THE PERCEPTIONS OF ARMY INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEMS SPECIALISTS REGARDING A FORMALIZED TRAINING PROGRAM: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

by

Amber D.E. Brouillard

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Liberty University

2024

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APPROVED BY:

Daniel Baer, Ph.D., Committee Chair

Kristy Motte, Ed.D., Committee Member

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative transcendental phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of Army Instructional Systems Specialists regarding implementing a formal training plan at a military training installation. The theory guiding this study is adult education theory, developed by Malcolm Knowles, as it illuminates how adults perceive learning and their training preferences. This study design includes the description, reduction, imaginative variation, and essence of the lived experience with data collection from nonprobability sampling, and criterion sampling was used because all participants experience the same phenomenon. Data was collected using interviews, journal prompts, and focus groups. The data analysis spiral included description, reduction, imaginative variation, and essence with close attention to the epoché. From the collected data, clusters of meaning, textural descriptions, and themes were derived. Final data analysis concludes with a written composite description of the phenomenon's essence of all the data. Discovered themes include training struggles, common professional development, confusion felt by ISSs, informal training, on-the-job training, and reliance on peers as a learning method. Unexpected findings include feelings of inadequacy, the need for mentors, and the impact previous military experience had on the training experience of ISS.

Keywords: instructional design, andragogy, training, adult education, military.

Copyright Page

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to Jesus, my Creator, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13)! Thank You for showing me how to find joy in the madness. To my husband and family, who have endured endless years of my constantly trying to juggle everything. My children, Angelique, Hailey, and Hunter, thank you for your patience and understanding during those late nights and constant weekends of fending for yourselves while I religiously worked. You three have always and will always be my why. Also, my mother, who was unable to graduate from high school and has offered me unwavering support and encouragement throughout my educational, military, deployments, motherhood, and professional pursuits. Thank you for listening and providing me with an amazing model of what strength and grace look like. It looks like we proved them wrong, Mom! My former co-workers, especially those who participated in this endeavor, you all have added more value to my life than you know. A big thank you to the River, who provides (especially motivation, sorry you don't have a doctor working for you to brag about) and deals with my sarcasm. Dr. Christina Parker, you have inspired me in many ways, from professionally to personally. I would have never fallen in love with ISD without your guidance. Larpe Diem, I miss our OG FTIB crew Finally, to my best friend Brandy, my biggest cheerleader and partner in crime, thank you for everything! I could not do life without you. I refuse! You love me unconditionally, something that has not often been offered in my life.

Acknowledgments

I want to acknowledge my appreciation for the expertise and dedication of Daniel Baer, Ph.D. Committee Chair and Kristy Motte, Ed.D. Their patience and insight were vital to my doctoral journey. I have faced and overcome many obstacles during this experience, which I could not have overcome without their tireless dedication.

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List of Abbreviations

Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation (ADDIE)

Critical Task Site Selection Board (CTSSB)

Instructional Designer (ID)

Instructional Systems Designer (ISD)

Instructional Systems Specialists (ISS)

International Board of Standards for Training, Performance, and Instruction (IBSTPI)

Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO)

Program of Instruction (POI)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The Covid pandemic created massive upheaval throughout education and training. This upheaval continues to reshape the higher education and training landscape while transforming teaching and learning practices (Pandya et al., 2022). As educators were thrust out of their comfort zones, they frequently looked to instructional designers for innovative methods and tools (Guppy et al., 2022). Current instructional design research focuses on designers' multiple capacities within various sectors. However, insufficient literature exists regarding the onboarding and training of instructional systems specialists (ISSs) who serve as instructional designers for the military. There needs to be more information regarding how implementing an ISS training program impacts the ISS Department of Army civilians performance, efficacy, and retention. Due to the vast number of duties assigned to instructional designers (IDs), there often needs to be more clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of instructional designers and those who employ instructional designers or ISSs, as the Army refers to IDs (Stefanik, 2017) This discrepancy appears throughout all areas where instructional designers perform, including the military, education, business, and industry sectors.

The historical, social, and theoretical concepts associated with ISSs and IDs will be discussed in the introduction. The problem of the need for a formalized training plan for Army ISSs is discussed. The significance of the study will be revealed, along with the guiding research questions, essential definitions, and a summary.

Background

As technology and education have evolved, the field of instructional design has had to flex and change over time, with responsibilities and roles expanding, making it almost

impossible to explain what an instructional designer does accurately (North et al., 2021; Reiber, 1998; Reiser, 2001b). With the COVID-19 pandemic, these responsibilities and roles have further evolved, illuminating the need to explore what skills, training, and instruction are needed to prepare instructional designers for the workforce (Heggart & Dickson-Deane, 2021; North et al., 2021). The question of what duties instructional designers perform within their jobs and how they perform duties leads to questioning how they should be trained (Heggart & Dickson-Deane, 2021). With instructional designers working in such a vast number of capacities, this is a daunting task to pursue (North et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021). The social, historical, and theoretical contexts offer insight into the problem of training programs for ISSs and IDs, which guides this study. Although each of these concepts is slightly different, each holds a crucial element to understanding this study's problem. The following is a discussion regarding these contexts.

Historical Context

The field of instructional design can trace its roots to World War II when there was a need to create training programs that delivered results quickly. The United States Army hired several psychologists and educators with training experience to conduct research and develop training materials for the military using a systems approach to training (Molenda, 2015;; Shipley et al., 2018). One notable contributor, Gagné (Gagné & Briggs, 1979), influenced these training materials, heavily based on instructional principles that evolved from research and theory on instruction, learning, and human behavior (Reiser, 2001a; Shipley et al., 2018). Over time, the education sector noticed how impactful the introduction of instructional design had been on military training and began pouring money into improving math and science education by hiring professionals and using instructional design tools. Eventually, using instructional designers bled

into business and industry, where IDs focused on enhancing human performance and solving problems (North et al., 2021; Shipley et al., 2018).

Education and training evolve simultaneously, affecting the duties typically performed by IDs. Instructional designers are knowledge workers who collaborate with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), apply ID models, multimedia principles, learning theories, manage relationships, use a vast array of developmental computer tools, and design and development training materials (Lachheb & Boling, 2018; Lowell & Ashby, 2018; Rabel & Stefaniak, 2018). This vast array of duties led to confusion regarding what the role of an instructional designer should be, performance problems within the field, and job dissatisfaction on behalf of the ID when the expectations of the position were not met (Klein & Kelly, 2018; North et al., 2021; Rabel & Stefaniak, 2018). Not understanding job expectations and employers not utilizing IDs to their maximum potential, opportunities for growth and change are often lost.

Practicing instructional designers in the field often needs clarification about their duties since many come from diverse experiences and educational backgrounds (York & Ertmer, 2013). A Delphi study to investigate 75 heuristics deemed necessary to instructional designers by York and Ertmer uncovered that many instructional designers state that their work focuses on training rather than education, and understanding their target audience is the most crucial component of designing products. This study concluded that instructional designers felt that all but 75 of the listed heuristics were important. The authors also described the difference between education and training as being the "difference between learning about something (theory) and learning how to use something (a weapon)" (York & Ertmer, 2013, p. 22). Instructional designers within the military also stated that they do not spend time developing products; instead, they focus on maintaining lessons with little input regarding design. An integrative literature review by Chen

and Carliner (2021), designed to investigate the relationship between instructional designers and faculty developing online courses, uncovered that ISSs employed by the military often serve as project managers, data entry clerks, or other not-instructional design-related capacities. This discrepancy may exist because there are no clearly defined roles and duties outlined for ISSs within military doctrine, nor is there a formal training program. The United States Army is not an exception to the disparity of expectations versus reality in the instructional design field.

Social Context

Within the current literature, information is abundant regarding the practices of IDs within the fields of education, industry, and business. Much of this information focuses on novice versus seasoned IDs, which also questions whether academia needs to change the curriculum to prepare instructional design students for a broader realm of responsibilities (North et al., 2021; Sharif & Cho, 2015; Yalçın et al., 2021). While a plethora of data is available for studies conducted in academia and industry, little exists for the U.S. Department of Defense, despite employing a reported total of 3.2 million employees (about the population of Arkansas) as of 2018 who require diverse types of training which needs the assistance of an ISS (Stimage, 2019). Most recently, studies within the practice of military ISSs have concentrated on ISS perception and practice (Parker, 2020; Parker & Momeny, 2021), yet no literature exists that considers the implications of a training program focusing on ISSs, more notably a training program that concentrates on adult education theory. Currently, no training program is available to properly prepare ISSs assigned to the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), and according to the literature, it takes ISSs several years to fully comprehend and perform their duties confidently (Parker, 2020).

Theoretical Context

Adult education theory, or andragogy, is a learning theory based on multiple other theories. These include conditioning, modeling, cognitive, behaviorists, organismic, gestalt, field theories, and humanistic and pragmatic philosophy (Knowles et al., 2015). Malcolm Knowles, often referred to as the father of andragogy in the English-speaking world, noted that adult education had three meanings. These include the process of adult learning, an organized set of activities to accomplish objectives, and the field of social practice (Knowles et al., 2015; Loeng, 2017). Knowles (1977) explained that while adult education has been documented for centuries by great educators such as Lao-Tze, Confucius, Socrates, Plato, Cicero, and Aristotle, adult education theory was not formally coined until 1833 when a German adult educator coined the term, based on "man not boy" in contrary to the already penned pedagogy (p. 206). According to Knowles, teachers of pedagogues acknowledge the dependency of their pupils; in contrast to andragogy, teachers feel obliged to equip students with independence and self-directiveness. Many of the adult education principles Knowles pioneered are based on Lindeman. First, adults are motivated to learn as they have needs and interests that the learning will fulfill. Second, adults have unique life experiences, and learning should be life centered. Third, experience is the richest resource for adult learning, and fourth, learning should be self-directed for adults. Finally, individual differences increase with age, making it necessary to account for differences in style, time, place, and pace of learning (Knowles, 1978). Whether planning for formal or informal education, these are pertinent concepts to incorporate.

Problem Statement

The problem is that instructional designers are often not provided with enough training to perform their assigned job roles due to the vast roles they play (North et al., 2021; Yalçın et al.,

2021) and expected instructional design competencies often conflict with the duty positions they serve within (Parker, 2020; Williams van Rooij, 2012). Instructional designers currently serve in a variety of capacities and sectors, including business, corporate, medicine, higher education, nonprofits, and government, including the military (Halupa, 2019; North et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021). Because instructional designers work in various capacities, they fulfill multiple roles with different titles. These roles/titles include instructional technologist, program manager, educational technologist, training manager, trainer, learning designer, curriculum developer, e-learning developer, learning and development professional, and performance improvement consultant (North et al., 2021; Yalçın et al., 2021). The broad array of sectors and roles makes it necessary for instructional designers to possess various skills and competencies before being hired, which indicates the professional organizations that outline these competencies (Larson & Lockee, 2004). Thompson-Sellars and Calandra (2012) uncovered an apparent disconnect between instructional designer preparation programs and hiring organizations regarding the expected knowledge and skills a graduate must ascertain before entering the workforce. Even among experienced instructional designers, there exist gaps in knowledge and skills (Cheong et al., 2006). Even among those formally trained versus informally trained, the latter heavily depended on the guidance of those officially trained, alluding to the need for a formal training plan (Thompson-Sellers & Calandra, 2012). Despite many specific competency standards, this broad scope of titles and duties may significantly contribute to the disconnect between the instructional designer and the supervisor's expectations (Rabel & Stefaniak, 2018; Shariff & Cho, 2015). In a study conducted by Villachica et al. (2010), findings from a study regarding employer perceptions of the skills of entry-level IDs uncovered that newly hired IDs did not exceed the expectations of their employers, with only one-third performing the skills of writing

performance objectives, sequencing objectives, and conducting pilot tests of new materials with minimal assistance. Incidentally, this contradicts a study by Larson (2005), which stated that graduates of ID programs rate their performance highly. This disconnect between employers and employees alludes to the idea that IDs are unaware of their inability to perform their duties adequately.

The Great Resignation in 2021 led to over 47 million Americans leaving their jobs. (Fuller & Kerr, 2022). Fuller and Kerr state that the main reason was the disconnect between what employers expected and the employee's tolerance for these demands. The field of instructional design seems to align with this, with managers often not knowing how to manage ISSs best due to their lack of education or experience within the field (Klein & Kelly, 2018). Institutions that reward degrees and other programs that prepare IDs to serve in government, military, and nonprofit roles should appraise their curricula to understand how they facilitate the development of ID skills (Villachica et al., 2010). A misalignment of the training program versus what is expected in a work setting, along with the lack of a formal training plan or onboarding, leads to job dissatisfaction, low job performance, and continued misconceptions as employees learn from their potentially less qualified and educated peers, leading to frustration and low employee retention (Larson & Lockee, 2004; Rabel & Stefaniak, 2018). With the military shifting to a more learner-centered focus, the new to rapidly respond to the development of resources, look for ways to optimize training time, and create more adaptive training, it is more important than ever for ISSs to be appropriately prepared to excel in their duties immediately (Bell & Reigeluth, 2014). No specific academic support or guideline is available that outlines the competencies required of an Army ISS. While current literature has illuminated the need for onboarding and specifying the duties of an instructional designer (Rabel & Stafaniak, 2018),

there is little to no discussion regarding the practices of Army ISSs, nor does it investigate perceptions of ISSs regarding formal training opportunities, which would better support them in a constantly evolving environment.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of Army ISSs regarding implementing a formal training plan at a military training installation. At this stage in the research, training was defined as teaching a new skill or behavior, whereas education emphasizes material with a more academic flavor (Bell & Reigeluth, 2014). The theory which guided this study is adult education theory, which outlines best practices when developing an effective adult training plan.

Significance of the Study

This phenomenological study of the perceptions of ISSs regarding their training experiences contributed knowledge to the theoretical base surrounding military instructional design, which is not currently addressed in research. Interviewing ISSs employed at DD (a pseudonym for the military training installation where this study was conducted) for at least six months should illuminate frustrations they have felt performing their duties. Approaching this phenomenon amongst specifically targeted participants with various years of experience and educational backgrounds offers theoretical, empirical, and practical significance. While previous studies have elicited how instructional designers perform their jobs (Lowell & Ashby, 2018; Piña & Sanford, 2017) or the importance of onboarding (Rabel & Stefaniak, 2018), there are no studies regarding the shared experiences of ISSs, nor are there any focusing on military ISS training. Several studies investigate how military ISSs perform their jobs (Klein & Kelly, 2018; Zhu et al., 2020), military methodology (Culkin, 2017), comparing duties to the IBSTPI

standards (Parker, 2020) and the importance of using ISSs when creating military education or training programs (Dragonetti et al., 2020). There is no other available research discussing ISS training, despite ISSs creating the curriculum for all soldiers. Current literature focuses on the importance of peer feedback, coaching, or onboarding instructional designers in education, business, and industry; there is no information about how this impacts ISSs working with the military (Lowell & Ashby, 2018; Rabel & Stefaniak, 2018; Stefaniak, 2017). Based on the findings of this study, it could be expanded to other fields of instructional design to improve the quality of training received by instructional designers and increase the retention of quality employees.

Theoretical

From a theoretical lens, adults are motivated to learn based on six assumptions. Proposed by Malcolm Knowles (1980), the first assumption is that as a person matures, their self-concept becomes self-directed. The second assumption is that adults collect experiences that are rich resources for learning. The third assumption is that an adult's readiness to learn is related to their role's tasks. Adult learning is tied to life experiences, which makes creating learning experiences relatable, with open dialog and real-world activities so important. The fourth assumption is adult education is more problem centered, opposed to subject centered learning. The fifth and sixth assumptions were created later, with the fifth assumption stating that adults are driven intrinsically. Finally, the sixth assumption is that adults need to know why they are learning something, it must be applicable. The lived experiences of ISSs training were investigated through an andrological lens. This study adds to the body of work by researching the lived experiences of ISSs by uncovering their perceptions of a formal training plan.

Empirical

The available empirical literature suggests a gap in literature surrounding the training practices of IDs and ISSs once they are hired. There is no existing literature which investigates how a formal training plan impacts ISSs, nor their experiences during the training process. What little literature exists focuses on the vast array of skills and competencies required of ISSs (Anderson et al., 2019; Mills et al., 2020; North et al., 2021) and the diverse backgrounds of ISSs (Parker, 2020; Parker & Momeny, 2021), little discusses how to effectively train ISSs once they are hired. By conducting a transcendental phenomenological study, the perceptions of Army ISSs regarding the adoption of a formal training plan fills this existing void.

Practical

The results of this study could bring about positive changes to Army ISS morale, increase retention, and ensure that ISSs are equipped with the necessary skills and competencies to complete their assigned tasks. It provides insight into the experiences of ISSs during the first six months at their place of duty, and illuminates how their training, or lack of training, affects them. Based on the results, measures can be taken to better equip them to create training for United States soldiers and potentially the ID field.

Research Questions

While there is literature surrounding the importance of onboarding instructional designers in education and industry, more needs to be done on the impacts of instituting a formal training program for Army instructional designers, who often perform duties vastly different from those taught in colleges and universities. Instructional designers' expectations of their responsibilities often differ from those of their supervisors, resulting in unknown expectations and vague duties (Klein & Kelly, 2018; Rabel & Stefaniak, 2018). In addition, many ISSs are hired with little to

no education or experience in instructional design (Parker, 2020). Understanding the experience of ISSs performing their duties could reveal potential implications for creating a training program for ISSs.

Central Research Question

What are the shared experiences of ISSs assigned to DD regarding their training?

Sub-Question One

What are the shared experiences of ISSs during the initial training process?

This question investigated any commonalities among ISSs during the training process, if any, once they start working at DD. ISSs employed by DD have various backgrounds. They vary widely from having bachelor's degrees in elementary education, others with no formal training who have served as subject matter experts (SMEs), and some with master's degrees in instructional design (North et al., 2021). Several have military experience, yet they have little to no formal instructional design education outside of a two-week Developer Course conducted on the installation, which focuses on the Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation (ADDIE) process. In addition to the vast prior experiences of ISSs, they have different learning styles, motivations, needs, interests, and goals. Tapping into these experiences through experiential techniques such as discussions benefits their learning.

Sub-Question Two

What are the shared perceptions of ISSs regarding how equipped they are to complete their assigned tasks six months after they are hired?

This question sought to understand how ISSs feel when performing tasks six months after they are hired. Based on previous studies conducted regarding the competencies of ISSs (Parker, 2020), newly assigned ISSs state their confusion regarding their roles at DD, and many need

clarification on their requirements even after working in their designated position for several years. More clarity is often required regarding job announcements, interview questions, and official federal government job descriptions versus ISSs' roles. Raynis (2018) analyzed instructional design job announcements for government/military ISS openings requiring competencies in design and development, communication and collaboration, assessment and evaluation, project management, and teaching and mentoring. However, realistically, their focus is to apply the ADDIE process to provide adult education advice, current theories and strategies of learning, and training design and development while creating audit trails of products (FASCLASS, 2018).

Sub-Question Three

What are the shared perceptions regarding the steps ISSs took to meet their training needs?

This question investigated the andrological principles driving ISSs to create and invest in their training. Adult learners portray a need to know, their self-concept, prior experiences, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation to learn (Knowles et al., 2015). Based on these six principles of andragogy, ISSs are driven to participate in their learning. By understanding the steps ISSs took to mitigate any gaps in knowledge, these gaps may be used to create a future training plan.

Definitions

1. *ADDIE*- A systematic process training developers use, including analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation phases (Department of the Army, 2021).
2. *Ibstpi*- A set of formal instructional design competencies that outline the standard for the profession (IBSTPI, 2021).

3. *Instructional design* - a science and art; a systematic process for analyzing learning or performance needs and using those findings, designing, developing, and managing instructional and non-instructional programs to address those needs or gaps in performance in a variety of settings (Chen & Carliner, 2021; Stefaniak, 2020).
4. *Instructional Systems Specialist* - The ISS (1750 series) is the civilian ID position in the Army. This position requires at least 24 academic credit hours in education (Parker, 2020).
5. *Andragogy* - the art and science of helping adults learn (Knowles, 1980).
6. *TRADOC*- Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) headquarters is in the southeastern United States. This command organization oversees and provides regulatory education guidance to all Army training installations. Its mission is to recruit, train, and educate the Army, driving constant improvement and change to ensure the Total Army can deter, fight, and win on any battlefield now and into the future (Joint Base Langley–Eustis, 2018).

Summary

Most ISSs employed by the military often have little to no education or experience in instructional design (Parker, 2020). Creating a formalized training plan could alleviate the stress of learning on-the-job and increase proficiency, performance, and retention. This study adds to the literature surrounding the experience of ISSs employed by the Army regarding their training experiences.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

A systematic literature review explored the impact of introducing a formalized training program for ISSs. This literature review examined the perception of formalized training plans to ISSs assigned to the DD and how this correlates with andragogy. Next is a brief history of instructional design, how the military and the civilian sectors use instructional design, along with a discussion about the ADDIE model as applied by the United States Army and Standards which dramatically impacts the field of instructional design. The following is an integration of the recent literature and an overview of the IBSTPI competencies. Lastly, literature on the importance of well-designed training programs is addressed. The conclusion contains a discussion surrounding the gap in the literature, which verifies the need for the current study.

Theoretical Framework

Adult education theory, or andragogy, is a vast field rooted in pedagogy, which means "the art and science of teaching men" (Knowles et al., 2015, p. 19). Knowles (1977) discusses the origin of the meaning of andragogy, stating that a German adult educator coined the term, derived from the Greek word "aner," meaning "man, not boy" (p. 206). Loeng (2017) states that Malcolm Knowles made the term andragogy known within the English-speaking world during the 1970s, while Alexander Kapp used it extensively during the 1800s. Kapp defines pedagogy as "education for men" (Loeng, 2017, p. 630). Knowles points out that andragogy focuses on teaching independent personalities with self-direction, while pedagogy focuses on teaching more dependent personalities. However, Machynska and Boiko (2020) argued that when adults learn a substantial amount of information from a particular field, they have little to no experience and are forced to rely on the instructor's experience.

According to Knowles et al. (2015), all learning theories fall into two major categories: behaviorist/connectionist and cognitive/Gestalt theories. Adult education theory also has roots in behavioral, developmental, clinical, sociology, humanism, and pragmatic philosophy. Although adult education has its roots in ancient education, dating back to ancient Greece and China, it gained extensive attention in post-World War I, when the Western world noted adult learners' unique characteristics (Knowles, 1977; Knowles et al., 2015). The founding of the American Association for Adult Education occurred in 1926. Edward L. Thorndike published his book titled Adult Learning, which centered less on how adults learned and concentrated on learning abilities. Malcolm Knowles noted that adult learners learn best in informal, flexible, non-threatening situations (Knowles et al., 2015).

Knowles et al. (2015) outlined the andrological model, containing six assumptions. There were only four main principles (Knowles, 1980). These include the students' need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction, students' experiences, learning subjects relevant to their lives, and creating problem-centered learning (Knowles, 1980; Machynksa & Boiko, 2020; Rowtho et al., 2020). This andragogical model is a process model, as opposed to traditional methods, which are content-focused. Knowles clarified that this model was designed to be flexible in its application, and Knowles stated that the application could be used with all its elements or portions. Knowles also argued that whether adults were involved in formal or workplace education, learners must be engaged in designing and evaluating their respective learning programs, which should include significant opportunities to immerse in experiential learning. Adults have an innate desire to play an active role in their learning, which builds commitment in them (Knowles, 1980). By engaging with the content and applying the newly acquired skills or content, learners can focus on problem-solving over content acquisition to give

meaning to the learning (Rowtho et al., 2020). Culkin (2018) further supports this theory by incorporating basic andragogical principles into a study focusing on professional military education. These included prior experiences and the need to cope with challenges and tasks.

When developing a curriculum for adults, Knowles (1977) outlines steps of creating a learning contract to reinforce and assist adult learners in becoming more self-directed. The first step is to list learning objectives covered during the course, focusing the adult learners' attention on where their concentration should lie. The second step is to list learning resources and strategies, with resources listed for each assigned objective and how to utilize them best. The third step is to document evidence of accomplishment of objectives, where adult learners plan what evidence, they will present to show competency of assigned objectives. Finally, the last step is criteria and means of validating the evidence, where students propose to the teacher what evidence they will provide and how it will be judged to highlight mastery.

Regarding adult education and military ISSs, information is scarce. Extraordinarily little peer-reviewed research has been conducted regarding how implementing a formal training program based on adult education principles will improve the perceptions and morale of instructional systems designers (ISDs) or ISSs. Most of the research has focused on the vast array of responsibilities and tasks assigned to ISDs and ISSs, the inconsistencies between adult education and the application of skills within the instructional design field, and ambiguities between what instructional designers think their responsibilities will entail versus reality. This research study will investigate these issues and explore the need for a standardized training plan, as many new ISSs assigned to DD have expressed their displeasure about understanding their job roles.

Related Literature

Instructional design is historically embedded within Army education institutions; however, little to no formalized training program, competencies, or guidelines exist regarding utilizing the talents of ISSs best. ISSs hired by the Army are required to have 24 hours of higher education. These hours must be from learning theory, psychology of learning, educational psychology, Instructional design practices, Educational Evaluation, Instructional product development, or Computers in education and training (Department of Defense Education Activity, 2021). The literature uncovers the importance of developing a training program to ensure instructional designers are prepared due to their vast roles. The instructional design focuses on the maximization of learning processes, with a focus on the task at hand, the design of the materials, the methods of instruction, and the activation of the learner's cognitive process to improve performance (Costa et al., 2021; Klepsch & Seufert, 2020; Reigeluth, 1999; Stefaniak., 2020). Literature related to the issues within instructional design and how training impacts ISSs will be discussed.

Instructional Design

Instructional design is a dynamic field that alters with technological advancements, making it difficult for colleges and universities to adequately prepare students (Heggart & Dickson-Deane, 2021; Larson & Lockee, 2009; North et al., 2021). Instructional design is defined as a science and art, a systematic process for analyzing learning or performance needs and using those findings, designing, developing, and managing instructional and non-instructional programs to address those needs or gaps in performance in a variety of settings (Chen & Carliner, 2020; Reiser, 2001a; Stefaniak, 2020). Due to the ever-changing landscape of technology affecting education and instruction, the instructional design also changes rapidly to

meet student's needs, including technology use or integration (Klein & Kelly, 2018). With these changes come various names and definitions of instructional design. These include ISD, educational technology, instructional media, instructional design and technology (IDT), and instructional systems technology (IST; Klein & Kelly, 2018; Reiser, 2001b). The term instructional design will be utilized throughout this study due to its universal encompassment of all facets of the career field.

While historically, instructional design has focused on media use, it gravitates towards a systematic design process. Instructional design concentrates on the application of a systematic design process and how to use technology best to improve learning or performance, guided by a model, oriented toward finding and applying the most cost-effective solutions to solve performance or learning problems (Stefaniak, 2019). Rothwell et al. (2015) argued that the focus should be based on human performance models, the basis of instructional design. Performance problems should be analyzed systematically, identifying the root cause or causes of the issues and implementing solutions. To ensure alignment of the cause and solution, designers must take a holistic look and consider the effects on learning (Stefanik, 2020).

History of Instructional Design

Delving into the history of instructional design is imperative to grasp its impact on military training. Instructional design has its roots in the military, originating in World War II (Anderson et al., 2019; North et al., 2021). Education was not yet impacted; however instructional media advanced swiftly during the 1920s and 1930s due to radio broadcasting, sound recording, and the film's introduction. Oddly, during World War II, as instructional media advancement slowed in the private sector, it vastly increased in the military service and industry, and using film was deemed an effective instructional tool (North et al., 2021; Reiser, 2001a).

Other instructional tools used included overhead projectors, slide projectors, audio equipment, and simulation devices, which are still employed in military Instruction today in a more advanced capacity (Reiser, 2001a).

During World War II, psychologists and educators gathered to research and develop training materials for the military and items to assess the skills of trainees to select the best candidates for specific jobs and standardize training (Anderson et al., 2019; Reiser, 2001b). For example, one flight training program had a high failure rate. Psychologists studied the general intellectual, psychomotor, and perceptual skills of those who completed the program and created instruments to assess future candidates for the program (Reiser, 2001b). A similar program called the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is still utilized to screen potential military candidates. Currently, those pursuing Army aviation flight school slots must receive a passing score on the Selection Instrument for Flight Training (SIFT; U.S. Army, n.d.).

Around this time, coinciding with the progressive education movement, a systematic approach to training and curriculum development, designated as instructional design, formally began (North et al., 2021). Information about the origins of objectives, which drives instruction by outlining behaviors and skills expected of the student, seems conflicting. While Richey et al. (2011a) propose that Ralph Tyler first introduced learning objectives in 1949, Reiser (2001b) states that educators used the concept in the early 1900s. Contrary to both authors, Gamson et al. (2019) argue that Franklin Bobbit of the University of Chicago crafted clear educational outcomes with educators in Los Angeles, California, during the 1920s, which were later adopted or adapted by many states and districts. Richey et al. (2011a) state that Tyler's work provided the foundations of instructional design by identifying the purpose of education, selecting activities, or learning experiences to attain objectives, organizing activities, and evaluating the

effectiveness of learning experiences. According to Richey et al. (2001), Tyler outlined the need to understand student backgrounds, information about contemporary issues to identify meaningful outcomes, and information about the content and what the subject matter experts consider essential, all of which form the basis for many modern-day instructional design processes.

Reiser (2001b) argues that Robert Mager was the first to recognize the need to teach educators to write proper objectives a decade later. However, both authors agree that objectives are stated in behavioral terms to evaluate the effectiveness of Instruction (Reiser, 2001b). Mager further states that objectives should include the behaviors' conditions and the performance standard (Reiser, 2001b). Another notable contribution in the realm of objectives was Benjamin Bloom, which provided instructors with a means of effectively imparting instructional content to learners by introducing educational objectives (Shariff & Cho, 2015). Bloom's book, published in 1956, provides guidance when developing learning objectives while concentrating on mastery and is the basis for Army learning objectives. Only when Mager (1962) built off his taxonomy to create instructional objectives was his impact on education acclaimed (Gamson et al., 2019). Army training objectives, including terminal learning objectives and enabling learning objectives, adhere to these standards pioneered by both Bloom and Mager.

Another impactful era in the history of instructional design occurred during the 1960s. With the Soviet Union's Sputnik launch, the United States scrambled to improve math and science education in the United States, pouring millions of dollars into education (Gamson et al., 2019; Reiser, 2001b). This event profoundly impacted instructional design, as there was a shift from subject matter experts creating content to designers creating it. Reiser argues that formative and summative evaluations were instituted during this time; however, Richey et al. (2011a) say

that Tyler already used a revision process. Also, during this period, concepts such as task analysis, objective specification, and criterion-reference testing were developed, along with systematic models for instructional design, forming the basis for modern-day instructional design (Reiser, 2001b).

The 1970s were built on the previous decade's models, often called the Systems Approach to Training (SAT) models (Branson, 1978). Branson estimates that there were about one hundred documented models. In 1975, the Air Force created the Model for Instructional System Development, which included five steps in the design process (Department of the Air Force, 1975). Eventually, the entire United States military adopted one instructional design model, later paving the way to creating the ADDIE model in the 1980s, which is still heavily used today (Costa et al., 2021; North et al., 2021). Seeing this success, many other organizations adopted instructional design methods to improve training, and as technology and education advance, more sectors are hiring instructional designers to enhance human performance and education (North et al., 2021; Reiser, 2001b). Larson and Lockee (2004) surmised that the trend of hiring instructional designers in business and industry to improve human performance was first noted around 1976-1977, with duties gradually increasing by the 1990s.

Finally, in recent times, instructional technology has evolved with the developments in education and technology. The invention of the microcomputer during the 1980s pioneered computer-driven instruction and changed how instructional design is accomplished (Shariff & Cho, 2015). This event also shifted from factory-style education to personalized education, which continues to broaden today. Those in higher education noted this shift and the massive increase in the need for instructional designers throughout several fields and improved their curriculum during the 90s, ensuring students had marketable skills (Larson & Lockee, 2009). As

the theory of constructivism increases in popularity, instructional designers and educators are encouraged to give students opportunities to solve complex, real-world problems, work together, take ownership of the learning process, engage in task-centered activities, learn by doing with personalized content and Instruction (Reiser, 2001b). The use of computers and the invention of the Internet have contributed significantly to creating learner-centered education built on mastery concepts.

As education, technology, and training have evolved, so have the duties typically performed by IDs, making it challenging to establish an identity (Larson & Lockee, 2004). Rabel and Stefaniak (2018) state that instructional designers are knowledge workers who collaborate with SMEs, apply ID models, multimedia principles, and learning theories, manage relationships, use a vast array of development tools, and design and development training materials (Lachheb & Boling, 2018; Lowell & Ashby, 2018; Piña & Sanford, 2017). This vast array of duties led to confusion regarding the role of an instructional designer, performance problems within the field, and job dissatisfaction when the position's expectations were unmet. By not understanding what is expected of them and employers not utilizing IDs to their maximum potential, opportunities for growth and change are often lost (Rabel & Stefaniak, 2018.)

Instructional Design Careers

Instructional designers perform in various capacities. These vary from K–12 education, higher education, workplace training, industries, business, corporate, medicine, nonprofits, and government, including the military (North et al., 2021; Sugar & Luterbach, 2016; Wang et al., 2021). Within some spheres, such as business and industry, the roles of the ISD can vary greatly. Sometimes, they serve as the subject matter expert, designer, instructor, project manager, and personnel manager. Within prominent industries, the role of the ISD tends to be more

specialized, where one person or department can be assigned merely to the area of needs assessment, project design, or material development (Morrison, 1988). Because of being employed in many settings, instructional designers also engage in various roles. These roles include instructional technologist, program manager, educational technologist, training manager, trainer, learning designer, curriculum developer, e-learning developer, learning and development professional, and performance improvement consultant (North et al., 2021; Yalçın et al., 2021).

Military Instructional Design

As stated, the military was the birthplace of instructional design and design models. Branson (1978) outlines the functions of SAT models: to optimize training results and costs through effective management and decision-making. One primary mission of military training command is to define instructional needs and priorities and create effective and efficient solutions to support those needs. A systems approach to instructional design in the military is the most effective current means of planning, implementing, and managing instructional programs. Branson states that the magnitude of the military training problem is not well understood by those not directly involved in the process due to the vast number of trainees. In 1973, Florida State University worked with the Army's Training and Doctrine Command to develop an SAT model specified for Army use and other service branches.

Outside of Branson (1978), extraordinarily little literature exists within the civilian sphere regarding instructional design in the military. This oversight can be explained by the fact that employers do not understand the functions of an instructional designer or that a small percentage of instructional designers are hired to work for the military. Even practicing instructional designers in the field often need clarification about their duties, as many come from diverse backgrounds (Parker, 2020; Parker & Momeny, 2021). A study by York and Ertmer (2013)

uncovered that many instructional designers working for the military state that their work focuses on training rather than education, and understanding their target audience was the most crucial component of designing products. The author describes the difference between training and education as being the "difference between learning about something (theory) and learning how to use something (a weapon)" (York & Ertmer, 2013, p. 22). Instructional designers within the military also state that they do not spend time developing products; instead, they focus on maintaining lessons with little input regarding design (Parker, 2020; Parker & Momeny, 2021). Studies have also shown that instructional designers employed by the military often serve as project managers, data entry clerks, or in other non-instructional design-related capacities (. To add further confusion to the topic, even Army doctrine, which dictates the duties and responsibilities of personnel, does not explicitly define an ISS's responsibilities. The Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) regulation, Army Learning Policy and Systems, TR-350-70, clearly illustrates the responsibilities throughout the ADDIE process and discusses duties assigned to those labeled Training or Course managers, but never ISSs (Department of the Army, 2017). The most recent definition available states that:

> This series includes professional positions, whose duties are to administer, supervise, advise on, design, develop, or provide educational or training services in formal education or training programs. The work requires knowledge of learning theory and the principles, methods, practices, and techniques of one or more specialties of the instructional systems field. The work may require knowledge of one or more subjects or occupations in which educational or training instruction is provided. (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1991)

Also included with the publication is a description of the various federal institutions an ISS may perform. These include elementary, secondary, or special education schools, programs of instruction in either military or civilian fields, programs of formal academic programs which are at the undergraduate or graduate level, and programs of education for groups, including disadvantaged youth. With such a vast array of institutions to support, it is no surprise that there appears to be confusion regarding how to best utilize the talents, education, and experience of ISSs.

While the Positional Classification Flysheet for Instructional Systems Series, GS-1750 (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1991) states that ISSs "engage in planning, coordinating, and developing components of instructional design based on the findings of occupational analysis" (p. 4), many ISSs argue that they rarely engage in duties typical of an instructional designer. A study by Parker (2020) uncovered that ISSs rarely engage in instructional design competencies as outlined by the IBSTPI, which the Army adopted, nor do they regularly engage in the ADDIE process. Ironically, Yalçın et al. (2021) reported that instructional design competencies were mostly expected for business/industry or government/military jobs. Research suggests that ISSs only engage in instructional design half the time (Parker, 2020; Parker & Momeny, 2021). This information contradicts the duty description outlined by FASCLASS (2018), which summarizes that ISSs are expected to apply the ADDIE process to provide educationally sound advice and guidance to all levels of leadership regarding the theories and strategies of learning in addition to training design and development. The ISS is expected to respond and adapt to information, procedures, and processes that frequently change while also performing various complex, intensive tasks resulting in multiple instructional products, including audit trail documentation of all facets of the ADDIE process as well as executable

curriculum development courseware materials (FASCLASS, 2018). The study conducted by Parker also illustrated that many ISSs are trained by non-instructional-design personnel, and most are hired with little to no knowledge regarding instructional design. This inconsistency is also experienced outside of the military, as SMEs are often employed as instructional designers and then promoted to supervisory positions (North et al., 2021). Considering that ISSs are only required to have a minimum of 24 hours of higher education, it is no surprise that confusion exists regarding ISS responsibilities.

All Army ISSs and Instructors/Writers must attend the Common Faculty Development-Developer Course (CFD-DC). This course is 10 days and 80 total hours, providing a basic overview of the ADDIE model (NCO Leadership Center of Excellence, n.d.). The CFD-DC also concentrates on taking the student through the design process and briefly discusses the various Army publications and doctrines frequently used by those creating training products for the Army. While the CFD-DC course effectively establishes an overview of how the ADDIE process works and is an excellent introduction to Army education, no further training is currently available to expand on the topics presented, nor are the duties of an ISS clearly defined. Training developers, such as Instructors or Instructor writers, attend the same class and engage in the same duties as the ISS, as uncovered by Parker (2020).

Klepsch and Seufert (2020) stated that instructional design involves optimizing the learning process while considering items such as the task that drives instruction, the design of the learning material, and the activation of the learner's cognitive processes while learning. Due to a lack of education and training regarding instructional design, items such as the distinct parts of mental load, how to differentiate instruction, creating schemas, activating prior knowledge, or understanding the limitations of trainees are overlooked when personnel create training products

(Klepshc & Seufert, 2020; Vogel-Walcutt et al., 2013). With little to no contribution from a seasoned instructional designer and no evaluation occurring, the effectiveness of these products remains to be discovered. By creating an in-depth training program and clearly defining roles, ISSs and those they engage with could produce a more symbiotic working relationship without the concern of losing their academic freedom or autonomy (Chen & Carliner, 2020).

Civilian Instructional Design

While instructional design within the Army appears to be ambiguous and stagnant, albeit perhaps not even genuinely traditional design, the field continues to expand rapidly within education, healthcare, business, and industries. With the advent of various new types of technology and media, the field of instructional design has increasingly become more general. Instructional design is so vast that even names for those in instructional design positions vary. These include instructional technologists, instructional designers, distance learning coordinators, instructional technology managers/administrators, course designers/developers, technical support specialists, web developers, curriculum developers, LMS Curriculum Developer, analysts, evaluators, project managers, and instructional support/technology librarian, educational consultant/analyst (Anderson et al., 2019; Mills et al., 2020; North et al., 2021). Due to this expansion, a disconnect exists between education and the field of instructional design. Many employers and instructional designers express this disconnect, stating that higher education agencies do not allow enough application opportunities. Literature suggests that employers of ISDs expect graduates to have independent problem-solving skills, group process skills, and communication skills, along with the ability to adapt to new situations (Morrison, 1988; Slagter van Tryon et al., 2018). Higher education agencies focus on theories without application due to the vast array of existence. In turn, it is more difficult for novice ISDs to pick the one best suited

for their assigned work once they enter the field (Howard & Benedicks, 2020; Slagter van Tryon et al., 2018). For this reason, Morrison argues that graduate students enrolled in ISD courses should work with a subject matter expert at the beginning of their program, and they should be assigned a problem to solve together, with the ISD taking the role of the project leader. This argument is further supported by Morrison, who states that ID skills should include planning and conducting efficient meetings, serving as a leader by creating an agenda and maintaining the group's focus, team development, skills for developing a group consensus, and conflict resolution skills.

Concentrating solely on theory over the application of instructional design makes the transition from college to the field complex. This gap between higher education and instructional design appears to be as challenging as the lack of education within the military (Howard & Benedicks, 2020; North et al., 2021; Stefaniak, 20120. This gap can be attributed to the fact that instructional designers within the private sector serve various roles, much like those working for the government, making it difficult for higher education institutions to focus on specific areas of design. Additionally, the field of ISD is changing rapidly, with the complexity of problems faced by ISDs increasing. New graduates are expected to be ready to work in a competitive environment where they need to analyze needs quickly, formulate creative solutions, choose the correct model and methods, provide recommendations, and deliver measurable results (Slagter van Tryon et al., 2018). Another reason for this disparity could be that it is a new field, leading to obscurity regarding formal roles and confusion among employees and employers (Shariff & Cho, 2015). With such disparities within the field, it is no surprise that employees or employers do not clearly define roles and place more responsibility on institutions of education to be aware of the various roles and responsibilities that tend to shift within the field of ISD (Morrison, 1988).

The ADDIE Model

Within the field of instructional design, there are many models to optimize training and human performance (Costa et al., 2021; Melo, 2018). Evidence shows that training formats should be based on reliable educational principles and guidelines to ensure effectiveness. These guidelines state that instruction should contain authentic, real-world problems, with scaffolding to increase complexity over time, provide timely feedback, and diminish support throughout training. The ADDIE model offers a reliable format for building training, and this model has withstood time tests with more than 100 different variations (Allen, 2006; Branson, 1978).

While many design models exist, ADDIE is their basis; ADDIE was developed in 1975 by the Centre for Education Technology at Florida State University for the Army (Budoya et al., 2019; Klein & Kelly, 2018). When adopted by the military, it embodied the design and development of systematic training within the military for highly specified tasks in a homogenous environment (Allen, 2006). The ADDIE process is an adaptation of the systems engineering process, but rather than solving engineering problems, it focuses on workplace training and instruction. As education and training needs have evolved, so has the ADDIE model's need to grow by including concepts outside of procedural tasks based on behavioral learning theory. Throughout the four evolutions of ADDIE, concepts for revisions have been drawn from system engineering, behavioral and cognitive psychology, instructional technology, and performance improvement. Various graphical depictions have been adopted from these adaptations of the ADDIE model. Most of these models use a systematic problem-solving approach to illustrate the procedures in phases and steps. This approach ensures continuous instruction improvement.

The ADDIE model is the most used instructional design model in Army and Air Force education and training programs (Allen, 2006). Despite having many instructional design manuals developed explicitly for Army training, ADDIE is still heavily relied on in some capacity, although some might argue that the Army employs the Rapid Prototyping Model (Parker & Momeny, 2021; York & Ertmer, 2013). Siew and Chin (2018) define the ADDIE model as an instructional design model that provides "a structure for thorough planning, developing, and adapting instruction to focus on learners' needs and content requirements (p. 216). Although ADDIE is often represented linearly, the interconnectedness of this model allows for iterations in whatever fashion to complete the design cycle to account for situational differences (Allen, 2006; Trust & Pektras, 2018).

The first portion of the ADDIE process is analysis. During the analysis phase, designers work to gather as much data as possible, including learner background information, needs assessment, gaps in training or knowledge, instructional goals, topic and task analysis, selection of tasks, difficulty and frequency of task performance, and the environment in which training will occur (Budoya, 2019; Megasari et al., 2021). Analysis is an integral part of the design process, as it drives instruction by ensuring that objectives and tasks are organized into logical portions that effectively lead toward the construction of knowledge. Recently, this construction and organization of tasks have been an integral part of the shift toward learner-centered and self-directed learning, allowing for the scaffolding of learning (Shipley et al., 2018). Within the Army, performing an analysis includes “needs analysis, mission analysis, doctrine analysis, collective task analysis, job analysis, individual task analysis, goal analysis, target audience analysis, targeted audience analysis, gap analysis, and resource analysis” (Department of the

Army, 2021, p. 18). This analysis also focuses on what students already know and can do versus what instruction is necessary (Allen, 2006).

The second portion of the ADDIE process is design. Learning objectives are generated during this phase, instruments and assessments are planned, and instructional strategies best suited for the content are created. Based on the previous task analysis, how the course will be organized to fit best the projected outcomes, audience, and environment will also occur during this phase. The design phase is also when designers begin to design learning activities, instructional methods, the type of media required, and subject contents or materials (Budoya, 2019; Megasari et al., 2021; Trust & Pektas, 2018). Several military items are designed during this phase of the ADDIE process. This process occurs after individual critical tasks are selected and the Critical Task Selection Site Board (CTSSB) concludes. A course map is produced, including the terminal learning objectives, expected outcomes, individual student assessment plan, media, and methods of instruction.

Following the design phase, the development involves producing the required materials for instruction. During this phase, the teaching and learning structure is created and designates that these products should be validated before implementation. If problems or issues arise, these are analyzed, re-designed, and re-developed as needed. Products created and refined during this phase include lesson plans, handouts/worksheets, presentation aids, training or job aids, assessments, the delivery platform, and any required media (Allen, 2006; Parker, 2020). If the content is delivered using technology, this is the phase where all items are uploaded into the chosen platform (Budoya, 2019; Megasari et al., 2021; Trust & Pektas, 2018). During the development phase, military instructional designers develop learning materials, lesson plans,

course management plans, evaluation tools, selection of the media, program of instruction (POI), and student/instructor materials (Department of the Army, 2021).

The final two phases, implementation, and evaluation are where everything comes together and is refined as needed. During the implementation phase, content and instruction are presented to the students, or a trial is conducted before exposing students to the content (Allen, 2006). Evaluation instruments investigate the instructional material's integrity and the program's values. Other items involved in this phase include instruction, student feedback, maintenance of facilities, materials, and equipment, and current and relevant reference materials (Budoya, 2019; Parker, 2020; Trust & Pektas, 2018). During the implementation phase, content is validated, and trial runs occur (Department of the Army, 2021). The evaluation phase is essential to collect data and information to improve instruction and occurs during all four preceding phases. Formative evaluations consist of process and product evaluations during the analysis and design phases, while summative evaluations entail conducting operational tryouts. Operation evaluations consist of periodic internal and external evaluations during implementation (Allen, 2006). Once all evaluations have concluded, revisions, which are often ongoing, occur. Other items considered during this phase of ADDIE are validity, reliability, quality, and the program's efficiency (Megasari et al., 2021; Parker, 2020; Siew & Chin, 2018). Allen surmises that evaluation of instructional effectiveness should continue throughout the course to improve or update instruction as needed.

Instructional Design Competencies

For employees or new graduates to succeed in the workplace, they must possess the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities that highlight their competencies within their chosen career field (Mills et al., 2020). Yalcin et al. (2021) stated that Gagné was one of the first

researchers to identify competencies an instructional designer should possess: values, knowledge, and methodologies. Morrison (1988) argued that ISDs must possess group process, communication, and problem-solving competencies. Competencies are defined as "capabilities that enable a person to accomplish a job effectively" and a piece of knowledge, skills, or ability that enables one to effectively perform the activities of a given occupation or function to the standards expected in employment (Larson & Lockee, 2004, pp. 24–26). IBSTPI refers to competencies as "a knowledge, skills, or attitude that enables one to effectively perform the activities of a given occupation or function to the standards expected in employment" (Richey et al., 2001, p. 8). However, according to Larson and Lockee, many within the field argued that attitude is not a competency. Competencies also provide guidelines for educating future instructional designers within higher education and assisting in creating training programs by delivering measurable, observable standards.

Instructional design competencies are derived from studies that analyze job descriptions and query those working in the field (North et al., 2021; Yalcin et al., 2021). Researchers suggested that items such as learning theories, instructional design models and processes, project management skills and techniques, problem-solving skills, communication (oral and written), group process, independent thinking, and technical skills, relationship building, collaboration, and software skills should be assigned as competencies (Mills et al., 2020; North et al., 2021; Sugar & Luterbach, 2015). Klein and Kelly (2018) suggested that instructional design competencies can be classified into five major categories. These include professional foundations, planning and analysis, design and development, evaluation and implementation, and management. It is interesting to note that three are derived from the ADDIE model and that a study conducted by Klein and Kelly exposed the usage of ADDIE to create learning solutions,

along with collaboration, e-learning tools, and knowledge of learning theories and principles were among the most mentioned competencies when studying job postings.

Within literature, there appears to be an inconsistency regarding qualifications for instructional designers. While North et al. (2021) stated that many instructional designers have not completed formal coursework, like Army ISSs, Mills et al. (2020) declared that 70% of job advertisements require a bachelor's degree. North et al. argued that this inconsistency may be due to subject-matter experts being promoted within the field, which is also common within the military sector. North et al. uncovered that over half of the employers polled stated that entry-level instructional designers should be able to perform everyday activities associated with ADDIE, while Sellar and Calandra (2012) concluded that there was little relevance for formal instructional design theories or models, which supports a similar study conducted by Larson (2005). This inconsistency begs the question of the significance of using theories and models, whether this is necessary knowledge, and whether either impacts instructional design training or product. This inconsistency also promotes the need for measurable competencies to identify successful job performance (Larson & Lockee, 2004).

IBSTPI Instructional Design Competencies

With the field of instructional design rapidly expanding and changing to meet the needs of technology and education, competencies and measurable standards are necessary to ensure instructional designers are consistently competent within all design aspects. Established in 1983, this non-profit organization has created the most widely researched and validated competencies within the career field by identifying the skills and abilities required for instructors, designers, and training managers (Larson & Lockee, 2009; North et al., 2021; Richey et al., 2001). Having a set of competencies also allows employees to understand what is expected of them after

securing a position and qualify for growth within areas of weakness. These standards are used by instructional designers employed by industry, education, and the government (IBSTPI, n.d.). The most recent update to the standards for instructional designers occurred in 2012. These competencies are divided into five categories: professional foundations, planning and analysis, design and development, evaluation and implementation, and management (see Table 1). These categories are separated into four to nine subcategories with 122 competencies (Dabbagh & English, 2015; IBSTPI, n.d.; Klein & Richey, 2005). Due to IBSTPI standards being internationally renowned, Army University, a U.S. Army Combined Arms Center subsidiary at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, adopted the IBSTPI competencies in 2015 to use instructors and ISSs (Parker, 2020). These competencies are employed throughout the (CFD-DC) and the Common Faculty Instructor Course.

Table 1

IBSTPI Instructional Design Competencies

Competency category	Subcategories	Level of expertise
Professional foundations	1. Communicate effectively in visual, oral, and written form.	*Essential*
	2. Apply research and theory to the discipline of instructional design.	*Advanced*
	3. Update and improve knowledge, skills, and attitudes about the instructional design process and related fields.	*Essential*
	4. Apply data collection and analysis skills in instructional design projects.	*Advanced*
	5. Identify and respond to ethical, legal, and political implications of design in the workplace.	*Essential*
Planning and analysis	6. Conduct a needs assessment to recommend appropriate design solutions and strategies.	*Advanced*

Competency category	Subcategories	Level of expertise
	7. Identify and describe target population and environmental characteristics.	*Essential*
	8. Select and use analysis techniques for determining instructional content.	*Essential*
	9. Analyze the characteristics of existing and emerging technologies and their potential use.	*Essential*
Design and development	10. Use an instructional design and development process appropriate for a given project.	*Essential*
	11. Organize instructional programs and/or products to be designed, developed, and evaluated.	*Essential*
	12. Design instructional interventions.	*Essential*
	13. Plan non-instructional interventions.	*Advanced*
	14. Select or modify existing instructional materials.	*Essential*
	15. Develop instructional materials.	*Essential*
	16. Design learning assessment.	*Advanced*
Evaluation and implementation	17. Evaluate instructional and non-instructional interventions.	*Advanced*
	18. Revise instructional and non-instructional solutions based on data.	*Essential*
	19. Implement, disseminate, and diffuse instructional and non-instructional interventions	*Advanced*
Management	20. Apply business skills to managing the instructional design function.	*Managerial*
	21. Manage partnerships and collaborative relationships.	*Managerial*
	22. Plan and manage instructional design projects.	*Advanced*

Note: Adapted from IBSTPI (n.d.).

Training Programs

In a rapidly changing and competitive world, training can affect knowledge management, succession planning, customer relations, strategic business operations, and productivity (Bhat et al., 2022; Stefaniak, 2020). Training is defined as a systematic process designed to improve and

maintain the performance of employees while providing a segway between the requirements of the job and the current job specification and ensuring employees can keep pace with the demands of their career (Williams van Rooij, 2012). Bhat et al. defined training as the organized acquisition of knowledge, skills, and abilities to increase performance in a specified environment. Training, like education, requires time, energy, and money, and much like instructional design, it seeks to evaluate employees' needs or investigate potential training gaps. Training, often developed by engaging in the instructional design process to identify a problem, also aims to improve employees' conduct towards their employers, subordinates, and colleagues. Front-end analysis and verifying whether training is necessary builds the foundation to determine training objectives, prerequisite skills, options, essential technologies, target audience, content, training context, and how training will be evaluated (Williams van Rooij, 2012).

Stefaniak (2020) state that evaluation in training and education settings aims to determine whether objectives and performance goals have been achieved. However, constructive evaluation can be complex within the field of instructional design due to the vast array of positions fulfilled by IDs. It is challenging to create a training program that is “one-size-fits-all,” considering the diverse roles IDs play within their assigned fields and often even within one corporation or within a particular design institution. Usually, within instructional design academia, learning institutions have been called out for not providing experiential access to practicing designers (Heggart & Dickson-Deane, 2021; Howard & Benedicts, 2020). Recall, as earlier discussed, experts within the field are also conflicted regarding what competencies should be assigned to instructional designers; even titles among designers vary (Klein & Kelly, 2018; Stefaniak, 2020). These issues make it almost impossible to create a solid training program that benefits all instructional designers.

While these issues persist within the career field, creating a training plan for incoming instructional designers, regardless of their education level or design experience, is still imperative. Training for employees is vital for many reasons, including ensuring that employees have relevant skills and transferability of those skills within their current institution (Chhetri et al., 2018). Establishing a training program also shows employees that the organization is committed to them, allowing them to feel appreciated, challenged, and more satisfied and making the organization more competitive (Bhat, 2022). Studies on productivity and training conclude a positive link between the two (Chhetri et al., 2018). However, the positive correlation between productivity and training and the benefits gained are often overlooked and ignored within the industry and the government sector due to being overly fixated on immediate and measurable training outcomes. Not only should training programs exist for new designers, but it is also imperative that training programs are age-inclusive and developed to equip mature IDs with the necessary skills to be successful as changes occur within the ever-expanding field of instructional design. These learning opportunities should be produced for maximum knowledge transfer and adapted to all workers' learning preferences and attitudes while empowering them and allowing self-actualization (Williams van Rooij, 2012).

Identifying training needs is the first step in planning a training program employing a training needs assessment (Williams van Rooij, 2012). By compiling a list of needs, a blueprint can be developed for aligning training plans with other talent management strategies to create solutions to existing performance or training gap issues. This methodology also allows supervisors and employees to design a framework for monitoring and assessing the training during performance reviews. While creating a training program, elements that directly or indirectly influence knowledge transfer and skills should be considered (Bhat et al., 2022; Fauth

& González-Martínez, 2021; Kim, 2022). To monitor the success of a training program, items such as metrics measuring turnover rates, tracking average lengths of employment, recruiting and retention, and employee satisfaction should be collected, analyzed, and given to managers for consideration (Williams van Rooij, 2012). Monitoring the success of training programs is necessary due to the expense, but to also gauge transferability to the work environment by ensuring that the skills and knowledge are being appropriately applied within the work environment (Bhat et al., 2022; Fauth & González-Martínez, 2021; Kim, 2022). Additional items to be considered are the goals and scope of training, sequencing and content, methods and tools, location, and the equipment needed for successful training (Bhat et al., 2022). Furthermore, measuring outcomes and determining training effectiveness, including post-training changes, is essential to continuing and improving implemented training interventions (Kim, 2022). A robust training program that considers all workers, their strengths, weaknesses, and the organization's needs is beneficial when properly executed.

Summary

Throughout this chapter, adult education theory was discussed, with topics regarding the history and development of andragogy, how adults learn, and how this differs from children. The topic of andragogy was followed by defining instructional design and an overview of the various aspects and roles within the instructional design field. Next, an overview of the history and evolution of the field of instructional design was analyzed, leading to a discussion regarding how instructional design is used in the military and civilian sectors. It was uncovered that there are inconsistencies within both fields and ambiguity exists regarding the exact roles of instructional designers when working for the Army and ISSs. Following the various roles instructional designers fill, it was uncovered how the ADDIE process affects the field of instructional design

and, most notably, how ISSs assigned to Army positions use it when implementing or revising training programs. The preceding section discussed instructional design standards, emphasizing the IBSTIPI standards, which military ISSs widely use. Finally, training programs were examined as to how they can improve institutions. Throughout the literature review, there was a trend regarding inconsistencies in training programs, education, and skill levels of Army ISSs and civilian instructional designers. There also appears to be a gap in the literature regarding how ISSs are trained once hired and the positions they fill, and there needs to be more information regarding how a formalized training plan could impact ISSs assigned to the Army.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to explore the perceptions of Army ISSs regarding implementing a formal training plan at a military training installation. At this stage in the research, training is defined as teaching a new skill or behavior. Due to the lack of literature surrounding training for ISSs working for the Army, it is crucial to explore the perceptions of Army ISSs regarding a formalized training program. Chapter Three outlines this study from a transcendental phenomenological approach. This chapter opens with an overview of the research design and rationale. Next is a description of the setting with details of the criteria for the participants. Also discussed are questions about the investigation, the research measures, and all data collection procedures. This study's data collection consisted of in-depth, one-on-one interviews, journal prompts, and focus groups. Finally, the chapter concludes with an overview of trustworthiness and ethical considerations surrounding this study before the conclusion of the summary of the research methodology.

Research Design

This qualitative research study studied people's experiences as ISSs at the DD. The phenomenological approach focused on the shared stories of participants (Webb & Welsh, 2019). The use of the qualitative research study format is appropriate because it aims to uncover why people think, feel, behave, and understand shared meanings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Aspers and Corte (2019) defined qualitative research as “an iterative process in which improved understanding to the scientific community is achieved by making new significant distinctions resulting from getting closer to the phenomenon studied” (p. 139). Additionally, qualitative research frequently includes collecting research from natural settings, using various methods,

including case studies, personal experience, and introspective life stories, while attempting to uncover moments and meanings in individuals' lives.

With origins in philosophy, phenomenology is estimated to have originated from 20th-century philosophy by German mathematician Edmund Husserl (Frechette et al., 2020; Moustakas, 1994); it focuses on lived experiences, seeking out those who have consciously lived and engaged in a shared experience. However, Moustakas proposed that it was used as early as 1765, with Hegel defining it as "knowledge as it appears to consciousness, the science of describing what one perceives, senses, and knows in one's immediate awareness and experience" (p. 26). The primary focus of phenomenological research is to begin without a predetermined hypothesis or preconception by setting aside any prejudgments of the investigated phenomenon. Phenomenology's contribution to the qualitative approach concentrates on the whole person concept (Sholokhova et al., 2022). Skirke (2021) proclaimed that phenomenology examines subjectivity, while Moustakas stated that whatever appears in consciousness is a phenomenon. Therefore, this conscious phenomenon leads to the experience of gaining new knowledge, which also becomes the basis for all new knowledge. Moustakas stated that perception is not an empty illusion; instead, it is the beginning of science that seeks verification from other sources. He further illustrated that evidence from phenomenological research is obtained from first-person reports of lived experiences. Phenomenology was selected for this study because it calls for the researcher to explore a shared phenomenon among participants; in this instance, it aimed to examine the phenomenon of the shared experiences of ISSs assigned to DD.

Transcendental phenomenology was selected because it concentrates on lived experience, with data collection focusing on what each participant experienced and how it impacted their training and working experience at DD (Moustakas, 1994). Transcendental phenomenology

allows the experience to be explored with fresh eyes, as if seeing the phenomenon for the first time through participants' lived experiences. The transcendental phenomenological research design is also appropriate because I wanted to understand the essence of what ISSs experienced as they persisted through their first six months at DD. In alignment with the chosen research design, great measures were taken to set aside all preconceived ideas (epoché) to see the phenomena through unclouded glasses, thereby allowing the true meaning of phenomena to emerge naturally. It is primarily concerned with structures needed for the potential of intentional experience, allowing subjects to encounter whatever they wish (Skirke, 2021).

There are four major components of phenomenological design, and these, according to Moustakas (1994), include description, reduction, imaginative variation, and essence. Moustakas focused on experience descriptions rather than including judgments or analyzing observations. The key to providing accurate descriptions is to accentuate underlying meanings while accurately and descriptively depicting the phenomenon, which includes perceptions and feelings. The researcher must approach each situation naively to correctly observe and detail the phenomenon with a clean slate. Reduction is used to describe the essence of the phenomenon. Horizonalization, part of phenomenological reduction, allows each statement to hold equal value, giving all statements an equal voice (Moustakas, 1994). Imaginative variation aims to analyze and develop the structures of experience more explicitly, with features of the experience being imaginatively altered to investigate from various perspectives (Turley et al., 2016). Finally, the textural and structural descriptions evolve into the essence of the experience (Moustakas, 1994).

Another reason transcendental phenomenology was selected for this study is the incorporation of epoché. Epoché allows the researcher to set aside prejudgments and open interviews without preconceived opinions (Moustakas, 1994). Skirke (2021) defined epoché as

the suspension of ontological commitments and that the ontological status of the items we experience is exempt from consideration. Epoché and horizonalization ensure that the researcher's firsthand experiences and position do not influence the study.

A transcendental phenomenological study research design was selected to provide the researcher with a profound understanding of the lived experiences of ISSs during their first six months working at DD. Due to having been part of the organization where research was conducted, using this form of research allowed the researcher to adjust lenses and set egos and personal experiences aside, allowing for objectivity, as Moustakas (1994) described. Phenomenology focuses on lived experiences by seeking out those who have consciously lived and engaged in a shared experience through observation, interviews, and surveys (Frechette et al., 2020; Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenological research also aims to capture the essence of human experience while providing detailed descriptions (Moustakas, 1994; Sholokhova et al., 2022). Capturing the essence of the struggle experienced by ISSs daily due to a lack of formal training is paramount to the study.

Research Questions

Central Research Question

What are the shared experiences of ISSs assigned to DD regarding their training?

Sub-Question One

What are the shared experiences of ISSs during the initial training process?

Sub-Question Two

What are the shared perceptions of ISSs regarding how equipped they are to complete their assigned tasks six months after they are hired?

Sub-Question Three

What are the shared perceptions regarding the steps ISSs took to meet their training needs?

Setting and Participants

According to the literature, inadequate training among instructional designers is common throughout the career field (Klepshc & Seufert, 2020; Vogel-Walcutt et al., 2013). Due to the vast nature of competencies and responsibilities performed by an ISS, a well-designed training program is necessary. This section outlines the study's setting and participants, along with support and rationale for setting and participant selection.

Setting

This study was conducted at a U.S. Army training installation that employs ISSs at the DD located in the South. This location, which falls under the U.S. TRADOC, recruits, trains, and educates the Army's Soldiers; develops leaders; supports unit training; develops doctrine; establishes standards; and builds the future Army. The training division develops training, doctrinal literature for the assigned branches, gunnery and aircraft survivability equipment issues, and the Combined Arms Training Strategy. Additionally, this site was selected because no official ISS training program currently exists at the location. Therefore, each section has its own training methods, which are inconsistent and inefficient, potentially leading to high turnovers and low morale. One advantage for inviting participants within my previous unit was that I could collect credible data through semi-structured interviews and focus groups with participants within their work environment. Another advantage was having a professional relationship with most of the participants.

Participants

Demographics of participants from the training division include women and men in their early 30s to their late 60s. All participants are employed as ISSs with various experience levels from a few months to over 30 years as an ISS. While most have master's degrees, some individuals possess the minimum credentials to become an ISS with 24 hours of education course credits. Education levels vary among those working at the DD. Some individuals possess bachelor's degrees in education, a master’s, or even a doctorate. Participants include those who identify as Caucasian and African American. The rationale for selecting ISSs from diverse backgrounds is to ensure bias does not occur and that the future training needs of all ISSs are met. At least ten participants will be selected for this study based on suggestions by Creswell (2013). Creswell and Poth (2018) discussed the importance of collecting data from the individuals who experienced the phenomenon using in-depth interviews with 5 to 25 individuals. DD has at least 20 ISSs to select from the interview pool about their perceptions of training.

Recruitment Plan

Following approval by the IRB and DD, I emailed potential participants expressing interest (see Appendix A). The sample pool consisted of current ISSs working for the DD. In qualitative research, surveys are often used as a criterion sampling method (Creswell, 2013). Surveys ensure that participants experience the explored phenomenon, with closed-ended questions eliciting a short or one-word answer. For this study, participants completed a brief, closed-answer survey about their background and demographics using Google Forms (see Appendix B). This survey ensured that participants were derived from various educational backgrounds and experience levels, thereby adding to this investigation's validity. Identities are protected using pseudonyms.

Based on the survey replies, participants were selected using a criterion sample, as Moustakas (1994) suggested. Qualifying criteria sampled used require that participants represent a variety of (a) experience levels, (b) education levels, and (c) employment time. Creswell and Poth (2018) also recommend using this type of sampling when doing a phenomenological study to ensure that all participants have experienced the phenomenon being studied, which focuses on training experiences. Employing the survey confirms that a variety of experiences are captured. DD employs approximately 30 ISSs from eight branches with different missions, allowing for a sampling size of 11 participants. Creswell and Poth stated that for a phenomenological study, the number of participants can range from one up to 325 but have at least 10 participants.

Researcher's Positionality

This section discusses the position of the researcher. The philosophical approach used for this research is post-positivism, allowing for multiple perspectives and reducing researcher bias. Philosophical assumptions are examined to illuminate the motivations for this research study.

Interpretive Framework

The interpretive framework applied to this research study is post-positivism, commonly used in phenomenological research studies. According to Panhwar et al. (2017), post-positivism blends positivist and interpretivist approaches. Combining these two approaches allows the researcher to explore the phenomenon while understanding that absolute truth cannot be discovered. Post-positivism provides multiple methods of gathering information, reducing the researcher and participants' personal biases by allowing the researcher to study various angles. Post-positivist researchers search for multiple perspectives using rigorous data collection and analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Philosophical Assumptions

Three philosophical assumptions have influenced the creation of this research study. These are the ontological assumptions of one reality based on the Word of God. The epistemological assumption is objectivism, assuming a realistic approach. An overview of my position regarding this study is provided for the axiological assumption.

Ontological Assumption

Ontology is the "science of being" (Engle, 2014, p. 29). The ontological assumption involves beliefs on reality. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), post-positivism thought is of one reality beyond us. For me, this reality involves believing in the Word of God. John 16:12–13 states:

> I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. (*New International Version*, 1984)

When God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit speak, they speak one truth to their people. While their words may vary, they still offer a similar message as one voice. Anytime we hear the Word of God, we are to listen closely, without bias, and without attempting to receive what we wish to hear; instead, we are to be open to attending the truth. Much like listening attentively to God's messages, we must also use this same method when listening to people as they relay their experiences and truths to us without judgment or attempting to control the conversation. When gathering data, using this ontological approach, I will search for the shared meanings among the multiple perspectives of the participants.

Epistemological Assumption

Epistemology is considered the science of knowledge (Engle, 2014). Epistemology can also be defined as what we know (Hiller, 2016). According to Neubauer et al. (2019), phenomenology is rooted in an epistemological attitude, and his main question focused on what it is for someone to know or be conscious of a phenomenon. These could be anything experienced by the senses or experiences through memory, imagination, or emotion (Neubauer et al., 2019). This research study will take an objective epistemology approach. Objectivism assumes a realist approach, if reality exists, whether participants are conscious of this. Objectivism also holds that close observation is best accomplished by discovering the truth about reality (Hiller, 2016). Observing a variety of ISSs within the workplace will create more subjective truths with less interference from personal interpretation.

Axiological Assumption

The axiological assumption is morals, choice, and fundamental values (Engle, 2014). I worked at DD in numerous capacities for over 5 years, and prior to accepting a promotion with another federal agency, I have taken an active role in training and discovering new ways of training new and existing employees. While assigned to DD, I had served as a POI manager and an ISS. It is important to note that within DD, POI managers and ISSs are often assigned the same duties, although the duty description states otherwise. In both cases, I experienced massive frustration from not receiving any training other than “trial by fire,” where I learned by completing my work incorrectly until I got it right. Throughout my time with DD this was a common complaint among ISSs, including those who had been there several years. I am aware of my own experience and those I work with, and I will make every effort to bracket my own experiences while listening to and recording the experiences of others. My objective to

conducting this study was to improve morale, job satisfaction, and retention among ISSs assigned to DD.

Researcher's Role

As outlined by the principles of phenomenological research, my interest was pivotal to this investigation (Moustakas, 1994). I was an ISS at DD in the Educational Technologies Branch; therefore, I served as the human instrument for this study. I was with the DD for over five years, where I was also assigned to the Flight Training Integration Branch (FTIB) and the Unarmed Aerial Vehicle (UAS) Enlisted Training Branch sections. I served as a POI manager when assigned to Enlisted Training Branch (despite the title of ISS) and in more of an instructional design capacity with FTIB as the Lead ISS. I received extraordinarily little training in either section and learned my duties and responsibilities by trial and error. I have worked with many participants and consider many friends and esteemed colleagues. At least three participants have served as my supervisor. My role and experience as an ISS could bias or influence the collected data. Therefore, steps were taken so that no assumptions were made to ensure this role did not influence data analysis. Within the past two years, I have been approached by the training operations chief to help create and implement a potential training plan for incoming personnel and currently assigned DD personnel. I have developed a standard operating procedure (SOP) guide for FTIB, including a brief, condensed training checklist of classes to attend, an overview of software programs used, and a specific doctrine to read that spans about a month. These two manuals were written explicitly for the Flight Training Integration Branch, the first time such a document had been implemented. These items have been used to onboard two ISSs assigned to FTIB and to assist other sections, and the SOP applies to all eight FTIB employees. The outlined training covers onboarding items such as links to mandatory training (cyber security, sexual

harassment training, equal opportunity, etc.), timecard training, requesting time off, creating the annual evaluation, using the Training Development Capabilities software, etc. To date, the other branches within DD have neither a dedicated SOP nor a training plan yet, but some have been working to adopt one. Despite this initial training, trainees had expressed extreme frustration at the lack of formalized, in-depth training, with few available resources and an overwhelming amount of doctrine.

Procedures

This study's procedures were generated to explore the study's central questions and sub-questions directly. Qualitative interview procedures were applied to the primary data collection method; journal entries and focus groups were also included. Appropriate safeguards and protocols regarding permission, recruitment, data collection, and data/document analysis were taken to ensure the safety of the participants and the reliability and validity of the study.

Data Collection Plan

To achieve triangulation, data collection included three steps to strengthen the credibility of the data and the study itself (Moustakas, 1994). Data collection comprised of semi-structured interviews, journals, and focus groups. Before the data collection, validation strategies were administered. This validation strategy included a group of experts comprised of at least three colleagues not contained in the study, who were invited to examine the wording and quality of the email survey, interview questions, and journal prompt questions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted as open-ended questions and studied to discover emerging themes, with journal prompts emailed to participants based on these themes to further understand the common perceptions and experiences of ISSs regarding a formal training program. Journal prompts were emailed in three phases to delve further into the lived experiences of ISSs, allowing ISSs to

reflect on their experiences after the interviews and in a secluded setting of their choice. Finally, focus groups were created based on the answers provided during the interviews and journal prompts, focusing on common themes that arose from the analyzed data.

Individual Interviews

Interviews are the heart of any qualitative study. Interviews consist of data that includes direct quotes, opinions, feelings, and knowledge (Merriam & Tisdale, 2015). Creswell and Poth (2018) expound on this, stating that interviewing is "considered a social interaction based on conversation" (p. 163). The semi-structured interview consisted of open-ended questions, with sub-questions based on responses from participants. Semi-structured interviews ensure that all participants are asked the same questions. However, participants and the researcher can gather additional information that may impact the study and adequately capture each ISS's opinions, feelings, and experiences (Merriam & Tisdale, 2015). Using the semi-structured interview method allows the researcher to study the common phenomenon the participants experienced while capturing everyone's unique experiences.

Responses were recorded and transcribed, and reflective journaling was documented during each session. During the interviews, phenomenological reduction is also referred to as bracketing or suspension of lived experience, and imaginative variation will occur to describe the experience of consciousness (Moustakas, 1994; Turley et al., 2016). The reflectivity process will be used, as it is one way to capture the understanding and interpretation of the individual (Billups, 2021). Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested that researchers should practice reflexivity to regularly advise in their interpretations of what they are gleaning from their inquiry. Billups shared that reflexivity looks different depending on the researcher's relation to the phenomenon

being studied and in cases where the researcher has also communicated the experience. Reduction and reflectivity allow participants to engage in self-awareness.

The interviews were conducted starting November 2023 at the 110th Aviation Battalion on Fort Novosel. Microsoft Teams interviews were executed for participants who did not have access to this building. Transcriptions were hand-analyzed. I organized, color-coded, and created charts to discover clusters of meaning. Once the information from the initial interviews were arranged, a follow-up interview with each participant occurred within a month at the exact location to ensure that all information was transcribed correctly and to inquire if the participants wished to add additional information. The interview questions are in Table 2.

Table 2

Individual Interview Questions

Question
1. Please introduce yourself to me as if we just met. Tell me a little about yourself and your professional and educational background. CRQ
2. Describe your experience during the training you received when you were first assigned to DD, if any. CRQ
3. Describe any confusion you felt during training, if any. CRQ
4. Describe any challenges you experienced during your first months as an ISS. SQ1
5. Describe your perception of your ability to apply what you learned in training to completing assigned tasks. SQ2
6. Describe your perceptions of how prepared you feel to complete your assigned duties as an ISS. SQ2
7. What ISS-related tasks, if any, were you not prepared to do through your training? SQ2
8. Describe your challenges when completing assigned tasks that you feel you need to be equipped to complete during training. SQ2
9. Describe a task or duty you were assigned that you needed to gain experience completing. Were you able to meet any assigned deadlines? How did you feel? SQ2
10. What is your perception regarding the training you received six months after training? SQ2
11. What steps did you take to fill in any gaps in your knowledge? SQ3

Question
12. When you had to complete a task, you needed clarification about how you completed it. SQ3
13. We have covered much ground in our conversation, and I appreciate your time. What else would be vital for me to understand the challenges facing Army instructional designers?

The questions align with the research questions, literature foundations, and theoretical lens applied to the study. Following the central question, the other interview questions sought to capture lived experiences that align directly with the main and sub-questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). All questions were created to explore the lived experiences of ISSs, which tie into the focal point of the study. The first three questions were designed to put the interviewees at ease and introduce the study's central premise. Question four sought to understand the lived experience of ISSs at DD when they first arrived at their respective branches. Questions five through ten sought to explore the lived experiences of ISSs during their first six months on the job. Finally, the last two questions focused on ISS's role in their training.

Individual Interview Data Analysis Plan

There is a three-stage process within qualitative research analysis. This process requires collecting initial data, coding, and analyzing the data, and once these steps are complete, presenting the themes and findings of the data gathered (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These steps were included in the data analysis spiral, including description, reduction, imaginative variation, and essence. Epoché was used to ensure no interference with the interpretation of other collected data while recording descriptions. By using epoché and engaging in reduction, I set aside any predilections and prejudices and allow all knowledge gleaned through the interview process to be seen anew, as if seeing and experiencing it for the first time (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas described reduction as recording what is seen externally in textural language while being

descriptive regarding the experience. Moustakas stated that “the process involves a prereflective description of things just as they appear and a reduction to what is horizonal and thematic” (p. 91). Horizonalization was also used, allowing each statement to be initially treated as having value (Billups, 2021). While engaging in horizonalization, I highlighted significant statements and quotes to understand how people experienced the phenomenon of the study while discarding less significant ones. Once this was established, the next step was to create textural descriptions followed by imaginative variation, themes, or structures. According to Moustakas, producing clusters of meaning allows for setting aside prejudices and prejudgments corrected by what is seen and heard. While searching for themes, Braun, and Clarke (2021) stated that thematic analysis is the active, not passive, pursuit of pattern identification within qualitative data. Notable quotes were also highlighted and set aside for later integration. This research concluded with a written composite description of the phenomenon's essence (Moustakas, 1994).

Journal Prompts

Creswell and Poth (2018) stated that phenomenological research requires diverse data collection forms, and triangulation requires three data collection methods. Journal prompts allow ISSs to express their viewpoints and perspectives without distraction and permit them time to introspect after the interview process (Creswell, 2018; see Table 3). Giving time to reflect, apart from the interview process, in their own time, allowed ISSs to provide more in-depth perspectives of their training experiences. Once interviews concluded, participants were emailed three journal prompts to further investigate their experiences regarding training as an ISS at DD. Participants were allotted two weeks to complete these three questions before emailing their responses.

Table 3

Journal Prompt Questions

Entry	Journal entry prompt
1	1. Describe your most recent training experiences at DD (CQ1).
	2. How much time did you spend training during the past year (CQ1)?
	3. How do you feel about the training you received during the past year? What is effective and applicable (CQ1)?
	4. Describe how the training you participated in applied to your position (CQ1).
2	1. Describe any professional development training you have been offered this fiscal year, if any. If none, state none (CQ1).
	2. How could training have been conducted to better support you during your first six months as an ISS at DD (CQ2)?
	3. What resources do you currently use when you need clarification on one of your assigned tasks (CQ2)?
3	1. What steps did you take independently to fill in gaps in your learning (CQ3)?
	2. How do you feel the currently available training might impact future ISS hires (CQ3)?
	3. Explain what type of training you feel would be most important for ISSs to receive when first being hired to DD. What training would be most effective after six months (CQ3)?

Journal Analysis Data Analysis Plan

The journal prompts were analyzed using the same constructs as the interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Having varied perspectives further supported the data analysis spiral process by acquiring multiple data sources across topics and questions and prompting responses to compare (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These steps were included in the data analysis spiral along with description, reduction, imaginative variation, and essence while engaging in epoché. The first journal prompt supported Sub-Question 1, the second prompt

supported Sub-Questions 1 and 2, and the third was designed to support Sub-Question 3. The journal prompts were completed before the focus groups to allow focus group questions to transform as needed as new themes arise. This information was compared to and integrated with the interview data.

Focus Group

Focus groups are invaluable when gathering qualitative data. Within qualitative research, focus groups have become increasingly common due to the ability to derive data from group interaction, making it an authentic depiction of the lived experience (Billups, 2021). Focus groups are a phenomenal supplemental data collection tool in conjunction with interviews (Baillie, 2017). Focus groups are an ideal data collection method to collect participants' attitudes, perceptions, motivations, and behaviors (Billips, 2021). The process of focus groups allows for considerable sharing, comparing, collaboration, and elaboration among participants. Baillie advised that member checking through individual follow-up should still be utilized. Once interviews were complete and the data was analyzed, two focus groups comprised of four participants in each group met, as Billups suggested. Focus groups allowed ISSs to share their unique and similar experiences regarding training. Focus groups were held via Teams due to participants not being in the same location. The focus group's primary purpose was to provide insight into the types of interactions and collaborations in everyday interactions compared to the formal, semi-structured, one-on-one setting. Focus group protocol was much like one-on-one interviews, with recorded interactions transcribed and coded to ensure triangulation across a variety of sources, is present. The questions asked during the focus group are in Table 4.

Table 4

Focus Group Questions

Question
1. How would you describe your feelings regarding your training experience with DD? CQ
2. Share how that training translated to your assigned duties. CQ
3. Explain how this impacted your initial perception of DD. CQ
4. Describe your feelings during your first week at DD. SQ1
5. How do you feel your military background or lack thereof impacted your job as an ISS SQ1
6. Describe how your military background, or lack of military background, impacted your initial experience as an ISS. SQ1
7. Describe a specific frustration you experienced when you initially started performing your duties independently. SQ2
8. Describe your experience with ADDIE before coming to DD. Explain how your training applied ADDIE to your current position. SQ2
9. Describe the type of professional development you feel would benefit you. SQ3
10. How do you feel an onboarding program would impact you? How would a mentor program support you? SQ1, SQ2
11. What would better prepare ISSs to effectively perform their duties initially and ongoing at DD? CQ

The focus group questions align with the research questions and data collected during the interviews and journal prompts. Following the central question, per Creswell and Poth's (2018) recommendation, focus group questions sought specific experiences that aligned directly with the central and sub-questions. The focus group questions intended to explore the personal and professional network experiences of ISSs. These questions were designed to provide rich data on the shared experiences among all ISSs assigned to DD. Listening to the ISS' voices was integral in creating an effective training intervention moving forward.

An expert review was conducted with at least three other ISSs to ensure clarity of questions. Suggestions were implemented, and the questions altered, as necessary. Any

committee recommendations to align the questions directly to the literature review topics were also integrated to ensure data alignment with research questions and current literature. These members were omitted from the research study.

Focus Group Data Analysis Plan

Data from the two focus groups was analyzed for common themes and interpretations of the topics. Transcriptions were hand-analyzed by the researcher. It was then organized and color-coded, and charts were devised to discover clusters of meaning. The analysis of the focus group discussions was accomplished using the same constructs as the interviews and journal prompts (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2018). This perspective variation further supported the data analysis spiral process by acquiring multiple data sources across topics and questions and prompting responses to compare (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These steps were included in the data analysis spiral along with description, reduction, imaginative variation, and essence while paying attention to the epoché. Next, a list of relevant meanings was extracted from the focus groups, eliminating redundant units. Once clusters of meaning were derived, a textural-structural description was generated for each participant and interwoven into a universal description of the focus group experience. Much like the interview collection methods, immersion in the data was paramount to discovering themes and patterns. As themes emerged, they were combined from across all questions and from all participants, leading to the essence of phenomenological triangulation. Only summarizing answers to each topic with a thematic focus fails to synthesize shared experiences (Elliott, 2018).

Data Analysis

Once interviews, journal prompts, and focus group analysis concluded, all research findings were compiled, concentrating on the emerging themes from data analysis. Reflective

interpretation continued as the data is composed into clusters of meaning. My goal was to combine themes across all questions and from all participants to support the essence of phenomenological triangulation rather than summarizing answers to each topic with a thematic focus. Not engaging in the triangulation of all collected data fails to synthesize the shared experiences (Elliott, 2018). This research concluded with a written composite description of the phenomenon's essence of all the data.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is an integral part of any research design. Trustworthiness includes ensuring the study is credible by being transparent and sincere. Transferability is also integral to trustworthiness by providing the study's findings can be applied to other studies. Dependability and confirmability are also paramount to trustworthiness by ensuring that findings are consistent and repeatable.

Credibility

Merriam and Tisdale (2015) referred to credibility as transparent and sincere research. Charmaz and Thornberg (2021) referenced Glaser and Strauss, suggesting a few criteria for judging credibility. These include a detailed and vivid description of data, readers' assessments of how the researchers came to their conclusions, multiple comparison groups to increase the theory's scope and generality and correcting and adjusting the emerging theory to diverse conditions. Credibility refers to the extent to which the findings accurately describe reality. To ensure credibility, I sought feedback from participants to solicit their views on the credibility of the findings. This feedback assured that the data analysis represented their experiences accurately. Interview participants were cross-examined to avoid any misinformation. Participants were involved in the study as much as possible to include data interpretation as an additional

layer of credibility, other professionals checked findings within DD, and the writing was explicitly detailed (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Transferability

Transferability is often related to external validity. According to Merriam and Tisdale (2015), transferability refers to the extent to which findings from one study can be applied to others. Merriam and Tisdale quoted Lincoln and Guba by stating that "the notion of transferability lies within the author; the onus is on the researcher to ensure that the steps taken can be applied elsewhere" (p. 254). To be transferable, thick, detailed descriptions were used. Merriam and Tisdale explained transferability as the use of a "highly descriptive, detailed presentation of the setting, and in particular, the findings of the study" (p. 257). Descriptive notes were used during all interviews and observations. All resources, including journals, surveys, and transcripts, are available.

Dependability

Dependability is utilized within qualitative studies to ensure consistency and reliability, according to Merriam and Tisdale (2015). Langtree et al. (2019) refer to dependability as the stability or consistency of the research processes used during the study. One way of ensuring reliability and confirmability is triangulation. Using various sources of information, having peers and participants give valuable input, and employing multiple theories are powerful strategies for increasing validity and dependability (Merriam & Tisdale, 2015). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), collecting three different data forms equates to triangulation and provides further validity. Three types of data were compiled for this qualitative study to ensure the stability and consistency of the research process.

Confirmability

Confirmability refers to how research findings are supported by the data while uncovering any potential bias (Manchaiah et al., 2022). It is also a variable that verifies that the findings stand impervious to the researcher's characteristics, biases, or assumptions (Langtree et al., 2019). Confirmability was completed through interviews, journals, and focus groups, and triangulation of the emerging themes was conducted to ensure further conformability. In addition, my peers reviewed my data and emerging themes with the use of member checking to confirm that interviews were appropriately transcribed and to also allow participants to add additional information if they chose to. One key aspect of a transcendental phenomenological research study is using epoché to allow potential bias to be acknowledged and bracketed.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were considered in my relationship with the participants. Since those participating are my co-workers, extra measures were taken to ensure their anonymity. These measures included pseudonyms and secure storage of data. Due to this study being shared with the leadership of DD to improve training for ISSs and online availability, participants were assigned pseudonyms, and no identifiable data was conveyed. All participants were invited to read all data transcribed and collected. Permission letters included information regarding how the research findings are used and the ability to withdraw from the study. Risks and benefits were discussed within the permission form, and any transcribed data will be kept on my personal computer with encryption capabilities, and printed materials are locked in a drawer in my home office. Supervisors were not part of the focus groups with their employees to ensure that participants could be forthright and honest in their responses. They do not have access to journal responses, which carry the same assigned pseudonyms as those given during interviews.

Permissions

The first step in gaining permission was to secure Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Liberty University (see Appendix C). The IRB ensures that studies are ethical and centered on respecting persons, concern for welfare, and justice (Creswell & Poth, 2018). All planned procedures were included to ensure participants' safety, welfare, and privacy. Permission granted by the Director of DD is in Appendix D. Once participants were selected from the sample pool, they sent an email securing informed consent as a file, which was signed using Adobe software and was sent back as encrypted (see Appendix E).

Other Participant Protections

Participants were informed on the consent form that they were volunteers who could withdraw consent to participate in the study at any time. All participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identity. All interviews were connected in a building adjacent to where participants work, with the door closed to ensure privacy. Participants were not placed in a focus group with other members from their section to ensure that they felt free to candidly share their experiences without fear. All information is stored electronically on my personal laptop device in a password protected folder. All data will be destroyed after three years. Participants were not at risk during any time in the study. The data that was received will potentially be used in the future to create training plans to improve the efficiency of training at DD.

Summary

This phenomenological study explored the perceptions regarding training currently provided to ISSs assigned to DD. Participants were screened to capture the diversity, and a wide breadth of experience was selected to participate. Once screened, participants were invited to engage in an interview to gauge how a formalized training program could improve retention,

morale, and quality of work. Journal prompts were emailed in three phases and studied for common themes. Focus groups were conducted nearby due to the proximity of the researcher. Great lengths were taken to ensure the experience of those interviewed was captured and not tainted by the researcher's viewpoints. This study aimed to be completely transparent, protect the identity of participants, and encouraged participants to be involved in the entire process. Interview data and post-interview follow-up information was collected using description, reduction, imaginative variation, and essence. Steps were taken to ensure trustworthiness throughout the study, emphasizing ethics.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of Army ISSs regarding implementing a formal training plan at a military training installation. Before starting this study, I gained approval from the IRB. Once this was secured, I emailed and hand-carried consent forms of participants. This chapter begins with a description of the 11 participants who participated and a narrative description of each participant. Next is a review and process of the data analysis to examine all themes and sub-themes that emerged throughout the three parts of this research study. Five themes and five subthemes emerged from the data using Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological reduction method, followed by outlier data. Following this are responses to the research questions and concludes with a summary.

Participants

To ensure the phenomenon experienced by ISSs was correctly captured, 11 participants who met the selection criteria participated in the study. All 11 participants completed the individual interviews, nine finished the journal prompts, and six participated in the focus groups. Those interviewed serve or have served in various roles within instructional design, including professional development, instructing, managing POIs, and lesson plan development. ISSs guide educational programs' analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. ISSs must have completed at least 24 semester hours, including learning theory, instructional design practices, educational evaluation, product development, and computers in education (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1991). Criterion sampling was used to identify and select participants. The confidentiality of the participants is protected using pseudonyms. The study consisted of five males and six females; six participants had prior military experience, while the

remaining did not. Two participants were of African American descent, while the rest were Caucasian. Years of experience with DD ranged from one year to fourteen. Degree subjects included adult education, elementary education, and instruction design, with two obtaining bachelor's degrees, six master's degrees, one educational specialist, and two with doctorates in education (see Table 5).

Table 5

ISS Participants

ISS participant	Years At DD	Highest degree earned	Degree subject	Military experience
Ben	14	Masters	Adult education	Yes
Tony	5	Masters	Instructional design	Yes
Carrie	2	Bachelors	Elementary education	No
Kane	8	Masters	Instructional design	Yes
Rose	1	Doctor of Education	Curriculum and Instruction	No
Julia	5	Masters	Adult education	Yes
Lina	8	Masters	Secondary education	No
Cathy	13	Doctor of Education	Instructional design	No
Dave	7	Bachelors	Instructional design	Yes
Katie	12	Masters	Adult education	N
Mike	8	Educational Specialist	Instructional design	Y

Ben

Ben is a White male who has two master's degrees: one in adult education and another in business. He is a retired helicopter instructor pilot with 23 years in the Army. He has been with DD for 14 years and has served in two roles; previously, while he was considered an ISS, he

served in a more administrative role, assisting the director of DD. Ben serves as a supervisor and is currently a GS-13.

Tony

Tony, an African American male, is an ISS who works with programs of instructor for an enlisted professional development school. Previously, he worked as an air traffic control specialist in the Army for 20 years, after which he retired. Upon retirement, he performed as an air traffic control instructor before becoming an ISS with DD. Tony recently completed his master's degree in instructional design, and his first assignment with DD was to manage the maintenance program of instruction for two UAS schools. He has been with DD for five years and was recently promoted to GS-12.

Carrie

Carrie, a White female, is not a veteran. She has been working as an ISS with DD for over a year and has no military background. She has a bachelor's degree in elementary education and taught for 17 years. She works primarily with flight lesson plans for all the rotary-wing aircraft schools.

Kane

Kane, a White male, has a master's degree in instructional design and is retired from the Army, where he was an aircraft crew chief. Before working at DD, he was a platform instructor for the Kiowa courses. He has performed as a POI manager for the Blackhawk helicopter schools and as an ISS. Currently, Kane serves as the Lead ISS for his assigned section. He has worked with DD for over eight years in these various roles.

Rose

Rose, a White female, is new to DD, where she has worked with the flight operations POI. She served as an elementary and middle school teacher in the public and private sectors and a university professor for 35 years. She has a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction and has worked at DD for over a year.

Julia

Julia, a White female, is a retired Marine specializing in air traffic control. She has a bachelor's degree in management and a master's in project management and adult education. She first came to DD as an administrative assistant and transitioned into an ISS role. She has been with DD for over five years and is currently assigned as the supervisor of her section, which consists of ten people.

Lina

Lina, an African American female, has extensive instructional design experience. She has a bachelor's degree in science and a master's degree in education. Lina taught for five years in public school before transitioning to the Army internship program. From there, she worked as a military–civilian instructor at another location for four years before coming to DD in 2014. At DD, she performed as an ISS and oversaw the writing of tasks for flight school from 2014–2022. It is worth noting that she has completed everything but the dissertation for her doctorate.

Cathy

Cathy is a White female with a master's in counseling, a master's in instructional design, and a doctorate in instructional design. She has over 20 years of instructional design experience, with most of those years working for the Army. She has no military service and began her ISS career with the internship program. As an ISS, she has been an instructor, worked and designed

flight lesson plans and courses, supervised, and now works for the Air Force as the Chief Learning Officer for Special Operations Command.

Dave

Dave, a White male, has been an ISS at DD for five years. He is a retired soldier who has worked as an instructor, managed enlisted professional development POIs, and is now a supervisor overseeing innovative technology and aircraft integration into training. His focus is supervising military personnel and civilians who write Training Support Plans. Previously, Dave was an Army instructor for ten years and is enrolled in a master's program in instructional design.

Katy

Katy, a White female, has been in education since 1987. She currently manages the POIs for the Gray Eagle UAS program. She has no military service but was hired through an internship program and became an army instructor for the flight operations course. She has an associate degree in accounting, a master's in counseling, and another in adult education. Katy has been an ISS with DD for 12 years.

Mike

Mike, a White male, is a retired Army Apache pilot. He currently works as a management analyst for the Army Civilian Career Management. Before that, he oversaw the POIs for the Apache schools for nine years. He has a bachelor's degree in public management, a master's in quality systems, and an education specialist in teaching and learning. Mike completed the coursework for the Ph.D. adult education program at Auburn University. He is scheduled to retire from Army civilian service in April of 2024.

Results

In this section, I will present the thematic results produced from this study. The results and themes were obtained from individual interviews, journal prompts, and focus group discussions. All participants were asked the same interview questions. Member checking was conducted to ensure accuracy post-interviews. Preliminary data analysis extricated 37 codes after reduction (see Appendix F). Themes and sub-themes were derived and extracted as they emerged while engaging in epoché to consciously view the participants' perspective (see Appendix G). Themes were recorded manually through intense scrutiny of the documents. Next, using horizonalization (Moustakas, 1994), words and phrases were explored to understand how each ISS perceived their training experiences. I utilized the horizons extracted from reduction to discover persistent themes further.

Five themes emerged from the data analysis using the transcendental phenomenological research process (Moustakas, 1994). These themes were (a) training challenges, (b) training, and (c) feelings of inadequacy, (d) need for a mentor, and (e) prior Army experience. Within the theme of training challenges, two sub-themes arose. These were continuous confusion and professional development. The second theme, training, contained three sub-themes: on-the-job training, other training, and reliance on peers (see Table 6 and Appendix H).

Table 6

Themes and Related Codes

Theme	Subthemes	Codes
Training challenges	Continuous confusion	Fire Hydrant
		No organization
		Unsure of duties
		Lack of training

Theme	Subthemes	Codes
		No initial training
		Information overload
		Training not translating to duties
	Available professional development	Staff and faculty course
		Developers course
		Mandatory training
		TDC course
Need for additional training	On-the-job training	Learn by doing
		No guidance
		Self-directed
		Learn by failure
		CTSSB
		Continuous corrections
	Formal and Informal education	Alternative professional development courses
		Peer-reviewed articles
		Formal education
	Peer training	Help from SMEs
		Manager guidance
		Informal mentors
Feelings of inadequacy		Lack of confidence
		Lack of confidence
		Paranoia
		Failure
		Frustration
Need for Mentors		Peer mentor supervisor as mentor
		Onboarding
Military experience		Prior Army experience
		Instructor experience
		Adaptability

Theme	Subthemes	Codes
		Military instructor

Training Challenges

The first theme that emerged was training challenges. Participants frequently highlighted the lack of organized, consistent training that applied to their positions when describing their lived experiences at DD. Elements of training challenges appeared across all three data sources for all participants. Participants also reported various training experiences, some stating they had a mentor, while others relied solely on on-the-job experience. Confusion often arose, such as when Mike declared, “As I mentioned, the training was kind of haphazard and ad hoc kind of situation, and confusion was pretty normal.” He further said, “Ad hoc if you know what I'm saying, it wasn't. It wasn't like structured. It wasn't like purposefully designed, let's say.” Rose stated, "I have said several times that for this to be a Training Division, and that's our specialty, we do not train our people well.” When discussing a formal training plan, Tony said:

> In the military, we have training records, but the people who create their products do not. We are creating a product we don't get to experience, so I challenged how well we can create it if we are not experiencing it and trained development.

Katy’s experience also reflected this; when asked what training she received before beginning her job, she stated, “Pretty much none.” Lina’s experience aligns with Katy’s; when asked what initial training she received, she replied, “Nobody trained me on anything.”

As stated, confusion throughout the first year was a common theme among most participants. Part of this confusion could stem from the need for more available courses. Ben says most courses are “only offered every two months.” Mike stated the following: “Yeah, the training I received, I got I, I received training on the Training Development Capability [TDC]

and other, you know, software applications and databases that they use." The few consistencies regarding available training were the Developer's Course and the Training Development Capability course, a software management program used for Army education courses. Three ISSs did not attend these courses, such as Katy, who explained, "I mean, I didn't go to any courses or anything when I came over here."

Continuous Confusion

The first subtheme of training challenges includes the lack of initial training, which led to continuous confusion. The theme of confusion emerged 28 times during the interviews, focus groups and journal prompts. ISSs reported on several occasions that more training was available initially, which led to several months of failing to perform their assigned duties. Mike reflected on his initial days at DD, stating there was not a fantastic program at the time, and there was certainly nothing structured. It seemed like they were trying to teach him how to do everything simultaneously. Some ISSs, like Rose, reported that they received no training for several months and sat for several months do not understand their role:

> Most of the training I had was mandatory training learning systems. That's what the training was. I attended the TDC course and developer course months after I started. I sat at a desk wondering what I was supposed to do for several months while Carla was there, and then she left after about a month. And now I wish I could go back because I know the questions in the information. I needed all of that when I went to training. I went to the TDC course first; now, mind you, I didn't even know what a task was; this wasn't something used when I was in the Air Force. I was in the teaching and learning center. So, I wrote lessons and taught them. I didn't know what a task was, and I knew some

> about the ADDIE process was, but I didn't know anybody that did it to detail that's being done here.

Katy had a similar experience to Rose:

> Umm, they didn't really seem to think that they needed to train me into anything I or had already been to all the courses. I've been to Middle Managers Course, and I'd been too well what we used to call SAT, which is the same thing as the developer's course, a systems approach to training just like the ADDIE process.

Based on Katy's response, there have been changes to what is mandatory, or the required courses vary depending on the branch you are assigned.

Many ISSs felt confused during their first months as ISSs at DD, with nine reporting confusion regarding their duties. Tony also supported the lack of official onboarding: "There was no formal onboarding program" when asked about his first months at DD. The subtheme of onboarding emerged eighteen times from the interviews, focus groups, and journal prompts. Tony further expounded on this, stating that he was confused regarding what his duties were: "My first month's my challenges were getting the standard for my performance identify because I did not get counseled and having to depend on the rumor mill." Rose echoed this during the focus group, stating, "I took the developers course next, and it shed a little bit more light on what I was doing, but still I was confused a lot in there about what my role was."

Lina had a similar statement: "Okay, some of my challenges included not knowing what my job was." Cathy also echoed what Tony stated when asked about challenges: "For me personally, it was understanding what instructional design was in this environment on top of learning the environment, on top of also trying to learn and become confident in my skill set." Cathy also further stated:

> Trying to do design and then not really being able to make a whole lot of headway. That's where the confusion started setting in like this. This does not compute in terms of what instructional design is and what it's and how it links to what they're calling instructional design. And then what they're actually doing–that's where the confusion started and so it was really more of an experiential kind of growth.

During the focus group, Rose relayed that she had taken the TDC course, stating, “My first training was TDC, and at that point, I didn't really understand what it was or why I needed it because I didn't know enough about my role because I don't have a military background.” She further explained, “So I was kind of confused in in that training, but now that I look back now that I've been here a little over a year, it clicks.” Looking back, Rose stated that after having been at DD for a year, that the TDC training was the most valuable training she engaged in. Having been an ISS for another organization, she was confused because the software program (TDC) is not typical of an ISS.

Available Professional Development

The second subtheme that occurred focused on the professional development courses hosted by Staff and Faculty at DD, primarily the Common Faculty Development Developer’s course and the TDC. The CFD-DC is a two-week, 80 course designed to equip Army training and curriculum creators with the skills to develop lesson plans and other instructional products for Army education and training settings. CFD-DC introduces developers to creating these products using ADDIE and Adult Learning principles (NCO Leadership Center of Excellence, n.d.). The TDC course teaches elements of the database that support resource management decisions made by the training division, a three-day course. The theme of the courses that are currently offered emerged 21 times from the interviews, focus groups, and journal prompts.

Opinions regarding their experience in the CFD-DC course vary. Carrie stated that it was far too much information given a small amount of time, likening it to “a fire hydrant” while Rose compared it to “drinking from a fire hydrant.” When referring to her experience in this course, Carrie stated, “So my training was just strictly going to a course. Course that was a fire hydrant of information. It was very overwhelming.” Rose agrees with Carrie’s position regarding too much information by stating that the Developers Course was a good overview of the ADDIE process. She says, “There was a large amount of information to learn in a short period, making retention of information challenging.” Rose explained that while this course was valuable, the information often did not translate to her assigned duties. Rose explained, “I went to the Developers Course where again I picked up bits and pieces of it because I knew what ADDIE was, but I didn't know how it was done here.” Katy reported that she felt that much of what was taught did not translate to her job, especially compared to having a supervisor who showed her how to execute her duties properly, stating, “It didn't translate at all to my assigned duties.” Tony agreed but noted that the course “Made many things I was doing through distance learning, blended learning experience with ECU. It brought them to life but did not help with my actual job.” The sentiment that the information offered in the Developers Course did not translate to ISS duties was mentioned 12 times.

Conversely, others felt the course needed to be shorter. While discussing the course, Ben explained: “The Developers Course is a three-day course crammed into two weeks.” Ben further relayed: “It is very slow in its developing, which, believe it or not, makes it kind of hard to follow because it is so slow.” Both Ben and Carrie stated that the course was confusing for conflicting reasons. Carrie stated:

> I think my confusion is how you connect, like the Developers Course. Like how was I connecting that to my actual job? Because I didn't, I don't actually go through the whole ADDIE process and can do an analysis. I kind of work in one box, and I couldn't apply all of the things that I learned in my day-to-day job.

Carrie also stated that she took the course after having been at DD for four months and that she felt like it reinforced part of what she had already learned on-the-job, and it provided less than half of what she needed to be successful. Ben's confusion arose because he felt it was too slow; he stated:

> It's so the pace of it is way too slow. So, it leads to confusion because your mind runs faster than the course does if you will…. We could have another day or two in it to practice the things that you learned during that course.

Lina, who had the most prior experience as an ISS before coming to D, stated:

> It was funny to sit in the class and have someone like, umm, you know, no offense with somebody without ISD background teaching me almost season ISD on concepts like within ADDIE, but they're teaching it wrong, and I'm like, ohh at some point somebody dropped the ball on this, and now they're just reading this PowerPoint, and that's not really it. And now I'm sitting in the class, and I'm struggling. Should I raise my hand and get the correct information out?

All the participants found the TDC course to be the most beneficial, although it had its issues. According to interviews, ISSs at DD often spend most of their time inputting information into TDC. Ben stated that the system is too technical to complete in three days. He feels that to meet the objectives effectively, the course should include two days of hands-on scenarios. Rose's response to the confusion she felt during training:

> Well, when I started off with TDC, I didn't know anything when I sat down in that workshop. I didn't even know what a task was, and I was being shown where to put in all the intricate pieces of it. I was very overwhelmed.

Rose's experience contrasts with Carrie's, who had her mentor sit down with her and go through the system, as well as how lesson plans were laid out within it, before attending class. Carrie feels her exposure through mentorship made the training more effective.

All the ISSs interviewed discussed training challenges they encountered when first starting at DD. Continuous confusion was discussed throughout the interviews, journal prompts, and focus groups. Another subtheme frequently mentioned was the availability of professional development, most notably whether it applied to their actual position and duties.

Need for Additional Training

A second theme that emerged was training that filled the gaps in learning. Discussion surrounding the types of training participants engaged in emerged 38 times. Every participant reported that they pursued some form of alternate training to fill in the gaps in their knowledge. Most participants frequently voiced their struggles to figure out how to complete their assigned tasks and understand their specific jobs. This confusion and frustration ISSs experienced often lasted far beyond the first few months. Three sub-themes stood out among the participants; most pursued higher education or other educational sources, such as publications or search engines, and everyone overwhelmingly stated they relied on the expertise of their peers and learned the job by doing it.

The wide variation of backgrounds and educations make it challenging to pinpoint the exact training each participant needed. This disparity was reflected by Kane's journal response when she was asked how current training may impact future ISS hires at DD. He said, "Everyone

brings different experiences to the job, so training should be tailored to that individual." Based on journal responses, the most recent trainings that were attended included Data Literacy and Record Management. Staff and Faculty Courses include the Instructor Course, the Test Construction Course, and the Developers Course. DD requests that all ISSs attend the Developers Course every three years. This statement was supported by Katy, who attended the Developers Course. She stated, "It was the third time I have taken this or a similar course in my career." When asked if the training effective, she said, "I can't say I learned anything new." One participant reported that the most recent course was taken within that past three months, while another stated that it had been over two years since they engaged in any type of training.

When asked how they felt about the training they had received during the past year, and if it was practical and applicable, responses varied greatly. Tony responded, "The programmed training events check a block but don't go beyond to specifically impact the setup or improvement of specific professional development needs." Two participants simply responded "no," while Ben stated that it was ineffective and too slow for the content being presented. Rose stated, "The information was an overview and sometimes, did not address my specific needs an ISS." Katy responded in her journal when asked if she had been offered any professional development opportunities during the past year, "Nothing that really is directed towards my field–they are usually for pilots." Carrie, Kane, and Ben responded that they had not been offered any professional development opportunities, and Julia echoed this.

When asked how training could improve, Tony stated, "If the organization had an onboarding 'training program" and a rock-solid culture of policy management with a SOP digital space or binder." Kane suggested that during the first six months, ISSs should be paired with experienced ISSs. Mike responded that an orientation or earlier initial training would provide a

proper foundation for ISSs. Cathy responded that the training needed to be more instructional design, focusing on elements such as creative thinking, design principles and practices, and the psychology of design. This suggestion is supported by Lina, who in her interview, relayed that she taught herself design programs such as Storyline because her position did not allow for typical instructional design duties. In her journal prompt, Rose offered that new ISSs would be better served by being provided with training in a sequence that builds on previously introduced concepts, such as short video clips. When asked what type of training she felt was most important to receive during their first months at DD, Rose responded that she thought weekly meetings with other new hires to answer questions and establish networking and expectations might be helpful, along with a more in-depth study into the ADDIE process, focusing on the analysis portion. Walking ISSs through the different stages of ADDIE would also be beneficial, Rose relayed in her journal. Carrie was asked the same question, and her reply was more aligned with understanding the courses that she managed. Carrie felt she needed to understand the courses, observe them weekly, have a cheat sheet for the acronyms and the mission of the courses and, after six months, be given additional mentorship.

On-the-Job Training

The first sub-theme regarding informal training was learning on the job. On-the-job learning was mentioned 48 times throughout the data. When discussing the experience of understanding on the job, Mike stated:

> It was exactly what I was gonna have to do and how I was gonna have to do it. It was exactly what I was gonna have to do and how I was gonna have to do it. But we're not gonna teach you how to do it. You know, you're gonna have to learn it. You're on your own, and that's OK.

Katy had a similar experience. When asked about her first six months on the job, when being confronted with a task, she stated her experience was:

> Here's your critical task list. These tasks need to be developed. I mean, I knew the product but not the process. I mean, yeah, I didn't figure out what the heck I was doing, you know? And so, I had to learn a lot of that.

During the focus group, Katy also expounded on this, stating that she felt: “My training experience was informal and hands-on. As the work was being completed, I was shown what to do by others.”

Lina taught herself how to complete her tasks by learning as she went. Her primary job was dealing with what the Army considers to be the Analysis portion of ADDIE, the CTSSB. Before her first Board, she stated: “I took the initiative to learn about CTSSB, and that worked out for me because that wound up being what I pioneered a little bit there.” When asked how she managed the Board with no training or direction, she responded that it was “mostly self-directed by reading and finding points of contact, finding people and just asking them how they would do this and modifying processes best I can to create one.” Tony also felt unequipped to complete the CTSSB and other tasks. When asked if he felt prepared to achieve his assigned duties, he stated:

> I did not feel prepared at all most days, in particular when I had to staff the program of instruction for the UAS maintenance course for 2020 through 2021. We had our timeline suspense, but I didn't know how I was going to make it. I didn't know how to brief it, and I didn't feel I had anyone to go to for help. I was not prepared to project the resourcing growth and, of course, subject to the results of the Critical Task Site Selection Board. I wasn't prepared to ensure development meets the standards and also forecast what it might cost the Army to answer the needs of the field.

Rose, like others, generally learned her job as she tackled new duties. Rather than understanding what the finished products should look like upon completion, she executed the tasks. She made revisions based on the feedback from her supervisor, telling her what needed to be corrected. She relayed that one memo was returned to her five times for corrections. Rose found this demoralizing and said:

> I'm a perfectionist little bit, and like I felt like I had no matter what I did, I could not be successful, and I was in administration where I wrote memos to the Chancellor on a regular basis, and I was being told I couldn't write a memo.

Formal and Informal Education

The second sub-theme related to training revolved around using other training sources. The sub-theme regarding pursuing higher education was stated by five participants and searching for other educational resources occurred 12 times. Four participants enrolled in higher education programs once they were hired at DD. Cathy completed her doctorate in instructional design while working at DD. Initially, she was an Army instructor before taking the position at DD. At that time, while she was hired as an ISS, she did not really perform the duties of an ISS, so she was unaware of what she did not know. Once she learned more about instructional design, she stated that during her initial time at DD, one of her biggest challenges was “understanding what instructional design was in this environment.” Cathy later stated regarding pursuing her degree:

> And it was only when I had spent more time in the profession and became more and more knowledgeable through continuing to go to school and continuing to do the work and then starting to teach collegiately on my own becoming more confident and being able to speak up to those things, that I understood what design should be.

Participants often pursued higher education degrees while learning new positions or continued seeking other professional courses. Dave explained that he was pursuing a master's degree in instructional design and had six more classes to complete. Like Cathy, he initially came on board to teach rather than perform ISS duties. It is worth noting that instructors at DD are required to have the identifier of ISS. Tony finished his degree in instructional design shortly after his initial year with DD, which, he stated, "contributed a great deal to his success despite the lack of formal training." The initial training experience prompted Kane to pursue his degree in instructional design. He stated, "That initial training time is when I decided I needed more school. So that's what I did go back and pursue another degree." He continued when asked if he felt obtaining his degree led to a better understanding:

> I think it made me think more about instructional design as far as initially just being in the position. Okay. I'm doing lesson plans. I'm doing this and not really thinking about the whole process more just like staying in our little bubble, and it was nice to see the big picture.

Mike also pursued higher education, earning his Educational Specialist in teaching and learning, and he also had a lot of courses from attending a doctoral program in adult education. He stated that that helped him a lot when working on developing lesson plans. Tony also earned his master's in adult education while working at DD. Tony stated:

> My initial experience was dependent upon the good nature of my newly assigned peers since there was no formal onboarding program. The curriculum for my master's degree at my university helped immensely in my new role it as the ISS.

In his journal prompt, he included that he had taken one class supporting a master's degree in project management to support his professional development. Along with college courses, Tony

also relied heavily on YouTube, Google, and peer-reviewed articles. When discussing how he went about finding information to complete his tasks he stated, “I use YouTube frequently for a little help in developing tracking tools.” Cathy also stated that she relied heavily on Google and peer-reviewed articles to assist in learning. Rose responded in her journal that she relied on reading regulations, and Julia stated the same.

Peer Training

The third sub-theme relating to training was relying on peers to guide and answer questions. The theme of reliance on peers was stated 33 times throughout the interviews, focus groups, and journal prompts. Peer training was often conducted by a co-worker who had been at the organization longer, a supervisor, a subject matter expert, or even a network of peers beyond the installation. Mike stated in his journal that he engaged in peer-to-peer learning to fill the gaps in his learning. Mike also noted, “I felt like the on-the-job training that I received was good, but it seemed like we're all, you know, finding our way.” When discussing his training experience, Tony said: “Yes, so my supervisor was not skilled in my PD. I relied heavily on the community of professionals in the building.” Tony added, “So, although there was no training, the training you did have was with your peers.” Katy had a similar experience with her supervisor, stating:

> Much as I loved my former supervisor as a person, he was not good at giving directions on how to complete the task. At times, I would complete something only to find out that it wasn’t what he wanted. Sometimes, I would go to him with a problem or frustration, and he would take on a “whatever” attitude that was no help to me.

Quite often, instead of supervisor support or a formal training program, many peers essentially acted as mentors to ISSs. Many of these peers were not ISSs; they were SMEs. Four of the participants reported that SMEs acted as mentors. Katy did not feel any of her training

helped her perform her duties; instead, her peers were more supportive of her training. She mentioned two non-commissioned officers (NCOs) as paramount in learning to execute her duties. She said, “So I got a lot of informal training from these individuals, but I did not get formal training, but the informal training I got was vital.” Katy went on to state that one of the NCOs taught her how to develop tasks and another, through the process, how to staff appeals. Dave’s experience was similar, stating that he relied heavily on his SMEs to develop tasks selected during the CTSSB.

The need for additional training was mentioned throughout the interviews, focus group discussions, and journal prompts. ISSs found ways to overcome their training challenges in various ways. The first was learning the job as they worked through trial and error. The second gap mitigation strategy was for ISSs to earn degrees or pursue higher education classes to learn about instructional design or even program management. Another way to teach themselves was to look for information using Google, YouTube, peer-reviewed articles, or multiple different regulations. Finally, many ISSs relied heavily on the knowledge of their peers, both SMEs and other ISSs.

Feelings of Inadequacy

The third theme that arose was feelings of inadequacy. Several participants revealed that there were times when they doubted themselves and their abilities. Codes often used were feelings of failure, inadequacy, lack of confidence, overwhelmed, confused, and unsure. The theme of feeling inadequate was stated 42 times. Katy stated that when she initially came to DD:

> I wondered what in the world I had done. I left a place where I had worked for 24 years and was the resident expert on how things were done there and came to a place where I

> didn’t know what needed to be done and when. It was baffling because they would talk about things that needed to be done like I knew the process.

As stated previously, Katy had taught an Army course for 24 years before taking on her ISS duties, and management made assumptions that she needed more training and understanding of how to complete her assigned tasks.

Rose, who has a doctorate, also felt inadequate. Rose previously taught at the collegiate level and worked as an instructional designer for the Air Force. Yet, despite this vast expertise and experience, she struggled with her confidence during her first year at DD. Rose stated:

> It made me not confident in my abilities because I just felt like there was a learning curve was so great and didn't really. I had to guess direction on what I was doing, so I just kind of felt lost sometimes, but I think even now, it has impacted my confidence level because it's so different than what I've been used to.

Carrie echoed similar sentiments of lacking confidence, stating, “I think in the very beginning, I didn't feel like I was confident enough.” She declared she was slower in meeting her deadlines, but her supervisor was flexible and understanding. Carrie also further clarified this later in her interview by stating, “You can easily feel like ‘I suck’ and feel defeated and feel that you're not smart enough or you're not good enough to do that or you really don't fit in this like this atmosphere.” Dave stated that he felt intimidated at first. It is worth noting that this feeling seemed more common among those who did not have previous military exposure. After six months, Carrie started to gain confidence and occasionally looked to her peers for support.

While others lost confidence in their ability, Tony felt unprepared and almost paranoid. He also thought he needed someone to help guide him at times and struggled to meet deadlines. Tony pointed out the vast array of regulations governing his position, which were new to him,

and the inconsistencies in how they were enforced or interpreted. He stated he felt "constant worry, constant paranoia that kind of ends up with me zoning out" when trying to meet deadlines.

Need for Mentors

A fourth topic that frequently emerged was the need for mentors. The efficacy of an assigned mentor occurred during interviews, journal prompts, and focus group discussions. The need or desire for an assigned mentor was found 15 times. Two of the participants in the study had the benefit of an unofficial mentor, and both reaped benefits. When referring to the concept of an unofficial mentor, this was someone in the same career field with more experience, whom they felt comfortable asking questions of versus a peer who trained them. Carrie felt her on-the-job training experience with her mentor was far more beneficial than the two Army courses (CFD-DC and TDC) she attended. She wrote in her journal prompt, "During my first six months training was on-the-job training, which was learning through a fire hydrant, yet it was more beneficial to me than the two Army courses I received during the first six months." Regarding her mentor experience, Carrie stated:

> I felt like I got good training under her simply because she took time to kind of break things down and didn't make me feel stupid when I asked my dumb questions because I felt dumb every day but asking those questions and getting answers and sometimes even drawing a diagram to help me understand.

Kane had an experience like Carrie's. Kane stated that his first six months as an ISS were successful because he was "mentored by very experienced ISSs."

Rose suggested newly hired ISSs be assigned a mentor during her individual interview and journal. Despite this, when asked if it was possible to have a mentor appointed to assist and

lead her, Rose was told no; instead, she was instructed to ask her supervisor for any questions she had. The reasoning she was given was: “You might be given the wrong answers about things.” Ben responded in his journal prompt that when ISSs are first hired, they should be offered a course depicting the Army’s way of doing training development and “then pair with a mentor for a few weeks.” Kane, who had prior military experience, suggested that branches assign a lead ISS. As lead, he can guide other ISSs within his branch through their various duties, such as lesson plan writing. Once they complete a lesson, he reviews it and sits with them to explain any concerns. His reasoning was, “I think you really would benefit by having like in every section having that kind of a QA [Quality Assurance] person who was not necessarily a supervisor, not somebody who they're going to be intimidated by.” In his journal response to the question, “How could training have been conducted to better support you during your first six months as an ISS?” Mike responded, “I think it is incredibly important for new hires to be mentored by mid-grade and senior people in the organization to give them the foundational knowledge and functional literacy of what we do and why.” Julia’s mentor was not official; he was her supervisor with several years of experience. She stated that she learned far more from his guidance than from any of the courses she attended. When discussing the benefit of having a supervisor who worked with her, she stated:

> So again going back, I am the day to Tony’s night, having that ability of having a supervisor sit down and be patient with me and allow me to make those small little mistakes and say okay, no, this is wrong.

This greatly influenced her positive perception of DD. To further illuminate the impact having a mentor had on Julia, she stated:

> When I came on, I was able to observe what right looked like; I was able to see the final product and work with all the different branches for the first two years in the organization, not as an ISS but as an administrative assistant, while working towards my civilian degree to become an ISS. So, I was able to get a better understanding as to what I was getting into and what was expected, and then when I became an ISS, obviously taking all the faculty and staff courses required, not necessarily preparing me for my position, but I was lucky enough to have a supervisor that.

Working in a different capacity other than an ISS and having a supervisor take the time to guide and mentor positively impacted Julia and her perception of her abilities to execute her duties. When asked about her perception of her abilities, she said: "I think I had the ability because of his belief in me." This statement is further supported by Ben, now a supervisor, who stated:

> So, we do as much onboarding as we can right seat–left seat with another ISS trying to show you things, but the challenge is usually technical information and how the Army does it coupled with all the new environment is a lot of learning very steep learning curve initially (right seat–left seat is a term that is used for pilots operating the aircraft in aviation)." The challenges appear far more significant for those with no military background due to the substantial amount of technical information, making a mentor program even more beneficial.

Those with prior military or military instructor experience may not have the same need for a mentor. Having taught Army education classes for 24 years before becoming an ISS, Katy felt she had an advantage over those without military exposure. Katy explained when asked how a mentor program could support her explained:

> I guess it depends on how in-depth the onboarding program was. I didn't need as much as someone else who had never worked in Army training before might need, so as long as I could have fast-tracked through the parts that I didn't need as much training on, it might have been beneficial. A mentor program probably could have helped me somewhat, but I can certainly see how it could help others who are new to this job.

Tony, a former active-duty and civilian air traffic control specialist, echoed that he, too, could see how beneficial a structured onboarding program and assigned mentor could be. When discussing the efficacy of such a program during the focus group, he stated that it would be helpful to new ISS.

> I compare it to when I worked in the schoolhouse, a new instructor was put through related training courses; he was matched up with an experienced instructor who served as a trainer and a mentor; he had to meet certain milestones to be signed off as a qualified instructor finally. Something with that type of process is what is needed.

While many found that mentorship would be beneficial, it needs to be purposeful. Julia expressed concern regarding a new ISS being paired with someone not equipped to mentor new personnel. She stated, "We also come from the military environment where there's also been some wrong mentoring that steers you in the wrong way." She further stated that some people often think they are doing things correctly, but they provide lousy information to others. Mike supported her thoughts, adding that if they were not mentored well, it could lead to poor thoughts regarding the organization.

Military Experience

The theme of prior military experience occurred 33 times. Some of the ISSs with no active-duty service but serving other capacities as Army military instructors also seem to have an

advantage. In her journal response, Rose stated, “ISS hires who have prior military experience have an advantage and quicker learner time since they do not have to learn the culture and military processes and procedures.” Katy, Lina, and Cathy were all military instructors before taking on the ISS role at DD. The theme of prior military experience being a potential advantage emerged 26 times throughout the data. Codes that emerged were prior Army experience, instructor experience, adaptability, and military instructor. When Katy was asked if she felt that not having a military background impacted her, she stated:

> As far as this job as an ISS, it hasn’t impacted much. Even though I was not active duty, I spent 24 years teaching in an Army course and have lived and worked around the Army since 1975. I knew a lot about the military, and particularly Army Aviation. I always feel so bad for people who come to work here and don’t have a military background.

ISSs who did not have any military exposure felt they were at a disadvantage.

Like Katy, Lina had been an instructor at another Army installation for several years before she arrived at DD. Lina was not only a military spouse, but her mother also served in the military, so she had more exposure to the military mentality. When asked about how she felt it impacted her experience as an ISS, she stated:

> I knew those different things in their culture, how they value rank and structure, how they value do it, because I told you to do it versus some critical thinking. Because of listening to my mother and my husband's experiences, I knew that there was some really strong thinking that would be hard for me to impact if I was thinking about anything about changing anything.

Neither Rose nor Carrie were affiliated with the military before coming to DD. Rose said, “Umm, it really impacted what I was doing, and I don't think I was prepared for that.” Rose

stated she was unfamiliar with the military culture despite working for the Air Force. A massive issue for her was the lack of autonomy and self-directed thinking being fostered. One way Rose overcame this was to observe military classes to gain more cultural knowledge. Both acknowledge that working with the Army requires developing "tough skin." Carrie and Rose explained that using acronyms was confusing and overwhelming because there were so many. Carrie relayed her struggles: "I did not understand the technical jargon. I struggled to figure out and understand where my branch fit in with the DD." Carrie said, "This is hard coming in with not a lot of background knowledge." Rose added to Carrie's statement, offering, "Learning acronyms, rank structure, and role of the Union are examples of challenges for me."

Seven other participants had served on active duty before becoming ISSs. Their backgrounds ranged from mechanics to air traffic controllers and instructor pilots. Tony, a retired air traffic controller, stated in his journal:

> If the new hire is prior military, there is a small chance that "go-getter" work ethic will continue to compensate for small pockets of competence and guidance. If the new hire is a civilian/educator, they will not stay very long and will soon depart DD.

Kane, who had been a crew chief on active duty and then a UH-58D instructor upon retirement, felt that perhaps his training was limited, much like Katy's, because of his previous occupation. He also thought it blurred the lines between an SME and an ISS. However, this seemed to be the only drawback that was stated. None of the former military members mentioned feelings of not understanding the position's culture, environment, or technical aspects. When asked how his experience impacted him, he replied, "I think it prepared me because I know where it's going." Julia stated that she felt it did not necessarily help her; instead, it made her aware of how poor training can negatively affect those serving in combat. However, she did state that it prepared her

to be flexible for constant change. Talking about dealing with continuous change, “So sometimes it gets frustrating, but I think with my training as an air traffic controller, if an emergency happens, it teaches you to not react in an excitable way.” Mike said, “So I think that helped me to deal with the ambiguity and, you know, not knowing what I was supposed to do.” Mike said he fully understood the content he was managing because it was the aircraft he had previously flown. He stated that if he had not had that background, completing his responsibilities as an ISS would have been much more difficult. Despite his background, he still wished he had a structured training plan.

Research Question Responses

This section answers the central and sub-research questions surrounding the perceptions of ISSs assigned at DD regarding a formalized training plan. The data analysis triangulates reviewed and analyzed sources based on participants’ responses to questions about their lived experiences. The following is a narrative explanation from the individual interviews, journal prompts, and focus groups.

Central Research Question

What are the shared experiences of ISSs assigned to DD regarding their training?

Participants offered a wealth of insight regarding their lived experiences with training challenges, when they first joined DD. I interviewed 11 ISS participants who were athirst to share their training experiences at DD. Several ISSs revealed that they experienced continuous confusion about their duties once hired. “My first month's challenges were getting the standard for my performance identified because I did not get counseled and had to depend on the rumor mill.” Lina was also confused, having been told her duties would be vastly different during the interview process, stating she had been lied to: “He said I was gonna get to do more of the

implementation thing; I had just pioneered a program based off of the ALM [Army Learning Model] 2015." She said most of her time was spent doing analysis with flight tasks and conducting CTSSBs, of which she had no prior training or knowledge. She stated, "It took me about a year to realize why I was actually hired and not the lie."

Rose summed up what many seemed to also experience during their first months at DD:

> Most of the training I had was mandatory training learning systems. That's what the training was. I attended the TDC course and developer course months after I started. I sat at a desk wondering what I was supposed to do for several months while Carla was there, and then she left after about a month. And now I wish I could go back because now I know the questions in the information, I need for all of that when I did go to training. I went to the TDC course first; now, mind you, I didn't even know what a task was; this wasn't something used when I was in the Air Force. I was in the teaching and learning center. So, I wrote lessons and taught them. I didn't know what a task was, and I knew some about the ADDIE process, but I didn't know anybody that did it to detail that's being done here.

Rose's feelings of confusion and being overwhelmed were not an anomaly. Many participants also noted feeling confused and likened the training to being like a fire hydrant of information. Rose shared another mutual thought: "I have said several times that for this to be a Training Division, and that's our specialty, we do not train our people well." Lina also echoed that mandatory training was all she received: "Well, you got your mandatory training." She explained this by stating, "So you got all of the mandatory training, a lot of it is on, you know, eLearning style, but not maximizing engagements, but it's digital." When asked if she experienced any challenges during her training, she stated, "I'm not doing anything in structured

instructional design related just knocking out my mandatory training and reading and trying to find my way." Troy echoed her sentiments during the Focus Group by pointing out that military members with whom DD creates the training have official training records. Tony relayed:

> In the military, we had training records, but the people that create their products do not. We are creating a product that we don't get to experience, so I challenge how well can we create it if we are not experiencing it and training development.

Mike's thoughts about his initial time at DD were like Rose's. He stated, "As I mentioned, the training was kind of haphazard and ad hoc kind of situation, and confusion was pretty normal."

Sub-Question One

What are the shared experiences of ISSs during the training process?

One commonality that all ISSs had was that they had attended the CFD-DC before coming to DD or a few months after arriving, which is the only required professional development for ISSs. For some ISSs this is their only exposure to instructional design. This course presented a training challenge because while the training was somewhat relevant to the job, many ISSs felt it was too much information given too quickly, with one exception regarding the course, stating that it was too long. Overall, most thought it was difficult to apply the information from the course to their duties. Carrie and Rose also compared the information to drinking through a firehose or a fire hydrant. While admitting that it was an inordinate amount of information, she said, "There was a large amount of information to learn in a short period, making retention of information challenging." Katy felt the course contained so much information that "it didn't translate at all to my assigned duties." Carrie stated that she felt it applied to perhaps half of her duties, "I kind of work in one box, and I couldn't apply all of the things that I learned in my day-to-day job." Ben was alone in reporting that he felt the course

was too long, stating, “The Developers course is a three-day course crammed into two weeks. It is very slow in its developing.”

All but two ISSs attended both the TDC course and the CFD-DC, with most stating that the TDC course was the most beneficial. On the TDC course, Ben says, “We understand from the TDC course how TDC works, but how that actual lesson plan works into TDC, I think, is probably our shortfall.” Ben feels this course should be longer because most ISSs spend time inputting information into TDC. Aside from Ben, those who took the CFD-DC course thought it either did not cover what they needed to succeed in their role as ISSs or taught too much too quickly without application opportunities. Carrie described this course as “very overwhelming.” Katy described that “it didn't translate at all to my assigned duties.” Tony concurred with these sentiments and explained that the course “did not help with my actual job.”

The two ISSs who had more guidance than others were Carrie and Julia. Carrie was assigned a mentor who had been an ISS in her branch and one other for several years. Carrie was also given access to a SOP written for her branch by her mentor for review. She stated, “I reread the SOP, but I couldn't necessarily make connections with all the things simply because I didn't have the background knowledge and the experience and this particular job.” Having a mentor discuss and review her duties before taking courses like the Developer’s course helped make it more applicable, as well as being able to ask for guidance afterward. She said of having a mentor:

> So, in my mentorship training, I felt like I got good training under her simply because she took time to kind of break things down and didn't make me feel stupid when I asked what were in my mind dumb questions, because I felt them every day, but asking those

> questions and getting answers and sometimes even drawing a diagram to help me understand.

Julia did not have a mentor; her immediate supervisor served in that capacity. Her supervisor walked her through all the ADDIE processes that DD is involved in, including task analysis. Of her training, Julia states:

> So, my boss had previously been the Chief of Faculty and Staff, and when he came to instruct me, he saw the issues. So, it was more of a this is where you need to look. This is what I'm looking for. This is what I mean. Here is all the training that the Army provides you; get in on this lunch and learn to do this lunch and learn.

Julia further explained her experience as being positive, stating that where others felt demoralized for making mistakes, her mentor would "sit down and be patient with me and allow me to make those small little mistakes and say okay, no, this is wrong." Rose states that she requested a mentor but was told no.

Sub-Question Two

What are the shared perceptions of ISSs regarding how equipped they are to complete their assigned tasks six months after they are hired?

Most ISSs felt they needed to be more prepared six months after being employed, reporting feelings of inadequacy. Other shared words include feeling stupid, lack of confidence, paranoia, failure, and frustration. Ten ISSs reported that they felt those with military or Army experience had an advantage over those without military experience.

Two ISSs, also Army civilian instructors before coming to DD, stated they had no training to include Staff and Faculty courses. Neither Katy nor Lina had any training from a mentor, supervisor, or formal Army classes. When asked about what training she received, Katy

replied, “Pretty much none.” When asked the same question, Lina stated, “Nobody trained me on anything.” Katy further explained, “Sadly, at DD you are pretty well thrown in and expected to figure it out for yourself. I think this was worse for me because I came from an Army course. They thought I already knew it.”

Many had to wait to take the TDC course and the CFD-DC course and needed a mentor beyond a few months, so many were still trying to figure out how to execute their tasks properly. Ben stated that:

> Well, I would say it takes about a year for an ISS to be comfortable working alone, unsupervised, and alone if you will. It takes a while to get comfortable working within the system, working the way the Army wants it done. Each lesson plan is actually a little bit different in itself, so getting everything right and doing all that. I would say it takes about a year to get comfortable working along with the normal average person coming off the street if you will.

Carrie, who has been with DD almost two years, supported this with her statement:

> I think I am still learning; I still have a lot of learning. I do not feel like I am 100% confident that I could train someone else just because I don’t know how to apply all parts of ADDIE.

For those who felt someone more confident in their abilities based on previous experience, they relayed that they found they had limitations. Cathy stated:

> In the beginning, I felt like I was prepared like if I was given something to do, I could do it. But I didn't even know until later that the lease was short. Because it was so new to me. So, I felt confident in my ability, but I didn't feel like other people were confident in

> my ability. Like, they're, you know what I mean, you have a very small buffering range that you can kind of play in that's acceptable and easily.

Tony also mentioned that he felt creativity was stifled and that the inconsistencies regarding adherence to doctrine "killed creativity." Lina also spoke about feeling confident in her abilities and the desire to be more creative in the products she produced. She stated, "It will all 2015 at the time, which was basically about creating engaging instructional, you know, moments which is my jam like that's my heart. That's why I got into education." Lina stated that her duties did not allow for that level of creativity. Rose spoke about the lack of autonomy, even a year after coming on board. She stated, "There's not nearly as much autonomy and self-directed thinking on projects and so forth." These statements suggest that some ISSs may not feel confident because their leadership does not allow them room for exploration and autonomy.

Sub-Question Three

What are the shared perceptions regarding the steps ISSs they took to meet their training needs?

Every participant reported the need for additional training. They reported learning the job as they went, often by doing things incorrectly and being told to fix their work. Another common subtheme reported relying on other means of training throughout the process, such as finding alternative professional development courses, finding peer-reviewed articles, or pursuing higher education. Every ISS reported relying on peers throughout the process.

Almost every ISS shared the perception that they needed more training and that much of their training had to be self-directed. Some ISSs met these needs in a variety of ways. When Lina did not encounter the support she needed within her organization, she looked outside for support. She said, "I did take initiative, and I was in the mentorship program. And then another coaching

program through the TRADOC level." Lina stated that she felt these training experiences were fruitful, especially compared to the lack of training she had access to at DD.

Most participants relayed that much of their training was learning by doing things incorrectly and then having to fix their work. Mike's introduction to his assigned duties was learning as he went, learning "What right looks like when you see it." When thinking he had completed something, he was met with, "hey, you didn't do this, right? And I'm like, okay, you know, I'll fix it." Tony ran into the same thing when it came time to staff his POI, which required writing memos, which he had never done. On this, he stated:

> When they came to the completion of Memorandums for Record at the end of the development process, that did not have a standard, and it changed depending upon the reviewer and their lens and outdated regulatory relevance. They got done but it was a confusing melee of back and forth and changing forms, and it could have been cut in half. We have standards.

Rose faced a similar issue with thinking she completed her tasks, only to be met with corrections. Rose relayed her experience when writing a memo:

> The editing of a memo and I think back of the amount of time I spent on my first ICTL [individual critical task list] memo redoing it numerous times. If I just knew what to do, to begin with, I could have saved time

Katy's experience aligned with theirs, relaying that when she did complete a task, her supervisor would tell her it was incorrect: "At times, I would complete something only to find out that it wasn't what he wanted."

Another common experience was the reliance on peers for guidance. During the interview, Tony stated, "Although there was no training, the training you did have was with your

peers." Katy leaned on the NCOs in her section to teach her how to write tasks and properly staff appeals. When Dave had to prepare for a CTSSB, he also relied heavily on the experience of others in his office to ensure he completed his assigned tasks correctly. Mike mentioned one notable peer, saying, "He's very good at what he did." His advice was to "Find people that know how to do the thing you're looking to do and learn as much as you can from them." Tony also looked to his co-workers, saying, "My training experience was dependent upon the good nature of my newly assigned peers." Finally, Katy also relied heavily on her co-workers, stating that two NCOs in her office taught her critical tasks and mentored her to completion.

When asked how she filled in gaps in her knowledge, Rose replied, "I read the regulations a lot and talk to colleagues a lot." Tony relied heavily on the regulations as well; when met with a task he was unfamiliar with, he would look for a similar product that had passed before, the documentation had been approved, and his next step was "To find the regulation that would that was to be used to complete it to make sure even that person got it right." The referenced regulations included TRADOC Regulation 350-70, Training Regulation 350-18, and TRADOC Pamphlets 350-70-14, 350-70-1, and 350-70-9. When asked how she filled gaps in her learning, Julia said, "I read the publications and regulations." Julia stated she felt this was a challenge and enjoyed researching information. To prepare for and run the CTSSB, Lina said she "Read 350-70 and get really smart and analysis. When I just figured out basically what the mission is, okay, they got this ATM (Aviation Technical Manual), and they managed to do tasks, task management, task analysis." Cathy, Dave, Kane, and Tony pursued degrees to help them improve their skills at ISS. Lina attended professional development classes with a Ph.D. but stated, "I didn't learn anything from him."

Several participants relayed that all they had participated in was mandatory annual training. Katy relayed that she took the CFD-DC course for the third time, while Carrie and Rose seized the military Instructor course offered by Staff and Faculty. Kane, Rose, Carrie, Lina, and Cathy participated in an Army-funded program discussing the Experiential Learning Model. Tony stated that his most recent training event dealt with data literacy.

Many participants reported pursuing higher education. Lina attended school hoping to complete her doctorate but finished short of the dissertation. Tony completed his master's in adult education and is pursuing another degree in project management to increase his skills for his job. Mike, like Lina, also completed all the courses in a doctorate program except the dissertation. Cathy completed her doctorate in instructional design while at DD. When asked how she filled the gaps in her knowledge, she replied, "Went back to school." Kane also completed his master's in instructional design, and Dave started but still has several classes left.

A final overarching theme regarding ISS's steps to meet their training needs was asking for assistance. Julia's boss was readily available to answer her questions and provide the guidance she needed to fulfill her duties successfully. Julia said, "I went immediately to my supervisor to avoid getting bad information." Kane was in an office with seasoned ISSs when he first came to DD, so he could easily ask them questions when he was unclear about how to complete a task. He said, "Since we all shared an office, it was easy to ask questions." Carrie had a mentor whom she could readily ask questions of and, eventually, a Lead ISS. Rose was advised not to ask her peers questions; instead, she met with her supervisor once a month for any questions she had during the day. She stated:

> After over a month, we finally worked out a system where she would come in and meet with me every morning before the day started, and I kept her notebook the questions. I have them throughout the day, and they cover them in the mornings. So that was helpful.

Summary

The thematic analysis of participants 'experiences uncovered several insights into the perceptions of ISSs regarding their training. An overriding theme was the training challenges they faced which included confusion and feeling overwhelmed or not prepared with the training they received. Statements from ISSs regarding the means they took to overcome their need for additional training included on-the-job training, additional resources, and reliance on peers. Feelings of inadequacy were emphasized, and many retained these feelings for two to three years after they were hired. Many voiced their desire for a mentor who could help them navigate through their training in an adaptable way. An interesting theme that emerged was that prior military experience seemed to benefit ISSs significantly by equipping them with skills such as resiliency, understanding the rank structure, and adapting to the military culture.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of Army ISSs regarding implementing a formal training plan at a military training installation. This chapter provides a critical discussion of findings that are essential in discovering the ISSs' lived experiences with training at DD. This chapter begins with a discussion regarding the interpretation of the findings, moving into an outline of implications for policy and practice. Next is a discussion regarding the theoretical and empirical implications, limitations and delimitations, recommendations for future research, and a summary.

Discussion

The central research question guiding this study was: What are the shared experiences of ISSs assigned to DD regarding their training? This study answers the research question and the sub-questions focusing on the experiences of ISSs regarding their training. Data collection included three methods: personal interviews, journal prompts, and focus groups. This section discusses the study's findings, considering the developed themes. Themes and subthemes provided insight into the lived experiences of ISSs regarding their training experiences and instituting a formal training plan.

Summary of Thematic Findings

Overarching findings from this research study conclude that all ISSs experienced some difficulty during their initial experience with DD. The data were collected via individual interviews, journal prompts, and focus groups to triangulate the data. Eleven ISSs working at DD, with experience ranging from one year to 14 years as an ISS, participated in an individual interview that posed 13 questions. Nine participants returned their journal prompts, which

consisted of ten short answer questions regarding their training experiences. Focus groups were presented with eleven total questions, each of the two focus groups comprising three ISSs. All 34 questions were connected to the central research question: What are the shared experiences of ISSs assigned to DD regarding their training? This question was devised to capture the essence of the participants' training experiences.

Meticulous scrutiny of the collected data uncovered five overall themes. The first theme, training challenges, included two subthemes. These included continuous confusion throughout the training process and beyond, as well as the available professional development for ISSs at DD. During initial training, participants compared the information flow being received like a fire hydrant, reported that there was little organization, they remained unsure of their duties after training, some they received no training at all, and others reported that the training they received did not translate to their duties. A second theme was the need for additional training beyond what was offered. Subthemes included that ISSs reported that most of their training was on-the-job training (learning as they worked), looking for additional types of training such as mentor programs outside of DD, formal education, other professional development courses, and peer-reviewed articles. The third theme uncovered feelings of inadequacy, lack of confidence, and even feelings of paranoia. The fourth theme the data revealed was the need and desire for an assigned mentor. Finally, participants, both with and without military experience, discussed that they felt those with prior military experience had an advantage over those who lacked this experience.

Critical Discussion

Chapter Four outlined noteworthy themes, including training challenges, the need for additional training, feelings of inadequacy, the need for a mentor, and the impact of former

military experience. While very diverse in experience, education, age, and years of experience, the participants had many commonalities regarding their training experiences with DD. Results validated the need for a standardized, formal training plan for ISSs. ISSs faced many challenges and frustrations during their first six months, which extended to two years for many. This study uncovered the need for additional training and outlined steps ISSs took to meet their training needs. With feelings of inadequacy, frustration, and requests for mentors, insights into the struggle of ISSs uncovered the dire need for a more structured plan for training. Sub-themes supported these themes, providing a broader scope of the overarching themes. This section includes interpretations from the interviews, journal prompts, and focus groups.

ISS Difficulties

ISSs reported a variety of difficulties that they faced during their training experience at DD. One of these challenges includes not having access to initial training. When asked if she had any training when she first arrived, Lina responded with, “That would be a big, fat, no.” One reason for the lack of training is that there is the assumption that anybody from a wide variety of education-related backgrounds is equally capable of performing ID duties, as uncovered by Parker (2020). This lack of initial training when ISSs arrive negatively impacts the mission and deadlines. Lack of training for IDs is not an issue experienced solely by military ISSs; instead, this is an issue throughout the entire ID field (Klepshc & Seufert, 2020; Vogel-Walcutt et al., 2013). Origins appear in academia, where many instructional design programs have been called out for not providing experiential access to practicing designers (Howard & Benedicks, 2020). The lack of preparation in academic settings, heavily influenced by learning theory, which negatively affects the transfer of learning to graduates' ability, appears to be a field-wide issue. This finding closely aligns with research completed by Mills et al. (2020) that relays that for

students to be successful in the workplace, they must possess the skills and abilities that allow them to highlight these competencies.

An additional difficulty ISS experienced was the type of training they did receive, if any when first assigned to DD. ISSs at DD have very diverse educational backgrounds, with five of the 11 participants having a degree in instructional design and only three with experience in instructional design before arriving at DD. Rose, who has previously worked for the Air Force as an instructional designer, was also a professor at a major university. She felt not only was the training overwhelming, but that she could not understand how it correlated to her job. During the focus group, she stated, “My first training was TDC, and at that point, I didn't really understand what it was or why I needed it because I didn't know enough about my role because I don't have a military background.” This disconnect exists because of their position's sheer vastness and inability to understand their duties entirely. ISSs or IDs function in a wide variety of roles, including instructional technologists, designers, distance learning coordinators, instructional technology managers/administrators, course designers/developers, technical support specialists, web developers, curriculum developers, LMS Curriculum Developer, analysts, evaluators, project managers, and instructional support/technology librarian, educational consultant/analyst (Mills et al., 2020; North et al., 2021). Those without prior ISS experience struggled most with understanding basic design principles. Many of the more seasoned ISSs with prior experience voiced that when they started their jobs at DD, they felt their duties were more akin to data management than ID. A study published by Parker (2020) corroborates this, stating that based on a study conducted at a military installation, ISS performed data entry duties with little involvement in the ADDIE process. This sentiment is echoed throughout the literature, and much of this may be due to the constantly changing nature of the career field, which can lead to

erroneous expectations regarding the roles ISSs are to fill. This evolving nature and ambiguity may also be why many ISSs stated that the CFD-DC did not translate to their position or that only portions of it applied to their assigned position. Perhaps this is why so many, like Carrie and Mike, repeatedly said that a structured training program for ISSs would be beneficial in helping them understand and perform their specific duties.

Another issue facing ISSs is that their supervisors often do not know how to utilize them best. The misuse of ISSs and their talents was echoed by several ISSs and is supported by Parker and Momeny (2021), who provided an overview of the misconceptions and misunderstanding of the roles and capabilities of ISSs. Most TRADOC leaders have little to no experience working with ISSs. Many leaders need to be educated or realize the value ISSs offer to the training environment. Lina stated multiple times that what she was told during her interview differed from her position, which consisted of writing and overseeing the creation of flight tasks. She likened her position to that of a glorified secretary. They were very dismissive when she tried to explain her purpose to her supervisors. As mentioned earlier, Tony and Katy stated that their supervisor did not know their job, nor could he answer their questions or help. Ignorance regarding the value of ISSs is not only found within the military sector; most employers outside of the military also expect new instructional designers to have the most current skills and knowledge (Wang et al., 2021). Outlining specific skills and knowledge and creating a plan to ensure that all ISSs are trained on these position-specific items would ensure clarity on behalf of the ISS and their supervisor while positively impacting product quality.

Inconsistencies

A second point for critical discussion is that there was no continuity of training ISSs at DD. First, no ISS received the same type of training. Only one ISS reported receiving any

onboarding training. Carrie, who has been at DD for almost two years, said her mentor provided her with a SOP outlining her branch's mission and a breakdown of how the division operated. Larson and Lockee (2009) uncovered that instructional designers experience various challenges, including job dissatisfaction and performance problems when transitioning into new roles. Recall that neither Lina nor Katy received any onboarding or training when starting at DD, and neither Cathy, Tony, Mark, nor Rose received any mentoring or onboarding. Much of the dissatisfaction is attributed to the lack of onboarding. Mike relayed during the journal prompts that adopting an official onboarding program would positively contribute to the success of newly hired ISSs. Jeske and Olson (2022) stress the need for onboarding to encourage team bonding, which is increasingly essential for a diverse workforce. Additionally, individuals unsatisfied with the onboarding process within the first few months often leave the organization within a year. Chillakuri (2020) builds on the importance of onboarding, stating that onboarding introduces new hires to the organization, their job, goals, mission, values, rules, responsibilities, and procedures while socially equipping them to succeed. Considering this vast array of items, being a newly hired ISS without prior experience is incredibly daunting. The onboarding process is not meant to be a tool for those unprepared for the profession, and newly hired personnel should already be knowledgeable about the job if the hiring process is done correctly. Ideally, a novice is led through the process of onboarding by a seasoned expert. A standardized onboarding process for all newly hired ISSs that explicitly outlines the responsibilities and duties of their position, expectations, where they fit within the division, plans for training, and how they were to become familiar with nuances specific to DD. Rose discussed with me that she felt that she was expected to know how to complete her tasks flawlessly with no training because of her

doctorate. This expectation is ironic because most of her duties aligned more with data entry specific to the Army and less akin to instructional design duties.

Another inconsistency that became apparent is the diversity of ISSs at DD. One item that stood out as a barrier to success is the lack of military knowledge. Rose and Carrie stated that one of the most overwhelming aspects of their roles was not understanding the Army's various acronyms, rank structure, organizational structure, and culture. Rose mentioned during the journal prompts that, “Learning acronyms, rank structure, and role of the Union are examples of challenges to me.” When speaking with those who had some exposure to the Army, all agreed that they thought it significantly impacted civilians hired without prior service or instructor experience. Lack of exposure to workplace nuances such as politics, organizational context, and workplace perceptions of ISS duties and constraints negatively impacts the performance of IDs (Larson & Locke, 2009). This added layer of frustration for DD employees could be mitigated by a training plan that included the nuances of Army culture.

Lack of consistent and standardized training led many ISSs to learn their jobs independently. While studies show that on-the-job training can positively impact employees (Ju & Li, 2019), ISSs reported learning by being told their work was incorrect once they completed their tasks. Tony stated during the focus group and the individual interview that he felt frustration from constantly being told his work was done incorrectly but never being given guidance on exactly how the work should look. Rose, Mike, and Tony discussed that they were often assigned a task to complete and were not told it was wrong until they felt it had been achieved, leading to feelings of incompetence, defeat, and failure. These feelings and fear of failure contradict adult learning theory; adults learn best in informal, flexible, and non-threatening environments with opportunities to engage in experiential learning (Knowles et al.,

2005). Providing ISSs with a structured program, learning opportunities, and practice in a non-threatening environment would positively impact their completed tasks.

Morale

Lack of morale was also apparent throughout the interviews and data collection process, with many mentioning terms such as lacking confidence, failure, and frustration. Rose mentioned during the individual interview that during her first week, she was excited. However, over time, she states she felt "woefully unprepared" and "I often wish that I did not have a doctorate" because there was the assumption that she automatically knew how to complete all her tasks. Rose had also requested a mentor, of which her supervisor told her no. She was told "you may get the wrong answers to your questions." In a study by Sell (2023), the cruciality of mentors uncovered that having a mentor was imperative for job satisfaction and increased productivity. Sell states that a good mentorship program can contribute to a recognition culture and help others feel seen and valued. Adopting a mentor program would not only provide a sense of belonging but also encourage ISSs to ask questions, such as the Army rank structure, or the meaning of acronyms they do not understand, in a safer environment rather than asking their supervisor.

Several ISSs reported feeling they lacked autonomy and that their supervisor lacked faith in them. Other items, such as stressing quantity and time constraints over quality, limited resources, and attitudes regarding creativity and innovation, were also noted, cited by Rabel and Stefaniak (2018) as a complaint throughout the design field. Cathy, who has over 20 years in the field and a doctorate in instructional design, noted that while she had confidence in her abilities, she did not feel her superiors had the same confidence. She also referred to not having autonomy when creating products, likening it to a "short leash." Tony also mentioned the lack of creativity, stating that it was stifled, and Lina supported this, declaring that her assigned duties offered her

no creativity due to the technical nature of writing tasks. Rose also mentioned the lack of autonomy in decision-making, which contradicts what many in the ISD consider a critical competency (North et al., 2021).

Morale and autonomy are often related within the workplace. Influencing your training experience has been proven to increase learning, according to Knowles (1977). Chillakuri (2020) stated that onboarding allows for a seamless transition in any new job and helps employees more effectively complete their duties. A well-designed training plan can reduce anxiety while providing clarity and understanding of the employee's latest position. Often, the onboarding process is an employee's first introduction to a company and sets the tone for their experience. Employees who feel empowered tend to stay with their employer, reducing high turnover rates. Another contributing factor to retention is ongoing training; employees who receive on-the-job training tend not to quit their jobs. Literature supports this; a study conducted by Chhetri et al. (2018) discusses that increased productivity is one of the benefits of training. In addition to productivity, the authors affirm that it raises wages, confidence, and job satisfaction. Essentially, a well-trained, happy workforce leads to positive short and long-term outcomes for the organization.

Implications for Policy or Practice

The findings of this research paper provided insight into the policy and practices of ISSs and offered guidance for the broader instructional design field. Implications for policy and practice incorporating information compiled from this study include creating a formal, individualized training plan for new ISSs assigned to DD. The literature supports the findings of the ISS perspectives of incorporating a formal training plan, onboarding program, and a mentor program of a seasoned ISS to act as a guide throughout the training and integration practice. The

following sections will explore the specific recommendations and actions to be considered to better support the needs of ISSs with a focus on implications for policy and practice, with the understanding that both are essential for fostering a better training experience for ISSs.

Implications for Policy

The research findings presented in this study focus on the crucial implications for training policy for ISSs. ISSs who work for DD currently lack well-defined competencies or required knowledge, skills, and abilities. By explicitly outlining these, creating a formalized training program that includes training relevant to the job would mitigate the current training challenges, including continuous confusion and the misalignment of available professional development courses. Wang et al. (2021) recognized the vast array of roles instructional designers fill. Their research provided insight by identifying specific competencies and standards to ensure the preparedness of graduates prior to entering the field. While the Army has not adopted a formal policy regarding specific competencies ISSs should possess, devising and adding these to the TRADOC 350-70 or creating a localized SOP for the Training Division would significantly reduce confusion regarding roles and would drive a training plan to ensure that ISSs are skilled in the required areas.

Another implication for policy is for each branch to develop an onboarding plan as part of the formalized training plan to be added to their branch SOP. Onboarding programs set the stage for new hires' expectations on how to behave as well as how to connect to others in the work environment while serving to emphasize to new hires what their employer prioritizes. Onboarding programs also serve the emotional tone of the workplace, which fosters team building. While the Army has not adopted a formal policy regarding specific training ISSs,

updating and adding a training plan to the TRADOC 350-70 or creating a localized SOP for the Training Division is possible.

A third implication for policy is the adoption of a mentor program. For mentor programs, due to the small amount of ISSs at DD, adopting a formal mentor program with experienced, educated ISSs who volunteer to mentor new ISSs is the most sensible strategy to ensure integration into the community. The addition of a mentor program will foster positive relationships while sharing knowledge and transferring workplace skills. Mentor programs also expand personal networks, which lead to career opportunities, employee engagement, higher job satisfaction, and higher levels of resilience (Rubbi Nunan et al., 2023). If budgetary and personnel constraints allow, the most effective method is to create an entire branch dedicated to the onboarding, training, mentoring, and ongoing professional development of ISSs assigned to DD.

Implications for Practice

For those who supervise ISSs, the implications are numerous and may extend outside military-centered instructional design. First, it is essential for supervisors to embrace the need for the creation of a training plan. The creation of a training plan will foster a climate of life-long learning. In addition, the creation of an onboarding and mentor program will lead to increased engagement, provide insight into future training/onboarding programs, reduce stress, and add clarity to the role of the ISS (Jeske & Olson, 2022; Rubbi Nunan et al., 2023). Pairing an ISS with little to no prior military experience with one who understands the Army's rank structure, the culture, the structure of the organization, and the various technical jargon would create a smooth transition for newly hired ISSs. Beyond the Department of Defense, there is an abundant amount of literature available that uncovers the ambiguity and diverse job descriptions of IDs

and supports the use of formal onboarding and training plans to acclimate new IDs to the institution they are hired (Rabel & Stefanik, 2018; Wang et al., 2021). With research that links IDs' empowerment to higher performance and retention, integrating a standardized onboarding program, personalized training plan, and mentor program may positively contribute to whatever agency IDs are employed by. In circumstances where training plans cannot be one-size-fits-all due to the vast nature of the career field, newly hired IDs should be included in choosing a suitable training plan.

Empirical and Theoretical Implications

This section addresses the empirical and theoretical implications of the study. By comparing the results of this study to the existing literature, implications focus on where this study diverges from previous works. Contributions to the field are discussed, as well as a comparison of similarities and differences.

Empirical Implications

As identified in Chapter Two, the empirical literature discussed the gap in recent literature regarding how ISSs are trained once hired and how a formalized training plan could impact ISSs assigned to the Army. This study's empirical implications add to the phenomenological research surrounding a formalized training plan for ISSs by corroborating previous research surrounding training in the field of instructional design. A transcendental phenomenological approach was adopted to gather the lived experiences of ISSs through interviews, journal prompts, and focus groups to explore the phenomenon.

While researchers discussed the importance of an onboarding program and mentor program (Chillakuri, 2020; Rabel & Stefaniak, 2018), as well as the impacts of training within the education and industry sectors of instructional design, there was no specific research

surrounding the training of ISSs, nor was there information regarding how a training plan could impact them. This study found that feeling overwhelmed and confused were common descriptions held by ISSs when they first came to DD. Ten out of the 11 did not have any structured training, with one receiving some guidance from her supervisor and the rest relying on peers or feedback on what they did incorrectly. Much of this confusion and frustration could be attributed to the various duties assigned to ISSs, and these seem to vary among the different sections at DD. This issue also exists outside of the military, as described by Larson and Lockee (2004), who explained that these vast duties make it difficult to establish an identity. Practicing instructional designers often need clarification about their duties (Parker, 2020; York & Ertmer, 2013). The findings of the current study support studies conducted by Parker and Momeny (2021), who uncovered that ISSs often serve as project managers, data entry clerks, or in other non-instructional design-related capacities.

A lack of morale with feelings of inadequacy and confusion were expressed by many participants. Creating a training plan evokes feeling of appreciation, satisfaction with the job, and employees feel challenged and supported (Bhat et al., 2022). Increasing morale is associated with retention, which is beneficial to the organization. Each participant reported learning as they went on – the - job, without any cohesive guidance to follow, and all reported that the classes they attended were often not very applicable to their position. This disparity could be attributed to the lack of detailed competencies, such as those created by IBSTIPI. Having a set of competencies would equip ISS with the understanding of what skills they should possess and give supervisors a set of realistic expectations.

One interesting and surprising finding was the military experience's impact on the training experience, specifically being used to the unique culture and lack of autonomy in that

environment. Those with a military background used vocabulary like flexibility and adapting to change. This study furthered research by suggesting potential benefits of a personalized training plan, onboarding program, and mentor program to improve performance and morale for ISSs.

Theoretical Implications

Regarding theoretical implications, adults are motivated to learn if they have the needs and interests the learning will fulfill. Second, adults have unique life experiences, and learning should be life-centered. Third, experience is the richest resource for adult learning, and fourth, learning should be self-directed for adults. Finally, individual differences increase with age, making it necessary to account for differences in style, time, place, and pace of learning (Knowles, 1978).

According to Knowles et al. (2015), adults are most interested in learning immediately relevant things. Newly hired ISSs possessed the motivation to learn, the readiness to learn, and the orientation to learning. Newly hired ISSs at DD are displayed a willingness to learn their new roles, yet these roles are highly diverse in terms of their duties and tasks. Yet when they attended training, many found that the amount of information they received was overwhelming, and later, much of it did not apply, or they needed guidance on how to apply it to their duties. This led to feelings of confusion, inadequacy, and frustration.

The current training available to ISSs only meets some of the needs that each ISS at DD currently requires for their position, and they have frequently stated that much of what they learn does not translate to their duties. Being involved in one's training is also one of Knowles et al. (2015) principles; adults need to be involved in creating their own learning and have control over the process. ISSs have various educational backgrounds, diverse work experiences, and vary in age, which leads to unique needs regarding the type of training they require. In addition to

creating their learning, Knowles et al. stressed the importance of setting a climate that encourages learning, assists the learner in identifying and meeting their needs and involving them in evaluating the outcome. This is relevant to the study because ISSs perceptions of their ability to complete their tasks were impacted by not being involved in the process or understanding how their learning applied to their duties.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations are defined in research as potential problems or challenges that may arise from the chosen research design or methods that can impact the study's outcome (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The first significant limitation of the study is the sample size of 11 participants. If more ISSs participated, the study results may have varied. However, there are not a substantial number of ISSs at DD. A second limitation related to the sample size is the lack of diversity within the study. While those sent the survey to participate were a diverse pool of individuals, those who responded were less indicative of the demographics at DD. Another weakness could be the timing, as this study took place primarily over the holidays when many people were taking the time or working limited hours. A fourth limitation of the study is that I used to work with all the participants at DD and am familiar with some of the participants' experiences. A fifth limitation is the age of the participants, of which the sample pool is limited to those in their late 30's and up, which eliminates younger generations from the study. Finally, a portion of DD is over one thousand miles away at another military installation, but this study was limited to the local area.

Delimitations

The first delimitation of this study was the choice of a transcendental phenomenological study, which allowed the use of Moustakas's (1994) epoché. This method permitted me to

bracket my experiences to record the experience and detailed descriptions of the participants accurately. The second delimitation was the effort taken to to incorporate ISSs of both genders and various races, ages, and educational backgrounds by sending out a survey (see Appendix B). This delimitation was conducted to gather the essence of diverse experiences. A third delimitation was to conduct some of the meetings virtually, because a few participants were unable to meet me in person for the individual interviews. In addition, I also kept the sample size small for the sake of time and to ensure the data was manageable.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study's findings reflect ISSs' experiences and their perceptions of their training experience and are not a generalization of the instructional design field. Future research would be to conduct a three-year longitudinal study examining the impacts on retention when standardized training plans. Multiple variations of the study could be conducted to explore whether the training plan, onboarding plan, or mentor program are the most impactful. This study would offer more insight into where DD should concentrate its efforts once new ISSs are hired. Another potential study is to expand this study to other federal agencies, using a collective case study. I have recently started working with the Department of Treasury, and I am noticing similarities between training ISSs in the two agencies. I have spoken with ISSs from several other federal agencies with similar observations regarding the lack of training, the disconnect between what supervisors expect ISSs to do, and the need to translate available training to their assigned duties. The collective case study would explore how a training program, or portion of a training program such as a mentor program or onboarding program, impacts the work production of ISSs.

Another area of consideration for future study is the impact of military experience on ISSs serving in a military setting. Using an embedded mixed methods research design, the study would aim to explore how prior military experience impacts instructional design performance. Throughout the current study there were instances of those with civilian instructional design experience struggling to learn the duties of an ISS working for the military. This study would seek to explore if prior military experience is necessary to be successful as a military ISS, by comparing the experiences of civilian ISSs, composed of those with instructional design and education backgrounds, compared to prior military members with the required education for an ISS (1750).

Conclusion

This transcendental phenomenological study focused on the perceptions of ISS describing their training experiences. The theoretical framework that supported this study was andragogy, which has roots in behaviorist/connectionist and cognitive/Gestalt theories. A textural description of the participants' experience was developed through various means of communication, including interviews, journal prompts, and focus groups where participants shared their experiences. Data was collected to extrapolate answers to the central and supporting research questions regarding the training experiences of ISSs.

The findings of this study were that ISSs overwhelmingly support the idea of a formal training plan for new hires due to the vast array of duties that vary within the Training Division. They also suggested the need for an onboarding program and the adoption of a mentor program with more experienced ISSs mentoring new ISSs. Coupled with the literature, it can be determined that a formal training plan would positively impact ISS, eliminating feelings of

confusion and frustration. It would also prepare ISSs to perform their duties faster and with fewer errors.

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Appendix A

Email to Participants

Dear XXX,

My name is Amber Brouillard, a Ph.D. candidate in the Instructional Design and Technology program at Liberty University under the direction of Daniel Baer. I invite you to participate in my dissertation research project on the perceptions of a training program for instructional designers within Army training organizations. Your participation is requested because you work as an instructional systems specialist within the [redacted] must have employed participants for over six months, and you must be at least 18. In addition, you may not be part of the study if you received training from me. Please disregard this email if you do not meet either of these qualifications.

The research will be conducted using the interview process. This interview aims to gain a more in–depth understanding of survey responses. Depending on your schedule, the interview will be conducted sometime in the October–November 2023 timeframe. It will last approximately 30–45 minutes, be conducted in person or via an electronic communication tool such as Microsoft Teams, FaceTime, or phone call, and will be scheduled at your convenience. I will audio record the interview digitally, using the Rev application software. I will keep these audio application records and transcripts safe, as all identifying information will be switched to pseudonyms. Additional activities include participating with a group of ISSs as a focus group where you will answer questions about your experiences training and performing duties as an ISS. This focus group will last about 30–40 minutes and will be audio-recorded and transcribed. You will also be asked to respond to three journal prompts. You will have two weeks to

complete these prompts, and a link will be emailed. You will then have two weeks to answer several questions about your experiences regarding training as a DOTD ISS.

Nobody at [redacted] will have any access to any informatic[redacted]ided. By participating in this interview, you [redacted]asked several questions that seek to gain greater insight and understanding of your survey responses. Findings from this study may serve to provide insight into training program designs.

I hope that you will consider participating in my research study. If you are willing to participate in the interview, please respond to this survey within 7–10 days: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeCkoVhIPVHId8ktAJvtm9RlKgLFCgwIpuu3tO4KNHy_a8L8Q/viewform?usp=sf_link

Sincerely,
Amber Brouillard
Ph. D. Candidate
Instructional Design and Technology
Liberty University

Appendix B

Survey Questions

1) How long have you been employed at the [redacted]?

   a) Less than six months

   b) 6–12 months

   c) 1–3 years

   d) 4–6 years

   e) 7–12 years

   f) 12–15 years

   g) More than 15 years

2) What age group represents you?

   a) 18–25

   b) 26–30

   c) 31–39

   d) 40–49

   e) 50–59

   f) over 60

3) Are you employed as an Instructional Systems Specialists at [redacted]

   a) Yes

   b) No

4) Have you been trained by me?

   a) Yes

   b) No

5) What is your level of education?

a) Bachelor's degree

b) Master's degree

c) Ed.S

d) A doctorate

6) What field is your degree in?

a) Elementary Education

b) Secondary Education

c) Adult Education

d) Instructional Design

e) Other _____

7) What is your gender?

a) Male

b) Female

8) What is your race?

a) African American

b) Asian

c) Latino or Latina

d) Caucasian

e) Native American

f) Other _____

9) What is your military affiliation, if any?

a) Veteran

b) Spouse

c) None

10) Have you taken the Staff and Faculty Developers Course?

a) yes

b) no

11) If yes, when did you last take it?

_____

12) Please provide your email address:

_____

Appendix C

IRB Approval Letter

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

September 28, 2023

Amber Brouillard
Daniel Baer

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY23-24-104 THE PERCEPTIONS OF ARMY INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEMS SPECIALISTS REGARDING A FORMALIZED TRAINING PROGRAM: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

Dear Amber Brouillard, Daniel Baer,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:
The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification

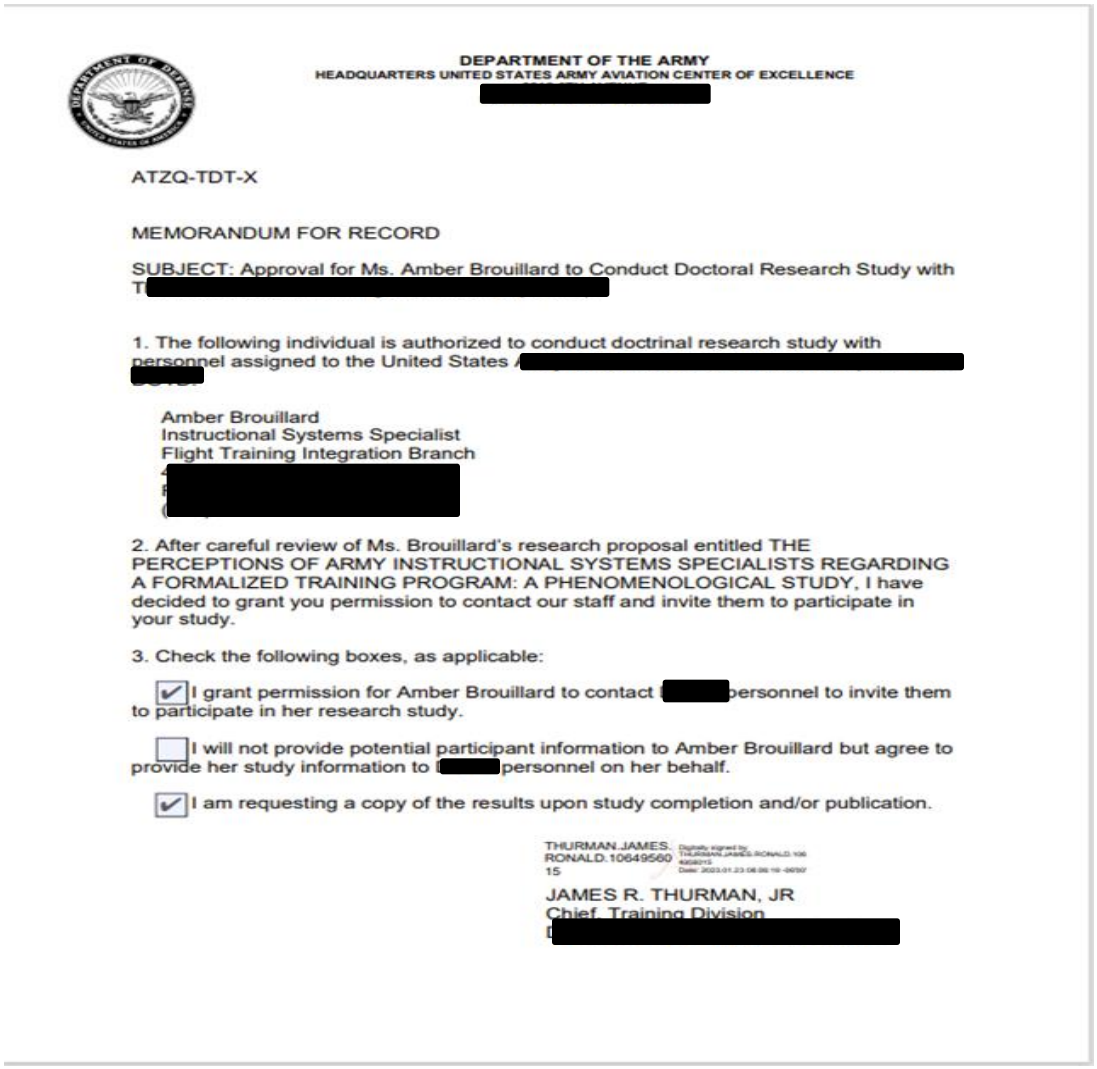
submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

Appendix D

Site Permission



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES ARMY AVIATION CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
[redacted]

ATZQ-TDT-X

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Approval for Ms. Amber Brouillard to Conduct Doctoral Research Study with T[redacted]

1. The following individual is authorized to conduct doctrinal research study with personnel assigned to the United States A[redacted]

Amber Brouillard
Instructional Systems Specialist
Flight Training Integration Branch
[redacted]

2. After careful review of Ms. Brouillard's research proposal entitled THE PERCEPTIONS OF ARMY INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEMS SPECIALISTS REGARDING A FORMALIZED TRAINING PROGRAM: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY, I have decided to grant you permission to contact our staff and invite them to participate in your study.

3. Check the following boxes, as applicable:

☑ I grant permission for Amber Brouillard to contact [redacted] personnel to invite them to participate in her research study.

☐ I will not provide potential participant information to Amber Brouillard but agree to provide her study information to [redacted] personnel on her behalf.

☑ I am requesting a copy of the results upon study completion and/or publication.

THURMAN.JAMES.RONALD.1064956015 Digitally signed by THURMAN.JAMES.RONALD.1064956015 Date: 2023.01.23 08:09:10 -05'00'

JAMES R. THURMAN, JR
Chief, Training Division
[redacted]

Appendix E

Consent

Title of the Project: THE PERCEPTIONS OF ARMY INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEMS SPECIALISTS REGARDING A FORMALIZED TRAINING PROGRAM: PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY
Principal Investigator: Amber D.E. Brouillard, Doctoral Candidate/Faculty Member, Liberty University, School of Instructional Design and Technology, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must have been employed as an Instructional Systems Specialist at [redacted] for six months or more and be over the age of 18. You must also have not been trained by me. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to investigate the perceptions of a standard training program for Instructional Systems Specialists working at the [redacted]

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

1. Participate in an audio recorded one-on-one interview either in person or via TEAMS for approximately 30–45 minutes. Interviews will be transcribed.
2. Respond to three journal prompts over the course of two-three weeks. These prompts should take approximately 10–15 minutes.
3. Potentially participate in an audio-recorded focus group, lasting 45–60 minutes. Focus groups will be transcribed.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include improving how Instructional Systems Specialists are trained initially and throughout their careers to alleviate frustration. This study could potentially impact the career of Instructional Design as well.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses to journal prompts will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in focus group settings. While discouraged, other members of the focus group may share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and a password protector folder on a personal computer. After five years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for five years once participants have reviewed and confirmed the accuracy of the transcripts. They will be deleted five years from the date they are reviewed. The researcher and members of her doctoral committee will have access to these recordings.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or the or the Directorate of Training and Doctrine. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you apart from focus group data will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Amber Brouillard. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at [redacted] or

[redacted]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr, Daniel Baer, at [redacted]

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____
Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature & Date

Appendix F

Preliminary Codes

#	CODE
1.	Frustration
2.	Confusion
3.	Lack of Training
4.	Mentor
5.	Onboarding
6.	Reliance on Peers
7.	Help from SMEs
8.	Staff and Faculty Courses
9.	Developers Course
10.	Peer-reviewed articles
11.	Professional development classes
12.	Self-directed training
13.	No organization
14.	Unsure of duties
15.	No initial training
16.	No guidance
17.	Fire hydrant
18.	Information overload
19.	Training not translating to duties
20.	TDC course
21.	Higher education
22.	On-the-job training
23.	Learn from doing
24.	CTSSB
25.	Mandatory training
26.	Feeling inadequate
27.	Lack of confidence
28.	Failure
29.	Overwhelmed
30.	Military instructor
31.	Manager guidance
32.	Adaptability
33.	Instructor Experience
34.	Prior Army experience
35.	Supervisor as mentor

Appendix G

Transcript With Epoché

Note: Searching for understanding of the different types of training; recall each is unique. I know Lina personally but want to behave as if I don't to see her training experience through her eyes without prior knowledge. The first question is to prep myself and the participant for the use of epoché to allow for this to occur.

0:0:6.100 --> 0:0:10.570

Brouillard Amber D

Yeah, please introduce yourself to me as if we just met one another.

0:0:10.580 --> 0:0:14.760

Brouillard Amber D

Tell me a little bit about yourself and your professional and educational background.

0:0:16.640 --> 0:0:17.220

Lina

Alrighty.

0:0:18.910 --> 0:0:19.300

Lina

Thanks.

0:0:19.310 --> 0:0:20.840

Lina

Sorry, I didn't know I was gonna go to the.

0:0:21.410 --> 0:0:22.920

Lina

I was eating a Tootsie roll, OK?

0:0:23.130 --> 0:0:23.500

Brouillard Amber D

Yeah.

0:0:25.440 --> 0:0:26.350

Lina

OK, I'll swallowing it.

0:0:27.880 --> 0:0:30.30

Lina

My name is [redacted]

0:0:30.640 --> 0:0:32.330

Lina

I've been in education.

0:0:33.680 --> 0:0:34.350

Lina

Uh.

0:0:34.360 --> 0:0:39.200

Lina

Since around 2005, when I.

0:0:41.560 --> 0:0:42.90

Brouillard Amber D

Oh shoot.

0:4:7.630 --> 0:4:8.650

Lina

Amber, can you hear me?

0:4:12.620 --> 0:4:12.840

Lina

Hello.

0:4:14.270 --> 0:4:15.830

Brouillard Amber D

Oh, I can hear you now.

0:4:15.970 --> 0:4:16.810

Brouillard Amber D

Ohh thank God.

0:4:18.40 --> 0:4:19.50

Lina

Guess what?

0:4:19.120 --> 0:4:21.970

Lina

I was talking that entire time with the mute button on.

0:4:22.530 --> 0:4:23.980

Brouillard Amber D

And I'm like, no, no, stop.

0:4:26.730 --> 0:4:31.950

Lina

And I was hearing the clicking and I'm assuming you are, uh, typing.

0:4:31.960 --> 0:4:33.880

Lina

And then I see that that you texted me.

0:4:34.760 --> 0:4:35.590

Brouillard Amber D

Yeah.

0:4:35.970 --> 0:4:36.770

Brouillard Amber D

Yeah.

0:4:36.620 --> 0:4:37.270

Lina

Ship.

0:4:37.380 --> 0:4:37.810

Lina

OK.

0:4:38.120 --> 0:4:38.950

Lina

Well, let's start over.

0:4:36.880 --> 0:4:43.410

Brouillard Amber D

So I think need to hear anything I didn't get to hear anything about your background and I really wanted to hear it.

0:4:45.10 --> 0:4:45.380

Lina

OK.

0:4:45.390 --> 0:4:46.770

Lina

What was the last thing you heard?

0:4:48.140 --> 0:4:55.60

Brouillard Amber D

It was introduced yourself to me as if we're meeting for the first time, like your professional background, your.

0:4:56.780 --> 0:4:58.800

Brouillard Amber D

Educational background those things.

0:5:0.240 --> 0:5:2.130

Lina

I'm so sorry for wasting your time.

0:5:2.670 --> 0:5:3.140

Brouillard Amber D

Or not?

0:5:2.190 --> 0:5:4.490

Lina

I talked for like 15 minutes on mute.

0:5:4.400 --> 0:5:6.170

Brouillard Amber D

I feel bad for having you talk.

0:5:5.200 --> 0:5:6.310

Lina

OK, so I'm gonna make it.

0:5:6.800 --> 0:5:7.590

Lina

I don't mind.

0:5:7.650 --> 0:5:8.190

Lina

I don't mind.

0:5:11.380 --> 0:5:11.560

Brouillard Amber D

Yeah.

0:5:8.200 --> 0:5:16.850

Lina

It's cool to always have this at the front of my mind and to be succinct with it, because you know us as instructional designers, we're all about efficiencies.

0:5:17.160 --> 0:5:20.670

Lina

So it's cool to get fine to my elevator pitch.

0:5:20.680 --> 0:5:22.990

Lina

I don't mind, but I'll expound a little bit.

0:5:23.680 --> 0:5:24.150

Lina

OK.

0:5:24.160 --> 0:5:25.140

Lina

Can you hear me?

0:5:23.520 --> 0:5:26.870

Brouillard Amber D

Hey, I can hear you perfectly now.

0:5:27.620 --> 0:5:27.860

Lina

OK.

0:5:29.490 --> 0:5:30.0

Lina

So.

0:5:32.420 --> 0:5:34.20

Lina

I was born on a cool, dark night.

0:5:34.30 --> 0:5:34.580

Lina

Now I was getting.

0:5:35.970 --> 0:5:38.280

Lina

Sorry, I'm a weirdo.

0:5:39.920 --> 0:5:40.310

Brouillard Amber D

Uh-huh.

0:5:38.290 --> 0:5:44.370

Lina

You already know, so I got my bachelor's degree in computer science.

0:5:44.380 --> 0:5:54.590

Lina

I always wanted to be a teacher when I grew up, but I wind up getting my bachelors in computer science because my mom was like, ain't no money in teaching.

0:5:54.600 --> 0:5:55.910

Lina

Go to computer schools.

0:5:55.920 --> 0:6:5.470

Lina

I'm like, OK Computer School and I barely got out of my bachelor's degree program with, like, a two point something and computer science because I didn't like I didn't enjoy it.

0:6:6.60 --> 0:6:6.380

Brouillard Amber D

Right.

0:6:6.320 --> 0:6:13.850

Lina

So here I am, a new college graduate, a new mommy, a new wife, and I'm looking for work in the computer science field.

0:6:13.860 --> 0:6:15.420

Lina

I don't find any right away.

0:6:15.430 --> 0:6:16.930

Lina

I'm living in Baltimore at the time.

0:6:17.360 --> 0:6:21.650

Lina

And then my neighbor, where we lived happened to be a high school teacher.

0:6:21.660 --> 0:6:24.80

Lina

And she said, oh, we always need teachers up in school.

0:6:24.350 --> 0:6:25.380

Lina

So I go up there.

0:6:25.390 --> 0:6:26.900

Lina

I substitute for about a month.

0:6:26.910 --> 0:6:28.380

Lina

They offer me a full time job.

0:6:28.390 --> 0:6:33.400

Lina

They're like you just gotta get these classes to get, you know, be a teacher certified.

0:6:33.410 --> 0:6:40.720

Lina

Well, all those classes accumulated for a master's degree in education, so I'm like, let me just get my master's degree and kill two birds with one stone.

0:6:41.30 --> 0:6:54.650

Lina

And it turns out you know, I always wanted to be a teacher anyway, so it kind of came around full circle, and I taught high school math for five years, three years in Baltimore, two years in Missouri, and then in Missouri is when I transitioned to the highest.

0:6:54.860 --> 0:6:56.490

Lina

The intern program.

0:6:57.100 --> 0:6:58.670

Lina

It's a 7911.

0:6:59.160 --> 0:7:3.470

Lina

I was on the wait list for a year and then the following year I got in the program.

0:7:4.120 --> 0:7:19.100

Lina

I wind up getting my permanent placement and staff and faculty, and I worked there from including the intern years from 09 to 14 and then I got a promotion offer to move to Fort Rucker, middle of Nowhere, Alabama.

0:7:21.340 --> 0:7:24.70

Lina

For, you know, to get a 12, I'm like, OK, fine.

0:7:24.260 --> 0:7:36.770

Lina

So I transplant my whole family will come here and I'm at DOTD from October 2014 around there to September 2022.

0:7:38.50 --> 0:7:43.760

Lina

Yeah, and that was my least favorite job of my whole life.

0:7:43.770 --> 0:7:45.120

Lina

It was worst job ever.

0:7:50.720 --> 0:7:50.950

Brouillard Amber D

No.

0:7:45.350 --> 0:7:56.420

Lina

I actually refer to the places the Titanic and I encourage people to get off the boat because the sinking like I just think from top to bottom that inside out that place is just whack a docious.

0:7:56.430 --> 0:8:0.920

Lina

And but I did develop thick skin as a result of being in an environment like that.

0:8:0.970 --> 0:8:14.200

Lina

And now that I'm at the TSA, 100% remote working from home with a actual team of actual ISD to actually know what they're talking about and are open.

0:8:15.110 --> 0:8:26.960

Lina

So the creative process of systems approach you know, and they actually know what they're talking about and they don't just know enough to be dangerous and they don't just know the buzzwords you know, and but they're the ones making the decisions.

0:8:26.970 --> 0:8:33.50

Lina

And like, oh God it that's not a struggle that I've encountered yet at this organization.

0:8:33.60 --> 0:8:34.40

Lina

I've been here for a year.

0:8:34.50 --> 0:8:37.280

Lina

I'm so so so, so, so, so happy.

0:8:37.290 --> 0:8:45.100

Lina

I love my current job, so this will be if I start an instructional design in 09.

0:8:45.110 --> 0:8:46.640

Lina

I started teaching in 05.

0:8:46.650 --> 0:8:51.600

Lina

That was education, but instructional design was 2009 to present.

0:8:51.770 --> 0:8:52.850

Lina

So whatever that is.

0:8:54.690 --> 0:8:54.940

Lina

It.

0:8:54.910 --> 0:8:56.70

Brouillard Amber D

That's a good long time.

0:8:57.20 --> 0:8:58.330

Lina

Yeah, almost 15 years.

0:8:59.20 --> 0:8:59.410

Brouillard Amber D

Wow.

0:9:0.420 --> 0:9:6.250
Brouillard Amber D
Describe your experience during the training you received when you were first assigned to do TDD.

0:9:6.300 --> 0:9:7.680
Brouillard Amber D
If any training occurred.

0:9:10.720 --> 0:9:10.980
Brouillard Amber D
Umm.

0:9:10.400 --> 0:9:12.660
Lina
Well, you got your mandatory training.

0:9:12.700 --> 0:9:17.600
Lina
Definitely gotta do that because the armies all about covering that ***.

0:9:17.940 --> 0:9:18.430
Brouillard Amber D
That's right.

0:9:18.640 --> 0:9:21.10
Lina
But I can definitely go on that soapbox.

0:9:31.990 --> 0:9:32.200
Brouillard Amber D
Mm-hmm.

0:9:21.20 --> 0:9:32.700
Lina
So you got all of the mandatory training, a lot of it is on, you know, eLearning style, but not really maximizing engagements, but it's digital ohm.

0:9:33.710 --> 0:9:35.210
Lina
What other training?

0:9:35.640 --> 0:9:43.40
Lina
So I had come from Staff and Faculty, so I didn't really need all of those classes, but they made me take them anyway and it was some of them.

0:9:43.50 --> 0:9:43.620
Lina
It was funny.

0:9:43.630 --> 0:9:55.470
Lina
It was funny to sit in the class and have someone like umm, you know, no offense with somebody without ISD background teaching me almost season ISD or.

0:9:55.780 --> 0:9:56.220
Lina
Ohh.

0:9:57.740 --> 0:10:9.240
Lina
Concepts like within ADDIE, but they're teaching it wrong and I'm like, ohh at some point somebody dropped the ball on this and now they're just reading this PowerPoint and that's not really it.

0:10:9.250 --> 0:10:12.600
Lina
And now I'm sitting in the class and I'm struggling.

0:10:12.610 --> 0:10:15.60
Lina
Should I raise my hand and get the correct information out?

0:10:15.70 --> 0:10:17.380
Lina
Because that's the teacher in me or.

0:10:17.390 --> 0:10:19.300
Lina
Nope, you're just a student [redacted]

0:10:19.310 --> 0:10:20.900
Lina
This is not your project.

0:10:21.290 --> 0:10:21.690
Brouillard Amber D
Mm-hmm.

0:10:21.510 --> 0:10:22.620
Lina
Stay in your lane.

0:10:22.630 --> 0:10:22.830
Lina
You know.

0:10:23.600 --> 0:10:23.980
Brouillard Amber D
Umm.

0:10:23.810 --> 0:10:24.150
Lina
Umm.

0:10:24.160 --> 0:10:32.290
Lina
And just having that struggle over and over and over, there was a what was that doctor do with the cool last name with the mullet?

0:10:32.430 --> 0:10:33.580
Lina
Doctor cloud?

0:10:34.420 --> 0:10:37.860
LINA
Uh [redacted] will bring him all the time.

0:10:37.870 --> 0:10:38.250
Lina
Brush.

0:10:38.890 --> 0:10:39.500
Brouillard Amber D
Brush yes.

0:10:39.230 --> 0:10:40.820
Lina
Well, it's fresh.

0:10:40.930 --> 0:10:45.720
Lina
Attended a few of his courses and they were they were good, but nothing.

0:10:45.730 --> 0:10:47.240
Lina
I really didn't learn anything new.

0:10:49.760 --> 0:10:49.880
Brouillard Amber D
Yeah.

0:10:47.370 --> 0:10:57.830
Lina
It was like I know I was already ohm and actually the last class that I sat in with him, it was like a three-day class girl.

0:10:57.840 --> 0:11:1.130
Lina
After the intro I just made up my mind.

0:11:1.140 --> 0:11:2.410
Lina
I'm not about to do this for three days.

0:11:2.420 --> 0:11:3.820
Lina
It's about to be the same thing.

0:11:3.830 --> 0:11:6.890
Lina
It was the last three four times I sat in this dude’s class.

0:11:6.900 --> 0:11:8.330
Lina
It ain't personal.

0:11:8.480 --> 0:11:11.90
Lina
I just rather have my three days back, you know?

0:11:11.220 --> 0:11:11.450
Brouillard Amber D
Umm.

0:11:11.160 --> 0:11:17.250
Lina

And I at the first bathroom break, I just packed up and left and emailed Christine like, yes, something came up.

0:11:17.260 --> 0:11:20.220
Lina
I'm gonna be able to do the class, but I literally was just like me.

0:11:21.790 --> 0:11:22.40
Brouillard Amber D
Mm-hmm.

0:11:20.230 --> 0:11:22.960
Lina
I don't wanna umm and then.

0:11:25.30 --> 0:11:27.220
Lina
You got your mandatory training is in person.

0:11:27.230 --> 0:11:31.500
Lina
Like all the SHARPs, all that one time of year, four times a year, whatever.

0:11:32.270 --> 0:11:32.540
Brouillard Amber D
Hmm.

0:11:32.130 --> 0:11:38.860
Lina
I see you try to think anything related to my actual job.

0:11:38.930 --> 0:11:40.540
Lina
That'll be a big fat no.

0:11:40.990 --> 0:11:48.360
Lina
So when I was at flight training branch, which was where I was majority of the time, I was at the LCD on my pride.

0:11:48.370 --> 0:12:0.770
Lina
My primary task was to do everything concerning CTSSB, so that's in the analysis phase, task analysis all the way in the deep, Deep South it.

0:12:1.420 --> 0:12:4.450
Lina
So I had to get really smart on that on my own.

0:12:4.740 --> 0:12:6.140
Lina
I knew enough to know.

0:12:6.200 --> 0:12:9.510
Lina
Read 350-70 and get really smart and analysis.

0:12:9.520 --> 0:12:17.510
Lina
When I just figured out basically what the mission is, OK, they got this ATM and they managed to tasks, task management, task analysis.

0:12:17.560 --> 0:12:18.710
Lina
Let me get into that world.

0:12:19.370 --> 0:12:19.630
Brouillard Amber D
Umm.

0:12:19.300 --> 0:12:21.710
Lina
Nobody trained me on anything.

0:12:21.860 --> 0:12:30.140
Lina
I came only with what I learned at Fort Leonard Wood, through the intern program, and then through my three years at Staff and Faculty there.

0:12:30.330 --> 0:12:35.600
Lina
Thank God, because their Staff and Faculty I was teaching all of these ADDIE concepts.

0:12:35.610 --> 0:12:45.540
Lina
I was teaching analysis in-depth, but I wasn't really doing analysis in depth because Staff and Faculty got, you know, a different set of standards they could get away with it.

0:12:46.120 --> 0:12:46.350
Brouillard Amber D
Right.

0:12:46.290 --> 0:12:54.180
Lina
So I didn't really have to do task analysis in in my Staff and Faculty position, but I talked it.

0:12:54.230 --> 0:12:55.600
Lina
So came the DD.

0:12:55.610 --> 0:12:57.540
Lina
Realized OK, I'm doing task analysis.

0:12:58.60 --> 0:12:59.170
Lina
First I was pissed.

0:12:59.180 --> 0:13:13.10
Lina
Because but it's a REDACTED lied to me because he said I was gonna get to do more of the implementation thing I had just pioneered a program called Shot Me Arm based off of the ALM 2015.

0:13:13.520 --> 0:13:13.720
Brouillard Amber D
Umm.

0:13:13.780 --> 0:13:17.470
Lina
At the time, it was new but basic bottom line up front.

0:13:23.150 --> 0:13:23.380
Brouillard Amber D
Umm.

0:13:17.480 --> 0:13:24.10
Lina
They're just trying to leverage technology to make ohh learning more engaging at the bottom line.

0:13:24.20 --> 0:13:24.890
Lina
That's what it is.

0:13:25.0 --> 0:13:31.410
Lina
And they want it to just inject all of the army training with this and that's my jam.

0:13:31.420 --> 0:13:33.70
Lina
So I'm like, yes, I'm up.

0:13:33.80 --> 0:13:36.30
Lina
Yeah, I see you got all this ALM 2015 stuff.

0:13:36.120 --> 0:13:37.470
Lina
That's how we wanna use you.

0:13:37.700 --> 0:13:46.250
Lina
But then I come to DD and I do 00 tasks connected to what he promised me to come here for.

0:13:46.560 --> 0:13:48.430
Lina
But anyway.

0:13:49.560 --> 0:13:51.330
Lina
Umm yeah, then?

0:13:51.340 --> 0:13:53.650
Lina
I asked you a question I feel like I just started rambling.

0:13:53.660 --> 0:13:54.20
Lina
I'm sorry.

0:13:54.600 --> 0:13:56.740
Brouillard Amber D
Did they make you take the Developer’s course again?

0:13:58.790 --> 0:13:59.330
Lina
Umm.

0:14:2.800 --> 0:14:12.230
Lina
I know I wasn't requirement but I'm trying to remember if I took it because I was kind of one of those, not buck at the rules, but I'm like there's there's some stupid **** I'm not doing that.

0:14:12.890 --> 0:14:13.480
Brouillard Amber D
Yeah.

0:14:13.550 --> 0:14:14.440
Brouillard Amber D
If it doesn't make.

0:14:13.410 --> 0:14:15.80
Lina
Ohh and it just depends on.

0:14:15.310 --> 0:14:17.960
Lina
Yeah, it just depends on who my supervisor was.

0:14:18.390 --> 0:14:22.210
Lina
If they would make me do it or not, I don't remember going through the Developer's course.

Lina
No, I don't think I did.

0:14:26.150 --> 0:14:30.660
Brouillard Amber D
Describe any confusion you felt during your training, if any occurred.

0:14:33.170 --> 0:14:36.710
Lina
Umm, the most it you mean any of the training DD?

0:14:38.300 --> 0:14:39.450
Brouillard Amber D
Your initial training.

0:14:41.80 --> 0:14:46.620
Lina
Like the mandatory training or some of the training I took with Staff and Faculty cause I did take a couple.

0:14:47.410 --> 0:14:48.960
Brouillard Amber D
With Staff and Faculty probably.

0:14:49.720 --> 0:14:52.960
Lina
OK, with Staff and Faculty, I took the.

0:14:54.930 --> 0:14:56.510
Lina
Ohh it was something with Steve.

0:14:56.520 --> 0:14:58.440
Lina
That old guy that had the frizzy hair?

0:14:59.10 --> 0:14:59.930
Lina
REDACTED.

0:15:0.460 --> 0:15:0.740
Brouillard Amber D
Mm-hmm.

0:15:0.740 --> 0:15:2.170
Brouillard Amber D
Was it the Middle Managers course?

0:15:3.860 --> 0:15:6.540
Lina
I think that's the one I took with him.

0:15:6.550 --> 0:15:7.430
Lina
Now here's the thing.

0:15:12.420 --> 0:15:12.680
Brouillard Amber D
Umm.

0:15:7.440 --> 0:15:18.810
Lina
I was the Middle Manager course manager at Fort Leonard Wood when I came, so actually when I came I wind up watching it to fix it, to give it to him, to redo.

0:15:19.240 --> 0:15:19.480
Brouillard Amber D
Umm.

0:15:19.260 --> 0:15:20.70
Lina
I never know.

0:15:20.140 --> 0:15:27.710
Lina
I don't know if he ever was able to implement it with all the engagements, I had built in case he was pretty resistant to that style or that approach.

0:15:28.510 --> 0:15:28.960
Brouillard Amber D
Yeah, I see.

0:15:32.20 --> 0:15:32.740
Brouillard Amber D
No, he did not. (NOTE- I took this course, it was all lecture- bracketed)

0:15:30.240 --> 0:15:35.970
Lina
But uh, yeah, yeah, I heard.

0:15:35.980 --> 0:15:37.820
Lina
I'll I didn't hear any good reports.

0:15:38.780 --> 0:15:42.190
Lina
Umm, what else did I take down there though?

0:15:42.200 --> 0:15:44.160
Lina
I promise you, I used to snub it.

0:15:44.260 --> 0:15:45.360
Lina
I didn't have.

0:15:52.960 --> 0:15:57.800
Lina
Gosh, I've really only think I took the mandatory training and Amber.

0:15:58.570 --> 0:15:59.370
Brouillard Amber D
I believe it.

0:16:4.440 --> 0:16:4.750
Brouillard Amber D
Right.

0:15:59.850 --> 0:16:4.880
Lina
Because I'm like, I was in those classrooms, but I was always in a different capacity doing some.

0:16:6.190 --> 0:16:6.780
Brouillard Amber D
That makes sense.

0:16:7.620 --> 0:16:7.860
Lina
Yeah.

0:16:7.770 --> 0:16:8.170
Brouillard Amber D
Umm.

0:16:8.470 --> 0:16:13.430
Brouillard Amber D
Describe any challenges you experienced during your first months as an ISS DoD.

0:16:14.850 --> 0:16:20.480
Lina
OK, some of my challenges included not knowing what my job was.

0:16:22.840 --> 0:16:23.70
Brouillard Amber D
Ohh.

0:16:22.520 --> 0:16:23.440
Lina
Why am I here?

0:16:25.130 --> 0:16:31.0
Lina
The PD was written very generically enough to let me know.

0:16:31.10 --> 0:16:32.770
Lina
Focus on the A and Addie.

0:16:32.780 --> 0:16:34.570
Lina
That's about all I could get from that.

0:16:35.430 --> 0:16:37.910
Lina
And then my supervisor at the time.

0:16:37.960 --> 0:16:48.410
Lina
So I was in the flight training branch and because of the nature of the ATM's, they didn't wanna civilian to be the chief of that branch.

0:16:48.420 --> 0:16:53.290
Lina
So all of the other DLT branches were led by civilians, except flight training branch.

0:16:53.300 --> 0:17:0.200
Lina
It always had to be CW5 type and I had 7 boxes and seven years while I was there.

0:17:0.900 --> 0:17:1.500
Brouillard Amber D
Wow.

0:17:2.140 --> 0:17:3.50
Lina
Yeah.

0:17:3.100 --> 0:17:3.470
Lina
Umm.

0:17:3.480 --> 0:17:9.830
Lina
And so the particular box that was there when I first got there was the second worst of the whole time.

0:17:9.840 --> 0:17:11.210
Lina
The first one and the last one.

0:17:11.840 --> 0:17:24.0
Lina
The first one was horrible and the last one was even more horrible and the ones in between were just OK, but that first one he was he was so intimidated by the fact that I knew more about ISD than him.

Appendix H

Themes and Subthemes

Themes and Related Code

Themes	Subthemes	Codes
Theme 1 **Training Challenges**	Continuous Confusion	Fire Hydrant No organization Unsure of duties Lack of training No initial training Information overload Training not translating to duties
	Available Professional Development	Staff and Faculty Course Developers Course Mandatory Training TDC Course
Theme 2 **Need for Additional Training**	On-the-job training	Learn by doing No guidance Self-directed Learn by failure CTSSB Continuous corrections
	Formal and Informal Education	Alternative Professional Development courses Peer-reviewed articles Formal education
	Peer Training	Help from SMEs Manager guidance Informal mentors
Theme 3		Feeling stupid

Feelings of Inadequacy	Lack of confidence Paranoia Failure Frustration
Theme 4 **Need for Mentors**	Peer Mentor Supervisor as Mentor Onboarding
Theme 5 **Military Experience**	Prior Army Experience Instructor Experience Adaptability Military Instructor