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Translators' and interpreters' engagement with professional development in Australia: An analysis of key factors

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Abstract: Professional development aims to facilitate the maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills, and has become a standard or even compulsory component of professional practice for many occupational groups. This paper traces the uptake of professional development amongst certified translators and interpreters in Australia, where in 2014 it was introduced as a requirement for newly-certified practitioners only, and in 2019 for all holders of translation or interpreting certification from the national certifying authority. Based on responses gained from a sample of 3,268 practitioners, we report high uptake overall with little variation according to level of qualifications. Slightly lower uptake rates are recorded only amongst 'newcomers' with less experience while for all others, it is consistently high. Lower uptake rates are recorded amongst those who work 1-10 hours per week and those earning up to A$10,000 per year compared to others working more hours and those earning more. A desire for more work does not co-occur with elevated levels of PD uptake. The data presented reflects the reported experiences of those who had already been required to engage with PD, those for whom this requirement was new with a three-year time window to undertake PD, as well as those for whom it still remains optional. These findings contribute to our understanding of PD uptake amongst a professional group whose engagement with post-certification training has been under-studied. Findings may inform relevant stakeholders in other countries considering measures to arrest atrophy and extend the skill sets of practising translators and interpreters.

Keywords: professional development; translator training; interpreter training; post-qualification/certification training

1. Introduction

The last 30 years have witnessed an increase in the number of university-level translation and interpreting (hereafter T&I) teaching programs and an expansion of the language services industry worldwide. At the same time, there are now many pedagogically based studies that formalise levels of knowledge and skills that are expected from graduates (Kiraly, 2013; Mikkelson, 2014). There are also many descriptions of performance capabilities that are tested by credentialing authorities (NAATI, 2016a; CIoL, 2020) and from industry-based bodies that seek to establish sector-wide standards (ASTM, 2007; ISO, 2015).

What these studies and guidelines encompass are occupationally-related attributes that translators and interpreters should possess *before* or *at the point of entering* professional practice. There are fewer studies that focus on how practitioners develop and extend their occupationally-related capabilities *after* commencing practice. The concept of 'professional development' or 'professional education' arose as a designation for activities that were more formalised than the usual things that professionals 'just did' in their spare time. These things that professionals 'just did' as a matter of course typically related to self-reflection on one's own work, observing and discussing with others (often more experienced practitioners), reading out of interest, attending social events or volunteering at professional events (French & Dowds, 2008). The notion of professional development emerged in the Unites States in 1960s and in the United Kingdom in the early 1980s (Friedman et al., 2001, p. 64), firstly in relation to teachers and soon after in relation to healthcare professionals. The same authors identify courses, specialist lectures, seminars and other short training activities as the defining characteristics of a structured program of work-focused learning that came to be known as professional development. Interestingly, one more recently identified characteristic of professional development is an understanding of "other kinds of knowledge, such as the *language* of practice (both verbal and visceral) by which professional advice [is] conveyed" (Friedman, 2012, p. 58. Italics and square brackets added). This statement made by Friedman (2012) was not directed at linguists or those employed in the language services sector. However, the relevance of this observation to translators and interpreters is obvious as they are expected to be aware of the form, content and intent of their written, spoken or signed messages.

This paper focuses on professional development as an attribute of translators' and interpreters' professional selves. This paper examines professional development in relation to practitioners' qualification level, length of practice, volume of work and satisfaction with volume of work and reported income.

2. Backgrounding professional development

A commonly accepted definition of professional development, first developed in 1986 by the Construction Industry Council in the UK, is the following:

> The systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills, and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties through the individual's working life. (Friedman, 2012, p. 9)

The above definition locates two changes that professional development can bring about. The first relates to a practitioner's knowledge base and capabilities where professional development can arrest atrophy as well as preserve and

augment these existing knowledge bases and capabilities. The second change relates to the practitioner as a person and the development of attributes that may be less quantifiable but nonetheless advantageous in the performance of their duties.

Associated with the notion of self-directed learning on which professional development was originally based, there are further terms that have been in use to refer to this activity, e.g. 'professional learning', 'professional education', 'continuing education' and 'continuous professional development'. We employ the term 'professional development' and its acronym 'PD' as a hypernym that encompasses all related terms.

The term 'professional development' contains the attribute 'professional'. The term 'professional' typically refers to a person who is educated and trained, socialised as a member of a specific occupational domain and who can claim membership in an association that prescribes and institutionalises the knowledge, skills and ethics of practitioners in that domain (Freidson, 2001; Halley & Sciulli, 2009). Krejsler (2005, p. 341) employs the term 'semi-professional' to refer to occupational groups that do not belong to "the so-called full-scale professions", examples of which include "lawyers, medical doctors, psychologists and ministers of religion". The same author contends that if an occupational group demonstrates certain functionalist attributes, it qualifies to be called "professional". Of interest to this study are two of the six attributes that Krejsler (2005, p. 342) lists: "professionals exercise formal as well as informal control over the development of knowledge within their field and over education of future professionals" and "members understand themselves within a comprehensive professional culture of common norms, symbols and language".

Our examination of PD is not premised on PD as a *definitive* characteristic of an occupational group being considered a 'profession' (Katan, 2009a). Nor does this paper deal in any meaningful way with the notion of 'professionalisation'. We do note, however, that early models of the professionalisation process for conference interpreters, as an example, do not mention PD (Tseng, 1992). As far as community interpreting is concerned, some early descriptions of community interpreting mention PD, e.g. Roberts (1997), while others do not, e.g. Mikkelson (1999). Beyond the conference vs. community interpreting distinction, Ozolins (2000, p. 27) identifies PD as a "secondary characteristic of comprehensiveness". He points to mandatory PD of court interpreters in some jurisdiction in the United States as highly laudable, but also remarks on the great variation in availability, perceived need and actual uptake of PD. Ozolins (2000, p. 27) also comments that where interpreters are mainly freelancers, "professional development increasingly becomes the responsibility of individual practitioners themselves". In this paper, we view PD as *a* characteristic of some (and perhaps a growing number of) T&I practitioners' lives (Dam & Korning Zethsen, 2010), where engagement with PD may pattern according to tangible characteristics such as practitioners' qualification level, length of practice and so on, but where PD may serve less quantifiable needs such as personal attachment to one's work, practitioners' sense of self-fulfilment or their feeling of solidarity with others. In his comprehensive description of PD, Friedman (2012, p. 19, square brackets added) alludes to the gains that practitioners may derive from PD that may be personal but also collective, i.e. that PD "can contribute to [not only] a sense of personal growth, improved morale, job satisfaction, [but also] camaraderie".

2.1 Translators and interpreters and professional development

In Ozolins's (2000) study of the infrastructure of the language services sector, with a focus on interpreting, he stated that there is variation in the formal

structures to support (or even enforce) PD. Nonetheless, he does not see this as evidence that practitioners do not engage in it: "elsewhere, most professional development remains unsupported by structures, but is nevertheless pursued in countless places by interpreters wishing to improve their own skills—and most importantly—to provide mutual support" (Ozolins, 2000, p. 27). Ozolins's (2000) observation was made over 20 years ago. In this section, we seek to see if opportunities for formal PD for interpreters and translators still remain limited by examining subsequent studies. Where information on formal PD is not available, we draw on studies that record practitioners' reported level of interest in PD or their reported belief in the need for PD.

In a worldwide survey of 890 T&I practitioners' beliefs about the hallmarks of professionalism that practitioners should display, Katan (2009b, p. 193) reports on only one informant who stated that "[g]ood T/Is are well-trained, adhere to a code of ethics, engage in continuing education/professional development". In a qualitative study of 10 conference interpreters, Albl-Mikasa (2013, pp. 23–24) records that only three mention PD, with two of them then stating that it is an activity that they do *not* engage in. Notwithstanding some practitioners' lack of enthusiasm for PD, in her description of the attributes that make up "interpreter competence", Albl-Mikasa (2013, pp. 17, 19) makes the case that such competence can be maintained by practitioners only if they engage in continuous and structured learning, with PD being one of the most amenable ways to achieve this.

In another large-scale survey of 888 practitioners, this time of community interpreters, Gentile (2015, p. 190) locates an "awareness of the need for training and professional development in public service interpreting". However, PD as a post-qualification or post-certification activity is identified by two informants only, where unspecified courses together with PD are mentioned as a substitute for one practitioner's lack of university training (p. 371), while another identifies PD as key attribute of performance *and* standing, "… more wide-scale and periodical professional development training courses would largely improve the quality of interpreting and the status of PSI [public service interpreting]" (p. 393). From her other sample of 805 conference interpreters, Gentile (2015) does not report any informants making mention of professional development.

Other studies that mention PD do so not based on actual studies of its delivery and reception, but more as an appeal that PD *should* be more commonly available and undertaken (e.g., Simkova, 2018). Öner (2013, p. 3159) advocates the "life-long professional improvement of translators" as an aspirational goal. In her discussion of "interpreter expertise" and the role of self-regulatory processes in achieving this, Hild (2014) identifies PD as a key attribute for high level skills to be supported and augmented. Online-based teaching would appear to be an amenable means to provide PD to T&I practitioners, and yet Şahin (2013) remains one of the few studies that explicitly makes a case for this. Pym et al. (2012, pp. 81, 82, 141) also point to PD as a component of post-qualification practice for the advancement of the status of translators and interpreters in the European Union.

Uncertainty that potential purchasers of translation services may have about the abilities and the quality of work performed by translators advertising their services in an open market is an issue which Chan (2013) argues can be addressed by tailored PD. His call for PD is consumer-focused, but implicit in it is the position that market-focused PD programs designed and delivered by translator-training institutions in consultation with professional bodies can upskill translators and award a PD credential that is 'readable' to the market.

A market-focused program of PD of a different format is reported on by Madden (2011, p. 73), who describes targeted training for educational

interpreters employed by the Queensland Education Department to provide Auslan-English interpreting for deaf students and hearing teaching staff. This PD program described by Madden (2011) was in-house, free and encompassed four days of training. Interpreters were remunerated for their attendance, with relevant teaching staff also involved in the training. The broader context of the training was government funding to increase participation rates of deaf students in mainstream schools. A congruent example of PD training, this time specific to interpreting in police-interviewee interactions, is provided by Norton (2020). Her study is similar to Madden's (2011) in that it had an inter-professional design that featured the involvement of police officers as well. What is evident in the studies by Chan (2013), Madden (2011) and Norton (2020) is the call for PD to be aligned with industry needs and, perhaps optimally, for an industry partner to be a co-deliverer of PD.

The call for PD to be closely related to industry stakeholders' needs is perhaps a recent and still uncommon development for many T&I practitioners who may be used to undertaking PD 'in their own way'. Congruent to Ozolins's (2000) observation that practitioners' engagement with PD may be difficult to quantify as many may undertake it outside formalised structures, Fulford (2012) lists professional reading as a key activity in freelance translators' PD portfolio. Fulford (2012, p. 279) distinguishes five different ways of reading, each with a purpose that can range from targeted reading to address a specific translation task to very generalist reading that enables the translator simply "to soak up language and cultural knowledge".

Although PD is still an emerging feature in the work-related activities of translation and interpreting practitioners, it is, in many other professions, now an established and often compulsory component of post-qualification practice (e.g. teaching, information services, medicine and the health sciences in general). In the following sub-sections, we draw on studies that examine the role or application that PD has in other professions with a view to seeing how these may be applicable to T&I in the absence of studies on PD in the T&I sector. We also draw on studies that focus on PD as a training practice. Where possible, we draw on studies about T&I that contain data congruent with occupational features discussed.

2.2 Level of qualification, length of employment and professional development

As stated in the introduction, a formal, pre-practice qualification is obligatory for entry into many professions. This certainly applies to those professions that subsequently require or strongly recommend PD for those practising in them. Perhaps because of this, studies on PD uptake do not commonly focus on PD participants' level of qualification and this is something that is mentioned in passing only, e.g., Lee (2011), Sankey and Machin (2014). In a study that does identify qualification level, possession of a (higher) qualification is reported to co-occur with higher reported rates of PD uptake (Friedman et al., 2001, p. 156).

Since the 1990s, there has been an "increase in the number of translation training programs across the world" (Orlando & Gerber, 2020, p. 203). These programs have been provided mostly at universities, very often at post-graduate level, such that Gambier (2018, p. 179) writes of the "institutionalization of translation studies" and, in relation to interpreting, Pöchhacker (2022, p. 32) of the "academization of interpreter training". But, while the number of university level training programs and students studying at them has increased greatly, this does not always mean that most, let alone all translators and interpreters have a university degree. Just over 10 years ago and in relation to countries of the European Union, a political entity in which there is a large number of university level training courses, Pym et al. (2012, p. 20) reported that "in no country that

we have surveyed is an academic qualification – or indeed any kind of formal qualification at all – required in order to use the term 'translator' or its equivalent *generic* terms". The fact that non-professional translation and interpreting is now well documented, including in an increasing number of studies, shows that translation and interpreting work is performed by people without a professional status. Such non-professional status typically refers to those who do not "(1) hold a degree or certification, and (2) earn a living performing translation/ interpreting" (Angelelli, 2020, p. 115). The strictness of these two defining characteristics is questioned by some (e.g., Monzó-Nebot & Wallace, 2020) and the label given to a practitioner who fulfils one criterion but not the other remains debated (Grbić & Kujamäki, 2018).

This point about the absence of certification but the ability to work and be remunerated as a T&I practitioner is relevant to our discussion. In the T&I sector, and particularly in relation to community interpreting in some countries, availability as well as uptake of pre-practice training has been variable. In Australia, for example, until 2007, training was not a pre-requisite to potential certification as an interpreter or translator. Reflecting this situation, a study examining 80 practising interpreters in Australia, Hlavac and Commons (2023) found that some practitioners who had no opportunity to engage in training before commencing work were reported to have attended PD as their first and only contact with formal training in T&I. To determine how completion of pre-service training may affect engagement with PD, our first research question is:

RQ1: What is the relationship between possession of T&I qualification and uptake of PD?

Moving from level of qualification to length of employment, we observe that a trend in many OECD countries since the 1990s has been the decreasing average length of employment at the same workplace and an increase in the number of job changes in one's working life (Fujita & Nakajima, 2016). Job change is not synonymous to a change in occupation, but for many people, this may be the case. A higher frequency of occupational change may have an ambivalent effect on PD uptake: there may be a greater likelihood that a person would seek PD opportunities to upskill and reskill; at the same time, their willingness to invest in PD may be lesser if they are unsure of their longevity in the profession (Schambach & Blanton, 2001, p. 62). A converse situation may also yield ambivalent outcomes: a lower frequency of occupational change may motivate some to invest in PD, knowing that this is likely to benefit them for many further years, while for others, a belief in the benefits of the length of their experience may lead them to view PD as an unnecessary or irrelevant exercise (Warr & Bindi, 1998).

Amongst 1,100 UK-based HR professionals, Sadler-Smith and Badger (1998) found no statistical difference in the level of value placed in PD according to the number of years' experience that a practitioner has. However, one aged-based difference that Sadler-Smith and Badger (1998, p. 220) do report is that "younger professionals were more favourably disposed towards CPD targets […] than were longer-serving members". In relation to T&I, those entering the sector may be more likely to be young, as new entrants to a professional area tend to be young adults. But there was evidence that many come to T&I in their 30s or 40s or older, having worked in other areas or also continuing to work in other areas (Badalotti, 2011). Advanced age is not necessarily an indicator of years of experience.

In his global survey of 890 T&I practitioners, Katan (2009b, p. 199) found that the average number of years' experience across the sample was 10, with 17% having over 21 years' experience. In a congruent study conducted in the

United Kingdom by the Chartered Institute of Linguistics (CIoL) and the Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI), it was found that the average number of years' experience for 2,262 freelance T&I practitioners was approximately 10, while for the 323 salaried practitioners, it was 9 years. In relation to their average length of years' experience, there was little difference between translators compared to interpreters (CIoL/ITI, 2011, p. 7). In light of the above, we formulate the following research question in relation to level of experience:

RQ2: What is the relationship between the number of years that a T&I practitioner has been practising and their uptake of PD?

2.3 Volume of work, satisfaction with volume of work and PD uptake

In the literature on PD, it is taken as axiomatic that the majority of those who engage in PD do so as individuals who belong to one professional group only. Further, most PD attendees in that professional group are usually assumed to be working full-time. Studies on PD that elicit participants' work fraction appear to be uncommon. Amongst those that elicit this feature, Lee et al.'s (2010, p. 35) study of 187 Australia-based radiographers, the proportion of informants who report working full-time was 87%. Bullock et al.'s (2003, p. 48) study of 2,082 dentists revealed that 79% worked full-time. A cross-tabulation of employment with the PD uptake rates in Bullock et al.'s (2003, p. 49) data reveal that those engaging in other, part-time work are over twice as likely to have completed a lesser amount of PD over a 12-month period compared to their full-time colleagues.

While most employees in many professions work full-time, research on T&I employment profiles shows a level of variation in work volume. Studies conducted in Australia record that up to a half of translators and interpreters work part-time (Macquarie University Centre for Translation and Interpreting Research, 2010). Studies from elsewhere also point to a substantial proportion of practitioners working part-time. For example, the CIoL data from the United Kingdom shows that of the 1,966 translators surveyed, 59% worked full-time and 41% part-time, while amongst the 619 surveyed interpreters, the majority (54%) worked part-time and 46% full-time (CIoL/ITI, 2011, p. 7).

A T&I work fraction that is less than full-time need not indicate that an individual is not otherwise working full-time; other forms of employment may be engaged in alongside T&I. Katan (2009b, p. 118) records that 69% of the 890 practitioners he surveyed claimed to have a second "role" (i.e., further or distinct occupational area) with 54% claiming a third one. While many informants then specified a second role that is located within the same (T&I) sector, many also worked in unrelated fields as well, leading Pym et al. (2012, p. 80) to describe the work status of many T&I practitioners as that of "pluri-employment", that is, working in part-time modes across different areas. Following from this, our third research question is:

RQ3: What is the relationship between number of hours worked per week in T&I and PD uptake?

Related to the volume of work that T&I practitioners have is their level of satisfaction with this volume. In a study of 840 Australia-based practitioners, 43% identified "workload" as an issue that would "affect their intention to leave the profession" (APESMA, 2012, p. 25). Concern about workload here relates either to a decreasing volume of work that would compel practitioners to look elsewhere for employment, or to the need to work further hours to maintain their current level of income. The same survey also identified "income insecurity" –

referring to a lack of assurance that a certain volume of work would be available to practitioners – as a feature that 89% identified as a "major problem", while 87% complained that existing scales of remuneration do not keep up with inflation (APESMA, 2012, p. 5). Considering these reported levels of dissatisfaction and the possible effects that PD can have in broadening practitioners' skill levels, which may enable the performance of a greater number of assignments and therefore greater remuneration, our fourth research question is:

RQ4: What is informants' level of satisfaction with the volume of work that they have and their PD uptake?

2.4 Income level from T&I and PD uptake

Studies that identify practitioners' work fraction often identify their income levels as well. For example, the CIoL/ITI (2011) study above elicited responses on income and recorded the following proportions from which T&I practitioners derived their income: only source of income – 21%; main source of income – 20%; approximately half the source of income – 24%; a minor source of income – 35% (CIoL/ITI, 2011, p. 9).

In Australia, statistics from census collections show that T&I practitioners' annual incomes are also not high. Going back to 2006 and based on the 3,638 residents who described their "main job" as either "interpreters" (2,419) or "translators" (1,219) in the census collection taken in that year, their average annual incomes were reported as A$21,241 for interpreters and A$27,306 for translators (ABS, 2007). The *average* annual income for all employees in Australia in that year was A$43,628 (ABS, 2007), while the *minimum* annual wage for that year was A$26,616 (Fair Work Commission, 2008). Even after considering the proportion of those practitioners who work part-time, a report prepared at the time stated that using the standard fee of A$64 for a 90-minute on-site interpreting assignment as a basis and converting this into a full-time fraction still yielded a gross salary of A$23,841 when fixed costs of vehicle usage and travel time were considered (AUSIT, 2008). What these figures from 2006 show us is that both translators' and interpreters' annual incomes (at least those nominating it as their only/main occupation) in Australia have been considerably below average national income levels.

Since then, pay rates have remained low. In response to the modest and often tenuous income levels of many practitioners, in 2018 the State Government of Victoria took the step of allocating a further A$21.8 million over 4 years to ensure that pay rates for casually employed T&I practitioners could rise (Victorian Dept. of Premier and Cabinet, 2018). This resulted in a 10-20% increase in remuneration for most interpreting assignments. This was followed by similar action by the state government of Queensland to increase pay rates and as an incentive to attract new practitioners to the profession (Queensland Dept. of Premier and Cabinet, 2020). A recent report from Western Australia points to levels of remuneration that continue to be low, notwithstanding some increases in pay scales: "Many interpreters work in language services to supplement their income from a primary job. Until recently, the sole income from language services was deemed to be insufficient to live on" (Financial Administrative & Professional Services Training Council Incorporated, 2020, p. 1). While causality between financial costs and disincentives to pre-practice training have been well studied (e.g., Callender & Jackson, 2005; Evans & Donnelly, 2018), the issue of PD cost and its effect on uptake is less commonly addressed. In relation to schoolteachers, Zepeda (2019, p. 68) reports that "no cost to participate eased financial burdens that often come with other professional learning activities", while for those working in

healthcare or social services, Alsop (2013, p. 7) concludes that although the service facilities that employ them may benefit from their newly acquired expertise, the "financial burden for professional development may well rest with the individual". Gonzalez (2019, p. 9) points to an issue clearly raised by many of the nearly 800 informants in her Australia-based sample of translators and interpreters: those working with languages of smaller diffusion are often unable to cover PD costs because of low remuneration and demand for those languages. Three years earlier, NAATI (2016b, pp. 24, 26) collected similar responses from 754 practitioners, many of whom reported that PD was not "affordable in relation to their income", that PD "costs are too high" and that "the opportunity cost of lost income due to having to turn down jobs to attend conferences or events" was a major obstacle. In light of the above, our last research question is:

RQ 5: What is the relationship between level of income and PD uptake?

3. Methodology

The research questions relate to quantifiable features of practitioners' circumstances that are matched with PD uptake. To address these questions, we sought to capture as large a sample of practitioners as possible but restricted the pool of potential informants to those based in Australia. In Australia, the circumstances in regard to PD are greatly influenced by the regulations of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). These regulations changed in 2019 so that PD changed from being a requirement for recently certified practitioners and a recommendation for others, to being a requirement for *all* certified practitioners. These regulations pertain to the Australian environment, and it is possible that practitioners in other countries may have different circumstances in relation to PD which can influence uptake rates.

The introduction of compulsory PD for all credentialed practitioners in Australia represented a key moment in the formalisation of practitioners' (continuing) skill sets and in the professionalisation of the T&I sector. PD had been introduced as a compulsory requirement for all certified practitioners who gained their credential from 2014 onwards so that they needed to complete a program of PD over three years to retain their credential. From 2019, this same requirement applied to practitioners who had just transitioned from the old system of accreditation. They also received a three-year period to complete a course of PD that consisted of the following three areas: skills development and knowledge, industry engagement (including the topic of ethics/ethical practice) and language maintenance, alongside evidence of continuing active practice (NAATI, n.d.). To examine how practitioners were responding to the introduction of this change and to examine their engagement with PD in general, we used a survey tool to elicit responses from practitioners at the end of 2019. The survey sought to encompass all practitioners. It thus includes the PD uptake rates of three groups of practitioners: those certified from 2014 for whom PD had already been a requirement; those certified before 2014 (numerically, a far larger group of practitioners) who had transitioned to the new system of certification; those certified before 2014 who had not transitioned to the new system of certification and who retained the old 'accreditation' credential only. For the last group, PD remains optional as the retention of the 'accreditation' credential does not compel them to undertake PD. We employed an electronic survey using online survey software from Qualtrics® that was open for six weeks, from 30 October until 11 December 2019. The survey elicited responses

on the following: length and place of residence in Australia; working languages; educational/training level; T&I certification and level; fields/areas of work; length of experience; volume of work; income; engagement with professional associations. In relation to PD, the survey elicited responses on: engagement with PD in previous 24 months; reasons for PD engagement; skills, topic areas of PD; mode of engagement (onsite, hybrid, online); cost; facilitating factors and barriers to PD; future preferences. The survey also welcomed 'free-response' comments at the end.

The authors contacted a variety of T&I key stakeholders with the request for distribution to their members or associates: professional associations, regulatory bodies, training institutions, state/territory and national-level stakeholders and language services providers. The invitation to participate in this survey attracted 3,591 submissions. Submissions from those who are not practising T&I professionals or who are located outside Australia were excluded, resulting in a final sample of 3,268 responses. [1]

The sample of 3,268 T&I Australia-based practitioners is over one-fifth of the total number of the 15,621 NAATI-credentialed practitioners who possessed a credential at the end of 2019.[2; 3] While the total number of informants in this sample is 3,268, our presentation of data in the following section is based on cross-tabulations of responses to two or more questions. In all cases, there were incidences of non-responses recorded for at least one of the questions. The consequence of this is that the total number of responses shown in Tables 1 to 12 is less than 3,268. The number of responses gained is shown at the top of each table and as a percentage (in square brackets) of the total number of all possible responses, had all informants responded to both questions. The level of non-response is, in general low: for Tables 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11 and 12 it is 10% or less. For Tables 3 and 5 it is less than 15%. Thus, the percentage of non-responses (5-15%) for the data presented in most tables is below 20%, a threshold that may justify analysis of whether there is a non-response bias or not (Peytchev, 2013, p. 101). The 'outliers' to this general pattern of rates of response are Tables 9 and 10, where the non-response rate rises to 45%. Post-survey adjustment strategies such as imputation and weighting (Toepoel & Schonlau, 2017) for these two tables were not undertaken as web-based surveys such as the one used in this study typically contain little information about non-respondents. A further strategy, that of using only the responses from those informants who replied to all questions in the survey, was also not pursued due to limitations in the data collation and coding resources available. The proportion of non-responses in the tables presented in Section 5 is generally low, so their effect on the overall representativity of the responses shown is not likely to be substantial. However, we acknowledge that for two tables, the non-response rate is conspicuous, and we alert the reader to this circumstance in Section 4.2. Non-responses are not numerically shown and percentages within

[1] Approval for the collection of responses from human informants was provided by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee: Project 'Translation and Interpreting Professional Development Opportunities', Project no. 22147, issued 15 October 2019.

[2] An unspecified number of NAATI-credentialed T&I practitioners reside outside Australia. As residence in Australia was a criterion for inclusion in the sample, the cohort of informants included in this final sample consists of a disproportionately high number of Australia-based practitioners in relation to all NAATI credential-holders overall.

[3] As of 30 June 2020, 20,683 NAATI credentials (51% in interpreting, 49% in translation) had been awarded to 15,621 individuals across 172 languages (170 in interpreting including 40 Indigenous languages and 52 in translation) (NAATI 2020).

the tables reflect the total number of counted full responses only and exclude non-responses.

The data presented in Section 4 below relate to responses relevant to the five research questions. Further, Section 4 contains select excerpts from responses provided in the open comments section of the survey. Amongst the free-response 1,516 comments that related to a very wide variety of issues, those that thematically relate to the research questions are given here in brackets: level of T&I qualification (5); length of professional practice (17); volume of work (6); satisfaction with volume of work (14); reported income from T&I (16). Thematic analysis of these responses (Braun & Clarke, 2019) was undertaken by the first and third authors who first counted and coded the comments in relation to each other and in relation to the content of the survey questions.

4. Results and discussion

In this section, we present results and provide a brief discussion of overall trends of the data. The term 'PD uptake' used in the sections below refers to any engagement with a PD offering in a 24–month period before completion of the survey, that is, from October 2017 to December 2019. All statistics, unless otherwise indicated, are given in percentages. The total number of informants on which the data in each table is based is given in the Table heading (i.e., as *n* = total number). Informant missing values were not included when deriving percentages. To provide a more detailed picture of PD uptake, data are also provided in relation to the number of offerings attended by those who reported engaging with PD. The number of offerings attended is graded into groups of 1–5, 6–10 or 11 or more offerings. Excerpts from informants' comments are provided that either exemplify statistical patterns or offer tangentially related views.

4.1. Level of qualification, length of employment and professional development uptake

The first research question relates to level of T&I qualification held and PD uptake. Most informants (77.8%) have a T&I qualification. This finding reflects a now changed situation in Australia in which until 2007, a credential called 'accreditation' (renamed 'certification' in 2018) could be gained by passing an examination of T&I skills and abilities, without evidence of prior training. Since 2007, training has been a pre-requisite to certification and this development led to an increase in the uptake of T&I training in Australia over the last 17 years. In our sample, 77.8% reported having completed some form of T&I training, ranging from a one-year diploma to a two-year master degree or beyond. Table 1 presents PD uptake rates and possession of a T&I qualification, while Table 2 presents only those with a qualification with a breakdown according to qualification type.

Table 1: T&I qualification and PD uptake (n = 3,112 [95.2%] of 3,268)

Possession of T&I qualification	Overall %	Uptake of PD	
		Yes	No
With T&I qualification	77.8%	79.4%	20.6%
No T&I qualification	22.2%	74.4%	25.6%
Total	100.0%	78.3%	21.7%

Table 2: T&I qualification held and PD uptake (n = 2,406 [94.6%] of 2,543)

Highest T&I qualification held	Overall %	Uptake of PD	
		Yes	No
Master degree or higher	19.8%	78.4%	21.6%
Bachelor degree	8.1%	78.7%	21.3%
Advanced Diploma	23.3%	80.0%	20.0%
Diploma	28.5%	79.5%	20.5%
Other qualification	20.1%	79.6%	20.4%
Total average		79.4%	20.6%

Comparison of Table 1 to 2 shows that those practitioners with a T&I qualification record higher levels of PD uptake than those without one. The rate of PD uptake amongst those with no T&I qualification was significantly lower ($p = .005$) than that of those who have a T&I qualification. Prior to the collection of data, we had uncertain expectations of the level of PD uptake amongst those without T&I training. On the one hand, we hypothesised that those without a formal qualification would record lower uptake rates as their lack of personal experience of any pre-practice training would act as a barrier to engagement with post-practice training, such as PD. On the other hand, a lack of training or qualification could be thought to be a motivator to engage with those training opportunities that are available to practitioners (Hlavac & Commons, 2023).

Table 2 shows that there is little difference in the PD uptake rates between respondents according to the T&I qualification possessed, and statistical analysis showed no significant difference ($p = .97$) between the groups. The overall trend is that those with a qualification record high rates of PD uptake regardless of the level of that qualification. Tables 3 and 4 show the number of PD offerings of those practitioners who participated in PD opportunities.

Table 3: T&I qualification and no. of PD offerings attended amongst 'PD-uptakers' (n = 2,205 [86.2%] of 2,559)

Possession of T&I qualification	No. of PD offerings attended		
	1-5	6-10	11 or more
With T&I qualification	55.1%	28.4%	16.5%
No T&I qualification	56.5%	28.7%	14.8%

Table 4: No. of PD offerings attended amongst 'PD-uptakers' with a T&I qualification (n = 1,729 [90.5%] of 1,911)

Highest T&I qualification held	No. of PD offerings attended		
	1-5	6-10	11 or more
Master degree	54.7%	28.5%	16.8%
Bachelor degree	57.5%	30.1%	12.4%
Advanced Diploma	52.5%	30.5%	17.0%
Diploma	57.0%	27.0%	16.0%
Other qualification	54.3%	27.6%	18.1%

Tables 3 and 4 show no statistically significant difference between the number of PD offerings attended and possession of a T&I qualification or type of qualification possessed: amongst all groups just over half had attended 1 to 5, around 30% 6 to 10, while about 15% had attended 11 or more. Of the 5 'open-response' comments relating to qualification level, four make a connection between their level of qualification and PD. In three cases, the

opinion was voiced that a higher level of training should obviate the need for PD:

> *PD should not be compulsory, especially for those of us who completed higher qualifications, such as a Masters… [The] new system is unfair to those of us who are older practitioners and who have plenty of experience and education.* (Inf. 247)

One informant supports PD for an area that remains a gap for them:

> *Given my experience and qualifications, Bachelor of Translation […] Advanced Diploma […], Master of Interpreting and Translating […], I guess PD in conference interpreting will be of great help.* (Inf. 1103)

We come to the second research question that relates to the number of years' experience that an informant has and their engagement with PD. Table 5 presents PD uptake responses.

Table 5: Length of T&I experience and PD uptake (n = 3,113 [95.2%] of 3,268)

Length of T&I experience	Proportion of total no. in %	Uptake of PD	
		Yes	No
Less than 1 year	8.4%	48.1%	51.9%
1-4 years	22.2%	75.9%	24.1%
5-9 years	22.6%	86.9%	13.1%
10-19 years	25.0%	83.1%	16.9%
20 or more years	21.8%	77.9%	22.1%

Table 5 shows a comparatively narrow range of differences in the level of PD uptake of informants who have between 1 and 20 (or more) years' experience, with the rates of PD participation ranging from 75.9% to 86.9%. The outlying group is those informants with less than one year's experience and they also represent the numerically smallest group (n = 262). We predicted that this group's PD uptake rate would be lower than most others because PD participation needs to be demonstrated at any time within a three-year period, and recently credentialed practitioners may be unlikely to undertake PD in their first year of work. Further, it is likely that recent entrants to the field will focus their occupational priorities on securing work and engaging in professional practice rather than PD in their first 12 months. Still, nearly half of those with less than 12 months' experience had attended PD.

Perhaps surprising is the high level of PD uptake recorded by those with 20 or more years' experience (77.9%), which is higher than those with 1-4 years' experience. The group of informants with 20 or more years' experience is also the one with the highest proportion of informants with the old NAATI 'accreditation' only. Among the 679 informants with 20 or more years' experience, 28.8% possess 'accreditation' only, compared to 19.3% for the sample overall. This suggests that while a certain proportion of those with 20 or more years' experience have not transitioned to the new system of certification, this appears to have had little commensurate effect on their willingness to take up PD opportunities. Table 6 below shows the number of PD offerings attended and informants' years of experience.

Table 6 below shows a similar pattern of distribution of PD offerings attended for the four groups spanning 1 to over 20 years' experience: just over 50% attended 1 to 5; just under 30% attended 6 to 10; around 16% attended 11 or more. As mentioned, the outlying group are those with less than 1 year's experience who also record a higher level of attending a smaller number of PD offerings.

Table 6: No. of years' experience and no. of PD offerings attended amongst 'PD-uptakers' (n = 2,205 [86.2%] of 2,559)

No. of years' experience	No. of PD offerings attended		
	1-5	6-10	11 or more
Less than 1 year	78.8%	11.5%	9.6%
1-4 years	56.8%	27.2%	16.0%
5-9 years	54.2%	29.6%	16.2%
10-19 years	53.4%	29.1%	17.5%
20 or more years	52.4%	31.8%	15.8%

Apart from newly-certified practitioners, there is no correlation between number of years' experience and PD uptake. This suggests that PD is accepted as a standard feature of practice: even amongst those with 20 or more years' experience, there are comparable percentages of those who report attending 6-10 or 11+ PD offerings, i.e. *more* than the minimum number of PD offerings required for recertification. However, amongst the 17 free-response comments, all of which are from practitioners with 15 or more years' experience (15 with 25 or more years' experience), eleven express negative views on PD, three are neutral and three are positive:

> *I learnt nothing in these PD sessions and resent having to do them to get recertified.* (Inf. 489)

> *Not a lot of useful ones for me. I have 34 years' experience. I expected more from PD courses.* (Inf. 69)

A neutral comment acknowledges the worth of PD for in-coming practitioners rather than for long-standing ones:

> *(...) material covered (although interesting) tends to be a repetition of what one already knows and is probably more useful for beginning interpreters*. (Inf. 1988)

One of the positive comments mentions the value of the content, but also of the notion of life-long learning:

> *All were useful. (...) It is vital to continue to learn new concepts and hone my skills further.* (Inf. 2103)

In general, the greater number of negative comments is in line with the sentiment expressed by some, more-experienced T&I practitioners, who questioned the usefulness of PD when it was being introduced in Australia (AUSIT, 2014, p. 14). The higher number of negative evaluations is congruent with Friedman et al's. (2001, p. 156) finding that many professionals nearing the end of their career felt that they did not need the approval of others, including their peers or superiors who may encourage PD participation.

4.2 Volume of work, satisfaction with volume of work and PD uptake

As stated in 2.3, a high proportion of T&I practitioners do not work full-time in this field. Section 2.3 also showed that in relation to PD uptake, most studies appear to take a full-time work status of participants as axiomatic. Table 7 shows PD uptake amongst informants according to the average number of hours per week that they report working in T&I. Across the four gradings of work volume, we consider the last grading, i.e. 31 or more hours, as a full-time work fraction.

Table 7: Average no. of hours worked per week and PD uptake (n = 3,197 [97.8%] of 3,268)

Average no. of hours worked per week in T&I	Overall %	Uptake of PD	
		Yes	No
1-10	39.5%	68.5%	31.5%
11-20	22.4%	82.3%	17.7%
21-30	18.7%	86.7%	13.3%
31 or more	19.4%	86.0%	14.0%

Table 7 shows that those who report working between 1 and 10 hours per week (on average) record the lowest level of PD uptake, but one which can still be considered reasonably high: 68.5%. Those working a higher number of hours record uptake rates of over 80%, with little variation between those working 11-20 hours per week and those who are 'full-timers'. These overall trends are replicated in relation to overall number of PD offerings attended as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Average no. of hours worked and no. of PD offerings attended amongst 'PD-uptakers' (n = 2,434 [95.1%] of 2,559)

Average no. of hours worked per week in T&I	No. of PD offerings attended		
	1-5	6-10	11 or more
1-10	64.5%	21.6%	13.9%
11-20	51.2%	32.0%	16.8%
21-30	50.2%	33.7%	16.1%
31 or more	50.6%	30.7%	18.7%

Table 8 shows that, except for those working between 1 and 10 hours per week in T&I, around half of the other groups had attended 1 to 5 PD offerings, around 32% had attended 6 to 10 PD events and around 17% had attended 11 or more. Of the 6 free-response comments on the topic, four expressed a negative sentiment towards PD while two were neutral. Two of the negative responses complained of the same PD requirements being applied on all credential-holders, regardless of their volume of work, e.g.:

> *I only work a few hours a week as an interpreter/translator and it is totally unfair that the system is imposing compulsory PD on all in the same way.* (Inf. 247)

Another practitioner suggests that a *larger* volume should be a reason for reducing the (cost of) existing PD requirements:

> *I have recently had a significant increase in work and the need to satisfy arbitrary PD requirements is a burden. I believe it would be fairer to discount [the cost of PD for] translators and interpreters who get through larger volumes of work.* (Inf. 965)

We come now to satisfaction with level of work and PD uptake. Table 9 shows the numbers of selections given by informants according to whether they would like to get more work, less work or are satisfied with their current level of work.

Table 9: Satisfaction level with volume of work and PD uptake (n = 1,839 [56.2%] of 3,268)

Satisfaction level with volume of work	Uptake of PD		
	Overall %	Yes	No
I would like more work	55.8%	74.9%	25.1%
I am happy with the current volume	42.8%	78.9%	21.1%
I would like less work	1.4%	68.0%	32.0%

Table 9 shows that over 55% of informants would like more work. This statistic indicates that available work is seen as even more precarious than reported in APESMA (2012), which recorded this concern amongst 43% of informants. In our sample, those that are content with the current level of work represent nearly 43%. Only a small percentage expresses a desire for less work. This group also records the lowest percentage of PD uptake: 68%. However, the converse is not true: those wishing to have more work recorded a *lower* rate of PD uptake than those who were satisfied with their current level of work. A desire to have more work does not co-occur with a higher level of engagement with PD and this is confirmed in Table 10:

Table 10: Level of satisfaction with volume of work and no. of PD offerings attended amongst 'PD-uptakers' (n = 1,408 [55.0%] of 2,559)

Satisfaction level with volume of work	No. of PD offerings attended		
	1-5	6-10	11-15
I would like more work	59.2%	25.5%	15.3%
I am happy with the current volume	55.1%	30.7%	14.2%
I would like less work	47.1%	41.2%	11.7%

A supposition that we had in regard to research question 4 that those who would like more work would have attended PD to a higher level than others and a higher number of PD offerings than the other groups was not confirmed. All 14 free-response comments on satisfaction with work level and PD contained unfavourable feedback on PD and the ability of PD to enable an increase in work volume:

> *PD activities helped me update my skills and knowledge. But it was not helpful to get employment.* (Inf. 2377)

> *PD cannot guarantee that I will have more work or that my income will go up. My translation rates have been the same for the last ten years.* (Inf. 2576)

> *I think the issue for me is the feeling that the PD is going nowhere except to get points for NAATI. I don't get any more jobs by doing a good job interpreting.* (Inf. 164)

Another informant lists an increased volume of work as a catalyst for greater enthusiasm for PD, not the other way around:

> *If I had more, and more varied, work I'd be a lot more excited about PD.* (Inf. 2535)

The statistical data and the comments provided by the small number of informants who gave feedback on this topic suggest that it is practitioners' lower volume of T&I work that determines the level of engagement with PD: dissatisfaction with a perceived low level of work overrides the belief that PD

could provide further possible work. This then accounts for the lower level of engagement with PD amongst those who work fewer hours per week in T&I.

4.3 Reported income and PD uptake

This section presents data on informants' reported income from T&I work and their level of PD uptake. Informants were asked to select a range within which their income fell in the financial year before the survey.

Table 11: Reported annual income (in AUD) from T&I and uptake of PD (n = 3,084 [94.3%] of 3,268)

Reported annual income	Overall %	Uptake of PD	
		Yes	No
A$0–10,000	34.8%	66.6%	33.4%
A$10,000–20,000	14.2%	74.9%	25.1%
A$20,000–30,000	12.0%	85.1%	14.9%
A$30,000–40,000	10.3%	87.4%	12.6%
A$40,000–50,000	8.0%	86.2%	13.8%
A$50,000–60,000	7.4%	88.1%	11.9%
A$60,000–70,000	5.8%	91.0%	19.0%
A$70,000–80,000	3.3%	87.1%	12.9%
A$80,000–90,000	1.6%	84.0%	16.0%
A$90,000–100,000	0.8%	96.0%	4.0%
A$100,000+	1.8%	85.1%	14.9%

Table 11 shows a high distribution of informants' reported income levels in the lower groupings from A$0–10,000 to A$30,000–40,000. To contextualise how these groupings relate to income levels in Australia at the time, we report that in November 2019, the average salary level was A$1,659 per week, i.e. A$86,268 per annum gross (ABS, 2020). This shows that out of over 3,000 T&I practitioners, 96.8% reported an income level that was below the Australian average salary during the data collection period. One factor that partly accounts for this stark observation is that a large proportion of the sample work part-time, i.e. 61.9% of informants reported working between 1 and 20 hours per week and this percentage rises to 80.6% if we include the group who work 21–30 hours per week, as Table 5 shows. However, 19.4% work 31 or more hours per week, i.e. a volume of work that can be considered full-time and yet only 3.2% of the sample earn an income that is at or above the level of the average (full-time) national salary.

Sadly, these statistics confirm the findings of other studies and surveys listed in Section 2.4, which report low remuneration for T&I in Australia and other countries. When comparing reported income level and PD uptake, we see that those with the lowest reported income report the lowest level of PD uptake (66.6%), while those in the second lowest income grouping report the second lowest PD uptake rate (74.9%). Amongst those informants who record an income level of A$20,000 or more, there is little substantial variation in PD uptake levels, which are generally between 85 to 90%. Table 12 below shows the number of PD offerings attended by those who engaged with PD over the 24 months before data collection.

The distribution of PD offerings attended is in line with the observation made in relation to the statistics presented in Table 11 that those informants whose income level is in the two lowest groupings report not only lower PD uptake rates, but that those who do attend PD engage with it less frequently than those reporting a higher income.

Table 12: Reported annual income and no. of PD offerings attended amongst 'PD-uptakers' (n = 2,414 [94.3%] of 2,559)

Reported annual income	No. of PD offerings attended		
	1-5	6-10	11 or more
A$0–10,000	65.4%	21.3%	13.%
A$10,000–20,000	58.8%	24.1%	17.1%
A$20,000–30,000	50.9%	36.8%	12.3%
A$30,000–40,000	50.0%	32.8%	27.2%
A$40,000–50,000	45.4%	35.1%	19.5%
A$50,000–60,000	49.5%	29.6%	20.9%
A$60,000–70,000	53.3%	30.3%	16.4%
A$70,000–80,000	48.7%	28.9%	22.4%
A$80,000–90,000	52.2%	27.5%	20.3%
A$90,000–100,000	54.5%	27.3%	18.2%
A$100,000+	41.5%	39.0%	19.5%

There were 16 free-response comments that related to income level and PD. All of them bemoaned the low level of income that practitioners (can) earn from T&I-related work. Very frequent were disgruntled comments complaining of the high cost of PD in relation to the low remuneration from T&I work:

> [*PD is*] *very expensive considering the low pay rates that interpreters get.* (Inf. 55)

> *The pay for interpreters does not justify expensive PD*. (Inf. 171)

As a result of the alleged mismatch in the cost of PD and level of income, many informants reported that they sought out free or low-cost PD only.

> *I never attend any PD activities that charge fees because translation and interpreting is one of the poorly paid sectors in Australia.* (Inf. 1865)

> *I specifically look for free or low-cost events as my income from translation is minimal these days, but I don't want to lose my certification.* (Inf. 167)

5. Conclusion

This paper addressed five questions relating to key features of T&I practitioners' profiles and their uptake of PD. The data was gained in late 2019. At the start of that year, PD had become compulsory for holders of any NAATI credential who wish to retain (i.e. 'to revalidate') it. The data collection was therefore timely as our survey tool was able to capture responses from recently credentialed practitioners for whom PD was already a requirement as well as from practitioners of longer standing who had a three-year period to complete a program of PD. The survey tool also captured responses from a third group for whom PD was entirely optional: those who had not transitioned to being 'certified' and who retained their 'accreditation' credential only. Uptake of PD amongst the first group was mandatory. But for the second and third groups, uptake of PD reflected the choices that practitioners had: to commence engagement with PD within the first year of a three-year cycle (i.e. 2019); not to engage with PD until a later stage within the three-year period; or not to plan to engage with PD at all.

In light of this period of transition to mandatory PD that this sample was gained in, we summarise here our findings. Levels of participation in PD are high for all groups of informants, regardless of the level of T&I training. Possession of a qualification prior to entry into the industry has little effect on engaging in training after entry into this same industry. This suggests that engagement with PD has become widespread in the work profiles of most practitioners, regardless of their uptake of training opportunities before they commenced practising. It is unclear to what extent those without any previous T&I training are motivated to engage with PD to gain skills that they were previously unable (or required) to acquire. Hlavac and Commons (2023) report on a specific cohort of practising T&Is with this profile. It is possible that some informants without a T&I qualification welcome the availability of PD as a means to gain specific knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs). But it is not possible to identify how many of those with no T&I training 'buy into' PD without data on motivational factors, and this remains an area that warrants further study.

We note also that the percentage of informants in our sample who have a T&I qualification is close to 80%. This is higher than that recorded in other data collections of practitioners' work-related attributes including T&I training (e.g., Katan, 2009a; Pym et al., 2012) and noticeably higher than the percentage (62.5%) that Gonzalez (2019, p. 7) records in her study of 793 Australia-based practitioners. The high percentage of informants that we record with previous T&I training may be reflective of an elevated proportion of practitioners with this attribute and/or a greater readiness amongst them to respond to random web-based surveys that elicit information on PD.

While the quantitative data shows an overall high uptake of PD, the qualitative data contain responses that do not suggest an overall high level of satisfaction. The number of qualitative responses is small, but the sentiment of most of these responses is similar: a general level of dismay with PD offerings that some trained T&Is see as not contributing greatly to their repertoire of existing KSAs. These opinions are in line with those that were voiced by some senior practitioners (AUSIT, 2014) when the status of PD was still being debated in Australia in the period leading up to it becoming a requirement in 2019. While learners' affective responses are an important factor in the evaluation of PD, measurement of the outputs that PD deliver can go beyond trainees' subjective ratings. Formal examinations, peer assessments, client surveys or practice assessments may offer other means to identify the effectiveness of PD training. Such further means may become a feature of PD as the PD infrastructure for translators and interpreters in Australia becomes more established.

In relation to our second research question on length of experience, the data shows that there is little difference in PD uptake and number of PD offerings attended relative to length of experience, at least amongst those with more than one year's experience. At the same time, there is little measurable drop in PD uptake rates amongst the most senior practitioners. This is noteworthy as the cohort with 20 or more years' experience is the one that has the highest proportion of those who remained 'accredited' rather than becoming 'certified' and for whom PD is optional. If PD uptake is high amongst those for whom it is compulsory, its almost equally high uptake amongst those for whom it is not compulsory (amongst whom 'senior' practitioners appear to be over-represented) suggests that PD has become a standard work-related practice for most T&Is in Australia. It is unclear whether this has come about due to PD becoming obligatory for all NAATI-certified practitioners, practitioners' belief in the intrinsic value of occupation-specific PD, or developments such as the notion of 'lifelong learning' that has become widely known across almost all

occupations. Studies on practitioners' motivations, values and beliefs about PD as well as their experiences of it are called for to address these questions.

The potential for PD to expand a practitioner's knowledge base and enable the acquisition of new skills means that it can have the ability to enhance a practitioner's employability with commensurate effect on the capability to increase volume of work. This may be particularly applicable to those who work only a small number of hours per week and who wish to increase this. But this contention that engagement with PD may be a particular inducement for those working few hours per week is not confirmed by the statistical data. Those practitioners who record a low number (1-10) of average hours of work per week record the lowest rate of PD uptake. For this group, the compelling factors behind their engagement with PD may be low income, the perception that there is little further work available, or a lack of confidence that knowledge or skill enhancement is economically rewarding. This is confirmed by the fact that those claiming to want to have *more* work record *lower* levels of PD uptake than those who are content with their current volume of work. The incentive of increasing work opportunities is one that practitioners do not believe that PD possesses. This view is reportedly held by other professionals, e.g. Wessels's (2007) study of nearly 2,000 US-based accountants recorded a lack of belief that PD enhances employability. So, T&I practitioners' views may be little different to those of others. What is different, as reported from studies referred to in Section 2.3, is that a recurrently high (≈50%) proportion of T&I practitioners work in this field less than full-time. The proportion of informants who work 30 or fewer hours per week in our sample is over 80%. Although over 55% claim to want more work, this has little to no apparent effect on PD uptake rates. If PD is not perceived as a factor in securing more work, the role of other factors (e.g., mobility, availability, predictability of work) needs to be investigated (and whether PD may still play a role alongside these). Conversely, there may be constraining factors such as carer obligations or geographic isolation that restrict the volume of work performed. Here again, PD may be able to play a role in developing strategies to address such limitations.

It is also possible, or even likely, that many informants view many aspects of T&I engagement – paid work, unpaid preparation, unremunerated travel time, home office costs, investment in resources and technology, professional association and/or union dues, (re-)certification expenses and in a retrospective sense, the time and cost invested in pre-practice training – as financially tenuous. The high percentage (71.3%) of informants who report earning A$40,000 per year or less is suggestive of this. Several free-response comments also confirm this. According to this view, the financial rewards of T&I work are modest. This view is then extended to PD such that, apart from satisfying the requirements for recertification, it endows practitioners with some skill enhancement but with little prospect of enabling an increase in earnings. Wessels's (2007) study of accountants cited above recorded a similarly low belief in the power of PD to enhance remuneration. A finding that is clear from our quantitative data as well as the modest number of free-answer responses is that most T&I practitioners have limited financial resources and providers of PD are faced with the challenge of the marketability of training and PD consumers' limited spending power.

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