

Public Abstract

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Title:UTILIZATION ASSESSMENT OF HEAD START LEADERSHIP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

Lack of knowledge surrounding professional development choices of Head Start directors served as the catalyst for proposing this study. Inability to identify a Head Start-specific survey instrument designed to query directors about professional development further validated the idea. The Head Start Directors Professional Development Resource Survey (PDRS) was designed specific to Head Start directors in an effort to glean quantitative data that would inform policy.

Eighty-seven Head Start directors working in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska were invited to participate in the study. Forty-three participants responded through an online survey resource, providing information about their professional development choices with relation to specific Head Start leadership core competencies (supervision, grant administration, planning and organizational development). From a predetermined list of professional development resources, directors were asked to indicate utilization (yes/no) and degree of utilization of each resource.

Survey results indicated Head Start directors utilize a variety of professional development resources to enhance leadership skills across all core competency areas. Variables found to be significant for resource utilization included location of Head Start program and position tenure of director. Continued research incorporating a qualitative component and involving a larger number of Head Start directors is recommended to further inform federal policymakers.