A Needs Assessment to Explore the Professional Development of Early Childhood Practitioners with Online Resources

Berna Souza
University of Hawaii- Manoa
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Do you know what the acronym ECE stands for?

A. Yes
B. No
C. I think so
Early Childhood Educator
Birth to 8 years old

- Center-based & Preschool
- Family Child Care providers
- Infant and Toddler specialists
- Early Intervention specialists
- Home Visitors
- Administrators
- Head Start teachers
- Special Education teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- Family Service staff
- Health Coordinators
Lives:
Kekaha, Kauai

Berna Souza
ABOUT ME

Lives:
Kekaha, Kauai

Work:
Child & Family Service - Kauai Head Start

St. Theresa Early Learning Academy
ABOUT ME

Lives:
Kekaha, Kauai

Work:
Child & Family Service- Kauai Head Start

St. Theresa Early Learning Academy

Passion:
Early Childhood Education & Professional Development
In 2012, Gov. Abercrombie created the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) and makes an appeal for State-funded Preschool.

- **Benchmark of “high-quality programming”:**
  - Bachelor’s degree
  - Specialized pre-kindergarten training
  - 15 hours of professional development
Great Idea . . . . .
DHS minimum requirements:

1) Associate’s degree in ECE

or

2) CDA (120 hrs.)
Impact on Kauai’s Workforce
Impact on Kauai’s Workforce

- Kauai Community College only offers an Associate’s of Science in ECE
Impact on Kauai’s Workforce

- Kauai Community College only offers an Associate’s of Science in ECE
- Limited direct access to high-quality & relevant professional development
Impact on Kauai’s Workforce

- Kauai Community College only offers an Associate’s of Science in ECE
- Limited direct access to high-quality & relevant professional development
- ECE practitioner technology capabilities are unknown
Kauai is approximately 550 sq. miles.
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March 2013 Survey of 28 participants:

1) 85.2% are motivated by “personal growth”

2) Day, cost, & distance prevents PD

3) 67.9% are Interested/Very Interested in online PD
Background Data

- **March 2013 Survey of 28 participants:**
  1. 85.2% are motivated by “personal growth”
  2. Day, cost, & distance prevents PD
  3. 67.9% are Interested/Very Interested in online PD

- **Research & Literature Suggests:**
  1. EC Practitioners seek professional growth
  2. Relevance & usefulness of topics
  3. Ease of accessibility of online resources in rural areas
Purpose Statement
A needs assessment was conducted using Google forms
A needs assessment was conducted using Google forms to explore the use of online resources for professional development.
A needs assessment was conducted using Google forms to explore the use of online resources for professional development by early childhood practitioners on Kauai currently working with children birth to 5 years old.
Instrument: Google Forms

- Free service
- Mobile-friendly
- Real-time data
- Response summary
- Data organizing capabilities

Online Resources for Professional Development Survey

* Required

Name

Program
Survey

Please rate your level of familiarity with the following online technology resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>1 = Not familiar</th>
<th>2 = Heard of it</th>
<th>3 = Use it occasionally</th>
<th>4 = Use it frequently/Very familiar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Webinars (web-based seminar)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media (ex. Facebook, Twitter)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education blogs</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synchronous learning environment</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Likert Scale
- Multiple Choice
- Checkboxes
- Grids
- Comment boxes
There was a total of 13 participants in this needs assessment survey who work with children from birth to 5 years old and are currently working in 6 different programs island wide in varying positions.
The survey was made available from February 5th – March 16th 2014.

Attempts:
- February 5th
- February 24th
- March 12th

Email ONLY
What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Some graduate [2]
- Bachelor's degree [2]
- Associate's degree [2]
- Master's degree [4]
- Professional degree [0]
- Doctorate [0]
- High school/GED [0]
- Some college [3]

- Some college: 3 (23%)
- Associate's degree: 2 (15%)
- Bachelor's degree: 2 (15%)
- Some graduate school: 2 (15%)
- Master's degree: 4 (31%)
- Professional degree (ex. law, medicine): 0 (0%)
- Doctorate: 0 (0%)
What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- High school/GED: 0 (0%)
- Some college: 3 (23%)
- Associate’s degree: 2 (15%)
- Bachelor’s degree: 2 (15%)
- Some graduate school: 2 (15%)
- Master’s degree: 4 (31%)
- Professional degree (ex. law, medicine): 0 (0%)
- Doctorate: 0 (0%)

Did you enroll in any online or distance education courses in your higher education?

- Yes: 8 (62%)
- No: 5 (38%)
How many professional development opportunities have you attend in the past year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How many professional development opportunities have you attended in the past year?

- 0 [2] 15%
- 1-3 [5] 38%
- 4-6 [3] 23%
- 7-9 [0] 0%
- 10+ [3] 23%

Would you have attended more if they were made available via online resources?

- Yes [11] 85%
- No [2] 15%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>In-person (AM) 8am or 9am</th>
<th>Online (AM) 8am or 9am</th>
<th>In-person (PM) 4pm, 5pm, 6pm</th>
<th>Online (PM) 4pm, 5pm, 6pm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>5 (38%)</td>
<td>2 (16%)</td>
<td>7 (54%)</td>
<td>10 (77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>6 (46%)</td>
<td>2 (16%)</td>
<td>6 (47%)</td>
<td>10 (77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>6 (46%)</td>
<td>3 (23%)</td>
<td>6 (47%)</td>
<td>9 (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>6 (46%)</td>
<td>2 (16%)</td>
<td>6 (47%)</td>
<td>9 (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>5 (38%)</td>
<td>2 (16%)</td>
<td>7 (47%)</td>
<td>10 (77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>12 (92%)</td>
<td>6 (46%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6 (46%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identifying the EC practitioners familiarity with & interest in various formats was important.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>1=Not Interested</th>
<th>2=Somewhat</th>
<th>3=Interested</th>
<th>4=Very Interested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Webinar</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>4 (31%)</td>
<td>7 (54%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitated</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>5 (38%)</td>
<td>4 (31%)</td>
<td>3 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blended</td>
<td>2 (15%)</td>
<td>2 (15%)</td>
<td>8 (62%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative BBC</td>
<td>2 (15%)</td>
<td>3 (23%)</td>
<td>7 (54%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-paced</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>2 (15%)</td>
<td>7 (54%)</td>
<td>3 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Higher Ed</td>
<td>2 (15%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>5 (38%)</td>
<td>5 (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teleconference</td>
<td>2 (15%)</td>
<td>3 (23%)</td>
<td>6 (46%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web-based VC</td>
<td>2 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (31%)</td>
<td>6 (46%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Limitations

- Needs Assessment Challenges:
Limitations

- Needs Assessment Challenges:
  1) Soliciting participants exclusively via email
Limitations

- Needs Assessment Challenges:
  1) Soliciting participants exclusively via email
  2) Unintended misrepresentation
Limitations

- **Needs Assessment Challenges:**
  1) Soliciting participants exclusively via email
  2) Unintended misrepresentation
  3) Participation assumption
Discussion

- Reasons for using online resources:
  - Ease of use
  - Convenience
  - Less restrictive
  - Time
  - Update credentials
  - Cost effectiveness
  - New skills/knowledge
Discussion

- Reasons for using online resources:
  - Ease of use
  - Convenience
  - Less restrictive
  - Time
  - Update credentials
  - Cost effectiveness
  - New skills/knowledge

- Obstacles facing the ECE field on Kauai:
  - Building a sense of community in an online environment
  - Belief that F2F is the most concrete way to enhance learning.
This needs assessment supports the idea that a “Blended Learning Environment” of in-person and online interactions for professional development would best suit the immediate needs of this rural island community.
A shout out to the OTEC 2012 Ohana, our ETEC Professors, Tami Saito, & my family for supporting me during this amazing journey.

The journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.