CORPORATE ELEARNING: PERCEPTIONS OF PERSISTENCE AND SATISFACTION

By

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Abstract

This study examined eLearning perception factors of persistence and satisfaction in a for-profit business setting. The input of 32 company leaders, eLearning content designers, and course participants was investigated to identify the convergent and divergent eLearning beliefs of stakeholders. Using the Delphi consensus-building method, results suggested three salient course elements influenced eLearning persistence and satisfaction. Findings highlight the importance of being cognizant to include specific factors in eLearning courses when designing and implementing online learning, while also acknowledging and navigating the divergent eLearning beliefs of corporate stakeholders.

Keywords: eLearning, online learning, adult learning theory, situated learning theory, return on investment, professional capital, literacy, professional development, eLearning satisfaction, eLearning persistence.

Dedication

This doctoral dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Brantley, who supported the late study nights, colossal tuition bills, and lengthy writing hours. I'm grateful for your unceasing love and unwavering commitment; you're a gem. This dissertation is also dedicated to our two adult children; Tyler and Jacelyn, and my mom Sandy. I could not have completed this project without your continual support, encouragement, and graciousness. I love you all.

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Lastly, I submit this dissertation in dedication to the memory of my father; Jay Dee Houston, who died from an aggressive cancer during year two of this doctoral program. My dad demonstrated the power of perseverance through trials, aptitude through self-determination, and love through service and commitment to others. Cheers to you, dad…I made it. xoxo

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In The Way to Wealth (1790), Benjamin Franklin stated, “An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest” (p. 160). In 2010, the Association for Training and Development (ASTD) proposed that organizational improvement and economic growth require a skilled and knowledgeable workforce. Institutions that foster human capital not only build competent laborers, but are also more apt to harvest financial, production, and community practitioner rewards (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Lave & Wenger, 1991).

In 2019, there are diverse learning modalities to support employees’ professional growth including: face-to-face sessions, webinar-only courses, asynchronous eLearning management systems, or a combination of these options. Organizational, financial, and educational considerations influence how institutions select their particular learning model. For example, business leaders may opt to offer eLearning courses to quickly and efficiently scale knowledge across a large volume of employees, saving both time and money. The eLearning model is often defined as an online educational resource that uses several technologies to provide efficient learning opportunities (Shultz & Correia, 2015). A popular component of eLearning is its asynchronistic feature where participants may engage in a course anytime, anywhere (Wong, 2003; Bielawski & Metcalf, 2005; Stanford-Bowers, 2007). Courses provided through eLearning versus face-to-face methods save corporations the costs associated with timing, travel, meals, and facility fees (Shultz & Correia, 2015).

In businesses, eLearning offers increased access, tracking, and dissemination of content to remote employees while lowering costs and improving attendance. (Schultz & Correia, 2015; Newton & Doonga, 2007). Over the last decade, the variety and content of eLearning courses have grown in popularity in the business sector (Young, Kyu, & Kim, 2012). Companies

developing continuous, systematic eLearning environments provide a pathway to enhance individuals' technical skills while attending to job responsibilities, and influencing a company's return on investment (Schultz & Correia, 2015; Zorzoliu & Iatagan, 2017).

The development of eLearning courses require collaboration from leadership, eLearning designers, and the Human Resources department (Waight & Stewart, 2015). Moreover, leadership significantly contributes to eLearning success. Research suggests that support for the learning at an organizational level influences the eLearner's success or lack of success. Waight & Stewart (2015) suggested, "Successful eLearning is dependent on leaders that understand and visibly support the eLearning team and their efforts to continually provide the best eLearning solution and experience" (p. 338). Leaders that clearly promote eLearning initiatives create positive outcomes in building organizational learning and influencing business performance (Uma, 2011).

Online corporate learning development and implementation may seem relatively simple. Typically, participants log in to a learning management system and experience content through written text and by watching videos followed by multiple-choice, true or false, or short answer assessments. However, developing employee understanding necessitates ongoing, systematic, collegial, and meaningful experiences to satisfy adult learners and influence eLearning persistence (Knowles, 2015; Schultz & Correia, 2015). Palloff and Pratt (2003) contended that online programs designed around the learner's needs (of quality learning objectives, clear assignment expectations, instructor accessibility, viable technology, and relevant content) tend to offer quality which, in turn, increases learner satisfaction. If learners are satisfied with the results of their online experience, they are more likely to stay in the course (Stanford-Bowers, 2007).

However, little is known about adult eLearning satisfaction and persistence in corporate settings since much of the literature pertains to the academic environment (Waight & Stewart, 2005).

Background of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand eLearning persistence and satisfaction as perceived by key stakeholders: organizational leaders, eLearning designers, and eLearning course participants. The research takes place within a for-profit, mid-sized literacy company. For the purpose of this study, the company will be called Future 1.0. The sole researcher of this study was employed by Future 1.0 as an eLearning content specialist and course instructor.

Future 1.0 produces K-12 literacy instruction and assessment software, and delivers onsite, webinar, and eLearning professional development to teachers across the United States of America, Europe, and Middle Eastern countries. The company employs over eighty trainers to provide literacy professional development in schools and districts. In order to ensure the quality and consistency of professional development provided to educators (or customers), Future 1.0 created internal eLearning literacy courses for the company's training employees with the intention of expanding these courses to the K-12 sector. As a result, the company agreed to investigate their internal eLearning literacy courses to help shape upcoming course development. This research sought to discover where Future 1.0 stakeholder perceptions of eLearning beliefs converged and diverged, since a lack of convergence could increase dissatisfaction and attrition, ultimately impacting the eLearner, K-12 literacy understandings, and company success.

Although K-12 student literacy achievement is outside the scope of this dissertation, the belief systems of Future 1.0 stakeholders could influence on-the-job knowledge transfer from company's professional development providers to educators, ultimately improving pedagogical practices and student learning. Zepeda (2013) suggested professional development supports

teacher quality, and continuous improvement of teaching. Zepeda (2013) also posited that educational institutions must provide teachers with professional learning opportunities to build progressive and efficacious instructional capacity to immediately differentiate instruction for students. Essentially, Zepeda proposed that improved student achievement is an outcome of effective professional development (Zepeda, 2013).

This study sought to examine the factors that influence the perception of Future 1.0's eLearning professional development persistence and satisfaction, as viewed by the company's key stakeholder groups, when building literacy knowledge through a corporate online training system. The purpose of Future 1.0's eLearning literacy courses under examination in this study are meant to support and improve K-12 teacher instructional practices through the delivery of quality professional literacy development to ultimately influence scholars' literacy rates.

Statement of the Problem

At Future 1.0, internal eLearning literacy training courses were designed to expand to the K-12 teacher population and provide asynchronous, differentiated professional development opportunities to promote blended literacy learning models. Until the release of the courses to the K-12 population, the company used these internal literacy courses to support employee training. Ultimately, the eLearning courses will generate corporate revenue while also supporting educators' K-12 literacy knowledge.

In 2018, professional development in the United States cost 18 billion dollars for educators and school systems (Horn & Goldstein, 2018). In a three-year study by The New Teacher Project, only three out of every 10 educators improved their evaluation performance while fifty percent remained at their current level and twenty percent declined over time (2015). According to The New Teacher Project (2015), most educators did not demonstrate significant

improvement in efficacious teaching practices, as measured by increase in student achievement, as a result of (unspecified) professional training. Moreover, 10 percent, or 19 days, of the school year is spent on professional development (The New Teacher Project, fullan2015). This is an enormous time and financial contribution without compelling instructional results.

Effective instruction by knowledgeable and skilled educators is essential for K-12 students to gain literacy skills (National Reading Panel, 2000; Snow, 2002, Snow, Burns, & Griffen, 1998). Additionally, Snow et al. (1998) argued that prevention is more effective than remediation and support the improvement of teacher preparation for elementary school educators. Walsh, Glaser, & Dunner-Wilcox (2006) found that only about 15% of schools provided elementary teachers coursework aligned with reading science. Joshi et al. (2009) reviewed multiple teacher preservice textbooks and discovered many did not cover all of the recommended National Reading Panel (2000) components of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension leaving teacher knowledge inadequate. Teachers require access to efficacious, research-proven training to improve literacy rates.

Educators need quality professional development to support student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2002; Fullan, 2001; Kent, 2004; Strahan, 2003). K-12 teachers often own little understanding of how reading acquisition occurs for students (Spencer, Schuele, Guillot, & Lee, 2008). Moats (2014) reported educators frequently share that they feel inadequately prepared to teach students how to read. Within districts and schools, classroom teachers need an understanding of curriculum, assessment, and literacy knowledge to analyze student needs and respond with efficacious instruction. Darling-Hammond (2002) found that teachers significantly impact student achievement and success and are conversely the strongest predictor of student failure. Although socio-economic status, language acquisition, and a student's mental and

emotional health affect a student's reading success, teachers can also serve classroom's greatest resource, as well as its greatest potential disadvantage (Clark, 2009). A teacher's lack of literacy knowledge, combined with poor implementation of adopted instructional programs add to why students fail to develop (Moats, 2014; Haager, Heimbichner, Dhar, Mouton, & McMillan, 2008).

To improve reading acquisition, educators need differentiated and timely training opportunities to meet their unique professional needs (Horn & Goldstein, 2018). According to The New Teacher Project (2015), teachers reported a lack of ownership and decision-making regarding professional training experiences. Instead of learning opportunities provided at the right time for their particular professional gaps, educators reported receiving mandated trainings based upon central office decisions (The New Teacher Project, 2015; Horn & Goldstein, 2018). Teachers in this study reported frustration with the top-down, decision-making approach to professional development experiences (The New Teacher Project, 2015).

In the United States, professional development for educators is primarily delivered onsite and follows a standardized, one-size-fits-all model. Lectures typically cover information previously learned by the teachers, or content that may be irrelevant to the educator's training need (Horn & Goldstein, 2018, The New Teacher Project, 2015). Listening to a presenter read bullet points from a set of slides during a lengthy professional development session is a practice that has not proven to positively influence teacher effectiveness nor student achievement (The New Teacher Project, 2018). Horn and Goldstein (2018) suggested increasing technology-driven professional training chosen by the eLearning participants based upon the unique needs of each learner. Self-selecting eLearning courses that align to an adult's immediate professional inquiry supports increased levels of persistence and satisfaction (Horn & Goldstein, 2018), since adults require timely, accessible, and relevant learning experiences (Knowles, 2015).

Similar to educational systems, for-profit corporations are responsible for ensuring quality and sustainable professional development for employees (Ulrich, Allen, Brockbank, Younger, & Nyman, 2009). However, creating satisfying courses that incorporate an eLearning modality requires specific factors to address professional learning needs. Some factors include access and convenience. Employees need easy entrance with functional technology to attend a course anytime, anywhere. Satisfying professional development includes meaningful shared learning opportunities situated on course content that can be applied to day-to-day job responsibilities (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Todd, Ravi, Akoh, & Gray, 2016). Additionally, for-profit companies influence eLearning persistence by scheduling individuals to experience eLearning courses during work hours instead of their personal time (Schultz & Correia, 2015). An employees' persistence in an eLearning course provides for professional learning capacity.

Although eLearning persistence is central to continuous learning opportunities, the dropout rate of participants continues at an alarming pace. Regardless of improved learning management platforms, increased popularity, and higher economic influences, some studies suggested that the majority of eLearning participants do not finish an online course (Flood, 2002; Alario-Hoyos, Estevez-Ayres, Perez-Sanagustin, Kloos, & Fernandez-Pandero, 2017). While eLearning supply and demand grew, the attrition rate of Massive Open Online Courses was marked as high as 90-95 percent (Flood, 2002; Alario-Hoyos et al., 2017). Other reports suggested 8 out of 10 participants dropped out of an eLearning course prior to completion (Flood, 2002). Despite the high incompletion rates, online learning courses have doubled each year. At the beginning of the 21st century, eLearning profitability reached 11.5 billion dollars (Flood, 2002). There is a significant disparity between eLearning revenue and course completion rates (Flood, 2002; Alario-Hoyos et al., 2017; Stanford-Bowers, 2007).

The persistence rates of eLearners is influenced by the satisfaction of participants (Palloff & Pratt, 2003). To ensure satisfying professional eLearning experiences, leaders, eLearning designers, and content providers must examine professional beliefs. Stakeholders who work within organizations own personal belief systems that may converge or diverge concerning the factors that define eLearning course satisfaction and persistence (Stanford & Bowers, 2007). For example, eLearning designers may consider course objectives, graphics, and interactive learning activities as central to course development. Alternatively, company leaders may consider return on investment as a key factor influencing course development. For example, developing a short course with a simplistic design may reduce production costs and increase potential revenue; serving as attractive eLearning factors for company leaders. Conversely, content developers and eLearners may believe content that can be immediately applied to professional situations as key to course development. For the purpose of this study, convergence is defined as individuals sharing similar beliefs. Alternatively, divergence is categorized as having differing beliefs or perceptions.

This study was undertaken to explore how stakeholder perceptions of eLearning diverge, and how related satisfaction and persistence may influence eLearning success or sustainability. Diverging beliefs may impact future K-12 literacy educators receiving the company's eLearning courses if deprived of a satisfying training system that inspires eLearners to persist (Palloff & Pratt, 2003; Stanford-Bowers, 2007; Todd et al., 2016).

Purpose of the Study

This study will address perceptions of online course persistence and satisfaction within Future 1.0 while contributing to the expanding literature involving adult online learning in the corporate setting. With this in mind, the purpose of this research study was to establish the

factors that contributed to perceptions of eLearning value, persistence and satisfaction of three stakeholder groups: leaders who were responsible for the eLearning business strategy, eLearning designers who were responsible for creating and managing the courses, and professional development providers who were responsible for training U.S. educators. The eLearning courses under review were new, and the for-profit literacy company had not compared eLearning satisfaction and persistence beliefs among stakeholders. Understanding the (potential) different eLearning lenses commonly held among the groups within a company could improve eLearning satisfaction and persistence rates among corporate participants. Corporations may apply the results from this research study to make improvements for the courses provided to K-12 educators (Stanford-Bowers, 2007).

Another rationale for this study pertains to company culture and employee retention. Luor, Hu, and Lu (2009) suggested that a rationale for employee attrition stems from a lack of professional growth or improvement. Supporting professional proficiency is critical for employees and the corporation (Slotte & Herbert, 2006). Training success influences employee morale and retention. Employee attrition is less likely when individuals are supported in their learning (Schultz & Correia, 2015). Employee retention saves companies onboarding costs, talent search expenditures, and preserves institutional knowledge (Newton & Doonga, 2007; Schultz & Correia, 2015). Loss of skilled employees takes rebuilding, time, and expense (Schultz & Correia, 2015). This study was undertaken to consider the eLearning impact on retention and maintaining a company's intellectual supply chain (Dealtry, 2008; Schultz & Correia, 2015).

This study's justification also included a strategic design to discover corporate leadership perceptions of eLearning satisfaction and affecting business decisions. K-12 eLearning professional development, profitability and sustainability are often difficult to measure and

evaluate (Schultz & Correia, 2015). This researcher sought to reveal stakeholder perceptions of satisfaction and persistence of Future 1.0's internal professional development system to improve future courses, and ultimately support quality eLearning literacy courses for educators who serve large populations of struggling readers.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (2018) suggested approximately 40 percent of 4th and 8th grade students have functional literacy skills. There is a growing body of research acknowledging the type of instructional design that helps prevent K-12 reading difficulties (Adams, 1990; National Reading Panel, 2000; Snow, Burns & Griffin, 2005). However, evidence suggests discrepancies between literacy research and classroom instructional practices (Brady & Moats, 1997; Moats, 2014, Moats & Foorman, 2003; Spear-Swerling, 2009). This study was focused on Future 1.0's internal employees who train teachers, develop eLearning courses, and are responsible for business profitability and educator knowledge. It is imperative to satisfying eLearning opportunities to support educator practices that impact student literacy acquisition.

Brown, Murphy, and Wade (2006) argued eLearning provides working professionals an internal capacity to improve. Structured eLearning courses supply direct and potentially intense training and certification to individuals interested in bypassing lengthy, expensive post-secondary requirements while gaining career skills (Wong, 2003). Certified eLearning courses are becoming popular and provide diverse options for knowledge attainment. Corporations have discovered eLearning courses can go beyond supporting internal employee training needs to providing a professional development certification center (Bielawski & Metcalf, 2005). This study researched a newly developed eLearning certification system aimed to quickly develop

individuals who support the literacy learning of educators in the United States, and explored four questions:

1. Where do stakeholders' (corporate leaders, eLearning content designers, and eLearning participants) perceptions of persistence converge?
2. Where do stakeholders' (corporate leaders, eLearning content designers, and eLearning participants) eLearning perceptions of persistence diverge?
3. Where do stakeholders' (corporate leaders, eLearning content designers, and eLearning participants) eLearning perceptions of satisfaction converge?
4. Where do stakeholders (corporate leaders, eLearning content designers, and eLearning participants) eLearning perceptions of satisfaction diverge?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The persistence and satisfaction perceptions of corporate stakeholders were examined through the theoretical frameworks of situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and adult learning theory (Knowles, 2015). These frameworks supported the inquiry and influenced the design of the eLearning courses under review. The literature on professional capital, course design, eLearning satisfaction, and eLearning persistence also guided the design of the courses utilized for this study.

Situated Learning Theory

Situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991) suggested that learning is embedded within situations, activities, and culture rather than through abstract presentations of information provided outside of context. Lave and Wenger (1991) argued knowledge must be provided in authentic situations and settings. This theory identified learners as engaged in a community of practice which incorporates social interaction and the collaboration of individuals motivated to learn when participating in meaningful experiences and able to use prior knowledge to construct knowledge (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Individuals within a community of practice experience "legitimate peripheral participation", where individuals engaged in "social interactions to transform thinking" (p. 14). Situated learning theory suggested that human minds acquire information in social exchanges using tools to reconstruct and extend understandings and in doing so, may transition from owning novice knowledge constructs to becoming experts.

Lave and Wenger (1991) suggested designing adult learning opportunities around structured frameworks that provide conditions for legitimate peripheral participation, including on-the-job training and applicable learning activities. The authors originally sought to redefine or retreat from the standard concept of apprenticeships (p. 17), arguing that it serves as a catch-all term, rendering the practice meaningless (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Apprenticeship innately

assumes the banking system of teacher (or computer) imparts knowledge onto the student and they take issue with the centrality (or locus) of learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Patel, 2016; Friere, 2000). When developing eLearning courses, legitimate peripheral participation included job-related discussion board questions that provided individuals the opportunity to share their unique knowledge with colleagues.

Lave and Wenger (1991) posited that legitimate peripheral participation as an avenue to understand learning rather than a teaching strategy. The operational definition of legitimate peripheral participation included submerging participants in experiences that help individuals reflect on prior knowledge that can be translated to workplaces, homes, and communities through intentional, relevant learning opportunities. For example, legitimate peripheral participation occurred in eLearning courses when participants were required to video record demonstrations of professional training segments. The purpose of this experience was to submerge participants in a real-life experience in order to reflect upon professional practices.

Adult Learning Theory

Andragogy, or adult learning theory, provides a structure to understand the complexity of adult learning development (Knowles, 2015). Adult learning theory centers on assumptions which facilitate the understanding of how adults learn best (McCallum, 2012; Zuga, 1999). Knowles (2015) stated, “In an adult class the student’s experience counts for as much as the teacher’s knowledge” (p. 531). He continued by acknowledging the importance of creating shared, two-way learning opportunities provided in informal, nonthreatening settings (p. 903). Examples include having adults share their knowledge through online discussion boards, group thinking opportunities, and videotaped exemplars.

Six precepts comprise Knowles' andragogical principles necessary to support learning and include: (a) supporting an adult learner's need to know; (b) acknowledging learners' self-concepts; (c) honoring learners' prior experiences; (d) supporting adults' readiness to learn; (e) considering adults' orientation to learning; and (f) realizing motivational factors to support learning (Knowles, 2015; Todd et al., 2016). In this study, we explored how the company's design of the eLearning courses incorporated all six of Knowles' principles into the eLearning courses to support satisfaction and persistence, and influence economic factors, professional capital, and ultimately teacher and student literacy success.

Economics and Professional Capital

In the 1930s, organizational economics began to investigate transactions, costs, and property rights in relation to their influence on production and corporate structures (Coase, 1937; Gibbons, 2013). This evolved into business experts and researchers questioning how organizations function in imperfect environments (Cyert & March, 1963). Imperfect environments include the divergent thinking of corporate stakeholders, which ultimately influences decision-making, business strategy, and profitability. Profit maximization occurs when corporations are able to determine prices that outweigh expenditures and lead to profitability (Coase, 1937). The cost of eLearning course implementation can impact a corporations' profitability. Corporate stakeholders who disagree on eLearning design, strategy, course components, learning outcomes, instructor support, and technical advancements may delay production. This situation can increase costs, decrease profitability, and degrade employees' learning opportunity.

Professional capital can influence profit margins (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Uma (2011) suggested that companies that instigate an "impulse to learn" (p. 3) improve corporate

potential and increase their competitive advantage (Senge, 1990). Leadership plays a critical role in organizational learning when creating teams and allocating resources (Uma, 2011). Building professional capital requires active participation since "learning is not a spectator sport" (Zepeda, 2013, p. 123). The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996) suggests that building professional capital in an educational setting involves connecting teacher's work to student needs, provide learning designed by problem solving, and providing sustained learning support (Zepeda, 2013). Creating eLearning courses that support continuous learning opportunity for educators and corporate employees must include quality course design.

Course Design

The presence in the literature on eLearning course design has proliferated over the last decade, impacting the enrollment in eLearning at the K-20 levels as well as in the corporate sectors (Allen & Seaman, 2010; Jung & Lee, 2018; Levy, 2004; Croxton, 2014; Hart, 2012; Lee & Choi, 2018; Kranzow, 2013; Todd et al., 2016). Ensuring flexible eLearning opportunities and increased course availability aligned to specific career knowledge influences eLearning enrollment and persistence (Stanford-Bowers, 2007; Wong, 2003). Flexibility addressed the need to provide professionally relevant, content-rich experiences (Todd et al., 2016; Bielawski, & Metcalf, 2005; Wong, 2003). Designing courses to include embedded videos, discussion boards, quick instructor feedback, video submissions, and clear objectives engage adult learners and provide collaborative learning practices (Wild, Griggs, & Downing, 2002; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Incorporating relevant eLearning course content created by subject-matter experts, in combination with engaging digital functionality, provide satisfying, quality eLearning experiences (Blundell, 2015).

Adult Learning Satisfaction

eLearning has a unique role in adult learning, and satisfaction has been widely studied (Allen & Seaman, 2010; Jung & Lee, 2018; Levy, 2004; Croxton, 2014; Hart, 2012; Lee & Choi, 2018; Kranzow, 2013; Todd et al., 2016). Gunawardena, Linder-VanBerschot, LaPointe & Rao (2010) state, "Students who report higher levels of learner satisfaction often participate more, demonstrate greater learning gains, and continue to enroll in online classes" (p. 209). Satisfied learners are more likely to be successful (Gunawardena et al., 2010; Puzziferro, 2008), and eLearning satisfaction provides information on how e-learning is received, accepted, and valued (Gunawardena et al., 2010). Multiple variables have been shown to impact eLearning satisfaction including learner self-efficacy and motivation, online learner support, instructor-participant interactions, functioning technology, relevant course design based upon adult learning needs, and social presence (Arbaugh & Hiltz, 2005; Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Goldman et al., 2005; LaPointe & Gunawardena 2004; Lim 2001; Puzziferro 2008). This sense of satisfaction leads to online learning persistence.

eLearning Persistence

Online learning persistence is defined as the number or ratio of participants continuing in a program, achieving learning outcomes, and course completion despite circumstances and obstacles (Kranzow, 2013; Hart, 2012; Burns, 2013). A significant body of literature exists to determine, examine, and explain a wide range of eLearning persistence factors. For example, persistence is influenced by designing course content based upon adult learning constructs (Knowles, 1980; Burns, 2013). Newton and Doonga (2007) reported organizational, learner, monetary, and leadership backing all influence eLearning employee persistence. Additional researchers identified factors such as developing a community of practitioners, maintaining a

high level of instructor presence and student motivation, as well as building highly structured courses as influencing persistence (Kranzow, 2013; Burns, 2013; Stanford-Bowers, 2007). Additionally, factors related to eLearning attrition include personal characteristics such as internal locus of control (Rotter, 1990), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1995), and self-regulation (Zimmerman, 2008). Unspecified factors, such as socio-economic status, marital status, language ability, and former educational opportunities, although not founded in the body of literature, could potentially affect attrition.

Justification of the Study

The eLearning courses developed by the company involved in this study aimed to improve internal professional capital to ultimately support K-12 educators and improve literacy rates in the United States. There is widespread, long-standing national concern about the significant number of K-12 non-proficient readers (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2017). At the turn of the century, a federal movement began with states accepting the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA, 2004) option of integrating Response to Intervention (RtI) into school systems to ensure reading proficiency. RtI was founded on the premise that students at risk for reading failure should receive evidence-based instruction. If not responding adequately, the student(s) receive more targeted and individualized intervention in order to improve the student's literacy ability (Hall, 2018). Yet after ten years of RtI implementation, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, 2017) reported only thirty-six percent of fourth-grade and thirty-four percent of eighth grade students performed as proficient on the nation's report card. To gain literacy skills, students require effective instruction from knowledgeable, well-trained educators (National Reading Panel, 2000; Snow, 2002; Snow, Burns, & Griffen, 1998). However, educators report training experiences with RtI as in-the-box,

lecture-style, and not applicable to their professional needs (Zepeda, 2013; The New Teacher Project, 2015; Horn & Goldstein, 2018). Providing meaningful, asynchronous, differentiated eLearning opportunities is necessary to improve student learning outcomes. Stakeholders within for-profit corporations must understand and agree to the necessary factors that contribute to eLearner satisfaction and persistence in order to construct courses for internal employees and ultimately support the broader K-12 educational community.

By investigating the perceptions of meaningful factors that influence eLearning persistence and satisfaction for corporate employees through the theoretical frameworks and contributing literature, it is the hope that these results may be applied to K-12 professional development eLearning courses to influence America's literacy rates. Adult learners who experience eLearning satisfaction are more apt to persist in a course, thus (potentially) increasing their professional knowledge. The aim is for organizations that provide satisfying eLearning courses designed to support adult learning needs and shared learning opportunities through relevant experiences while attending to corporate profitability.

Although there is a preponderance of business revenue literature and adult learning research available, a missing aspect includes overlaying these concepts onto eLearning in a corporate setting. I will address the lack of availability through the design of this and implementation of this research study, which explored:

1. Where do stakeholders' (corporate leaders, eLearning content designers, and eLearning participants) perceptions of persistence converge?
2. Where do stakeholders' (corporate leaders, eLearning content designers, and eLearning participants) eLearning perceptions of persistence diverge?

3. Where do stakeholders' (corporate leaders, eLearning content designers, and eLearning participants) eLearning perceptions of satisfaction converge?
4. Where do stakeholders (corporate leaders, eLearning content designers, and eLearning participants) eLearning perceptions of satisfaction diverge?

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this applied research study, perceptions of eLearning satisfaction and persistence at a for-profit corporation were examined using three stakeholder groups: corporate leaders, eLearning content designers, and eLearning participants. The author sought to discover the convergence and divergence of stakeholders' eLearning perceptions in order to identify corporate online learning courses' strengths and areas for potential improvement. The author also set out to determine the satisfaction and persistence factors considered most important to the three stakeholder groups. These results are necessary to expand future corporate eLearning courses and influence greater eLearning participant satisfaction and coursework persistence for improved learning outcomes.

Researcher's Philosophy

This research study was constructed to better understand and shape eLearning strategy in the corporate education sector. According to Sproull (1988), applied research is conducted to respond to a specific problem or to support decision-making, and is used for practical application. Currently, a significant body of literature supports online learning persistence and satisfaction at the K-12 and higher education levels (Allen & Seaman 2010; Jung & Lee, 2018; Levy, 2004; Croxton, 2014; Hart, 2012; Lee & Choi, 2018; Kranzow, 2013; Todd et al., 2016). This established research can be applied effectively by eLearning designers and educators to support the development of satisfying K-20 eLearning courses. However, studies to design satisfying courses to support participants' persistence specifically in a corporate setting are lacking. Thus, the primary purpose of this study centered on applying the results of this study to Future 1.0's operational practices. More specifically, Future 1.0 desired to create eLearning experiences to quickly acclimate its employees to product knowledge and to ultimately, improve

professional training quality for educators in the United States of America. Additionally, this applied research is meant to expand the body of literature regarding eLearning in a corporate setting while supporting business organizations' construction of satisfying and sustainable online learning environments.

Since the author worked as an eLearning content designer for Future 1.0, it was necessary to provide subjects (who were also colleagues) the opportunity to share their perceptions of the factors influencing eLearning satisfaction and persistence in an ethical manner (Sproull, 1988). Ethical research practices include protecting human subjects, using appropriate methodology, drawing conclusions based upon actual findings, ensuring anonymity, maintaining confidentiality, and obtaining informed consent (Sproull, 1988). Participation was voluntary and confidential and individuals were not compensated (Creswell, 2015). Participants acknowledged their permission to participate to the conditions of the research study after Institutional Review Board approval and prior to the study's onset.

Research Design

This 4-week study was designed to explore the factors stakeholders' perceived as influencing online learning persistence and satisfaction in a corporate setting. The study was conducted from October through November 2018 to align with the company's workflow and participant availability. The approach for this study contained two quantitative surveys implemented through a *modified Delphi consensus-building method* (Stanford-Bowers, 2007).

Participants and Sampling Procedures

Upon obtaining Internal Review Board approval, specific corporate leaders were sent an official letter to obtain the company's consent to proceed with the research study (see Appendix

A). Additionally, several teleconference calls occurred to ensure corporate leaders mutually agreed with the study's design, implementation, and access to potential participants.

Upon corporate sponsorship, forty-five employees were sent an electronic invitation to the study (see Appendix B) with a hyperlink and Quick Response (QR) code to access the consent survey (see Appendix C). The consent surveys from employees generated 37 responses, including: 10 Leaders, 11 Designers, and 16 Participants. The study aimed to include 10 to 30 subjects, or the suggested amount when using a Delphi method (Rayens & Hahn, 2000).

From the returned consent survey, participants were placed in stakeholder groups as Leaders, Designers, or Participants that represented a variety of experience, positionality, and influence (Rayens & Hahn, 2000). Leaders included high level directors and vice presidents while designers were content developers, eLearning specialists, and instructors. Participants included professional development providers who train teachers across the United States.

Subjects in each stakeholder group received Survey 1 with follow up notifications (see Appendix D) and were given five days to submit a response to the first survey. On the fifth day, individuals who had agreed to participate in the study yet not returned survey one received a reminder email with an additional link and QR code. Three Leaders and 2 Participants did not return Survey 1 by the completion date and were removed from the study. A total of thirty-two individuals completed Survey 1, including: 7 Leaders, 11 Designers, and 14 Participants.

The degree of eLearning course exposure varied between stakeholder groups. To qualify for the study, the Designers were required to self-report their prior experience in helping to generate at least one of the company's eLearning courses. Within the Designer stakeholder group, individuals self-reported developing from 1 to 5 eLearning courses for the company. Likewise, eLearning course participants were required to acknowledge the completion of a

minimum of one eLearning course while employed with the company. All Participants self-reported the completion of 3 or more eLearning courses. Leaders reported the lowest eLearning course exposure. One Leader of 7 acknowledged experience with at least one of the company's eLearning courses.

Demographic diversity existed as well. Including the 32 individuals within all stakeholder groups, the participants' employment time ranged from 2 months to 15 years, with over half of the study's participants working for the company between 2 to 4 years.

Participants	Leaders	Designers	Participants
N = 32	Female = 5 Male = 2	Female = 10 Male = 1	Female = 12 Male = 2

Description of Methodology and Instrumentation

The content in Survey 1 was based upon the predetermined factors of eLearning persistence and replicated the Stanford-Bowers (2007) study. As such, the stakeholder groups received a varied number of factors to evaluate, including: 20 factors for Leaders, 25 factors for Designers, and 17 factors for Participants. During the first round, subjects rated each factor they perceived as most important to least important in supporting eLearning courses. The anonymous responses received a Likert-scale survey and individuals were asked to rate their responses by using a four-point Likert scale: 1, Not Important; 2, Somewhat Important; 3, Important; 4, Very Important.

Round one included participants from all three stakeholder groups: Leaders, Designers, and Participants. The results of the first Likert-scale survey determined the rank order of factors in the second survey. The top ten totals were tabulated for each satisfaction and persistence factor. The frequency with which each factor received a particular ranking determined where that factor was listed. Survey two was generated by calculating the highest number of "strongly

agree" and "agree" results from participants in round one. The greater the total number value, the higher that factor was placed on the list. Mean and median scores were calculated for each factor. The list of factors for each stakeholder group was divided into an eLearning satisfaction and persistence category. All subjects from the first survey participated in the second round of the study.

The second questionnaire displayed the top 10 perceived indicators of eLearning satisfaction and persistence for the same stakeholders to rank order (Leaders, Designers, and Participants). The stakeholders re-ranked the survey items in ordinal position from 1–10, with the highest rating listed as 1, and the lowest rating of 10 indicating likelihood of satisfaction and persistence in the company's eLearning courses. At the end of the study, the three stakeholder groups were provided access to a written summary of the findings in a cumulative report.

Figure 1. Key elements of Delphi consensus method

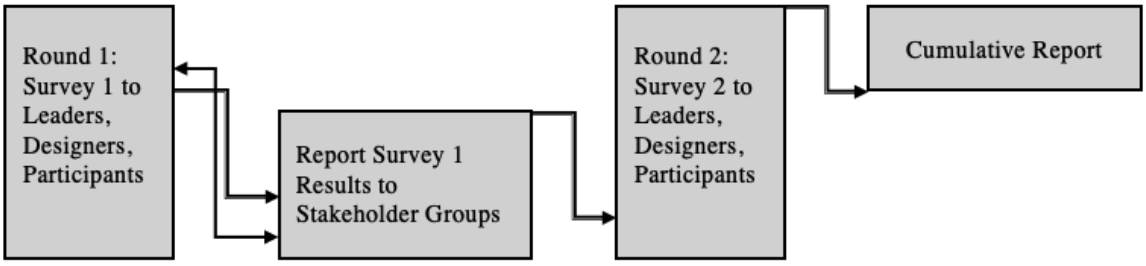


Figure 1. Key elements of Delphi consensus method adapted from Stanford-Bowers (2007). *Online persistence in community college distance education: Perceptions of major stakeholders*. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Through the examination of three stakeholder groups (Leaders, Designers, and Participants), this study sought to discover the perceived factors that influence eLearning persistence and satisfaction in a corporate setting. This study aimed to identify where convergence and divergence of thinking occurred among for-profit stakeholders regarding specific eLearning factors. A lack of convergence among stakeholder groups could potentially influence the efficacy of the eLearning experience, including satisfaction level of eLearning participants, as well as their desire to complete corporate online training courses and ultimately affect work performance. Alternatively, high levels of convergence among stakeholder groups may improve work performance and knowledge transference of corporate employees through satisfying eLearning experiences. This chapter will explain the data collection process and present the results of Survey 1 and Survey 2.

Using a modified Delphi consensus-building methodology, this study was conducted from October 15 through November 5, 2018. Results from two rounds of surveys within three stakeholder groups were collected from individuals who had been or were currently corporate employees. The identities and responses of the study's participants remained anonymous and zero attrition occurred throughout the duration of the study.

Data Analysis

Round 1. Using the list of eLearning factors previously generated by the Stanford-Bowers' study (2007) of online persistence in a community college setting, stakeholders in the current study rated eLearning factors on a four point Likert-scale. Each stakeholder group received a distinct list of factors listed on the Round 1 survey instruments in the order previously

determined by Stanford-Bowers (2007). The factors Survey responses were calculated using mean and mode.

Leaders' Round 1 Results. The purpose of Round 1 was to determine the most important factors influencing eLearning persistence and satisfaction. For Round 1, the corporate Leader stakeholder group completed a 20-item survey instrument and included the following factors:

1) Responsiveness of instructor and prompt feedback
2) Convenience and flexibility
3) User-friendly format
4) Availability of courses
5) Self-motivation
6) Course design
7) Self-discipline
8) Reading ability
9) Dedication
10) Basic computer skills
11) Collaboration
12) Computer access
13) Time management
14) Organization
15) Clearly stated requirements
16) Instructors
17) Value
18) Communication and writing skills

19) Computer support tools

20) Difficulty level

The results from the Leaders' survey one included (see Table 1):

Table 1. Leaders' Round 1 Most Important eLearning Factors

Factor	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Responsiveness of instructor and prompt feedback	28.57% (2)	42.86% (3)	28.57% (2)	0% (0)
Convenience and flexibility	42.86% (3)	28.57% (2)	14.29% (1)	14.29% (1)
User-friendly format	42.86% (3)	57.14% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Availability of courses	42.86% (3)	28.57% (2)	28.57% (2)	0% (0)
Self-motivation	42.86% (3)	42.86 (3)	14.29 (1)	0% (0)
Course design	42.86% (3)	57.14% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Self-discipline	28.57% (2)	71.43% (5)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Reading ability	14.29% (1)	57.14% (4)	28.57% (2)	0% (0)
Dedication	14.29% (1)	42.86% (3)	28.57% (2)	14.29% (1)
Basic computer skills	28.57% (2)	14.29% (1)	57.14% (4)	0% (0)
Collaboration	28.57%	42.86%	28.57%	0%

	(2)	(3)	(2)	(0)
Computer access	57.14% (4)	28.57% (2)	14.29% (1)	0% (0)
Time management	14.29% (1)	85.71% (6)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Organization	14.29% (1)	57.14% (4)	28.57% (2)	0% (0)
Clearly stated requirements	42.86% (3)	28.57% (2)	28.57% (2)	0% (0)
Instructors	57.14% (4)	42.86% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Value	28.57% (2)	71.43% (5)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Communication and writing skills	28.57% (2)	57.14% (4)	14.29% (1)	0% (0)
Computer support tools	0% (0)	71.43% (5)	28.57% (2)	0% (0)
Difficulty level	0% (0)	57.14% (4)	28.57% (2)	14.29% (1)

During Round 1, over 50% of the Leaders rated 12 of the 20 eLearning factors as Important or Very Important. Forty-percent of the Leaders rated 8 factors as Very Important. These finding helped generate the top-ten list of eLearning factors for the Round 2 survey instrument.

Designers' Round 1 Results. To determine Designers' perceptions of the most important eLearning factors, Designers received a 25-item survey. The factors included:

1. Student/teacher interaction and prompt feedback
2. Self-motivation

3. User-friendly format
4. Course design
5. Learning styles
6. Computer skills
7. Computer access
8. Subject-matter content
9. Clearly stated requirements
10. Lack of personal contact
11. Discipline
12. Instructor
13. Cheat-ability
14. Discussion
15. Personal contact
16. Required readings
17. Intellect
18. Perceptions of course difficulty
19. Flexibility
20. Reliable server and support network
21. Outside assistance
22. Control
23. Value
24. Time
25. Alternate means of contact

The survey website produced the percentage and number of Survey 1 responses from Designers and included:

Table 2. Designers' Round 1 Most Important eLearning Factors

Factor	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Student/teacher interaction and prompt feedback	63.64% (7)	27.27% (3)	9.09% (1)	0.0% (0)
Self-motivation	72.73% (8)	27.27% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
User-friendly format	72.73% (8)	27.27% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Course design	90.91% (10)	9.09% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Learning styles	54.55% (6)	36.36% (4)	0.0% (0)	9.09% (1)
Computer skills	18.18% (2)	45.45% (5)	36.36% (4)	0.0% (0)
Computer access	36.36% (4)	45.45% (5)	18.18% (2)	0.0% (0)
Subject-matter content	36.36% (4)	27.27% (3)	36.36% (4)	0.0% (0)
Clearly stated requirements	72.73% (8)	18.18% (2)	9.09% (1)	0.0% (0)
Lack of personal contact	9.09% (1)	45.45% (5)	27.27% (3)	0.0% (0)
Discipline	27.27% (3)	54.55% (6)	18.18% (2)	0.0% (0)

Instructor	27.27% (3)	63.64% (7)	9.09% (1)	0.0% (0)
Cheat-ability	18.18% (2)	27.27% (3)	27.27% (3)	27.27% (3)
Discussion	18.18% (2)	63.64% (7)	18.18% (2)	0.0% (0)
Personal contact	27.27% (3)	18.18% (2)	54.55% (6)	0.0% (0)
Required readings	54.55% (6)	36.36% (4)	9.09% (1)	0.0% (0)
Intellect	0.0% (0)	36.36% (4)	27.27% (3)	36.36% (4)
Perceptions of course difficulty	18.18% (2)	36.36% (4)	45.45% (5)	0.0% (0)
Flexibility	9.09% (1)	54.55% (6)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Reliable server and support network	72.73% (8)	18.18% (2)	9.09% (1)	0.0% (0)
Outside assistance	18.18% (2)	45.45% (5)	36.36% (4)	0.0% (0)
Control	27.27% (3)	54.55% (6)	18.18% (2)	0.0% (0)
Value	72.73% (8)	27.27% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Time	36.36% (4)	54.55% (6)	9.09% (1)	0.0% (0)
Alternate means of contact	45.45% (5)	45.45% (5)	9.09% (1)	0.0% (0)

During Round 1, over 50% of the Designers rated 13 of the 25 eLearning factors as Important or Very Important. Designers rated 9 factors as Very Important. These finding helped generate the top-ten list of eLearning factors for the Designers' Round 2 survey instrument.

eLearning Participants' Round 1 Results. Participants received a 17-item survey. The factors included:

1) Convenience and flexibility
2) Discussion and interaction
3) Time management
4) Course design
5) User-friendly format
6) Personal contact
7) Time limits
8) Less class interaction
9) Computer skills
10) Independent learning and responsibility
11) Accessibility
12) Clearly stated requirements
13) Less difficulty coursework
14) Efficiency
15) Technical support
16) Personal issues
17) Value

The results from the Participants' survey one included:

Table 3. Participants' Round 1 Most Important eLearning Factors

Factor	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Convenience and flexibility	71.43% (10)	14.29% (2)	14.29% (2)	0% (0)
Discussion and interaction	42.86% (6)	28.57% (4)	21.43% (3)	7.14% (1)
Time management	50.00% (7)	50.00% (7)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Course design	71.43% (10)	28.57% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)
User-friendly format	85.71% (12)	7.14% (1)	7.14% (1)	0% (0)
Personal contact	28.57% (4)	50.00% (7)	21.43% (3)	0% (0)
Time limits	42.86% (6)	35.71% (5)	21.43% (3)	0% (0)
Less class interaction	7.14% (1)	21.43% (3)	50.00% (7)	21.43% (3)
Computer skills	21.43% (3)	50.00% (7)	28.57% (4)	0% (0)
Independent learning and responsibility	21.43% (3)	57.14% (8)	21.43% (3)	0% (0)
Accessibility	50.00% (7)	42.86% (6)	7.14% (1)	0% (0)
Clearly stated requirements	78.57% (11)	21.43% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Less difficulty coursework	0% (0)	50.00% (7)	28.57% (4)	21.43% (3)

Efficiency	28.57% (4)	57.14% (8)	7.14% (1)	7.14% (1)
Technical Support	42.86% (6)	50.00% (7)	7.14% (1)	0% (0)
Personal issues	7.14% (1)	42.86% (6)	35.71% (5)	14.29% (2)
Value	71.43% (10)	28.57% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)

During Round 1, over 50% of the Participants rated 11 of the 17 eLearning factors as Important or Very Important. Over half of Participants rated 7 factors as Very Important. These finding helped generate the top-ten list of eLearning factors for the Participants' Round 2 survey instrument.

Round 2

The survey results from Round 1 were used to derive the Round 2 surveys for each stakeholder group. The Round 2 surveys were constructed by calculating the mode and mean of each factor. The highest mean and mode for each factor using the categories of Very and Somewhat Important were derived to determine the top ten factors for each Round 2 survey.

Leaders' Persistence Results. In Round 2, Leaders received a 10-item rank ordered survey, listing factors from highest previously scored persistence factors and included:

1) Instructors
2) Course design
3) Computer access
4) User-friendly
5) Self-motivation
6) Value
7) Self-discipline
8) Clearly stated requirements
9) Availability of courses
10) Time management

The factors that did not make the top ten Leader persistence list included: responsiveness of instructor and prompt feedback, convenience and flexibility, reading ability, dedication, basic computer skills, collaboration, organization, communication and writing skills, computer support tools, and difficulty level.

Leaders rated self-motivation of the eLearning participant as the most important factor to influence online learning persistence, followed by course design, value, computer access, and user-friendly features.

1) Self-motivation
2) Course design
3) Value
4) Computer access
5) User-friendly

The results from the Leaders' survey two included:

Table 4. Leaders' Round 2 Most Important Persistence eLearning Factors

Self-motivation	7.5
Course design	6.17
Value	6.14
Computer access	6.0
User-friendly	5.83
Self-discipline	5.67
Instructors	5.17
Availability of courses	5.17
Time management	5.0
Clearly stated requirements	4

Leaders' Satisfaction Results. To derive Round 2's satisfaction list for the Leaders' stakeholder group, the frequency of Very and Somewhat Important categories were calculated and rank ordered based upon highest to lowest mean and median scores. Future 1.0 Leaders received a 10-item rank ordered survey, listing factors from highest previously scored satisfaction factors. The top ten satisfaction factors included:

1) Instructors
2) Course design
3) Computer access
4) User-friendly
5) Self-motivation
6) Value
7) Self-discipline
8) Clearly-stated requirements
9) Availability of courses
10) Convenience and flexibility

The factors that did not make the top ten Leader satisfaction list included: responsiveness of instructor and prompt feedback, reading ability, dedication basic computer skills, collaboration, time management, organization, communication and writing skills, computer support tools, and difficulty level

Leaders rated course design as the most important satisfaction factor to influence online learning satisfaction, followed by instructors, user-friendly, value, clearly-stated requirements.

1) Course design
2) Instructors

3) User-friendly
4) Value
5) Clearly-stated requirements

Table5. Leaders' Round 2 Most Important Satisfaction eLearning Factors

Course design	7.83
Instructors	7.71
User-friendly	7.5
Value	6
Clearly-stated requirements	5.33
Availability of courses	5.14
Convenience and flexibility	5
Computer access	4.5
Self-discipline	4.14
Self-motivation	3.67

Designers' Persistence Results. To derive Round 2's persistence list for Designers, the frequency of Very and Somewhat Important categories were calculated and rank ordered based upon highest to lowest mean and median scores. The top ten factors were utilized to generate each unique Round 2 stakeholder group survey. The Designer stakeholder group received a 10-item rank ordered survey, listing factors from highest previously scored persistence factors. The results from the Designers' survey two top-ten persistence factors included:

1) Course design
2) Value
3) Self-motivation

4) User-friendly format
5) Reliable server and support
6) Clearly-stated requirements
7) Student/teacher interaction and prompt feedback
8) Required readings
9) Flexibility
10) Learning styles

The factors that did not make the top ten Designer persistence list included: computer skills, computer access, subject-matter content, lack of personal contact, discipline, instructor, cheat-ability, discussion, personal contact, intellect, perceptions of course difficulty, outside assistance, control, time, and alternate means of contact.

Designers rated user-friendly format of the eLearning participant as the most important persistence factor to influence online learning persistence, followed by course design, self-motivation, value, and reliable server and support.

1) User-friendly format
2) Course design
3) Self-motivation
4) Value
5) Reliable server and support

Table 6. Designers' Round 2 Most Important Persistence eLearning Factors

User-friendly format	7.9
Course design	7.6
Self-motivation	7.5
Value	6.3
Reliable server and network	6.2
Clearly-stated requirements	5.3
Student/teacher interaction and feedback	5.09
Flexibility	4.1
Required readings	3.45
Learning Styles	3.09

Designers' Satisfaction Results. To derive Round 2's satisfaction list for Designers, the frequency of Very and Somewhat Important categories were calculated and rank ordered based upon highest to lowest score mean and median scores. The top ten factors were utilized to generate each unique Round 2 stakeholder group survey. The Designer stakeholder group received a 10-item rank ordered survey, listing factors from highest previously scored satisfaction factors. The Designers top ten satisfaction factors included:

1) Course Design
2) Value
3) Self-motivation
4) User-friendly Format
5) Reliable Server and Support
6) Clearly-stated Requirements

7) Student/Teacher Interaction
8) Required Readings
9) Flexibility
10) Time

The factors that did not make the top ten Designer satisfaction list included: learning styles, computer skills, computer access, subject-matter content, lack of personal contact, discipline, instructor, cheat-ability, discussion, personal contact, intellect, perceptions of course difficulty, outside assistance, control, alternate means of contact.

Designers rated value to the eLearning participant as the most important factor to influence online learning satisfaction followed by course design, user-friendly format, time, reliable server and support rounding out the top five factors.

1) Value
2) Course design
3) User-friendly format
4) Time
5) Reliable server and support

The top ten most important satisfaction factors for Designers included:

Table 7. Designers' Round 2 Most Important Satisfaction Factors

Top Ten Satisfaction Factors	Rank Ordered Scores
Value	8.2
Course design	6.7
User-friendly format	6.36
Time	6.3

Reliable server and network	5.5
Self-motivation	5.4
Flexibility	5.27
Student/teacher interaction and feedback	5
Clearly-stated instructions	4.3
Required readings	3.18

Participants' Persistence Results. The survey results from Round 1 were used to derive the Round 2 surveys for each stakeholder group. The Round 2 surveys were constructed by calculating the mode and mean of each factor. The highest mean and mode for each factor using the categories of Very and Somewhat Important were derived to determine the top ten factors for each Round 2 survey.

The initial eLearning Participants' persistence results that generated Round 2 survey included:

1) User-friendly format
2) Clearly-stated requirements
3) Course design
4) Value
5) Convenience and flexibility
6) Time management
7) Accessibility
8) Technical support
9) Time limits
10) Discussion and Interaction

Seven factors did not make the top ten eLearner Participant persistence list included: personal contact, less class interaction, computer skills, independent learning and responsibility, less difficulty coursework, efficiency, and personal issues.

Participants rated user-friendly format of the eLearning experience as the most important factor to influence online learning persistence, followed by clearly-stated requirements, course design, value, and convenience & flexibility rounding out the top five persistence factors.

1) User-friendly format
2) Clearly-stated requirements
3) Course design
4) Value
5) Convenience and flexibility

Table 8. Participants' Round 2 Most Important eLearning Persistence Factors

Top 10 Persistence Factors	Rank Ordered Scores
User-friendly format	8.31
Clearly stated requirements	7.77
Course design	7.23
Value	6.31
Convenience and flexibility	6.23
Time management	4.38
Accessibility	4.23
Time limits	3.23
Technical Support	2.92

Participants' Satisfaction Results. The survey results from Round 1 were used to derive the Round 2 surveys for each stakeholder group. The Round 2 surveys were constructed by calculating the mode and mean of each factor. The highest mean and mode for each factor using the categories of Very and Somewhat Important were derived to determine the top ten factors for each Round 2 survey.

The initial eLearning Participants' satisfaction results that generated Round 2 survey included:

1) User-friendly format
2) Clearly-stated requirements
3) Course design
4) Value
5) Convenience and flexibility
6) Time management
7) Accessibility
8) Technical support
9) Discussion and Interaction
10) Efficiency

Seven factors did not make the top ten eLearning satisfaction top-ten list and include: personal contact, time limits, less class interaction, computer skills, independent learning and responsibility, accessibility, less difficulty coursework, and personal issues.

Participants rated value of the eLearning experience as the most important factor to influence online learning satisfaction, followed by convenience & flexibility, course design, clearly-stated requirements, and user-friendly format.

1) Value
2) Convenience and flexibility
3) Course design
4) Clearly-state requirements
5) User-friendly format

Table 9. Participants' Round 2 Most Important eLearning Satisfaction Factors

Top 10 Satisfaction Factors	Rank Ordered Scores
Value	8.07
Convenience and flexibility	7
Course design	6.93
Clearly-stated requirements	6.71
User-friendly format	6.64
Efficiency	5.86
Accessibility	4.21
Discussion and interaction	3.86
Time management	3.79
Technical support	1.93

Results of Research Question 1

Where do stakeholders' (corporate leaders, eLearning content designers, and eLearning participants') eLearning perceptions of persistence converge?

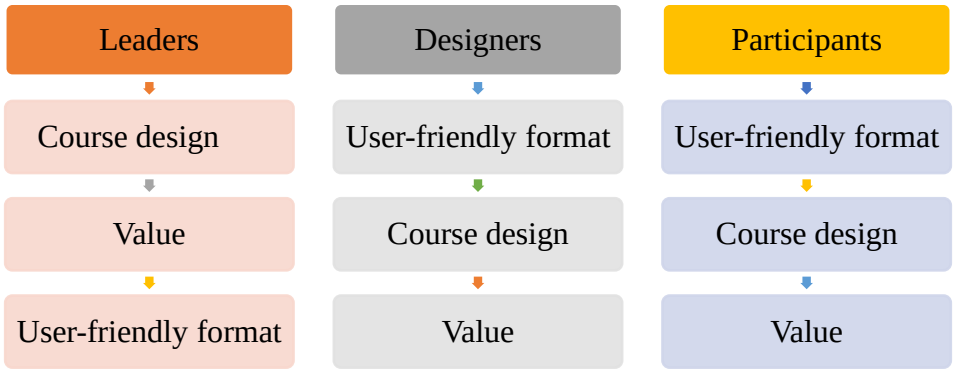
The convergence of stakeholders' perceptions of the factors influencing eLearning persistence occurred the areas of user-friendly format, course design, and value. All three stakeholder groups independently placed the highest importance on the eLearning persistence factors of course design, value, and user-friendly format.

Table 10. Persistence Congruence Results Across Stakeholder Groups

Leaders' Persistence Factors	Designers' Persistence Factors	Participants' Persistence Factors
1. Self-motivation	User-friendly format	User-friendly format
2. Course design	Self-motivation	Clearly stated requirements
3. Value	Course design	Course design
4. Computer access	Value	Value
5. User-friendly format	Reliable server	Convenience and flexibility

In the category of persistence, user-friendly, value, and course design appeared in the top five ranked factors across all stakeholder groups.

Table 11. Factors of Complete Persistence Convergence Across Company Stakeholders



In the category of persistence, user-friendly format was ranked first for Designers and Participants, and fifth for Leaders. In the category of persistence, course design was ranked second for Leaders, and third for Designers and Participants. In the category of persistence, value was ranked third for Leaders, and fourth for Designers and Participants.

Additionally, two stakeholder groups demonstrated convergence on self-motivation. Self-motivation was ranked first for Leaders and second for Designers when considering the important factors that influence eLearning persistence.

Results of Research Question 2

Where do stakeholders' (corporate leaders, eLearning content designers, and eLearning participants) eLearning perceptions of persistence diverge?

Table 12. Divergent Persistence Factors Across Company Stakeholders

Leaders' Persistence Factors	Designers' Persistence Factors	Participants' Persistence Factors
1. Self-motivation	User-friendly format	User-friendly format
2. Course design	Self-motivation	Clearly stated requirements
3. Value	Course design	Course design
4. Computer access	Value	Value
5. User-friendly format	Reliable server	Convenience and flexibility

The divergence of stakeholders' perceptions of the factors influencing eLearning persistence occurred the areas of computer access, reliable server, clearly stated requirements, and convenience and flexibility. Leaders ranked computer access as the fourth most important

factor to influence eLearning persistence. Designers ranked the necessity for a reliable server as an important factor to influence eLearning persistence. Participants ranked clearly stated requirements and convenience and flexibility as important eLearning persistence factors.

The convergence of stakeholders' perceptions of the factors influencing eLearning satisfaction occurred the areas of user-friendly format, course design, and value. All three stakeholder groups independently placed the highest importance on the same factors.

Results of Research Question 3

Where do stakeholders' eLearning perceptions of satisfaction converge?

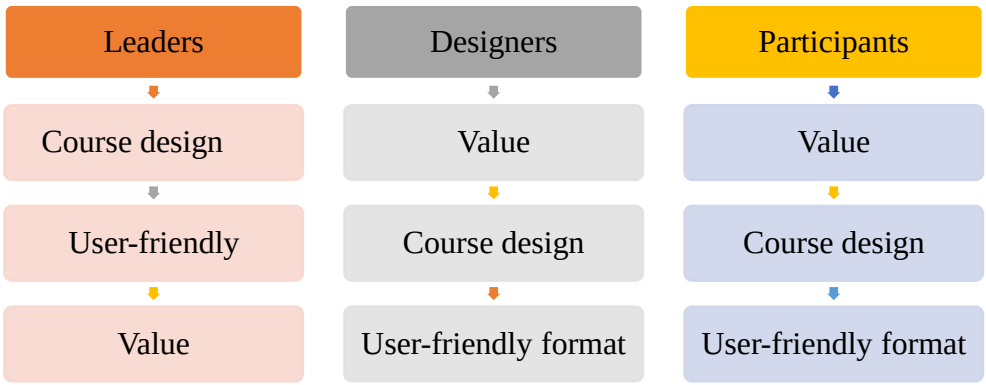
In the category of satisfaction, the factors of user-friendly format, value, and course design appeared in the top five ranked factors across company stakeholders.

Table 13. Satisfaction Congruence Results Across Company Stakeholders

Leaders' Satisfaction Factors	Designers' Satisfaction Factors	Participants' Satisfaction Factors
1. Course design	Value	Value
2. Instructors	Course design	Convenience and flexibility
3. User-friendly	User-friendly format	Course design
4. Value	Time	Clearly-stated requirements
5. Clearly-stated requirements	Reliable server and support	User-friendly format

Within the satisfaction category, the factor of value was ranked as first for Designers and Participants and fourth for Leaders. Within the satisfaction category, course design was ranked first for Leaders, second for Designers, and third for Participants. User-friendly format was ranked third for Leaders and Designers, and fifth for Participants.

Table 14. Top Factors of Complete Satisfaction Convergence



Results of Research Question 4

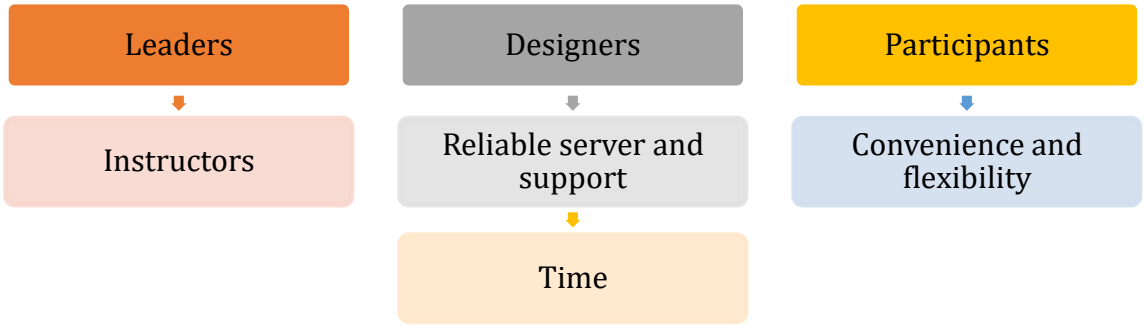
Where do stakeholders' eLearning perceptions of satisfaction diverge?

Table 15. Divergent Perceptions of Satisfaction Factors Across Company Stakeholders

Leaders' Satisfaction Factors	Designers' Satisfaction Factors	Participants' Satisfaction Factors
1. Course design	Value	Value
2. Instructors	Course design	Convenience and flexibility
3. User-friendly	User-friendly format	Course design
4. Value	Time	Clearly-stated requirements
5. Clearly-stated requirements	Reliable server and support	User-friendly format

The divergence of stakeholders' perceptions of the factors influencing eLearning satisfaction occurred the areas of instructors, time, reliable server and support, and convenience and flexibility. Unlike Designers and Participants, Leaders ranked instructors as the second most important factor to influence eLearning persistence. Designers ranked the necessity for a reliable server and time as important factors to influence eLearning satisfaction. Participants ranked convenience and flexibility as important eLearning persistence factors.

Table 16. Divergent Perceptions of Satisfaction Factors Across Company Stakeholders



In summary, the key findings of this study suggest that stakeholders within this for-profit corporation converged on the three distinct eLearning persistence and satisfaction factors of course design, value, and creating a user-friendly format. This is a remarkable and unexpected finding, and will be explained in greater detail in the final chapter.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

A high degree of convergence occurred regarding stakeholders' perceptions of eLearning satisfaction and persistence. All three stakeholder groups independently placed high value on the eLearning factors of course design, value, and the necessity for a user-friendly format. User-friendly, value, and course design ranked in the top five factors across all stakeholder groups for both persistence and satisfaction.

Within the category of persistence, Leaders reported computer access while Designers ranked reliable server as important. Participants reported clearly-stated requirements and convenience and flexibility as important, while Leaders placed importance on Instructors. Designers reported reliable server and support as factors that influence eLearning satisfaction. Contrastingly, Participants determined that convenience and flexibility as an important factor.

This study sought to identify the convergent and divergent eLearning perceptions of corporate stakeholders to improve user experiences and ultimately impact K-12 literacy instruction. In the United States, the number of eLearning course offerings by for-profit corporations has grown since the beginning of the century making it necessary to determine and implement the factors that best support online participants (Wong, 2003; Bielawski & Metcalf, 2005; Stanford-Bowers, 2007; Flood, 2002; Young, Kyu, & Kim, 2012). Understanding the satisfaction and persistence factors among corporate stakeholders can help construct efficacious eLearning courses. The identification of divergent perceptions within corporations can support ongoing discussions while addressing opposing beliefs. Such crucial conversations regarding differences can help traverse eLearning course development roadblocks and enhance user experiences.

Convergence

In this study, the amount of convergence among corporate stakeholders' perceptions of the eLearning factors that influence both persistence and satisfaction was unexpected. Stakeholders revealed complete consensus on the indicators of value, user-friendly format, and course design as the most important factors contributing to eLearning persistence and satisfaction success in a corporate setting.

Table 17. Persistence and Satisfaction Convergence Factors Across Stakeholders

Leaders	Designers	Participants
Course design	Value	Value
Value	Course design	Course design
User-friendly format	User-friendly format	User-friendly format

Value. The survey results from Leaders, Designers, and Participants for both the satisfaction and persistence revealed 'value' as central to eLearning importance.

Table 18. Value Rank-ordered Across Stakeholders

Leaders	Designers	Participants
	Value	Value
Value		

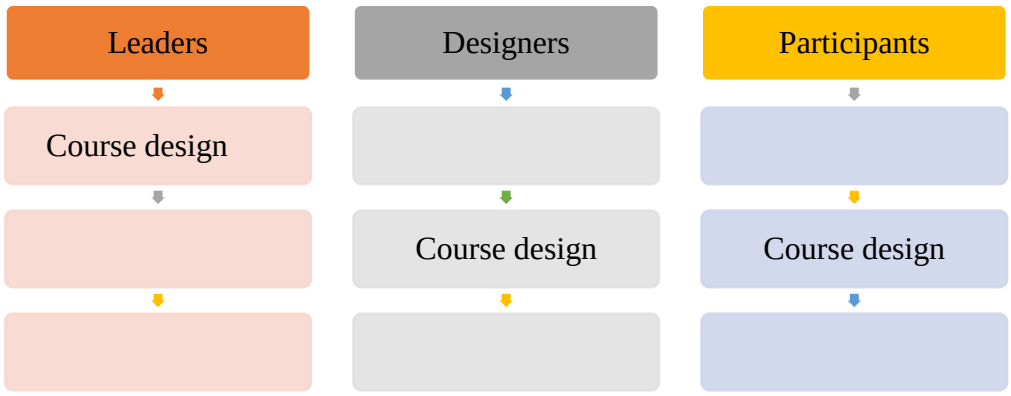
For the purpose of this study, 'value' within eLearning courses was defined as: 1) believing the online courses were equal to or better than onsite instruction, and 2) ensuring the company received a return on their eLearning investment. Identifying 'value' as essential to

eLearning importance signifies that Leaders, Designers, and Participants acknowledge that adult learners navigate competing interests. Providing meaningful courses that improve an individual's life support eLearning value. Knowles (2015) argued that valuable adult learning experiences require the incorporation of six andragogical principles: (a) supporting an adult learner's need to know; (b) acknowledging learners' self-concepts; (c) honoring learners' prior experiences; (d) supporting adults' readiness to learn; (e) considering adults' orientation to learning; and (f) realizing motivational factors to support learning (Knowles, 2015; Todd et al., 2016). This study's eLearning courses were strategically designed from the construct of Knowles' (2015) adult learning theory. The findings from this research study overwhelmingly endorse the necessity for profit-generating corporations to create courses centered on adult learning principles in order to maintain 'value' and support eLearning persistence and satisfaction.

In this study, 'value' for each stakeholder group was also defined in terms of return on investment. The eLearning courses under review were utilized to build institutional knowledge and employee retention, to ultimately influence return on investment extension. Luor, Hu, and Lu (2009) suggested that employee retention is a bi-product of professional growth support (Slotte & Herbert, 2006) while valuable training experiences influence morale and employee retention (Schultz & Correia, 2015). Providing valuable learning opportunities saves Human Resources costs (Newton & Doonga, 2007; Schultz & Correia, 2015). Since Leaders, Designers, and Participants provided strong evidence that 'value' influences both the persistence and satisfaction of eLearning success in a corporate setting, 'value' should be central to future eLearning course development.

Course Design. The survey results from Leaders, Designers, and Participants for both the satisfaction and persistence revealed 'course design' as central to eLearning importance.

Table 19. Convergence of rank-ordered factors, course design

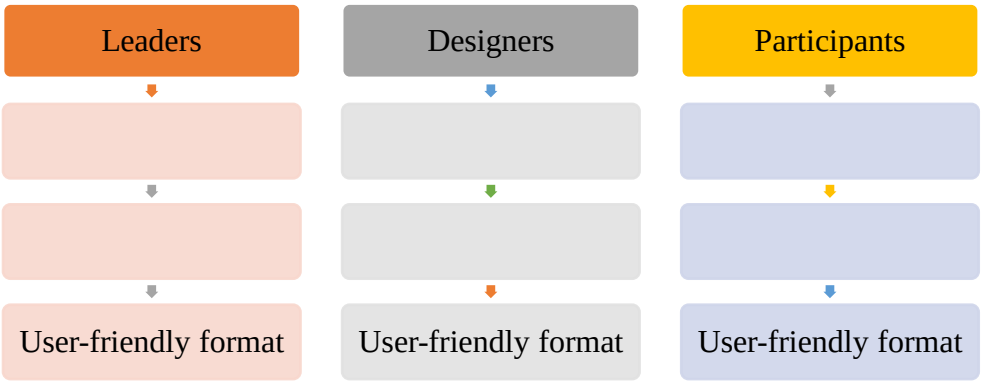


For the purpose of this study, 'course design' within eLearning courses was defined as: 1) engaging multiple sensory modalities, 2) creating a hierarchal design 3) developing activities to supplement text reading, 4) providing quality material presented in an engaging format, 5) using a variety of teaching strategies, and 6) integrating video, links to other sites. The finding of providing a 'course design' for eLearners aligns with research that suggests that individuals require interactivity, streamlined content, and multi-modal participation (Burnett, 2001; Palloff & Pratt, 2003; Stark & Warren, 1999). As evidenced by this study's convergence regarding the importance of developing courses with a 'course design', a recommendation for industry sponsors includes future course constructions that transcend eLearning experiences. The results from this study support the integration of visually-appealing graphics, accessible reading content aligned to application activities, and the use of short video clips in order to provide a well-designed eLearning course (Burnett, 2001; Palloff & Pratt, 2003; Stark & Warren, 1999). To ensure eLearning satisfaction and persistence, the stakeholders within this study agreed upon the importance of efficacious 'course design'. A recommendation includes implementing eLearning courses that contain clearly communicated course objectives, expectations, and policies as well as ensuring instructor support and an eLearning participants' course success (Gaide, 2004; Lorenzetti, 2005a; Lorenzetti, 2005b).

A well-designed course will help retain participants (Palloff & Pratt, 2003; Schweir, 2000; Stark & Warren, 1999). When an eLearning course does not provide a logical scaffolding of content or interactive learning opportunities, participants may select to log-off and participate in an alternate activity (Stanford-Bowers, 2007). Poorly designed courses impact self-discipline and persistence of eLearners (Palloff & Pratt, 2003). With this factor receiving high endorsement from the three stakeholder groups, for-profit corporations should place importance on constructing well-designed courses.

User-friendly format. The survey results from Leaders, Designers, and Participants for both the satisfaction and persistence revealed 'user-friendly format' as central to eLearning importance.

Table 20. User-friendly Format Convergence Rank-ordered Across Stakeholders



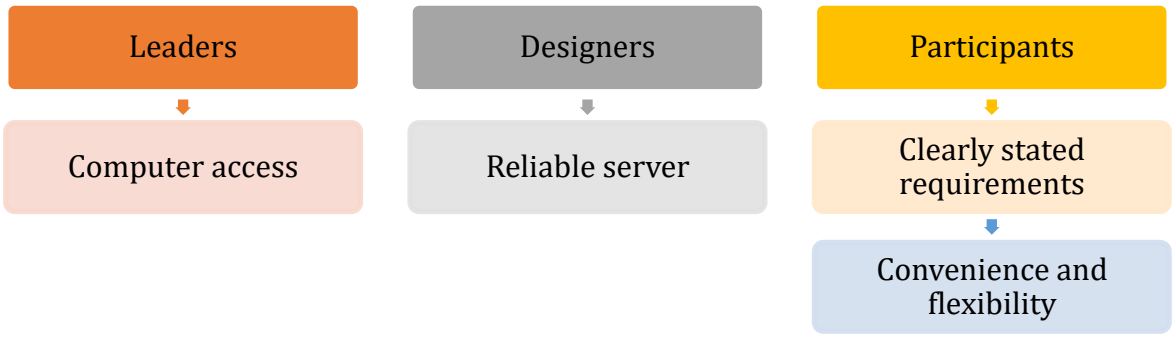
For the purpose of this study, 'user-friendly format' within eLearning courses was defined as: 1) a format that does not create anxiety, 2) the course layout enables less experience eLearners to navigate the course without problems, 3) the format is clear and uncluttered. As indicated by the clear convergence of stakeholders within this study, individuals who construct and support eLearning courses must recognize the importance of adhering to technological simplicity.

In order for eLearning satisfaction and persistence to occur, individuals developing courses must provide a modality for easy access information, learning activities, videos, and other eLearning components (Stanford-Bowers, 2007). Participants who experience navigation issues may not be able to fulfill course requirements, creating situations that impede course completion (Cross, 1981; Lorenzetti, 2004). In eLearning courses, technology should not serve as a steep learning curve, and course functionality should support a user's positive course finish (Stanford-Bowers, 2007).

Divergence

Persistence Divergence. In this study, stakeholders' beliefs demonstrated minor divergence in perceptions of eLearning persistence. Leaders reported computer access as significantly influencing eLearning persistence, while Designers and Participants did not determine this as an important factor.

Table 21. Divergent Persistence Factors Across Company Stakeholders



Corporate leaders may consider computer access as an important factor since they are responsible for ensuring employees are equipped with technological equipment and tend to the business aspects of running a for-profit corporation. Conversely, Designers are responsible for ensuring participants are able to connect to learning management systems through reliable servers. This may account for the divergence of eLearning persistence between Leaders and

Designers. Meanwhile, Participants reported eLearning importance in terms of convenience and flexibility as well as receiving clearly-stated expectations. The Leaders and Designers divergence regarding these particular eLearning persistence factors depart from Lave and Wenger's (1991) Situated Learning Theory which suggests that adults carry individual needs and experience the world through various lenses. Participants' perceptions, however, aligned with adult learning tenets. They expressed the need for relevant, well-designed, convenient courses that meet their unique learning needs.

The top factors reported as important by the stakeholders in this study align with each individual's role and responsibility within the company. A recommendation for traversing the stakeholders' divergent perceptions includes acknowledging the important lens that each stakeholder group brings to the organization. If Leaders shared their perspective regarding the importance of and role in providing computer access to employees, then Designers and Participants may have an opportunity to learn from the Leaders' responsibilities, supporting the synergy of eLearning community practitioners (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The same tactic can be applied to Designers and Participants in for-profit corporations. Communicating differences and needs supports functional, healthy teams, and effective organizations (Lencioni, 2002).

Satisfaction Divergence. In this study, Leaders reported the role of the instructor as important for eLearning satisfaction. Palloff and Pratt (2001) agree that eLearning instructors are central to course persistence and must establish positive relationships with participants to maximize effective teaching. Instructors must moderate eLearning courses with clear expectations, helpful feedback, and quick responses (Palloff & Pratt, 2001; Stanford-Bowers, 2007). Leaders must ensure skilled Designers are allowed to prevent eLearning barriers, as eLearning is time-consuming and requires a skilled instructor (Stanford-Bowers, 2007).

In a corporate setting online courses for onboarding and employment purposes can be time-consuming (Stanford-Bowers, 2007). In this study, Designers reported ‘time’ as an important factor to influence eLearning satisfaction. Employee attrition can occur when professional learning is viewed as a waste of time or unsatisfying (Luor, Hu, and Lu, 2009). Personal and professional priorities compete with an employee’s schedule, requiring Designers to ensure the time spent on eLearning courses is well worth participants’ time (Stanford-Bowers, 2007).

Participants reported the importance of eLearning ‘convenience and flexibility’. Asynchronous learning experiences provide scheduling solutions for adults with competing interests, helping eLearners engage in courses anytime, anywhere (Wong, 2003; Bielawski & Metcalf, 2005; Stanford-Bowers, 2007). Interestingly, in this study Participants reported ‘convenience and flexibility’ and the second most important factor to influence eLearning satisfaction while Designers and Leaders did not report this factor in their top-five lists. A recommendation for corporate leaders and eLearning designers includes the consideration of eLearning versatility. Learning flexibility supports Knowles adult learning theory principle of supporting an individual’s need to know information (2015). Adults characteristically require learning on a need-to-know basis, when content is applicable and meaningful to their lives, and when planted within a community of practitioners (Knowles, 2015; Lave & Wenger 1991).

Strengths and Limitations

A strength of this study includes filling the gap in the minimal research that now exists regarding online adult learning in a corporate setting. This study aimed to inform industry eLearning stakeholders to examine the factors that influence satisfaction and persistence of their online systems. Inherent limitations exist when examining adult online learning in corporate settings. Future 1.0's legal requirements limited the type and amount of company information this research can share with outside entities. While reporting on findings in online learning satisfaction, this research does not provide company information that may advantage competitors. Another limitation within this project includes the size of the corporation. Since this study examines a medium-sized organization, the researcher was also the primary individual responsible for the company's online learning system.

Additional limitations include survey size issues. Corporate professionals, and especially corporate leaders, have full workloads. A limited sample size among the Leader stakeholder group served as a limitation to this study. An optimal Leader sample size would have been double what was available for this study, or roughly 50% of the corporation's executive team. Limited participation may have been negatively influenced by the eLearning Participant stakeholder group. These individuals have significant caseloads and share their time to complete each survey while not receiving a monetary reward. Offering compensation for their time may have increased the number of Participants in this study. The eLearning stakeholder group had the highest survey response and represented the smallest organizational unit. This study sought to extinguish the bias of underrepresentation of this group within the corporation through the methodology of this research study.

Recommendations for the Future

Although this study expanded on the literature pertaining to eLearning in a corporate setting, recommendations for future research include incorporating the eLearning factors of high convergence in the design of future corporate courses, increasing the participant's sample size, and replicating the study beginning with an open-ended survey.

Stakeholders independently reported the saliency of course design, value, and user-friendly eLearning formats as important factors that influence eLearning persistence and satisfaction. For-profit corporations can implement this finding to strengthen eLearning course offerings, support employee satisfaction and retention, as well as develop efficacious online offerings for customers. Corporations should ensure eLearning course development centers on course design, value, and user-friendly eLearning formats.

In the future, this research should be replicated with a larger sample size (N = 50) to strengthen the validity and reliability of this study. Confirming the participation of a more robust number of corporate leaders prior to sending the consent survey would prove helpful, as it was difficult to acquire a sufficient quantity of subjects from the leadership team. Future studies may benefit from securing a more diverse population of organizational leaders, male constituents, multilingual, and lower socioeconomic individuals in order to generalize the findings.

For ease, future researchers may opt to utilize the Survey 1 instrument to identify the factors with a different population of stakeholders. Another recommendation is to implement a mixed-methods approach and incorporate a final interview with each stakeholder group. This would provide participants with the opportunity to discuss the findings and process the divergent perceptions between stakeholder groups.

Conclusion

Ultimately, this findings of this study provide insight regarding the factors that support satisfaction and persistence since limited eLearning research exists in a corporate setting. In the United States, factors that influence eLearning satisfaction and persistence at the K-20 level have been thoroughly studied. However, the body of eLearning literature pertaining to the corporate setting is lacking. The advancement of learning management sites, eLearning design, internet access, and technological literacy skills allows adults greater learning access and flexibility. This supports the integration of learning into an adult's busy and geographically diverse life while providing a cost-saving business and training approach to supporting employees within companies, while extending course offerings to customers.

A paradigm shift is necessary in corporations to ensure that eLearning courses are constructed as user-friendly, valuable, and well-designed in order to influence persistence and satisfaction of eLearners to ensure large number of scholars register and complete eLearning courses. In corporations, eLearning may be required for employment. Nevertheless, employees may be more apt to enjoy and persist in a course based upon the effectiveness of the eLearning designer and company stakeholder support.

As a researcher, eLearning designer, and course instructor, I have gained a deeper understanding of the factors that edify online adult learners, and the systems necessary to support their success. Professional proficiency is critical for employees, and preparedness through training opportunities influences both morale and retention (Slotte & Herbert, 2006). When provided opportunities to learn pertinent content through collegial communities of practice, employees are more likely to continue working for a company. Employee attrition is less likely when individuals are supported in their learning and professional practices (Newton & Doonga,

2007; Schultz & Correia, 2015). Loss of skilled employees takes rebuilding, time, and expense (Schultz & Correia, 2015). This study was undertaken to consider the eLearning impact on retention and maintaining a for-profit's intellectual supply chain while identifying the factors that influence eLearning persistence and satisfaction (Dealtry, 2008; Schultz & Correia, 2015).

In turn, the overarching goal of this study was to help support adult learners, maintain satisfied learning of employees within corporations, and ultimately provide efficacious eLearning courses that support educators in their understanding of how to increase student literacy rates across the United States. Hopefully, these findings will increase the application of course design, value, and user-friendly factors, and adults will experience more satisfaction in eLearning courses thus improving persistence and overall professional instructional practices.

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APPENDIX A

Informed Consent for Future 1.0 Approval

August 16, 2018

Dear Leaders:

I am a doctoral student at the University of Washington working on a degree in Educational Leadership. I am seeking volunteers for my applied research study, *Corporate eLearning Perceptions of Satisfaction and Persistence*. This study, which will be conducted through two surveys questionnaires, will examine the perceptions of experiences as seen by corporate decision-makers, content producers and digital designers, and adult participants who take internal eLearning courses. This study will seek to identify the factors stakeholders find most important in the learner's decisions to persist in the previously created eLearning courses.

To establish a comprehensive representation of stakeholders, I am seeking company leaders, eLearning specialists, and course participants. Eligibility requirements for stakeholders include:

Course participants -

- ✓ Completed at least one online course

Company leaders -

- ✓ Employed for the company for a minimum of one month

eLearning designers and content providers -

- ✓ Employed for the company for a minimum of one month

By participating in this study, you will be contributing to the existing knowledge base of information to improve future online courses. Findings of the study will be made available to interested participants in Spring, 2019.

You will be asked to respond to two surveys which will be posted over a 6-week period beginning in October. Each participant will be provided with the survey website's URL and instructions for completing the questionnaire. Each participant's survey response will be represented within a stakeholder group to maintain individual anonymity and confidentiality. Only the researcher will have access to an individual's unique responses.

The first survey should require approximately 15 minutes as you read and rate the importance of the responses. The second survey should require approximately 10 minutes as you will rank order items listed in the questionnaire.

The content of the second survey will be based on your survey one responses, and will be provided approximately 7 days after the deadline for survey one.

Round	Survey Released	Response Deadline	Time Required
1	October 15, 2018	October 29, 2018	15 minutes
2	November 5, 2018	November 19, 2018	10 minutes
Results	March, 2019	N/A	5-10 minutes

The following table outlines a tentative schedule for the study:

Participation in this study carries no known or foreseeable risks, and there are no costs or monetary rewards associated with your participation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (housts@uw.edu) or my Committee Chair, Dr. Colleen Carmean (carmean@uw.edu). If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact the School of Education, University of Washington at 253-692-4430.

Your electronic signature indicates that you understand and have read the information provided and that you willingly agree to participate in the study. Because of the study's nature, it is important that those panelists who commit continue to participate for the duration of the two survey rounds. If circumstances prevail that impede your participation, you may withdraw consent and discontinue without penalty.

You may print a copy of this consent form. Participants will be selected by the researcher from among the eligible volunteers submitting this form and completing a required questionnaire about your online experience. You can access this questionnaire via this link:
Preliminary Survey for eLearning Study

You can e-mail this consent form to me by midnight Friday, September 15, using the contact housts@uw.edu.

APPENDIX B

Electronic Communication to Potential Research Participants

Dear _____,

I need your help, thoughts, and expertise! I am seeking volunteers for my University of Washington research study, which will be conducted through two (very short) surveys totaling less than 30 minutes of your time. The purpose of the study is to examine the perceptions of satisfaction and persistence from corporate decision-makers, content producers, and adult learning participants.

Are you a 'yes' and willing to participate? Click on this link (or use the QR code) to complete the demographic information and sign the electronic consent form by Friday, October 12th.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9QJYB7B

Not quite sure yet and need more information? Keep reading!

By participating in this study, you will be contributing to the existing knowledge base of information regarding eLearning satisfaction and persistence factors. Findings of the study will be made available Spring, 2019 and will be sent to you via email.

This university study is based on voluntary participation. The first survey should require less than 15 minutes, with the second survey requiring less than 10 minutes. Each participant will be provided the survey website's URL or QR code with instructions. Individual anonymity/ confidentiality will be upheld throughout the entire process.

The content of the second survey will be based on responses from the first survey.

Here is the schedule for the study:
Week of October 8 – Distribute Demographics and Consent Forms
Week of October 15 – Distribute Survey One (less than 15 minutes required)
Week of November 5 – Distribute Survey Two (less than 10 minutes required)

Participation in this study carries no known or foreseeable risks, and there are no costs or monetary rewards associated with your participation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (housts@uw.edu) or my Committee Chair, Dr. Colleen Carmean (carmean@uw.edu). If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact the School of Education, University of Washington at 253-692-4430.

Interested in helping with this research project and adding to the body of eLearning literature? Here is access (again) to begin the process. Use the QR code and/or link to complete the demographic information and consent form.

APPENDIX C

Consent Survey

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
1900 Commerce St, Tacoma, WA 98402

Dear _____,

I need your help, thoughts, and expertise! I am seeking volunteers for my University of Washington research study, which will be conducted through two (very short) surveys totaling less than 30 minutes of your time. The purpose of the study is to examine the perceptions of satisfaction and persistence from corporate decision-makers, content producers, and adult learning participants.

Are you a 'yes' and willing to participate? Click on this link (or use the QR code) to complete the demographic information and sign the electronic consent form.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9QJYB7B

Not quite sure yet and need more information? Keep reading!

By participating in this study, you will be contributing to the existing knowledge base of information regarding eLearning satisfaction and persistence factors. Findings of the study will be made available Spring, 2019 and will be sent to you via email.

This university study is based on voluntary participation. The first survey should require less than 15 minutes, with the second survey requiring less than 10 minutes. Each participant will be provided the survey website's URL or QR code with instructions. Individual anonymity/ confidentiality will be upheld throughout the entire process.

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Here is the schedule for the study:
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Participation in this study carries no known or foreseeable risks, and there are no costs or monetary rewards associated with your participation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (housts@uw.edu) or my Committee Chair, Dr. Colleen Carmean (carmean@uw.edu). If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact the School of Education, University of Washington at 253-692-4430.

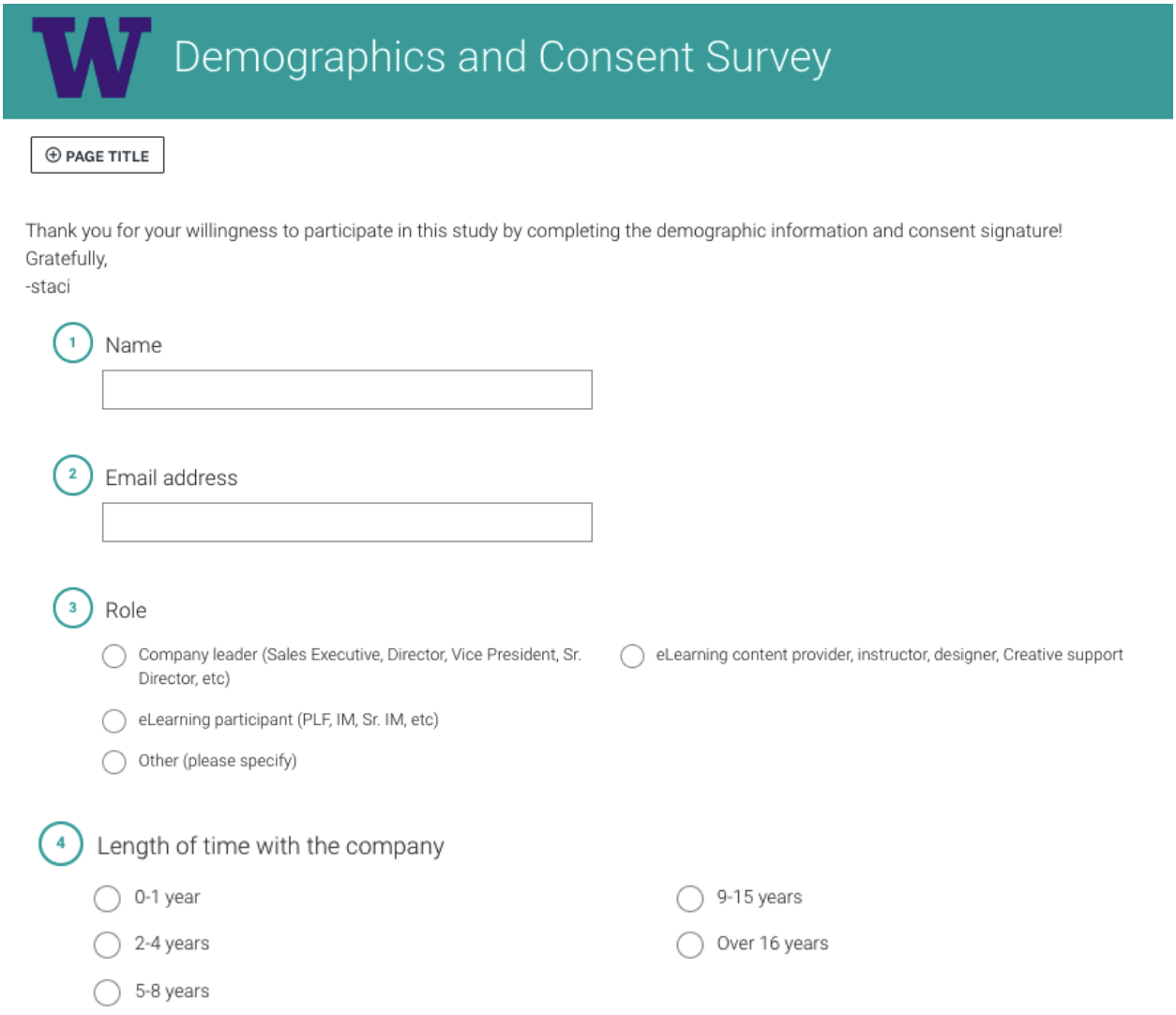
Interested in helping with this research project and adding to the body of eLearning literature? Here is access (again) to begin the process. Use the QR code and/or link to complete the demographic information and consent form.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9QJYB7B

Thank you SO much for your time and help!

APPENDIX D

Demographics Survey



Demographics and Consent Survey

PAGE TITLE

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study by completing the demographic information and consent signature!
Gratefully,
-staci

1 Name

2 Email address

3 Role

- Company leader (Sales Executive, Director, Vice President, Sr. Director, etc)
- eLearning content provider, instructor, designer, Creative support
- eLearning participant (PLF, IM, Sr. IM, etc)
- Other (please specify)

4 Length of time with the company

- 0-1 year
- 2-4 years
- 5-8 years
- 9-15 years
- Over 16 years

5 The Certification courses in which I was an ELEARNER
(check all that apply)

- [ ] Core5
- [ ] RAPID
- [ ] Core5/RAPID
- [ ] PowerUp
- [ ] Training Best Practices
- [ ] Not applicable

6 The Certification courses I served as an INSTRUCTOR
(check all that apply)

- [ ] Core5
- [ ] RAPID
- [ ] Core5/RAPID
- [ ] PowerUp
- [ ] Training Best Practices
- [ ] Not applicable

7 The Certification courses I served as a CONTRIBUTOR (providing guidance/leadership, creating documents or content, designing courses)

- [ ] Core5
- [ ] RAPID
- [ ] Core5/RAPID
- [ ] PowerUp
- [ ] Training Best Practices
- [ ] Not applicable

8 The Certification courses I STARTED or LOOKED AT include
(check all that apply)

- [ ] Core5
- [ ] RAPID
- [ ] Core5/RAPID
- [ ] PowerUp
- [ ] Training Best Practices
- [ ] Not applicable/I did not have access to eLearning courses

9 The Certification courses I COMPLETED include
(check all that apply)

- [ ] Core5
- [ ] RAPID
- [ ] Core5/RAPID
- [ ] PowerUp
- [ ] Training Best Practices
- [ ] Not applicable/I did not have access to eLearning courses

10 Would you like to receive a summary of the findings?

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No

11 I am willing to volunteer my time and complete two surveys for this University of Washington research study, which focuses on eLearning satisfaction and persistence in a corporate setting.

Electronic Signature _____

Thank you SO much for your willingness to support this project. **You will receive SURVEY 1 on MONDAY (October 15th).** The survey won't take much time -- less than 15 minutes. Then, I'll follow up with **SURVEY 2 on the 5th of November**.

Gratefully,

-staci

APPENDIX E

Leader Survey 1 Description

Hello, Company Leaders,

Thank you so much for your support! The purpose of this project is to replicate the study by Stanford-Bowers (2007) to better understand eLearning in a professional setting. While completing literature reviews I discovered a large body of university setting studies, but very little corporate eLearning research. Your thinking will (hopefully) contribute to how eLearning specialists develop workplace trainings to support successful systems.

As leaders, your time is valuable. I've tried to keep the lift minimal. This is the first of two, short surveys to complete. (The next survey will arrive in your inbox on November 5th.)

This first survey includes twenty eLearning factors to score on a scale of:

Not Important to Very Important

The factors (in capital letters) represent the general themes. The comments, which follow each theme, are those provided in Stanford-Bowers' (2007) prior study. Although each comment relates to the theme indicated, all comments may not present the same idea and may not agree.

Your role is to rate each theme (LISTED IN GREEN) according to its importance to you.

When you have finished, click "Done". Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous.

This survey will be available until midnight, October 29, 2018. Again, the second survey will be provided on November 5th -- and then it will be time to crunch the numbers and make meaning of it all.

Many, many thanks!

-staci

* 1. Directions: Rate each theme (LISTED IN GREEN) according to its importance to you.

RESPONSIVENESS OF INSTRUCTOR & PROMPT FEEDBACK

-Timely communication helps the eLearner stay connected.

-eLearners expect and deserve constructive critique with explanation of errors and suggestions for improvement.

-Responding appropriately to what is stated and what is not stated in the eLearners' entries.

-eLearners feel freer to ask questions.

-Instructors must establish and maintain frequent communication with the eLearners with email, discussion boards, etc.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 2. CONVENIENCE & FLEXIBILITY

-eLearning courses are flexible, self-paced and allow eLearners to work around their professional and personal schedules.

-There are not as many time constraints on eLearners; they can log on when it is convenient for them.

-eLearning decreases barriers caused by proximity, corporate financial costs, and eLearners' physical disabilities.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 3. USER-FRIENDLY FORMAT

-A format that is not user-friendly creates anxiety.

-Ease of course layout enables the less experienced eLearners to navigate the course without problems.

-If the eLearners have difficulty finding things, they are likely to give up; if the format is clear and uncluttered, they are more likely to succeed.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 4. AVAILABILITY OF COURSES

-To prepare employees for work responsibilities (training educators), there is space available in eLearning courses, and there are product-specific courses available for employees to participate in.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 5. SELF-MOTIVATION

-If eLearners are not motivated, [they] will put off completion of assignments, etc., until the last minute—which does not equal learning success.

-eLearners that are internally motivated seem to be more successful.

-eLearners whose career plans hinge on success in a course are more likely to persist; enjoying the learning experience increases motivation; experiencing success also motivates.

-eLearning courses work well for self-motivated learners. They can take a more active part in their own learning.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 6. COURSE DESIGN

-Should engage multiple modalities; design should be hierarchal; activities should be the centerpiece and supplement reading of text.

-Quality material presented in an engaging form—students expect a quality content in an interactive format.

-Course with variety of teaching strategies—not just notes. Integrate video, links to other resources, discussion boards, etc.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 7. SELF-DISCIPLINE

-eLearners who don't stay on task often get behind and ultimately wish they could withdraw.

-Without self-discipline the eLearner simply will not follow through with the work on a daily basis and will be unlikely to complete the coursework without repeated nudges from the instructor.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 8. READING ABILITY

-Since much of eLearning is text based, eLearners who struggle with written expression may experience increased roadblocks to eLearning success.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 9. DEDICATION

-eLearning courses require more dedication on the participants' part.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 10. BASIC COMPUTER SKILLS

-The eLearner needs to be able to use email, send attachments, click on links, upload documents, etc.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 11. COLLABORATION

-Group discussions help eLearners become more involved with the course content while they share learning with each other.

-Opportunities to interact with instructor and class—chats, discussion boards, etc.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 12. COMPUTER ACCESS

-eLearners must have reliable computer access; having a variety of access points.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 13. TIME MANAGEMENT

-eLearners need to allow sufficient time to complete assignments and avoid procrastinating and non-academic distractions (such as social media sites, computer games, etc).

-eLearners must have adequate time to devote to completion of the course.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 14. ORGANIZATION

-eLearners must employ great organizational skills.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 15. CLEARLY STATED REQUIREMENTS

-Course requirements that are clear and repeated often are important.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 16. INSTRUCTORS

-Those who teach online should enjoy it.

-An instructor should be knowledgeable about use of technology, adult learning, teaching online, and responsive to eLearners.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 17. VALUE

-eLearners must perceive that they are getting good value for their time. The online class must be equal to or better than onsite instruction or conference sessions.

-The organization must receive a return on eLearning investment.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 18. COMMUNICATION AND WRITING SKILLS

-Most eLearning communication is in writing.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 19. COMPUTER SUPPORT TOOLS

-Use a Learning Management System (LMS - such as Canvas) to allow a flexible, asynchronous learning experience.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 20. DIFFICULTY LEVEL

-eLearners tend to think the online course will be easier than passing an in-person course.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

APPENDIX F

eLearning Designer Survey 1

Hello, Content Designers -

Thank you so much for your support! The purpose of this project is to replicate the study by Stanford-Bowers (2007) to better understand eLearning in a professional setting. While completing literature reviews, I discovered a large body of university setting studies, but very little corporate eLearning research. Your thinking will (hopefully) contribute to how eLearning specialists develop workplace trainings to support successful systems.

As professionals, your time is valuable. I've tried to keep the lift minimal. There will be two, short surveys to complete. The first survey includes twenty-six factors to score on a scale of:

Not Important to Very Important

The factors (in capital letters) represent the general themes. The comments, which follow each theme, are those provided in Stanford-Bowers' (2007) prior study. Although each comment relates to the theme indicated, all comments may not present the same idea and may not agree.

Your role is to rate each theme (LISTED IN GREEN) according to its importance to you.

When you have finished, click "Done". Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous.

This survey will be available until midnight, October 29, 2018. The second survey will be provided on November 5th -- and that will be a wrap!

Many, many thanks!

-staci

Top of Form

* 1. Directions: Rate each theme (LISTED IN GREEN) according to its importance to you.

STUDENT/TEACHER INTERACTION & PROMPT FEEDBACK

-If eLearners do not have some contact with instructor, they get frustrated.

-Personal contact with instructor creates a sense of partnership.

-eLearning courses allow for instant responses to questions with redirection by the eLearner and instructor.

-If the eLearner feels the instructor cares about their participation success, the eLearner may perform to that expectation.

-eLearners need quick and adequate responses from instructors, especially in the beginning of the course. Feedback helps to build confidence.

-Important for instructor to check in and remind eLearners that they are available for questions and about upcoming deadlines.

-Frequent communication with the instructor helps the eLearner feel less "alone" in the course.

-If eLearners can get direct feedback or participate in discussions, they are more likely to feel like they are doing something.

-eLearners who have feedback provided in a timely manner often feel less nervous about their performance in the course.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

Bottom of Form

* 2. **SELF-MOTIVATION**

-Successful eLearners feel compelled to log in regularly, and complete assignments on time.

-If the eLearner is truly interested in the subject matter, it will positively impact the eLearner's progress.

-Most eLearners must desire to learn the content before they can retain and apply it.

-Curious eLearners will seek correct answers.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 3. USER-FRIENDLY FORMAT

-The course must be personal and effective. eLearners needs to feel comfortable with the course and delivery.

-If eLearners are able to access information easily, they feel they can do the course and will stick with it.

-If eLearners can determine what the specifics of the course are and how to succeed in the environment, typically they feel less intimidated.

-If the Learning Management Site, such as Canvas, is easy to use and access, then students will not get frustrated.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 4. COURSE DESIGN

-If the course is well-planned and conducted, eLearners will perform better in the course and will desire to return for another course.

-Keep the course format simple and to the point. Do not overwhelm students with information.

-Use a blended format of delivery.

-The workload should be reasonable—some online instructors are unrealistic in expectations.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 5. LEARNING STYLES

-Repetition is important—especially if there's no visual or auditory instructor reinforcement.

-Have availability of materials to match eLearner's learning needs. If the course is well-planned and conducted, eLearners will perform better in the course and will desire to return for another course.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 6. COMPUTER SKILLS

-eLearners must possess prior knowledge with computers.

-Less successful eLearners lack computer literacy (have difficulty posting on a discussion board, uploading documents and videos, responding to a discussion board, navigating between modules).

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 7. COMPUTER ACCESS

-Computers at home—allows access at odd times and reduces frustration.

-Computer access at work—allows work time during breaks and lunch, or eLearner stays later to do course work while family responsibilities are avoided.

-eLearner access to high-speed Internet connection: eLearners with a slow connection or incompatible software doesn't allow them to view course/do work from home.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 8. SUBJECT-MATTER CONTENT

-eLearners who are familiar with the subject matter more easily learn new material.

-Problems with the subject matter are compounded in the eLearning environment. Without the interaction of peers and instructor, the issue could result in eLearner fatigue or frustration.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 9. CLEARLY STATED REQUIREMENTS

-eLearners who understand the requirements of the course typically appear to be more comfortable in the online environment.

-Clear and concise directions are necessary to keep eLearners from feeling lost and confused.

-A consistent class structure so eLearners know what to expect.

-eLearners do not like to be surprised in any type of course; the online environment is no exception.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 10. LACK OF PERSONAL CONTACT

-Not having to face an instructor; individuals say things they would never say face-to-face to an instructor.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 11. DISCIPLINE

-eLearners should begin working on course work in a timely manner—if eLearners get behind at the beginning of the course, catching up can be difficult.

-Disciplined eLearners will start their course and pace their progress for the duration of the course.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 12. INSTRUCTOR

-In an eLearning course, an instructor can point out the good stuff.

-Good eLearning instructors make the difference for eLearners who need lots of help/encouragement.

Poor instructors don't establish online presence, offer tech support, or build good online course.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 13. CHEAT-ABILITY

-It's far easier to cheat on eLearning assignments than it is on in-class tests.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 14. DISCUSSION

-Discussion must encourage eLearner involvement.

-Requires active involvement in discussion board setting.

-Availability of other eLearners' input lets eLearners have a feeling that they are in a group (real or imaginary).

-Opportunities to be involved in an online peer community helps to create a sense of the traditional class in the online format.

-Discussions create a community atmosphere far easier to cheat on eLearning assignments than it is on in class tests.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 15. PERSONAL CONTACT

-At least one face-to-face contact with instructor—that human connection provides motivation.

-Chats with eLearners—lets instructor give verbal encouragement and feedback.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 16. REQUIRED READINGS

-Readable and reliable text; if the text is boring, eLearners are not going to read it.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 17. INTELLECT

-eLearners with above average intelligence are more able to learn independently.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 18. PERCEPTIONS OF COURSE DIFFICULTY

-eLearners think the course will be easier, quicker, less trouble. In reality, eLearning courses can be more (cognitively) demanding.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 19. FLEXIBILITY

-Variability—flexibility of time. eLearners can do the work when they want to, not when they have to.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	
○	○	○	○	○

* 20. RELIABLE SERVER & SUPPORT NETWORK

-If eLearners keep running into problems with the system, they will not desire to continue to take online courses and feel frustrated.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 21. OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

-eLearners need to be willing to seek help from the instructor and other participants when they experience difficulty in an online class.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 22. CONTROL

-Collection of work uploaded (such as videos, written responses) gives eLearners a feeling of control over part of the course.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 23. VALUE

-Making eLearners feel they are getting just as much or even more than in-person courses.

-The organization must receive a return on eLearning investment.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 24. TIME

-The eLearners must have enough free time in their life to devote to the courses.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

* 25. ALTERNATE MEANS OF CONTACT

-A must if eLearners are experiencing technical difficulties or need clarification of course requirements on short notice.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

APPENDIX G

Participant Survey 1

Hello, eLearning professionals,

Thank you so much for your support! The purpose of this project is to replicate the study by Stanford-Bowers (2007) to better understand eLearning in a professional setting. While completing literature reviews I discovered a large body of university setting studies, but very little corporate eLearning research. Your thinking will (hopefully) contribute to how eLearning specialists develop workplace trainings to support successful systems.

As professionals, your time is valuable. I've tried to keep the lift minimal. There will be two, short surveys to complete. The first survey includes seventeen factors to score on a scale of:

Not Important to Very Important

The factors (in capital letters) represent the general themes. The comments, which follow each theme, are those provided in Stanford-Bowers' (2007) prior study. Although each comment relates to the theme indicated, all comments may not present the same idea and may not agree.

Your role is to rate each theme (LISTED IN GREEN) according to its importance to you.

When you have finished, click "Done". Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous.

This survey will be available until midnight, October 29, 2018. The second survey will be provided on November 5th -- and that will be a wrap!

Many, many thanks!

-staci

1. CONVENIENCE & FLEXIBILITY

-eLearning courses take out some of the logistics of attending a training.

-eLearners don't have to physically attend training.

-The eLearner has the luxury to attend training at their convenience. Therefore, taking as much time to evaluate, understand, and apply the material.

-eLearners can work at their own pace.

-Learning pace—not forced to go along at the pace of a group.

-Being able to have all the content in one place.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

2. DISCUSSION & INTERACTION

-The posting of discussion questions regularly to encourage participation and preparation.

-Being able to communicate and learn from other colleagues.

-There should be adequate communication between instructor and eLearner as well as with other colleagues.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

Top of Form

3. TIME MANAGEMENT

-eLearners must manage their time.

-There are other courses and other things to do and everyone has a personal life and their own personal needs.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

4. COURSE DESIGN

-Presentation—the eLearning course should make the eLearners want to work online.

-Course material—the amount of the course material should not be so overwhelming that an eLearner will have to work for too long without a break.

-A posted schedule encourages eLearners to manage time and stay organized.

-Notes and perhaps links provided to aid in the completion of assignments as well as the final project/observation.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

5. USER-FRIENDLY FORMAT

-Organization and clearness of the eLearning course.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

6. PERSONAL CONTACT

-Connecting with the instructor, if possible, to serve as check points for progress.

-Contacting the instructor (phone, text, email)—less impersonal, able to solve any problems.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

7. TIME LIMITS

-Should take into consideration eLearner's reading speed and comprehension.

-If time limits are short they may discourage instead of encourage someone from taking or completing the course.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

8. LESS CLASS INTERACTION

-Working through a course alone versus learning from other peoples' experiences and knowledge.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

9. COMPUTER SKILLS

-Confusion—computers are not for everyone and trying to attend an eLearning course and trying to understand how to submit assignments can only add to the confusion.

-eLearners must have computer literacy to be successful.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

10. INDEPENDENT LEARNING & RESPONSIBILITY

-Forces the eLearner to self-teach.

-Helps eLearners on their own better than attending a session.

-Attention to detail—with an eLearning course, I have to follow directions and clarify for myself. Therefore, paying closer attention to directions and applications to the work required.

-With eLearning, there is no "human element" with my teacher. Therefore, I cannot anticipate the level of the instructor's expectations, forcing me to do my very best work at all times.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

11. ACCESSIBILITY

-Logging in to the eLearning course at any time, using various pieces of technology (laptop, tablet).

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

12. CLEARLY STATED REQUIREMENTS

-Clear course objectives given to enable eLearners to become familiar with goals and expectations.

-Sufficient information—how well the expectations and due dates are made clear.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

13. LESS DIFFICULT COURSEWORK

-Some courses are easier to take online that conference session or webinar.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

14. EFFICIENCY

-You obtain similar knowledge as you would in a conference session or webinar.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

15. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

-The eLearner should be given good support in case something should go wrong with the program.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

16. PERSONAL ISSUES

-Between work and life responsibilities the average day only gets busier. The eLearner may forget about her/his online classes.

-Problem within a person's home; there could be eLearners going through a divorce or death in the family, which may cause the eLearner to stray away from their online classes.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

17. VALUE

-eLearners must perceive that they are getting good value for their time. The online class quality must be equal to onsite instruction or conference sessions.

-The organization must receive a return on eLearning investment.

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
○	○	○	○

APPENDIX H

Leader Survey 2

Hello, Leaders,

Based on your responses from Round 1, the following contains a list of the top ten eLearning factors that this stakeholder group identified as Very Important, Important, or Somewhat Important, etc. The factors are listed in order, from the highest ranking to the lowest ranking.

During this round, please read and then rank order the list (again) according to your perceptions of PERSISTENCE and SATISFACTION. The most important factor should receive a ranking of 1, and the least important factor should receive a ranking of 10.

Thank you, again, for your participation - I'm truly grateful. This is the last item needed from you, so thanks!

This survey only contains two questions and takes about 3 minutes to complete.

-staci

1. Rank order these themes based on what you perceive influences eLearning PERSISTENCE.

1 = MOST IMPORTANT to 10 = LEAST IMPORTANT

- INSTRUCTORS
- COURSE DESIGN
- COMPUTER ACCESS
- USER-FRIENDLY
- SELF MOTIVATION
- VALUE
- SELF DISCIPLINE
- CLEARLY STATED REQUIREMENTS
- AVAILABILITY OF COURSES
- TIME MANAGEMENT

2. Rank order these themes based on what you perceive influences eLearning SATISFACTION.

1 = MOST IMPORTANT to 10 = LEAST IMPORTANT

⠿	INSTRUCTORS
⠿	COURSE DESIGN
⠿	COMPUTER ACCESS
⠿	USER-FRIENDLY
⠿	SELF MOTIVATION
⠿	VALUE
⠿	SELF DISCIPLINE
⠿	CLEARLY STATED REQUIREMENTS
⠿	AVAILABILITY OF COURSES
⠿	CONVENIENCE AND FLEXIBILITY

APPENDIX I

eLearning Designer Survey 2

Hello,

Based on your responses from Round 1, the following contains a list of the top ten eLearning factors that this stakeholder group identified as Very Important, Important, or Somewhat Important, etc. The factors are listed in order, from the highest ranking to the lowest ranking.

During this round, please read and then rank order the list (again) according to your perceptions of PERSISTENCE and SATISFACTION. The most important factor should receive a ranking of 1, and the least important factor should receive a ranking of 10.

Thank you, again, for your participation - I'm truly grateful. This is the last item needed from you, so thanks!

This survey only contains two questions and takes about 3 minutes to complete.

-staci

1. Rank order these themes based on **what you perceive influences eLearning PERSISTENCE.**

1 = MOST IMPORTANT to 10 = LEAST IMPORTANT

⠿	COURSE DESIGN
⠿	VALUE
⠿	SELF MOTIVATION
⠿	USER-FRIENDLY FORMAT
⠿	RELIABLE SERVER AND NETWORK
⠿	CLEARLY STATED REQUIREMENTS
⠿	STUDENT/TEACHER INTERACTION AND FEEDBACK
⠿	REQUIRED READINGS
⠿	FLEXIBILITY
⠿	LEARNING STYLES

2. Rank order these themes based on **what you perceive influences eLearning SATISFACTION.**

1 = MOST IMPORTANT to 10 = LEAST IMPORTANT

⠿	COURSE DESIGN
⠿	VALUE
⠿	SELF MOTIVATION
⠿	USER-FRIENDLY FORMAT
⠿	RELIABLE SERVER AND NETWORK
⠿	CLEARLY STATED REQUIREMENTS
⠿	STUDENT/TEACHER INTERACTION AND FEEDBACK
⠿	REQUIRED READINGS
⠿	FLEXIBILITY
⠿	TIME

APPENDIX J

Participants Survey 2

Hello,
Based on your responses from Round 1, the following contains a list of the top ten eLearning factors that this stakeholder group identified as Very Important, Important, or Somewhat Important, etc. The factors are listed in order, from the highest ranking to the lowest ranking.

During this round, please read and then rank order the list (again) according to your perceptions of PERSISTENCE and SATISFACTION. The most important factor should receive a ranking of 1, and the least important factor should receive a ranking of 10.

Thank you, again, for your participation - I'm truly grateful. This is the last item needed from you, so thanks!

This survey only contains two questions and takes about 3 minutes to complete.

-staci

1. Rank order these themes based on what you perceive influences eLearning PERSISTENCE.

1 = MOST IMPORTANT to 10 = LEAST IMPORTANT

- USER-FRIENDLY FORMAT
- CLEARLY STATED REQUIREMENTS
- COURSE DESIGN
- VALUE
- CONVENIENCE AND FLEXIBILITY
- TIME MANAGEMENT
- ACCESSIBILITY
- TECHNICAL SUPPORT
- TIME LIMITS
- DISCUSSION AND INTERACTION

2. Rank order these themes based on what you perceive influences eLearning SATISFACTION.

1 = MOST IMPORTANT to 10 = LEAST IMPORTANT

⠿ ⬍	USER-FRIENDLY FORMAT
⠿ ⬍	CLEARLY STATED REQUIREMENTS
⠿ ⬍	COURSE DESIGN
⠿ ⬍	VALUE
⠿ ⬍	CONVENIENCE AND FLEXIBILITY
⠿ ⬍	TIME MANAGEMENT
⠿ ⬍	ACCESSIBILITY
⠿ ⬍	TECHNICAL SUPPORT
⠿ ⬍	DISCUSSION AND INTERACTION
⠿ ⬍	EFFICIENCY