

## Thinking like a Survey Researcher: The Experience of Inservice Educators

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### **Abstract**

This phenomenological study presents the lived experience of six inservice educators participating in an online graduate-level research methods course as they learned about survey methodology and applied the knowledge and skills they acquired to their professional careers. Uniquely situated, the course employed an existing survey that was originally designed to evaluate the effectiveness of a professional development workshop for inservice educators as a main teaching tool. Semi-structured interviews and secondary data sources such as VoiceThreads<sup>®</sup>, discussion boards, assignments, and post course evaluations were used to explore the essence of the novice educator-researchers' experience and perceptions. Through the four overarching themes, participants described the course as eminently applicable to their professional lives and shared how it transformed them from amateur to novice survey researchers. They also annotated how the course would benefit fellow practitioners when they too find themselves collaborating with or becoming educator-researchers.

*Keywords:* research methods; surveys; professional development; educators; graduate coursework; phenomenology

### **Thinking like a Survey Researcher: The Experience of Inservice Educators**

Educator practitioners want to take job-embedded coursework that they believe will make them better administrators or teachers, rather than theoretically focused research courses traditionally associated with advanced degrees. This study focused on an online survey research methods course designed to bridge this gap and make survey research practical for all educators pursuing advanced degrees. Course participants became novice educator-researchers and critical consumers of survey data. They completed the course with a fresh perspective on survey research and the importance of carefully crafting surveys to produce useful information.

As educators become more familiar with survey design, data collection and results analysis, they in turn ask more meaningful questions and have a better understanding of how each of these aspects contribute to a quality survey— one with exactness, fidelity and trustworthiness. This newfound insight combined with the lived experience of taking a graduate research methods course with other practitioners fosters idea sharing and meaningful application to professional careers during and after coursework.

Through the qualitative tools of phenomenology this study examined the lived experience of six inservice educators learning about and applying survey-design, data collection and results analysis from a scholarly perspective (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). To capture the essence of their experience, the following research questions guided the study:

- How did novice educator-researchers describe the essence of their learning experience when studying survey methodology in a graduate-level course that utilized a PD survey example as a teaching tool?
- In what ways did novice educator-researchers apply the knowledge and skills they learned from the course, and what did they see as the perceived value of survey research for themselves and fellow educators?

The questions above also elicited: (a) the lived experience through simultaneously supporting the educators' growth as novice-researchers and promoting professional development (PD); (b) the

effectiveness of a survey originally designed to evaluate a PD workshop for inservice educators as a main teaching tool; and (c) additional insight and meaningful feedback to design courses in the future.

### **Survey methods and professional development**

School leaders must continuously evaluate the impact PD has on teachers to assess if funding spent is providing added value, especially as billions of dollars are devoted to teacher PD each year (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Hirsh, 2009; Horn & Goldstein, 2018; Popova et al., 2018; The New Teacher Project, 2015; World Bank, 2018). Obtaining data from surveys can be a particularly useful, relatively inexpensive and flexible way to collect participants' PD evaluations (Irwin & Stafford, 2016; Minnesota Department of Education and Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest, 2017). Most educators, therefore, have encountered surveys as part of PD sessions. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) advocate using surveys as a tool to identify PD areas that are both needed and desired, as well as to connect teaching practices to professional support.

A survey design supplies a quantitative account of movements, viewpoints, and beliefs of a population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Puma and Raphael (2001) additionally recognize how surveys are possibly one of the best ways to measure change in teachers' values and beliefs. Research has shown, when administered according to best practices, a well-designed PD survey that contains behavioral and descriptive questions can also provide valid and reliable data (Desimone, 2009). These findings validate examining teachers' perceptions of PD usefulness or quality through survey methodology. PD providers, however, typically administer surveys at the program end, and do not examine long-term impact nor observe for change in teaching practices (Avalos, 2011; Datnow, 2006; Howlett & Penner-Williams, 2020; Kennedy, 2016; Penner-Williams et al., 2019).

### **Professional development and educators as researchers**

This research-to-practice gap, which refers to the idea that evidence-based research knowledge is being used minimally or not at all when it comes to application in school settings, is a recognized and long-standing issue in teacher education literature (Grima-Farrell, 2017). One attempt to bridge the gap between PD and change in teaching practice has been the proposal of developing research *with* teachers,

instead of *on* teachers (Kempe, 2019; Grima-Farrell, 2017). There have been over 50 commentary and empirical studies on research-to-practice that have supported strong collaboration between researchers and educators (Grima-Farrell, 2017). Asking inservice educators to participate in the research process positions them as experts, in turn providing opportunities for professional learning, teacher leadership, practitioner enquiry, and agency (Torrance & Forde, 2017; Webster-Wright, 2009).

As inservice educators become more involved in the development and evaluation of PD, they also become more familiar with survey structure and composition. If they collaboratively design surveys with researchers, then they will share ownership of the survey, ensuring both educators' needs and appropriate data collection methods are met (Irwin & Stafford, 2016; Puma & Raphael, 2001). Thus begins the journey of practitioner to novice researcher. More research is needed to investigate the experience of professional learning as created and immersed within genuine professional practice (Webster-Wright, 2009). Limited literature exists on how inservice educators learn about survey methods, or how their ideas and newfound knowledge transfer.

### **Educator-researchers as learners**

Like other professions, educators are expected to be engaged in lifelong, professional learning (Louws et al., 2018; Webster-Wright, 2009). In the teaching profession, however, teachers are rarely asked to choose what they would like to learn and may have different motivations for engaging in PD (Louws et al., 2017). The current study positioned educator-researchers as learners with distinct *learning goals*, defined as an individual outcome of what teachers hoped would change about their own ways of thinking or doing (Louws et al., 2017).

For adult learners, these learning goals are situated in the work context (Van Eekelen et al., 2006). Influences from the classroom, school, and professional learning environment all factor into teacher learning (Van Eekelen et al., 2006), and professional learning focuses on experiential learning and context-mediated reflection (Webster-Wright, 2009). When taking into account educators' learning goals including their work-mediated context, it is not only important to understand the aspects of motivation and choice, but also explore how they affect their learning and later application.

## **Methods**

### **Qualitative phenomenology**

Phenomenology, as its own approach, illustrates the common *essence* of the *what* and *how* of a shared “lived experience” among individuals as described by them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Moustakas, 1994). In phenomenology researchers take individuals back to the wholeness of their experience through open-ended interviews, observations, journals, or conversations to obtain all-inclusive descriptions of what the participants experienced and how they experienced it (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Moustakas, 1994). From there, researchers examine, reflect, and attempt to portray the true essence of the experience through description (Husserl, 2004; Moustakas, 1994).

In many cases studying phenomenological experiences is formulated by “questions and problems that reflect the interest, involvement or personal commitment of the researcher” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 21). Considering this and in an attempt to approach this study with systematic steps, Moustakas’s (1994) transcendental framework was utilized. Researchers integrated “bracketing” to minimize the probability that their own experiences of taking a survey research course affecting their findings.

### **Context, setting, and participant selection**

The proposal to develop a survey research methods course for inservice educators was brought about to span the gap between educators and researchers. The eight-week, online graduate-level course was conducted at a southeastern U. S. flagship university during fall 2019. The course was purposefully designed and situated in the context of a pre- and post-PD survey that had been previously administered to inservice educators across the state. Course objectives included teaching graduate student, inservice educators how to (a) recognize key characteristics of a well-designed survey; (b) apply these characteristics when analyzing and evaluating example and non-example surveys; (c) create and administer an effective survey that answers a research question relevant to their current work or professional interest; (d) collect, analyze, and present respective data; as well as (e) actively participate in peer review and share lived experiences.

Fowler's (2013) *Survey Research Methods* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) was utilized as the foundational text due to its easy to understand and comprehensive introduction to survey research methodology. With a pilot structure in mind, the class enrolled nine students. Employing the online platform Blackboard Learn<sup>®</sup>, instructor-student and student-student interaction was facilitated through VoiceThread<sup>®</sup>, Collaborate Ultra<sup>®</sup> as well as its discussion board.

Given the course's focus on application, a student-centered approach was taken to ensure question-answer sessions and peer collaboration were maximized and supported throughout. Participants were actively encouraged to share examples and thoughts related to the example survey and its respective research questions. The end of course project consisted of applying concepts learned to individually create and administer a survey designed for 10 or more respondents. Students collected and analyzed their survey results for a final paper.

The purposefully selected participants of this study included six educators who were enrolled in the course. Participants were selected by the researcher to represent differing levels of experience with surveys, both in terms of levels of education represented i.e. masters and doctoral, and in variety of levels of educational experience. When variations of these factors were represented through the six invited participants, interviews were closed and no more participants were solicited. All participants were college graduate students and self-identified as having "basic or minimal experience" to a "great deal of experience" with survey methods. This *experience* ranged from minimal--being a survey respondent--to having experience in a professional marketing research firm. The participants' educational experience spanned from 4 to 35 years with student populations from early childhood to adult. This sample size is appropriate for a phenomenological study (Polkinghorne, 1989) and met the criteria for non-probability sampling.

### **Data collection and analysis**

Prior to revisiting the course syllabus, submitted coursework, and interviewing the participants, the researchers reviewed their own experiences as graduate students taking research methods courses, and as inservice teachers and/or as a course instructor. This empowered them to reduce personal biases

(Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). This process, known as “epoche” or “bracketing,” is essential to suspending predispositions and assumptions as much as possible to clearly explore the mindfulness of oneself (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 27; Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989).

Data for this phenomenological study was collected and analyzed in a multifaceted approach throughout nine months. After collecting data from end of course open-ended surveys, a need for more detail was recognized and semi-structured interviews were initiated. The semi-structured interviews consisted of a total of 10 open-ended questions – two central questions, with eight others as sub-questions (Creswell, 2003). Questions were designed to elicit the in-depth experiences of the six participants, encourage feedback, and provide historical context. All interviews were conducted over video conferencing. Interviews were recorded and later transcribed verbatim for accuracy and creditably. Written consent was obtained from participants.

Since other visual or textual materials can speak to lived experiences and therefore contain reflective accounts of phenomenological value (van Manen, 1990), secondary qualitative data also included the course syllabus, VoiceThread<sup>®</sup>, and discussion board posts. Along the same lines, written feedback from the assignments incorporating the pre- and post-PD survey where participants utilized six scaffolded tasks was also used. As participants worked on assignments throughout the course, they were constantly reminded to assume the perspective of a researcher/survey-designer as opposed to a respondent. The advantage of including these secondary sources was the ability to unobtrusively review student-student and student-instructor interaction in its natural setting over the entire research period (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). This additional information also provided an added level of richness (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The interviews and secondary data sources were first organized and then catalogued. An initial reading and review of all data sources was carried out to obtain an overall gestalt, and then, as outlined by Moustakas’s (1994) modified van Kaam method analysis, followed with reiterative readings to return to the essence of the experience and compare each participant’s perspectives (Giorgi, 2012; Moustakas,

1994). All data sources were examined once again, and then coded by segmenting key statements to formulate meanings and find themes and the overarching essence (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Moustakas, 1994). The triangulation of the different sources along with the systematic analytical approach ensured accuracy, consistency and reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

### **Findings**

From the 42 pages of in-depth interview transcripts, 158 discussion board posts, three 30-minute VoiceThreads<sup>®</sup>, and 54 post course open-ended survey responses, the data was narrowed down to 49 significant statements. Meanings were then formulated and exemplified into the following four themes: (1) *Motivation and Choice*, (2) *Appreciation of Course Design and Overall Experience*, (3) *Beginnings of an Educator Researcher*, and (4) *Perceived Value and Application for Educators*. These themes represent the full essence of the novice educator-researchers' lived experience and perceptions of the course, additionally describing their understanding of *what* they learned and *how* they applied their newfound knowledge and skills. In order to maintain confidentiality, the researcher code of "ER" (Educator-Researcher) with an assigned number was used to designate each distinct participant.

#### **Motivation and choice**

When examining the individuals' lived experience, their prior knowledge of surveys and motivation for enrolling in the course was important to recall. Through the initial VoiceThread<sup>®</sup>, and then reconfirmed in the interviews, five of the six participants shared how they had basic experience with survey research, primarily as respondents with some background in creating surveys for students or teachers. Previous graduate coursework which touched on survey research as a methodology was mentioned by three students. One participant specifically recalled her experience as a market researcher and how she wrote reports to discuss survey results but had not designed surveys herself.

Reflecting on why they enrolled in the course, all participants mentioned the need to meet a degree requirement. However, participants could have chosen from over 10 other research methodology courses offered, and instead chose this particular course. As they repeatedly expressed, requirement or

not, they believed this topic would further their own research and be applicable to their professional careers.

Accordingly, when further probed as to *why*, one participant said, “I felt like it would really give me a better grasp of how I could really use a survey to conduct real research, instead of just trying to get opinions and feedback” (ER4). Another explained, “I wanted to learn more about surveys because that is a piece of my job that I’m responsible for in my school district” (ER5). The participant who is a director of a public school English language learning program that evaluates the impact of PD programs added:

I think that perspective [mixed methods] or that methodology is good in education because so many things are not quantitative, or not black and white, really kind of can be enhanced by having respondents give their perspective and their experience (ER2).

In summation, the participants shared how they chose to take the course through internal motivation and interest based on previous lived experiences with surveys, both personal and professional.

### **Appreciation of course design and overall experience**

When eliciting the participants’ overall view of their experience all six described positive aspects of the course, with three also sharing ideas for course improvement. Positive comments included the relevance of the course and the textbook. By drawing on Fowler’s (2013) *Survey Research Methods* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) as the theoretical foundation, participants not only expressed how they appreciated its precision and applicability in its many contexts, but also how it was integrated into course assignments. For example, one assignment involved summarizing the chapters into a one-page graphic organizer, simulating exactly what they would do to support and promote their own students’ learning.

Two students emphasized the application of learning, with one stating, “I feel like we learned a lot just by doing. And so, I felt like it was really hands-on and practical” (ER4). Another reflected on the course experience: “I think it was a big eye-opener, just building the questions and learning what questions were good and if a question was leading into a certain response that we were trying to get, so that was helpful” (ER5). One teacher recognized, “I was really glad I took it because [as we went through it] I realized that I do a lot of surveys, but I’ve been doing very basic surveys ... and so this class has really helped” (ER1).

The many opportunities for instructor feedback and peer review were also highlighted by participants as being a positive outcome of the course. This reflection coincides with Irwin and Stafford's (2016) research that using a collaborative process in developing surveys is essential to creating a high-quality instrument. Two participants shared:

I appreciated the opportunity for feedback from my peers as well as from the instructor. I think it was good to get insight from others who were novice researchers and their learning, but also had some really valuable insights and feedback on my work (ER2).

It was also helpful to see from the other classmates how they worded some of their questions and seeing it from different perspectives of the different backgrounds in education and different core subject areas and how it would apply not just my area that I work with in education, but also as a whole (ER5).

These findings were validated through multiple VoiceThread® comments and discussion board posts where participants extended thanks and appreciation to the instructor and fellow educators for their feedback and ideas.

Changes suggested by participants in the post course evaluation were: (a) reducing the reading load and (b) more time on sampling. Although the VoiceThread® and discussion board post on sampling and response rates were filled with ideas and positive feedback, a few participants expressed the desire to delve even deeper into sampling. Others wrote they would like to learn more about statistical methods and data analysis. Upon further reflection, as noted in their interviews and the post course evaluation, they acknowledged that more depth would require more time, the entire semester. Individual learning styles were shown throughout the interviews as one student said the textbook was “just such a handy little book” (ER4) while another stated, “I didn't get a whole lot out of the reading, just because again, I'm more of a hands-on person” (ER1). From a global perspective it was, as they all described, “overall enjoyable” and “very beneficial.”

### **Beginnings of an educator researcher**

The interviews, discussion board posts and VoiceThreads® provided examples of how the participants' professionalism as novice-researchers developed while learning how to craft their surveys. Some

participants also described how the course content linked with other courses, stating, “My research methods course touched on them, but I hadn’t had anything specifically about surveys until then” (ER6).

Additionally, the importance of recognizing interviewer bias and being objective also emerged through the course. One participant reflected:

I actually got to develop something that was relevant to my work, and so I was always trying to make sure that I was being objective. I tried really hard to make sure that I was not asking leading questions ... [and asking] questions that would really get a true response (ER4).

This same participant also said, “I was already aware of interviewer bias and things... but this course helped me become more aware of that” (ER4). These reflections speak directly to what the participants learned from in regard to avoiding administrative bias Fowler (2013)

When reflecting on designing their own questions, administering their surveys and participating in the peer review process, participants also described how they began to see the importance of “quality questions” and “diverse samples.” A participant who spoke to question construction revealed, “Coming out of this class, I got away from that ‘yes’ and ‘no’ standard that most people just go for. I asked more in-depth questions and [consequently] got more expanded answers” (ER1) while another had the realization:

Whenever I would send out the form again, I was more aware of how maybe incorrect my survey tool was, and so I would go in and make changes to the questions, and then I saw the difference in the data I was collecting (ER5).

Sampling is a useful tool for collecting data about a population (Fitzpatrick et al., 2004) and as one participant remembered learning, “Diversity in a sampling group is so very important...it has to be broad, our sampling group, there have to be enough numbers or individuals participating to make that data really mean something” (ER3).

When the participants described their experience of analyzing and redesigning the example pre- and post-PD survey in the post course evaluation and discussion board posts, they shared the challenges of intertwining Fowler’s (2013) characteristics of effective surveys (e.g., timing of administration, sample design, question design, complete instrument design, data collection, and analysis) in their work. Fowler’s

(2013) criteria provided a needed common vocabulary for discussion. The educator-researchers felt that this enabled them to communicate questions and ideas with the instructor with more confidence and clarity; consequently, the instructor was able to provide more targeted support and feedback. Evidence, illustrated in the evaluation excerpts below, suggest that this process bolstered participants' experience and self-efficacy in designing and administering effective surveys:

It really helped me understand the importance of aligning pre and post survey questions. If we are trying to determine a perception in change of knowledge and implementation, it is important to have the questions items aligned to show growth or not (ER1).

“It was good to do some reading, but then also practical application of using the surveys. I think that by having real survey questions as well as real survey data, it really contextualized the reading in a way that was applicable” (ER2). Another participant stated, “It was helpful to have one particular study that the course was ‘designed’ around. It was easier to follow because I understood the survey and wasn’t having to get comfortable with a new survey each week” (ER3).

The novice educator-researchers truly began to see that the quality of the survey directly relates to the quality of the results and whether the results met survey intentions. “Understanding that when you’re trying to collect data, that having a strong survey tool that’s developed on the front end and making sure that it’s clear, it’s not confusing to participants,” asserted one participant (ER5). From this lived experience participants said they felt they went from a basic knowledge of surveys or putting questions together quickly with little thought, to knowing how to carefully construct questions; sample a wide, diverse population; and collect meaningful data. As one participant put it, “I now think surveys are a thing people ‘think’ they know how to do, but really, can be done much more purposefully” (ER2).

### **Perceived value and application for educators**

Participants, who were both classroom teachers and instructional facilitators, discussed how fellow educators would benefit from taking a survey methodology course. One classroom teacher drew on his experience, “[A survey] is an additional tool that can be very, very valuable when you know how to do it right” (ER1). The same participant described how surveys can bridge a communication gap, break a

language barrier, or just begin meaningful conversations. This includes asking simple closed-ended questions regarding dates of availability to attend school events (e.g., back to school night, concerts, parent-teacher conferences, etc.) to more personal open-ended questions of what parents are wanting their child to learn. As he explained, for teachers who are in school districts with a high number of English learners or culturally and linguistically diverse students and are not able to communicate freely with families through a telephone call or home visit, a survey can give both sides the opportunity to digest the information and respond at their convenience (ER1). In other words, surveys can be an effective and purposeful way to gather information from students and their parents, especially if class sizes are large or there is a language or cultural barrier.

Instructional facilitators, on other hand, expressed how this experience confirmed their belief that survey methods can be useful in assessing teachers' needs and also gauge the effectiveness or impact of PD. The following excerpts are from three of the participants who work on PD programs for fellow educators:

The idea of getting really valid and rich feedback is so helpful in our profession and with professional development. I think there's a lot of "circle from one to five" on how helpful this was, what did you learn? It just seems like it's the same types of questions in the professional development evaluation and I think focusing more on the comprehensive, or even more targeted questions as a [better] way to gauge if a PD is valuable or not (ER2).

[Other educators] send out surveys and then they're so open ended that either people don't know how to respond, or you get so many different responses, you can't make sense out of them. [They] could benefit just from having the knowledge about how to adequately design a survey, to elicit the information that you want (ER4).

as well as "Taking the data that we have, we find the gaps in our students, or what we are doing effectively for our students as educators. And that's sort of the direction one would point PD" (ER3).

One of the doctoral candidate participants, who is a National Board Certified Teacher and now serves as director of federal programs, summarized how taking a research methodology course can help educators connect the entire educational community:

A survey course ... would be extremely helpful because we survey so many different entities in our district. We survey the kids, the parents, the teachers, the community, and then the whole staff collectively. And I think if the educators have more background knowledge of how to build a survey and how to use good questions, then maybe the data

that we would see on the back end of everything would be more valuable for the teachers to use in their classroom and for the schools to use (ER5).

### **Discussion**

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to authentically describe what the novice educator-researchers experienced as well as *their* perceptions of *what* they learned and *how* their newfound knowledge and skills contributed to their professional careers. The essence of the themes was echoed through the research and directly spoke to the lived experience of the six novice inservice educator-researchers and their educational journey prior to and throughout the course. The participants' motivation, appreciation, development, perceived value and application were a direct result of the course's purposeful design and its student-centered, practical application approach.

Participants unanimously agreed the learning experience furthered their own research skills and was applicable to their academic and professional careers. The relevance of Fowler's (2013) *Survey Research Methods* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) and the hands-on, practical application of the pre- and post-PD survey was consistently noted throughout all the data sources and reflected in the participants' final projects.

The asset based instructor-student and student-student interaction was also salient from multiple data sources. Employing advanced technologies such as VoiceThread<sup>®</sup> and Collaborate Ultra<sup>®</sup> helped "replicate many of the methods used in the [traditional] classroom" and built a welcoming community of learning and reflection (Ladyshevsky, 2013, p. 2). As described by the participants, this attribute of collaboration and feedback led by the instructor positively influenced their ability to design their own surveys and analyze respective findings. Their responses also spoke to the value of seeing the course through the lens of fellow novice educator-researchers. As confirmed in the literature, using a team collaborative process to develop surveys leverages expertise and creates high-quality instruments to ensure objectives are being met and data collection is consistent (Irwin & Stafford, 2016).

In summation, participants described the many benefits of taking the survey methodology course, from learning how to purposefully gather information from students and parents to assessing teachers' needs or gauging the effectiveness or impact of PD. This finding is reflected in how a well-designed

survey is not only able to effectively and completely evaluate a myriad of educational variables, but also provide stakeholders at all levels, including school leaders and teachers, with broad to nuanced insights so they can make necessary decisions and/or improvements to their schools, classrooms or programs (Bailes & Nandakumar, 2020). The latter coincides with and supports Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) conclusion of how surveys can help ensure PD is connected to practice.

While the strengths of phenomenology lie within its ability to focus on commonalities of lived experiences and the end goal of the reader experiencing the phenomenon vicariously (Polkinghorne, 1989), its limitation of uncertainty and generalizability must be noted – all participants may not possess the self-awareness needed to convey to the researchers the essence of their experience. The use of non-probability sampling means generalizations across the entire population of educators cannot be made on this study alone (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Future studies could be further developed through exploring the essence of other research courses designed for educators and examining the dynamics of how an online platform possibly affects participants' learning experience (e.g., direct vs. indirect interaction communication). Additionally, the sample size was small and focused on one course section only. A quantitative study of educators' perspectives in other research courses with multiple sections of each course would provide a different viewpoint that would be more generalizable.

### **Conclusion**

Despite these limitations, this study elicited the participants' lived experience and invited a deeper understanding and appreciation for the learning and application of survey research methodology. The six participants shared many insightful reflections that spoke to their experience and journey of becoming novice educator-researchers. Utilizing the pre- and post-PD survey as a teaching tool for survey design, data collection, and results analysis to understand survey methodology from a scholarly perspective simultaneously promoted their academic and professional development. Accordingly, this study highlights how educators benefit from learning how to effectively apply researcher skills and the added value of working with more experienced researchers. Building a strong educator-research

community founded on professional collaboration and shared knowledge will not only enhance educators' understanding of surveys, but also help them create purposeful, valid tools.

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