THE IMPACT OF THE MISSISSIPPI WE THE PEOPLE SUMMER INSTITUTE
UPON THE CONTENT KNOWLEDGE, TEACHING STRATEGIES, AND
DISPOSITIONS OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS

By
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A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Secondary Education
in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Mississippi State, Mississippi

May 2006
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Title of Study: THE IMPACT OF THE MISSISSIPPI WE THE PEOPLE SUMMER INSTITUTE UPON THE CONTENT KNOWLEDGE, TEACHING STRATEGIES, AND DISPOSITIONS OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS

Pages in Dissertation: 187

Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education

The importance of effective and content specific professional development, particularly civic education, is well established in the literature. This study sought to determine if the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute (MSWTPSI) had an impact upon content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions of social studies teachers. The MSWTPSI professional development model is consistent with civic education scholars’ and education researchers’ recommendations for effective professional development.

This study employed a mixed methodology to address three research questions. Data originated from pre- and post-tests and surveys of 27 MSWTPSI participants. Additionally, from a volunteer pool of 15, six teachers participated in interviews, observations, and lesson plan reviews.
Regarding the impact of the MSWTPSI upon participants’ content knowledge, from the qualitative analysis, findings indicated that participants were impacted (i.e., increased knowledge, rekindled interest in the Constitution), while findings from the quantitative analysis showed no statistically significant difference. From the quantitative analysis, findings regarding the MSWTPSI’s impact upon participants’ teaching strategies indicated a statistically significant difference \( (p < .02) \). Concurrently, findings from the qualitative analysis indicated the MSWTPSI did impact participants’ teaching strategies. Findings from the quantitative analysis regarding the Institute’s impact on participants’ dispositions indicated a statistically significant difference \( (p \leq .04) \) likewise; qualitative findings indicated an impact upon participant dispositions (i.e., more confidence, more enthusiasm).

Results suggested that participation in the MSWTPSI did impact participants’ content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions. Conclusions drawn from the results indicated that the MSWTPSI was effective. Results also support the recommendation of researching more state institutes. Additionally, it is recommended that a longitudinal study examining participants’ content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions be conducted through principal evaluations to disclose MSWTPSI effects. Overall, participants’ comments concerning the MSWTPSI were positive.
DEDICATION

I dedicate this endeavor to the Higher Power that has sustained me throughout my entire life: God. While not knowing where my steps in this journey may take me, it is with confidence I trust His love.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincerest thanks are extended to Dr. Burnette Wolf Hamil. You are timeless. Expressed appreciation is also due to my dissertation committee, namely Dr. Dwight Hare, Dr. Sue Minchew, Dr. Peter Messer, and Dr. Nancy Verhoek-Miller.

I thank my parents, Bobby and Reba Pearson for providing a home of love. You have always believed dreams were possibilities and I share with you this moment. To the remainder of my family, Laura, John, Sandra, BJ, Justin, Eric, and James, thank you for your constant support and encouraging words…It has been your kind thoughts that have spurred my endeavors to the end.

To the Hinton Church and my pastor Rev. Myrtle Carney, it is with heartfelt gratitude that I say thank you…Thank you for loving and sustaining me through this process. And lastly, I owe much to my friends and colleagues in North Dakota who have supported and sustained me in the completion of the dissertation.

To those who remain nameless, but not faceless, from the depths of my heart, thank you for the constant love and encouragement in this valley. I end with this thought:

I pray for you every single day
Protection and guidance to find your way
Strength and courage to help you through
This I ask of Him, from Me to You.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Civic education has been defined as an institutional mechanism for attitudinal and value change (Finkel, 2000). Historically, public schools have been the instrument of instruction for civic education with the burden of the responsibility resting upon teachers (Westheimer & Kahne, 2003). The duty of teachers to teach the facts and principles of American democracy has continued unabated (Niemi & Junn, 1998). Civic education for the American youth, suggested Tolo (1999), prepares informed citizens and promotes participation in the civic life of the community.

A renewed attention to civic instruction has arisen from an increasingly disengaged sense of interest by young Americans in the political processes (Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Finkel & Ernst, 2001; Putnam, 2000). Carpini and Keeter (1996) suggested that by providing instruction in civic education, the trend of disengagement could be halted. Hutchins (Kaplan, 1992) captured the importance of the need for civic education when he stated, “The death of democracy is not likely to be an assassination from ambush. It will be a slow extinction from apathy, indifference, and undernourishment” (p. 702). The necessary components determined to promote the continuance of a democratic society include an informed citizenry and the
participation of that citizenry in the self-governing process; these are the goals of civic education.

Thomas Jefferson (as cited in Tozer, Violas, & Senese, 2002) wrote in a letter to William Jarvis in 1820:

I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves, and if we think [the people] not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education. (p. 31)

The civic discretion about which Jefferson wrote has been defined as the freedom or authority to make decisions and choices regarding civic affairs and rights of citizenship (Agnes & Guralnik, 2001). The importance of informing the citizenry has not diminished but has continued to grow in significance. As our nation has developed, the magnitude and responsibility of enlightening this civic discretion through education has evolved and expanded.

It was recognized early in American history that a free society had to rely on the knowledge, skills, and virtue of its citizens; therefore, civic education was essential to the preservation and improvement of this democracy (Gutmann, 1987). In 1958, John F. Kennedy (as cited in Center for Civic Education [CCE], 2003) stated, “There is an old saying that the course of civilization is a race between catastrophe and education. In a democracy such as ours, we must make sure that education wins the race” (p. 1). The goal of civic education has been and continues to be the promotion of informed, responsible participation in political life by competent
citizens committed to the fundamental values and principles of American constitutional democracy. Ultimately, a democratic society must rely on the future citizenry to perpetuate the government. It is essential that the citizenry be informed of the fundamental values and principles of the American constitutional democracy.

Literature Review

Civic Education

Recent events have attracted greater attention to the condition of civic education and resulted in renewed reform efforts for practices in civic education. In 2003, the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) established an overall goal for civic education, which is to help young people acquire and learn to use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens. According to CIRCLE, educators must meet the challenges of attending to the goal of civic education. As articulated by Westheimer and Khane (2003), to make a democracy work, schools must take seriously the goal of educating and nurturing engaged and informed democratic citizens. Philosopher Amy Gutmann (1987) stressed the importance of preparing citizens to participate in conscious social reproduction as the central mission of schools:

Although we cannot conclude that democratic politics has casual primacy over democratic education, we can conclude that “political education”—the cultivation of the virtues, knowledge, and skills necessary for political
participation—has moral primacy over other purposes of public education in a democratic society. Political education prepares citizens to participate in consciously reproducing their society, and conscious social reproduction is the ideal not only of democratic education, but also of democratic politics. (p. 287)

The central purpose of education in America, as Carpini and Keeter (1996) emphasized, has always been to teach the requisites of good citizenship. During the past century, civic educators sought to induct each generation into the democratic culture of society in order to maintain the political and civic order (Patrick, 2003). Instilling political knowledge, values, and skills among citizens was viewed as the means by which this goal could be achieved.

According to Meier (2003), habits of democracy do not develop naturally, but they can be learned by immersion, apprenticeship, and direct teaching. Similarly, Patrick and Vontz (2001) stated that future generations would not learn civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions unless learned educators deliberately teach them. Galston (2003) identified seven relationships that exist between civic knowledge and civic attributes. They are:

1. Civic knowledge promoted support for democratic values; (2) civic knowledge promoted political participation; (3) civic knowledge helped citizens to understand their interests as individuals and as members of groups; (4) civic knowledge helped citizens learn more about civic affairs; (5) the more knowledge of civic affairs, the less generalized
mistrust and fear of public life; (6) civic knowledge improved the
consistency of citizens’ views as expressed on public opinion surveys; and
(7) civic knowledge altered opinions on specific civic issues. (p. 32)

In an effort to measure the effects of civic education on students, nationwide
tests have been created. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a
nationally-mandated project, collects and reports data about the educational
achievement of American students in core subjects (National Center for Education
Statistics [NCES], 1999). The goal of the NAEP civics assessment is to measure how
well American youth are being prepared to meet their citizenship responsibilities. To
this end, NAEP developed an instrument to test students’ abilities in identifying and
comprehending the purposes and effective applications of both participatory skills
and civic dispositions (Patrick, 2000).

Administered to fourth, eighth, and 12th-grade students, this test is the nearest
thing to a national civics exam that our country has (Galston, 2003). Students’
performances on the exam have tremendous ramifications for civic educators since its
purpose is to discover what students know and do not know about civics. NAEP
(NCES, 1999) reports students’ performance on the exam as basic, proficient, or
advanced. Students at the proficient achievement level indicate competency in civic
content, application of civic knowledge to real-world circumstances, and analytical
skills relative to civics. The basic achievement level indicates partial mastery of these
fundamental components, while the advanced achievement level indicates superior
mastery of the components.
Niemi and Junn (1998) conducted an analysis of the scores of twelfth grade students from the 1988 NAEP Civics Assessment. They found that students (a) were well-versed in many aspects of the criminal system, (b) were well-informed about citizens’ rights, (c) knew less about subjects not mentioned in the Constitution, and (d) knew little about the context surrounding relevant historical figures. From this analysis, Niemi and Junn reached two conclusions: (a) students have limited exposure to contemporary events, problems, and controversies and (b) students retain knowledge on aspects of civic importance that are currently familiar to them.

With a representative sample of students from grades 4, 8, and 12, the results of the 1998 NAEP Civics Assessment provided an overview of trends in students’ knowledge and teachers’ classroom practices. Findings from the assessment revealed overall that only 25% of the students performed at or above the proficient level. In addition, 31% of the fourth grade students, 29% of eighth grade students, and 35% of the 12th-grade students scored below the basic level (NCES, 1999). According to Galston (2003), these results indicate “near-total civic ignorance” (p. 31).

Prior to the findings of the NAEP in the 1980s and 1990s, concerns regarding civic education had been expressed. As early as 1967, Patrick (1969), in conjunction with Massialas, and Smith vocalized concern regarding the state of civic education and appealed for the reform of civic education in schools. To validate the need for concern, Patrick, in the early 1970s, conducted research regarding the influence of civic education. In 1972, he examined the impact of an experimental course entitled American Political Behavior on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of secondary
school students. The course content was designed to overcome inadequacies and narrow the knowledge gap in civic education. In this study, he found the effects of the course to be significant in regard to the impact of specialized text materials and instruction on the students’ political knowledge and skills.

**The Impact of Teachers**

Teachers have a profound impact on students and students’ academic success (Darling-Hammond, 2000). The multi-faceted influence of teachers is a driving force in the education of America’s youth. Henry B. Adams (as cited in Kaplan, 1992) gave a profound summation of the power teachers possess when he said, “A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops” (p. 535). Educators, policymakers, and the public acknowledge that the most powerful influence on students’ learning is the quality of teaching that students experience (Hawley & Valli, 2000). In reviewing case studies of effective teaching, Stronge (2002) maintained that the most influential school-related force is the teacher.

One element of a teacher’s influence that has been found to affect students’ learning is teacher expertise (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Sparks, 2002). In a meta-analysis that merged content analysis of 179 handbook chapters and reviews, 91 compiled research syntheses, and 61 educational expert surveys, researchers Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1993) identified classroom instruction as one of the most important influences on student learning. In case study research of teacher-effects conducted by Brophy (2001), teacher behaviors and patterns of teacher-student
interaction were found to be associated with students’ achievement gains. These findings indicate that explicit components of a teacher’s influence impact students’ learning.

In related studies (Brophy, 1986; Gage & Needels, 1989; Prawat, 1992; Schulman, 1991), it was determined that effective teaching can be defined and learned by teachers, effective teachers can be identified, and the degree of teachers’ influence can be determined. Johnson (1977) found that perspectives of effective teaching by principals, school board members, and teachers include references to process and person, lesson objectives, assessment of students, classroom control, and learning mastery. In another study, when asked to identify characteristics of best teachers, students said that the best teachers have knowledge of the subject, explain things clearly, spend time helping students, have a sense of humor, and make the class interesting (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1997).

In a recent study, McBer (2002) found that effective teachers have extensive content knowledge and possess a bank of teaching strategies that enhance student learning. He described effective teachers as being professional, analytical and conceptual thinkers, planners with expectations, and flexible. Other professional characteristics of effective teachers that have been identified by researchers include resourcefulness, intelligence, emotional stability, considerativeness, objectivity, drive, refinement, cooperativeness, and reliability (Ornstein, 1999). The sum of these findings reveals that the attributes of effective teachers can be defined and that the impact of the various attributes can be isolated.
Content Knowledge

Educational researchers have agreed that a basic component for effective teaching is a teacher’s content knowledge. What teachers know about the subject they teach has been determined to be a powerful factor in how well students learn (Branson, 2003). Citing extensive research (see Berliner, 1986; Blair, 2000; Covino & Iwanicki, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1996, 2000), Stronge (2002) stated that mastery of content knowledge has been consistently identified as a fundamental and important element of effective teaching. After reviewing the report of the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, Darling-Hammond (1996), highlighted the importance of increasing teachers’ knowledge in order to create environments that produce opportunities for student learning. Recognized by researchers as fundamental, powerful, and important, mastery of content knowledge is critical to effective teaching (Darling-Hammond, 1998). According to Darling-Hammond, “teachers need to understand subject matter deeply and flexibly; so that they can help students create useful cognitive maps, relate ideas to one another, and address misconceptions” (p. 6). Competence in the subject matter creates the opportunity for students to become engaged in and open to learning (Traina, 1999). Additionally, Traina indicated it increases students’ respect for teachers, which in turn enhances the learning environment and allows students to gain greater perspectives of the world around them.

Leading civic researchers have fashioned various models outlining important components of content knowledge. Hyland’s (1985) research on teaching about the
Constitution examined what junior high social studies teachers know about the Constitution. Findings of the study revealed that social studies teachers must have scholarly knowledge of the subject matter in order to carry out civic education programs competently. Patrick and Vontz (2001) asserted that social studies teachers are not likely to effectively teach the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed by citizens to sustain and improve democracy unless they have experienced courses in civics. Moreover, they suggested that teachers can not teach about democracy effectively unless they know and understand it thoroughly. They also recommended that in educating for citizenship in a democracy, civics teachers’ content knowledge must include knowledge of the roles of civics and government in a democracy. In the Patrick and Vontz model of citizenship education, *Components of Education for Citizenship in a Democracy*, the following fundamental concepts of civic knowledge were identified:

(a) concepts/principles on the substance of democracy; (b) issues about the meaning and implementation of core ideas; (c) constitutions and institutions of representative democratic government; (d) organization and functions of democratic institution; (e) practices of democratic citizenship and the roles of citizens; (f) contexts of democracy to include cultural, social, political and economic; and (g) history of democracy in particular states and throughout the world. (p. 41)
According to Patrick and Vontz, the primary objective of civic education was teaching the principles of democracy through example and understanding. If they are to teach them well, social studies teachers must have a thorough understanding of these concepts.

Another civic education model for citizenship education, which was developed by Patrick in 2003, includes six basic topics of study: representative democracy (republicanism), constitutionalism, rights (liberalism), citizenship, civil society (free and open social system), and market economy (free and open economic system). In this model, Patrick identified these concepts as core content and the “indispensable foundation of an effective civic education” (p. 12). Patrick maintained that it is the investigation, application, and interpretation of this core content knowledge that enables students to learn about and practice democracy. For this model to be implemented successfully, teachers must be knowledgeable about these concepts.

Teaching Strategies

Certain teaching strategies or instructional methods are found to be more effective than others in civic education classrooms (Haas, 2001). Interactive teaching strategies, for example, “promote certain dispositions and participatory skills that increase students’ capacity to act effectively as citizens in a constitutional democracy” (CCE, 1995, p. 14). According to Galston (2001), the critical issue in civic education is the enrichment of classroom instruction. In an attempt to improve
civic education, a recent approach has been the implementation of student-centered
teaching strategies. Some of the interactive teaching methodologies recommended for
use in civic education classrooms include mock trials, questioning, simulated
congressional hearings, cooperative learning, problem solving, service learning, moot
court, debate, and the continuum (CCE).

In mock trials, students are required to take the roles of others and role play
conflicts (CCE, 1995). Assigned to the different roles in a trial setting (e.g., judge,
prosecutor, defense, jury, witnesses), students act out a case which has been
researched. Such role-play leads students to understand social behavior and develop
methods of solving problems effectively (Joyce & Calhoun, 1996). Additionally,
mock trial encourages collaboration in analyzing social situations and in developing
democratic methods of coping with situations.

Muijs and Reynolds (2001) identified questioning, specifically open-ended
questioning, as a highly effective teaching strategy. It is important for teachers to
learn how to use this strategy because asking high-level questions tends to elicit high-
level responses from students, and this has been correlated with higher student
achievement (Klinzing, Klinzing-Eurich, & Kish, 1985). It has been suggested that
the use of such questioning encourages students to develop knowledge, decision-
making skills, conflict management understanding, and a commitment to citizenship
participation (CCE, 1995).
Similar to real-life situations, simulations are currently included in classroom instruction. Over the last 30 years, simulation models have increasingly been used in education. This teaching strategy is found to be effective as students’ abilities of application and analytical processing are increased (Joyce & Calhoun, 1996). The critical aspect of the simulation strategy is the teacher’s ability to make the activities meaningful. Various types of simulations exist, (e.g., congressional hearing, legislative hearing) but the underlying premise for all types is the same: approximate realistic conditions so that concepts learned and problem-solutions generated are transferable to the real world.

Redefining group work, cooperative learning added a dimension to interactive teaching strategies. Orlich et al. (2004) defined cooperative learning as “an adaptation of the small-group teaching technique, used to promote individuals’ and group members’ achievement” (p. 268). The basis of cooperative learning is the fostering of positive interdependence by teaching students to work and learn together. Each student’s participation is essential to the successful completion of the task and exercise. Found to be an effective teaching strategy, cooperative learning assists in the development and use of appropriate interpersonal skills (CCE, 1995).

Torp and Sage (2002) identified problem solving as an important method of engaging learners. Jurisprudential inquiry, one type of problem solving, allows students to examine social issues. Created and developed especially for secondary students in social studies, jurisprudential inquiry increases students’ awareness of
social and personal values and skills for participating in democratic inquiry (Joyce & Calhoun, 1996). Students have the opportunity to review court cases involving social problems where public policy issues are involved. Students identify policy issues and values underlying the choices available in dealing with the issues. Described as an effective teaching method, this strategy fosters critical thinking skills and facilitates deeper levels of understanding (Torp & Sage, 2002).

Service learning, considered by some educators to be the most effective example of teaching democratic citizenship, assists students in understanding that their rights depend upon being civically active and responsible (Battistoni, 2000). Hepburn (2000) defined service learning as community service that is curriculum-based. The service experience is related to learning content objectives by connecting classroom assignments to projects carried out in the students’ community.

Moot court is patterned on the Supreme Court hearing model (CCE, 1995). This strategy centers upon the preparation and presentation of arguments regarding the application and constitutionality of a law or the fairness of a previous court decision. The success of this strategy rests in focusing students’ attention on the underlying principles and concepts of due process. Similar to a debate, moot court presents arguments for consideration.

Debate is a strategy deemed most effective for encouraging students to “clearly and logically formulate arguments based upon evidence” (CCE, 1995, p. 22). This method involves teaching students to take and support a position on an issue.
Additionally, students are provided opportunities to develop the ability to sway others’ opinions. Identifying issues clearly and logically, students formulate arguments based upon evidence. As an interactive learning strategy, debate encourages the cultivation of interpersonal and verbal skills.

When using the continuum strategy, students are presented a range of possible attitudes about or approaches to a controversial issue. They analyze the issues and their beliefs concerning the issues (CCE, 1995). Provided with a technique for identifying ranges of values or opinions, teachers encourage students to determine which element of the continuum most closely approximates their attitudes. As a result of considering contrary opinions or values, students develop an understanding of the reasoning behind the various positions. This strategy is thought to be effective because it assists students in seeing a range of values or opinions that exists on a given topic and understanding the reasoning that supports those positions. This strategy, like debate, provides an orderly method of discussing controversial topics.

**Dispositions**

Various definitions of dispositions exist. With these various definitions, the roles and importance of dispositions in teaching remain open for interpretation (Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Wenzlaff, 1998). However, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (2003), the leading national accrediting body for teacher education programs, offers the following explanation of dispositions:
Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justices. For example, they might include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment. (p. 1)

Fundamentally speaking, dispositions signify a person’s customary frame of mind (Agnes & Guralnik, 2001). Buss and Craik (1983) described dispositions as synoptic behavior patterns or summaries of act frequencies. Katz and Raths (1985) stated that a disposition “summarizes the trend of a teacher’s action in particular contexts” (p. 302). The proposal of behavioral patterns led to the suggestion that dispositions predicted future behavior provided specific circumstances were present (Arnstine, 1990). Refining an earlier definition, Katz (1993) distinguished a disposition as “a tendency to exhibit frequently, consciously, and voluntarily a pattern of behavior …” (p. 1). More recently, Weiner and Cohen (2003) suggested that dispositions are “one’s personal qualities or characteristics including attitudes, beliefs, interests, values, and coping style; determiners of behavior, constellations of personal meanings from which behaviors spring” (p. 1).

Research on dispositions related to teaching can be traced to Arnstine in the 1960s. Centered upon integrating learning and schooling, Arnstine’s work included the first mention of dispositions and their importance to teaching. He stated that “to ascribe a disposition to something or to someone is to say he has a tendency to behave
in certain ways when certain conditions are realized” (p. 32). According to Arnstine, when specific environmental conditions are created, certain types of behaviors are exhibited.

In the mid 1980s, Katz and Raths (1985) proposed the idea of professional dispositions as goals in teacher education. They maintained that dispositions provide a description rather than an explanation of behavior. Katz and Raths offered multiple reasons for including dispositions in teacher education: overt focus upon skills, competency, preferable dispositions, love of teaching, and ideal characteristics. As a result of their research, Katz and Raths contended that dispositions can be recognized, enhanced or weakened, and measured.

Published by the Minnesota Higher Education Board in 1986, *Minnesota’s Vision for Teacher Education: Stronger Standards, New Partnerships* significantly influenced the interpretation of dispositions in teacher education in the late 1980s (Freeman, 2003). This document drew attention to the role of dispositions in teacher education. The taskforce that produced the report identified the following categories of dispositions: dispositions toward self, dispositions toward the learner, dispositions toward teaching, and dispositions toward the professions (Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Klein, 1995). Additionally, the taskforce stated:

Expected dispositions of beginning teachers must stem from the concept of an ideal teacher. The identified dispositions determine the range of skills needed by beginning teachers. Effective teachers are intentionally disposed to act in
particular ways that best facilitate learning and can explain their patterns of behavior. The frequency of particular actions within specified categories of circumstances determines the particular disposition. (p. 170)

The Minnesota report ultimately provided support in the development of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) that emerged in 1987. INTASC is a collection of state and national educational agencies committed to reforming teacher education. The mission of this organization is guided by the principle that effective teachers should integrate content knowledge with regard to strengths and needs of students ensuring student development and achievement (INTASC, 1992). During the 1990s, INTASC developed standards that outline what teachers should “know, be like, and be able to do in order to practice responsibly” (p. 2). Embedded within these standards are descriptors of desirable traits for teachers with respect to knowledge, performance, and dispositions.

Research by Thompson, Ransdell, and Rousseau (2004) examined the dispositions of elementary master teachers to determine (a) what dispositions effective teachers have in common and (b) how the dispositions of effective teachers compare with the dispositions established by the INTASC standards. Observing 13 teachers over a 7-week period, the researchers discovered that the teachers were excellent communicators who engaged and motivated students in the learning process and encouraged positive interaction. These findings correspond with dispositions identified as critical in INTASC standards 3, 5, 6, and 10 (INTASC, 1992). INTASC
standard three focused upon a teacher’s understanding of main themes, tools of inquiry, and discipline that makes subject matter important to students. INTASC standard 5 focused upon a teacher’s understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior. INTASC standard 6 focused upon teachers’ communication skills. INTASC standard 10 focused upon partnerships the teacher fosters with respect to school colleagues, parents, other groups in the community.

In other research (Usher, Usher, & Usher, 2003), effective teachers were found to exhibit dispositions of empathy, positive view of others, positive view of self, authenticity, and meaningful purpose and vision. Additionally, a teacher’s enthusiasm for teaching, learning, and content has been identified as an important part of effective teaching (Stronge, 2002). Stronge also found that effective teachers recognize that motivation is critical to fostering and enhancing learning. Finally, studies conducted by Jones and Moreland (2004) and Scrivens (1998) provide evidence that confidence is also a critical disposition to successful teaching. The dispositions highlighted in the aggregate findings of these studies correlate respectively to INTASC standards 2, 5, 6, and 9 (INTASC, 1992). INTASC standard 2 focused upon the teacher understanding adolescent development. INTASC standard 5 focused upon the teacher understanding individual and group motivation and behavior. INTASC standard 6 focused upon the teacher’s understanding of communication in the classroom. And, INTASC standard 9 focused upon the teacher as a reflective practitioner who engages in professional development.
Creating and sustaining professional development for educators has resulted in changes for the profession as a whole. Over the past 40 years, professional development, also referred to as staff development and inservice education, has been used as a means to reform teaching. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) defined professional development as the facilitation of the learning of all adults in the school community. The fundamental intention of professional development programs is to impact behaviors of teachers in order to improve the performance of students in the classroom (Tewel, 1995). Professional development provides opportunities for teachers to reflect critically on their practices and to fashion new knowledge and beliefs about content and pedagogy.

As a result of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (U.S. Department of Education, 1994), and the *National Education Goals* (U.S. Department of Education, 1996), professional development has been encouraged by the national government over the past two decades. Among recent federal legislation impacting the preparation and professional development of teachers has been the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) (Whitehurst, 2002). This legislation requires teachers to be “highly qualified” to teach the subject matter they are designated to teach. To be highly qualified, teachers are required to have at minimum a Bachelor’s degree, a state license, and proof of competency in the subject they teach. In addition
to this federal legislation, state guidelines also affect teachers’ professional
development as licensure requirements mandate continuing education (Timar & Kirp,
1989).

According to Udall and Rugen (1997), educators attend professional
development opportunities to increase their knowledge and continue their education.
Darling-Hammond (1996) noted the significance of providing professional
development for continued growth of knowledge and skills of teachers as essential.
Professional development is viewed as an important element to the growth and
development of educators. According to Darling-Hammond (1998), teachers learn
best when engaging in interactive, reflective, and collaborative activities. The critical
need for quality professional development cannot be overstated. As Hunter (1993)
maintained, education is a profession like medicine or dentistry, and it requires its
members to retain and increase their rigor and artistry.

Teacher educators agree that a critical element in ensuring student success is
the need for ongoing professional development (Sullivan, 1999). Agreement
regarding the importance of professional development resulted in the identification of
specific practices and characteristics that enhance effective teaching. Guskey and
Sparks (1997) linked quality professional development to improvement in educational
outcomes through its influence on teacher knowledge and their practices. According
to Sparks (2002), if classroom teachers are to apply the most current research based
teaching practices, professional development must be driven by student learning and data-based assessment.

Testifying before the U. S. Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities, Daniels (1999), Director of Best Practice Project/National, reported the following common characteristics of successful professional developmental programs: voluntary, peer-led, curriculum-centered, standards-oriented, lengthy, active, practical, open-ended, and supported and attended by the principal. Professional development programs are to be carefully designed and implemented in that they are to provide continuity between what teachers learn and what goes on in their classrooms or these activities do not have the likelihood of producing long-lasting effects on teacher competence or student outcomes (Fullan & Steigelbaur, as cited in Sullivan, 1999).

Sparks (2002) found that high-quality staff development (a) focused on deepening teachers’ content knowledge and pedagogical skills; (b) included opportunities for practice, research, and reflection; (c) was sustained over time; and (d) was founded on a sense of collegiality and collaboration among teachers and between teachers and principals in solving important problems related to teaching and learning. Recent models of professional development recognize learning as an interactive process (Hawley & Valli, 2000). Joyce and Showers (1980) discovered that teachers’ behaviors changed when professional development reached the application and problem-solving level.
Professional development for teachers recently experienced major changes in its purpose and practice (Guskey, 2003; Morris, Chrispeels, & Burke, 2003). Alterations in professional development have been supported by teachers, prominent educational reformers, and organizations, such as the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) (Kelleher, 2003). During the 1980s, educators were dissatisfied with traditional professional development (Wood & Kleine, 1987). Consequently, a strong consensus emerged that reform was needed if professional development activities were to be improved. Hirsh (2001), for example, contended that conventional inservice was similar to adult pull-out programs with piecemeal efforts that have not been successful in translating teacher learning to student learning. The sit and get method required educators to sit while specialists shared new practices (Sparks & Hirsh, 1997). This approach to professional development was ineffective.

In the mid 1980s professional development began to evolve as leading researchers and educators proposed new models. Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) inspired foundational changes in professional development with the introduction of five models: (a) individually-guided professional development in which teachers read professional publications, have discussions with peers, and engage in new teaching strategies; (b) observation/assessment in which collegial observations provide feedback for teachers in the form of mentors or coaches; (c) involvement in a development/improvement process in which teachers are encouraged to adapt, design, and engage in systematic improvement; (d) training in which professional
development includes activities such as lecture, demonstration, and role-playing based upon a clear set of objectives; and (e) inquiry in which teachers are engaged in a participatory fashion.

Subsequent changes in professional development were shaped by results-driven education, systems thinking, and constructivism (Sparks, 1994). Results-driven education is guided by the idea that altering teacher instructional behavior will benefit students. Systems thinking recognizes the complex and interdependent relationships among the varied features of the educational system (i.e., curriculum, instruction, graduation requirements, assessment) while seeing the whole system. Constructivism is centered upon the concept that learners build knowledge structures rather than merely receiving them from teachers. According to Sparks, these three ideas led to professional development focused on student needs, learning outcomes, and content-specific skills. Once fragmented with piecemeal efforts, professional development is now driven by principles and standards that align with content curriculum. Professional development is no longer viewed as a frill; it is viewed as a necessary and central process.

In 1995, the NSDC adopted standards for professional development (Hirsch, 2001). These standards were designed to provide schools, districts, and states specific direction for quality professional development. The standards, which were revised in 2001, address the areas of context, process, and content. According to Hirsch, context standards described where learning occurred while the process standards referred to
how the system organized various learning opportunities. Content standards addressed what educators must understand with regard to knowledge and application. Hirsh went on to suggest that educators must attend to context, process, and content standards simultaneously to ensure students learn successfully.

Darling-Hammond and Ball (1999) offered four suggestions for stimulating changes in professional development: (a) integrate theory and practice, (b) develop discussions regarding teaching problems, (c) provide content-based professional development, (d) and learn from the analysis of practice. National studies have also emphasized the importance of professional development for teachers. Published in 1996, the U. S. Department of Education’s *Mission and Principles of Professional Development* includes the principle that professional development is ultimately evaluated with regard to teacher instruction and student learning. The conclusions are used to direct future professional development efforts. An additional report, *Does Professional Development Change Teaching Practice?: Results from a Three-Year Study* (U.S. Department of Education, 2000), provided insights into the findings of a longitudinal study of the federal Eisenhower professional development program. The Eisenhower program’s goal was to support professional development experiences for teachers that enhance classroom teaching and ultimately improve students’ learning. The Executive Summary of the Eisenhower program stated that professional development that “focused on specific, higher-order teaching strategies increased teachers’ use of those strategies in the classroom” (p. 1). According to the
Eisenhower study, professional development was found to be more effective when the activities were teacher-centered, inclusive of all participants, and encouraged discussion among teachers from similar disciplines.

Using a national probability teacher sample to determine the effects of different types of professional development on teachers’ learning, research by Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon (2001) produced two major findings. Professional development that is sustained and intensive is more likely to have an impact. Additionally, professional development that is focused on academic subject matter gives teachers opportunities for hands-on work, and incorporating the knowledge of school life is more likely to produce enhanced knowledge and skills.

Focusing attention on content professional development programs resulted in more research and greater quality professional development opportunities. According to Killion (2002), a study conducted over a two year period by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) sought professional development programs demonstrating meaningful professional development in social studies. Only two such professional development programs were submitted. Both were by the Center for Civic Education (CCE). Each program met NCSS’ criteria of improving student achievement. The programs were *We The People: The Citizen and the Constitution* (WTP) and *We The People: Project Citizen* (PC). The WTP program expanded teachers’ content knowledge in civics and government. The PC program expanded teachers’ content knowledge in public policy making. The CCE offers various forms
of professional development for teachers in both WTP and PC. One and two day trainings; week long, summer institutes; and conferences are made available to teachers at local, state, regional, and national levels. The focus of the professional development programs is increased proficiency of educators in the implementation of the WTP and PC curricula.

Professional Development for the Social Studies

A review of the literature reveals that research has been conducted on social studies specific professional development: the New Mexico Geographic Alliance Summer Institute [NMGASI] (Marroquin, 2000), Facing History and Ourselves [FHAO] (Lowenstein, 2003), Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute [CWTI] (Schell, 2003) and We The People: Citizen and the Constitution [WTP], (CCE, 2000). Each program provided teachers an opportunity to attend summer institute professional development that consists of an extended stay of a week or more. To determine the impact of the professional development activities upon the teacher participants, the researchers examined the perceived effectiveness and value of the professional development opportunities. What follows is an overview of each of these professional development programs and the findings from the respective studies.

New Mexico Geographic Alliance Summer Institute. The National Geographic Society’s (NGS) educational foundation mission is to “prepare children to embrace a diverse world, succeed in a global economy, and steward the planet’s resources”
The goal of the NGS is to eliminate geographic illiteracy in the nation’s classrooms. In pursuit of this goal, NGS established geographic alliances in each state. In 1992, New Mexico joined this network of state geographic alliances and provided professional development for teachers in order to increase their knowledge of and strategies for teaching geography.

The NMGASI (Marroquin, 2000) professional development for middle and high school teachers consists of three structural components: geographic content, pedagogy, and presentation skills. Guest geographers provide content lectures during the professional development with the goal of expanding the participants’ core knowledge. Teacher Consultants (TCs) who are trained at the National Geographic Headquarters in Washington, D.C. demonstrate geography lessons for participants. The TCs assist teacher participants in developing lessons for classroom implementation and provide guidance on lesson presentations for peers. The participants are expected to share the information gained during the professional development with their students in the classrooms and with other teachers by providing in-service presentations in their schools and school districts.

Marroquin (2000) conducted research to determine how participants from the NMGASI transferred their learning from the Institute to their teaching practice. Marroquin’s research sought to discover how teachers changed the ways they thought about and taught geography, to identify how teachers integrated new geographic knowledge into their teaching, and to validate the extent to which geography
standards were integrated into the schools’ curriculums. In Marroquin’s study of the NMGASI, 62 teachers participated in 14 focus groups. Data collection included interviews with 10 administrators of teachers who attended the NMGASI, classroom observations of eight teacher participants, and document analysis of teacher lessons plans and NGS annual professional development reports. Findings from the NMGASI study indicated that teachers’ content knowledge of geography was increased, geography was integrated into the curriculum, and feelings of inadequacy about teaching geography were replaced with feelings of confidence and enthusiasm.

*Facing History And Ourselves.* FHAO’s (2003) mission is:

to engage students of diverse backgrounds in citizenship education, to teach that the study of history is a moral enterprise, and to provide interdisciplinary programs, resource materials, and speakers for middle and high school educators to relate to past issues in the world today. (p. 1)

This mission is realized through the programs’ professional development and is considered successful if educators engage in personal confrontation with the materials, become intellectually stimulated, and rethink their assumptions and approaches to classroom teaching.

FHAO’s professional development program consists of two structural components. Participants attend an awareness presentation or an introductory workshop before being invited to a five- or six-day summer institute. This professional development, which includes scholarly lectures and mentor facilitation
of the scope and sequence of the curricula, has been designed so participants will personally experience the curriculum. The summer institute’s curriculum scope and sequence consists of (a) community building; (b) individual and society; (c) we and they; (d) the roots of anti-Semitism; (e) nighttime interlude; (f) the historical case study: the rise of the Nazis; (g) response: human behavior, obedience, survivors and rescuees; (h) judgment and legacy; and (i) choosing to participate. During the school year following the professional development, FHAO offers the participants consultation services to assist in the implementation of the curriculum (Lowenstein, 2003).

Exploring the influence of FHAO on teachers’ beliefs about citizenship and civic education, Lowenstein’s (2003) study endeavored to determine whether, how, and to what extent the understandings about citizenship and civic education held by teachers were influenced by the summer institute. His hermeneutic/interpretivist qualitative research design consisted of eight comparative case studies following middle and high school teachers in three phases: before the institute, during the institute, and following the institute during the next school year. Three queries created the outline for both interviews and observations: (a) what was the education in civic education; (b) what ends, skills, and dispositions did teachers include in their definition of citizenship, civics, and civics education; and (c) what were the contexts and sources of teacher learning. The researcher reviewed each case in comparison to the other cases in an effort to filter and separate the narratives, metaphors, binary
oppositions, and textual repetitions that were used to codify and construct meaning of the data.

Lowenstein’s (2003) findings revealed that the largest influence FHAO exerted was upon teachers’ understandings of pedagogical content knowledge in civic education. Pedagogical content knowledge identified distinctive bodies of teaching and represented the blending of content and pedagogy. A second finding included effects on teacher understandings of citizenship and civic education. FHAO effects were mediated by the following points of view: teachers’ biographies; teachers’ perception of students’ emotional, ethical/civic, and intellectual needs; and environmental and historical context. A third finding included FHAO’s influence on instructional practice. The effect on instructional practice, reflected in the curriculum purpose, provided an important explanation for understanding teachers’ curricular practices.

Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute. Another social studies professional development reviewed was the CWTI. The goals of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (CWF) (2003) include providing teachers opportunities to

(a) identify and analyze significant 17th and 18th century events that shaped and defined the United States; b) engage students in the exploration of their ethnic, economic, cultural, and political heritage; (c) learn techniques that develop students’ abilities to use higher-order critical thinking skills by incorporating primary source documents and artifacts; (d) explore challenges
the Founding Fathers faced in the development of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights; (e) use technology resources; (f) examine and compare 18\textsuperscript{th} century and 21\textsuperscript{st} century rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and (g) create a network in which they can acquire and exchange information (p.1).

The CWTI eight-day professional development is designed for elementary, middle, and high school teachers. The CWTI’s overarching theme, \textit{Becoming Americans: Our Struggle to be Both Free and Equal}, focused on the early development of America. Activities at CWTI included 18\textsuperscript{th} century character analysis, historical site visits, archaeology, and the analysis of artifacts to tracing the effects of laws and political structure on the local county. This professional development has two structural components: historical site visits with character interpreters or guides and peer teachers who present lessons incorporating historic information (Schell, 2003). The purpose of the CWTI was to improve the teaching and learning of American history.

Schell’s (2003) study of fifth grade teachers who participated in the CWTI focused on why they chose to participate, what their experiences were, how their experiences enhanced their teaching, how CWTI influenced their students’ learning, and what the teachers learned from CWTI. The research employed two 90-minute in-depth interview sessions with 10 CWTI participants. Findings from this study indicated that teachers chose to attend CWTI because of personal and professional desires to improve their own knowledge and skills. Teachers identified two factors as
important in their professional development experience: (a) the collegial learning atmosphere of the institute and (b) the desire to share with their students what was learned.

The teachers in Schell’s (2003) research also described a new enthusiasm and energy for teaching American history that included a different perspective on what to teach, how to teach, and why to teach this subject. Also gained from the institute was an improvement in the teaching of social studies and content knowledge regarding early American history. According to Schell, the greatest impact identified by the teachers was a transfer of what was learned during the professional development to other subject areas in social studies (e.g., geography, civics, economics). Following their participation in the institute, teachers reported incorporating a greater variety of strategies and materials into their teaching of American history. As a result, they became familiar with effective methods of teaching social studies.

*We The People: The Citizen and the Constitution Summer Institute.* Over the past few years, a professional development model sponsored by the CCE that has gained attention throughout the United States is the We The People: The Citizen and the Constitution Summer Institute (WTPSI). The mission of the CCE (2000) is “to promote an enlightened and responsible citizenry committed to democratic principles and actively engaged in the practice of democracy in the United States and other countries” (p. 1). To that end, the CCE administers a wide range of teacher-training programs. The purpose of the WTPSI is to provide teachers with content knowledge,
teaching strategies, and assessment strategies that will help them effectively implement the curriculum (Roe, personal communication, March 11, 2004).

With funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the first summer institute was held at the national level in the 1980s. In 1998, interest was so great in the national level WTP professional development; a pilot regional institute was established. By 1999, five regional institutes had been established to accommodate the increased demand for the professional development. In an effort to provide more teachers the opportunity to attend summer institutes, the CCE began funding state professional development programs. (Roe, personal communication, March 11, 2004).

The WTP professional development model for elementary, middle, and high school teachers consists of three structural components: scholarly content lectures, pedagogy, and a simulated congressional hearing. Civic scholars provide content lectures during the institute with the goal of expanding the participants’ core knowledge. Mentor teachers present lesson demonstrations for the participants. Divided into six units correlating with the curriculum, participants engage in researching and presenting a simulated congressional hearing.

Soule’s (2000) longitudinal examination of participants who attended a regional WTPSI was conducted to examine the institute’s impact upon teachers. Soule’s study was designed to assess the number of teachers who implemented the WTP curriculum and who conducted simulated hearings. The findings of the study
indicated that participants believed the institute to be intellectually stimulating as well as “interesting, rewarding, and valuable” (p. 8). Findings indicated that less than half of the participants used the *We The People... Citizen and the Constitution* as their main text, but a majority, 56.5%, used it as a supplemental text. Prior to the professional development, one-fourth conducted hearings, while afterwards, three-fourths conducted hearings. Further review of the literature revealed there were neither additional regional studies nor any state WTPSI studies. According to the Director of Professional Development for the CCE, no research at the state level currently existed. (Roe, personal communication, March 11, 2004).

**Summary**

Historically recognized as essential, an informed and engaged citizenry ensures the continuation of a democracy. The citizen’s participation is sustained through educational systems and teachers of civic education. Civic education’s purpose has been to teach the fundamentals of good citizenship. National, state, and organizational attention to the condition of civic education and effective teaching resulted in national efforts to measure students’ civic knowledge and dispositions. Additionally, examining teachers’ impact upon student learning, researchers identified characteristics found in effective teaching. These characteristics include having an extensive content knowledge, incorporating multiple teaching strategies, and displaying preferred dispositions.
Civic education scholars maintained that a comprehensive content knowledge is critical in impacting student learning. Moreover, in teaching civic education, interactive teaching strategies are found to be more effective. Recommended teaching strategies include mock trials, questioning, simulations, cooperative learning, problem-solving, service learning, moot court, debate, and continuums. Finally, dispositions or characteristics that reflect behavioral patterns were identified in all teachers. Recognized in effective teaching, preferred dispositions (e.g., communicative, positive views of self and others, enthusiasm, motivation, confidence) were highlighted and considered desirable for replication.

For educators, professional development reformed teaching and impacted teacher behavior. As mandated by federal and state legislation, professional development seeks to promote teacher growth and development. The demand for quality professional development resulted in identifying models that contribute to effective teaching. Model characteristics include an integration of content and pedagogy, development and incorporation of new teaching strategies, and analysis of practice. An examination of content professional development models for the social studies included the NMGASI, FHAO, CWTI and WTPSI. The NMGASI model addressed geographic content, pedagogy, and presentation skills. Similarly, the FHAO model included scholarly content lectures and teacher facilitated lessons from the curriculum. Somewhat different, the CWTI model incorporated historical character interpreters in addressing content knowledge and peer teacher lesson
demonstration. Lastly, the WTPSI model integrated scholarly content lectures, pedagogy, and a simulated congressional hearing.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute (MSWTPSI) had an impact upon social studies teachers’ content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions. Prior to this study, no research had been conducted on the impact of this or other state level WTP Institute participants. This research is the first of its kind to determine the impact the state level WTP summer professional development had upon teachers’ content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions toward the content they teach.

Rationale of the Study

A review of the literature revealed that little research has been conducted examining the impact of social studies specific professional development. Marroquin’s (2000) findings support the theory that quality professional development enhances teaching and learning through gains in teacher content knowledge, implementation of effective teaching strategies, and positive dispositions.

Studies conducted on the content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions of civic education teachers who have participated in professional development activities have been limited. Civic education advocates have appealed for research on discipline-specific professional development programs (Wilson &
Berne, 1999). This study seeks to meet this need by conducting research on the impact of a state level institute, specifically the MSWTPSI, upon the content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions of social studies teachers who participated in the institute.

Research Questions

Three questions were addressed in this research:

1- Did the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute impact the participants’ content knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights? If so, how?

2- Did the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute impact the participants’ implementation of varied teaching strategies concerning the Constitution and the Bill of Rights? If so, how?

3- Did the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute impact the participants’ dispositions in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights? If so, how?

Limitations

Inherent in all studies, limitations establish boundaries and exceptions of any research (Patton, 2002). These must be addressed to provide criteria by which the research may be understood and measured. Limitations for this study include:
• The pre-test and post-test used to measure content knowledge were created to measure adolescents’ knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. This served as a limitation as the test was not created to measure adult social studies teachers’ knowledge. However, the decision was made to use these instruments because it parallels the WTP curriculum used in the MSWTPSI.

• Involvement of the researcher as an administrative assistant in the MSWTPSI may be considered a limitation of the study due to the possibility of experimenter bias. To safeguard the integrity of the study, the researcher retained an open mind while remaining mindful of potential biases as the research progressed.

**Definition of Terms**

The following definitions were used in this study:

1. Content knowledge refers to what teachers know about their subject matter or discipline (Branson, 2003).

2. Teaching strategies refer to instructional methods incorporated by teachers to encourage student learning (Haas, 2001).

3. Dispositions refer to an individual’s normal or prevailing nature or customary frame of mind (Agnes & Guralnik, 2001).

4. Professional development, referred to as staff development and inservice education, is defined as opportunities for teachers to reflect critically on their practice
and to fashion new knowledge and beliefs about content, pedagogy, and learners
(Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995).
CHAPTER II

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This research employed a mixed-methods approach in collecting and analyzing data to determine the impact the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute (MSWTPSI) had upon teachers who attended the summer institute. In a mixed-methods approach, both quantitative and qualitative data are collected, analyzed, and reported during a single study (Creswell, 2002). In eulogizing methodologist pioneer Campbell, Glass (as cited in Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) stated, “The method must follow the question. Campbell, many decades ago, promoted the concept of triangulation—that every method has its limitations, and multiple methods are usually needed” (p. 22).

The merging of methodological procedures provides a rich variety of combined approaches. The quantitative method is focused on discovering principles of learning that increases the base of generalizable knowledge, whereas qualitative methods are more appropriate for generating better-informed hypotheses and for helping to explain findings (Paul & Marfo, 2001). Glesne (1999) maintained that qualitative approaches focus on inductive techniques for examining phenomena within broader contexts and influences. In contrast, by employing deductive techniques, quantitative
techniques establish general formulations of steps that guide researchers (Frankel & Wallen, 2003). Incorporating both of these approaches produced an enhanced knowledge base that provided explanations of events and perspectives important to this research.

The MSWTPSI held at Mississippi State University included 27 participants. Six participants were selected for in-depth case studies from a pool of volunteers (See Figure 1.) Data were collected through pre-test/survey and post-test/survey, interviews, observations, and lesson plan reviews.

Five major topics divide and organize this chapter. These divisions are research design, participants, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

Research Design

This study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods of research. Greene and Caracelli (1997) stated, “The underlying premise of mixed-method inquiry is that each paradigm offers a meaningful and legitimate way to knowing and understanding” (p. 7). This position maintains that the philosophical differences between methods, quantitative and qualitative, are acceptably matched to achieve what will work best given the research. The research questions must drive the methods and establish the foundation for analysis. Pragmatic researchers consider the research questions to be more important than either method (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). It is the design that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research
research questions to be more important than either method (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). It is the design that connects the empirical data to a study’s initial research questions and ultimately to the conclusions (Yin, 2003). Through the mixed-method approach, the focus of this study was to develop an understanding of whether or not the MSWTPSI had an impact upon social studies teachers’ content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions.

Figure 1. Case study method: design, collection, and analysis, and cross-case analysis.
Assessing Goodness of a Measurement

In this research, the goodness of measurement described the degree to which the collected data meets a standard of quality. From a mixed-methods perspective, Hunter and Brewer (2003) stated,

Reliability and validity are a continuum for the assessment of the quality of one’s measurement and research results, and where one is on the continuum is a function of the degree of similarity or difference in the research methods used. (p. 581)

In a qualitative approach, issues of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are criteria that collectively combined in various fashions determine the trustworthiness of research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To establish credibility, the researcher’s honesty, believability, expertise, and integrity are vital. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), credibility is the most important component in establishing trustworthiness of the results and inferences in a qualitative approach. This study utilized a mixed-methods approach to secure complementary strengths of both approaches. Johnson and Turner (2003) suggested three principles of ensuring trustworthiness in a mixed methodology: (a) obtain convergence or corroboration of findings, (b) eliminate key alternative explanations for conclusions drawn from data, and (c) clearly explain the different aspects of the phenomenon.
Data Quality

Reliability (dependability) and validity (trustworthiness) are essential elements in determining credibility in a mixed methodology (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Validity centers upon making correct inferences about data and reliability consistently produces the same results (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). Desired is both high reliability and high validity.

Reliability. In the quantitative approach to research, reliability is defined as “the degree to which a measure will yield similar results for the same subjects at different times or under different conditions” (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 184). Additionally, Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) stated that reliability “refers to the consistency of scores or answers from one administration of an instrument to another…” (p. 158). According to Punch (1998), in qualitative data collection, reliability is based upon data quality to represent control of data. What is addressed is how well the data represent the research. With either forms of research, the intent is not necessarily to replicate findings, but to insure that the results are consistent with the data collected.

Determining reliability for instruments in research incorporating quantitative techniques include consideration for errors in measurement, test-retest method, and internal-consistency (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003). Errors in measurement allow for changes in settings, anxiety, energy, and other circumstances. Similarly, test-re-test method tests the same group twice with one test completed after an interval of lapsed
time. Finally, the internal-consistency method incorporates calculations of statistical analysis (e.g., split-half procedure, Kuder-Richardson, Cronbach alpha). To attain reliability, researchers purposefully considering the most appropriate methods, apply them to the study.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated the instrument in a qualitative approach to data collection, the researcher, is a smart, adaptable, flexible instrument responding to situations with skill, tact, and understanding. The honesty, integrity, believability, and expertise of the researcher become the basis for reliability. The researcher must monitor changes in self-perspective that could influence the results of the study.

Regarding the researcher, Patton (1990) elaborated:

There are no straightforward tests for reliability and validity. In short, there are no absolute rules except to do the very best with your full intellect to fairly represent the data and communicate what the data reveal given the purpose of the study… Qualitative analysis ultimately depends on the analytical intellect and style of the analyst. (p. 372)

The researcher, a high school social studies teacher for 16 years in both private and public schools, received a Master of Science degree in 1995 and an Educational Specialist degree in 1999. Additionally, for a year, the researcher taught Western Civilization at a local community college. Having expansive classroom experience in teaching social studies, provides an understanding for needed civic education professional development. During the last five years, the researcher worked extensively with pre-service and in-service teachers to address educational and
professional development needs. The researcher acquired valuable knowledge regarding research procedures through varied sources (e.g., reading professional research journals) and experience conducting research through multiple research projects in graduate school.

The Center for Civic Education utilized the test-retest method to establish reliability for the instrument employed in this study. Additionally, reliability was attained through triangulation. According to Merriam (1998), the reliability of a study is higher when the analysis of repeated interviews and observations produce the same results. The result is consistency and dependability. To this end, multiple interviews and observations of selected participants were conducted.

Validity. As defined by Fraenkel and Wallen (2003), validity in the quantitative approach to data collection refers to the “appropriateness, meaningfulness, correctness, and usefulness of the specific inferences researchers make based on the data they collect” (p. 158). Johnson and Turner, (2003) defined validity in terms of worthiness or something well-done and worthy of a reader’s attention. In a mixed-methods design, the validity of a study is strengthened using varied approaches (Borg & Gall, 1989).

Regarding the quantitative approach to data collection, Borg and Gall (1989) maintained that external validity refers to “the degree to which findings can be generalized to the population from which the participants were drawn” (p. 404). The findings were generalized to the population of participants who attended the
MSWTPSI. With regard to quantitative data collection, internal validity refers to “the degree to which the findings can be distorted by extraneous variables” (p. 205). The extraneous variables (e.g., selection bias, mortality, history, instrumentation) were not considered a threat to this study, as participants were teachers who were on site for the data collection procedure. Additionally, efforts in obtaining more information regarding subjects, standardizing conditions under which the study was conducted, and choosing the appropriate design controlled threats to internal validity. Obtaining more information on the subjects reduced characteristics threat, while standardizing the conditions assisted in controlling the conditions surrounding the data collection. Choosing an appropriate design eliminated threats of testing and subject attitude.

According to Patton (2002), however, qualitative studies that aim to gain insight about specific phenomenon are not conducted for the purpose of empirical generalization from a sample to a population. Rather, they are conducted for seeking in-depth information from a purposeful sample. In this study, the purposeful selection of the six volunteer participants was deliberate to elicit rich, thick descriptive information concerning the purpose of the study and control serious threats to validity. Additionally, Patton stated that the trustworthiness (i.e., validity) of a qualitative study is associated with perceived methodological rigor or the demonstration of using verification and validation procedures necessary to establish dependability and authenticity. Repeated site visits resulted in extended time in the field and provided prolonged engagement with and observation of the study’s participants. The trustworthiness of this study was supported by the use of multiple
sources of data (i.e., lesson plans, pre-test/survey and post-test/survey data), cross-case analysis, and member check of the interview transcripts.

Participants

The participants for this study were attendees at the MSWTPSI. Teachers were solicited from school districts across the state through the Mississippi Department of Education. School districts received brochures announcing the MSWTPSI as a professional development centered upon the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Requirements of applicants included being an elementary, middle, or high school social studies teacher and providing a letter of support from each applicant’s principal. The Mississippi We The People State Coordinator reviewed all applications to determine eligibility of the applicants.

The State Coordinator stated that participants applied to the Institute for several reasons (S. Burroughs, personal communication, May 1, 2003). Motives for attending the Institute included obtaining free materials, obtaining continuing educational units (CEUs) for re-certification, receiving encouragement from a principal, and for increasing professional knowledge and skills. Upon completion of the MSWTPSI, all participants received a set of We The People (WTP) textbooks for their specific grade level. Of the 27 participants attending the MSWTPSI, 25 opted to obtain CEUs (T. Prather, personal communication, June 29, 2004). As described by the participants, some were urged to attend by their administrators, while others chose to attend the MSWTPSI and learn more about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
According to Burroughs, due to limited college or university course requirements in educational programs of study, some teachers lack a strong content background. The MSWTPSI provided teachers opportunities to gain additional content knowledge and pedagogical skill.

On the first evening of the MSWTPSI, the researcher inquired if participants would be willing to participate in the study. After identifying volunteers who were willing to participate, the distribution, signing, and collection of consent forms commenced. Participants then completed the pre-test/survey.

At the conclusion of the MSWTPSI, participants indicated if they would be willing to participate in the interview and observation phase of the study. The total number of volunteers was 15: three elementary school teachers, five middle school teachers, and seven high school teachers. From the volunteer pool of 15, the researcher purposefully selected teachers to participate in the interview and observation phase of the study. Of these six, two were elementary teachers, two were middle school teachers, and two were high school teachers. Teachers were assigned pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality.

Demographic considerations for the six volunteer participants included geographic location, gender, ethnicity, institutional affiliation, and teaching assignment (i.e., grade level and subject matter). The considerations for regional geographic locations in the state included northern, western, central, and southern. The volunteers, five from public schools and one from a private school, included one white male, one black male, and four white females.
Instrumentation

Multiple instruments were used in this study. A pre-test/survey, post-test/survey, interview, observation, and lesson plan review were utilized to collect data. The use of these instruments provided triangulation of the data. Additionally, the researcher was utilized to collect data.

Prior to the MSWTPSI, to obtain insight into the teachers’ knowledge of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, the participants completed a pre-test/survey (see Appendix A). The pre-test/survey included 24 content knowledge questions. The researcher selected the questions (see Appendix B) from an existing test bank containing items validated by the Center for Civic Education (CCE) and leading civic education researchers (S. Soule, personal communication, April 2, 2004). The test bank included questions created and reviewed by political scientists, historians, judges, lawyers, educators, and researchers. The test items correlated with the six units from the WTP curriculum, which served as the foundational text for the MSWTPSI. The items included in the pre-test correlate to each unit (See Table 1).

Table 1
Test Item Correlation with We The People Text Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 1</th>
<th>Unit 2</th>
<th>Unit 3</th>
<th>Unit 4</th>
<th>Unit 5</th>
<th>Unit 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Items 1 through 4</td>
<td>Items 5 and 6</td>
<td>Items 7 through 11</td>
<td>Items 12 through 17</td>
<td>Items 18 through 21</td>
<td>Items 22 through 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based upon the curricular material, *We The People...Citizen and the Constitution* which covers the history and principles of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, participants responded to questions correlating to each of the following units: (Unit 1) the historical and philosophical foundations of constitutional government, (Unit 2) the creation of the United States Constitution, (Unit 3) the organization of the American national government, (Unit 4) the development of the United States Constitution, (Unit 5) the expansion of individual rights during the last 200 years, and (Unit 6) the roles of citizens in American democracy (CCE, 1995).

The pre-test/survey and post-test/survey questions measuring participant content knowledge were identical. Of the 24 content knowledge questions, 19 questions related to the Constitution. The remainder of the questions, numbers 14, 18, 19, 20, and 21 addressed issues relative to the Bill of Rights. An open-ended question was included on the post-survey (see Appendix C) to provide participants the opportunity to elaborate on how they determined the MSWTPSI impacted their general content knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

The researcher created the pre-test/survey that was administered to the participants on day one of the professional development. Within the pre-test/survey, were 13 questions relating to the frequency use of the following teaching strategies: (a) mock trials, (b) questioning, (c) simulated hearings/legislative hearings, (d) cooperative learning, (e) problem-solving, (f) service learning, (g) moot court, (h) debate, and (i) continuum. On the last day of the MSWTPSI, the participants completed a post-test/survey on plans for the use of the strategies in their classrooms.
during the coming year. An open-ended question on the post-test/survey provided the participants the opportunity to describe how they determined the MSWTPSI impacted the implementation of teaching strategies.

Also created by the researcher, the second section of the pre-test/survey consisted of six dispositional questions. Constructed to solicit the participants’ dispositions (e.g., confidence, enthusiasm, motivation) prior to their participation in the MSWTPSI were questions toward attitudes about teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The post-test/survey included six dispositional questions that were identical to the pre-test/survey questions. The post-test/survey also included an opened question that gave participants an opportunity to elaborate on how they determined the MSWTPSI affected their dispositions toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

The final data collection instrument utilized in this study was the researcher (see Appendix D). Serving as co-coordinator during the MSWTPSI, the researcher conscientiously separated the role of researcher from that of co-coordinator to ensure validity. As a former government teacher who implemented the WTP curriculum and was knowledgeable of the program, the researcher conscientiously refrained from any attempts to influence the participants during the MSWTPSI or in the data collection. The researcher sought to discover and determine the impact of the MSWTPSI on the participants. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stressed the importance of the researcher being responsive and sensitive to the environment and employing adaptive techniques within the circumstances to explore, expand, and clarify the data.
According to Patton (2002), the researcher’s role is to understand the world as it unfolds, to be true to complexities and multiple perspectives, and to maintain balance in reporting both confirmatory and disconfirming evidence. These were the goals of the researcher. The researcher conducted the pre-test/survey, post-test/survey, interviews, observations, and lesson plan reviews.

According to Fetterman, (1989), the most important data-collection technique is the interview. The purpose of the interview is to find out what is in and on the participants’ minds (Patton, 1990) and to record as fully and accurately that particular interviewee’s perspective (Patton, 2002). Employing the interview protocol (see Appendix E), the researcher interviewed each participant three various times during the fall semester following the MSWTPSI.

Yin (2003) maintained that observations provide the opportunity for the researcher to gain access to events that otherwise would be inaccessible, and observations can also provide the ability to perceive reality from the viewpoint of someone who is inside the study. The researcher acted as a participant observer engaging personally in some activities. Playing this role enabled the researcher to have access to a wide range of information and enhanced awareness of classroom interactions. According to Patton (2002), observational data must have depth, detail, and be descriptive in nature. Data gathered from observations provided a glimpse of the behavior and activities of the individuals in their natural settings. Employing the observation protocol (see Appendix F), the researcher observed each participant in the classroom three various times during the fall semester following the MSWTPSI.
Regarding lesson plan reviews, Patton (2002) stated that such document analysis provides the researcher with information about many things not observed. He added that “documents prove valuable not only because of what can be learned directly from them, but also as stimulus for paths of inquiry that can be pursued only through direction observation and interviewing” (p. 294). One advantage of lesson plan reviews was that lesson plans offered documentary stability. During each of the three visits with participants, lesson plans were reviewed through a lesson plan protocol (see Appendix G).

Data Collection Procedures

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), combining data from both quantitative and qualitative research provides a powerful methodology. For the purposes of triangulation, this study collected data from multiple sources (See Figure 2). Sources of data for this research included a pre-test/survey, a post-test/survey, interviews, observations, and lesson plan reviews. The collection of data began after obtaining permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Mississippi State University (see Appendix H). Data gathered from the quantitative methods established a numerical descriptive base for the study, whereas data gathered from the qualitative research provided rich, descriptive representations of the participants’ perspectives and experiences.
Brophy (1995) suggested that qualitative research is best when achieved using various types of data collection such as interviews and observations. The data collection process of this study included both of these methods. Additionally, a review of the participants’ lesson plans served as another source of triangulation.

Invited to engage in the study, MSWTPSI participants signed the consent forms. On the day of the Institute, the participants completed a pre-test/survey that related to the content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions toward teaching about the Constitution and Bill of Rights. At the conclusion of the MSWTPSI, participants completed a post-test/survey.

Figure 2. Sources of data collected from participants in this study.
From the volunteer pool of 15 participants, six teachers participated in the interviews and observation phases of the study. After receiving permission from the participants’ district superintendents (See Appendix I) the researcher visited each of the six participants three times. Each visit consisted of an interview, an observation, and a lesson plan review. Interviews provide information that reveals people’s attitudes, values, and opinions (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003).

Utilizing an interview protocol, the researcher audiotaped and transcribed the 18 interviews. The duration of the interviews was 30 minutes to an hour. Marked and categorized for patterns, themes, and relationships the researcher’s field notes complimented the audio transcription. Each interview included closed and open ended (See Protocol) structured questions, semi-structured questions, and impromptu conversations guided by the interviewee. The interviews occurred during the school year following the participants’ involvement in the MSWTPSI experience.

To gain additional insights into the teachers’ use of teaching strategies and exhibition of dispositions toward teaching the curriculum, the researcher conducted three classroom observations of each of the six volunteer participants. To understand events as they happened, the researcher utilized an observation protocol. Observations served as a research tool to develop a clear understanding of the teachers’ practices following the professional development experience. Each observation lasted approximately 40 minutes to an hour and a half and occurred during the school year following the participants’ involvement in the MSWTPSI experience.
The participants’ lesson plans provided the final source for data collection. The lesson plans were reviewed upon each visit with the participant. This document analysis provided written evidence of information otherwise unavailable to the researcher. The lesson plan protocol was utilized for identification of behavioral objectives and teaching activities in the classroom. A review of these documents provided measurable physical traces concerning incidence and frequency of pertinent teaching behaviors. Patton (2002) maintained that documents reveal goals and decisions that might be otherwise unknown to the researcher. Lesson plan reviews occurred during each of the three visits with the six volunteer participants during the school year following the participants’ participation in the MSWTPSI.

Data Analysis

In this study, an analysis was conducted on the data gathered through quantitative and qualitative research. According to Patton (2002), the triangulation of data achieved by using both qualitative and quantitative approaches constitutes a form of comparative analysis. The mixed-method approach enhanced this study as the analyses of data from three areas (i.e., content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions) were processed. The analysis began with the data collection from the quantitative research and continued with the incorporation of cross-case analysis of the data collected from the qualitative research (see Table 2). The data analysis included a paired-samples \( t \) and descriptive statistics. In analyzing the data of the two samples, the \( t \) was employed because the statistical focus is upon the mean score with
the purpose of comparing samples (Huck, 2000). Data gathered from the qualitative research were analyzed descriptively, categorically, and interpretatively. According to Patton (2002), analyzing data descriptively includes providing a perception of what transpired as if it was a mirror image. The reader develops an understanding of what occurred and how it occurred. Data analyzed categorically includes classifications, identifications, and labeling the primary patterns within the content to determine what was significant. In establishing categories, Merriam (1998) suggested constantly comparing incidents and remarks with each other until recurring regularities emerge in the data. Lastly, interpretative analysis explains the meanings about the research topic (Patton, 2000). In working back and forth and making sense of the data, the researcher related parts to whole and whole to parts as the process developed a greater understanding of the information.
Table 2
Research Question Correlation of Mixed-Methods Data Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Quantitative Research Data</th>
<th>Qualitative Research Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number One:</td>
<td>Pre-Test/Survey: Items 1 through 24</td>
<td>Interview: Item one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Knowledge</td>
<td>Post-Test/Survey: Items 1 through 24</td>
<td>Observation: Items one through seven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Open-Ended Post-Test/Survey: Item 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Two:</td>
<td>Pre-Test/Survey: Items 25 through 37</td>
<td>Interview: Items 2 through 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Strategies</td>
<td>Post-Test/Survey: Items 25 through 37</td>
<td>Observation: Items one through seven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson Plan Review: Objective &amp; Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Open-Ended Post-Test/Survey: Item 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Three:</td>
<td>Pre-Test/Survey: Items 38 through 43</td>
<td>Interview: Items 15 through 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispositions</td>
<td>Post-Test/Survey: Items 38 through 43</td>
<td>Observation: Items one through seven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Open-Ended Post-Test/Survey: Item 46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data from the pre-test/survey and the post-test/survey on content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions were analyzed by comparing the correlated means through a paired $t$ for dependent samples. As suggested by Huck (2000), this statistical analysis was appropriate because the focus of the $t$ was upon the mean score with the purpose of comparing samples. A $t$ compared mean scores of the group before the professional development and mean scores of the group after the professional development. The $t$ determined if there was a statistically significant difference between the means of the correlated samples. The level of significance was established at the .05 alpha level. Scored for correct responses, individual content
knowledge item responses were aggregated for a pre-score and post-score mean. Teaching strategies were scored by rank of implementation: (a) often, included 8 or more times (b) sometimes, included 4 to 7 times (c) rarely, included 1 to 3 times and (d) never or 0 times. Dispositions were scored by rank: (a) low, (b) moderate, and (c) high. Measured, summarized, and organized, additional data collected during the study include field notes, interviews, observations, and lesson plan reviews.

Classified by coding schemes and patterns, data collected from the qualitative research consisted of written field notes, transcribed interviews, classroom observations, and lesson plan reviews. With regard to the research questions, schemes and patterns were analyzed by reviewing notes, identifying patterns, and cross-validating data within participant responses and between participant cases. As suggested by Patton (1990), these were refined and explored throughout the data collection process until the categories obtaining no new information became saturated.

As stated in chapter one, the three research questions in this study focused upon content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions (see Appendix J). In order to determine if the participants’ content knowledge was impacted by the MSWTPSI (research question number one), data from the pre-test/survey were collected and analyzed. Data from the post-test/survey were collected at the conclusion of the MSWTPSI and then analyzed. The data from both were compared with a paired-samples $t$. Included on the post-test/survey was one open-ended question regarding the impact of the Institute on the participants’ content knowledge.
of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The question was analyzed descriptively to create a written reflection that mirrored what happened; categorically to identify emerging patterns; and interpretatively, to explain the meaning of the whole effect and that of individual parts. In addition, the interview protocol included questions concerning the impact the MSWTPSI had on participants’ content knowledge. Review of the lesson plans sought to identify objectives related to the content knowledge addressed during the Institute. The post-test/survey, interview questions, observations, and open-ended questions included descriptive, categorical, and interpretative analysis. This question was also analyzed descriptively to create a written reflection that mirrored what happened; categorically to identify emerging patterns; and interpretatively, to explain the meaning of the whole effect and that of individual parts.

In order to determine if the participants’ implementation of teaching strategies were impacted by the MSWTPSI (research question number two), data from pre-test/survey were collected and analyzed. Data from the post-test/survey were collected and analyzed. The data from both were compared with a paired-samples $t$. Pre-test questions inquired how frequently participants currently used the WTP teaching strategies. In the post-test, participants identified how frequent in the next academic year, they would implement these teaching strategies. One open-ended question on the post-test/survey asked participants to describe how the MSWTPSI influenced their understanding of implementing the teaching strategies. Questions on the interview protocol inquired which teaching strategies participants implemented
into their classroom instruction. Utilizing the observation protocol, the researcher noted teaching strategies incorporated in the lesson on the observation dates. Analyzed to identify specific teaching strategies, lesson plan reviews revealed teaching activities observed in the context of the classroom. The open-ended questions, interview questions, and observations were analyzed descriptively, categorically, and interpretatively. The question was analyzed descriptively to provide a reflection of actual happenings, categorically to identify emerging patterns, and interpretatively to explain the meaning of events.

In order to determine if the participants’ dispositions were impacted by the MSWTPSI (research question number three), data from the pre-test/survey regarding dispositions toward teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights were collected and analyzed. Data from the post-test/survey questions were collected and analyzed. The data from both were compared by a paired-samples $t$. Questions were included on both the pre-test/survey and post-test/survey regarding participants’ levels of confidence, enthusiasm, and motivation in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. On the post-test/survey, participants expressed through open-ended questions how the Institute affected their dispositions. The question was analyzed descriptively to create a written reflection that mirrored what happened; categorically to identify emerging patterns; and interpretatively, to explain the meaning of the whole effect and that of individual parts. In addition, one question on the interview protocol asked participants to describe the impact the Institute had upon their dispositions toward teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The observation
protocol also included a section for observed dispositions of the participant toward teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
CHAPTER III
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a description of the analysis of data in the study conducted on the Mississippi We The People Summer (MSWTPSI). The purpose of this study was to examine the impact that MSWTPSI had upon the content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions of social studies teachers attending the professional development opportunity. This chapter begins with a presentation of the demographic data of participants. Each research question is then addressed.

Demographic Characteristics

In the summer of 2003, there were 27 participants engaged in the MSWTPSI professional development held at Mississippi State University. All MSWTPSI participants agreed to take part in the pre-test/survey and post-test/survey segments of the study. From a pool of 15 volunteer participants, 6 were purposefully selected to participate in the interview and observation phase of this study. In Table 3, the researcher presents demographic characteristics of the participants in this study. Teachers were assigned pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality. In the remaining section the six participants are described.
Table 3
Demographic Characteristics of the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Total Participants</th>
<th>Total Case Study Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>1 to 5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 +</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Ben

As a middle school social studies teacher, Ben has a Bachelor of Arts degree (sociology and philosophy) and is in the process of completing a Master’s. Ben teaches eighth grade American history in traditional 55-minute classes. In Ben’s 13 years of experience, his first four years were in a high school setting teaching government, until he changed to this school to teach American history and to serve as a male role model. Ben’s classroom is filled with desks in rows and chairs in the front of the room. On the walls are posters of important figures in American history. Ben’s desk is located in a corner near the door, providing him the opportunity of speaking to the students before reaching their seats. He took advantage of speaking to the students upon their entrance and asked questions about what was happening in their lives.

Margaret

Margaret, a middle school teacher, has a Bachelor of Arts degree. Considered a veteran with 28 years experience, she teaches eighth grade American history in a middle school. This city school has a student population of 400 divided between African Americans and Caucasians. Margaret’s teaching schedule is based on traditional 50-minute periods. She has taught reading in addition to social studies. In her classroom, desks are clustered to form groups. On the front chalk board one finds a thought-provoking quote. On the walls are replicas of important American documents and several boards with student information. When the music plays for
classes to change, Margaret stands at the classroom door and encourages the students as they depart.

Kate

Kate, an elementary teacher with a Master’s degree, teaches at a private school in Mississippi. Approximately 150 students attend this school with the population being largely Caucasian. Having both elementary (K-8 in math and science) and secondary certification (7-12 in history and social studies) enables Kate to teach various grades and different subjects. Currently teaching grade five on a modified block schedule, this was her sixth year of teaching. Although separate from the main building, Kate’s classroom, a portable trailer, has a high percentage of student traffic as her unit contains the science lab and passage to the other portable trailer. With an exceptionally small class, different desk arrangements are organized to fit the day’s lesson. Kate greets students as they enter the classroom, and as they depart she expresses well wishes for the day.

Sally

Sally, a high school social studies teacher, has a Master’s degree and teaches senior government and economics classes. Upon occasion, she teaches law and psychology. In a school with a large Caucasian student population of approximately 575, Sally teaches in a city school. In the 19.5 years of experience, Sally initially taught seventh and eighth classes for three years. In her classroom, desks face
frontward in a traditional classroom setting. Chalkboards line the wall in front of the student desks with a bookcase near the door. Sally’s desk and class resources are to the left side of the student desks.

*Shirley*

Shirley, an elementary school teacher, has 24 years of experience teaching school. This veteran teacher is responsible for the social studies and language arts in grades five and six. She has a Bachelor of Science degree (K-8 certification) and has additional hours toward a Master’s. Shirley teaches in a kindergarten through sixth county school that has approximately 500 students. The population is largely African American. In addition to the city educational system, there are two small county school systems here in the town. In her classroom, spatially there is enough room for the desks to be arranged for various activities. In traditional rows, students move into groups to work cooperatively during particular sections of the lessons. In front of the class near the front door, Shirley has her two desks side-by-side. At the changing of classes, Shirley stands at the door and speaks to students in passing.

*Tom*

Tom, a high school social studies teacher, has a Master’s degree and is currently working on National Board Certification. His school has a diverse student population and operates on a four-by-four (block) schedule. Upon retirement from the army, Tom began his teaching career in 1990. With 13 years of experience, Tom has
taught a variety of the disciplines in social studies, but his love is world history.
Compliments of the military, Tom is well traveled, providing him with a substantial background knowledge not common to the regular classroom teacher. Upon entering Tom’s classroom, one finds it neat and desks facing each other with his desk to the side and multiple newspapers on it. The walls have various posters with themes of art, American history, liberty, and political ideologies. Standing at the door while the class enters, Tom greets nearly every student by name and inquires about their well-being.

Research Question One

Did the Missississippi We The People Summer Institute impact the participants’ knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights? If so, how? The results from the pre-test/surveys and post-test/surveys on content knowledge were analyzed. Scored for correctness, individual content knowledge item responses were aggregated for a pre-score and post-score mean. The mean scores for pre-test/survey and post-test/survey on content knowledge were compared in a paired samples t-test. There was no statistically significant difference between pre-test/survey scores and post-test/survey scores on content knowledge. This indicated that content knowledge was not impacted. (See Table 4).
Table 4
Pre-Test/Survey and Post-Test/Survey Content Knowledge Mean Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-Score</th>
<th></th>
<th>Post-Score</th>
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<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Content Knowledge</td>
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<td>2.99</td>
<td>-.881</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.386</td>
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</table>

An examination of the means between the pre-test/survey and post-test/survey found such little deviation that further investigation of the individual test items is necessary. Closer inspections revealed that with various questions, participants answered incorrectly on the post-test/survey as compared to the pre-test/survey (See Table 5). With two questions, a large segment of the participants chose the incorrect answer in both pre-test/survey and post-test/survey. On question 17, in the pre-test/survey, 88% of the participants chose the incorrect answer, as compared to the post-test/survey, 83% chose the incorrect answer. Additionally, in both pre-test/survey and post-test/survey with regard to questions 13 and 15, the participants chose the incorrect answer, 46% and 71% respectfully.
To determine if and how the MSWTPSI impacted the participants’ content knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, the data from the post-test/survey, interviews, observations, and lesson plan reviews were analyzed.

Participant responses indicated that their content knowledge of the Constitution and

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-Test</th>
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<th>Post-Test</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>4.2</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
the Bill of Rights was impacted. Multiple themes that emerged included (a) increased knowledge and understanding, (b) empowerment through knowledge, (c) rekindled interest in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and (d) continued professional development.

*Increased Content Knowledge and Understanding*

As part of the post-test/survey, participants answered an open-ended question addressing if and how the MSWTPSI impacted their knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Emerging from these responses regarding the MSWTPSI’s impact upon their content knowledge, participants identified increased knowledge and a greater understanding of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as a main theme. Responses included, “It gave me more details of the Bill of Rights,” “I received a lot more information about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and the understanding of how and why they are so important,” and “The MSWTPSI has helped my knowing and understanding the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.” Additionally, comments from the participants indicated they learned a great deal and gained more depth in understanding specific issues. One participant wrote that the MSWTPSI “further explained the principles and concepts of our Constitution” while another participant elaborated, “I obtained more details about our government in a philosophical and analytical sense.” Participants expressed that the MSWTPSI increased the depth of their knowledge and provided them with the ability to connect the past with the present in a much more coherent manner.
Empowerment Through Knowledge

During each visit, the researcher observed that the participants exhibited an extensive knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Identified by the teachers as new knowledge, this gave them a sense of empowerment. Because of the additional knowledge, the teachers exhibited a sense of pride. This was reflected in an eagerness to share with students what they learned at the MSWTPSI. Sharing the information was done through telling the students, “I learned this at the MSWTPSI” or referencing information from books obtained at the MSWTPSI. Also, the researcher observed that books given to the participants at the MSWTPSI were on bookshelves in the classroom and made available to students. This signified that not only were the participants proud of the books they had been given at the MSWTPSI, but also that they wanted students to have the opportunity to access information relevant to the topic. Some teachers commented that the students enjoyed looking up information on the Constitution and the Bill of Rights from “college books.”

In the interviews, the participants often told the researcher they were thrilled to be able to explain a particular aspect of the Constitution or Bill of Rights. Margaret, a middle school teacher, said the MSWTPSI tremendously impacted her knowledge because she had to really do some studying, “some college-type studying,” that she had not done in a long time. Referring to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, she said that the MSWTPSI “gave me an in-depth look at these and how to apply them in the classroom where they mean more to the students.”
Likewise, Tom, a high school teacher, believed the scholars who presented content lectures made a difference in his knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. “They gave depth to the knowledge… so it really helped. You can spit out the words, but if you can answer student’s fine little questions, then you’ve done well.” This knowledge provided Tom with a new sense of empowerment in teaching his classes. He expressed that he now possessed an ability to answer questions where previously he would not. This made a difference for him.

Similarly to Margaret and Tom, Ben, a middle school teacher, believed the MSWTPSI greatly influenced his knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. “It made me look at things closer than I had in the past. In teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, we don’t fine-tune them the way they did. And the hearings just honed it in.” In relating content knowledge to the simulated congressional hearings, he stated, “Because, really, you look at it… Those folks only had just a few minutes to go up there and present their case. That helped me.” He added, “That’s the part that I got to get the children to doing, to show them it really does work. That it is not some abstract document that’s sitting out there. It really works.”

When asked how the MSWTPSI impacted her knowledge, Shirley, an elementary school teacher, said, “It made me aware that young people, children, especially the older children need to understand what is going on with government and what their rights are, what their duties will be, and even what they can do now.”
Stressing the role children must take, she added, “They may say I’m a kid, but wait a minute, that doesn’t throw you out of the system.” Shirley said what she gained from the MSWTPSI was most important. She stressed that sharing this new knowledge “has kept me from retiring.” This learning and sharing opportunity was a stimulus for remaining in the field of education, sharing her knowledge, and encouraging students to take part of the democratic process.

Sally, a high school teacher, said that although she knew a lot of historical information, the most important impact the MSWTPSI had upon her knowledge was the aspect of sharing that knowledge with students and getting them engaged in learning about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. She stated, “I was spending too much time teaching facts without giving them the opportunity to experience and see that they are part of the government.” More importantly, Sally indicated that the MSWTPSI expanded her knowledge and empowered her to help students understand governmental issues instead of just relating information.

An elementary teacher and political science major, Kate, said the simulated congressional hearing had the most impact on her knowledge. She said, “Before … you think I know a little bit about it, but once you go through that and once you do the research, then you really know. I just thought I knew [lots of knowledge], but now I really know.” Additionally, she believes the MSWTPSI had such an impact on her knowledge that she was able to incorporate much of the newly acquired additional information into her classroom instruction.
The researcher reviewed lesson plans of the volunteer participants. While two participants provided detailed information relative to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, the researcher found that others provided very little information. One participant provided no lesson plans.

Rekindled Interest in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

Participants indicated that they had a rekindled interest in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights because of the MSWTPSI. One MSWTPSI participant remarked, “It was without a doubt the best week of my summer vacation I’ve ever spent.” This comment and similar ones were echoed by many participants as they described how the MSWTPSI impacted their knowledge of and interest in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Sally said that her experience at the MSWTPSI was “not just for this year, it will impact the way I teach until I retire.”

Such rekindled interest was not only expressed by participants in the interviews, but also observed by the researcher in the classrooms. During one particular observation, Margaret shared an article she found in the paper that was relative to a topic the class had discussed the previous day. She used this article to link her interest in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights to how it was related to everyone today. She stressed to her students how important it was to maintain an interest and a desire to participate in government. Margaret commented that it had been the MSWTPSI that had stimulated her once again to make the connections between rights of the past and present and to be aware of Constitutional rights.
Ben mentioned that he had become “slack in the things of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights,” but attending the MSWTPSI “rejuvenated me and now I am back on track.” He said,

I’ve always liked politics. After the MSWTPSI it really refocused my attention on the true importance of it. Prior to that I sort of had got a little lack luster with it, but after that I thought it pays to keep up with it. The first thing I do in the morning is if we have a newspaper, I’ll get with them and have them discuss what’s in the headlines.

Similar to Ben’s comment, Sally stated, “I felt relieved, excited, and ready to get back and get started… I was ready to put into practice the things I had seen.” These thoughts were echoed by others as they discussed how the MSWTPSI had stirred and recharged them with an invigorating interest in the Constitution.

**Continued Professional Development**

The desire for continued professional development was the final theme that emerged with respect to if and how the MSWTPSI impacted the participants’ knowledge. Every participant during the first interview of this research asked if it would be possible to return for next year’s summer MSWTPSI. All participants stressed how much this professional development program was unlike others they had attended. The difference between this program and others included relevance to their teaching area, applicable instructional strategies, and increased confidence in teaching this subject matter. One participant commented,
As far as teacher professional development that we go to, that was by far the best one that I can come back to school with and actually do something with. Most of the other ones you may pick or chose one or two little things, but the WTP was great.

Each participant asked if there was another level of the We The People (WTP) professional development program and if so, where they could get information on applying for it. One participant at the conclusion of the researcher’s visits had contacted the Center for Civic Education (CCE) and was anticipating attending a regional summer MSWTPSI. Additionally, several participants inquired if there might be another level of this program that would be or could be held in even or odd summers for returning teachers. Ben believed this professional development was “really super, and I’ve been trying to convince my colleagues to go. It was almost like an advance class in a week and it really helped me.”

Participants indicated that this professional development had an impact on their professional careers. The networking of teachers provided a link of support that each participant believed would assist them in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. One participant added that “The meeting of fellow teachers and the talking with them” was very important.

Summary

Findings from the quantitative analysis indicated no statistically significant difference in the impact of the MSWTPSI upon the knowledge of the social studies
teachers attending the MSWTPSI. Unlike the findings from the quantitative research, themes emerged from the qualitative data establishing substantive significance to support how the MSWTPSI impacted the knowledge of the participants. The triangulation of interviews, observations, and lesson plan reviews provided evidence that teacher’s content knowledge was impacted and changed. The themes were identified as (a) an increased knowledge and understanding; (b) knowledge and empowerment; (c) rekindled interest in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights; and (d) continued professional development. According to the research of Garet et al. (2001) and consistent with the findings from the qualitative analysis, professional development that is focused on content knowledge is more likely to produce enhanced knowledge and skills.

Research Question Two

Did the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute impact the participants’ implementation of varied teaching strategies concerning the Constitution and the Bill of Rights? If so, how? Findings from the quantitative and qualitative methods indicate the participants’ implementation of varied teaching strategies was impacted. Findings indicated that the participants would implement and did implement interactive teaching strategies learned at the MSWTPSI.

The results from the pre-test/survey and post-test/survey on teaching strategies were analyzed by a paired samples t-test. Participants were asked in the pre-test/survey how often they had implemented specific teaching strategies in their
classrooms. Likewise, in the post-test/survey participants were asked how often they would be inclined to implement specific teaching strategies in their classroom during the next school year. Higher mean scores reflected the participants’ intent to implement each teaching strategy in the classroom. Lower mean scores on the survey reflected a diminished likelihood of implementing each teaching strategy. Table 6 presents the pre-test/survey and post-test/survey means of the participant’s responses. Teaching strategies were scored by rank of implementation: (a) often, included 8 or more times (b) sometimes, included 4 to 7 times (c) rarely, included 1 to 3 times and (d) never or 0 times.
### Table 6

Pre-Test/Survey and Post-Test/Survey Means for Teaching Strategies of the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute (N = 27)

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<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simulated Congressional Hearing</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative Learning</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-Solving</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moot Court</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuum</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teaching Strategies**

The MSWTPSI participants responded to questions regarding interactive teaching strategies incorporated in classroom instruction. All teaching strategies, indicated a statistically significant difference between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey scores. Teaching strategies were individually scored by rank of implementation: (a) often to include 8 or more times (b) sometimes to include 4 to 7 times (c) rarely to include 1 to 3 times (d) never or 0 times. Additionally, Table 7 presents participant responses in terms of frequency, regarding the incorporation of
teaching strategies prior to and after the MSWTPSI. Participants indicated they implement the teaching strategies (a) often, included 8 or more times; (b) sometimes, included 4 to 7 times; (c) rarely, included 1 to 3 times; and (d) never or 0 times. Table 8 presents the statistics for each teaching strategy in the pre-test/survey and post-test/survey.

Table 7
Pre-Test/Survey and Post-Test/Survey Teaching Strategy Frequencies (N=27)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Strategy</th>
<th>Pre-Test/Survey</th>
<th>Post-Test/Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Pre-Test/Survey</td>
<td>**Post-Test/Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a      b      c      d</td>
<td>a     b     c      d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(8+)   (4-7) (1-3) (0)</td>
<td>(8+) (4-7) (1-3) (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock Trial</td>
<td>0      0      3      24</td>
<td>0     3     20      4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>13     12     1      1</td>
<td>26     1     0       0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simulated Congressional Hearing</td>
<td>0      0      3      24</td>
<td>0     4     16      7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative Learning</td>
<td>7      13     6      1</td>
<td>20     7     0       0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-Solving</td>
<td>4      13     8      2</td>
<td>13     9     5       0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>0      1      7      19</td>
<td>0     5     17      5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moot Court</td>
<td>0      0      3      24</td>
<td>0     0     8       19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>1      2      13     11</td>
<td>4     15    3        5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuum</td>
<td>0      2      16     9</td>
<td>2      7     14      4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Currently incorporates teaching strategy. ** Intends to incorporate teaching strategy. (a) often: 8 or more times; (b) sometimes: 4 to 7 times; (c) rarely: 1 to 3 times; and (d) never or 0 times.
**Mock Trial.** The results of the *t*-test showed a statistically significant difference (*p < .05*) between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses concerning the implementation of a mock trial. As a result of the MSWTPSI, participant responses identified a difference regarding the implementation of this strategy as indicated by paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 89% of the participants had never used mock trials, but after the MSWTPSI 74% indicated they would use the strategy one to three times in the classroom.

Table 8

Pre-Test/Survey and Post-Test/Survey Teaching Strategy Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th><em>t</em></th>
<th>df</th>
<th><em>p</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mock Trial</td>
<td>- .8519</td>
<td>.53376</td>
<td>-8.293</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>-.5926</td>
<td>.74726</td>
<td>-4.121</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simulated Congressional Hearing</td>
<td>-.7778</td>
<td>.50637</td>
<td>-7.981</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative Learning</td>
<td>-.7778</td>
<td>.69798</td>
<td>-5.790</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-Solving</td>
<td>-.5926</td>
<td>.69389</td>
<td>-4.438</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.017*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>-.6667</td>
<td>.55470</td>
<td>-6.245</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moot Court</td>
<td>-.1852</td>
<td>.39585</td>
<td>-2.431</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.022*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>-.9259</td>
<td>.87380</td>
<td>-5.506</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuum</td>
<td>-.5185</td>
<td>.64273</td>
<td>-4.192</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates statistically significant difference
Questioning. The results of the t-test showed a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses concerning the implementation of questioning. As a result of the MSWTPSI, participant responses identified a difference regarding the implementation of this strategy as indicated by paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 52% of the participants indicated they used questioning four to seven times in a semester. At the conclusion of the MSWTPSI 96% of the participants indicated they would employ the questioning strategy eight or more times a semester.

Simulated Congressional Hearing. The results of the t-test showed a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses concerning the implementation of a simulated hearing. As a result of the MSWTPSI, participant responses identified a difference regarding the implementation of this strategy as indicated by paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 89% of the participants had never implemented this teaching strategy in the classroom. Post-test/survey results indicated that 59% would implement this strategy one to three times in the next school year.

Cooperative Learning. The results of the t-test showed a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses concerning the implementation of cooperative learning. As a result of the MSWTPSI, participant responses identified a difference regarding the implementation of this
strategy as indicated by paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 48% of the participants indicated they implemented cooperative learning four to seven times during a semester. Results from the post-survey indicated that 26% would maintain the same usage, while 74% would incorporate cooperative learning eight or more times during the school year.

Problem-Solving. The results of the $t$-test showed a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses concerning the implementation of problem-solving. As a result of the MSWTPSI, participant responses identified a difference regarding the implementation of this strategy as indicated by paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 30% of the participants indicated they implemented problem solving one to three times a semester. Following the MSWTPSI, 48% indicated they would implement this strategy eight or more times during a semester.

Service Learning. The results of the $t$-test showed a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses concerning the implementation of service learning. As a result of the MSWTPSI, participant responses identified a difference regarding the implementation of this strategy as indicated by paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 70% of the participants indicated they had never implemented service learning in the classroom. After the
MSWTPSI, 63% indicated they would be willing to incorporate this strategy one to three times per semester in the classroom.

*Moot Court.* The results of the *t*-test showed a statistically significant difference (*p* < .05) between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses concerning the implementation of a moot court. As a result of the MSWTPSI, participant responses identified a difference regarding the implementation of this strategy as indicated by paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 89% of the participants had never implemented this strategy in the classroom. After the MSWTPSI, 30% of the participants indicated they would implement this strategy one to three times per semester.

* Debate. The results of the *t*-test showed a statistically significant difference (*p* < .05) between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses concerning the implementation of a debate. As a result of the MSWTPSI, participant responses identified a difference regarding the implementation of this strategy as indicated by paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 41% of the participants had never implemented debates in the classroom while 48% had implemented debates one to three times. After the MSWTPSI, 56% of the participants indicated they would implement debates four to seven times per semester and an additional 15% would incorporate this teaching strategy eight or more times.
Continuum. The results of the t-test showed a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between pre-survey and post-survey response concerning the implementation of a continuum. As a result of the MSWTPSI, participant responses identified a difference regarding the implementation of this strategy as indicated by paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 33% of the participants had never implemented continuums in the classroom, while 59% had incorporated this strategy one to three times. After the MSWTPSI, 52% would implement this strategy one to three times a semester, while an additional 26% of the participants would utilize it four to seven times. Additionally, 7% of the participants specified that they would implement continuums eight or more times in a semester.

Like quantitative findings that showed a statistically significant difference, qualitative analysis enhanced and elaborated the findings regarding if and how the MSWTPSI impacted the participants’ implementation of varied teaching strategies concerning the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Qualitative analysis for research question two was conducted on data collected through interviews, observations, and lesson plan reviews. All six volunteer participants agreed that the MSWTPSI impacted the implementation of varied teaching strategies when teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The question of how it impacted the implementation of teaching strategies was answered in themes that emerged from interviews, observations, and lesson plan reviews relative to the question. The
descriptive data revealed the following themes: (a) new ideas, (b) multiple teaching strategies, and (c) favorite teaching strategy.

New Ideas for Teaching

Responding to the open-ended question on the post-test/survey that asked the participants to describe how the MSWTPSI influenced their implementation of the varied teaching strategies, participant responses indicated a willingness to utilize varied teaching strategies in the classroom. One participant stated, “It gave me much needed insight on different teaching strategies as related to the Constitution.” Others indicated that good ideas were derived from the various teaching strategies and allowed students more of an opportunity to participate. Another participant stated that these teaching strategies “gave me ideas for role-playing, projects, and demonstrations that I can use in the classroom.” Overall, participants revealed that as a result of participating in the MSWTPSI, they had learned new teaching methodologies that would help students connect ideas concerning the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

In observing the participants, the researcher found that as they implemented the teaching strategies, ideas were interjected and teachers were able to take advantage of a teachable moment. After one particular observation, one teacher commented that these new ideas made the difference in classroom instruction for her and the students. She described to the researcher how her principal had been
impressed by these new ideas and teaching strategies, and how much students seemed to enjoy interacting with each other.

Kate commented that the MSWTPSI “not only increased my knowledge, but it gave me more ideas.” These ideas consisted of different ways to teach the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. She added that, “I like to always think outside the box. Don’t take what somebody gives you—think about it first.” One of the things Kate emphasized in reading questions from the WTP text was that lots of new ideas came into mind and “you could think of other questions and ideas to piggyback on that.”

Similar to Kate, Ben stated, “I wanted to do debates a few years ago. I said we don’t even have a debate team in this school… maybe we can start in the 8th grade level.” His ideas of forming a debate team and team teaching led him to implement additional teaching strategies and encourage some of his colleagues to join his efforts.

Multiple Teaching Strategies

All teachers participating in the observation and interview phase of the study agreed that the MSWTPSI had impacted their implementation of varied teaching strategies when teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Interactive student-centered teaching strategies were observed in all classroom visits. The researcher also observed the use of mock trial, questioning, simulated and legislative hearings, cooperative learning, continuum, and debate. Additionally, through the researcher’s observations, it was evident teachers and students had been working on
specific activities in preparation for the researcher’s visit. In visiting the classrooms, all teachers had arranged the room to accommodate the specific teaching strategy that was being implemented that day.

As the researcher reviewed lesson plans, each participant cited only one specific teaching strategy for that particular lesson. However, during all observations with the exception of two specific visits, the researcher noted that participants incorporated multiple teaching strategies. The exceptions occurred during the implementation of a simulated congressional hearing and a legislative hearing. An example of incorporating multiple strategies included the implementation of questioning. Teachers would prompt students to employ problem-solving skills as part of an active learning process while probing with open-ended questions. This was often embedded in the cooperative learning activities.

Using questioning, teachers were observed probing students’ knowledge and understanding of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. During numerous interviews, multiple remarks regarding questioning and the construction of open-ended questions gave insight into how the MSWTPSI impacted the teachers’ use of this teaching strategy. One teacher commented that “the MSWTPSI helped me to know how to state questions to really make kids think.” Another said that “the questions in the WTP text or the curriculum have not only fostered critical thinking for the kids, but it has helped me to mature and develop my questioning.”
Regarding the incorporation of multiple teaching strategies, Ben said, “It works better and I found out working with students that they learn quite a bit from each other. I am getting better at it.” One observation he made was that “as I began to change, I too gained an insight that kids can get across a point I want to make.” Ben’s change resulted from the implementation of the WTP strategies as he saw his students gain a greater understanding of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. He added that using questioning is most important. “The thing I do is I question the students. I start asking leading questions… With the dialogue what I change is more in-depth questioning.” Ben emphasized how important it was to get students to think critically instead of generally in terms of base knowledge.

During one observation, a simulated congressional hearing was conducted in the classroom. The teacher arranged for a panel of judges to be present. Students were dressed for the occasion, the researcher noted the teacher’s, and classes’ excited anticipation of the event. Once the teacher began the activity, no intervention ensued until the simulation was completed as the students modeled a simulated hearing. At the conclusion of the hearing, the panelists were dismissed and the teacher debriefed the students. The researcher noted the pride shared by the class regarding their performance. A comment made by the teacher denoted the change that had resulted from the teachers’ implementation of the simulation. He said, “Not bad for a guy who only lectured last year. We will definitely be doing this again!”
Sally said the greatest influence she received from the MSWTPSI was the methods of implementing different strategies. “By being with other people that teach the same thing that I do, ... [they] would comment about how they taught certain units and things.” Sally found that the MSWTPSI provided her with the opportunity to learn from the mentor teachers and other participants. The demonstration of the different teaching strategies made a difference.

Tom stated that as a result of the MSWTPSI he uses inquiry or problem-solving a great deal, especially when the topics center upon “due process of law and how the country goes about making sure that it can find terrorists without stepping all over people’s rights.” This was important to him because of his military background. He indicated that real-life problem-solving prepared students for adulthood and that his job was to prepare them for life. He said, “Usually, the only government they get from eighth grade to adulthood is what they get in my class. It is important that I share something that is real with them and that hopefully it will make a difference.”

As a result of the MSWTPSI, Kate conducted a mock trial in her class. On visiting the classroom, the researcher observed that students took seriously each role they fulfilled in providing testimony, defending and prosecuting the case, and serving as jurors. The teacher facilitated the activity and guided the students through the process with minimal interjections. Afterwards, the teacher debriefed the case and students took the opportunity to question, discuss, and critique their fulfillment of
each role. Offering few suggestions, the teacher directed the students to provide positive and constructive feedback to fellow classmates.

**Cooperative Learning**

Teachers cited cooperative learning as their favorite teaching strategy. In implementing cooperative learning, Sally said that “if the kids are weak … and they’re with a group of people who do really well, then they feel really good about themselves if they can contribute anything.” She said that giving everyone a job is vital to this strategy. “I have them to learn within a group to state their opinion and work through their possible ideas for things.” Sally also stated that learning to work with people was critical to cooperative learning and life.

As a result of the MSWTPSI Tom stated, “I was not a fan of cooperative learning, but as time has gone on, it does have its place. I find that they learn from their fellow students probably better than they learn from me. When somebody can sit down and explain something to them in their terms, it is good.”

Margaret believed cooperative learning is the most effective teaching strategy. She presented the material and had students grouped together to question and discuss. She said, “Some questions they research, some are their opinions, and then I think by comparing what each group has found… the students learn from each other.” Margaret said that getting students more involved is the basic element and that students truly learn from each other.

Shirley believed cooperative learning gives shy children an opportunity to
express themselves. Cooperative learning has impacted the class because “a lot of times a very shy child will develop courage in a small group to participate and add to the conversation. It gives a lot of confidence to children who wouldn’t talk in large groups.” As she implemented cooperative learning in the social studies classroom one thing caught her attention: “they monitored themselves as to which question they were going to address and who was going to do what.” Shirley commented that she was surprised at the high quality of student performance, maturity levels, and depth of student thinking.

Another elementary teacher, Kate, said that cooperative learning has been the top teaching strategy because her children love working in groups. “They are not just reading… it keeps them more engaged. It is more hands on, minds on things. When they get to do those ideas to discuss and problems to solve, it just solidifies it.” She also commented that group work allows students to build life-skills in cooperating with others.

Ben commented that questioning and discussion were critical in the implementation of cooperative learning. He said, “Normally, … I have stayed away from it,” but indicated that his attendance at the MSWTPSI made him willing to include interactive activities in his classroom instruction. Ben also said that with lecture the students were simply not involved, but he wanted to get students more involved so he had to change strategies.
Summary

Findings from data collected from quantitative research and analysis indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in the impact the MSWTPSI had upon participants’ implementation of varied teaching strategies concerning the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Themes emerged from the qualitative findings to support how the MSWTPSI impacted the teaching strategies of the participants. Emerging themes included new ideas, multiple teaching strategies, and the favorite teaching strategy. These themes confirmed how the MSWTPSI impacted the participants’ intent to implement varied teaching strategies. Participants believed the use of multiple strategies was important to engage students in learning about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. They indicated that the MSWTPSI did influence their tendency to implement varied teaching strategies concerning the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Research Question Three

Did the Missississippi We The People Summer Institute impact the participants’ dispositions in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights? If so, how? Findings from the quantitative and qualitative methods indicated the participants’ dispositions were impacted in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Participants’ confidence and enthusiasm were increased as evidenced by sharing their enthusiasm and confidence in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
with students, colleagues, and the researcher. Themes emerged from data gathered from the interviews and observations that confirmed the impact.

The results from the pre-test/survey and post-test/survey on dispositions were analyzed by a paired samples $t$-test. Participants were asked in the pre-test/survey how they would rate their dispositions toward teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. In the post-test/survey, participants were asked the same questions. Higher mean scores reflected a more positive disposition toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Lower mean scores reflected a less than positive disposition toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Table 9 presents the pre-test/survey and post-test/survey means of the participants’ responses.

Table 9
Disposition Pre-Test/Survey and Post-Test/Survey Mean Scores Toward Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights ($N = 27$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dispositions</th>
<th>Pre-M</th>
<th>Post-M</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in teaching about the Constitution and Bill of Rights</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm in teaching about the Constitution and Bill of Rights</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to teach about the Constitution and Bill of Rights</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence incorporating varied teaching strategies when teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm in using various teaching strategies when teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additionally, Table 10 presents participant responses, in terms of frequency, regarding dispositions toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Participant responses indicated: (1) low, (2) moderate, and (3) high. The item regarding having a positive attitude toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was measured on a scale of (1) always, (2) sometimes, and (3) rarely. Pre-test/survey scores indicated that 25 participants always had a positive attitude while two sometimes had a positive attitude toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Post-test/survey scores indicated that 26 participants always had a positive attitude toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights while one person sometimes has a positive attitude toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
Table 10

Pre-Test/Survey and Post-Test/Survey Dispositions Frequencies (N=27)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 (Low)</th>
<th>2 (Moderate)</th>
<th>3 (High)</th>
<th>1 (Low)</th>
<th>2 (Moderate)</th>
<th>3 (High)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm for Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to Teach About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in Incorporating Varied Teaching Strategies when Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm in Using Varied Teaching Strategies to Teach About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Attitude toward teaching The Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The MSWTPSI participants responded to questions regarding dispositions toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. A statistically significant difference between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey scores (see Table
11) was noted for all dispositions with the exception of confidence in incorporating varied teaching strategies when teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and a positive attitude toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Table 11
Pre-Test/Survey and Post-Test/Survey Paired Mean Disposition Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disposition</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>* Indicates statistical significant difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>-.67</td>
<td>.620</td>
<td>-5.586</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.000*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm for Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>-.37</td>
<td>.629</td>
<td>-3.058</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.005*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to Teach About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td>.526</td>
<td>-2.563</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.017*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in Incorporating Varied Teaching Strategies when Teaching</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>.751</td>
<td>-1.537</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm in Using Varied Teaching Strategies to Teach About the</td>
<td>-.30</td>
<td>.724</td>
<td>-2.126</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.043*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitution and the Bill of Rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Attitude Toward Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.570</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.574</td>
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Dispositions

Confidence in Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The results of the t-test indicated a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between
pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses concerning confidence in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The MSWTPSI did have an impact on the participants’ confidence in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as indicated by the paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 15% of the participants indicated a low level of confidence in teaching about the Constitution in the classroom. After the MSWTPSI, 100% of the participants indicated a moderate or high confidence level in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill or Rights.

*Enthusiasm for Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.* The results of the *t*-test revealed a statistically significant difference (*p* < .05) between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses of participant enthusiasm. The MSWTPSI did have an impact on the participants’ enthusiasm in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as indicated by the paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 63% of the participants indicated a high enthusiasm level for teaching about the Constitution. At the conclusion of the MSWTPSI, 93% indicated a high level of enthusiasm while 7% indicated a moderate level of enthusiasm.

*Motivation to Teach About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.* The results of the *t*-test indicated a statistically significant difference (*p* < .05) between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses in motivation to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The MSWTPSI did have an impact on the participants’ motivation to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as
indicated by the paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 74% of the participants were motivated to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. After the MSWTPSI, one individual was moderately motivated and all other participants were highly motivated to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

**Confidence in Incorporating Varied Teaching Strategies When Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.** The results of the t-test indicated no statistically significant difference between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses of confidence in incorporating varied teaching strategies. The MSWTPSI did not have an impact on the participants’ confidence in incorporating varied teaching strategies about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as indicated by the paired mean differences.

**Enthusiasm in Using Varied Teaching Strategies to Teach About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.** The results of the t-test revealed a statistically significant difference (p < .05) between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey responses of enthusiasm in using various teaching strategies to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The MSWTPSI did have an impact on the participants’ enthusiasm in implementing various teaching strategies concerning the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as indicated by the paired mean differences. Prior to the MSWTPSI, 44% of the participants indicated a low or medium level of enthusiasm in using various
teaching strategies to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. After the MSWTPSI, 100% of the participants were highly enthusiastic in implementing the various teaching strategies.

*Positive Attitude Toward Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.* The results of the *t*-test indicated no statistically significant difference between pre-test/survey and post-test/survey scores of positive attitudes toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Participants’ pre-survey responses in teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights were exceptionally high. This indicated that participants had positive attitudes toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights prior to the MSWTPSI. With such high scores there were limited opportunities for change in post-test/survey scores.

Qualitative analysis for research question three was conducted on post-surveys, interviews, observations, and lesson plan reviews. All six volunteer participants unanimously agreed that the MSWTPSI impacted their dispositions regarding teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The question of how it impacted their dispositions was answered in themes that emerged from an open-ended question, interviews, observations, and lesson plan reviews relative to the question. The following themes and descriptive data indicated what participants maintained to be true concerning the impact of the MSWTPSI upon their dispositions. The themes included (a) confidence: the difference, (b) excitement, (c) enthusiasm, and (d) motivated to do more.
Confidence: The Difference

In response to the post-survey question, “How did the MSWTPSI change your dispositions toward teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights,” over half of the participants indicated increased confidence. One participant stated, “I am more confident in teaching both, [the Constitution and the Bill of Rights], because of the information and materials I received.” Another participant wrote, “It gave me more confidence that I don’t have to know everything to get the information across to students, but how to direct them to search and obtain the information themselves.” Most participants felt more confident. One of the more profound statements came from a participant who said that the MSWTPSI “changed my disposition from not wanting to teach government to wanting to teach it. I feel more confident in teaching the Constitution.” Participant responses indicated a more positive confidence in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. These gains were noted in the responses and comments provided by the participants.

All teachers who participated in the interview and observation phases of the study stated that their dispositions were positively impacted by the MSWTPSI. Additionally, participants said they were more confident because of their participation in the MSWTPSI. Data results from questions regarding confidence revealed that all teachers expressed various degrees of confidence ranging from more confident to much more confident in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Also,
questions regarding confidence for incorporating various strategies in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights denoted higher degrees of self-assurance.

In the observation of participants, the researcher found an exceptional level of confidence exhibited in the classrooms. As the researcher visited each participant, the confidence level for all teachers was high. All participants shared with the researcher how much the MSWTPSI had impacted their confidence.

Margaret said that her confidence had definitely increased because of the MSWTPSI. “I think by going to the class this summer and studying the book, you feel like you are better equipped, you know more, because you have read the book.” She also emphasized the importance of the materials provided to participants during the MSWTPSI. “I think that has helped us [the participants] to be better teachers. All the books, all of the knowledge that we gained from the summer MSWTPSI makes you feel a lot more confident in teaching.” In teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, Margaret also said:

I have a better attitude because I feel more confident in teaching the material.

The MSWTPSI provided me with what I needed to develop ideas I had and then be able to come back and implement those ideas in the classroom.

Sally believes her positive attitude and confidence in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights has affected her students. “I found when I have a positive attitude about what I’m teaching, I enjoy teaching it so much more and the kids get so much more out of it.” She believed the MSWTPSI impacted her
dispositions because she felt she had what was needed to do a better job. This included knowledge and varied teaching strategies. “At the conference I saw the people who had been utilizing the material and the teaching strategies…” Additionally, she believed that the MSWTPSI helped because she saw many activities and other ideas that mentor teachers shared.

Shirley believed that as a result of the MSWTPSI her confidence level has increased and she has become happier because of her increased knowledge base. She also indicated that this has become personal. “I am no constitutional scholar, but at least I think I understand it in a lot of ways that I didn’t before. It has inspired me to read it.” Shirley indicated that the more she reads the books obtained at the MSWTPSI, the more confidence she gains to implement her ideas with the various strategies and to deviate from the textbook. She commented, “Now I actually have the knowledge and ability to go out into a new area. I would never have had the guts to go out and discuss some of the issues before the MSWTPSI.” In reference to having confidence that she was making a difference in the lives her students, Shirley said, “I still see glimmers of reaching the children.”

Kate believed her confidence in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights has been impacted, and the impact was spilling over to the children. “Without the MSWTPSI, I probably would have just plowed through it. My total confidence level has changed.” She indicated that this year she was a little nervous implementing the teaching strategies, but next year she “would be a pro. On a scale of 1 to 10,” she
added, “I would say my confidence level is now a nine!” Kate believed the MSWTPSI has made her a better teacher.

Tom believed it was a combination of multiple things that increased his confidence for teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and implementing various strategies. The MSWTPSI “gave me more confidence to try it myself, knowing I wasn’t reinventing the wheel.” He indicated that he was not where he wanted to be, but neither was he a beginner. Tom said the MSWTPSI gave him confidence to try something new, “something I hadn’t done before and something I found out I could do very well.” He believed the things he learned at the MSWTPSI was helping him to get better every day and that the MSWTPSI served as a positive professional development experience unlike others before.

Ben believed the MSWTPSI impacted his dispositions toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and the implementation of various strategies. “It made me feel better about teaching the Constitution. It strengthened me… And it really makes you teach better when you know what you’re teaching.” He added that, “I feel much more comfortable teaching the material because I’m more knowledgeable about it now and it really helps me.” He believed this increased his confidence and aided his instruction greatly. He said, “Basically, it has made me more confident in what I teach to them and how I do it.” Ben, affirming his confidence in implementing various teaching strategies, said the MSWTPSI “has made me a little more daring to go about and try them now since I have gotten more knowledge on them.”
The researcher noted varying degrees of increased confidence by all six participants throughout each phase of the data collection. Teacher confidence gains observed in the classroom were evidenced in the teacher facilitated activities. Within all the classroom environments the researcher visited, the comfort level and ease with which each participant approached teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights indicated an increase in confidence.

*Excitement and Enthusiasm*

Data results from survey items and interviews regarding enthusiasm revealed that all teachers expressed varied degrees of enthusiasm from “excited” to “totally enthusiastic” in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Also, responses to questions regarding enthusiasm for incorporating various strategies in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights denoted exceptional enthusiasm. In the classrooms, the researcher observed that participants were upbeat, excited about the activities of the day, and very positive in their approach to teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

During each classroom observation, positive attitudes were present. The excitement and enthusiasm for teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was evident throughout the classroom observations as the teachers engaged students in the learning process. Through greetings, smiles, and exchanges of conversation between the teacher and students the excitement and enthusiasm of the teacher
emanated to the children. The result of this emanation was student responsiveness and participation in the lessons and varied activities.

Regarding her level of enthusiasm in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, Sally commented that for her it is the most interesting thing in the world. She said, “Therefore, I’m very enthusiastic.” Additionally, she said the children know “how excited I get about what I’m teaching them. I think sometimes they think I’m a little too enthusiastic.” Sally elaborated that after the MSWTPSI, “it is so interesting and also; it is so relevant that I don’t have any problem tying it into them and their lives.”

Shirley noted that her enthusiasm continues to be impacted by the MSWTPSI. This is especially true when she hears from students things she has taught, come back in casual conversations or in the course of a class discussion. “Well, I know what I am saying. I like government and it [the MSWTPSI] has made me even happier with it and [my enthusiasm] has made it a lot more interesting instead of just lecture, lecture, lecture.”

Kate believed her enthusiasm in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights has been impacted. She commented, “This time next year, I’ll be much better off.” Kate’s overall attitude toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights changed after the MSWTPSI.

I think I dreaded it before I went to the MSWTPSI. I was thinking it was going to be hard because I had not taught that. And after the MSWTPSI I was
like, bring it on. After doing the MSWTPSI, … we can do the simulated congressional hearings and all of the other projects.

Participation in the hearing was what Kate believed made the difference for her in becoming a better teacher. “If they had just handed me the book, I may not have been quite as enthusiastic. Going to the MSWTPSI, seeing how it is supposed to work, and actually taking part in the hearing really increases your level of everything.”

Ben indicated that in discussing the law, the scholars aroused his enthusiasm in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. He said, “I just think there is just so much we can teach. And primarily, the law and the responsibilities and the rights we have, it makes me gung-ho to teach it to them.” Upon visiting Ben, it was evident from the comments his colleagues made that their enthusiasm and attention was stimulated because of his attendance at the MSWTPSI. Additionally, this was observed as another teacher had his class participate in several different activities with Ben’s class. This was verified in the lesson plan review as time was allocated for preparation of the debate. Ben commented, “Once you become more proficient and especially more knowledgeable about what you’re talking about, then you can be more enthused about what you’re delivering.”

Motivated to Do More

The last theme, motivated to do more, emerged from the findings of the data collected from the qualitative research obtained from the post-test/surveys, interviews, and observations. Participants indicated a greater sense of motivation in
teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. One participant commented that the MSWTPSI “changed my disposition from not wanting to teach the Constitution and the Bill of Rights to wanting to teach it.” Another participant indicated that seeing what worked for the mentoring teachers “gave me the desire to do the same in my classes.”

Margaret believed the knowledge from the MSWTPSI made such an impact upon her that she desired to share this not only with her students, but also with the school. Recognizing how much the MSWTPSI impacted her, Margaret became aware of the importance of all students having an opportunity to increase their knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. As a result of the professional development experience, Margaret was motivated to invite one of the MSWTPSI scholars, a Mississippi Supreme Court Justice, to visit the school. He accepted her invitation and spoke to the school’s student body. This goes much beyond simply implementing a new strategy into the curriculum, but rather speaks to how much the MSWTPSI impacted and influenced this teacher.

Ben discussed how he was going to ask a judge to allow his students to come and sit in on a real trial. He believed this would further stimulate students’ desire to learn about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. He added that it would be even better if he and Mr. Jones, a teaching colleague, would be able to work together on these projects to assist students in gaining a greater understanding of the Constitution.
Sally said that she has been motivated to add more instructional time for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. She commented, “I thought this is something that I really need to do even if it means at the end that I’ve got to crunch down something else.” She added, “This is what is most important right now.”

Summary

All quantitative findings were found to be statistically significantly different for all participant dispositional scores with the exception of confidence in incorporating teaching strategies in teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and positive attitudes toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The researcher therefore concluded that the MSWTPSI impacted the dispositions of the participants in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Consistent with these findings, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) research suggested that as teacher’s efficacy increased so would their effort in teaching. All participants indicated their confidence, enthusiasm, and motivation were increased through their participation in the MSWTPSI. It was the general consensus of the participants that this participation affected their teaching about and implementation of strategies regarding the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. This descriptive data provided a realistic picture of participants’ confidence, enthusiasm, and motivation about the MSWTPSI and the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
Discussion

Research Question One

Did the MSWTPSI impact the participants’ knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights? If so, how? The findings from the quantitative research revealed that pre-test/survey scores on the content knowledge test were high. This indicated that participants’ knowledge of the items asked on the test prior to the MSWTPSI was above average. With the scores there were limited possibilities for notable increases in post-test/survey scores. The items utilized in the pre- and post-test/surveys were created as part of an exit exam for high school seniors.

*Increased Knowledge and Understanding*

Based upon the data from the qualitative research, the researcher concluded that participants’ knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was broadened. Through their acknowledgement, participants identified a lack of knowledge in different areas in understanding the Constitution and Bill of Rights. It was concluded that participants did receive greater knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as a result of the MSWTPSI. Consistent with these findings, Udall and Rugen’s (1997) research suggested that teachers attend professional development programs to increase their knowledge. Darling-Hammond (1998) agreed that teachers must gain a greater perception and depth of their content knowledge to be successful in the classroom.
Knowledge and Empowerment

All participants believed the MSWTPSI impacted their knowledge and served as a source of empowerment in assisting students’ understanding of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Additionally, each participant found this empowerment resulted in a greater sharing of knowledge in the classroom. This communication of knowledge was evident by directing student learning and providing explanations relevant to the study of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. While responses to open-ended questions indicated increased knowledge due to the MSWTPSI, a review of the lesson plans revealed a lesser knowledge gain.

The researcher concluded that data collected from qualitative research gathered relative to the impact the MSWTPSI had upon the participants’ knowledge provided further evidence that increased knowledge served to empower the participants. This empowerment was described by the participants as the ability to “show them it really works,” referring to assisting the students in learning about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Consistent with these findings, Hyland’s (1985) research of social studies teachers teaching about the Constitution suggested that educators must have scholarly content knowledge and intensive training to fulfill their responsibilities. Research by Hawley and Valli (2000) concurred that educators are competent learners when the professional development is content specific.
Rekindled Interest in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

The researcher concluded that the knowledge of the participants was impacted as interest in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was regenerated. Joyce and Shower’s (1980) agreed that teacher behavior changes as professional development moves into the application level. This led the researcher to conclude that the rekindled interest motivated the participants to devote greater energy in examining the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Continued Professional Development

The researcher concluded the MSWTPSI did impact the participants’ knowledge when additional professional development was requested. Consistent with the findings of Garet et al. (2001), sustained professional development that is intense has a greater impact. Participants at the MSWTPSI believed this professional development to be different and applicable to what they taught, therefore they requested additional opportunities for learning. This suggests the MSWTPSI truly made a difference for the participants. Opportunities for participants to attend regional MSWTPSIs are provided through the CCE. Research on a follow-up of those choosing to attend this additional professional development would be an indicator as to the extent of the impact the MSWTPSI had upon the participants.
Research Question Two

Did the MSWTPSI impact the participants’ implementation of varied teaching strategies concerning the Constitution and the Bill of Rights? Is so, how? Based upon the quantitative findings, the researcher concluded that the MSWTPSI did have an impact upon the implementation of varied teaching strategies by the participants. A statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) was found for each teaching strategy addressed in the survey: mock trial, questioning, simulated congressional hearing, cooperative learning, problem solving, service learning, moot court, debate, and continuum. Therefore, the propensity of the participants to implement varied instructional strategies of the participants concerning the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was affected. Prior to the MSWTPSI, some participants had never incorporated a mock trial, simulated hearing, or debate into their classroom instruction, but following the MSWTPSI participants indicated a willingness to implement these strategies. The researcher concluded that participants did not employ a varied selection of instructional techniques in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as presented at the MSWTPSI. Having the opportunity to learn about and how to employ different strategies, participants indicated a greater willingness to implement these strategies. This suggested that participants either were not aware of the different teaching strategies presented at the MSWTPSI or were not comfortable with the implementation of such strategies.
New Ideas About Teaching

The researcher concluded that the MSWTPSI impacted the teaching strategies of the participants as new ideas emerged. All teachers indicated that not only did they have new and different ideas relative to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, but also they could now build upon existing strategies. New ideas included expanding questioning opportunities for teachable moments, appropriate methods of incorporating recently acquired teaching strategies, and ways to implement changes in the current curriculum.

Multiple Teaching Strategies

The researcher concluded that the MSWTPSI impacted the teaching strategies of the participants attending the MSWTPSI. Additionally, from the findings the researcher believes that prior to the MSWTPSI participants had an exceptionally limited number of teaching strategies that was used to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. This suggested to the researcher that the participants were looking for new teaching strategies to use in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. With certain teaching strategies being more effective than others (Orlich et al., 2004), participants recognized the difference between what they previously implemented and the interactive, student-centered strategies demonstrated at the MSWTPSI. It has been determined by Darling-Hammond and Ball (1999) that integrated theory and practice that is content-based makes a difference. The
difference for the participants in this study was the variety of teaching strategies relative to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Cooperative Learning

The researcher concluded that the MSWTPSI impacted the participant’s teaching strategy in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Findings indicated that participants used cooperative learning prior to the MSWTPSI and identified cooperative learning as a particular favorite strategy. Following, the MSWTPSI results indicated that more participants were willing to implement this strategy in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. According to Spark’s (2002) research, effective professional development focused on deepening content knowledge and pedagogical skills are linked to teacher proficiency and student achievement.

Research Question Three

Did the MSWTPSI impact the participants’ dispositions in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights? If so, how? Based upon the quantitative findings, the researcher concluded that the MSWTPSI did have an impact on the participants’ dispositions in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. A statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) was found for confidence in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, enthusiasm for teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, motivation to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, motivation to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
Rights, and enthusiasm in using varied teaching strategies to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Confidence in Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Right

The researcher concluded that the confidence level of the participants in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was impacted by the MSWTPSI. This suggested that participants prior to the MSWTPSI were not as confident in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as they were at the conclusion of the professional development. This difference in scores indicated a positive affect created by the MSWTPSI.

Enthusiasm for Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

The researcher concluded that the participants’ level of enthusiasm in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was impacted by the MSWTPSI. Slightly less than two-thirds of the participants had a high enthusiasm level prior to the MSWTPSI. At the conclusion of the MSWTPSI participant scores revealed a much greater level of enthusiasm for teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. While not all participants had a high level of enthusiasm, all participant scores were increased.

Motivation to Teach About the Constitution and the Bill of Right

The researcher concluded that the participants’ level of motivation to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was impacted by the MSWTPSI. Prior to
the MSWTPSI, slightly more than 25% were not motivated to teach about the Constitution whereas post-MSWTPSI scores indicated that all participants were motivated to teach the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. This suggested that the MSWTPSI’s professional development program was in fact, motivational.

Confidence in Incorporating Varied Teaching Strategies When Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

From these findings the researcher concluded that prior to the MSWTPSI, participants were confident of incorporating varied teaching strategies; therefore, there was no distinguished change in their confidence level. This was notable as participant responses indicated confidence in incorporating teaching strategies about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, but they were not as confident in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Enthusiasm in Using Varied Teaching Strategies to Teach About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

The researcher concluded that the participants’ enthusiasm in using various teaching strategies was impacted by the MSWTPSI. Prior to the MSWTPSI, slightly less than half of the participants indicated a less than high level of enthusiasm in incorporating various teaching strategies to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. However, after the MSWTPSI all participants were reportedly enthusiastic in including varied teaching strategies in their classrooms. These findings led the researcher to conclude that participants were not as enthusiastic about their existing
teaching strategies as they were about the new teaching strategies. Additionally, with these new suggested teaching strategies (i.e., mock trial, continuum, simulated hearing) participants now were enthusiastic about having the opportunity to implement these new strategies. Consistent with these findings, Allinder’s (1994) research on dispositions and instructional practices suggested that teachers with a greater sense of efficacy display a greater enthusiasm for teaching.

Positive Attitude Toward Teaching About the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

The researcher concluded that the MSWTPSI did not statistically impact the participants’ attitudes toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Positive attitudes existed prior to and at the conclusion of the MSWTPSI. This suggested that the participants hold a positive disposition toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Confidence: The Difference

The researcher concluded that the MSWTPSI impacted the confidence level of the participants. All participants indicated that their confidence grew and the more confident they became the more able they were to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. This cyclical process was evident among all participants.

Excitement and Enthusiasm

The researcher concluded that the MSWTPSI impacted the excitement and enthusiasm of the participants attending the MSWTPSI. Additionally, from the
findings the researcher believes that prior to the MSWTPSI, participants were somewhat excited about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, but had not engaged in interactive activities (e.g., debate, moot court, simulation) prior to this MSWTPSI. Participants then recognized the difference between what they had experienced previously in regard to professional development and became more enthusiastic and excited regarding the content and applicability of the MSWTPSI to their needs.

Motivated to Do More

The researcher concluded that the MSWTPSI impacted the dispositions of the participants attending the MSWTPSI in relation to being motivated to do more. All participants appeared more willing to add something different in their classroom instruction in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. This change in disposition was evidenced by multiple participants specifically inviting someone to their classroom, involving other teachers in their activities, or changing the course requirements.

Comparative Analysis of the Mixed Methodology

The survey data findings collected from the quantitative research found no statistically significant difference in the participants’ content knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as compared to the qualitative findings, which indicated a difference regarding the MSWTPSI’s impact upon the participants. Through interviews, participants indicated they were impacted by the MSWTPSI
regarding their content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions. As indicated by participant statements, the researcher also observed the impact of the MSWTPSI on varied teaching strategies. For the first time, participants conducted particular teaching strategies (e.g., mock trial, debate, simulated hearing) in their classroom.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the We The People Summer Institute (WTPSI) is to provide teachers with content knowledge, teaching strategies, and assessment strategies that will help them effectively implement the We The People (WTP) curriculum (Roe, personal communication March 11, 2004). This study yielded quantitative and qualitative research findings regarding the effectiveness of the professional development. In this chapter, the researcher summarized the results of this mixed-methods study concerning the impact the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute (MSWTPSI) had upon the content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions of social studies teachers. Conclusions regarding the impact of the professional development are highlighted. Additionally, recommendations are offered in respect to the findings.

Summary

The quest for sustaining American democracy lies in the hands of the American educational system. In striving to maintain a democracy, Barber (1992) portrayed the relationship of education and democracy when he stated, “Democracy is less the enabler of education than education is the enabler of democracy” (p. 14).
According to the literature, the enabling of democracy through education, or as suggested by Thomas Jefferson, enlightening the civic discretion, has remained the primary task of teachers throughout American history (Tozer, Violas, & Senese, 2002; Westheimer & Khane, 2003). Commenting on the integral relationship between democracy and education, John Dewey (as cited in Battostoni, 2000) commented that “Democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is the midwife” (p. 30). Identified as critical in the advancement of civic education, the role of the teacher remains the focus. To equip civic educators with the necessary resources in fulfilling this responsibility of educating the citizenry, changes occurred in professional development.

A review of the literature indicated that the professional development of educators experienced a reformation and evolved from limited one-day workshops into extensive week-long summer institutes (Guskey, 2003; Hirsh & Sparks, 1997; Morris, Chrispell, & Burke, 2003; Sparks, 2002). Research on professional development identified specific characteristics that constitute quality professional development. Current summer institute models engaged teachers as active learners. Additionally, these week-long models provided educators with intense content related professional development. The literature review revealed few investigations addressing the impact of professional development institutes upon educators, specifically civic education institutes.

The purpose of this research was to examine the impact the MSWTPSI had upon the content knowledge, strategies, and dispositions of social studies teachers.
attending the professional development. In the summer of 2003, the MSWTPSI was held at Mississippi State University. With a pragmatic approach, a mixed-methods design was employed to determine the impact of the Institute upon the participants. As means for gathering data, quantitative and qualitative research methods were utilized in collecting and analyzing data. This mixed-methods approach generated a deeper understanding of the impact the professional development had upon the teachers attending the Institute. The inclusion of qualitative data revealed a richer and fuller insight into the influence this professional development had upon the social studies teachers.

Participants engaged in the summer institute totaled 27. Each participant completed a pre- and post-test and survey with questions relating to content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions toward the teaching of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Purposefully selected from a pool of volunteers, six participants engaged in interviews and observations and allowed the researcher to review lesson plans. Data from the quantitative research were analyzed using paired samples $t$-test and descriptive statistics. Analyzed by the researcher, data from the qualitative research were converted from raw material into partially processed data. The data were then coded and subjected to specific schemes, patterns, and themes that emerged during the analysis. Data results from the quantitative and qualitative research were used to respond to each of the three research questions.

Research question one, regarding the impact the MSWTPSI had upon the content knowledge of the participants, yielded no statistically significant differences,
although qualitative results indicated an impact upon the volunteer participants’ knowledge. Data from the quantitative research collected through the pre and post-tests for research question one were analyzed by a paired samples t-test. The mean scores of the participants’ content knowledge showed no statistically significant difference ($p > .05$). However, the researcher noted high mean scores in both pre- and post-tests. Relative to research question one, data gathered from the qualitative research provided descriptive information that brought clarity to the quantitative findings. Engaging in the interview and observation phase of the study, participants believed their content knowledge deepened and strengthened because of the scholarly lectures. These participants regarded this increase in knowledge a sense of empowerment in explaining to their students the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The social studies teachers agreed that the Institute gave them a means of explaining the principles and concepts of the Constitution, whereas previously they had not been able to “develop a relationship between the past and the present.”

Research question two, regarding the impact the MSWTPSI had upon the teaching strategies of the participants, yielded a statistically significant difference for multiple teaching strategies. Data from the qualitative research supported this finding with all volunteer participants reporting that the institute impacted their use of these specific teaching strategies. Data from the quantitative research collected through the pre- and post-surveys for research question two were analyzed by a paired samples t-test. The participants’ mean scores on teaching strategies showed a statistically significant difference among specific strategies ($p < .05$). As cited by the participants,
results of the teaching strategies pre-survey indicated limited implementation of varied strategies. The implementation of teaching strategies consisted only of questioning, cooperative learning, and debates in their classroom instruction. However, in the post-survey, participants indicated a willingness to employ more of the suggested teaching strategies: mock trials, simulated hearings, problem solving, service learning, moot court, and continuum in addition to existing strategies. The data from the qualitative research relative to research question two provided an authentic account to support the quantitative findings. All volunteer participants believed the Institute impacted their implementation of various teaching strategies in their classroom. Participants discussed how these strategies would make a difference in their instruction and provide a greater opportunity for students to become more actively engaged in learning about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The integration of these teaching strategies was apparent through observation when the researcher visited the participants in their classrooms.

Research question three, regarding the impact the MSWTPSI had upon the dispositions of the participants toward teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, yielded a statistically significant difference on selected motivational items. Additionally, based upon collective data from the qualitative research, volunteer participants indicated that the Institute impacted their dispositions. Data from the quantitative research collected through the pre- and post-surveys for research question three were analyzed by a paired samples $t$-test. The participants’ mean scores on dispositions showed a statistically significant difference among four particular
dispositional items \( (p < .05) \). Results indicated that participants believed they experienced an increased confidence in and enthusiasm for teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Additionally, results from paired samples t-test indicated that participants believed their motivation to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights had increased, as did their enthusiasm in using various teaching strategies to teach about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The data from the qualitative research relative to research question three provided a realistic picture to support the quantitative findings. All volunteer participants agreed the Institute impacted their disposition toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Confidence in teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was evident as participants greeted the researcher on the first visit and shared what was transpiring in the classroom. The participants’ enthusiasm for teaching not only about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, but also implementation of the new teaching strategies was evidenced by excitement in the classroom.

Conclusions

This research sought to examine the impact the MSWTPSI had upon the content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions of social studies teachers attending the professional development opportunity. As indicated by both the quantitative and qualitative findings, yes, the institute did impact the content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions of the participants. The results of this
study support multiple findings in the literature regarding successful professional development.

Findings from this study support the findings in the literature that the MSWTPSI impacted the content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions of the participants. In comparing this study to Soule’s (2000) regional study, the research findings were consistent with the literature. Results from the regional Institute indicated that more than 90% of the participants found the WTP Institute intellectually stimulating and the knowledge gained was useful during the academic year. Of the MSWTPSI participants, 100% indicated that their knowledge was impacted regarding the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. This professional development was a week-long, included multiple hours of content lecture and pedagogical training. Participants unanimously agreed that the content lectures provided by scholarly professionals contributed to needed knowledge regarding the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Additionally, qualitative findings indicated that participants gained immense insight from mentors in planning and preparing instruction in the WTP curriculum as part of their pedagogical training.

Findings from this study support the literature that effective professional development engages new teaching strategies, especially student-centered strategies. Quantitative results indicated that not only were participants willing to implement new strategies, but qualitative research findings indicated that they also incorporated the new civic education strategies in the classroom. The quantitative research findings regarding teaching strategies indicated that a statistically significantly difference
existed in all pre- and post-surveys. Additionally, participants specified that implementation of the civic education teaching strategies stimulated new ideas and techniques to engage students. As expressed by Darling-Hammond (1996), this continued growth of knowledge and skill is essential for teachers’ professional development.

As supported by the literature review, additional findings revealed dispositional changes because of the MSWTPSI. Recognizing the deepening of their content knowledge and engagement of student-centered teaching strategies, participants began to experience increased confidence, enthusiasm, and motivation in incorporating the WTP curriculum. The more confident, enthusiastic, and motivated the participants became, the greater their incorporation of content knowledge and teaching strategies. Identified in the literature review, these increased positive dispositions within the participants became cyclical as they recognized this as an important part of effecting teaching, successful teaching, and learning (Jones & Moreland, 2004; Stronge, 2001; Scrivens, 1998; Usher, Usher, & Usher, 2003).

Regarding teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, results of the post-survey indicated that participants’ confidence, enthusiasm, and motivation were impacted. Quantitative and qualitative research findings indicated that all participants responded with greater positive disposition towards teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights after the institute.

The researcher concluded that participants found much interrelatedness among the areas of content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions. The researcher
discovered that participants often found it hard to determine where the greatest impact existed in regard to content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions.

Participants viewed the Institute’s impact comprehensively. For some participants, the teaching strategies had a greater impact, while others believed that the increased knowledge enabled them to address issues that previously were beyond their scope of understanding. Additionally, as confidence and content knowledge increased regarding the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, so too did their willingness to implement new teaching strategies. This cyclical pattern was evident in the interviews and observations.

The researcher concluded that for some participants, lesson plans were less than important in the scope of planning. Planned lesson preparation for participants ranged from extensive, in-depth, well thought out plans to a minimum of a few lines in a planner. Such diversity created a cause for concern regarding the impact of civic education in the social studies classroom.

Recommendations

Previous research on the impact the WTPSIs had upon participants’ content knowledge, teaching strategies, and dispositions at the state level was non-existent and limited at the regional level. This study contributes to the literature on both the regional level and state level. The results of this study also suggest the need for further research. The researcher suggests the following recommendations:
1. Correlating with the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, energies could be devoted to creating an adult exam in determining an appropriate measurement of content knowledge.

2. Civic education professional development research could be conducted at the state level. As more states conduct WTP summer institutes, it is an opportunity to examine the impact in multiple states across the nation.

3. Future studies could examine gender and grade level differences in WTPSI professional development. It would be intriguing to discover where the greatest impact was relative to gender and grade level and what causes might be involved in the defining the two groups.

4. Future studies could include a longitudinal study of participants and the impact of the MSWTPSI. Additionally, the study could include questions relative to continued advancement of content knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and the incorporation of student-centered teaching strategies. Additionally, an examination of lesson planning in civic education professional development could be addressed.

5. Future studies could include examining why assessment strategies have not been incorporated into the WTPSI as is indicated in its purpose. And, in future studies, if they have been incorporated, what impact have they had upon participants.
REFERENCES


Haas, N. (2001). Using we the people... programs in social studies teacher education. In J. Patrick and R. Leming (Eds.), *Principles and practices of democracy in the education of social studies teachers* (pp. 167-183). Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education (ERIC/ChESS) of Indiana University.


APPENDIX A

MISSISSIPPI WE THE PEOPLE SUMMER INSTITUTE
PRE-TEST AND SURVEY
Mississippi We The People
Summer Institute Survey
June, 2003
Pre-Survey

Please answer the following:
Years of Experience: _____________  Grade Level ___________

Subject(s) Taught______________________________________________________________

Please circle your response:
Gender:    M   F
Ethnicity: African American     Asian     Caucasian     Native American     Other
Highest Educational Degree:  BS/BA      Masters     Specialist
National Board Certified: Yes     No
Type of School: City     County     Consolidated
Lengths of Class:     Traditional 50 minute (approx.) Class
                      Block Schedule Class
Class Internet Access: Yes     No
Certification: Social Studies 7-12     Elementary Education (K-8)

Multiple Choice: Please select the correct answer.

1. The Founders believed that “natural rights” meant the right to
   a. an education, property, and security.
   b. life, liberty, and property.
   c. clothing, food, and shelter.
   d. life, work, and protection.

2. An agreement to create a government and consent to its law is known as a
   a. consent decree.
   b. Constitution.
   c. social contract.
   d. declaration of intent.

3. Classical Republicanism
   a. stresses promoting the common good above the rights of the individual.
   b. stresses that individuals should be motivated by civic virtue.
   c. stresses the importance of political rights such as voting, expressing ideas and opinions
      about government, and serving in public office.
   d. All of the above.

4. Citizens who put the common welfare above their own selfish interests demonstrate
   a. democracy.
   b. separation of powers.
   c. balance of powers.
   d. civic virtue.

5. According to the Declaration of Independence, if the government takes away people’s natural
   rights,
   a. the President can be impeached.
   b. a new constitution must be written.
   c. military leaders may take over the government.
   d. the people can change or abolish the government.
6. The idea that government gets its authority from the people is known as
   a. a state of nature.
   b. social justice.
   c. popular sovereignty.
   d. a natural right.

7. The author of the Virginia Plan, also known as the “Father of the Constitution,” was
   b. James Madison.
   c. Benjamin Franklin.
   d. Thomas Jefferson.

8. An important difference between the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution is that the Constitution gives
   a. Congress the power to act directly upon the people.
   b. Congress the right to establish a national school system.
   c. any state the right to leave the Union if it wishes.
   d. smaller states greater power.

9. George Mason’s objections to the Constitution were primarily concerned with
   a. the difficulty of amending the Constitution.
   b. protecting the people’s rights.
   c. economic issues.
   d. the threat of judicial review.

10. Those who opposed the Constitution such as George Mason and Patrick Henry, were known as
    a. Anti-Federalist.
    b. Federalist.
    c. Framers.
    d. Revolutionaries.

11. In order to get enough support for the ratification of the Constitution, the Federalist agreed to
    a. remove the “necessary and proper” clause.
    b. amend the “three-fifths” clause.
    c. outlaw slavery in the territories.
    d. add a bill of rights.

12. Final authority, or sovereignty, in the government of the United States is held by the
    a. President.
    b. Congress.
    c. people.
    d. Constitution

13. In which system of government do the people delegate some power to the national government, some to the state governments, and keep some for themselves?
    a. Unitary system.
    b. Confederate system.
    c. Federal system.
    d. Republican system.
14. The Bill of Rights is the  
   a. Declaration of Independence.  
   c. original text of the Constitution.  
   d. first ten amendments to the Constitution.

15. The Framers opposed political parties because they were viewed as  
   a. undemocratic.  
   b. selfish.  
   c. illegal.  
   d. inefficient.

16. Political parties came about as a result of  
   a. a constitutional amendment.  
   b. disagreements over the powers of the national government.  
   c. conflicts between the Senate and House of Representatives.  
   d. an Act of Congress.

17. Judicial Review over the legislative and executive branches of the federal government was established by  
   a. the original Constitution.  
   b. a Supreme Court opinion.  
   c. a Constitutional amendment.  
   d. an Act of Congress.

18. Which of the following school situations involves a First Amendment right?  
   a. Principal searches a student’s purse.  
   b. Principal searches a student’s locker.  
   c. Principal suspends a student for leaving campus without permission.  
   d. Principal suspends a student for picketing the school cafeteria.

19. Constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech, press, assembly, and religion, are  
   a. limited in some situations.  
   b. officially ended during the times of war.  
   c. only for U. S. citizens.  
   d. listed in the Preamble to the Constitution.

20. The Fourteenth Amendment was intended to guarantee the equal protection of laws to  
   a. blacks.  
   b. females.  
   c. whites under age twenty-one.  
   d. whites who did not own property.

21. The right to “due process of law” means that  
   a. laws will be publicly debated.  
   b. important public questions must be settled by direct vote of the people.  
   c. proposed laws must be passed by both houses of the Congress.  
   d. laws and procedures of government must be fair.
22. How can a U.S. citizen influence the governing of our nation?
   a. Write letters to elected representatives.
   b. Attend meetings to gain information and discuss issues.
   c. Vote in local, state, and national elections.
   d. All of the above.

23. Which of the following rights do U.S. citizens have that aliens do not? The right to
   a. due process of law.
   b. freedom of religion.
   c. vote and hold public office
   d. trial by jury.

24. Henry David Thoreau and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., are examples of people who went to jail
    because they
   a. spoke against the government.
   b. disobeyed laws which they believed were unjust.
   c. refused to serve in the military.
   d. committed violent acts of protest.

25. In my classroom, mock trials are used as a teaching strategy
    a. often.
    b. sometimes.
    c. rarely.
    d. never.

26. In my classroom, Socratic dialogue (questioning strategies that lead students into analysis of
    situations and into synthesis and evaluation of concepts) is included in classroom instruction
    a. often.
    b. sometimes.
    c. rarely.
    d. never.

27. In my classroom, Simulated Congressional Hearings are included in classroom instruction
    a. often.
    b. sometimes.
    c. rarely.
    d. never.

28. In my classroom, cooperative learning (study partner or small group environment) is employed as
    a teaching strategy
    a. often.
    b. sometimes.
    c. rarely.
    d. never.

29. In my classroom, problem-solving is incorporated as a teaching strategy
    a. often.
    b. sometimes.
    c. rarely.
    d. never
30. In my classroom, service learning is used as a teaching strategy
   a. often.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.
   d. never.

31. Community research individuals are invited to my classroom
   a. often.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.
   d. never.

32. In my classroom, Legislative Hearings (patterned after hearings held by committees of the US Congress to gather information upon which to base a recommendation) are used as a teaching strategy
   a. often.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.
   d. never.

33. In my classroom, moot court (patterned on an appeals court or Supreme Court hearing) is integrated as a teaching strategy
   a. often.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.
   d. never.

34. Debates are included in my teaching strategies
   a. often.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.
   d. never.

35. In my classroom, continuums (exercises in which participants are presented with a range of possible attitudes or approaches on a controversial issue) are used as a teaching strategy
   a. often.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.
   d. never.

36. In my classroom, incorporating various news media sources (TV, newspaper, internet) within my teaching strategies occur
   a. often.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.
   d. never.

37. Within my classroom, gathering information on problems in the community or nation from government offices occurs
   a. often.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.
   d. never.
38. I would rate my level of confidence in teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as
   a. low.
   b. moderate.
   c. high.

39. I would rate my level of enthusiasm for teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as
   a. low.
   b. moderate.
   c. high.

40. I would rate my motivation to teach the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as
   a. low.
   b. moderate.
   c. high.

41. I would rate my confidence level for incorporating various teaching strategies in teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as
   a. low.
   b. moderate.
   c. high.

42. I would rate my enthusiasm in using various teaching strategies to teach the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as
   a. low.
   b. moderate.
   c. high.

43. I have a positive attitude toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights
   a. always.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.
APPENDIX B

CENTER FOR CIVIC EDUCATION VALIDATION LETTER
April 2, 2004

To: Donna Pearson,

The Center for Civic Education is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational corporation dedicated to fostering the development of informed, responsible participation in civic life by citizens committed to values and principles fundamental to American constitutional democracy.

The Center’s *We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution* program has received national acclaim. It focuses on the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights for upper elementary, middle, and high school students. The program is based on curricular materials developed by the Center and acclaimed by leading educators.

The test developed to measure the impact of high school students participating in *We the People* consists of sixty multiple-choice items. The test was drafted by the Center’s Executive Director, Charles Quigley, a skilled text book writer and evaluator; Dr. Duane Smith, a Harvard-educated political philosopher; Dr. Margaret Branson, an expert in the of field, who also authors items for the National Association of Educational Progress in civics. The tests validity and reliability was established through an extensive review process with input from many scholars, such as Dr. John Patrick.

Studies by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and Professor Dr. Richard Brody, Stanford University, indicate that students who used the curriculum "significantly outperformed comparison students" on every topic studied.

Sincerely,

Dr. Soule
Director of Research and Evaluation
Center for Civic Education
APPENDIX C

MISSISSIPPI WE THE PEOPLE SUMMER INSTITUTE

POST-TEST AND SURVEY
Please answer the following:
Years of Experience: _____________ Grade Level ___________
Subject(s) Taught______________________________________________________________

Please circle your response:
Gender:    M   F
Ethnicity: African American     Asian     Caucasian     Native American     Other
Highest Educational Degree:  BS/BA      Masters     Specialist
National Board Certified: Yes     No
Type of School: City     County     Consolidated
Lengths of Class:     Traditional 50 minute (approx.) Class
                      Block Schedule Class
Class Internet Access: Yes     No
Certification: Social Studies 7-12     Elementary Education (K-8)

Multiple Choice: Please select the correct answer.

1. The Founders believed that “natural rights” meant the right to
   a. an education, property, and security.
   b. life, liberty, and property.
   c. clothing, food, and shelter.
   d. life, work, and protection.

2. An agreement to create a government and consent to its law is known as a
   a. consent decree.
   b. Constitution.
   c. social contract.
   d. declaration of intent.

3. Classical Republicanism
   a. stresses promoting the common good above the rights of the individual.
   b. stresses that individuals should be motivated by civic virtue.
   c. stresses the importance of political rights such as voting, expressing ideas and opinions
      about government, and serving in public office.
   d. All of the above.

4. Citizens who put the common welfare above their own selfish interests demonstrate
   a. democracy.
   b. separation of powers.
   c. balance of powers.
   d. civic virtue.
5. According to the Declaration of Independence, if the government takes away people’s natural rights,
   a. the President can be impeached.
   b. a new constitution must be written.
   c. military leaders may take over the government.
   d. the people can change or abolish the government.

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   d. a natural right.

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   d. Thomas Jefferson.

8. An important difference between the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution is that the Constitution gives
   a. Congress the power to act directly upon the people.
   b. Congress the right to establish a national school system.
   c. any state the right to leave the Union if it wishes.
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   a. the difficulty of amending the Constitution.
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   c. economic issues.
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    b. Congress.
    c. people.
    d. Constitution
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   d. Republican system.

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   a. Declaration of Independence.
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   d. first ten amendments to the Constitution.

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   b. selfish.
   c. illegal.
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   a. a constitutional amendment.
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   c. conflicts between the Senate and House of Representatives.
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   c. a Constitutional amendment.
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   c. Principal suspends a student for leaving campus without permission.
   d. Principal suspends a student for picketing the school cafeteria.

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   a. limited in some situations.
   b. officially ended during the times of war.
   c. only for U. S. citizens.
   d. listed in the Preamble to the Constitution.

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   a. blacks.
   b. females.
   c. whites under age twenty-one.
   d. whites who did not own property.
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   a. laws will be publicly debated.
   b. important public questions must be settled by direct vote of the people.
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   d. laws and procedures of government must be fair.

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   a. Write letters to elected representatives.
   b. Attend meetings to gain information and discuss issues.
   c. Vote in local, state, and national elections.
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   a. due process of law.
   b. freedom of religion.
   c. vote and hold public office
   d. trial by jury.

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   a. spoke against the government.
   b. disobeyed laws which they believed were unjust.
   c. refused to serve in the military.
   d. committed violent acts of protest.

25. Will you utilize mock trials as a teaching strategy
   a. often?
   b. sometimes?
   c. rarely?
   d. never?

26. Will you employ Socratic dialogue (questioning strategies that lead students into analysis of situations and into synthesis and evaluation of concepts) into classroom instruction
   a. often?
   b. sometimes?
   c. rarely?
   d. never?

27. Will you use a Simulated Congressional Hearing in your classroom instruction
   a. often?
   b. sometimes?
   c. rarely?
   d. never?

28. Will you implement cooperative learning (study partner or small group environment) in your classroom instruction
   a. often?
   b. sometimes?
   c. rarely?
   d. never?
29. Will you employ problem-solving as a teaching strategy
   a. often?
   b. sometimes?
   c. rarely?
   d. never?

30. Will you implement service learning in your classroom instruction
   a. often?
   b. sometimes?
   c. rarely?
   d. never?

31. Will you invite community research individuals into your classroom
   a. often?
   b. sometimes?
   c. rarely?
   d. never?

32. Will you incorporate Legislative Hearings (patterned after hearings held by committees of the US Congress to gather information upon which to base a recommendation) as a teaching strategy
   a. often?
   b. sometimes?
   c. rarely?
   d. never?

33. Will you use moot court (patterned on an appeals court or Supreme Court hearing) in your classroom instruction
   a. often?
   b. sometimes?
   c. rarely?
   d. never?

34. Will you include debates in your classroom instruction
   a. often?
   b. sometimes?
   c. rarely?
   d. never?

35. Will you use continuums (exercises in which participants are presented with a range of possible attitudes or approaches on a controversial issue) as a teaching strategy
   a. often?
   b. sometimes?
   c. rarely?
   d. never?

36. I will include Incorporating various news media sources (TV, newspaper, internet) within my teaching strategies
   a. often.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.
   d. never.
37. I will include gathering information on problems in the community or nation from government offices in teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights
   a. often.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.
   d. never.

38. I would rate my level of confidence in teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as
   a. low.
   b. moderate.
   c. high.

39. I would rate my level of enthusiasm for teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as
   a. low.
   b. moderate.
   c. high.

40. I would rate my motivation to teach the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as
   a. low.
   b. moderate.
   c. high.

41. I would rate my confidence level for incorporating various teaching strategies in teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as
   a. low.
   b. moderate.
   c. high.

42. I would rate my enthusiasm in using various teaching strategies to teach the Constitution and the Bill of Rights as
   a. low.
   b. moderate.
   c. high.

43. I have a positive attitude toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights
   a. always.
   b. sometimes.
   c. rarely.

Open Ended Questions:
Please complete the following questions:

44. How the Institute alter your knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights?

45. Describe how the Institute influenced your aptitude to implement varied teaching strategies?

46. How did the Institute change your dispositions (confidence, enthusiasm, etc.) toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights?

47. In your opinion, how will your effectiveness as a classroom teacher be impacted by what you have experienced in the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute?
APPENDIX D

VITAE
DONNA KAY PEARSON

Office: College of Education and Human Development
Home: 1022 8th Ave South
P. O. Box 7189  Education Bldg Room 101A
Grand Forks, ND  58202
Grand Forks, ND    58201
701-775-4704
701-777-2861
donna.pearson@und.nodak.edu

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Mississippi State University          (expected graduation May, 2006)
Mississippi State, Mississippi
Ph. D., Curriculum and Instruction
Emphases: Secondary Education, Social Studies

Mississippi State University          1999
Mississippi State, Mississippi
Education Specialist, Curriculum and Instruction
Emphases: Secondary Education, History

Mississippi State University          1995
Mississippi State, Mississippi
Master of Science, Curriculum and Instruction
Emphases: Secondary Education, History

Judson College             1982
Marion, Alabama
Bachelor of Science: Physical Education (major), Business (minor)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of North Dakota             August 2004 to present
Secondary Education (Social Studies) in the Department of Teaching & Learning

Mississippi State University          2003-2004
Research and Evaluation Coordinator: ACHIEVE, MS  Curriculum & Instruction
Grant Writing and Research, Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Site Visit Evaluation,
Student Teacher Supervision, and PBL Training for University faculty, K-12 teachers,
preservice teachers, staff development, and workshops.
Graduate Assistant: College of Education 2002-2003
Curriculum & Instruction Mississippi State University
Administrative Assistant, We The People…The Citizen and the Constitution, We The People…Project Citizen, Civitas: An International Civic Education Exchange Program, Youth E-Vote (Freedom’s Answer), Campaign to Promote Civic Education and the Mississippi We The People Summer Institute. Teaching Assistant, Undergraduate and Graduate Secondary Education and Education Foundations Courses.

Graduate Research Assistant: College of Education 2001-2002
Office of Field Based Instruction and Licensure Mississippi State University
Assistant Coordinator of the Clinical Instructor Program: Organize, Plan, and Direct Clinical Meetings for Clinical Instructors, Direct Orientation of Student Teachers in Clinical Program, Advise and assist Student Teachers in Clinical Program, Assist Instructor in Elementary Student Teacher Seminar, Research for the Office of Field Based Instructor and Licensure.

OTHER RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Educator: Quitman High School: Quitman, Mississippi 1997-2001
American History, Geography, Government, Psychology, and Sociology. Social Studies Chair, Student Council Advisor, and Tennis Coach

Educator: Alabama Southern Community College: Gilbertown, Alabama 2001
Western Civilization I and Western Civilization II.


Educator: Clark Academy: Pachuta, Mississippi 1985
Business, Computer Science, Basketball and Softball Coach

COURSES TAUGHT

Undergraduate
Spring 2006: Undergraduate
Curriculum Development & Instruction (22 students)
Methods and Materials-Social Studies (Elementary) (31 students)
Fall 2005: Undergraduate
Methods and Materials-Social Studies (Secondary) (12 students)
Methods and Materials-Social Studies (Elementary) (26 students)
Microteaching (12 students)

Summer 2005: Undergraduate
Methods and Materials-Social Studies (Secondary) (7 students)

Spring 2005: Undergraduate
Curriculum Development & Instruction (9 students)
Microteaching (16 students)

Fall 2004: Undergraduate
Methods and Materials-Social Studies (Secondary) (16 students)
Methods and Materials-Social Studies (Elementary) (31 students)

Advising
Undergraduate: 40

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

University
Student Relations Committee 2005-2006
Senate Intercollegiate Athletic Committee 2005-2006

Department & Program Area
Undergraduate Assessment Committee 2005-2006
Teaching & Learning Technology Committee 2005-2006
Teaching & Learning Alumni Committee 2005
Social Studies Search Committee 2004

Member of Faculty Appeals/Advisory Committee 2004, 2005

PUBLICATIONS

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

National


Regional


We The People Lesson Demonstration (Center for Civic Education) at Mentor Conference in Pasadena, California. (February, 2003). (Invited)

State


GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

American Councils for International Education (ACTR/AACELS). Teachers Training Teachers Program (3TP) held at the University of North Dakota. Grant Award: $38,400. 2005-2006.

Center for Civic Education: We the People: Project Citizen (PC). Funded by the United States Department of Education. Grant Award: $15,485. 2005-2006

Center for Civic Education: We The People… The Citizen and the Constitution Summer Institute (Western Region): Professional Development at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, California. ($100,000. unfunded due to Congressional Budget Cuts). 2004

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

National

National Council for the Social Studies Citizenship Vice-Chair of the Citizenship Select Subcommittee 2004, 2005

Center for Civic Education: Project Citizen Professional Development for Preservice Methods Instructors Steering Committee 2005-2006
Regional
Northern Rocky Mountain Education Research Association Executive Board
   North Dakota Representative 2004-2005

State
Mississippi Council for the Social Studies President-Elect 2004
Mississippi Council for the Social Studies Vice President 2003
Mississippi Council for the Social Studies Fall Conference Planning Committee 2002
We The People State Hearings (North Dakota) 2006
We The People State Hearings (Mississippi) 2002, 2003, 2004
Character Education Grant Reading 2002

Local
Standards-Based Teacher Education Project (STEP) 2003
Teacher Education Advisory Committee 2003, 2004
   (Graduate Student Representative)
Judge: Service Learning Project at Ocean Springs High School 2002
   (Meridian Area, Chapter 1230)

Current Professional Association
American Education Research Association 2002 to present
Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development 2003 to present
College and University Faculty Assembly (CUFA) 2002 to present
Mid-South Educational Research Association 2002 to 2004
Mississippi Council for the Social Studies 1998 to present
National Council for the Social Studies 2001 to present
North Dakota Council for the Social Studies 2004 to present
Northern Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association 2004 to present

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Alice T. Clark Mentoring Program August 2004 to May 2005
(University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota)

The Grantsmanship Center Institute February, 2004
(Florida Gulf Coast University, Ft. Myers, Florida)

R. Freeman Butts Institute on Civic Learning in Teacher Education May, 2003
(Indiana University, Indianapolis, Indiana)

Training of Trainers: Center for Civic Education February, 2002
(Los Angeles, California)

Mountains/Plains Regional Institute (Center for Civic Education) June, 2002
(Montana State University, Billings, Montana)

National Geographic Association Teacher Consultant Summer Institute June, 2000
(Mississippi State University, Starkville, Mississippi)

CONSULTANT ACTIVITIES

Center for Civic Education 2002 to present
Professional Development Training

HONORS/AWARDS

Phi Delta Kappa Outstanding Graduate Student 2003
(Mississippi State University Chapter)

Alpha Theta Chi 2001

Phi Delta Kappa 1999

APPENDIX E

MISSISSIPPI WE THE PEOPLE SUMMER INSTITUTE

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

170
The Impact of the MS WTP Summer Institute Upon the Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions of Social Studies Teachers

Interview Guide
MS We The People Summer Institute Follow-Up

Your participation is voluntary, and at any time you may choose not to answer a question or cease to participate. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact the We The People Summer Institute has upon the effectiveness of Social Studies teachers. Thank you for assisting in this research effort.

Code__________

Questions:
Mock Trials, Socratic Dialogue, Cooperative Learning, Problem-Solving, Service Learning, Community Research Individuals, Legislative Hearings, Moot Court, Debates, and Continuums.

1. Explain how the MS WTP Summer Institute has impacted your knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights?
   --Were there particular aspects of the institute that were of greater benefit to your knowledge acquisition, and if so how has it impacted your classroom instruction?

2. Have you used mock trials as a teaching strategy, and if so how has it impacted your classroom instruction? Explain.

3. Have you employed Socratic dialogue (questioning strategies that lead students into analysis of situations and into synthesis and evaluation of concepts), and if so how has it influenced your classroom instruction? Please elaborate.

4. Have you implemented cooperative learning (study partner or small group environment) into your classroom instruction and if so how has it impacted your classroom instruction? Explain.

5. Have you employed problem-solving as a teaching strategy, and if so how has it impacted your classroom instruction?
6. Have you implemented service learning into your classroom instruction, and if so explain how has it impacted your classroom instruction?

7. Have you invited community research individuals into your classroom, and if so how has it impacted your classroom instruction? What benefits have been realized from this activity?

8. Have you incorporated a simulated congressional hearing as a teaching strategy, and if so how has it impacted your classroom instruction?

9. Have you incorporated Legislative Hearings (patterned after hearings held by committees of the US Congress to gather information upon which to base a recommendation) as a teaching strategy, and if so how has it impacted your classroom instruction?

10. Have you used moot court (patterned on an appeals court or Supreme Court hearing) in your classroom instruction, and if so how has it impacted your classroom instruction?

11. Have you included debates in your classroom instruction, and if so, how has it impacted your classroom instruction?

12. Have you used continuums (exercises in which participants are presented with a range of possible attitudes or approaches on a controversial issue) as a teaching strategy, and if so how has it impacted your classroom instruction?

13. Have you included gathering information on problems in the community or nation from government offices in teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and if so how has it impacted your classroom instruction?

14. Describe what has been the best teaching strategy for implementation in your classroom? Why?

15. How has your level of confidence in teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights affected your classroom instruction, and describe the impact?

16. How has your level of enthusiasm for teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights affected your classroom instruction? Explain its benefits.

17. Describe how your confidence level for incorporating various teaching strategies in teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights influenced your classroom instruction?
18. Has your enthusiasm in using various teaching strategies to teach the Constitution and the Bill of Rights impacted your classroom instruction and if so, how?

19. How has your attitude toward teaching about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights changed, and if so how has it impacted your classroom instruction?

20. Describe how the Institute impacted your dispositions toward teaching the Constitution and the Bill of Rights?

21. Do you have any questions you wish to ask of me?
APPENDIX F

MISSISSIPPI WE THE PEOPLE SUMMER INSTITUTE

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL
The Impact of the MS WTP Summer Institute
Upon the Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions
of Social Studies Teachers
Observation of Participants
MS WTP Summer Institute
Follow-Up

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact the We The People Summer Institute has upon Social Studies teachers. Specifically, the information collected during this visit will be used to provide an evaluation of the implementation process in their classroom.

Classroom Setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Today’s date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Elementary, Middle or High School Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Academic subject observed:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The arrangement of the classroom observed is best described as: (row, circle, clusters, lines, tables; placement of resource materials and technology). Draw diagram.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Degree of Competence (knowledge)

6. Teaching Strategies

7. Attitudes/Dispositions (enthusiasm, confidence, etc.)
Activities of the teacher will be described as they are happening.