Dissertations   Theses and Dissertations

2001

Teacher Portfolios in the Supervision Process: A Journey of Discovery

Halyna M. Kornuta EdD
University of San Diego

TEACHER PORTFOLIOS IN THE SUPERVISION PROCESS:
A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

by

Halyna M. Kornuta

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

University of San Diego
2001

Mary Woods Scherr, Ph. D., Co-Chair
Diane M. Yerkes, Ed. D., Co-Chair
Margaret R. Basom, Ph. D., Member

Copyright © 2001 by Halyna M. Kornuta

All Rights Reserved

iii

ABSTRACT

Teacher Portfolios In The Supervision Process:

A Journey Of Discovery

Facilitating the personal and professional growth of teachers is a very effective way to positively impact students' self-esteem, skills development, and behaviour. Certain professional development strategies, for example, developmental supervision, enable teachers to plan for their own growth. Developmental supervision is a nonevaluative approach to providing feedback that meets individual needs of teachers. The process utilizes research in the areas of professional development, teacher supervision, and adult learning. Portfolio projects could be a component of developmental supervision. However, there is minimal empirical research to support the use of portfolio projects in nonevaluative supervision.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe the experiences of elementary teachers in a Canadian school district who completed a portfolio project as part of a developmental supervision process. Research questions guided data collection about the journeys each teacher experienced. Teachers revealed insights about the portfolio project process, their personal and professional growth, and how the meaning of the experience contributed to their development. The interview data and the portfolio projects document teacher growth through reflection on practice.

An analysis of interview data and portfolio projects revealed three themes: continuous learning, enhancement of esteem, and a new sense of personal and

professional meaning. This study documented that a nonevaluative supervision approach contributed to the personal and professional growth of teachers. Teachers revealed that the process of portfolio project development left lasting legacies, which included personal and professional affirmation, fulfillment, worthiness and competency, as well as the joy of learning. The study concludes with strategies for supporting portfolio project development for teachers, principals, and district administrators.

v

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DEDICATION

A journey begins with a single step and is enriched by all those we meet along the way. . . I have been fortunate to enjoy and benefit from the relationships of many individuals, personally and professionally. These people have influenced my work, supported my creativity, sharpened my values, and challenged my thinking.

I acknowledge my mother for teaching me the joy of learning, encouraging my pursuit for excellence, and modeling the importance of finding my own path; Denys Kornuta for giving me a sense of family, a deep sense of caring and the courage to be independent and interdependent; Demi Dunlap for her mentorship as I developed my understanding of the essence of true leadership; Adèle Revet who as a friend understood relationships and life; Ray Latta for sharing his vision of international leadership and encouraging my leadership to grow and develop; teachers and parents who were patiently part of my community of learners and encouraged my leadership development; the faculty of San Diego State University and University of San Diego, and the doctoral students of our cohort, who contributed to my understanding of leadership; Gail, Aby, Mary, Marie, Suzanne, and Elaine who gave generously of their time and themselves; the school district in this study for their support; and Dr. Scherr, Dr. Yerkes, and Dr. Basom who gave of their time, guided me, and taught me to define my thoughts. I express appreciation for the support given by Christian Schuhmann, Rosie Rodriguez, and to Deborah Sundmacher, Debbie Wright, and Cheryl Smith who gave of their time and of their perspectives. In addition, there were members of

my extended family and individuals who assisted me during my journey; without their voices and influences, these pages would be empty. Most notably, I recognize Ron Germaine for his friendship and intellectual support.

It is to these people and to the celebration of life and learning that this dissertation is dedicated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE: THE ISSUE

Facilitating the personal and professional growth of teachers is a very effective way to positively impact students' self-esteem, skills development, and behaviour (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Fullan, 1991). Teachers grow when they "observe, examine, question, and reflect on their ideas and develop new practices that lead toward their ideals" (Barth, 1990, p. 50). When teachers grow, so do their students.

Good professional development programs often provide opportunities for teachers to learn new knowledge and skills and to gain new insights. Recently, researchers have sought to identify effective professional development programs that promote the continual process of learning (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Fullan, 1991; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996; Rényi, 1998). In the past, administrators assumed that professional development was one result of teacher evaluation. Typically every school district has procedures for teacher supervision and teacher evaluation; however, research indicates that teachers perceive little or no improvement in their teaching or their development as a teacher as a result of an evaluation process (Lawton, Hickox, Leithwood, & Musella, 1988). Teachers find the process negative and nonprofessional (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998).

An alternative process is required, reflective of current educational research (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Developmental supervision offers a process in which principals focus attention on teacher improvement by

1

recognizing each teacher's knowledge and competencies. Teachers become responsible for their own educational practices when given the opportunity to choose their own area of growth (Garubo & Rothstein, 1998; Gleave, 1997; Glickman, 1990; Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 1998; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998; Siens & Ebmeir, 1996). The setting for this study was one school district that gave teachers an opportunity to select their own area of growth through nonevaluative developmental supervision. The application of research on professional development, teacher supervision, and adult learning was an integral part of meeting the needs of teachers. One possible outcome of this type of developmental supervision was a portfolio project, which produced a record of reflection on practices, experiences, and achievements in the area identified by the teacher.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study was to describe the lived experiences of elementary teachers in one school district who completed a portfolio project as part of their developmental supervision process. This research sought to reveal the development of those teachers by recording their professional experiences in their own words. The teachers' descriptions are critical to understanding conditions that promote teacher growth in a nonevaluative developmental supervision program.

Duke and Stiggins (1990) reviewed evaluation conditions associated with teacher growth and concluded that "case studies documenting teachers' feelings and reflections as they tackle growth goals are crucial if we are to learn more

about the conditions that promote and inhibit professional development" (p. 131). Harris and Curran (1998) concur: "Few research studies have dealt with what educators know about portfolios or their feelings about using them" (p. 83). To achieve the purpose of this study, teachers described the portfolio project experience, including ways in which they made sense of this opportunity for professional development. This case study also explored the participants' feelings as they reflected on their portfolio project experience.

Background of the Study

Teacher projects represent one way for teachers to document their professional practice (Danielson, 1996; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Martin-Kniep, 1999; Wolf, 1996). The school district in this study offers portfolio projects as an option within the supervision program. The intent of the program is to promote continuous professional growth in the interest of improving student learning (Gleave, 1997). Portfolio projects are a purposeful collection of artifacts resulting from a yearlong professional development activity in an area of growth as identified by the teacher. Grant and Huebner (1998) noted that when a teacher's portfolio is constructed around inquiry into a self-designed question, it is possible for the portfolio "to have significant impact on the development of teacher knowledge and professional practice" (p. 33). While the school district does not specifically prescribe portfolio contents, generally included are artifacts that reflect the teachers' learning journey, including documents that demonstrate knowledge, skills, and/or abilities. The portfolio project may include video tapes, audio tapes, reflective journals, records of professional reading, and written notes

from interviews, formal and informal observations, team teaching, coaching, or mentoring experiences (Prowse & Turley, 1996).

Wolf and Dietz (1998) stated that portfolios are more than a collection of artifacts about professional growth. They recommended that portfolios should include specific items in three areas: How teachers examine their teaching and learning, how they share their insights with others, and how they have improved their teaching through the application of their learning. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1998) noted that the decision about what items to include as portfolio artifacts should be the responsibility of the teacher who collaborates with the principal to identify issues of discussion and analysis. Portfolio projects are intended to evolve as teachers continually reflect and analyze their teaching. The process and experience of creating a portfolio project can be akin to how Csikszentmihalyi (1990) described the reading of his book, Flow, as a voyage,

> . . . through the realms of the mind . . . [and] like all adventures worth having it will not be an easy one. Without some intellectual effort, a commitment to reflect and think hard about your own experience, you will not gain much from what follows. (p. 6)

Portfolio projects can be a valuable record of experiences and achievements providing an opportunity to reflect on growth, to plan for improvement, and to search for meaning. Roe and Vukelich (1997) reported that when teachers used student portfolios, the portfolios supported " 'ways of knowing' not only about their students, but also about themselves and their beliefs" (p. 16). Rogers and Danielson (1996), as believers in the widespread

adoption of student portfolios, advocated that teachers keep their own portfolios to better enable them to understand their students' portfolio experiences.

Overall, teacher portfolios are a learning journey with many pathways that are adventurous and rewarding. On these pathways, teachers may work together to teach each other in the spirit of continual learning, creating a learning community. In this setting, they discover and foster their own growth (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990), resulting in teacher leadership within and beyond the classroom (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996; Lambert 1998b). The portfolio project should demonstrate continuous learning by teachers and positively impact student self-esteem, skills development, and behaviour (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Dietz, 1995). The portfolio project is a way to capture professional practice resulting from a teacher and principal working together in a supervision process.

The goal of developmental supervision is the improvement of teacher effectiveness and the quality of instruction (Glickman et al., 1998). Developmental supervision, with its emphasis on the growth of individual teachers is fairly recent in the history of teacher supervision. From the early 1900s until the late 1950s, administrators used bureaucratic instructional supervision as a form of social control over teachers and teaching (Siens & Ebmeier, 1996). A shift to a more scientific model followed. The educational innovations of the 1960s emphasized educational improvement with a focus on programs rather than people. An orientation towards fulfilling bureaucratic organizational goals continued, but the research of the 1980s shifted toward a more teacher-centered supervisory process focusing on the need to

help teachers become more reflective about their teaching. Lambert et al. (1995) summarized the styles of teacher supervision:

> Teachers may be closely supervised, with the principal setting job targets and fulfilling a quality control function; or supervision may be perfunctory, based on the assumption that everyone understands the standards and expectations and that teachers will perform their role as expected. In either instance, the principal is not seen as a facilitator of teacher growth, nor does the purpose of teacher supervision seem to be the professional development of teaching staff. (p. 10)

Many options for supervision have also existed. One option, known as cognitive coaching, is growth-oriented with a post-conference emphasizing self-reflection. The discussion focuses on seeking to understand the teaching episode (Blase and Blase, 1998; Lambert et al., 1995). Another option, clinical supervision, emphasizes the formal pre-conference, observation and collection of objective data focusing on instructional activities, and feedback through the post conference (Sergiovanni, 1995; Siens & Ebmeier, 1996).

Andrews, Basom, and Basom (1991) challenged us to move beyond clinical supervision to " . . . think of the act of supervision as the sum of the personal interactions between and among teachers and the principal that lead to the improvement of instruction" (p. 100). Glickman (1990) introduced a supervisory behaviour continuum with four supervisory response behaviours and practices: directive control, directive informational, collaborative, or nondirective. A combination of responses is also possible. Glickman's model (1990) of

supervisory responses altered the original clinical supervision model to better meet individual teacher's needs. A strength of the model is that it suggests that not everyone should receive the same supervisory approach. Glickman's model (1990) focuses on individual teacher development by encouraging principals to " . . . select the method of supervision that will allow the greatest growth potential for each teacher" (Siens & Ebmeier, 1996, p. 303). The approach to supervision described in this study is consistent with Glickman's supervisory approaches and employs supervisory styles intended to support the teacher's developmental needs (Gleave, 1997).

Current supervision theory promotes the teacher's involvement in effective supervisory practice (Cruz, 1998; Danielson, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1998). A form of professional development that engages teachers in a supervision process is known as developmental supervision. Developmental supervision offers quality learning experiences by recognizing that teachers operate at different levels of development (Glickman et al., 1998). Developmental supervision is nonevaluative and based on meeting individual teachers' professional needs by focusing on adult learning, professional development, and life-span transitions (Gleave, 1997; Glickman, 1990; Siens & Ebmeir, 1996).

Over the years, different ways to reshape schools for success, including improvement of teacher effectiveness, have been described in the educational reform movement (DuFour & Eaker, 1988). Research on effective schools in the 1980s defined effective teaching and identified characteristics consistently found in effective schools, including extensive staff development opportunities

(Duttweiler, as cited in Sergiovanni, 1995; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Levine, 1991). Researchers attempted to take the complexities of schooling and represent them in a simplified manner, using checklists for improving schools. Educators raised concerns about generalizing the effectiveness research. The characteristics of effective schools are correlational and not causal (Glickman et al., 1998). While they do not cause the effectiveness they suggest, there is a significant positive correlation between identified characteristics and school effectiveness. Blending characteristics of a caring environment with good teaching may result in learning communities that are necessary for quality professional development (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1997; Lambert, 1998b; Leithwood, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1995).

The effective schools movement sought to improve teaching and schooling so that the focus was more directly on learners' needs. Today, teachers are expected to build learning environments by understanding learners and their learning as much as they comprehend their subjects. "Schools are being asked to educate the most diverse student body in our history to higher academic standards than ever before" (Darling-Hammond, 1998, p. 7). An important key to transforming schools into communities of learners is the kind of leadership provided by principals (Sergiovanni, 1995), who support teachers' continuous learning (Darling-Hammond, 1995). Opportunities for continuous learning occur when professional development is seen as " . . . not an end in itself . . . the ultimate goal is changing the culture of learning for both adults and

students so that engagement and betterment is a way of life [for each individual] in schools" (Fullan, 1991, p. 344).

As long as there is a need for learning and improvement there will be a need for professional development. Most districts provide learning opportunities after school or in release day workshops that are mandated and designed to involve everyone in the same experience. To be effective, professional development planners should recognize that teachers have differing development needs depending on age, career stage, gender, and whether teachers are at the elementary or secondary school level (Barth, 1990; Fullan, 1991; Huberman, 1989). Grimmett and Neufeld (1994) reviewed the writing of eleven scholars who contributed to the field of teacher development. The authors used a model developed by Sergiovanni (as cited in Grimmett & Neufeld, 1994) to summarize the findings. Findings included teacher development as characterized in three forms: traditional, alternative, and authentic. The traditional form occurs when teachers focus on themselves as learners because of externally imposed requirements. The alternative form occurs when teachers develop their practice according to what they find professionally rewarding and thus, learning occurs for intrinsic reasons. The authentic form occurs when teachers balance their learning needs with what is important and of value to students. Authenticity results in a quest to transcend the traditional and alternative forms of development in pursuit of supporting learning from the perspective of both students and teachers. Providing for teacher growth through

professional development requires a culture that encourages authentic development (Grimmett & Neufeld, 1994; Sergiovanni, 1992a).

Growth through developmental supervision includes both personal and professional development (Glickman et al., 1998). While there are many unique factors that influence teacher growth, principals can begin to nurture growth and development by acknowledging the developmental needs of teachers. The importance of leadership is inherent in portfolio projects, professional development, and developmental supervision (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998). Teacher professional development thrives in a learning community where the following three factors exist to energize and enhance teaching and learning: (a) honoring individuality by recognizing differences in a teacher's career stage, personal situation, school and community setting, and grade and program assignment; (b) viewing development as a process within a yearlong cycle to improve instructional quality and teaching effectiveness; and (c) encouraging reflection on practices to promote dialogue, collaboration, and an invitation for responses that contribute to a teacher's learning and effectiveness (Barth, 1990; Jalongo, 1991; Lambert et al., 1995; Leithwood, 1992; Prowse & Turley, 1998a; Senge, 1990).

In summary, portfolio projects can be a form of individualized professional development. In a developmental supervision program, portfolio projects are one option. Teachers document their experiences, achievements, and reflections on their practices in the area they identified.

Significance of the Study

The use of portfolios as part of the supervision program is a relatively new phenomenon. Few studies have looked at the effects and effectiveness of portfolio use (Reiveran & Tidel, as cited in Harris & Curran, 1998). There is relatively little empirical data about the use of portfolios for teacher development in a nonevaluative supervision process. A lack of empirical research to support the use of portfolio projects for teacher development may be a source of difficulty in promoting their use in the supervision process. There is a need for research based, quality professional development programs for teachers that build on their experiences while recognizing their individual needs. This study is significant because it describes the professional journey that teachers experienced while completing individualized portfolio projects. The study adds to the understanding of professional development by presenting the teachers' perspectives. These perspectives and experiences may encourage school districts to consider portfolio projects as a way of improving learning opportunities for teachers, and ultimately, for students.

Research Questions

The focus of this study was an investigation of how elementary teachers in one school district experienced a portfolio project designed to foster their professional growth. The following research questions guided data collection:

1. Describe the process of developing a portfolio project. How did it evolve?

2. What was it like to have the experience? What were the advantages and/or disadvantages?

3. How did the process contribute to your professional development?

4. What aspects were most meaningful or not meaningful? How could the process be improved?

These questions sought to explore the journey in the portfolio process, to provide the opportunity for teachers to describe the positive and negative outcomes of their portfolio experience, and to share the finding of their personal and professional meaning.

Discussion of Terms

For the purposes of clarity, the following terms are described.

Portfolio Projects

Portfolio projects are the product of a purposeful learning process and one possible outcome of a developmental supervision process. The portfolio project is constructed around inquiry into a self-directed question and documents professional practice. Teachers collect, reflect, and select artifacts that document the achievement of goals through self-development and growth. The teacher, in collaboration with the principal, identifies an area for growth and sets goals. Portfolio projects are unique collections of artifacts for each teacher producing tangible evidence of the learning, growth, application, and insights that occurred during the developmental supervision process.

<u>Developmental Supervision</u>

Developmental supervision is nonevaluative, and strives to nurture teacher growth by focusing on improving the quality of a teacher's instruction so that sutdent's learning can be maximized. Multiple activities occur whereby teachers study and learn from their own experience, as well as from current education theory and research. Teachers are challenged to take a role in their own professional development through identifying, planning, and pursuing areas of growth (Glickman et al., 1998).

<u>Professional Development</u>

Professional development is a process of learning that aims to increase teaching knowledge and skills. It is successful when teachers strive for renewal and instructional improvement by increasing their personal and professional competence (Duke & Stiggins, 1990; Fullan, 1991). As an individualized process, professional development leads to a new level of consciousness and a heightened awareness; to be meaningful, it must also include reflection about learning and teaching experiences. Teachers develop through extending their knowledge, skills, and abilities. Application leads to further growth. The ultimate outcome should be improved instruction for students.

Limitations of the Study

Each case study has certain limitations that define what data can be collected (Merriam, 1998). The limitations in this study included the number of people who could be involved, the time lapse since completion of the projects, and the biases of the researcher.

The contribution of this study could potentially be limited because of the low numbers of teachers who had completed the portfolio project option as part of their developmental supervision. Twenty elementary teachers completed portfolios since the program's inception seven years ago. These teachers voluntarily choose the portfolio options for their developmental supervision. Using the selection criteria, a purposeful sample of six participants permitted systematic data collection from multiple data sources, and for an analysis that produced credible findings. Time lapse could also be viewed as a limitation, since the completion of participants' portfolio projects ranged from less than one year to five years.

This study is limited by its personal nature involving biases of the researcher. As Patton (1990) noted, the strength and weakness of qualitative inquiry are the human element. Specifically, the researcher was biased by her belief in the value and importance of individualized professional development for teachers. Knowing the existence of this bias resulted in planning, conducting, and analyzing the data through controls for bias. Controls included the care taken in the design of the interview questions so as to focus on the teachers' experiences and the portfolio process, not on the researcher's previous role as the supervising principal. In addition, participants' involvement in the research included clarifying the researcher's interpretations. Also, member checks, the focus group, and other sources including portfolio projects, assisted to address the bias through triangulation of data. The fact that the researcher was once the supervising principal could be viewed as limiting her ability to be nonjudgmental

during the study. Patton (1990) recommended that researchers be aware of and state their bias and juxtapose their bias with technical rigor and documentation of methods. Such rigor and documentation of methods allow others to review the research and methodology for bias.

The aspects defined as potential limitations could also be identified as strengths of this study. Time lapse could be viewed as a benefit; the process of this study required an examination through reflection. Participants were able to reflect on long-term benefits of the portfolio project making the time lapse a possible asset to the study. The researcher's experience as a principal for more than a decade could strengthen her understanding of what may be important in the teacher supervision process. Some may see the nature of qualitative research as limiting the generalizability of a study. Qualitative scholars including Donmoyer (1990) argued that qualitative research may be generalized beyond a specific case when rigorous research methods are used.

Summary

This chapter discussed the importance of personal and professional growth of teachers, followed by an explanation of portfolio projects as a means for teachers to learn continually within the context of a supervisory program that emphasized professional growth. The Significance of the Study, Research Questions, Discussion of Terms, and Limitations of the Study concluded this chapter.

The literature review, in Chapter Two, discusses three areas of research that provide the context for this study: professional development, as an adult

learning process occurring through the understanding of adult stages of development and adult learning; developmental supervision as an individualized process; and portfolio projects as an experiential process. Throughout, the essence of leadership is a spirit, which interconnects the three areas making possible a nurturing environment for growth to occur.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Joy is a word that describes the experience of learning something new (Armstrong, 1998). Assisting teachers to find their personal fulfillment can lead to experiencing joy in learning. Portfolio projects are one form of professional development in a supervisory process for teachers to experience and further their own learning, growth, and personal fulfillment.

The purpose of this study was to investigate and describe teachers' experiences during the completion of a portfolio project as part of a program known as developmental supervision. This chapter is therefore comprised of a literature review in three areas: professional development, developmental supervision, and portfolio projects. An understanding of these three areas and their interrelationships provides the theoretical basis for the study. The essence of leadership is a spirit that permeates the boundaries of the three areas. By applying the knowledge of what is possible into the action that makes it happen, the essence of this leadership spirit could be assumed by any teacher, principal, or district administrator.

Professional Development as an Adult Learning Process

Professional development programs are an investment in the continuous learning of educators. Fullan (1991), Glickman et al. (1998), and Sergiovanni (1995) have reviewed teacher professional development programs, and described the reasons why they succeed or fail. Personalized professional

17

development programs are a successful way to promote the growth of teachers wherever they are in their personal or professional journey. An emphasis is placed in education on understanding child development and how children learn. It is just as important for educators to understand adult development and learning. Therefore, the literature review focuses on two factors that contribute to a successful professional development program: an understanding of adult stages of development including the professional life cycle of teachers; and an understanding of adult learning including individualization, reflection, and motivation to learn. This section concludes with a summary of guidelines for successful professional development programs.

Adult Stages of Development

Development in the learning process has been described by stage-related phases (Piaget, 1926; Kohlberg, 1976; Erikson, 1997). Early research on adult development suggested that people move through predictable stages (Freud, 1920; Gilligan, 1982; Jung, 1933; Kohlberg, 1976; Piaget, 1954). Erikson's eight-stage model (1997) of the life cycle from infancy to old age described development as a series of crises or turning points resulting in cumulative growth. Erikson identified the three stages of adult development as young adulthood, adulthood, and old age. These stages associated with the adult years are illustrated in Figure 1.

The most significant stage for this study, because of its implications for educators, is adulthood. In this stage, the opportunity for identify development and renewal occurs through the struggle of generativity versus self-absorption

Stages	Young Adulthood	Adulthood	Old Age

Human Strengths emerging from the struggles of

Love   Care   Wisdom

Conflict   Intimacy vs. Isolation   Generativity vs. Self-absorption and stagnation   Integrity vs. Despair
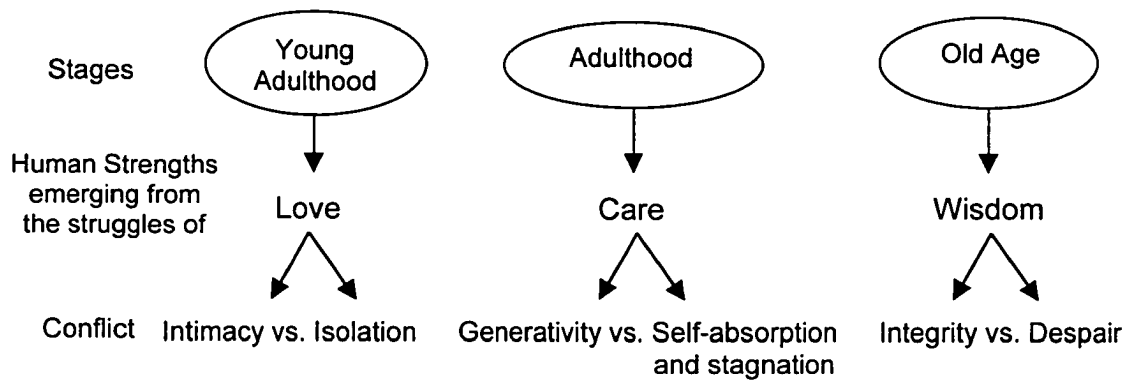
<u>Figure 1.</u> Adult Stages within Erikson's Life Cycle

and stagnation. Generativity is described as adults' care for family and children, and includes productivity and creativity as well as procreativity. Palmer (1998) suggested that elders who serve the young and their own well-being, define generativity as "creativity in the service of the young" (p. 49).   In education, generativity leads to new ideas, adult identity development, and learning for improvement. When generativity is lacking, the result is stagnation. Erikson (1997) wrote: "If one should withdraw altogether from generativity, from creativity, from caring for and with others entirely, that would be worse than death" (p. 112). Striving for generativity and the development it brings contributes to purpose in daily life, including work.

Generativity, shown as creativity in work and ideas, results in a sense of worthiness and competence both of which are found in people with a healthy sense of self-esteem. Self-esteem is based on perceptions: perceptions of our own competence in what we do, and perceptions of our worthiness, or seeing meaning in who we are (Mruk, 1999). It follows, then, that someone with high worthiness and high competence would have high self-esteem. Such people are

confident in their abilities, self-directed, decisive, assertive, loving and lovable, and take pride in accomplishments (Reasoner, 2000). Self-esteem can be positively influenced by choosing to grow; activity in generative matters promotes our competence, contributing to a positive self-esteem, which is " . . . the immune system of consciousness providing resistance, strength, and a capacity for regeneration" (Branden, 1994, p. 2).

Recent research on adult development suggests that teachers experience successive stages in a career cycle. Huberman (1989) found that professional development needs and situations differ for teachers, depending on age, stage of career, and gender. He analyzed the professional life cycle of teachers and found major themes appearing at various stages. His analysis of teachers from seven to thirty years of teaching is particularly relevant for this study.

According to Huberman (1989), from the seventh to the 18th year of teaching, experimentation with curriculum and grade levels often occurs. There is a desire to increase one's impact and this activism can result in desires for new career opportunities or readiness for other challenges. During the 19th to 30th years of teaching, serenity prevails. These are the final years towards the end of a professional career. Teachers in this stage can be increasingly withdrawn and disengaged from policies and practices, or they can seek ways to give back to the upcoming generation. The challenge for professional development programs is to find ways to promote generativity throughout a teacher's thirty-year career span.

School districts can play a role in promoting generativity and high self-esteem by encouraging adult development through professional development, thereby contributing to a sense of fulfillment for teachers. Those planning professional development programs benefit from knowledge of the adult stages of development and the professional life cycle of teachers. Knowledge about adult learning can also provide additional insights for educational planners.

<u>Adult Learning</u>

Research has indicated three elements essential to the adult learning process are individualization, reflection, and motivation to learn. Each is important for teachers' professional development (Glickman et al., 1998).

Since people experience learning at different rates and times, individualization is necessary and facilitates the adult psychological need to be self-directing. The personalized, developmental supervision model used by the school district in this study begins with the teacher and principal working together to identify a teacher's area of interest and/or need. Several options for documenting growth are available including the portfolio project. One option, a portfolio project, is constructed around inquiry into a self-directed question and documents professional practice. Individualizing professional development through choice has the potential to strengthen one's self-esteem as seen in three of Branden's (1994) six pillars of self-esteem: the practice of self-acceptance, the practice of self-responsibility, and the practice of living purposefully.

Professional development programs should also encourage teachers to reflect about daily teaching experiences. Schön (1983) described "reflection-in-

action" (p. 50) as a way to make sense of a phenomenon. Danielson and McGreal (2000) advocated that teachers create portfolios to provide the structure and process necessary to document and reflect upon their teaching practice. As reflective practitioners, teachers learn by attending to their inner voices. They move along their journey of discovery through pathways of thinking and feeling about teaching, and they learn to question and reflect. This inner journey is filled with open-ended questions that guide the search for insights and meaning. Palmer (1998) explained that good teaching requires self-knowledge to take professionalism to a deeper level of consciousness. Teaching emerges from one's inner self, and it occurs when we ask the deepest questions of our teaching lives, including, "How can I develop the authority to teach, the capacity to stand my ground in the midst of the complex forces of both the classroom and my own life?" (Palmer, 1998, p. 32). Ultimately, we teach who we are, and reflection adds a significant dimension to a teacher's development. With the provision of individualization and learning options, and the practice of reflection in professional development, there is potential to attain high levels of both personal and professional development and to increase motivation.

While there are many motivational theories (Daresh, 1989), a helpful approach to leadership and supervision is an understanding of Maslow's needs-satisfaction theory. Maslow's (1970) theory of a hierarchy of needs begins with physiological needs and progresses through needs for security-safety, social belonging, esteem, and finally to self-actualization. Motivation is thus defined by Maslow as the desire of human beings to satisfy certain needs in a linear,

sequential fashion. Consequently, unless lower needs are satisfied, individuals will not be motivated to a higher level of concern and individual behaviour will be motivated by the need most important at the time. Beyond the security of basic human needs, teachers have the desire to feel safe and to be accepted by peers. Once these three needs have been met, motivation can lead to further development of esteem and to self-actualization.

It is possible to understand self-esteem in terms of needs that provide motivation. Reasoner's (2000) five elements of self-esteem can be seen as motivating needs. They are: the need for security (taking responsibility for one's own happiness and view of life); the need for identity (accepting oneself with a focus on strengths); the need for belonging (opening oneself up to others); the need for purpose (life with meaning and focus with set goals); and the need for a sense of personal competence (being committed to goals and to do the best possible). These motivating needs are powerful intrinsic motivators.

Principals may need to be conscious about both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation to encourage the inner drive that inspires learning. Motivation is an inner force that compels behaviour. Extrinsic motivation is doing something for external benefit. Intrinsic motivation is doing something for its own sake. Enduring motivation must come from within. In Maslow's model, intrinsic motivation moves one from the initial drive to satisfy physiological needs, to acting and achieving according to one's own standards at the level of self-actualization. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) used flow theory to describe the intrinsically motivated learner who, absorbed in the pursuit of a goal,

understands and develops a personal meaning that results in a feeling of spontaneous joy.

Flow is a "state of mind when consciousness is harmoniously ordered, [when individuals] want to pursue whatever they are doing for its own sake" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 6). The state of flow is characterized by common experiences. People typically feel strong, in effortless control, and at the peak of their abilities. Their concentration becomes so intense that anything else is irrelevant; body and mind are "on the same page, doing the same thing" (Csikszentmihalyi, 2001). Self-consciousness disappears and a sense of ecstasy occurs. The sense of time becomes distorted; time may seem longer, as experienced by figure skaters in their pirouettes, or shorter, as when hours seem to pass by in minutes (Csikszentmihalyi, 2001).

Flow is experienced by almost everyone, when performing at peak levels or stretching beyond former limits. Figure 2 (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 74) shows that entering the flow channel occurs when one is faced by a challenge a
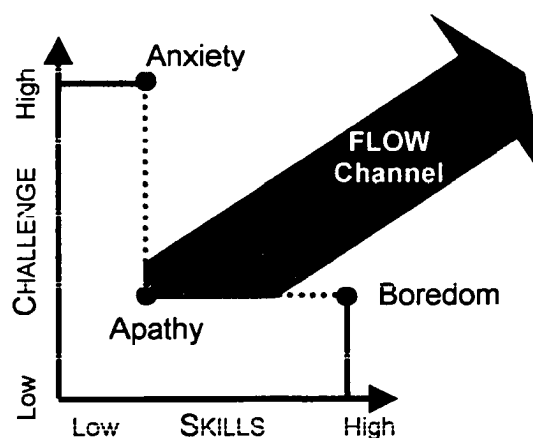
Figure 2. Flow emerging from Challenge and Skills

bit greater than usual, yet not beyond the skills available. With the necessary skills, the challenge is met with enjoyment. Growth occurs in competence, confidence, and/or skills. Boredom results when skills are greater than the challenge; feelings of anxiety occur when the level of challenge far exceeds skills. Matching challenge and skill, according to Csikszentmihalyi's theory, is a prerequisite for flow. Maintaining the right balance between level of skill and level of challenge makes good motivational sense as it contributes to flow. Flow then becomes its own reward, as Goleman (1995) explained, "Because flow feels so good it is intrinsically rewarding . . . the sheer pleasure of the act itself is what motivates [people]" (p. 91).

Individualization, reflection, and Maslow's, Reasoner's and Csikszentmihalyi's motivation perspectives provided lenses for examining factors necessary for teachers' continual growth and development. Insights gained from both the theory of adult learning and adult stages of development have applications for professional development in practice.

Professional Development In Practice

An understanding of adult stages of development and adult learning can contribute to the development of more successful professional development programs. A fundamental assumption underlying these areas of research is that, under normal conditions, human beings will tend to seek growth (Jalongo, 1991), and that real growth and progress are made step by step, following a natural sequence of development (Covey, 1992). Learning is a process that has no short cuts; all stages of growth and development are important. Each stage must

be taken into consideration when planning programs for teacher development. Including teachers in planning and decision-making are essential factors that lead to successful adult development (Loucks-Horsely, as cited in Fullan, 1991). Fuller (as cited in Jalongo, 1991) concluded that teachers' concerns move from a focus on self, to a focus on task, to a focus on impact. This change in focus is parallel to factors important in developing self-esteem.

Professional development models have evolved from that of traditional workshops to a model that encourages teachers to share practices, to mutually solve problems, and to reflect on and learn from their experiences (Katzenmeyer, 1996). This recent model defines Senge's (1990) learning community, which provides opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practice, thereby expanding their capacity to create the results they truly desire.

Fullan (1991) stated that continuous development of teachers is the cornerstone for giving meaning and improving on an educator's work. This occurs, according to Sergiovanni (National Staff Development Council, 1997), through successful development programs that "recognize individual differences among teachers; encourage teachers to reflect on their own practices; give a high priority to conversation and dialogue among teachers; provide for collaborative learning among teachers; and call upon teachers to respond morally to their work" (p. 2). Overall, schools must attend to individualization, recollection, and motivation to nurture the growth described in adult learning literature (Glickman et al., 1998).

Developmental Supervision as an Individualized Process

This section begins with a summary of the research that differentiates teacher evaluation from teacher supervision, and includes information about Glickman's (1990) model of developmental supervision as used by the school district in this study. Supervisory principles that support the growth of teachers through developmental supervision are also discussed.

Evaluation versus Supervision

A plethora of terms exist relating to evaluation and supervision. Fullan (1991) wrote: "Teacher appraisal, teacher evaluation, clinical supervision, career ladders, and similar terms abound in confusion of meaning and variability in practice" (p. 323). Recently, literature and practice have attempted to more clearly define the difference between teacher evaluation and teacher supervision. Each is a unique process with differing outcomes, yet both have similar characteristics. Typically, every school district has procedures for evaluation and supervision.

In many school districts, a traditional process of evaluation, or performance appraisal, is in place. Evaluation is a management function that rates, grades, and classifies teachers. Evaluation emphasizes performance standards, data collection, and analysis. It seeks to ensure that organizational goals and expectations are attained, performance standards are measured and monitored, and that fair practice is followed in personnel decisions. Site visits occur, and a supervisor writes an evaluation at the end of the year (Cruz, 1998; Daresh & Playka, 1995; Sergiovanni, 1995).

In 1982, a comprehensive study looked at performance appraisal policies and procedures used in Ontario schools (Lawton et al., 1988). The study focused on appraisal practices for teachers, principals, consultants, superintendents, and directors. Four basic concerns were at the core of the study: what types of policies were adopted, the extent to which they were implemented, what types of appraisals were most effective, and what processes were used to develop and implement the policies. The findings test assumptions about the purpose and value of appraisals.

All but seven of the 187 Ontario school boards participated in a questionnaire screening process. The sample size was drawn from the returned questionnaires, and school systems were selected "based on traditional criteria" (Lawton et al., 1988, p. 13). Questionnaires were sent to all superintendents and directors, and to samples of teachers, principals, and trustees. The researchers received a return rate ranging from 53 percent to 87 percent, judged to be representative of Ontario. An additional eight schools supplemented the survey as case studies, which included indepth interviews with all categories of personnel.

An important part of the study was the description of the appraisal process through four stages: preparation (planning, purposes, criteria, and standards), data collection (sources and types of information, collectors of information, time spent, reporting impact of appraisal, compliance, extent of effort, and degree of impact), evolution of policy, and impact on system effectiveness (for teachers and principals). Superintendents reported teachers' performance as a result of

evaluation improved by 86 percent, yet "at least 80 percent of the teachers said they perceived little or no improvement as a result of the appraisal process" (Lawton et al., 1988, p. 32). Teachers suggested that evaluation added little or nothing to the improvement of their performance. This study concluded that while most school systems in Ontario have formal appraisal systems, it was not clear that they were used with effectiveness, or that the recipients sensed much improvement.

A different process is needed to provide a way for individual teachers to improve and grow, personally as well as professionally (Glickman, 1990). In many school districts, this happens through teacher supervision. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1998) stated ". . . the overarching purpose of supervision is to help teachers improve" (p. 274). This improvement might be based on what the teacher knows, the development of abilities, or an inquiry into the teacher's own practice. Supervision encourages teachers to become responsible for their own educational practices (Garubo & Rothstein, 1998). Glickman's (1990) model of developmental supervision incorporated these characteristics by focusing on the individual teacher's developmental level. Glickman's model goes beyond clinical supervision by adding dimensions based on theories of adult development, teacher development, and life-span transitions.

Siens and Ebmeier (1996) used Glickman's (1990) model as the context for a study that attempted to link developmental supervision to the reflective thinking of teachers. The reflective educator was described as "one who can rise above the limits of tradition, technique, and authority to practice teaching in a

manner that exhibits rational and intuitive thought" (p. 306). Thirty graduate students who were aspiring administrators in a master's degree program received instruction about, and later demonstrated proficiency in the use of Glickman's model. The graduate students worked with 120 classroom teachers who were divided into a control group and an experimental group. Through several interviews and with the Levels of Use instrument designed by Hall, Loucks, Rutherford, and Newlove (1975), the researchers noted a statistically significant difference between the control and treatment groups in their reflective thinking scores. To address a possible Hawthorne effect, a further t-test supported this conclusion. Results from this study offer empirical support that developmental supervision can both substantially increase teachers' reflective thinking and be used as a vehicle for the professional development and personal growth of teachers.

Both developmental supervision and evaluation are necessary functions to improve teacher and student performances and outcomes. Each is a unique process that is dependant upon the situation. A comparison between the concepts of teacher evaluation and developmental supervision is presented in Figure 3.

Definition	Purpose (Goal)	Characteristics	Process	Outcomes (Product)	Observations
Teacher Evaluation Provides data to uphold the standards of excellence	❑ To determine if the teacher is effectively meeting defined organizational goals and expectations ❑ To check for the desired instructional and professional behaviours ❑ To determine the status of a teacher's contract ❑ To establish a standard for an acceptable level of performance	❑ Makes value judgements ❑ Uses a measurement device ❑ Requires documentation that follows legal requirements of school board policy ❑ Establishes a superior / subordinate relationship between principal and teacher	❑ Summative ❑ Uses an established process for performance within a time frame; ongoing throughout the year ❑ Follows due process ❑ Tends to incorporate extrinsic motivation	❑ An appraisal report that is an evaluative record of teacher performance ❑ Report is included in personnel file ❑ A decision is made to obtain, maintain, or terminate a professional contract	❑ Defines principal in a management role ❑ Follows primarily a transactional leadership style ❑ Alone, cannot develop teacher growth
Developmental Supervision Provides support for teachers to improve classroom instruction	→ To facilitate teacher learning and professional growth → To support a teacher's needs and desires to learn, improve, and grow	→ Teacher centered → Supports upgrading of knowledge, skills, and abilities → Reflective component → Personalized, based on a teacher's needs, as mutually defined between the teacher and principal, or can be teacher determined → Meets professional needs → Seeks development of teaching or program improvement	→ Formative → Uses an established process for development within a time frame; ongoing and may extend beyond one year → Growth oriented experiences with many components → Tends to incorporate intrinsic motivation	→ A developmental supervision report is the portfolio → Report is included in personnel file → Supports and promotes growth and renewal → Encourages teachers to become more effective → Increases motivation	→ Defines principal in a leadership role → Follows primarily a transformational leadership style → Professional growth and development occurs
Common Characteristics	Purpose: Evaluation and supervision are each needed and valued depending on the needs and goals Goal of improvement: Teacher and student performance grow as part of school improvement. Importance of process: Both evaluation and supervision are equally important. Value of relationship: Caring, honesty, and collaboration build trusting relationships. Commitment to process: Teacher and principal invest in ongoing communication, data collection, and investment of time.				

Figure 3. A Comparison between Teacher Evaluation and Developmental Supervision

<u>The Supervision Process in Context</u>

The school district in this study adapted Glickman's (1990) developmental supervision model. The program supports the development of teachers as they study and learn from their own experience, as well as from current educational theory and research findings.

The program, which is illustrated in Figure 4, begins as the teacher and principal meet early in the fall to review the supervision process, and the district supervision report. The report is part of the teacher's permanent employment record, which is retained in the district's personnel file. An agreement is reached on the style of developmental supervision to be used: directing, negotiating, collaborating, or facilitating. A combination of styles is also possible. The purpose of the supervision is determined and, to meet the teacher's developmental needs, the teacher chooses the area of emphasis for the year. Suggested areas of emphasis include personal and professional abilities, classroom management, core curriculum, and individualizing and personalizing instruction (Prowse & Turley, 1996).

Developmental Supervision exists:

✓ As a developmental process;

✓ As a yearlong process;

✓ To improve the quality of instruction;

✓ To encourage teachers to become more effective in their teaching; and

✓ To provide a record of experiences and achievement (Prowse & Turley, 1998).

Process

Human Elements

❑ Personal situation
❑ Career stage
❑ School / community setting
❑ School community

Supervision Style

❑ Directing
❑ Negotiating
❑ Collaborating
❑ Facilitating

Planning Stages

❑ Identify needs
❑ Choose area of emphasis abilities, instruction, classroom management, curriculum
❑ Set goals, personalize to meet developmental needs

Process/Report

❑ Review program, process, and district report
❑ Determine purpose for the supervision

Portfolio Projects

Formal and informal observation

Video tapes

Audio tapes

Interviews

Case Studies

Reflective journal

Photographs

Illustrations

Team teaching, coaching, or mentoring

Records of professional reading

Product

Figure 4. Personalized Developmental Supervision Program

The teacher sets development goals and is responsible for choosing the method for presenting the year's learning experience. The portfolio project is one way of collecting and illustrating a record of growth and achievements (Prowse & Turley, 1998a). A variety of data gathering techniques may include any combination of video tapes, audio tapes, reflective journals, records of professional reading, and written notes from interviews, formal and informal observations, team teaching, coaching, or mentoring experiences. The teacher and principal meet throughout the year to review goals (Gleave, 1997). The teacher is responsible for reflecting and then selecting the portfolio contents demonstrating that knowledge, skills, and abilities are identified. The supervision program concludes with the principal and teacher completing the district's supervision report, which formally documents the progress made towards learning and improvement. It also includes a summary of the portfolio project. The supervision report and summary, along with the portfolio project, are given to the superintendent. The project is later returned to the teacher and the supervision report and summary remain in the district office in the teacher's personnel file.

Personalizing the supervision process for teachers includes recognizing factors related to career development stages. A move to a new school and a change of grade or program assignment has an influence. These situations are intermingled with a teacher's personal circumstances, as diverse as child care to elder care (Glickman et al., 1998; Prowse & Turley, 1998). There is potential for any one, or combination of these circumstances, to influence teachers'

professional growth as they strive to maintain balance in their life. Support is needed as these changes occur (Fullan, 1999).

There are many ways for supervision to energize teachers and respond to their individual needs. Supervision in the district in this study is seen as a developmental process occurring throughout the year. It is further viewed as a way to improve the quality of instruction by encouraging teachers to become more effective in their teaching. By considering the skills, level of assistance needed, knowledge and personal characteristics of the teacher, the stage is set for the development of teacher leaders (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996). Open discussions about professional growth lead to good relationships. In a caring climate, teachers become more committed to their own educational experiences (Garubo & Rothstein, 1998). The principal's role is to guide teachers and remove barriers by listening and supporting them as they develop their ideas (Fullan, 1997).

Ultimately, the intent of this supervision process is to promote "teacher development toward a point at which teachers, facilitated by supervisors, can assume full responsibility for instructional improvement" (Glickman et al., 1998, p. 199). Literature has demonstrated that the adaptability of the model has the potential to contribute positively to a teacher's professional growth and improvement.

Portfolio Projects as an Experiential Process

This section reviews the research on teacher portfolios that are part of a teacher supervision program. In this context, the process of shaping a portfolio

includes defining its purpose, determining its content, and reflecting on its meaning.

<u>Portfolios and Teacher Supervision</u>

Current research linking teacher portfolios to professional growth is minimal. Martin-Kniep (1999) reports that " . . . professional portfolios have been endorsed by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, by the state of Texas, and by numerous school districts . . . however, portfolios are the exception rather than the rule as either tools for self-assessment or as mechanisms for teacher evaluation and supervision" (p. 2). Of 62 dissertation abstracts found using the key words of teacher portfolios, professional development, and growth, none reported the completion of a self-directed teacher portfolio within the context of a developmental supervision program. Recent contributions to the limited empirical knowledge about teaching portfolios and professional growth are summarized in the following reviews.

Freeman (1998) conducted three case studies with elementary school teachers for the purpose of determining their growth through the use of teaching portfolios. Participants reported an increase in reflection, self-assessment, and changes in classroom practices. Lucid (1997) discovered that portfolios were recognized as a type of growth-oriented teacher evaluation practice even though teachers made limited use of teacher portfolios. Sutherland (1998) collected data in one school where seven participants had been experimenting with teaching portfolios by collecting and discussing work samples for three years. In her literature review, she stated that few articles describing the process had been

written, that there was a lack of empirical research on the subject, and that studies generally tended to focus on the portfolio process rather than the conditions and outcomes. What is lacking among these studies is the uniqueness of the use of the portfolio project in a nonevaluative supervisory process and its link to the professional growth of teachers in the areas they identified.

It is of interest to note reports of teacher growth as a result of requiring their students to complete a portfolio. Roe and Vukelich (1997) analyzed four teachers' use of student portfolios over a three-year period. The teachers reported growth in their own ability to understand and use student portfolios. Through this understanding, teachers encouraged a greater level of children's involvement in portfolio development. Teachers also reported that the experience contributed to their own professional growth and self-awareness.

Portfolio Projects: Process, Purpose, and Content

Developmental supervision, as a process for teachers, provides the context for developing a portfolio project. While the process of shaping a portfolio contributes to defining a portfolio's purpose and determining its content, each tends to blend due to the interrelationships of process, purpose, and content.

For the district in this study, portfolio development is part of the developmental supervision program. Together, the teacher and principal, discuss and decide on an area of growth to be represented in the portfolio. The teacher then sets goals and is responsible for assembling a portfolio that

contains evidence of development towards the goals.   The portfolio is constructed around inquiry into a self-designed question.   Sergiovanni and Starratt (1998) would support this process.   They stated that portfolios should be designed with a sense of purpose in mind and assembled to demonstrate that key issues have been examined and addressed as evidence that goals have been met.   Martin-Kniep (1999) encouraged teacher involvement in the process of artifact selection so that the projects become personalized.   By creating a portfolio in these ways, teachers are then able to share who they are, what they have done, and what they will do.

Portfolio development is a new process for most educators, and there may be resistance to such a change in supervision format (Brown & Moffett, 1999). Questioning the necessity, worth, or relevance of portfolios is a normal response. The literature provides research-based solutions.   The Concerns-Based Adoption model developed by Hall et al. (1975) described behaviours and practical options for dealing with resistance to change.   Three predictable stages of concern may be identified when confronting change: Personal concerns (what will this mean for me?); management concerns (will I be able to do it?); and impact concerns (what difference is it making in the classroom?).   When confronting a change, it is the support of concerns that will motivate teachers past personal and management concerns into the third stage, becoming concerned about the impact of their growth on student learning (Brown & Moffett, 1999).   Teachers' needs are addressed through dialogue and the portfolio can be seen as a learning project: It is a work in progress evolving to include a collection of

artifacts reflecting teaching practice, ongoing professional development, and accomplishments. It is also a creative outlet for educational growth. As part of the supervision process, portfolios place teachers "in the realm of discovery, reflection, self-understanding and professional improvement" (Sergiovanni & Starrat, 1998, p. 248). Each teacher's own learning process soon extends to learning with others, which Lambert (1998a) defined as leadership. Bolman and Deal (1994) extended this definition to describe both teaching and leadership as a way to infuse life and work with passion, meaning, and purpose. Teacher leaders influence each other towards improved educational practice as they model continuous learning by reflecting on and learning from their experiences.

Current literature suggests that there are three stages particularly important to the portfolio process for assembling artifacts (Courtney & Abodeeb, 1999). Teachers must collect, reflect, and select to portray the achievement of goals through self-improvement and growth. Collection is a conscious effort to gather teaching artifacts. Reflection means appraising work to determine what represents evidence of growth. Selection continues the process by choosing artifacts purposefully. Danielson (1996) underscored the importance of reflection and emphasized that, if accompanied by discussion with colleagues, these stages in the portfolio process provide an opportunity for teachers to demonstrate their professional growth and development.

Danielson (1996) also stated that one purpose of portfolios is to support mentoring and coaching. While teachers are notorious for working in isolation,

relationships with colleagues should be an important element in teaching. Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) examined the critical importance of relationships, and stated that our identity is formed through relationships "that make available more: more expressions, more variety, more stability, more support. Who we become together will always be different than who we were alone. New relationships create new capacities" (p. 18).   Therefore, when teachers share beyond the classroom, *professional relationships can develop into mutual support and enhancement.*

Descriptions of portfolio contents are diverse.   While portfolios are an accepted tradition in the community of architects, artists, designers, painters, photographers, and writers (Bird, 1990), the use of portfolios in teacher evaluation and development is a relatively recent phenomenon.   There has been little research on teacher portfolios, although a number of journal articles and books have been written (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 1990; Lyons, 1999; Martin-Kniep, 1999; Oakley, 1998; Peterson, 1995; Wolf & Dietz, 1998). Borrowing the portfolio from other professions has resulted in a variation of the purpose and contents of a teacher portfolio.

There are many suggestions for portfolio contents. Wolf (1996) described the contents as a "collection of information about a teacher's practice . . . and should carefully and thoroughly document a set of accomplishments attained over an extended period of time" (p. 34). Authors provide lists of a range of artifacts to include, such as a résumé, teaching background, educational

philosophy and teaching goals, lesson plans, descriptions of instruction, lists of professional activities, video tapes, photo journals of classroom activities, and letters (Bird, 1990; Campbell et al., 2000; Dietz, 1995; Wolf, 1996). To extend the collection of artifacts beyond a scrapbook, however, requires the inclusion of items that demonstrate knowledge, skills, and abilities in the following five areas: a statement of philosophy including values and beliefs; a statement of professional goals and objectives for the present and future; a collection of materials that demonstrate growth, including ways of enhancing student work and evaluation; a journal of reflective writing representing growth in thinking planning, delivering, and assessing teaching; and evidence of ongoing professional development efforts (Van Wagenen & Hubbard, 1998; Wolf, 1996; Zubizarreta, 1994). A portfolio then becomes a comprehensive record of growth and development, which can also serve as a résumé support (Danielson, 1996).

The Search for Meaning

One aspect of the portfolio project is reflection. Reflection includes questioning: what was learned, what the experience meant, and how the knowledge and skills can be applied in the future. Costa and Kallick (2000) described the need for continual learning and growth experiences through the practice of reflection: "In teaching, as in life, maximizing meaning from experiences requires reflection . . . [whose purpose] . . . is to get us into the habit of thinking about our experiences" (p. 60). Teachers used journal writing as a record of reflection, which enables them to construct meaning from their work.

Journal writing, as part of the process for finding meaning, was portrayed in the videotape, Uniquely me: A Personalized Developmental Supervision Process (Prowse & Turley, 1998). A teacher spoke passionately about the experience:

My administrator said I could handle my own growth and development. I didn't get anything out of the checklist. I had been using journals with my kids for fifteen years. They wrote, and I commented but I had never written a journal. I thought it was going to be the wonderings of a middle aged teacher and I didn't know exactly what to say and I didn't know how to begin. Who would read it in the end? It actually worked out pretty good, once I got started, just like the grade 3 kids. You get pretty good at it once you get started . . . maybe it is easier to have a principal come and do a check list on you. But I didn't get anything out of that. In the end what did I learn? [Now I know] my principal is there to help me as a teacher.

This teacher is searching for meaning. Atwell (1998) wrote about the importance of finding meaning through reflective writing about teaching philosophy, goals, and methods. Teachers push to describe or discover the significance of their knowledge and experiences as well as their thoughts and feelings.

Reflection, as a part of the portfolio process, allows teachers to hear their own inner voice. A reflective journal is one way for teachers to view themselves, their students, and the world differently. Quinn (1996) explained that perceiving

our reality through a different lens causes a change in our being, a change in self. Palmer (1998) underscores the value of change in self for teachers:

> Teaching, like any truly human activity, emerges from one's inwardness, for better or worse. As I teach, I project the condition of my soul onto my students, my subject, and our way of being together. The entanglements I experience in the classroom are often no more or less than the *convolutions of my inner life. Viewed from this angle, teaching holds a* mirror to the soul. If I am willing to look in that mirror and not run from what I see, I have a chance to gain self-knowledge – and knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject.
>
> (p. 2)

This call to see our inner self is what Palmer (1998) described as listening to "the voice of the teacher within" (p. 29) which he encourages through the keeping of a journal. "By beginning or continuing an inner journey, [educators] may gain insight, inspiration, and support for their personal and professional lives" (Scherr, 1999, p. 1). Learning and growth through developmental supervision is both personal and professional. As Secretan (1997) wrote, "The key to personal development and evolution lies not outside ourselves but within" (p. 16).

Portfolio projects challenge teachers through reflection to ask questions about meaning, thereby nurturing the teacher within. This process has the potential to facilitate conscious development. Vaill (1996) characterized the conscious development of meaning in life as spirituality:

Spirituality seeks fundamentally to get beyond materialist conceptions of meaning. Spirituality is a decision to search beyond what one can do *to* or *on* or *within* oneself . . . spirituality is to turn away from material props and to open oneself to a transcendent source of meaning . . . Genuine spirituality, then is the willingness to enter into a process of dialogue about [ultimate] meaning. (p. 180)

Covey (1989) included spirituality as part of his seventh habit. He believes in development of, and investment in, the four dimensions of our nature: physical, mental, social/emotional, and spiritual, with the spiritual dimension being the core of one's value system, providing sources that will inspire and uplift.

The teacher's reflective journal is a learning experience that links core values to daily experience, and brings an inner focus to personal leadership. Developmental supervision that encourages reflective writing as part of learning may be a way to develop the teacher within.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature on professional development, developmental supervision, and on portfolio projects. They pertain to the personal and professional growth of teachers. Professional development acknowledges adult stages of development and promotes adult learning through individualization, reflection, and motivation. Traditional forms of supervision tend to "hinder rather than promote teacher growth" (Glickman et al., 1998, p. 81). Developmental supervision, as an individual process, provides an alternative supervision program by incorporating the benefits from the understanding of

adult development and adult learning. Portfolio projects, as an experiential process, link professional development to teacher growth through an individualized supervision process. Chapter Three presents the Methodology and the Research Design followed in this study to investigate teachers' experiences of a portfolio project as part of a developmental supervision program.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of this study was to describe the lived experiences of teachers who completed a portfolio project as part of their developmental supervision. This chapter presents the Methodological Framework for the study, the Research Questions, and the Research Design. Data Collection and Data Analysis conclude the chapter.

Methodological Framework

Qualitative studies in education seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, and the perspectives of the people involved (Merriam, 1998). This multiple-case study investigated and described how teachers experience the process of completing a portfolio project; therefore, a qualitative approach was appropriate. Patton (1990) considered case studies to be useful when there is a need to understand a unique situation in depth, and where, by identifying cases rich in information, a great deal can be learned from the phenomenon in question. Patton added, "The more a program or treatment aims at individualized outcomes, the greater the appropriateness of qualitative case methods" (p. 54). The aim of the supervision program was to support each teacher's growth and development through an individualized portfolio project.

This research was designed "to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than

46

confirmation" (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). A case study appropriately addressed the research questions and was sensitive to the teachers' lived experiences and the way they saw their project develop.

Research Questions

The major focus of this study was the lived experiences of elementary teachers in one school district who completed a portfolio project. The following research questions guided data collection:

1. Describe the process of developing a portfolio project. How did it evolve?

2. What was it like to have the experience? What were the advantages and/or disadvantages?

3. How did the process contribute to your professional development?

4. What aspects were most meaningful or not meaningful? How could the process be improved?

The questions sought to reveal insights into the experiences of completing a portfolio project through understanding the why and how of developing a portfolio project, what happened during the project's development, and what the experience meant to those involved.

Research Design

Qualitative inquiry seeks to understand how people make sense of their world. The research for this study was carefully conducted and supported with systematic data collection and thoughtful analysis. The following sections

describe site setting, participant selection, participant sample, the role of the researcher, and protection of human subjects.

<u>Site Setting</u>

The setting for this study was an urban school district consisting of approximately 1200 elementary and secondary teachers. This moderately sized Canadian school district includes 22,000 students, 44 elementary schools, and eight high schools. Each school has a principal and vice principal whose responsibilities include supervising the work of teachers. In this school district, teachers engage in a formal supervision process, known as developmental supervision, once every five years.

Seven years ago, this school district undertook to clearly define developmental supervision and teacher evaluation and to differentiate between them. Portfolio projects are an option in the district's developmental supervision program, as illustrated in Chapter Two, Figure 4. Teachers choose an area of emphasis for the year and set goals for growth. They design their portfolio projects to demonstrate their development. Contents may include any combination of video tapes, audio tapes, reflective journals, records of professional reading, and written notes from interviews, formal and informal observations, team teaching, coaching, or mentoring experiences. Upon completion, the teacher and principal submit the portfolio project to the superintendent, along with the district supervision report.

Participant Selection

The school district granted the researcher permission to contact teachers who had completed a portfolio project. Twenty teachers completed portfolio projects since the supervision program included that option seven years ago; eighteen of these teachers had completed their portfolio projects under my supervision prior to the commencement of the study. The following criteria guided participant selection: teachers who had most recently completed their project as part of their developmental supervision; teachers actively teaching in the elementary school setting with children from kindergarten to grade 8; and teachers who had at least five years of teaching experience. Eight teachers were contacted; two declined due to previous professional commitments. The teachers who met the criteria completed their portfolio project in a time frame ranging from less than one year to five years prior to the study. The study took place during the period from October through December, 2000.

Participant Sample

Sampling is important in qualitative research. A purposeful sample was used, as it is "one that is believed to be especially well suited for obtaining meaningful data on a particular research problem . . . it is a group of participants that a researcher selects because they have characteristics that make them especially worthy of attention" (Pyrczak & Bruce, 2000, p. 97). Six participants was the number that allowed the researcher sufficient time to listen, understand, and gain insight into the experiences. As Patton (1987) stated, the power of purposeful sampling lies in the selection of information-rich cases for in depth

study to learn about experiences. The six participants involved in the study represented the school district's spectrum of positions and teachers' experiences. They included two teacher librarians, two resource teachers, and two classroom teachers; all had assignments in kindergarten to grade 8 elementary schools. All teachers had a bachelor of education degree; their teaching experience ranged from 8 to 26 years, averaging 16 years.

The teacher librarians provided learning support with library resources in two schools each, through their dual roles as teachers and librarians. As teachers, they gave students at every grade level an orientation of the library, taught students research skills, and co-planned lessons with classroom teachers. As librarians, they managed the library's operation and resources by developing its collection. The resource teachers assisted students identified by teachers as requiring learning assistance in the form of diagnostic testing, and individual and small group teaching. They supported classroom teachers with strategies and attended team meetings with parents and professionals. The classroom teachers instructed a wide range of subject areas to a class of usually no more than 30 students. The classroom profile included students whose academic ability generally ranged from one to two grade levels above and below their assigned grade, and whose behavioural needs also ranged widely.

Role of the Researcher

My role as researcher brings experiences and insights and as Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted, the nature of the interaction between the researcher and participant will impact on the findings. I was a member of a district supervision

committee that decided portfolio projects could be an option in the developmental supervision program.   My involvement encouraged teachers to complete a portfolio project.   As a result, I supervised eighteen of the twenty teachers who have completed portfolio projects since the program's inception seven years ago. This supervision occurred over a five-year time span in two schools.   Patton (1990) provided support for a personal perspective stating, "Qualitative inquiry depends on, uses, and enhances the researcher's direct experiences in the world and insights about those experiences" (p 56).   As their principal, I had established a trust relationship with the teachers who became the participants in this study.   That relationship could be seen as a benefit to this study.   Lincoln and Guba (1985) commented that "respondents are much more likely to be both candid and forthcoming if they respect the inquirer and believe in his or her own integrity" (p. 256).   Because I was their former supervisor, the relationship could be viewed as inhibiting participant responses due to the authority of my position.

Protection of Human Subjects

This research followed guidelines established by the Committee on Protection of Human Subjects of the University of San Diego.   As part of the Protection of Human Subjects, all of the teacher participants signed an informed consent form, which included assurance of confidentiality (see Appendix B).

Teachers participated in this study on a voluntary basis and understood that they could withdraw from the study at any time.   Since this study was not part of an evaluation process, these teachers were not at risk.

Participants were assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity. As a further precaution, participants reviewed their interview transcripts to delete and/or edit their comments. During the interviews, participants showed considerable pride in their achievement, and requested that their first name be used instead of a pseudonym. Each participant gave written consent for the use of her real first name.

Data Collection

A case study does not claim any particular method for data collection (Merriam, 1998). Qualitative researchers gather data and use a variety of procedures to check credibility and to establish trustworthiness. To understand the process of portfolio development from the participants' perspectives, the researcher conducted interviews, reviewed interim journals, convened a focus group, and reviewed portfolio contents. This section on Data Collection concludes with a description of the audit trail.

<u>The Interviews</u>

The interview is one strategy used in naturalistic inquiry to find out what people think and feel through their descriptions of how they understand and perceive the world in their own terms (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). To understand the process of portfolio development from the participants' perspectives, tape-recorded interviews were conducted with each participant. The intent was to capture reflection-in-action, which Schön (1983) described as taking place after the incident occurs. Preparation for the interviews required overcoming the challenge of finding the right questions. Time and reflection contributed to a

lengthy search for interview questions. In the teaching style of Socrates, asking the right questions was recognized to be more important than simply finding "the right answers." The researcher conducted a pilot interview with a teacher who had completed a portfolio project to test the effectiveness of the interview protocol (see Appendix A) and conducted another interview with a second teacher to determine the appropriate sequence of questions, a procedure suggested by Patton (1990).

Prior to the interviews, participants received a copy of the questions, at their request.   The first interview occurred at a location chosen by the participants. Their choices included: conference rooms, classrooms, a learning resource centre, an office, and their homes.   The locations were free from interruption. Participants signed a consent form; their signature gave permission for an assigned pseudonym and permission to record the interview data.   The researcher collected demographic information using the form as shown in Appendix C.

Figure 5 was used to assist the participants in visualizing the connections among the four research questions: the process, the personal experience, the
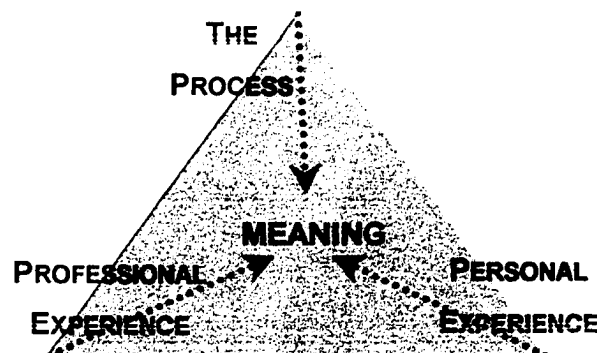
Figure 5. Key Research Questions

professional experience, and the project's meaning.

A semi-structured interview protocol guided the conversation. Two interviews, each approximately one hour long, provided descriptive data relevant to the teachers' understanding and perspective of the portfolio process. As the interview proceeded, the interviewer was able to respond to comments and questions from participants. The interaction contributed to data interpretation and analysis (Patton, 1990).

The researcher took notes, consisting of key phrases and major points, on the interview guide to record as fully and fairly as possible, the participants' perspectives. All interviews were transcribed by the researcher to capture the actual words of each participant. A technique known as member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was used; participants were invited to correct and/or challenge data and interpretations to establish credibility (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996; Merriam, 1998).

Participants received the transcribed data for review within a few days. The transcriptions included the researcher's notes and interpretations and also the topics that emerged. At the second interview, participants reviewed the transcripts as part of the member check process. The second interview was also taped, and transcripts were sent to participants for their review and response, and the member check technique was repeated. Some of the participants requested a third interview to continue discussion. Tapes were destroyed upon completion of the study.

<u>Interim Journal</u>

At the first interview, participants received an interim journal in which to record their introspection. During the time period from the interview until the member checks, any additional recall could be captured in the journal. Some teachers chose to use this format and shared their entries, which were incorporated into the data collection. Others found that when reading the transcripts, memories occurred which they wrote into their transcript revisions.

<u>Focus Group</u>

After each participant completed the member check by verifying the data from the two interviews, the focus group met. Six posters displayed data from interview transcripts. Four posters stated participant responses for each interview question under the headings: process, personal experiences, professional development, and meaning. Two additional posters listed the participants' topics and their comments of a project legacy left to them.

Five out of six participants attended the focus group meeting. Participants chose partners, and in two groups began reviewing posters, two at a time. Participants initialed comments they agreed with, made additions, and proceeded to the next pair of posters. Participants then shared their impressions in the large group and further discussion occurred. Teachers were also invited to write, on a separate page, their personal responses. Participants saw slides of their portfolio projects. At the request of the absent participant, the six posters were forwarded to her. She responded, thus completing the data gathering process for the focus group phase.

<u>Portfolio Contents</u>

The teachers' portfolio projects served as another source of data. A review of the projects resulted in a portfolio content description: the project title, a summary of the scope of the project, and a content overview. In Chapter Four, details are provided for each participant. The portfolio projects were not evaluated for quality of content.

After reviewing the portfolio contents, the researcher asked participants and received their permission to capture the portfolios in slide format. A set of slides exists for each portfolio, including an overview slide and individual slides for each component of the portfolio.

<u>Audit Trail</u>

To enhance the dependability of this qualitative research (Ary et al., 1996), a log was maintained of how the data were gathered and how the study was conducted. The log included information regarding audio tapes, transcripts, interview records, and research remarks from the interviews.

To lessen the chances of being overwhelmed by the amount of data, the researcher maintained a separate file for each participant organized with a data checklist. File contents included: initial contact information, informed consent and demographic information forms, interview transcripts, interim journals, and portfolio project notes. Process notes consisted of methodology procedures, decisions and strategies, and analysis charts of the findings from the study. This audit trail of materials ensured the research process was completed in an organized and timely fashion. Color coding was used purposefully to assist in

analysis of interview data.   This strategy was continued when findings were reported, aiding in clarity and organization.

Data Analysis

This case study focused on the process and experience of portfolio projects as one possible outcome of developmental supervision.   In this nonevaluative form of supervision, teachers identified an area of growth, determined their goals for achieving that growth, and chose a portfolio project as the way to portray the outcome of their growth.   Interview questions about portfolio projects were designed to gather data related to the portfolio process and to its meaning.   Data collection, observations, and interpretation took place simultaneously and contributed to systematic categories of analysis (Ary et al., 1996; Guba, as cited in Patton, 1990).   In this multiple-case study, two stages of analyses occurred: within-case analysis of each participant's data; and cross-case analysis, which began once the analysis of each case was completed (Merriam, 1998).   Documenting these procedures appears to be linear and mechanical in nature, even though the thinking processes and steps taken to convert and analyze the data were nonlinear and organic in nature.   Figure 6 is an illustration of process and steps that contributed to the systematic categories of analysis for this study.

STAGE ONE: Within-case Analysis

STAGE TWO: Cross-case Analysis

FIRST PHASE

SECOND PHASE

FIRST PHASE

SECOND PHASE

Analysis by
interview,
reviewing
transcripts,
substantiating
themes:

Analysis by
integration of data
sources:

❖ Interviews
❖ Interview
   transcripts
❖ Field notes
❖ Interim journals
❖ Portfolio
   projects
❖ Project slides

Reported in six
vignettes as
Summary of
Findings:

❖ Profile
❖ Insights and
   Discoveries
❖ Integration of
   data sources
   by questions:

❖ Portfolio
   Project
   description

Analysis by
responses and
integration of
focus group data:

Analysis by
Responses:

Four interview questions with six participants

1. Process

2. Personal

3. Professional

4. Meaning

X 6

THEMES

Continuous
Learning

Enhancement
of Esteem

A new sense
of Personal
and
Professional
Meaning

Reported by
question in
Analysis of
Findings:
Responses by
Question and
summarized
in Figure 7

Reported in
Analysis of
Findings:
Themes and
summarized
in Figure 9

Figure 6. Systematic Categories of Analysis

The first stage, a within-case analysis, began when each participant responded to the interview questions and open-ended prompts. During the first phase, each interview was audio taped and notes were taken. The validity and reliability of qualitative data depends on the skill, sensitivity, and integrity of the researcher during the interviewing and content analysis phases (Patton, 1990). While transcribing the interviews, the researcher reflected on the meaning of what was heard and recorded those thoughts on a side column on each interview page. Through careful listening, the researcher uncovered and discovered the participants' lived experiences (Van Manen, 1990). Participants reviewed the interview transcripts at the second interview for accuracy of meaning, as well as substantiating the topics identified by the researcher. The first phase ended when each of the six participants completed their reviews.

The second phase of the within-case analysis began with an integration of data. Lincoln and Guba (1995) advised the use of a system of checks and balances to ensure fairness. In this phase of analysis, multiple data sources strengthened the fairness of the study: phase one interview notes and transcripts, topics, field notes, interim journals, portfolio projects, and slides of projects. These multiple sources of information and member checks provided comprehensive information to cross-check and validate findings. Frequent comparisons enhanced the validity of the study. Phase two concluded after integration of the data. The Summary of Findings in Chapter Four presents a synopsis of the integrated data: each participant's profile, responses to the four interview questions, and portfolio project description.

Preparation then began for the focus group meeting. The integration of data, organized by interview questions, began the second stage: a cross-case analysis. During the first phase, individual cases were pooled and responses were organized by interview questions. The processes included making sense out of what participants said, integrating multiple data sources, putting together what was said, and looking for patterns (Patton, 1990). The recurring patterns of common responses formed categories, which described the questions.

Keyes, Hanley-Maxwell, and Capper (1999) suggested that the validity of a study is due to the corroboration between the researcher and the participants. Corroboration in this study occurred at the focus group meeting. Participants viewed six posters prepared by the researcher; four posters displayed participant responses for each of the interview questions, one poster listed eighteen topics[1] emerging from participant interviews, and one poster noted participant comments of a project legacy left to them. Participants' responses specific to each interview question were written in separate colors. The color-coding continued to be used as a tool to assist the researcher in organizing and cross-referencing the listed comments with the interview source. Participants were not given the coding key. The four posters grouped responses by category, each having its own title. Participants engaged in thoughtful discussions that assessed, confirmed, and modified the topics, which had emerged from the interview questions and

---

[1] Participant topics were: a lived experience, a learning experience, building relationships, setting goals and making a plan, caring relations, affirmations, joy of learning, confidence builder, pursuit of excellence, developmental path, value of looking back, reflecting and learning, building the picture, finding perspectives, the gift, dialogue, meaning, benefits and connections.

questions and multiple data sources. Their collective responses are found in the Analysis of Findings in Chapter Four, and summarized in Figure 7.

The second phase of cross-case analysis began with the search for themes. Reponses were grouped by category and judged for belonging by commonalities within the group and by differences from other groups. Glasser and Strauss (as cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and Merriam (1998) suggested a similar strategy of category development, the constant comparative method of data analysis. This strategy was followed as the researcher grouped data while considering what was significant and meaningful (Patton, 1990). Making comparisons while seeking patterns and arranging them in relationship to one another contributed to forming categories. This creative process uncovered three themes, which concluded this phase as described in Chapter Four, Cross-case Analysis: Themes, and summarized in Figure 9.

Summary

This chapter described the qualitative methodology followed to describe the lived experience of portfolio projects from the teachers' perspectives. Four interview questions guided data collection, which was described in the Research Design. Data collection, interpretation, and analysis began with the first interview. The integration of data sources contributed to the within-case analysis as reported in six vignettes. In the cross-case analysis, participant responses were grouped by interview questions. The questions provided the organizer for analyzing the collective responses. Patterns within the responses resulted in the

formation of three themes. Chapter Four provides the summary of data and

analysis of findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: SUMMARY OF DATA AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Chapter Four presents a summary of participants' responses to the four interview questions and an analysis and discussion of the findings. It begins with the Setting of the Study, which includes a review of the supervision process, the participants' demographic information, and a collective description of the portfolio projects. The Summary of Findings: Within-Case Analysis presents the six participants through vignettes of their portfolio project experiences. The Cross-Case Analysis reports collective responses from participants, from which emerged three themes: Continuous Learning, Enhancement of Esteem, and a new sense of Personal and Professional Meaning.

Setting of the Study

The Supervision Process in Context

The participants in the study were teachers in a school district that has two supervision programs: a nonevaluative developmental supervision model and an evaluative performance appraisal model. Once every five years, the principal and teacher meet to agree on completing one of the two programs. Developmental supervision is generally chosen if the teacher does not require, or has not requested, a performance appraisal.

The developmental supervision program is intended to facilitate ongoing teacher development. Teachers or principals may initiate this supervisory process. They meet early in the fall for an orientation at which time a plan is

63

jointly developed to personalize the process. Teachers identify an area where growth is required, and together, the teacher and principal determine goals. Options for data collection include the portfolio project. With this option, teachers proceed to collect data, and monthly conferences are planned for reflection and interaction. This supervisory program recognizes teachers' professionalism, nurtures critical and creative thinking, and encourages professional reading. The completed project is submitted to the superintendent.

The participants in this study chose the portfolio project for their developmental supervision. They heard about this option at a fall staff meeting and those interested in the portfolio option attended a small group information session. Participants asked clarifying questions and listened to testimonials from teachers at their school who spoke about their experience, shared their completed portfolio projects, and offered to provide support.   In the last few years, participants also viewed the video, Uniquely Me: A Personalized Developmental Supervision Process (1998). In the video, three teachers shared their experience with developing a portfolio project.

<u>Participants' Demographics</u>

The participants in this study (Gail, Aby, Mary, Marie, Suzanne, and Elaine) completed their portfolio projects in a time ranging from less than one year to five years. They included two teacher librarians, two resource teachers, and two classroom teachers; all had teaching assignments in elementary schools. Their teaching experience ranged from 8 to 26 years with an average of 16 years. Each career stage was evident: one teacher was in her first third, three

were in their second third, and two were in the last third of a thirty-year career. All teachers were teaching with a bachelor of education degree. In addition, one teacher also had a bachelor of arts, another had a master of education, and two had post graduate diplomas. All teachers completed portfolio projects as a first time experience.

<u>Portfolio Projects</u>

The participants' portfolio projects included formal and informal observations, interviews, a video, records of professional reading, photographs, illustrations, case studies, and journals. All portfolios included reflective writing. The portfolio projects were unique in contents, organization, and presentation style. Most projects were completed in binder format; one was housed in a file box. Each portfolio project was a reflection of the teacher's individual style and interests.

Summary of Findings: Within-Case Analysis

The findings in this multiple-case study were analyzed in two stages: within-case analysis, where each participant's case was described; and cross-case analysis, where the cases where collectively analyzed and reported in the Cross-Case Analysis of Findings. The within-case analysis occurred in two phases. Phase one began with the participants' first interview and ended when they completed their interviews and reviewed their transcripts. Phase two is reported in this section in six vignettes. This final phase began with an integration of data which enabled the researcher to tell the story of each participant with depth and detail, drawing upon data from the phase one

interviews and transcripts, including topics, field notes, interim journals, portfolio projects and slides of projects. Each vignette is presented in three sections: teacher's profile, insights and discoveries, and portfolio project. The teacher's profile includes her background information and approach to the portfolio project. The teacher's insights and discoveries are organized by responses to the interview protocol as guided by the four research questions:

1. Describe the process of developing a portfolio project. How did it evolve?

2. What was it like to have the experience? What were the advantages and/or disadvantages?

3. How did the process contribute to your professional development?

4. What aspects were most meaningful or not meaningful? How could the process be improved?

The questions sought to explore the dimensions involved in the portfolio journey and to provide the opportunity to hear each teacher's voice as she described the outcome of her portfolio experience. One paragraph is therefore devoted to summarizing responses and topics in the natural language of the participant (Ary et al., 1996) in the insights and discoveries section. Each vignette concludes with a description of the teacher's portfolio project. The vignettes are presented in the next section, beginning with the participant who most recently completed her portfolio project.

<u>Gail's Awareness</u>

    <u>Gail's Profile.</u>

        At the conclusion of her portfolio project, Gail had completed 14 years as a teacher in the school district with a total of 26 years of teaching experience. She was a teacher librarian with a "hectic schedule," assigned to two schools. One school's growing population required building renovations, including the development of a new learning resource centre (library). Students and staff were relocated to two different schools necessitating that Gail work in three buildings. She provided teaching support to teachers and their students from kindergarten to grade 8 and was involved in the design of a new library as part of the building renovation.

        Gail was at the point in the five-year developmental supervision cycle where she was required to complete the district supervision report. To meet this requirement, she chose to produce a portfolio project. Selecting that option enabled Gail to plan her own professional development, as related to her career stage, school settings, and teaching assignment. Gail began her project with an idea that she entitled: Designing a Learning Resource Centre and the Role of a Teacher Librarian in Three Sites. Throughout the project, Gail was willing to "take the risk" of assuming responsibility for her evolving portfolio. The project grew over two years, encompassing components that she had not initially anticipated, and was completed just prior to her involvement in this study.

Gail's Insights and Discoveries.

Initially Gail was "confused" about the kind of project she would complete, so she spoke to her principals about it. When she learned the portfolio project could be molded to her own teaching circumstances, her enthusiasm grew:

I could develop it myself. There were not strict guidelines that I had to try to fit into some predetermined format. [The "old" ways of supervision in which] a principal coming to watch me teach just wasn't relevant . . . or a very fair way to evaluate my job because teaching isn't the whole thing that I do.

At her career stage, Gail was comfortable with the new process. Along the way, the project changed from a requirement to a highly motivating experience that was flexible enough to meet her professional needs. She felt compelled to write about the library renovation and its effect on her life. Initially, the time to work on the project was a negative factor, yet she became philosophical: "Time is always a big factor in everything, so I can't see what would be negative to be learning about yourself!" Gail described her journey as getting to know the process, becoming involved in it, and then watching her own growth. She further reflected: "Determining the unknown and trying to get started is a natural part of the process. We must learn to focus on the process more [rather than the product]." If she were to repeat the experience, Gail was convinced her project would be longer. The effects of journaling clearly impressed Gail, and she was committed to continue: "I've got more to write. If I was to do it again, I'd do it as a daily journal and write a monthly summary." She

also looked forward to ways in which her learning experience might be helpful to others designing new libraries.

For Gail, the highlight of the portfolio experience was the personal learning experience. Gail appreciated integrating her life experiences: "There's a fair amount of information to draw on when you've been around the block a few times!" Gail noted how her personal growth built on her previous experiences. As a result of the writing process, she noticed things about herself and about her relationships with others: "I paid more attention to what I was doing, otherwise you just cope. Now, I do it, write about it, and think about the effect it has."

Gail's professional experience resulting from her portfolio work included the development of relationships through communication, dialogue, and mutual understanding and empathy of difficult times. Gail benefited from collegial collaboration in her role as librarian in three schools; challenging situations developed her problem solving ability. She proudly shared, "The portfolio allowed me to think about what I was doing and how I was doing it; that has now become a pattern in the way I operate." She gained affirmation that she was successfully fulfilling her role as teacher librarian, which increased her sense of competence. The compelling force for Gail was that the portfolio project could be individualized and self-directed thus becoming a meaningful learning experience. She has enthusiastically promoted it to others as relevant professional development, rather than "when you go to in-service after in-service and you just reinvent everything . . . usually there's something that comes out of it but it's a lot of sitting for one little idea." While the principal did not evaluate the portfolio, Gail

realized that she evaluated herself. She shared the details: "I was thinking about everything, how I reacted to things, what was important, what wasn't important, what to concentrate on, what to let go and what kind of job I was doing."

Gail's portfolio project provided meaning for her. The reflective journal writing brought her personal journey to "another level of consciousness." Gail believed that she experienced deep change in her awareness and behaviour, experiencing a transition in her experience when the project evolved from simply documenting the renovation-learning experience into something deeply meaningful. At one point during the interview, Gail paused and shared a revelation. After deep thought, she connected her portfolio project to reflective thinking: "For the past two years, I've been thinking [reflectively], so now it's part of what I do and how I operate. I've assimilated it into my way of thinking." New behaviours became habits for her, influencing how she learns. Gail summarized the portfolio project through the topics of a lived experience, a learning experience, and building relationships. Gail felt empowered; she chose her project and developed it. It was pertinent to her and therefore she learned and grew both personally and professionally. Gail viewed her experience as a fulfilling and ongoing journey.

Gail's Portfolio Project.

Gail's portfolio project, Designing a Learning Resource Centre and the Role of a Teacher Librarian in Three Sites, evolved from her unique teaching assignment. She was the teacher librarian at two schools, one of which was

relocated to two different school sites while the original school building underwent renovations. Gail was keenly interested in contributing to the design of, and documenting the transformation of, the library at the renovated school. Gail's portfolio contents depicted her "life on the run": notes from meetings, site visits and interviews with other teacher librarians, and summaries from discussions with computer personnel, purchasing agents, painters, architects, and job site managers. She influenced the physical design of the new library, which resulted from her portfolio project.

Gail's portfolio project started as the documentation of a renovation. It evolved to be about the teacher-librarian, too. Through reflection, Gail became aware of the impact of the school's move to two new sites, and the collaborative learning experience it afforded her because of the need to share an existing library facility with another teacher librarian. She was also keenly aware of the effect of the construction process on students.

Gail's journal included a chronological listing of events and her personal reflection regarding these events, including her experience of sharing space with two other teacher librarians, and the difficulties and benefits of that arrangement. Gail noted how the portfolio project evolved over time, as did its focus:

> The beginning of the portfolio contains lists of what I had to do to plan a library, including wish lists, meetings and a brief description of what was decided at the meetings and where we were going from that point to the next. That continued until we left our school site and were relocated into two other buildings. That's when I started, more or less, keeping a

journal/diary. I wrote about what life was like on the run and not being in our own building but being a guest in someone else's. The portfolio went from lists and the meeting descriptions, to what it was really like, to the impact it had on me as a teacher librarian, as a teacher, and as a person. I also wrote about working with my colleagues and how difficult that was, and how I worked with the other teacher librarians. What I wanted to do was describe it from beginning to end, what the finished new library looked like as compared to the old one. And then all that other stuff happened in between!

Gail believed her reflections about her accomplishments and creative solutions made a significant contribution to her growth.

Aby's Joy

Aby's Profile.

At the conclusion of her portfolio project, Aby had completed 14 years of teaching and was the school's resource teacher. In this half-time position, she provided assistance to students from kindergarten to grade 8, mainly in Language Arts. Aby worked collaboratively with classroom teachers, parents, and many resource professionals to assess students who had academic or behavioural difficulty. Frequently, she included students in the planning stages of their educational needs, and after her involvement, she provided thorough documentation to others involved with the child, who were then to continue supporting the child's learning.

Aby combined her many years of successful teaching practices into her chosen portfolio project, Reading Intervention and Reading Recovery, which she completed one year ago. She began the portfolio project by articulating clear goals for herself and her students. A plan was developed to implement the goals and monitor the progress. Her teaching approach and philosophy of continuous learning permeated her portfolio project. There was evidence of her self-improvement and growth.

Aby's Insights and Discoveries.

Aby began to consider completing a portfolio project for her supervision option after speaking with another resource teacher, Suzanne, who shared the value of her portfolio experience. She was also keen to explore Reading Intervention, a topic that had been of interest for years. Aby explained her initial anxiety as originating not from the portfolio project but from her feeling of "denying children a wonderful tool for them to catch up [on their skills]. I was also denying myself professional development opportunities by not learning this absolutely fantastic program." Aby felt ready to approach her principal about beginning her project. That fall, I became principal at Aby's school. She appeared in my office on my first day, filled with great enthusiasm and anticipation, requesting the portfolio project option for her developmental supervision. From that point, planning seemed to happen naturally for Aby: she had a personal need to fulfill, was motivated by a reasonable level of stress, saw the potential in the outcome, and felt confident in the support from her principal. Aby began her reflective journal, which she described as "the core" of her project.

She used it for planning and to record accomplishments, which later became evidence of her growth. Aby spoke of the journal as her key for success, making her plan tangible, achievable, and realistic. She was able to break her task into manageable chunks, saying enthusiastically, "I can do this!" Upon reflection, she would not change what she described as a self-directed learning project:

> As an adult learner, the process was important. It contributed to my comfort zone to know that learning opportunities are provided and that I have a choice. That is empowerment. I was able to assess my own needs, to recognize where I am as a teacher, and to determine where I could go by setting goals for both the students and me. And all this must happen within a caring environment.

Aby spoke with quiet serenity about her personal experience. "For me, it was tremendously rewarding, and tremendously satisfying." Aby's love of writing allowed her to reflect and think, to analyze and set goals, and to make a record of her successes. She shared that she didn't normally do so much reflective writing and yet it was something that she grew to enjoy. An element of personal risk taking, however, occurred for Aby when she chose to videotape herself. The technical aspects of videotaping required new learning and were not in her comfort zone. By choosing to videotape, Aby felt committed to becoming more technologically literate and proudly achieved a "quiet satisfaction" of knowing she could successfully initiate and carry through a fairly large project. She reflected: "Some stress and anxiety provided the challenge and can be motivating!" Aby explained her feeling of fulfillment:

For me, there was so much joy in doing this. And I think that's what it should be. It should be a joy, and it should be fun. That doesn't mean there doesn't need to be work; they can go hand in hand. There is joy in sharing with an interested, knowledgeable, caring adult; joy of knowing I can make a difference in the lives of my students.

Aby was convinced that this supervision process contributed to her professional development as a teacher and she articulated her reasons:

I was able to focus on myself as the learner. I observed good teachers and received their support; the principal's interest, encouragement, and care were available and helpful. Learning occurred; this was professional development.

Aby's comfort zone expanded as she tried doing things differently. Time commitment became less of a factor when she focused on her need for professional growth. The relevance of the project and the setting of measurable outcomes for students added motivation and confirmed the validity of Aby's professional experience. She believed that her own learning became cyclical, as it led to student learning which was very satisfying for her. Aby felt the synergy of professional support when she collaborated with colleagues and was overwhelmed by their generosity of time, effort, and expertise to her project. She observed their lessons; they observed her videotaped lesson and discussed it. She felt grateful for their input and support, noting, "When they know that something is valuable to you, and that you care deeply about it, they are willing to offer their expertise and knowledge."

Aby experienced deep meaning from her project. For her, motivation was provided from within. She continually referred to the wonderment of learning and her reflective writing as a key to the success of her experience. Writing gave life to facts that "alone have no significance. It's only when you reflect on them that the meaning and the significance becomes evident." When I shared with her Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) writing about the energy that results from flow, she enthusiastically responded that "the concept summed up beautifully some of the things I've experienced." Aby spoke of the joyfulness she experienced. Her intrigue about the notion of joy motivated her to describe it further:

> Joy is something that is transcendent, taking you out of yourself, expanding the consciousness. It is not bound to material pleasures in any way; it is a flash of very strong emotion that fills not only the mind and heart but also the soul. There's an excitement and a happiness; an unconditional love all at the same time. It leaves a yearning to recapture that experience. Reading over my journal again and seeing I could make a difference [in the lives of children], that was pure joy!!

Aby felt no failures in this project. For her, the portfolio project topics included goal setting, the joy of learning, and an affirmation in her abilities "to make a difference in children's lives, and to set out on a major task and to see it through." She also spoke highly of the caring relationships of colleagues who supported and contributed to her sense of renewal and flow in the project. She appreciated the principal who recognized the importance of one's "emotional and spiritual well being as part of the whole teaching experience, without which

teachers will never develop their full potential." Aby welcomed other teachers into the portfolio experience by sharing, "The insights you get into your own work and the knowledge you get out of it are so invaluable."

Aby's Portfolio Project.

Aby's portfolio project, Reading Intervention and Reading Recovery, documented her development in five sections: professional reading, student case studies, lesson observation, a videotape, and a reflective journal. The student section presented two case studies documenting each student's goal setting, assessments, and progress in the Reading Intervention program. A file on each child included pretests, test results, weekly check lists of progress, lesson plans, samples of student work, and reports. Aby observed Reading Intervention lessons taught by experienced teachers and subsequently videotaped and critiqued her own lesson. Aby's reflective journal outlined her background in Reading Intervention, her professional goals, reasons for working with the two students and her goals for them and their progress, a bibliography, and other relevant materials. Aby's journal was a blend of free flowing ideas with leading questions providing the direction and focus for her learning. Reflections at each reporting period included her joys and anxieties as well as the students' progress and personal gains, which were followed by the setting of future goals.

Mary's Raison d'être

Mary's Profile.

Mary completed her portfolio two years ago after eight years of teaching. Mary believed that she had the best job in the school, working with all of the students and teachers in two elementary schools as the teacher librarian.

Mary's project, Welcome to My World: A Glimpse into the Role of a Teacher Librarian, gave insight into a job she described as teaching "the love of reading and learning." She proudly shared, "I get to watch as students are turned on to a book I suggested and come back to thank me, and ask for another! I get to watch eyes light up as I read a special story! I have a wonderful job!" Mary amalgamated resource-based learning with teaching by providing support materials and strategies to teachers and students from kindergarten to grade 8 in two languages, English and French.

Mary's Insights and Discoveries.

The portfolio process began with a muddling-through stage for Mary. She started out tentatively, really concerned about what she would do and how it would evolve. Mary felt unsure about where the project might lead, yet she chose the portfolio option recalling, "I knew it was something I could do and do well. I knew I'd enjoy doing it and that I wanted to do my best." She remembered thinking about it for a long time, observing others experiencing the process, and watching the supervision video, Uniquely Me: A Personalized Developmental Supervision Process (1998). Mary wanted a topic that would be meaningful to her as well as to others. Once she set the purpose for portfolio

project, she wrote and gathered the information for the appendices, and commented that reflective thinking became instrumental. "[The project] was like a mirror, reflecting back on the things I do. It pulled everything together so I could see the big picture. It helped me go inside to think about what I do." As a visual learner, Mary felt the portfolio process supported her strengths in writing and illustrating and, therefore, helped her learn. At one point, the project suddenly didn't seem like a lot of work. When introduced to Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) writing about flow theory, she responded with enthusiasm, saying, "I know what you are talking about. To me, it's the feeling I get when I'm at my computer, writing. The words are coming from somewhere, through my fingers. I'm not sure they're mine. It's almost like a spiritual thing." Overall, Mary believed that she owned her portfolio, proudly sharing, "I created it, planned it, and spent many hours, days, and weeks thinking about what would go into it and how it would develop." She appreciated the flexibility in being able to choose her own topic to meet her needs and felt that option should continue for others.

When asked about her personal experience, Mary spoke of her high sense of competence and high degree of intrinsic motivation. Mary knew that she was a good teacher, she believed in her position and its value to others, and her portfolio project enabled her to articulate this with confidence. One risk Mary found was that of writing reflections about her personal experiences. "It helped me go inside," she explained, "to start with who I am, and then proceed to think about the things I do. My writing is sharing a piece of my soul. When you give others your writing to look at, that's taking a risk." When the portfolio project was

completed, Mary was comfortable enough to make it available to others; she also turned to it as a source of inspiration when feeling discouraged about her effectiveness with teachers.

Mary's professional goal with her portfolio project was to critique the role of a teacher librarian by juxtaposing her ways of work with those defined by the school district. The school district defined the role of teacher librarian to include instruction, management, and development. In comparing her work with this model, Mary proudly discovered that the roles articulated by the district missed the element of promotion. She articulated the many ways promotion becomes a critical component in a teacher librarian's job, stating, "If one doesn't promote the library, one won't have patrons to work with!" The portfolio project helped Mary see the teacher librarian job globally, thus enabling her to identify the missing element. By choosing to give people an insight into the life of a teacher librarian Mary was reminding herself about all that she did. Once Mary finished the critique of her role, she understood the teacher librarian position more clearly and then chose to evaluate herself based on the school district's criteria, including the new element, promotion. Another goal Mary set for her portfolio project was that it be useful to others. She has lent her project to other teacher librarians and has presented it at workshops, receiving very positive feedback. Others were impressed with the amount of work that she did. Mary expressed that she had fun doing it, yet she noted with interest that the other teachers were not yet at the stage of understanding that the project could be completed for internal rather than external reasons. Mary was in the pursuit of her own excellence and stated,

"I'm a better teacher-librarian for having gone through this experience." She discovered through her portfolio, that she was intrinsically motivated to do the best job possible. The reflective journal confirmed that she was doing a good job as a teacher-librarian, and inspired her to do even better. It enabled her to experience feelings by thinking about what was happening.

This project gave meaning to Mary, allowing her to see that she was on a developmental path as a teacher. In the beginning, she recognized that the portfolio's focus was on her own personal development. As she gained insights, the focus became more professional and global. Mary's topics described the portfolio project as a confidence builder increasing her competence and worthiness in the pursuit of excellence. To explain the cycle of learning and the meaning it had for her, Mary suggested that writing the portfolio gave an inner sense of her spirit being engaged in rising to the challenge, in taking the risk, and in being more successful than she had realized possible. Working on the portfolio project, Mary often experienced the characteristics described in flow theory. Appreciating the gifts of discovery along the way increased Mary's self-confidence.

<u>Mary's Portfolio Project.</u>

Mary's portfolio, Welcome to My World: A Glimpse into the Role of a Teacher Librarian, integrated her personal beliefs and philosophies of her position as teacher librarian with the role as developed by the school district. Mary began her portfolio project by writing about her personal life, by asking, "Who am I?" in order to review the road that led her to the present. Her

reflections clearly provided the foundations for the description of her professional role. Mary used her published journal article, "How to be a super successful teacher librarian" (1994), as the foundation for her writing project. She then integrated her fourteen tips of how to be a super successful teacher librarian with the district's role description and used that to evaluate herself. Her goal was to give a glimpse into both her personal life and her professional role, inviting the reader to "come spend a day with me, walk a mile in my shoes and see why I am tired yet fulfilled at the end of the day."

The teacher librarian position consisted of three categories: Instruction, Management, and Development, which Mary expanded to include a fourth category, Promotion. The appendices in her project contained artifacts supporting each of the four categories: her journal article, lessons, illustrations, photographs, monthly journal entries, and schedules. Mary explained that the numerous appendices were due to her preference as a visual learner; photographs enabled her to portray her role and educational influence in two schools.

Marie's Exploration

Marie's Profile.

Marie had completed 25 years of teaching primary students when her portfolio project was finished. Three years ago, Marie's classroom of grade one and two French Immersion students, with a wide variety of skills and abilities, provided the setting for her project. In the French Immersion program, kindergarten and grade one students who are primarily English speaking, receive

all of their instruction, including reading, in French. Grade two students begin receiving an additional reading program in English. Marie's background in curriculum writing and her experience as an early childhood education teacher, gave her the interest and intrigue to explore the various reading strategies she had used in second language instruction over the years. Marie entitled her portfolio project, Reflection into My Professional Growth: My Teaching of Language Arts.

Marie's Insights and Discoveries.

Marie's process of beginning her portfolio was clouded with negative thoughts, due to the responsibilities of her multi-graded classroom and an overwhelming feeling of not being able to find the time to do one more thing. She also felt she was "starting out in the darkness," and so hearing from others that the process had been good for them, helped her decide that it might be useful for her. Marie remembered reading Mary's portfolio, and although the topic was not related to hers, it enabled her to see how valuable the process could be. The flexibility and ability to choose a topic and decide how it might be presented appealed to Marie. The portfolio project allowed her to explore learning through her own way of thinking, and it began to evolve around her knowledge about the challenges of teaching reading in a second language. She remembered how the project seemed to develop a life of its own, growing from nebulous thinking to something that had structure and meaning. The connection with what she was doing as a classroom teacher allowed Marie to overcome her objection to the demands on her time, although finding time to devote to the portfolio project

continued to be a struggle for her. The project slowly moved from a requirement that she felt she had to fulfill, to something that inspired her. She spoke positively about choosing to do a portfolio project in the future, and how it would be interesting "to take a topic, read up on it, and do something with it."

Marie's portfolio project had personal meaning. It reaffirmed her confidence in herself, providing confirmation that what she does, she does well. This occurred when she reviewed the knowledge she had accumulated over her career. She reflected that it was like putting the pieces of the picture together:

It enabled me to see how I learn. I like to learn about how things change, what's new, and what that means to me as a teacher. The big picture I created enabled me to see what I had done in the past, more of what was possible for me to do now, and what I could do in the future.

Marie began to understand her development and thus felt reassured. It gave her confidence to mentor other teachers.

Marie's portfolio project was an extension of the professional development that she had initiated years ago. She was proud that she had continued her professional reading. Marie shared,

The portfolio helped to clarify where I am on my professional journey, the way that I teach, and how I could evolve to get better. The important part was reflecting and organizing my own thinking about how I taught reading. When I was finished, I could see that the portfolio was something I'd gained from. It helped me continually learn and grow, always trying to use ideas a little bit differently.

This feeling was extended when Marie observed that a portfolio is not meant to end just because there is a finished product and the project is over. "You must continue and do something with it, think about it and see how it fits in with your life, your career and where you want to go with your teaching." Marie also noted that the portfolio process strengthened her professional relationships because she was able to interact with others more knowledgeably. Marie advocated the portfolio process to colleagues as a part of their commitment to lifelong learning. She appreciated portfolios as a way to honor the individual nature of teachers, recognizing where they are in their life stages, and personal and career commitments. While Marie supported the open ended nature of portfolios, she cautioned about the need for time to complete a project.

Meaning for Marie occurred when she discovered that, by looking at changes in her career, she was able to evaluate her current situation with the goal to evolve and grow. Marie's portfolio project topics emphasized the value of looking back to past experiences, and using reflection to build the future picture. In her words, "By looking backwards, I was able to look forwards. My portfolio helped me realize that reviewing what we know helps us understand and feel reassured." Marie felt the portfolio provided affirmation, confirmation, and a sense of accomplishment for her. All of these contributed, personally and professionally, to boosting her competence and worthiness.

<u>Marie's Portfolio Project.</u>

Marie's project, Reflection into My Professional Growth: My Teaching of Language Arts, was a collection of teaching materials and experiences that

profiled her development in teaching language arts. Marie explained, "I decided I'd look at how things had changed over my career, and the new things that I'd tried." Her portfolio project included information and discussion about levelled books, phonetic spelling, and independent reading. She documented her assessment process for each child individually and her system of recording placement and progress. The index included records of Marie's collaboration with the resource teacher and examples of her weekly communication to parents, which she believed to be a critical link in supporting each child's reading development.

Marie's project was a reflection of her understanding of reading and her commitment to provide the best learning opportunity for each student. In Marie's words, her portfolio project "reaffirmed a lot of the things I was doing. It gave me a direction to where I wanted to go, what I wanted done, and some of the things to improve."

Suzanne's Discovery

Suzanne's Profile.

Suzanne had completed 14 years as a teacher at the conclusion of her portfolio project four years ago. At that time, she was the resource teacher in two dual stream schools. She provided learning assistance and support to students from kindergarten to grade 8 in two languages, English and French.

Suzanne was keen to teach children with learning disabilities and also had an interest in developing her knowledge and expertise in teaching reading and social skills. Her portfolio project, Skills for Success, was a work in progress,

where she was able to illustrate ways in which she expanded her expertise, and applied her growing knowledge to teach and modify programs for students.

<u>Suzanne's Insights and Discoveries.</u>

Suzanne chose the portfolio process for her developmental supervision because she knew it was going to be an experience that would enable her to continue learning at her career stage. After hearing about the portfolio process at a staff meeting, she began to plan her project by making a web cluster. Suzanne saw the process as interactive and flexible, and she explained, "It enabled me to include some of the emotion and passion I felt about teaching. I was able to give it direction and include what was important to me." She proudly remembered that she wrote an instructional program as part of her project, implemented it, and observed children learning from it. A cycle of learning occurred. Suzanne had a project that she knew would be useful for her students' growth, her own growth, and something she could share with others. Since its completion, Suzanne has shared her portfolio project many times and has found it to be a model for others as well for herself. She hopes to produce another portfolio for her next supervision cycle. In retrospect, Suzanne found building the portfolio to be difficult because it was a new skill for her to learn. Yet, she would not change anything in the process; it was flexible enough to incorporate needed adjustments. The importance of reflection, she observed, was a key to the process, and explained,

Anything you write, you need to reflect and think about because if you don't, well, then it's just words. Each of the parts of my portfolio was so different, yet they were tied together by reflection.

Suzanne commented about the climate of the process, which evoked feelings and descriptions of a relaxed and warm atmosphere that invited her involvement. She remembered previous direct supervision reports occurring in a very strict and cold atmosphere, where the experience was restricted to pre-established domains. While the portfolio project was more work, Suzanne insisted that it was enriching and challenging at the same time, and in the end, she proudly commented that she had something to show for a two-year process. Suzanne commented about her own leadership role, by highly recommending the process to beginning teachers as a way to record their accomplishments. To teachers in general, she has been a mentor encouraging their participation in portfolio projects, as a way to give credibility to their teaching.

Suzanne found her portfolio to be personally satisfying in many ways. She spoke with emotion remembering,

The project helped me focus on my areas of strength and weakness. It helped me analyze, share, and develop in areas I would never have thought of doing. It was a risk because I was sharing an inner part of myself with others. It was developmental, as I gained in self-confidence. I'm not a person to open up easily, and it really created greater openness and self-confidence in me. It made me look at different ways of dealing with people, and ways of learning from them.

Suzanne gave two examples of interaction that energized her personal growth. She spoke with pride of her son. The learning difficulties he experienced helped Suzanne to be more creative. As she shared her portfolio with her son, he began his own. He became a source of personal inspiration for his mother's project. She experienced a second highlight in the collaboration she experienced with a colleague she respected and from whom she wanted to learn. They later became writing partners. The dialogue added to her confidence; Suzanne learned more about herself and her learning styles as she interacted with others.

There was no question in Suzanne's mind that this project enabled her professional development. She was looking for direction in her teaching, specifically wondering what she might do to develop her potential. Her position as a resource teacher provided the perfect focus for her project, as her school had chosen to emphasize support for reading and writing in the primary grades. She expanded her professional reading repertoire; she felt challenged to choose articles and analyzed them for strategies that might work, and questioned why they might not. She remembered vividly coming home at night to ask herself if her portfolio project was relevant to her teaching. She shared her discovery enthusiastically:

> Teaching is not just teaching children to read, or write, it's everything; it's teaching the whole child. Before my portfolio, there was the act of teaching reading and the notion of teaching social skills. After my portfolio experience, I had insights about teaching that moved it from being two dimensional to multidimensional. It's a process where I realized teaching

reading is teaching social skills. The experience gave me the opportunity to see connections between areas that I had thought before to be discrete.

Significant meaning from the portfolio project occurred for Suzanne when she began to see interaction between the academic learning world of her students and their social relationships. While she describes her project as hard work that took time, the end result was extremely pleasing for her. The portfolio project was a personalized process that brought out her creativity, accentuated her strengths, and gave her the confidence to become less private. A career change occurred for Suzanne and the portfolio project provided the catalyst. As her competence increased, her professional skills expanded, and she made the transition from teacher to consultant. Today she follows what she termed, "the consultative model" in teaching. This model began when she consulted with a professional on how to do the project, and through the interaction she was encouraged to continue learning. Suzanne commented, "That's what I do [now] with teachers. When they ask for help, I give them ideas, model teach for them, and come back to ask if it worked or didn't work." Suzanne identified topics of dialogue, meaning, and the benefits and connections of the portfolio project to her learning. Suzanne learned the value of open communication and its application through the portfolio process. Her collaboration with others taught her to share her feelings, and increased her confidence. Suzanne used her portfolio project as a way to model teaching strategies to other teachers.

<u>Suzanne's Portfolio Project.</u>

Suzanne's portfolio project, Skills for Success, evolved from four topics of interest that developed into chapters. Each chapter began with an overview that introduced the topic and provided Suzanne's reflection about her learning connection to the topic. Her binder also included formal observations, interviews with teachers and parents, and case studies of students.

Chapter One, Reading Intervention, was Suzanne's study of the Reading Recovery program in English. She attended a conference, applied her knowledge, and began using the strategies. She documented her progress through a case study involving a student and parents over a two-year period. The second chapter, Reading Intervention: L.I.R.E. (Lecture, Indépendente, Réussie, Efficace), was Suzanne's transfer of some of the strategies and ideas of the English reading program into French. Suzanne assisted teachers and parents in their understanding of the program through presentations about the reading strategies children needed to make progress through the program of leveled books. She included her presentation notes in this chapter.

Chapter Three, Curriculum Based Assessment, focused on an assessment strategy that Suzanne learned and applied. She developed a comprehensive assessment of reading based on the curriculum in French Language Arts and presented a workshop of graded writing assessment examples. Suzanne wrote and developed for children with learning disabilities and/or behavioural problems, Skills 4 Success, as included in Chapter Four. She based it on the philosophy that, with social skills strategies, children who face

many difficult situations in everyday life can be successful. Each of nine lessons included a detailed presentation of objectives, strategies, and activities, some of which involved parental participation.

These four chapters concluded a mammoth two-year portfolio project. When reviewing her experience, Suzanne marvelled at her accomplishment and her motivation to overcome the friction of both effort and time commitment. She lived a full family life, created and developed her portfolio project, taught full time in two schools, and taught a behavioural skills program on the weekends. The richness of Suzanne's portfolio was evident in the fact that Chapters Two and Four became manuals for teacher use. She recognized differences in her students and designed learning opportunities so that they could empower themselves to achieve success. Her vision for student success extended beyond daily classroom contact, and she developed a behaviour skills program that included both child and parents. Suzanne's project is a tribute to her commitment to children and her belief that with successful experiences, learning difficulties can be supported and overcome.

Elaine's Papillion

Elaine's Profile.

Elaine had experienced eight years as a classroom teacher when her portfolio project came to completion five years ago. In her half-time position, she provided instruction to kindergarten students and invited parents to be part of the classroom learning experience. Elaine's portfolio, Six Case Studies in Classroom Management, was developed from her interest in reaching students

with academic and behavioural challenges. Her classroom mission was to provide a positive beginning for each kindergarten child's school career, and therefore the focus for her project was to learn about classroom management strategies that would support the diverse needs of her students.

Elaine's Insights and Discoveries.

The portfolio process seemed to be less threatening to Elaine and more meaningful than previous methods of supervision. She remembered that starting the process of writing was difficult, but became easier when she focused her thoughts on her students and their needs. Elaine felt comfortable with the freedom the portfolio project allowed in support of her learning styles; she planned using web clusters that allowed her writing to flow. The portfolio project, however, took time she felt she didn't have, so she procrastinated. Yet, as the project progressed, she commented,

> It was time worth spending. Once I had the finished product I could see that it was a really good reflective process for me and time was not a big concern. I felt empowered and inspired by developing it in my own way. [It was a] big open window, giving a lot of freedom. The writing was coming from within. There wasn't pressure.

Elaine appreciated the journaling aspect as a way to look inside herself, and it taught her the value of reflective writing. She felt acceptance for her writing through the school's caring environment. Her self-esteem grew and the writing process became easier and easier. The reflective writing process became a vehicle for meaning rather than her original professional development

goal. This was critical for Elaine, because on a daily basis, she had felt that working with children was a process of surviving from one day to the next. The portfolio project enabled her to step back from daily routines to see her work in a much larger context.

"I grew and developed myself," Elaine said about the personal impact of her portfolio. "I didn't realize how much I was going to get out of it." When asked if the reflective process was worth doing, Elaine replied,

> I didn't have much time [previously] to think about me, as a person or as a professional. Children filled my life at school when I'm there, and my children at home when I was there. This project was time for me. As a person, I became more willing to try new things. I learned to look into myself. It did a lot for my confidence. You don't see what you're doing when you're in the midst of it. When you write it down and explain it to someone else, then you realize how much you've done, and that it's working!

At the start of portfolio project, Elaine was at a point in her career where she was ready for more. Her own growing children required less time, allowing her to think more about her career, and the portfolio project helped her to see what she could do. She was open for a change; Elaine's portfolio increased her sense of worthiness and competence as a person and as a teacher.

As a professional, Elaine gained confidence. She became more aware of her learning when she placed an emphasis on professional reading about behaviour management, helping her understand the behaviour of her students

and their learning process. The experience gave her direction in her professional life in two ways. First, Elaine's confidence boost moved her out of her comfort zone of teaching primary students into teaching social skills to students in a middle years' classroom. Secondly, a change in her professional prospective came as a result of her self-affirmation that gave her a willingness to try something new and different. Her sense of confidence in the classroom motivated her to learn more. She was at a career and personal stage where she felt the need for change. By reflecting on what had been and on the change that occurred, Elaine was able to look forward. "I had the courage to think about my future," Elaine remembers. "The portfolio was the needed bit of sunshine that made me ripe and ready for change. It helped bring that to my consciousness. It's a gift that keeps on giving." Today, she is a full time teacher in a student behaviour management program, a place where she continues to learn and apply the results of her portfolio experience.

Elaine recognized the meaning the portfolio project held for her at two particular times: after she had completed her project and then more recently, when she reviewed it prior to her interviews. Looking back on her project, Elaine described the process to be very interesting and "kind of therapeutic." At the time, she saw its value as the pathway to greater self-affirmation. The reflective writing helped her deal with the frustrations of not seeing daily success with students, and helped her put teaching into a perspective that brought a new level of consciousness, or awareness. Elaine's topics included the portfolio project's contribution to her ability to find perspectives, provide confidence, and provide

gifts to herself and her future. She reflected on the relevance of her portfolio, and marveled at how well the process worked, enthusiastically commenting, "I didn't realize when I started how much I was going to get out of it. And the portfolio is for me; it is not a form to be filed." She noted that the development she saw in herself through her portfolio project was a rare perspective that otherwise might not have been seen. Elaine spoke with passion about the project:

> . . . a growing gift to me, of where I've been and what I've accomplished. I feel like I was sowing seeds, putting them down on paper, watering them, and watching them grow. It's time consuming, but it's worth every minute. It made me feel so good last night when I read it!

Taking the time initially to reflect was very valuable to her; taking the time to relive and reflect again was the beginning of the next part of her journey. Today, she views the project as a turning point in her career development. Elaine has begun to prepare for another developmental supervision process by planning her second portfolio project. She feels excited and inspired to begin the new project, wondering how it will unfold.

Elaine's Portfolio Project.

Elaine's portfolio project was entitled Five Case Studies in Classroom Management. Her goal was to reflect in journal format how she addressed the special needs of five students in her kindergarten classroom, who had a range of academic and physical needs, and who found daily classroom activities and routines to be challenging. Elaine presented the case studies in her portfolio:

Each student's behavioural and developmental needs were summarized, as were the strategies she used to address their needs. Written reflection documented the learning experience and its successes and frustrations.

Elaine also realized that her portfolio was taking her in a direction that allowed her to ask the questions that expanded her horizons, such as, "Why am I doing this job? What is my vision and my direction?" Elaine documented her professional development in the form of a web cluster. It illustrated linkages between previous learning and the reading of current articles, attendance at a series of professional activities, and meetings with her colleagues. She extended the web cluster and integrated her new skills and strategies with the routines of her classroom, showing how her new learning supported her students. This process gave meaning to her experience.

Cross-Case Analysis of Findings: Responses by Question

The second stage of analysis, a cross-case analysis, began with the integration of data, as organized by interview questions. Several steps were taken to convert the collected data into systematic categories of analysis (see Figure 6, Chapter Three). Two phases of analyses occurred: the first phase is presented as Responses by Question; and the second phase of analysis is found in Cross-Case Analysis: Themes.

During the first phase, individual cases were pooled and organized by interview question, making sense out of what participants said collectively drawing from multiple data sources, looking for patterns, and putting together what was said in one place with what was said in another place (Patton, 1990).

In this phase of analysis, the multiple data sources that strengthened the study included interviews, transcripts, topics, field notes, interim journals, portfolio projects, and slides of projects. The recurring patterns among the common data for each question formed collective responses. These were presented to participants at the focus group meeting for confirmation and/or clarification. Aby provided a synthesis that was supported by the other participants: "It is great to know that *my thoughts and experiences were paralleled by all the others in this* research. Our experiences were so similar." The next four sections are organized by responses to the interview questions, which asked about the portfolio process, the personal connections, the professional connections, and the overall meaning of the experience.

<u>Portfolio Process</u>

In response to the first interview question about the portfolio process, participants identified the characteristics of the process, discussed its challenges, and offered their advice for success.

Characteristics of the process included the uniqueness of the project, and acknowledgement that it was a risk-taking venture with many unknowns. Questions dominating the teachers' initial stages of concern included:

Will I choose a portfolio project or the traditional style of supervision? What topic shall I explore? What will be my goals? What past experiences can I build on? Where do I want to go? What will it look like? What have others experienced and done? Do I really want to do this?

One participant noted the muddling-through stage required support in direction and planning; traveling on the journey became less threatening as information was provided. Upon project completion, participants described the process journey as: (a) a self-directed adult learning experience honoring their individuality; (b) a professional commitment that included responsibility for planning professional development, and accountability for demonstrating growth and development; and (c) a living entity, recognized for its interactive nature that encouraged the building of relationships and nurturing of meaning through reflective writing. Gail explained her biggest stumbling block was overcome when she understood not to focus on producing a product, but rather to focus on the process. Her comment exemplified that there is no one right path for the process journey nor one particular way for the product to look. Gail learned to move away from "looking for the right answer" (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996, p. 15).

Participants considered time and stress as the two major challenges in the portfolio project process. Overcoming the constraints of time was an individual experience: Elaine and Marie combined what they were doing as classroom teachers with their professional development; Gail overcame the pressure of time as she realized, "When I learn about myself, it [time] is no longer negative." Overall, the participants concurred with Mary: "My portfolio was something I wanted to do. I enjoyed doing it, and wanted to do my best. It didn't seem like a lot of work." Another challenge was the stress of "having to do a portfolio." For

Aby, knowing that the portfolio project was part of the supervision process provided the right amount of stress for both challenge and motivation.

Participants described their advice for experiencing project success:

Be prepared for the unknown and the time needed to find out more. Try to see the big picture and then break it into more manageable chunks. Make a timeline, fill in the details, and use it as a guide and as a record of growth. Start with who you are and then proceed with what you do. Set your direction with achievable, tangible goals.

Participants added that success for teachers would occur with adequate time and energy. The project requires love of writing, motivation, a caring environment to nurture the learning process, and ability to address challenges with courage and determination. The project became a visual résumé of personal creativity. Each participant has recommended the process to others.

Personal Connections

In answering the second question about their personal experience during the portfolio project, teachers talked about personal affirmation, motivation from within, supportive relationships, and the power of reflection.

All six participants experienced personal affirmation that contributed to an increase in their self-esteem. For Aby, completing the major task of a portfolio project resulted in the feeling of a new level of worthiness. Elaine, Marie, Suzanne, and Gail reaffirmed their own confidence, becoming more open to change and handling challenges. For two teachers, personal affirmation was actualized when they initiated their own self-evaluation. For example, Mary used

the district's role description of a teacher librarian to evaluate herself. The concept of motivation was recognized as a force from within. Initially, the portfolio project required an imposing time commitment, until it developed a "life on its own." The portfolio experience then became meaningful to each of the teachers, intrinsically motivating and inspiring them to do their best.

Relationships were critical to making personal connections. Aby and Elaine mentioned their need to be supervised in a caring community, with the principal's interest, encouragement, and care. Aby also spoke passionately about the difference it makes "working with somebody who is a caring person and who is genuinely interested." Gail felt that the principal's role was not to drive the process, but to keep her on track by sitting in the back seat and letting her drive. A highlight for Suzanne was the collaboration she experienced with a person she respected and from whom she wanted to learn. The collaboration experienced by the participants was summarized by Aby: "It is invaluable when two people, or more, work together and share. The experience is enriched when there is the joy of sharing, celebrating, and crying together." The power of reflection was a key ingredient in making personal connections for each participant. Participants spoke of the pleasure there was in taking time to think, to review past experiences, and to reflect about learning. Aby described reflection as a blending of free-flowing ideas with questions that influenced the direction, and brought focus, and meaning to her learning; for Marie reflection brought experiences to another level of consciousness. Gail's learning

experience of being a reflective thinker and journal writer became a self-driven habit that contributed to her development and feeling of continuous renewal.

Professional Connections

In response to the third question, participants described how the process contributed to their professional development by way of professional affirmation, new insights, and reciprocal relationships.

Each participant felt professionally affirmed in her ability to make a difference in children's lives while also contributing to her own development as a teacher. Each experienced a new level of competence and worthiness. Elaine shared, "[The project] helped me clarify where I was on my professional journey, the way that I teach and how I could evolve and get better." Mary concurred, "It gave me confidence as a professional." A reassurance of professionalism occurred when teachers reviewed their learning and sought examples demonstrating evidence of growth.

Participants spoke of new insights, as Elaine explained, "By looking backwards, I was able to look forwards. Seeing how things evolved helped the way I teach so I could get better." Similarly for Gail, the portfolio project was the window through which she could see what she was capable of now and could do in the future. Teachers made connections between theory and daily practice, and saw a web of interconnectedness between previously discreet experiences. Through the reflective process, Mary saw what she was doing, and then noticed what was missing, and Suzanne saw interactions and connections in areas of her teaching.

Reciprocal relationships defined the professional interaction and dialogue valued by teachers. Participants enjoyed the synergy that resulted from their collaboration with colleagues. Students were also a valued part in the building of relationships. Their learning motivated further teacher learning, and learning then became a reciprocal process. The professional relationship between the teacher and principal was identified as using primarily the collaborative and facilitating supervisory styles. Participants included directing and negotiating styles, as "this was a process that had to be done!" and one participant reflected that it was "a bit of all styles."

<u>Meaning</u>

For the participants, answering the question about what was meaningful or not meaningful crystallized their thoughts on what was important about the portfolio experience. All participants spoke of "a way of knowing" and "a way of bringing experiences to another level of consciousness," or awareness. Suzanne explained, "I began to see the interactions between the academic world of my students and their behaviour. I saw connections between areas I thought had been discreet!" Elaine described an understanding of self: "I learned to look into myself," she shared. Mary continued, "It helped me 'go inside', start with who I am and then proceed to think about the things I do. It's a spiritual thing." Flow was evident for Aby: "I experienced joy . . . an expansion of my consciousness, a flash of emotion that fills the mind, heart, and soul."

To conclude the discussion on meaning, each participant was asked what changes might be made to improve the portfolio project process. Participants felt

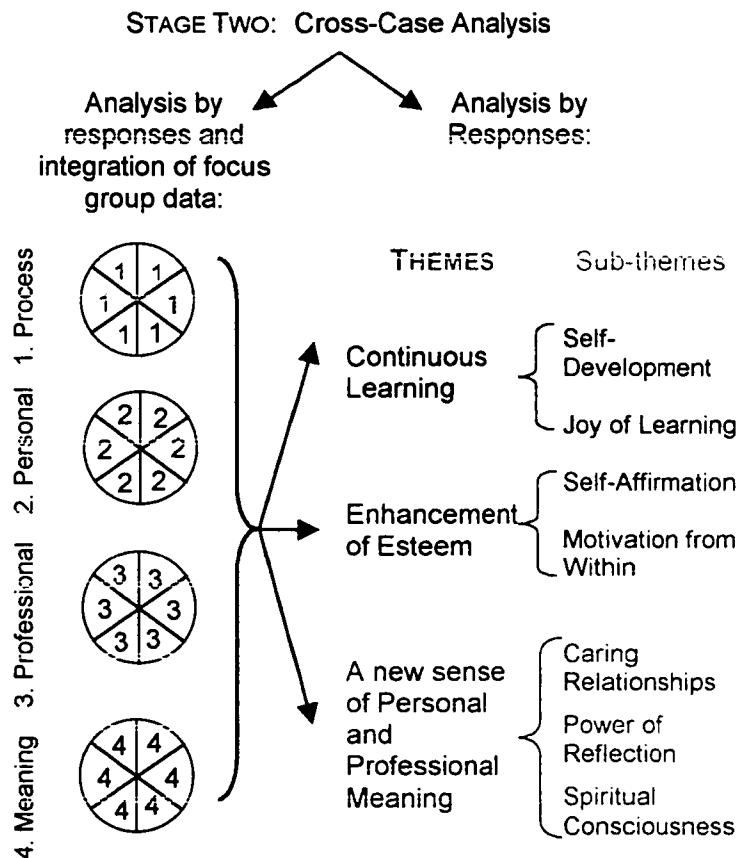that the process had the flexibility to incorporate any changes that were needed.

An overview of their responses, as shown in Figure 7, concludes this section.

	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES			
THE PORTFOLIO PROCESS	1. Describe the process of developing a portfolio project. How did it evolve?	**Characteristics** ➢ Stages of concern ➢ Self-directed adult learning with choice ➢ Honors individuality ➢ Professional commitment ➢ Relationship building ➢ Reflection provides meaning	**Challenges** Overcoming: ➢ Constraints of time ➢ Feelings of stress	**Advice for success** Committing: ➢ time, energy Requiring: ➢ love of writing. motivation, caring environment, addressing challenges	
PERSONAL CONNECTIONS	2. What was it like to have the experience? What were the advantages and/or disadvantages?	**Personal Affirmation** Increased sense of: ➢ Self-esteem ➢ Confidence ➢ Worthiness	**Motivation from Within** ➢ Intrinsic ➢ Courage to take risks	**Supportive Relationships** ➢ Caring community ➢ Caring individuals	**Power of Reflection** ➢ Questioning of ideas gives direction and brings meaning
PROFESSIONAL CONNECTIONS	3. How did the process contribute to professional development?	**Professional Affirmation** Ability to make a difference: ➢ as a teacher ➢ in the lives of children Increased sense of: ➢ Competence ➢ Worthiness	**New Insights** ➢ Making connections between theory and daily practice ➢ Webs of interconnectedness	**Reciprocal Relationships** ➢ Professionals collaborating resulted in synergy ➢ Student learning motivated teacher learning	
MEANING	4. What aspects were most meaningful or not meaningful? How could the process be improved?	**Meaning Defined** ➢ A way of knowing ➢ A way of bringing experiences to another level of consciousness, or awareness	Process improvement: Participants felt that the process had the flexibility to incorporate any changes that were needed.		

Figure 7. Cross-Case Analysis: Responses

Cross-Case Analysis of Findings: Themes

The second phase of cross-case analysis began with the search for themes, as illustrated in Figure 8.   Responses were grouped by category and judged for belonging by commonalities within the group and by differences from other groups.   Glasser and Strauss (as cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and Merriam (1998) suggested a similar strategy of category development, the constant comparative method of data analysis. This strategy was followed as the

STAGE TWO: Cross-Case Analysis

Analysis by responses and integration of focus group data:

Analysis by Responses:

THEMES   Sub-themes

Continuous Learning

Self-Development

Joy of Learning

Enhancement of Esteem

Self-Affirmation

Motivation from Within

A new sense of Personal and Professional Meaning

Caring Relationships

Power of Reflection

Spiritual Consciousness

4. Meaning   3. Professional   2. Personal   1. Process

Figure 8. Themes and Sub-Themes

researcher grouped data while considering what was significant and meaningful (Patton, 1990). Making comparisons while seeking patterns and arranging them in relationship to one another contributed to forming categories. This phase concluded as categories emerged into three themes: continuous learning, enhancement of esteem, and a new sense of personal and professional meaning.

Continuous Learning

This first theme emerged from participant comments about the contributions of portfolio projects to their continuous learning as educators. Included in their descriptions were two sub-themes: self-development and the joy of learning.

Continuous learning was exemplified through the category of self-development, which included elements related to stages of adult development and theories of adult learning. Participants found portfolio projects created generativity (Erikson, 1997) as they felt productive and were able to express their creativity in work and ideas. Each participant recognized the flexibility of the portfolio project process as supporting her individual learning styles. As visual learners, Mary added photographs and Elaine used web clusters to plan and document her growth. As Fullan (1999) mentioned, "A flow of new and better knowledge and ideas is the lifeblood of continuous improvement" (p. 81). Quinn (1996) concurred, noting that learning and progressing energize us. Teachers found they were more effective in the classroom and ready for challenges, including new career opportunities. Elaine's project was "self-affirming." With

the attitude of "I can do this, and I can do more," her portfolio project gave her the knowledge, skills, abilities, and confidence to leave her comfort zone to teach other grades. Acknowledgement of the professional life cycle of teachers (Huberman, 1989) by their principal and by the participants themselves contributed to generativity.

Three elements of adult learning were identified in the portfolio project experiences: individualization, reflection, and the motivation to learn. Teachers appreciated the individualization of their professional development. They were able to choose their own topic and set their own goals. "My portfolio project was relevant professional development," shared Gail, "it was totally self-directed." Teachers were involved in their own learning process, and as a result, they made a commitment to themselves as learners. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) noted how involvement gives meaning to a person's life. A feeling of empowerment resulted from choice and being involved in the process, as Aby explained: "I was given absolute freedom of choice in this project, and that made it very valuable to me. The process really empowers the person going through it." Reflection was viewed as a key to the portfolio process, giving participants direction based on past experiences because they took the time to think and to search for meaning. "It would have been interesting to have done a portfolio my entire career," Gail reflected, "and a good idea for new teachers as a measure of their growth." Gail has pledged to continue the practice of continuous learning or "intellectual maintenance" (Secretan, 1997, p. 186). This view of the learning process moved the participants beyond learning by doing, to what Vaill (1996) described as

"learning as a way of being, a process of becoming a more conscious reflective learner" (p. 47). Learning went beyond extrinsic motivation, when the portfolio journey became as important as achieving the set goals. Learning for participants became a joyous process. As Mary explained, "I was reflecting and thinking about my experience. It helped me go inside." Intrinsic motivation emerged, learning about the self occurred, and participants spoke of experiencing *continuous renewal*. Learning became a cyclical process for Elaine, whose portfolio project extended beyond learning about herself: "My own learning process helped me understand my students' learning process."

The joy of learning became evident when participants spoke of experiences common to flow, as described by Csikszentmihalyi (2001). Teachers mentioned four experiences:

1. The transformation of time. Dedicating time to the portfolio projects was a challenge to all participants, yet for each, it evolved from being a barrier to a non-issue. Teachers spoke of a major shift in their perception of the amount of time and the way it was spent on the project. Initially, the portfolio projects were seen as a task to accomplish, requiring extra time that they were reluctant to devote. Then the perception of time was transformed as it seemed to pass by much faster than when the projects began.

2. Complete concentration on the task at hand. Participants became focused with body and mind in harmony, doing the same thing. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) used Flow Theory to describe this experience:

Concentration is so intense that there is no attention left over to think about anything irrelevant, or to worry about problems. Self-consciousness disappears, and the sense of time becomes distorted. An activity that produces such experiences is so gratifying that people are willing to do it for its own sake, with little concern for what they will get out of it, even when it is difficult, or dangerous. (p. 71)

Jointly, the transformation of time and concentration on the project were personal experiences that occurred at a defined point when the portfolio project began to "take on a life of its own." This point for Aby occurred when she realized the relevance and usefulness of the portfolios; time ceased to be an issue. Mary described the portfolio process as growing into an experience she wanted to do, not seeming like a lot of work, and completely absorbing her attention to the task. Participants became completely absorbed in what they were doing, causing their self-consciousness to disappear.

3. Inner clarity of goals with feedback. Teachers felt empowered, as they were responsible for choosing their own topic, setting clear goals, and structuring their own learning plan. Gail set her goals, and the project "was relevant to what I wanted to do," she said. Participants received feedback from the students or teachers they were working with and from their principal. Aby strongly believed that setting goals and making a plan that took into consideration where she had been and where she wanted to go, and reflective writing allowed her to have a learning experience that was joyous and fun.

4. Knowing that the activity was doable. When faced with completing a portfolio project, teachers required the challenge to be somewhat greater than their skills, allowing them to meet the challenge and to grow in competence. Aby set out to face the challenging technology of video taping. Feeling "technologically illiterate," she overcame the challenge, which she found "so rewarding because the actual feedback [of her lesson] was so valuable." *Matching challenge and skill, according to flow theory, is likely to result in flow* (Sergiovanni, 1995). Participants described these four experiences common to the characteristics of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2001) as part of their portfolio project journey.

The value of continuous learning was evident as teachers opened the door to their classrooms, observed each other teach, and experienced synergy through collaboration. All six participants became formal and informal instructional leaders (Brown & Moffett, 1999) as they shared portfolio projects highlighting their value with other teachers and recommending the project to them. Participants mentored each other: Suzanne shared her project with Aby and Mary shared her project with Marie and Gail. Gail mentored two other teachers, pleased that "they were really interested in the idea." Participants were engaged in ongoing study and practice, influencing others towards improving their educational practices by contributing as teacher leaders in a learning community (Lambert, 1998a). Mary fulfilled her goal of "helping other people see what [teacher librarians] do" when she presented her portfolio project at a recruitment seminar for potential teacher librarians. The personal development

they achieved through the portfolio project was a learning experience akin to an "aha!" moment, an optimal experience. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) explained an optimal experience through the concept of flow, "the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sake of doing it" (p. 4). Teachers described the portfolio journey as an optimal experience.

<u>Enhancement of Esteem</u>

This second theme emerged from responses that were grouped into the sub-themes of self-affirmation and motivation from within. Participants expressed a sense of personal and professional affirmation upon completion of their portfolio project, and Mary referred to it as a "confidence builder." She continued, "My growth was in self-confidence. I'm a great teacher! Kids really respond to me -- they're learning!" Participants spoke of being on a developmental path when striving to fulfill their role as teachers who made a difference to students. Portfolio projects, as an individualized form of professional development, increased their self-esteem. Teachers recognized growth in their competence through what they did, and felt an increased sense of worthiness in finding meaning (Mruk, 1999). Branden (1994) described six pillars of self-esteem, three of which were evident when teachers described their experience: (a) The practice of self-acceptance requires a commitment to the value of one's own person, and a willingness to experience the facts at the particular moment. Participants practiced self-acceptance by thinking and noting feelings about what they had done. There was willingness on their part to accept

themselves and to learn from mistakes. "The portfolio project was a learning experience," Gail shared, "and the highlight was learning about myself." Change and growth are possible by practicing self-acceptance; (b) The practice of self-responsibility requires the taking of responsibility for actions and goals. Aby took pride in setting goals and making a plan: "I set out on what was a major task and I saw it through." Each teacher took responsibility for her portfolio project and the attainment of the goals. The goals had a purpose for behaviour, which gave the project focus and direction; and (c) The practice of living purposefully requires choosing to live with a purpose. Through choice, our purpose in life is given focus and direction. Our goals give us structure and valuing ourselves encourages us into action. Mary explained, "I created [my portfolio project], planned it, spent hours thinking about what would go into it and how it would develop." By working towards the attainment of set goals, the practice of living purposefully was achieved. By increasing competence and worthiness, self-affirmation occurred for each teacher.

The inner motivation experienced by participants also contributed to the enhancement of their esteem. Participants mentioned experiences that have two characteristics common to the flow experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 2001). The first characteristic is the loss of self-consciousness. Participants wanted to do their very best on their portfolio projects and spoke of paying attention to the activity for its own sake. Preoccupation with the project allowed them to temporarily forget themselves, and enter into what Elaine described as "another level of consciousness," or awareness. That was a critical moment, when

teachers were able to give up self-consciousness.   When their self-consciousness resumed, the experience enriched them.   For Elaine, "It was a growing gift to me." The second characteristic common to the flow experience is the autotelic experience.   The term "autotelic" originates from the Greek words aleto, meaning self, and telic, meaning goal.   The activity became intrinsically rewarding due to the self-determining goals set by the participants.   Learning was then experienced as a way of being, as opposed to learning because it was required.   Upon reflection at the focus group meeting, Marie observed that all of the participants described rewarding experiences that were "very positive self-esteem boosters." These experiences helped the participants' esteem grow with a motivation from within.

A New Sense of Personal and Professional Meaning

Participants experienced a new sense of personal and professional meaning through caring relationships, the power of reflection, and spiritual consciousness.   The importance and relevance of relationships were evident throughout the portfolio project experiences.   Teachers commented about developing relationships with staff and students through mutual understanding and empathy with their difficult times; developing caring relationships with colleagues leading to synergy through collaboration; and developing trusting relationships with the principal. People need strong relationships to evolve, grow and find meaning, as is evident in Wheatley's (1995) explanation of relationships:

We don't know who we are, what we think, or how we'll respond until we meet up with another person, event, or idea. We can't know who we are

without our relationships. If we open ourselves to relationships with new people and new ideas, we will discover more and more insight into ourselves. Our best bet for discovering the complexity of who we are is to put ourselves into more and more relationships. (CRM Films)

Quinn (1996) agreed, noting that, "Relationships often play a key role. We have our greatest sense of joy and meaning when we connect with others in mutually enhancing ways" (p. 42). Teachers found meaning through relationships.

"Reflective writing is a key to the portfolio process" was a comment supported by all participants. Reflection is a process through which teachers made sense of personal and professional activities, thereby enhancing professional growth. Marie captured her reflection as a process where "by looking backwards, I was able to look forwards, to see how things have evolved, so I could evolve and get better." Reflection was a dialogue of thinking which teachers found central to problem solving, synthesizing ideas, developing skills, guiding action, and creating meaning (Schön, 1983). Problem solving was a common activity for participants, including Gail who started her action research portfolio project with the practical problem of documenting and reflecting on a building project. Her project then "evolved along the way," beyond how a library is renovated, to the interrelationships occurring during a building renovation.

"When someone reflects-in-action, he becomes a researcher in the practice context . . . he does not separate thinking from doing" (Schön, 1983, p. 68) and this is what occurred for the participants. Aby's portfolio project was clearly reflection-in-action, as a collage of research, theoretical frameworks,

consultation with outside experts (Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991) and her reflective journal. Aby wove her teacher-in-action research into her own experiences and her reflective thinking formed the context of her inquiry. Each participant's portfolio project was an example of McBride and Skau's (1995) conclusion that "reflection can become a powerful force in teachers' lives and can help them make sense of their work . . . [and] the work of supervision is to *improve classroom teaching and children's learning through teacher reflection*" (p. 272). Participants designed and complied their portfolio projects as portrayals of themselves, selecting work to highlight their topics, and tying them together through reflective writing, which brought meaning. The power of reflection, as experienced by each teacher in this study, parallels findings by Schön (as cited in Lambert et al., 1995). He found that reflection is vital to teacher learning and performance, leading to their continued growth over time.

Participants spoke of a spiritual consciousness as part of finding meaning. They went beyond their initial goals of learning and the materialistic conception of completing a portfolio project as merely a collection of artifacts, to the finding of meaning. Vaill (1996) described the pathway to spirituality as the search for a source of meaning. In this context, he wrote of his views of spirituality as,

> a personal process, occurring over time and expressing at each moment the person's sense of the meaning of life, of what the important questions are, of the significance of the persons and things around him or her, and of the direction that his or her journey is taking . . . No two of us have the same needs for meaning . . . Genuine spirituality, is the willingness to

enter into a process of dialogue about meaning, within oneself and with others. (p. 180)

Participants described reflection as finding a pathway leading to a deeper level of consciousness, which Mary described as "a spiritual thing." They described feeling emotions of passion and joy; the portfolio process was expressed as a journey of self-fulfillment, self-discovery, and self-knowledge. These discoveries of the personal self contribute to the development of the spiritual consciousness (Secretan, 1997). Teaching requires a combination of the whole person, a connection between mind, feeling, and spirit. We teach who we are, and to teach as a whole person takes professionalism to a deeper level (Palmer, 1998).

For participants, the portfolio activity became a merging of what Csikszentmihalyi (2001) expressed as action and awareness that produces a sense of serenity. Such action and awareness is the entrance into the flow experience, where growing beyond the boundaries of ego results in an experience of transcending oneself. This sense of discovery transports a person into higher levels of reality and new states of consciousness where, according to Csikszentmihalyi (1990), reflection no longer occurs:

> In normal life, we keep interrupting what we do with doubts and questions. 'Why am I doing this?' . . . Repeatedly we question the necessity of our actions, and evaluate critically the reasons for carrying them out. But in flow there is no need to reflect, because the action carries us forward as if by magic. (p. 54)

After this flow experience, the flow cycle is ready to begin again.

Each portfolio experience was unique, and as Fullan (1991) pointed out, if the experience was to make a difference, teachers needed to work out and find their own meaning. The participants in this study experienced the finding of what was meaningful to them. Their explanations assisted in the emergence of the three themes of continuous learning, enhancement of esteem, and a new sense of personal and professional meaning, as summarized in Figure 9.

SUB-THEMES FORMED FROM RESPONSES ⟶		THEMES	
Self-Development ➢ Adult development, through generativity and career stages ➢ Adult learning, through honors individuality: self directed with choice, in pursuit of self-identified goals ➢ Reflection, through intrinsic motivation ➢ Engaging in ongoing study and practice ➢ Contributing to a learning community as leaders ➢ Learning as an optimal experience, as a way of being	**The Joy of Learning** Experiences common to Flow: ➢ Time evolved from being a barrier to a nonexistent issue ➢ Completely absorbed and focused on project facilitating webs of interconnectedness ➢ Clear goals with feedback ➢ Knowing the activity was doable	**CONTINUOUS LEARNING**	⟵ Continuum of learning and development ⟶
Self-Affirmation ➢ Increased sense of competence and worthiness ➢ Confirmation of self ➢ Confirmation of professional ability to make a difference in the lives of students ➢ Practice of self-acceptance, self-responsibility, living purposefully	**Motivation from Within** ➢ Experiences having characteristics common to Flow: loss of self-consciousness; autotelic experience ➢ Intrinsically rewarding	**ENHANCEMENT OF ESTEEM**	
Caring Relationships ➢ With staff and students through mutual understanding and empathy of difficult times ➢ With colleagues, leading to synergy ➢ With the principal, a trusting relationship **Power of Reflection** ➢ Reflective writing is a key process ➢ Dialogue of thinking is central to problem solving ➢ Contributes to constructing own meaning from research	**Spiritual Consciousness** ➢ Finding spirituality as a source of meaning ➢ Finding another level of consciousness, a sense of serenity with the merging of action and awareness ➢ Experience as a journey of self-fulfillment, self-discovery, self-knowledge	**A NEW SENSE OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL MEANING**	

Figure 9. Cross-Case Analysis: Themes

A Legacy from the Journey

Participants commented that the process of portfolio project development left lasting legacies. Each teacher described a way in which the journey made a unique personal and professional contribution to her life. Gail's professional journey began as a lived experience that became a personal journey. Through reflective thinking, she found a new way of approaching relationships. She felt in charge of her own growth, and in her words,

> [The journey] has been enlightening. I didn't know where I was going on this trip and I'm not there yet. I'm traveling and learning on the way and I'm not done writing or learning. There's no map to this journey. There are stops along the way but no end. Once it becomes a habit, it drives itself and never ends.

Aby gained an affirmation of her ability to make a difference in children's lives through the reflective process. Recognizing her own growth and the synergy of caring relationships left her "yearning to recapture the [learning] experience." Aby found "so much joy" in her experiences that her consciousness expanded her awareness fulfilling her mind, heart, and soul.

Mary described the portfolio process as "full of gifts along the way, making the journey, and the time and effort it took well worth it." She expressed that the portfolio was a gift of self-discovery, self-fulfillment, and confirmation of her good teaching. For Mary, the experience was a journey that can never be over.

Marie's portfolio project was a "journey of discovery." It was a painting or building of her own "big picture" which illustrated where she had come from, affirmed competence and growth in her teaching career, and provided direction.

Suzanne's portfolio experience gave her the confidence to apply for her current position as an educational consultant and inspired her to publish two chapters of her portfolio project as manuals for teacher use. She too prepares enthusiastically for her next portfolio project. Suzanne's journey is continuous, as the learning that began with her portfolio is ongoing.

Elaine experienced her portfolio process twice; the first time occurred five years ago when her project initially took place, and again when she reviewed it for this study. Originally, the portfolio project led Elaine to make a career move resulting from new teaching experiences and an increased sense of worthiness and competence. A review of the project reaffirmed her experiences and inspired her to begin a second project that she felt might lead to another career change. Elaine provided the following reflection:

> The journey began with the first steps of thinking about veering off the "old" usual path of the checkmark style [of supervision], continued through the process of writing, reflecting, and growing from the experience. The next professional steps, for me, were of trying new things and taking new directions. The journey continues, by looking back [over my project], I am looking forward to continuing the journey through another portfolio project for supervision this year. And, doing this study has made me look forward to yet another journey – a journey into myself.

Summary

The qualitative data from this study were presented in detailed descriptions with direct quotations, capturing the past personal perspectives and experiences of the teachers. Each participant's case was specific and unique and contributed to the within-case and cross-case analyses from which emerged three themes. The participants in this study grew personally and professionally as a result of the portfolio process. The findings of this study supported the importance of individualized teacher professional development (Grimmett & Neufeld, 1994: Sergiovanni, 1992a; Glickman et al., 1998) and make a contribution to teacher supervision literature. Chapter Five summarizes the study, provides strategies for educators, and identifies the contributions of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND CONSIDERATIONS

This multiple-case study described the lived experiences of participants who completed a portfolio project as part of their developmental supervision. Chapter One provided a background to the study and presented the four research questions that guided data collection. Chapter Two reviewed the literature by investigating professional development, developmental supervision, and portfolio projects. The third chapter presented the methodology and research design used in the case study.

Chapter Four summarized the six participants' responses to four interview questions, integrated data from multiple sources, and presented an analysis of the findings which led to the emergence of three themes: Continuous Learning, Enhancement of Esteem, and a new sense of Personal and Professional Meaning. Chapter Five summarizes previous chapters, provides strategies for educators, and identifies the contribution of the study.

Background of the Study

Good professional development programs provide opportunities for teachers to learn new knowledge and skills and to gain new insights. Developmental supervision is a form of professional development that nurtures teacher growth. Portfolio projects are designed for teachers to take a role in their own professional development. The use of portfolio projects in a supervision process is a relatively new phenomenon and empirical research linking teacher

123

portfolios to professional growth is minimal. The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe the experiences of elementary teachers in a Canadian school district who completed a portfolio project as part of a developmental supervision process. Three areas of knowledge contributed to the framework of the study: professional development, developmental supervision, and portfolio projects.

Professional development is a dynamic process of learning. Successful planning for professional development recognizes that teachers have differing developmental needs. Developmental supervision of teachers, as presented in Glickman's (1990) model, promotes teacher development and encourages teachers to be reflective learners. A portfolio project could be a component of a nonevaluative developmental supervision program. Portfolio projects document teacher growth through reflection on practices, experiences, and achievements in an area identified by the teacher. As part of the school district's required yearlong developmental supervision program, teachers identified their own need, determined the learning required to enhance their own professional development, and presented their learning and supporting artifacts in their portfolio project.

Research Questions

The focus of this study was an investigation of how elementary teachers in one school district experienced a portfolio project designed to foster their professional growth. The research questions guided data collection:

1. Describe the process of developing a portfolio project. How did it evolve?

2. What was it like to have the experience? What were the advantages and/or disadvantages?

3. How did the process contribute to your professional development?

4. What aspects were most meaningful or not meaningful? How could the process be improved?

Literature Review

The literature review explored three particular areas: professional development as an adult learning process; developmental supervision as an individualized process; and portfolio projects as an experiential process. An understanding of these three areas and their interrelationships provides the theoretical basis for the study. Leadership permeates the boundaries of the three areas. By applying the knowledge of what is possible into the action that makes it happen, the leadership role could be assumed by any teacher, principal, or district administrator. Due to its very nature, leadership was integrated throughout each area of the literature review.

Professional development is an investment in continuous learning. Two factors that contribute to successful professional development are adult stages of development and adult learning. The most significant stage of development for this study is adulthood, a stage in Erikson's (1997) life cycle model, characterized by a concern for generativity. Generativity promotes motivation and contributes to a sense of esteem for teachers. Three essential elements of the adult learning process are individualization, reflection, and motivation. Individualization, by way of providing options, supports the need for teachers' self-direction. The

individualized portfolio project within a learning community encourages teachers to reflect on their own practices and leads to intrinsic motivation. The teachers in this study described an inner force that compelled them to pursue their learning goals. Participants also spoke of understanding and developing a personal meaning from their experience.

Effective professional development programs are based on adult development and adult learning theories. Developmental supervision, as defined by the school district in this study, is a process that influences teacher development, guided by these principles: (a) honoring individuality. Teacher differences occur in career stages, personal situations, school and community settings, and in grade and program assignments; (b) viewing development as an ongoing process. Teaching and learning evolves during a school year, and development expands throughout a yearlong cycle supporting the application of knowledge; and (c) promoting reflection on practice. Reflection improves instructional quality and teaching effectiveness. Even with these principles in place, teachers may sometimes face levels of challenge that exceed their skill level, resulting in anxiety. Understanding the interaction between challenge and skill, as explained in flow theory, encourages principals and teachers to maintain the right balance.

An important key to the success of the supervision process is open communication, which in a caring school climate develops good relationships. Dialogue and collaboration contribute to teachers' learning and effectiveness and the principal's role is to support teachers. The stage is set for a nonevaluative

supervision process, enabling teachers to grow and improve personally as well as professionally.   Teachers become more committed to improving their educational practice by reflecting on and learning from their experiences.

The school district in this study requires that each teacher complete a developmental supervision process once every five years.   The teacher and principal work together, within a supervision process, to plan for and cultivate growth.   An option for recording this process may be the portfolio project, which could combine data such as video tapes, audio tapes, reflective journals, records of professional reading, and written notes from interviews, formal and informal observations, team teaching, coaching, or mentoring experiences.   Wolf (as cited in Peterson, 1995) described portfolios more as "an *attitude* of teacher behaviour rather than a *container* of information" (p. 186).   Portfolio projects are a means to link professional development to teacher growth through individualized supervision.   The process of developing a portfolio project has the potential to facilitate conscious development, to challenge teachers to search beyond what is known, and to develop themselves from within, uncovering a new dimension of personal and professional meaning.

Methodology and Research Design

This case study investigated how teachers made sense of their portfolio project experiences based on their own beliefs, perceptions, and personal reflections.   A case study was the most appropriate plan for capturing the teachers' thinking and reflection in their own language; the method was sensitive

to the teachers' lived experiences and the way they saw the project develop. Four interview questions guided data collection.

The setting for this study was an urban school district consisting of approximately 1200 elementary and secondary teachers, 22,000 students, 44 elementary schools, and eight high schools. In this school district, teachers engage in a formal supervision process, known as developmental supervision, once every five years. A purposeful sample was used to select participants. They included two teacher librarians, two resource teachers and two classroom teachers; all had teaching assignments in elementary schools. Their teaching experience ranged from 8 to 26 years with an average of 16 years. Each career stage was represented. Considering a hypothetical thirty-year career, one teacher was in her first third, three in their second, and two in their last third of their career. All teachers had a minimum of a bachelor of education degree. In addition to that degree, one teacher had a bachelor of arts, another had a master of education, and two had post graduate diplomas. All teachers completed their portfolio projects as a first time experience within the past five years.

Qualitative researchers gather data from multiple sources and use a variety of procedures to check credibility and to establish trustworthiness. To understand the process of portfolio development from the participants' perspectives, the researcher conducted interviews, reviewed interim journals, convened a focus group, and reviewed portfolio contents. A technique known as member checks was also used: participants were invited to correct and/or challenge the data and interpretations. As the participants' former principal, the

researcher took care to minimize personal involvement; the research questions focused specifically on the teachers' journeys, not on her role or involvement as the supervising principal.

The six participants individually responded to the interview questions at two intensive interviews. They shared their experience and told the story of their journey. The focus was on how these elementary teachers experienced their portfolio project. The teachers were able to recall and reflect on their experience, and commented on the long term implications of their project.

Data interpretation and analysis took place simultaneously and contributed to systematic categories of analysis. In this multiple-case study, two stages of analyses occurred: within-case analysis of each participant's case as reported in six vignettes; and cross-case analysis, which began once the analysis of each case was completed. In the cross-case analysis, participant responses were grouped by interview question and organized by collective responses. Three themes emerged.

Analysis of Findings

This section presents a summary of the participants' responses to the four interview questions through within-case and cross-case analyses. The Summary of Findings in Chapter Four provided a detailed synopsis of the data collected and presented the within-case analysis as six vignettes. Each vignette included the participant's profile, responses to the four research questions as "insights and discoveries," and a description of her portfolio project. The cross-case analysis occurred in two phases and details are provided in Chapter Four. The integration

of data from multiple sources contributed to the first phase of analysis. At the focus group meeting, Elaine observed and shared, "It's fascinating how so many of us felt the same although our projects were so different." The common data from the responses for each question are summarized in the first section below and also in Figure 7, Chapter Four. The second phase of cross-case analysis resulted in the emergence of three themes as described in the second section and also in Figure 9, Chapter Four.

<u>Cross-Case Analysis of Findings: Response by Question</u>

Question One asked participants to describe the process of developing a portfolio project. In response, participants identified the characteristics of the process, discussed its challenges, and offered their advice for success. Throughout the experience, the teachers overcame the obstacle of entering into a new project with unknown outcomes, persevering in the "muddling-through stage," and overcoming the challenges of time demands and stress to find that the portfolio project journey became intrinsically motivating. Advice for experiencing project success included identifying needs, setting goals, working in a caring environment, and addressing challenges.

Question Two asked about the personal experience during the portfolio project, including both the advantages and/or disadvantages. Teachers responded by discussing personal affirmation, motivation from within, supportive relationships, and the power of reflection. Each participant experienced an increase in their self-esteem, affirming their confidence and worthiness. They became intrinsically motivated to complete their portfolio projects, experienced

enhanced personal connections, and described reflection as the key to making meaning of the present from past learning and teaching experiences which contributed to future directions.

The third question asked how the process contributed to each teacher's professional development. Participants described their professional affirmation, new insights, and reciprocal relationships. Teachers felt affirmed in their ability to teach, found a reassurance in their professionalism, and gained competence. Their paradigm of teaching expanded beyond their own classroom to the context of their school. This was especially evident in the stronger relationships they found with colleagues.

Question Four asked about what was most meaningful or not meaningful, and how the process could be improved. Teachers spoke of finding meaning through individual reflection that opened up new ways of viewing and relating to others, and of finding themselves through their own reflective writing. This individualized process of professional development led teachers to a new level of consciousness, or awareness. The question asking about improvements needed in the portfolio project received very few answers; participants felt as a group that the process had the flexibility to incorporate any specific changes that they needed.

The findings in this study revealed the growth and development of the participants who completed a portfolio project as part of a nonevaluative developmental supervision process. The participants told of the process and the meaning it had for them personally and professionally. They all overcame initial

uncertainties and unknowns about entering the process, and continued with their journeys. Participants noted that portfolio project slides shown at the focus group meeting clearly illustrated the uniqueness of each portfolio project. Although the projects were unique, there were many similarities in the way the journeys evolved. Teachers spoke of lasting legacies as a result of the portfolio project process, which included personal and professional affirmation, fulfillment, worthiness and competence, as well as the joy of learning. The portfolio project experience was a journey that continues for each participant today.

Cross-Case Analysis: Themes

During the second phase of the cross-case analysis, three themes emerged: continuous learning, enhancement of esteem, and a new sense of personal and professional meaning (see Figure 9, Chapter Four).

The portfolio projects were an experience in continuous learning. Even though the average time lapse since the portfolio completion was three years, the teachers displayed a strong commitment to their portfolio project learning and a sense of appreciation for the gifts their projects left to them. They described a continuum of learning that began as they established their learning goals and then continued as learning for the sake of learning. Teachers felt productive and spoke of their self-development as they engaged in ongoing study and practice, collaborating with their colleagues and providing leadership in their learning community. They became completely absorbed and focused on their projects, experienced a joy of learning, and found the demands on their time to be a non-issue.

Portfolio projects enhanced esteem. Teachers soon became aware of a sense of personal and professional affirmation. Their self-esteem increased as they recognized growth in their sense of competence and worthiness. Teachers experienced a personal confirmation of a job well done, and a professional confirmation of their ability to make a difference to students. Their portfolio projects changed from a requirement to a learning experience that was intrinsically motivating. The portfolio project became a journey of self-knowledge, self-discovery, and self-fulfillment.

Participants found a new sense of personal and professional meaning. Caring relationships with colleagues nurtured the portfolio process and led to synergy through collaboration. Reflective writing contributed to a new level of consciousness, or awareness. The process became meaningful to teachers as they reflected about their learning and teaching experience.

After the analysis of themes, it became evident that there was a continuum of learning and development. The portfolio project was an experience in continuous learning that contributed to esteem. The enhancement of the participants' esteem provided the self-affirmation and intrinsic motivation, which facilitated the finding of personal and professional meaning. Their experience evolved in a safe environment of caring relationships and was inspired by reflective writing. Their growth resulted in a new level of spiritual consciousness, or awareness.

The story of Don Quixote is akin to the way the teachers' portfolio projects reflect individual transformation. Don Quixote was a Spanish nobleman, who

imagined himself as a knight. He traveled with his squire, Sancho Panza. The romantic Quixote and the realist Sancho, combat the world's injustice, creating adventures and becoming heroes in their eternal quest for goodness and truth, while facing insurmountable obstacles. By confronting windmills, or what he perceived to be challenges in life, Quixote stepped outside his old paradigm and realigned himself with a new worldview in his search for meaning and direction in life. Gail, Aby, Mary, Marie, Suzanne, and Elaine chose to step out of the old paradigm of teacher supervision and into development through portfolio projects. Thus began their adventure and quest for truth and knowledge, at times overcoming obstacles and windmills in their search for meaning and direction in their lives.

Considerations for Educators

Participants saw portfolio projects as a process that resulted in their personal and professional development. There are many strategies that would assist educators to establish the use of portfolio projects as an option in a nonevaluative supervision program. The participants suggested strategies and gave advice to teachers for their consideration. Participants also provided advice for principals and district administrators in their role as supervisors. This advice, the researcher's experience as a principal for over 10 years, and the theory from the review of the literature combined to provide suggested strategies and approaches for principals and district administrators to consider.

<u>Strategies for Teachers</u>

Prior to when teachers consider completing a portfolio project, either through their own professional development initiative or as part of a supervision program, they might compare themselves to the profile of a teacher who might undertake the portfolio project. Mary suggested that this teacher may need the following characteristics:

> *Confidence in self as a person and as a teacher; a life-long learner seeking to improve; a strong sense of accountability and responsibility; able to see part of a larger picture; a team player; a thinker about 'What is best for kids?'; a hard worker, wanting to do the best possible; willing to try something different and comfortable with the unknown; a believer in challenges.*

Mary developed the above profile based on her observations of the other participants. There are striking similarities between her list of characteristics and Goleman's (1995) list of the characteristics of emotional intelligence. His list included the possession of "self-control, zeal and persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself" (p. xii). Elaine added that the portfolio experience was flexible enough to work for almost any teacher, noting that reflection about one's experience can contribute to career as well as personal development. Aby suggested that the importance of liking to write was an important quality, yet she noted that there would be many technologies from which teachers might choose to support or replace handwritten text. Suzanne and Gail suggested that portfolio projects were especially important for beginning teachers to track their own

development. They noted that while experiences would be limited for those teachers, the value of accumulating and reflecting on their experiences would still contribute to their professional development and self-affirmation. Collectively, participants agreed that the project would be valuable to anyone choosing this developmental supervision option.

To assist teachers on their portfolio journey, participants gave the following advice:

1. Become involved. Participants encouraged teachers to rise to the challenge of becoming involved in their professional development through a portfolio project. Robbins and Alvy (1995) reminded teachers, "We have to work on our own professional development: no one else can take the initiative for us" (p. 261).

2. Commit time, energy, and motivation. The initial stages of concern described by the participants are predictable and follow the levels of use framework developed by Hall et al. (1975). They cautioned teachers to be aware of the feeling of time pressures. Participants recommended the use of a timeline as an organizer recognizing, that until intrinsic motivation is engaged and the project begins to have a life of its own, time to work on the project and balancing it with other professional and personal commitments would be a challenge. Similarly, while recognizing that there may be a struggle to find just the right amount of stress to provide the challenge and motivation to complete the project, the participants believed that the stress factor should not be removed. Participants remembered that the project became less

stressful once they had more information; speaking to the principal and teachers who had completed the process was recommended.

3. Plan wisely. The format for a portfolio in this self-directed learning project was not defined. Participants appreciated the flexibility, and emphasized the importance for teachers to choose a relevant topic, assess learning needs, set goals, and collaborate with others. The topic becomes more meaningful, participants agreed, when integrated with daily activities.

4. Participate in the reflective process. Participants found reflection about their learning to be valuable, by asking themselves questions such as, "What have I gained from my focus?" Participants agreed that asking questions was needed, and that a critical factor necessary for the project to have an impact was reflective writing. Reflective writing gave teachers the opportunity to see daily routines in light of their goals and purpose. It gave meaning to their professional life in school. Without reflective writing, goals would not be reached to the depth and understanding they found to be possible.

5. Consider the project to be a developmental journey. The project promoted self-development that is as crucial to good teaching as knowing one's students and subject material. Development from within was the project's strength. It was a medium for learning, which was transformed into meaning as teachers reflected on their experiences. Good teaching comes from knowing who you are, and cannot be reduced to technique (Palmer, 1998). Participants encouraged their colleagues to seek out information about

portfolio projects, and to consider portfolios as part of their professional developmental.

<u>Strategies for Principals</u>

Glickman et al. (1998) explained that the long-term goal of developmental supervision is to move teachers toward a point at which they, facilitated by principals, can assume full responsibility for instructional improvement. Principals can facilitate continuous learning for teachers, enhancement of esteem, and a new sense of personal and professional meaning through collaborative leadership. To assist principals with supervision procedures and processes, the following strategies and approaches are presented for their consideration:

1. A handbook. From my role as a principal, I believe it would be helpful for principals to have a handbook, Principal's Guide to Supervision. This binder would include school district guidelines, a registry of teachers as a yearly insert with dates of their last supervision cycle, the district supervision report, and professional resources. A year-at-a-glance timeline would encourage planning and the tracking of monthly meetings or informal sessions with teachers to discuss progress on portfolio development. Guiding principles for supervision would be established for portfolio project development, as well as examples of portfolio contents, and a list of teachers willing to mentor other teachers.

2. Supervision training. The literature review supported the need for principals to receive supervision training (Glickman et al., 1998; Sergiovanni, 1995).

Principals require knowledge of the change process, adult learning, and adult development. The uncertainty of a new process, such as portfolio projects, may cause uneasiness. Principals also require the knowledge, skills, and ability to facilitate the development of a caring, learning community where teachers determine goals for their own development (Lambert, 1998a).

3. Modelling professional development. While principals' styles differ, the role of a leader in an education system is to lead by example and to practice what is desired in others (Burns, 1978; Greenleaf, 1977; Maxwell, 1999). Journal articles and books suggest portfolios for principals, however, they primarily focus on the use of portfolios for principal assessment and as documentation of skills, experience, and success (Brown & Irby, 1997; Yerkes & Guaglianone, 1998). Two years after experiencing the portfolio process with teachers, I came to the realization that "the best way to show [that I] value continuing development among teachers is to model it" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996, p. 38). I was able to share my experience, artifacts, and reflections with teachers as my portfolio developed, and these experiences contributed to this study. Encouraging and mentoring teachers through an electronic portfolio process became our next developmental experience.

Strategies for District Administrators

School district administrators are in a position to encourage portfolio development by promoting professional development within a learning community. "If we believe all students can learn, we also show by word and action that we believe all teachers can learn" (Brown & Moffett, 1999, p. 158).

Participants also saw the value of a learning community. They noted the importance of teachers working together in a supportive learning environment. The following strategies and approaches are presented for school district administrators to consider:

1. Policies and practices. Lambert et al. (1995) recommended supporting the continuous professional development of all staff members through policies and practices. They also recommended support for a self-analysis process of supervision that engages in collaborative action research. Portfolio projects, as part of a supervision process, would be a practice supporting continuous development. Gail stated, "I think having done a portfolio project will make it much easier to recommend it to others. Portfolio projects should be a prerequisite for administrators to complete before asking their staff to do one." School district personnel could demonstrate trust in the value of the portfolio project by expecting a portfolio project of themselves and their principals. As Fullan (1991) noted, "Sustained improvements in schools will not occur without changes in the quality of learning experiences on the part of those who run the schools" (p. 344).

2. Funding. District administrators must allocate funds for professional development for the training of principals and vice principals (Duke and Stiggins,1990), for implementing the portfolio project option, and for supporting the time commitment given to portfolio projects. The complexities of a school day consume time for teachers and principals, leaving little opportunity for professional development. Marie commented,

If the school district wants teachers to do something like [a portfolio project], I don't know how they could allow for it, but time should be given for teachers to do it. If it's important to them for teachers to have a chance to grow professionally and reflect on things, then they should give them some time to work on [their portfolio project].

Funding to acknowledge the time commitment given to portfolio projects would be appreciated by teachers, and similarly by principals.

3. Portfolio projects option. Districts can offer the portfolio project as an option in a developmental supervision program. Any school district interested in such a program might use this school district's developmental supervision program (Figure 4, Chapter Two), and the Model for Growth (Figure 10, Chapter Five). Participants suggested the following characteristics of portfolio projects that are necessary to support a successful portfolio process: (a) choice. The portfolio project could be offered as an option in the supervision process because it helps teachers to feel empowered (Blase & Blase, 1994). Participants suggested that the best protection against the misuse and loss of the potential benefits of the portfolio project is not to mandate its use. The portfolio projects' positive qualities of reflection and self-understanding are best achieved when they are an option in a nonevaluative supervision program.   Sergiovanni and Starratt (1998) noted that if portfolio use "is uniformly mandated or linked to a bureaucratic and management-oriented system of evaluation it becomes both ritualistic and burdensome" (p. 247); (b) sharing of portfolio information. Initial stages of portfolio development require

information about the project and its ways of work. Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) remind us, "In healthy human systems, people support each other with information and nurture one another with trust" (p. 39). The information about portfolio projects as a supervision option must permeate from the district level into schools; (c) a flexible format. Participants appreciated permeable boundaries rather than a defined structure; (d) a planning process. Teachers collaborate with their principal to assess their learning needs, choose an area of interest requiring development, and set goals; and (e) reflection. Participants noted reflection as a key to portfolio project success. A reflective organization would support reflection-in-action, a process which "tends to surface not only the assumptions and techniques but the values and purposes embedded in organizational knowledge" (Schön, 1983, p. 338). Modelling of collaborative and team building behaviours and strategies by district administrators, and shifting of leadership from the authoritative to facilitative style are actions that can facilitate professional development within a learning community (Lambert et al., 1995).

Contributions of the Study

This study contributed to the subject of professional development by describing the involvement of teachers in completing their portfolio project and the meaning it had for them. Four research questions guided data collection about the journey each teacher experienced. The participants spoke openly and revealed meaningful insights about the process, their growth, and a new sense of personal and professional meaning. Specifically, the use of portfolio projects as

a nonevaluative component of a developmental supervision process gave insight into teacher motivation and how self-esteem was built through increased competence and a new sense of worthiness. The portfolio projects were a journey in personal and professional development for the participants. Insights from this study may be applied and could contribute to the success of supervision programs in education. It is hoped that the knowledge gleaned will serve to inspire other educators to embark on their own journey of discovery through the portfolio project process. The analysis of findings and its visual conception, as illustrated in Figure 6, Chapter Three, may contribute to other studies.

Responses from participants in this study describe the portfolio process as a journey. Figure 10, A Model for Growth, captures the portfolio project experience from the perspective of participants. While models are only representations of reality and not reality itself, this model attempts to represent and integrate the factors and conditions that provide the setting for and influence of the portfolio process. Portfolio projects were described as living entities; the movement and dimensions in the model portray projects as evolving over time and contributing to the development of teachers as people and professionals. Portfolio projects were recognized as flexible enough to exist in a number of settings, through all career stages, for different teaching assignments, and within different personal situations. Teachers discovered the significance of their knowledge and experiences while simultaneously uncovering personal and professional meaning. Teachers valued the importance of honoring individual differences and nurturing growth through the developmental supervision process.

Teachers recognized the commonalities of these factors, which they felt improved their classroom instruction. Each completed portfolio project was unique, reflecting the practices, experiences, and achievements that contributed to the professional development of the teacher.

A Model for Growth represents the findings of this study, which support portfolio projects as a form of professional development in nonevaluative supervision. The model also supports the educational goals of the school district in this study. Ten Goals of Public School Education are listed in three categories. The first goal, Academic Development, includes communication and computation, critical and creative thinking, and lifelong learning. The second goal of Personal Development includes healthy lifestyles, a sense of personal worth and dignity, and moral, ethical, and spiritual values. The final goal category of Social and Cultural Development includes growing with change, democratic and responsible decision making, respect for others, and world citizenship. The portfolio project supports components of the school district's goals including communication, critical and creative thinking, and lifelong learning; it promotes a sense of personal worth and dignity and respect for others. The educational goals are supportive of the factors and conditions as illustrated in Figure 10.

"We have to work on our own
professional development: no one else
can take the initiative for us. By nurturing
our own growth, we are able to enhance
our ability to serve and help others grow"
(Robbins & Alvy, 1995, p. 261).

Developmental Process

Honoring individual
differences and nurturing
growth

"Leadership by definition is active and
requires creating systems and structures that
proactively work to bring out the best in all
people of the organization"
(Harris, 1996, p. 65).

School /
community
setting

Results in a

Portfolio

Personal
Situation

A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY:

A MODEL FOR GROWTH

Record of reflection
on practices,
experiences, and
achievements

Evolves with time

Yearlong
process

Career
Stage

Grade/program
assignment

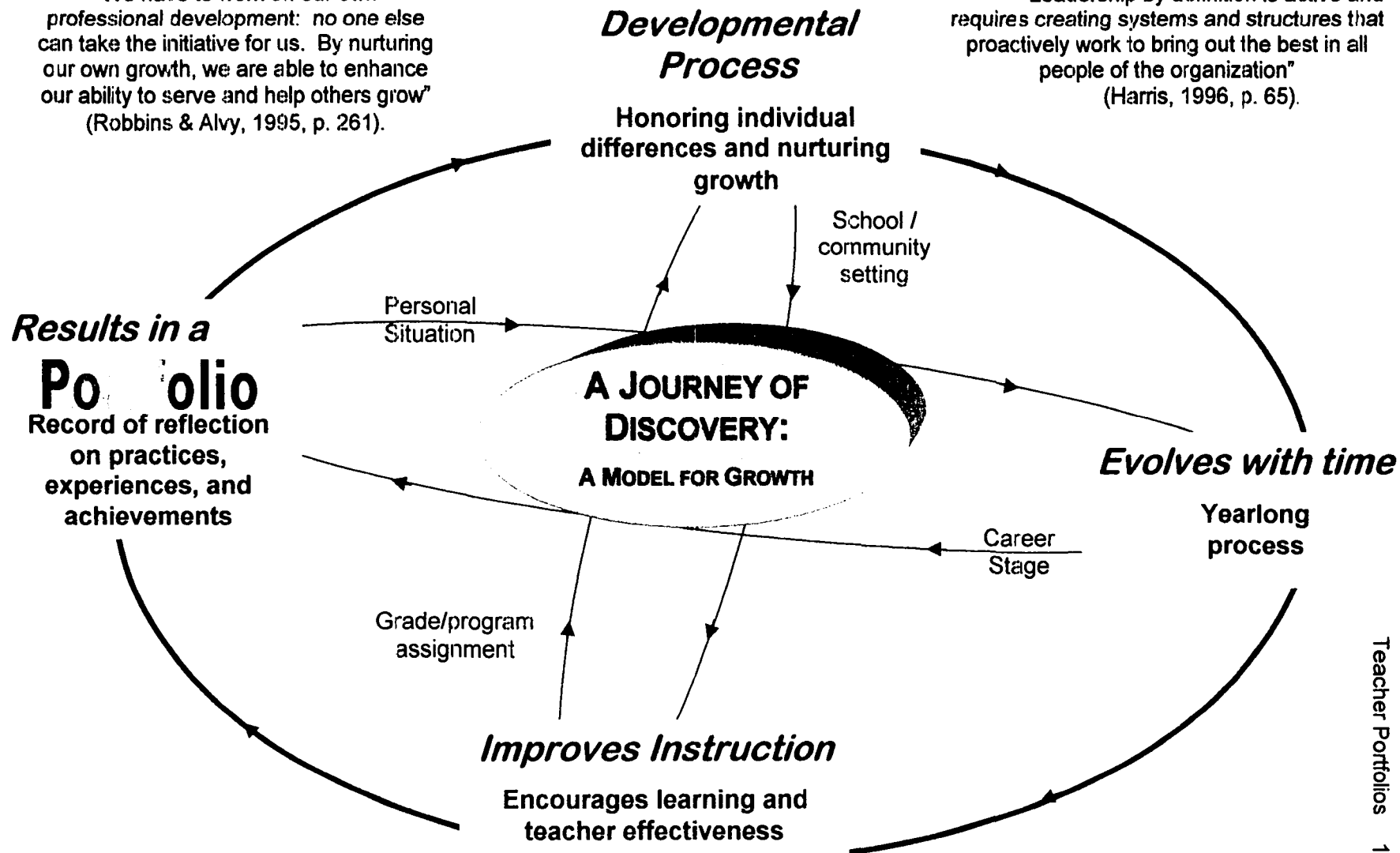## Improves Instruction

Encourages learning and
teacher effectiveness

Figure 10. A Journey of Discovery: A Model for Growth

Suggestions for Further Study

The findings of this study suggest additional areas that may prove beneficial for investigation. These include:

1. What are the growth patterns of inexperienced teachers who participate in professional development through the process of completing a portfolio project?

2. What is the retention rate of teachers as a result of their completing a portfolio project?

3. What is the nature of the relationship between teachers and principals who participate in a portfolio project?

4. To what measurable extent, if any, does the self-esteem of teachers change as a result of completing a portfolio project?

5. How might portfolio projects serve in the teacher evaluation process?

6. How might portfolio projects serve as part of a marginal teacher's development?

7. What conditions and factors have contributed to the minimal number of teachers who chose the portfolio project option in this school district?

8. What conditions and factors are required for teachers to successfully complete a portfolio project?

9. Are there teachers who have had overall negative portfolio project experiences? What were the contributing factors?

10. In what ways might portfolio projects contribute to the development of inner consciousness, or spirituality, of teachers?

Conclusion

This study described the process of developing a portfolio project and how it evolved in the context of six teachers' lived experiences. Teachers found the journey to be more important than the destination. Personalizing the supervision process for teachers honored their individual differences, including recognizing factors related to personal situations, career stage development, a move to a new school, and a change of grade or program assignment. Each teacher identified an area of professional growth, set goals, and was responsible for reflecting and selecting the portfolio contents to ensure that goal attainment was demonstrated. Portfolio projects were a means for teachers to document their continuous learning.

Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) wrote, "Everything is in a constant process of discovery and creating" (p. 13) and portfolio projects exemplified this observation. Portfolio projects were a work in progress, a learning endeavor that became a creative outlet for teachers' educational growth. Completed projects portrayed a record of reflection on practices, experiences, and achievements. While each portfolio project was unique in many ways, there were common characteristics: each was at least a yearlong process, and provided artifacts including reflections of the teacher's learning journey. Finding meaning for participants occurred through their reflective writing and resulted in a sense of meaning to the portfolio project. For teachers, the portfolio projects became an intellectual journey as characterized by the three themes: continuous learning,

enhancement of esteem, and a new sense of personal and professional meaning.

Teachers revealed that the process of portfolio project development left lasting legacies, which included personal and professional affirmation, fulfillment, worthiness and competence, as well as the joy of learning. The teachers were internally motivated to complete their projects, resulting in a flow of creativity and generativity. Teachers experienced a renewed sense of purpose; they were inspired with a fresh view of reality, and a renewed sense of self-responsibility. Ultimately, they saw their own learning reflected in the growth of their students. It is hoped that the findings of this study and considerations for educators will encourage district administrators, principals, and teachers to promote portfolio projects as a way of improving learning opportunities for teachers, and ultimately, for students.

REFERENCES

Andrews, R.L., Basom, M.R., & Basom, M. (1991). Instructional leadership: Supervision that makes a difference. Theory into Practice, 30 (2), 98-100).

Armstrong, T. (1998). Awakening genius in the classroom. [On-line]. Available: http://www.ascd.org/readingroom/books/armstrong98book.html

Ary, D., Jacobs, L.C., & Razavieh, A. (1996). Introduction to research in education (5th ed.). Fort Work, TX: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.

Atwell, N. (1998). In the middle: New understandings about writing, reading and learning. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers.

Barth, R. (1990). Improving schools from within. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bird, T. (1990). The schoolteacher's portfolio: An essay on possibilities. In J. Millman & L. Darling-Hammond (Eds.). The new handbook of teacher evaluation: Assessing elementary and secondary school teachers (pp. 241-256). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Bishop, M. (1994). How to be a super successful teacher librarian. The Medium, 34 (1), 10, 11.

Blase, J., & Blase, J. (1994). Empowering teachers: What successful principals do. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Blase, J., & Blase, J. (1998). Handbook of instructional leadership: How really good principals promote teaching and learning. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Bolman, L.G., & Deal, T.E. (1994). Becoming a teacher leader: From isolation to collaboration. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Branden, N. (1994). Working with self-esteem in psychotherapy. [On-line]. Available: http://www.nathanielbranen.net/psy05.shtml

Brown, G., & Irby, B.J. (1997). The principal portfolio. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Brown, J.L., & Moffett, C.A. (1999). The hero's journey: How educators can transform schools and improve learning. Alexandria, VI: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Burns, J.M. (1978). Leadership. New York: Harper & Row.

Campbell, D.M., Melenyzer, B.J., Nettles, D.H., Wyman, R.M., Jr. (2000). Portfolio and performance assessment in teacher education. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Costa, A.L., & Kallick, B. (2000). Getting into the habit of reflection. Educational Leadership, 57 (7), 60-62.

Courtney, A.M., & Abodeeb, T.L. (1999). Diagnostic-reflective portfolios. The reading teacher, 52 (7), 708-714.

Covey, S. (1989). The seven habits of highly effective people: Restoring the character ethic. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Covey, S. (1992). Principle-centered leadership. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Cruz, J. (1998). Continuous learning. Thrust for Educational Leadership, 27 (7), 32-34.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). Flow: The psychology of optimal experience. New York: Harper Perennial.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2001). Essential elements of flow. Paper present at a seminar at Mira Costa College, Oceanside, CA.

Danielson, C. (1996). Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching. Alexandria, VI: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Danielson, C., & McGreal, T.L. (2000). Teacher evaluation: To enhance professional practice. Alexandria, VI: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Daresh, J.C. (1989). Supervision as a productive process. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Daresh, J.C., & Playko, M.A. (1995). Supervision as a proactive process: Concepts and cases (2nd ed.). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1990). Teacher evaluation in transition: Emerging roles and evolving methods. In J. Millman & L. Darling-Hammond (Eds.). The new handbook of teacher evaluation: Assessing elementary and secondary school teachers (pp. 17-32). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1996). The quiet revolution: Rethinking teacher development. Educational Leadership, 53 (6), 4-10.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1998). Teacher learning that supports student learning. Educational Leadership, 55 (5), 6-11.

de Bono, E. (1998). Simplicity. London, England: Viking.

Dietz, M.E. (1995). Using portfolios as a framework for professional development. Journal of Staff Development, 16 (2), 40-43.

Donmoyer, R. (1990). Generalizability and the single case study. In E.W. Eisner & A. Peshkin (Eds.). Qualitative inquiry in education: The continuing debate (pp. 175-200). New York: Teachers College Press.

DuFour, R., & Eaker, R. (1988). Nine assumptions for school improvement. The Developer, National Staff Development Council, December 1988.

DuFour, R., & Eaker, R. (1998). Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing student achievement. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

Duke, D.L., & Stiggins, R.J. (1990). Beyond minimum competence: Evaluation for professional development. In J. Millman & L. Darling-Hammond (Eds.). The new handbook of teacher evaluation: Assessing elementary and secondary school teachers (pp. 116-132). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Erikson, E. H. (1997). The life cycle completed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Freeman, J.J. (1998). The teaching portfolio as a vehicle for professional growth. [On-line]. Abstract from: DAI Available: http://firstsearch.oclc.org Item: AAG9923833

Freud, S. (1920). A general introduction to psychoanalysis. New York: Boni and Liveright Publishers.

Fullan, M.G. (1991). The new meaning of educational change (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. (1997). What's worth fighting for in the principalship (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. (1999). Change forces: The sequel. London: Falmer Press.

Garubo, R.C., & Rothstein, S.W. (1998). Supportive supervision in schools. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Gilligan, C. (1982). In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gleave, D. (1997). Bifocals for teacher development and appraisal. Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 12 (3), 269-281.

Glickman, C.D. (1990). Supervision of instruction: A developmental approach. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Glickman, C.D., Gordon, S.P., & Ross-Gordon, J.M. (1998). Supervision of instruction: A developmental approach (4th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Goleman, D. (1995). Emotional intelligence. New York: Bantam.

Grant, G.E., & Huebner, T.A. (1998). The portfolio questions: A powerful synthesis of the personal and professional. [On-line]. Available: http://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com/cgi-bin/web

Greenleaf, R.K. (1977). Servant leadership : a journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness. New York : Paulist Press.

Grimmitt, P.P., & Neufeld, J. (1994). The authenticity for struggle. In P.P. Grimmett & J. Neufeld (Eds.), Teacher development and the struggle for authenticity (pp. 205-232). New York: Teachers College Press.

Guare, R.E. & Starratt, R.J. (1995). The spirituality of leadership. Planning and changing, 26 (3/4), 190-203.

Hall, G.E., Loucks, S.F., Rutherford, W.L., & Newlove, R.B.W. (1975). Levels of use of the innovation: A framework for analyzing innovation adoption. Journal of Teacher Education, 26 (1), 52-56.

Hargreaves, A. (1997). Rethinking educational change: Going deeper and wider in the quest for success. In A. Hargreaves (Ed.), Rethinking educational changes with heart and mind (pp. 1-26). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum.

Harris, M.B., & Curran, C.M. (1998). Knowledge, attitudes, and concerns about portfolio assessment: An exploratory study. Teacher education and special education, 21 (2), 83-94.

Huberman, M. (1989). The professional life cycle of teachers. Teachers College Record, 91 (1), 31-57.

Jalongo, M.R. (1991). Creating learning communities: The role of the teacher in the 21st century. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Jaworski, J. (1998). Synchronicity: The inner path of leadership. San Francisco: Berret-Koehler.

Joyce, B. & Showers, B. (1980). Improving inservice training: The messages of research. Educational Leadership, 37 (5), 379-384.

Jung, C.G. (1933). Modern man in search of a soul. New York: Harvest Books.

Katzenmeyer, M., & Moller, G. (1996). Awakening the sleeping giant: Leadership development for teachers. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Keyes, M.W., Hanley-Maxwell, C., & Capper, C.A. (1999). "Spirituality? It's the core of my leadership": Empowering leadership in an inclusive elementary school. Educational Administration Quarterly, 35 (2), 203-237.

Kohlberg, L. (1976). Moral stages and moralization: The cognitive-developmental approach. In Lickona, T. (Ed.). Moral development and behavior: theory, research and social issues (pp. 31-53). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Lambert, L., Walker, D., Zimmerman, D.P., Cooper, J.E., Lambert, M.D., Gardner, M.E., & Ford Slack, P.J. (1995). The constructivist leader. New York: Teachers College Press.

Lambert, L. (1998a). Building leadership capacity in schools. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Lambert, L. (1998b). How to build leadership capacity. Educational Leadership, 55 (7), 17-19.

Lawton, S.B., Hickcox, E.S., Leithwood, K.A., & Musella, D.F. (1988). Performance appraisal in Ontario schools. In E. S. Hickcox, S. B. Lewton, K. A. Leithwood, & D. F. Musella (Eds.), Making a difference through performance appraisal (pp. 12-41). Toronto, ON: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Press.

Leithwood, K.A. (1992). The move toward transformational leadership. Educational Leadership, 49 (5), 8-12.

Leithwood, K.A., & Jantzi, D. (1996). Toward an explanation of variation in teachers' perceptions of transformational school leadership. Educational Administration Quarterly, 32 (4), 512-538.

Levine. D.U. (1991). Creating effective schools: Findings and implications from research and practice. Phi Delta Kappan, 72 (5), p. 389-393.

Lincoln, Y.S., & Guba, E.G. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Lucid, J.M. (1997). Impact of growth-oriented teacher evaluation practices in selected Los Angeles County elementary schools. [On-line]. Abstract from: DAI Available: http://firstsearch.oclc.org Item: AAG9813442

Lyons, N. (1999). How portfolios can shape emerging practice. Educational Leadership, 56 (8), 63-65.

Martin-Kniep, G.O. (1999). Capturing the wisdom of practice: Professional portfolios for educators. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Maslow, A.H. (1970). Motivation and personality. (2nd ed.). New York: Harper & Row.

Maxwell, J.C. (1999). The twenty-one indispensable qualities of a leader. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

McBride, M., & Skau, K.G. (1995). Trust, empowerment, and reflection: Essentials of supervision. Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 10 (3), 262-277.

Merriam, S.B. (1998). Qualitative research and case study applications in education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mitchell, D. & Tucker, S. (1992). Leadership as a way of thinking. Educational Leadership, 49 (5), 30-35.

Mruk, C.J. (1999). Self-esteem: Research, theory and practice. (3rd ed.). New York: Springer.

National Staff Development Council. Moral purpose, community must guide school reform, says Sergiovanni. (1997, January). The Developer, p. 1,2.

Oakley, K. (1998). The performance assessment system: A portfolio assessment model for evaluating beginning teachers. Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education, 11, 323 -341.

Owens, R.G. (1982). Methodological rigor in naturalistic inquiry: Some issues and answers. Educational Administration Quarterly, 28 (2), 1-21.

Palmer, P.J. (1998). The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Palmer, P.J. (2000). Let your life speak: Listening for the voice of vocation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Patton, M.Q. (1987). How to use qualitative methods in evaluation. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Patton, M.Q. (1990). Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Peterson, K.D. (1995). Teacher evaluation: A comprehensive guide to new directions and practices. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Piaget, J. (1926). The language and thought of the child. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc.

Piaget, J. (1954). The construction of reality in the child. New York: Basic Books.

Poplin, M.S. (1992). The leader's new role: Looking to the growth of teachers. Educational Leadership, 49 (5), 10-11.

Prowse, P., & Turley, H. (1996). Uniquely me: A personalized developmental supervision process. Saskatoon, SK: Saskatoon Public School Division.

Prowse, P., & Turley, H. (Producers). (1998). Uniquely me: A personalized developmental supervision process [videotape]. Saskatoon, SK: Saskatoon Public School Division.

Purkey, S.C., & Smith, M.S. (1983). Effective schools: A review. Elementary School Journal, 83 (4), p. 427-452.

Pyrczak, F., & Bruce, R.R. (2000). Writing empirical research reports: A basic guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences. Los Angeles, CA: Pyrczak Publishing.

Quinn, R.E. (1996). <u>Deep change: Discovering the leader within</u>. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Rabbin, R. (1998). <u>Invisible leadership: Igniting the soul at work</u>. Lakewood, CO: Acropolis Books, Inc.

Reasoner, R.W. (2000). <u>Self-esteem and youth: What research has to say about it</u>. Port Ludlow, WA: International Council for Self-Esteem.

Rényi, J. (1998). Building learning into the teaching job. <u>Educational Leadership</u>, <u>55</u> (5), 70-74.

Robbins, P., & Alvy, H. (1995). <u>The principal's companion</u>. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Roe, M.R., & Vukelich, C. (1997). That was then and this is now: A longitudinal study of teachers' portfolio practices. <u>Journal of Research in Childhood Education</u>, <u>12</u> (1), 16-26.

Rogers, S.E. & Danielson, K.E. (1996). <u>Teacher portfolios: Literacy artifacts and themes</u>. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Rubin, H.J., & Rubin, I.S. (1995). <u>Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data</u>. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Scherr, M.W. (1999). Embracing spirituality: The inner journey of educational leaders. In L.F. Fenwich (Ed.). <u>School leadership: Expanding horizons of the mind and spirit</u> (pp. 1-22). National Council of Professors of Educational Administration 1999 Yearbook. Lancaster, PA: Technomic.

Schön, D.A. (1983). <u>The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action</u>. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Secretan, L. (1997). <u>Reclaiming higher ground</u>. Toronto, ON: Macmillan Canada.

Senge, P.M. (1990). <u>The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization</u>. New York: Doubleday.

Sergiovanni, T.J. (1992b). Why we should seek substitutes for leadership. <u>Educational Leadership</u>, <u>49</u> (5), 41-45.

Sergiovanni, T.J. (1995). <u>The principalship: A reflective practice perspective</u>. Boston, Allyn and Bacon.

Sergiovanni, T.J., & Starratt, R.J. (1998). Supervision: A redefinition (6th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

Siens, C.M., & Ebmeier, H. (1996). Developmental supervision and the reflective thinking of teachers. Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 11 (4), 299-319.

Sparks-Langer, G.M., & Colton, A.B. (1991). Synthesis of research on teachers' reflective thinking. Educational Leadership, 48 (6), 37-45.

Sutherland, S. (1998). A systematic examination of portfolio assessment to promote teacher professional growth. [On-line]. Abstract from: MAI Available: http://firstsearch.oclc.org Item: AAGMQ38768

Turley, H. (2000). Teacher portfolios. Saskatoon, SK: Saskatoon Public School Division.

Vaill, P.B. (1996). Learning as a way of being: Strategies for survival in a world of permanent white water. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Van Wagenen, L., & Hubbard, K.M. (1998). Building teacher portfolios. Educational Leadership, 55 (5), 26-29.

Van Manen, M. (1990). Researching lived experience: Human science for an active sensitive pedagogy. London, ON: Althouse Press.

Wheatley, M.J., & Kellner-Rogers, M. (1996). A simpler way. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

Wheatley, M., Mihal, M. (Producer), McCarey, K. (Director). (1995). Leadership and the new science [Videotape]. (Available from CRM Films, 2215 Faraday Avenue, Carlsbad, CA 92008-7295)

Wolf, K. (1996). Developing an effective teaching portfolio. Educational Leadership, 53 (6), 34–37.

Wolf, K., & Dietz, M. (1998). Teacher portfolios: Purposes and possibilities. [On-line]. Available: http://vweb.hwwilsonweb.com/cgi-bin/web

Yerkes, D.M., & Guaglianone, C.L. (1998). The administrative portfolio. Thrust for Educational Leadership, 27 (7), 28-31.

Zubizarreta, J. (1994). Teaching portfolios and the beginning teacher. Phi Delta Kappan, 96 (4), 323-326.

APPENDIX A

University of San Diego
Teacher Portfolios in the Developmental Supervision Process: A Journey of Discovery
Dissertation Interview Guide
Halyna M. Kornuta, Researcher

Semi-structured Interview Questions

Data collection will be guided by the following questions:

1. Describe the process of developing a portfolio project. How did it evolve?
2. What was it like to have the experience? What were the advantages and/or disadvantages?
3. How did the process contribute to your professional development?
4. What aspects were most meaningful or not meaningful? How could the process be improved?

The following probing questions are intended to be available to be asked if necessary. As a sample script, the interview would begin: "I want to know about your developmental supervision experience of completing a portfolio project. Think back. Describe for me. . ."

1. *Process*: Describe the process of developing a portfolio. How did it evolve?
   - Tell me about your journey.
   - How did you choose your topic and zero in on it?
   - Were you motivated to pursue the project? Why?
   - What did you write and collect?
   - What was the role of reflective writing in the process?
   - Is your journey over?

2. *The experience:* What was it like to have the experience?
   - What was it like: the stages, your thoughts and feelings? What frustrated you? What was of benefit?
   - Would this work for anyone else? Under which circumstances?
   - What does it depend upon (e.g. career stages, school and community setting, grade and program assignment, personal situations)?
   - What were the advantages or disadvantages? What was most challenging?
   - What should be kept? Eliminated?
   - Which teachers would most likely choose this process and gain from it?
   - Is there a link between your experience and portfolios you've worked on with students?

3. *Professional development:* Upon reflection, did it contribute to your professional development?
   - What difference did this project make?
   - What personal meaning did it have for you?
   - Did you meet your goals?
   - Describe the effect (impact) it had on your thinking and behaviour.
   - What benefits did you derive from it?
   - Did you share successes and failures?
   - Was this risk taking?
   - Did it lead to the ultimate. . . making a difference to students?
   - Would your repeat this process or recommend it to others?

4. *Meaning*: What aspects were most meaningful or not meaningful? How could the process be improved?
   - What did you learn about yourself? Describe any changes that occurred during, after and any time later.
   - If you were to repeat the process in the same context, how would you have approached it?
   - What knowledge was gained? Skills? Abilities?
   - What was the impact on you? Your relationship with others? On your leadership with others?

APPENDIX B

University of San Diego
Teacher Portfolios in the Developmental Supervision Process: A Journey of Discovery
Halyna M. Kornuta, Researcher

Informed Consent Form

1. I understand that the purpose of this research is to learn about the process of developing a portfolio as part of my developmental supervision. I have been invited to participate in this research. I am participating in an interview that will be audio taped. The transcription will be used only for the purposes of this study. Only the researcher will have access to the audiotape and transcripts. I understand that I have the opportunity to review and clarify the transcript of my interview. Tapes will be destroyed after the information is used for the study.

2. I may choose to withdraw my consent at any time during the research process. It is not anticipated that this research will pose any potential risk and/or discomfort to me in any way. This information will not affect my supervision program as it is completed. In the future, it is highly unlikely that we will be part of a staff together. The research information will not be used in a supervisory way.

3. The potential benefits I may experience are that of personal insight and reflection. By partaking in this study, I may have a better understanding of my own development as a teacher, while making a significant contribution to the educational community's knowledge in the area of portfolio projects as part of a developmental supervision program. In addition, I will have the opportunity for feedback.

4. I understand that my participation is strictly voluntary and that there will be no adverse consequences for not participating. No payment will be received for my participation. I may withdraw at anytime.

5. I will be given an opportunity to ask questions and receive answers prior to signing this form.

6. I agree to make a commitment for up to three sessions within five hours, as required.

7. I understand that care will be taken so that the data from my interview will be confidential. I will be assigned a pseudonym and no data will be included that reveals my identity. I also understand that I will receive a copy of the transcript and may delete or revise any portion.

8. I understand that this consent form is our only agreement.

I, the undersigned, understand the above explanations and, on that basis, I give consent to my voluntary participation in this research.

_____   _____
My Signature   Date

_____   _____
Location   Date

_____   _____
Signature of researcher   Date

_____   _____
Signature of Witness   Date

Done at _____   _____
                    City, Province   Date

APPENDIX C
University of San Diego
Teacher Portfolios in the Developmental Supervision Process: A Journey of Discovery
Halyna M. Kornuta, Researcher

Demographic Information

Teacher's Name: _____   Participant's Pseudonym: _____

Years of Teaching experience: _____

School / Community Setting: _____

Grade/Program assignment at time of portfolio completion: _____

Career stage: ❏ First 1/3   ❏ second 1/3   ❏ last 1/3

Education: ❏ B.Ed.   ❏ PGD   ❏ M.Ed.   ❏ Ph.D. / Ed.D.

New Developmental Supervision Process completed:

❏ once   ❏ twice   ❏ other _____

Situations that contributed to the developmental supervision process:

❏ Career Stage
❏ Personal situation
❏ School and community setting
❏ Grade and program assignment

Product Components in the portfolio (check all that apply):

❏ Formal observations
❏ Informal observations
❏ Video tapes
❏ Audio tapes
❏ Reflective writing
❏ Interviews
❏ Journals
❏ Length of product: _____
❏ Time commitment _____ hours
❏ Other:

Developmental supervision style used (check all that apply):

❏ Directing
❏ Negotiating
❏ Collaborating
❏ Facilitating