionally, two early career participants considered having formal training and a credential (e.g., a PhD in the field of education) as central to their career progression in becoming an experienced ED.

The emphasis on learning 'the norms, the practices, the identity' was indicative of an experienced ED response in the data. While early career EDs focus on their assigned tasks and responsibilities to "[learn] the 'best' way to support faculty to teach their courses and develop their curriculum" (2-33), experienced EDs seemed to focus on establishing effective processes and building systemic capacity, including "[pursuing] projects that would shake the status quo"(1-8), "working with a resistant/emotional participant; supporting a large curriculum renewal process; [and] launching a faculty development initiative" (1-11). Our findings suggest that defining one's position within the educational development profession involves a mixture of having a formal title, professional experience, and recognition by themselves and others in the community.

Discussion

As noted in the introduction, we chose to contextualize our findings through Super's (1990) lifespan model, which outlines five key life and career stages. We focus on the career-specific elements of the model—the Exploration, Establishment, and Maintenance stages. The model is centred on the notion that 'self-concept' changes over time and as a result of experience. Individuals have constellations of self-concepts that evolve over their lifespan, connected to different roles and contexts. In particular, occupational self-concepts, the development of which can broadly be described as a matching process between an individual's understanding of their own attributes and their perception of needs of an occupation, is relevant to our research. As Super (1990) states, "Individuals match attributes, formulate preferences, make choices, and seek to implement these choices by obtaining needed training and finding suitable employment" (pp. 222-23). The development of these self-concepts is the mechanism through which an individual transitions through the stages of the lifespan career model, though not necessarily through consistent or linear means.

The process of developing occupational self-concepts may play an especially crucial role in participants' perceptions of their early career stage. People base their career decisions off the beliefs they hold about themselves (Super, 1990). Therefore, a person's self-identification as early career suggests their occupational self-concept and experiences align to support that identification, and they are theoretically unable to transition to other stages of career development until their occupational self-concept evolves. Our findings echo this, demonstrated by the various experiences and challenges participants identified in defining early career in educational development. In the following sections, we draw parallels between the three relevant stages of Super's (1990) lifespan model and our findings to support preliminary sense-making and point toward opportunities for future research.

Exploration Stage

In Super's (1990) lifespan model, the exploration stage is typically associated with people in the phase of life prior to participation in an occupation (e.g., teenage and early adult years), when they are exploring their interests and attributes through education and other social experiences. However, the stages are not framed as fixed and/or linear, and the exploration stage may be experienced in major or minor ways throughout one's career. Laskar (2021) captures the significance of the exploratory stage when they claim, "although the role [of ED] is becoming of increasing importance and requires a high degree of flexibility, training and pathways into the profession are unclear" (p. 4). Translated to practice, many EDs enter the profession, as understood in Super's (1990) terms, without developing their self-concept in relation to the field in a way that might be gained from engagement in formal education or training. Our data reflect the literature as participants entered the profession through a wide variety of pathways, and with the development of varied occupational and other self-concepts. For example, participants mentioned the importance of relevant experiences, such as working as faculty in different educational contexts, and obtaining relevant credentials through formal education. These opportunities enabled participants to try on different professional identities, make tentative choices about their career, and develop relevant skills that would ideally facilitate their transition into ED roles.

Establishment Stage

Once participants entered the field of educational development, their experiences mirror that of Super's (1990) establishment stage. In this stage, someone in a new role is likely settling in—getting started on day-to-day tasks and beginning to develop new attributes and competencies that will be important to their overall success, and contribute to their occupational self-concept. This is reflected in the early career EDs responses in our research. For example, participants tried to negotiate their capacity in relation to the expectations of their roles; learn about how their work fits into the team or institution; and navigate relationship building with faculty, students, and colleagues. These actions or behaviours support early career EDs to develop their own professional identity in relation to their contexts and institutional expectations, some of which were critical for early career EDs to gain credibility and build confidence in their contributions to the team, institution, and community. It is notable that some early career participants did not fully identify as an ED, indicating that their occupational self-concept may not yet have evolved to include their new role. The results suggest a mismatch between their understanding of their own attributes and capacities, and those required of their formalized conception of the role of ED.

Our findings also suggest that developing new skills, navigating relationships, and learning about the context and expected duties of a new role are important for a successful transition out of the early career stage, while also supporting individuals in

developing career maturity. There is not necessarily one critical moment that leads to someone no longer identifying as early career, but rather, we found that multiple factors (e.g., title, time in role, hands on experience, recognition by peers, self-identification, etc.) coalesce for individuals to move away from being self-defined or perceived as an early career ED. As indicated by an experienced ED, "I had experience working in different capacities on all kinds of projects and types of work from consultations to full project development and management. No single event changed my view on my career stage per se" (1-4). This indicates a multi-faceted development of experienced EDs' occupational self-concept and suggests a transition from the establishment stage into the maintenance stage.

Maintenance Stage

While our research focuses primarily on the early career (establishment) stage, we see evidence of the maintenance stage emerging throughout participants' attempts to define and differentiate the early career phase from a more established one. Beyond the amount of time spent in an ED role, experienced EDs spoke of a sense of belonging with a network of colleagues within and beyond their institutions, leading initiatives that improve existing processes, and building systemic capacity as important markers of their professional identities and contributions. These ideas align with how Super (1990) describes the maintenance stage as ongoing adjustments, learning, relationship building, and negotiations in pursuit of self-improvement and career growth.

Tying It All Together

While the stages in Super's (1990) model are presented as structured and linear, they are not necessarily inflexible. Super (1990) highlighted how individuals can move through 'mini cycles' throughout the overarching career development model, and how transitions can be revisited depending on the individual's experiences. This can occur for a variety of reasons. For example, as new experiences and skills are developed, or as individuals shift focus or direction over the course of their career. The heterogeneity of educational development roles suggests that transitions within the field might initiate a "mini cycle" as a result of the shift in role or context. Study participants noted that working in a new context of educational development required them to navigate tasks from the establishment stage for their new role, though their prior experience may be sufficient for them to not need to transition back through the exploration stage, unlike someone entering the field who is also brand new to the larger context of higher education.

While previous experiences or career paths may support a more efficient transition into the field, our findings indicate that beginning a career in educational development is still a unique and often complex early career experience. Developing one's self-concept within the field seems to be a critical part of transitioning out of the

early career stage. This process is supported over time, through hands-on experience, and through navigating and establishing relationships with colleagues.

Conclusion

We found that time was not the sole factor in initiating or identifying the transition out of the early career stage for emerging EDs. During the early career period, EDs experienced different aspects of the role, began to see themselves as an ED, and understood more about the role and the field as time passed. It appears that these factors are all aspects supporting the transition out of the early career stage.

The results from this study provide an initial understanding of the experiences of new EDs and our discussion situates it within the greater context of the career development literature. Through the passage of time, and simultaneous engagement with relevant experience, EDs begin to embrace the ambiguity inherent to the field and work toward developing a professional identity as an ED. This process can be understood as a transition from the early career stage, which parallels the establishment stage of career development described by Super's (1990) model, enabled by the evolution of an individual's occupational self-concept.

Future Directions

While our current research has served to provide a preliminary overview of the experiences of self-identified early career EDs, we recognize that there are many perspectives, ideas, and experiences that may not be represented in this dataset. Future research could more intentionally seek out participants that may have been missed or underrepresented in our data. Our participants were primarily Canadian, and we recognize that future research could seek to explore if these themes are relevant in other geographical locations to increase the external validity of this study's findings.

One area for future research is around professional identity. Further research may be needed to understand how the early career ED's understanding of educational development as a field impacts their own identity as an ED. This may also offer further connections to Super's (1990) notion of self-concept in relation to how and whether someone sees themselves as occupying a particular role, identity, and place in the field. However, as with all theoretical models, we recognize the limitations of viewing our findings through Super's (1990) individual-oriented lifespan career development model and acknowledge the opportunity for further research to analyze the definition of the early career stage of educational development from other theoretical perspectives.

While our data helped to form some vocabulary to identify and discuss experiences of early career EDs, it also highlights opportunities for a deeper exploration of what these experiences entail. Future research may serve to identify how the

opportunities and challenges experienced by new EDs could be addressed at multiple levels. A tangible future goal could include a deeper analysis of existing, additional data from similar studies to identify supports for early career EDs as they navigate the complexities of our field.

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Appendix A - Survey

1. Please select the type(s) of higher education institution that best describes your institution.
   a. Public University
   b. Private University
   c. College
   d. Institutes of Technology or Polytechnic
   e. Other Please specify:

2. In which province/region are you located?
   a. Atlantic (PEI, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick)
   b. Quebec
   c. Ontario
   d. Prairies (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba)
   e. British Columbia
   f. Territories (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut)
   g. Outside of Canada. Please specify:
   h. Other. Please specify:

3. Where is your educational development work primarily situated?
   a. Faculty/Division/School (e.g., Faculty of Engineering)
   b. Teaching and Learning Centre
   c. Institutional (e.g., Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic)
   d. Other. Please specify:

4. How many people focused on educational development do you work with? (The intent of this question is to understand how many colleagues you work with closely who do similar work as you do, as part of a teaching and learning centre, administrative office, etc.)

    a. 0 – 5
    b. 6 – 10
    c. 11 – 15
    d. 16 – 20
    e. 20+

5. What is your current job title?

6. How long have you been involved with educational development?
    a. 0 – 2 years
    b. 3 – 5 years
    c. 6 – 10 years
    d. 11 – 15 years
    e. 16+ years

7. As one of our intentions with this survey is to clarify the term "early career" educational developer, do you consider yourself an early career educational developer?
    a. Yes
    b. No

8. [if Yes] Why do you consider yourself an early career educational developer?

9. [if Yes] What are the two biggest issues/challenges you have encountered as an early career educational developer?

10. [if Yes] Please rank your level of interest in the following list of potential activities that the Early Career ED Action Group could offer by dragging them into your preferred order, with 1 being the highest. –
    a. Mentorship opportunities
    b. Virtual Book club
    c. EDC Early Career ED Guide or other online resources
    d. Regional social events
    e. Other (please specify)

11. [if No] How would you describe "early career" in the context of educational development?

12. [if No] When (or at what point) did you no longer define yourself as an "early career" educational developer?

13. [if No] How (and by whom) should/could early career educational developers be supported

Appendix B - Participant Demographics

	Count of Self-Identified Early Career EDs (*n*=34)	Count of Experienced EDs (*n*=25)
Description of Institution		
Public University	25	17
College	6	6
Institute of Technology or Polytechnic	2	1
Other	1	1
Number of colleagues focused on educational development within office/unit/centre		
0-5	23	12
6-10	8	7
11-15	2	4
16-20	1	0
20+	0	2

Province or Region

Atlantic (PEI, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick)	5	0
British Columbia	4	1
Ontario	12	9
Prairies (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba)	8	13
Quebec	3	2
Territories (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut)	1	0
United States	1	0

Where within Institution work is Situated

Faculty/Division/School (e.g., Faculty of Engineering)	5	3
Funded Research Project	1	0
Institutional (e.g., Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic)	3	2
Teaching and Learning Centre	25	20

Current Job Title

Administrative Leadership (Chair, Academic Lead, Director, Associate Director, Senior Manager, Senior Educational Developer)	4	9

Role		
Educational Developer or Educational Development Consultant/Specialist or Conseiller Pedagogique or Teaching and Learning Specialist	16	8
Curriculum Consultant/Developer/Manager/Specialist	4	2
Faculty Developer or Faculty Development Consultant/Coach or Teaching Development Facilitator	2	4
Student Educational Developer	4	
Instructional Designer or Developer	1	2
Instructor	1	
Graduate Research Assistant	1	
Learning Strategist	1	

Number of Years in Educational Development		
0-2	16	1
3-5	15	3
6-10	3	4
11-15	0	13
16+	0	4

Appendix C – Plain Text Version of Figure 1

A flow chart of and adaptation of the Lifespan Career Development Model from Super (1990). The model begins with Stage One: Growth Stage which is the initial development of self-concept, attitudes, needs, and general idea of work. Then the model moves to Stage Two: Exploration where individuals try out their development through classes, work experiences, or hobbies. Tentative choice and skill development occur, and individuals might set vocational goals. Stage Three: Establishment where entry level skill building and stabilization occurs through work experience, and self-concept in the context of work identity emerges. Next the model moves to Stage Four: Maintenance where a continual adjustment process to improve one's position takes place, and the individual focuses on essential activities. Stage Five: Decline is the final stage in Super's model which consists of reduced output and preparing for retirement. These five stages make up Super's Lifespan Career Development Model but the process is not necessarily linear where an individual moves through stages 1 to 5, but can be cyclical consisting of mini cycles within the larger career development life cycle occurs. The relevant stages for this research are Stage 2: Exploration, Stage 3: Establishment, and Stage 4: Maintenance.

About the Authors:

Jessie Richards has worked in the field of educational development for over ten years in various positions across the higher education sector. In her current role as Curriculum Development Specialist at the University of Toronto (U of T) she supports departmental leaders in the coordination and management of curriculum review processes, which includes developing and implementing program evaluation strategies; guiding departments through curriculum mapping; and coordinating strategies for continuous improvement of curriculum. Jessie holds a Master of Arts from the University of Windsor and is currently a PhD candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Lisa Endersby serves as an Educational Developer in the Teaching Commons as the liaison developer for the Faculty of Health, the Schulich School of Business, and the Libraries. Her portfolio includes supporting all facets of experiential education pedagogy alongside facilitating opportunities for reflective professional development through observation, reading, and peer mentorship. Her PhD in Educational Studies explored professional development within communities of practice, examining the impact of social learning on the negotiation of a professional identity for student affairs and higher educational professionals. Her professional and academic background also includes experience in career services, student leadership development, and supporting the first year student transition.

Lynn Cliplef is a Faculty Development Coach in the Centre for Learning Innovation at ACC. In her role, she supports faculty in all areas of teaching and learning including classroom instruction, technology enhanced teaching, curriculum development, and professional development and growth. Trained in secondary education, She has spent time instructing students in the applied trades in the math and science they need to be successful on the job. She is currently completing a Master's in Educational Administration by completing research on the experiences of novice trades instructors.

Deb Chen integrates her perspectives as an educator, facilitator, trainer, and coach to create process-driven, inclusive, and accessible learning experiences for higher education, non-profit, and healthcare clients. Deb lends a strengths-based approach when supporting her clients to apply systems thinking, cultivate curiosity, and actualize their purpose and outcome. She also worked in the field of mental health, supporting suicide prevention and crisis intervention services for over 8 years. She has a doctorate in Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and is a Certified Organizational Coach, credentialed with the International Coaching Federation.

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Jackie Hamilton is a senior leader in the field of leadership, education, and learning development, Jackie has extensive experience facilitating the creation of impactful curriculum. Her work is focused on supporting curriculum and program design, training leaders, and presenting cutting edge primary and secondary research and initiatives in the field of learning and development. She works collaboratively with faculty and other stakeholders to meet quality assurance requirements, by leading people through efficient and meaningful processes. She has given invited talks on the importance of providing intentional faculty support and presented on creative curriculum solutions. She is currently pursuing her PhD in Management (Leadership and Organizational Strategy) while working as the Director, Accreditation, Curriculum Development, and Learning Innovation at the Lang School of Business and Economics at the University of Guelph. She is also an instructor in the first-year seminar program and the Department of Management, where she provides inclusive and active learning opportunities to students.

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