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Perspectives of Teacher Education Graduates About Their Cooperating Teachers
During Preservice Placements

A dissertation

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership

and Policy Analysis

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

by

Patricia Dawn Miller Taylor

December 2004

Dr. Louise MacKay, Chair

Dr. Elizabeth Ralston

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Dr. Russell West

Key terms: Cooperating Teacher, Preservice Teacher, Reflective Practice,
Concern for Diversity, Collaboration, Social Responsibility

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine perspectives of teacher education graduates about their cooperating teachers during preservice placements.

Discovering how graduates of a teacher education program perceived their cooperating teachers with regard to the attributes of leadership, diversity, collaborating, reflecting (and thinking critically), remaining a learner for life, caring, and teaching about social responsibility provided insight into what was needed in the future to aid the cooperating teacher in helping the preservice teacher begin the lifelong journey toward effective teaching and teacher leadership. This discovery also led to identifying not only the needs that existed for the preservice teachers but also for the cooperating teachers and recommendations for ways in which these needs may be met by the College of Education. This information may lead to stronger cooperating teacher/preservice teacher relationships and to stronger relations between the cooperating teachers and the College of Education.

The major finding of this study was the high, positive responses that preservice teachers gave to the evaluation of their cooperating teachers. The entire group of preservice teachers and all subgroups of these indicated that they perceived their cooperating teachers positively.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beautiful children, Dustin, Brad, and Rae- who made our “Fab-Four” *fab*-- and our “Awesome-Foursome” *awesome*. Thank you for the unbelievable privilege of being your sorely undeserving, yet ever-grateful mother. Perhaps Harrison (1970) said it best: “Tell me what is my life, without your love. Tell me who am I without you by my side.” You are my gifts. I love you through all enduring time.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my wonderful, adored, and brilliant husband, Dr. John M. Taylor III, who told me to complete this project- *so I did!* *Since time began* and forever, John, you are my soul mate and my eternal love. Thank you for always encouraging me- by your own example- to be all I can be, and to stand for what is right and just and good. Thank you for the happiness we share every day, no matter where we are, no matter what we do. Like Adam said of Eve in Twain’s *The Diary of Adam and Eve*, ‘wheresoever you are, there is Eden.’

“Truth is reality. That which is false is unreal. The more clearly we see the reality of the world, the better equipped we are to deal with the world. The less clearly we see the reality of the world- the more our minds are befuddled by falsehood, misperceptions and illusions- the less able we will be to determine correct courses of action and make wise decisions.”

-M. Scott Peck (The Road Less Traveled, 1978)

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Posner (1993) stated, “Probably the greatest influence on the quality of a field experience particularly for the student teacher is the cooperating teacher” (p. 95). Bennett, Meyer, and Meyer (1994) described field experience as an experience that “will provide the students with the opportunity to apply the information acquired in the college classroom to an actual classroom situation” (p. 10). Pellett, Strayve, and Pellett (1999) suggested that paramount to the success of the student teacher are the attitudes and actions of the cooperating teacher. About the importance of the cooperating teacher–preservice teacher relationship Pellett et al. said, “The cooperating teacher is the most influential person in the student teaching process” and must help the preservice teacher “develop the necessary skills, strategies and methods for effective teaching” (p.1).

To better understand the importance of this role, it is appropriate to make a comparison between the powerful role of a parent in a child’s life and the role of the cooperating teacher in the life of the student teacher or preservice teacher. In this way the cooperating teacher, much like the parent of the child, is the one who is entrusted to create a place where the preservice teacher not only feels welcome

and safe but also compelled to learn, experience, and grow- a place the student teacher may regard as home.

The cooperating teacher is many times referred to as the mentor teacher. What does it mean to be a mentor? Daloz (1999) referred to the mentor as a “map for her student” (p. 226). Although Rowley’s (1999) work discussed the mentor relationship with a first-year teacher, his information about the duties and characteristics of what he referred to as a good mentor certainly apply to the cooperating teacher’s relationship with the preservice teacher. Rowley said a mentor is an individual devoted to the success of the learner and dedicated to investing the time it takes for the learner to achieve success. According to Rowley, the best mentors see the beginners not as incapable when things do not turn out right every time (realizing that all beginning teachers are not created equal and do not all fit the same mold). Rather, they recognize the beginners as in the process of learning to be teachers.

To foster commonalities between the veteran teacher and the new teacher Rowley (1999) said the mentor must be a proficient practitioner who shares personal and professional experiences and who not only observes the preservice teacher, but who serves as a model and allows himself or herself to be observed while teaching and carrying out teaching duties. Additionally, Rowley said that it is the mentor who furnishes a variety of ways for the beginner teacher to succeed at

instruction. Perhaps the most important point made by Rowley was that the mentor is a guide who is excited about remaining in the ongoing state of learning.

Another way to look at mentoring is that which Acheson and Gall (1997) referred to as clinical supervision. The term clinical supervisor should not be limited to the university supervisor who works with the cooperating teacher and the preservice teacher but may also be given to the cooperating teacher or mentor because “the primary goal of clinical supervision is the professional development of the preservice or inservice teacher” (p. 3). Clinical supervision is different from the traditional idea of supervision in that clinical supervision encourages the collaboration of the preservice teacher or inservice teacher and the person in the supervisory role. Clinical supervision requires that those involved work “side by side” in a relationship “where both participants look at factual information, analyze, interpret, and make decisions as colleagues rather than adversaries” (p. 9).

Having defined what a mentor is, are there actual benefits to be gained by the cooperating teacher who does the mentoring? According to Boreen, Johnson, Niday, and Potts (2000) those who mentor learn from the preservice teachers just as the preservice teachers are learning from their mentors. Having a preservice teacher in the classroom should offer help and assistance (a luxury all too unfamiliar to the classroom teacher) to the mentor and may even allow time for the mentor and/or the cooperating teacher to work toward projects for unmet student

needs. Maybe most important is that those mentors who help the preservice teacher-cooperating teacher relationships build and evolve from “mutual respect and trust”, are rewarded with “some of their richest collegial interactions” (p. 3). Portner (2001) referred to the “power in ... collaboration” between those who mentor and those who are mentored and said that those who take part in this process also take part in vision (pg. 46).

What should the preservice teacher expect from the cooperating teacher- this one who has been selected to be his or her mentor? Fairbanks, Freedman, and Kahn (2000) suggested in their study about effective mentoring that cooperating teachers are to aid in the survival of the preservice teacher’s initial “teaching experiences,” to help the preservice teachers “define their teaching lives,” to help build “relationships based upon dialogue and reflection, and to develop “professional partnerships” (p. 104). One of the things Fairbanks et al. discussed that was done to ensure the making of these ideas a reality included caring, cooperating teachers’ taking ample time to help the preservice teacher feel like and actually become a professional part of the classroom and the school community. Other things included cooperating teachers giving the preservice teachers spaces of their own in which to work, introducing the preservice teachers to administrators and other faculty members, making clear the policies of the schools, and offering help in the implementation of these policies. Effective cooperating teachers also

engaged in conversations with the preservice teachers and reflections about the work, the goals, and the successes and concerns of both the cooperating teachers and the preservice teachers.

Stallworth (1998) noted other expectations and particular things needed by the preservice teacher. These included new strategies for teaching and managing the classroom, “samples of successful lesson plans and time to practice them; time to share resources and personal stories..., time to read about... issues that directly affect their teaching and learning ..., time to reflect, and opportunities to reinvent” (p.78).

The 1995 East Tennessee State University College of Education Volume 1 Institutional Report listed 10 dimensions or areas of teacher education in its conceptual framework entitled, *Educating Leaders for the 21st Century*. The 10 dimensions include three areas of knowledge in which teacher-education students should gain preparation. These areas are general education knowledge (comprised of the basic college courses taken by students throughout all colleges of the university), content knowledge (comprised of coursework that teaches about “central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures” of those subjects that will be taught to students as well as ways to make “the subject matter meaningful for all students” p. 13), and professional knowledge (consisting of coursework that teaches about such things as planning for instruction, implementing instructional

strategies, student development, maintaining an appropriate environment for learning, and understanding and using a variety of ways to evaluate and assess student learning p. 15). Six other dimensions in the conceptual framework deemed essential for educational leaders are “concern for diversity, collaboration, reflective practice, lifelong learning, caring, and critical thinking” (p. 7). These six dimensions along with the three areas of knowledge are all a part, then, of a larger area or dimension of teaching, the tenth dimension of the conceptual framework, referred to as leadership.

According to the College of Education minutes of the meeting for faculty members of August 21, 2002, the faculty agreed (by way of an earlier vote) on the following revisions to the dimensions of the College of Education Conceptual Framework. The dimensions were revised to include the following areas:

Dimension 1: General Knowledge, Dimension 2: Content Knowledge, Dimension 3: Professional Knowledge, Dimension 4: Diversity, Dimension 5: Collaboration, Dimension 6: Reflective Practice, Dimension 7: Lifelong Learning, Dimension 8: Caring, Dimension 9: Social Responsibility, and Dimension 10: Leadership. The dimension of critical thinking that was included in the 1995 College of Education Conceptual Framework was omitted in the 2002 revision. The concept of critical thinking, however, remained present in Dimension 6 in the following manner:

The dimension of Reflective Practice states, “Teacher education graduates are reflective practitioners who continually seek to raise questions, to critically analyze the effects of their own practice on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community), and to develop creative solutions to educational dilemmas and concerns.” The final revision was the addition (to the dimensions) of social responsibility. This dimension states, “Teacher education graduates demonstrate a commitment to active, ethical involvement in the school, community, and profession. They are committed to developing opportunities for learners to engage in socially responsible behaviors” (minutes of the meeting, August 21, 2002).

Given that the dimensions of leadership, concern for diversity, collaboration, reflective practice, lifelong learning, caring, critical thinking, and social responsibility are of the utmost importance for candidates in the teacher education program, so must they be for the cooperating teachers who are chosen to be the guides for the preservice teachers. These qualities or characteristics suggest that a cooperating teacher, that is, the one who mentors, must do much more than simply invite the preservice teacher into the classroom. Rather, the cooperating teacher must be an exemplary leader who fosters leadership in others. Giebelhous and Bowman (2002) iterated the idea that while those mentoring preservice teachers may be open to the idea of mentoring, it is imperative that they know how to

mentor effectively. The authors noted that the mentoring a preservice teacher receives is crucial and that while numerous models exist for mentoring those teachers just beginning to teach full time, few exist for mentoring preservice teachers.

Knowing how graduates of a teacher education program perceive their cooperating teachers with regard to these attributes of leadership, diversity, collaborating, reflecting, remaining a learner for life, caring, thinking critically, and teaching about social responsibility may provide insight regarding what is needed in the future to aid the cooperating teacher in helping the preservice teacher begin the lifelong journey toward effective teaching and teacher leadership. This information may also establish needs that may be met by the College of Education that will lead to stronger cooperating teacher/preservice teacher relationships as well as stronger relations between the cooperating teachers and the College of Education and performance assessment regarding the identified dimensions.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study was to determine the perceptions that preservice teachers have about their cooperating teachers and whether the dimensions of leadership, including concern for diversity, collaboration, reflective practice,

critical thinking, lifelong learning, social responsibility, caring, and other areas of leadership were being exhibited by the cooperating teachers.

Significance of the Study

Because student teaching is such a significant time in the lives of preservice teachers, it is imperative that cooperating teachers send appropriate messages to preservice teachers about the critical aspects of the teaching profession and about the work of the preservice teacher during student teaching placements. The significance of this study was to determine the perceptions of preservice teachers regarding their cooperating teachers' attitudes and behaviors. It was significant as well to discover if the leadership qualities of concern for diversity, collaboration, reflective practice, critical thinking, lifelong learning, social responsibility, and caring, espoused by the College of Education at East Tennessee State University were perceived by the preservice teachers in their cooperating teachers. This led to identifying needs that existed for both the preservice teachers and the cooperating teachers and recommendations for ways in which these needs may be met.

Research Questions

Five general research questions were developed to give focus to the data collection and data analysis phases of the study. In answering all five research questions descriptive statistics were used. The five research questions follow.

1. What are the characteristics of the preservice teachers who responded and how did they rate the quality of their preservice (student teaching) experience?
2. To what extent are the 10 dimensions represented in the East Tennessee State University College of Education Conceptual Framework being taught and modeled by cooperating teachers?
3. Are there differences in the evaluations of the preservice teaching experience based on type of program (Bachelor's degree students versus Master of Arts in Teaching [MAT])?
4. Are there differences in the evaluations of the preservice teaching experience based on area of licensure?
5. Are there differences in the evaluations of the preservice teaching experience based on the major area of study?

Assumptions

Relevant to this study, the following assumptions were made:

1. The previously collected data were obtained via a reliable instrument.
2. Participants were honest regarding answers and comments.
3. Participants understood the survey questions.
4. Participants were accurate in recalling their experiences with their mentor teachers.
5. Participants completed the survey only once.

Delimitations

The following delimitations were pertinent to the study:

1. The study was limited to the May 2002, December 2002, and May 2003 graduating student teachers of East Tennessee State University College of Education.
2. The data in this study were limited to the results of one 34-item survey per graduating class.

Limitations

This study and the results thereof were limited as follows:

1. One hundred twenty-two usable surveys were received from preservice teachers.
2. Eighty-eight surveys were received from undergraduate preservice teachers, and 34 surveys were received from Masters of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers.
3. Surveys received from preservice teachers organized into areas of licensure included 17 preKindergarten-3 preservice teachers, 60 Kindergarten-8 preservice teachers, 4 grades 1-8 preservice teachers, 20 grades 7-12 preservice teachers, and 21 Kindergarten-12 preservice teachers.
4. Surveys of preservice teachers organized into major areas of study included 61 Elementary Education majors, 24 Secondary Education majors, 7 Special Education majors, 19 Early Childhood majors, 4 Physical Education majors, 3 Art Education majors, 3 Music Education majors, and 1 who indicated the major as other.

Definitions of Terms

Caring

“A deep relationship between people based on mutuality, respect, relatedness, receptivity, and trust” (Sirotnik, 1990, p. 302).

Collaboration

“As a theory and a practice, collaboration implies joint effort, shared goals, collective responsibility, and commonly held social values” (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 148).

Concern for Diversity

“To increase understanding and appreciation for the ways in which diversity has shaped American culture, social thought, social institutions, and intergroup relations” (McFalls & Cobb-Roberts, 2001, p. 164).

Cooperating teacher

“A classroom teacher who supervises preservice intern or practice teacher” (Acheson & Gall, 1987, p. 25).

Critical Thinking

“Critical thinking is best understood as the ability of thinkers to take charge of their own thinking. This requires that they develop sound criteria and standards for

analyzing and assessing their own thinking and routinely use those criteria and standards to improve its quality” (Elder & Paul, 1994, pp. 34-35).

Diversity

“Race, ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, language, and exceptionality are categories that include all groups and individuals” (McFalls & Cobb-Roberts, 2001, p. 164).

Leadership

“In the broadest sense leadership is the process of influencing the behaviors of others to accomplish a set of prescribed objectives” (East Tennessee State University College of Education Volume I Institutional report for the national council for the accreditation of teacher education and the Tennessee state department of education, 1995, p. 7).

Lifelong learning

“Lifelong learning is the process by which individuals continue to develop their knowledge, skills, and attitudes over their lifetimes” (East Tennessee State University College of Education Volume 1 Institutional report for the national council for the accreditation of teacher education and the Tennessee State Department of Education, 1995, p. 22).

Mentor

“A wise, loyal advisor ... a teacher or coach” (*Webster’s New World College Dictionary 4th ed.*, 1999, p. 900).

Preservice teacher

“A student teacher is a teacher education student performing the role of a classroom teacher under the supervision of a supervising (cooperating) teacher and the college supervisor” (Garland, 1980, p. 4).

Reflection

“Reflection as a means for learning is on reflection as a process in which preservice and inservice teachers must engage in order to learn from their experiences” (LaBoskey, 1994, p. 6).

Social Responsibility

“A personal investment in the well-being of others and of the planet” (Berman, 1992, from <http://www.miamigreens.org/Youth-StudentExcerptsEducation.shtm>).

Procedures

Previously collected data were used in this study. The data were collected by the student teaching office at East Tennessee State University during the late spring (first mailing June 6, 2002) and mid summer of 2002 (latest return date, July 28, 2002) following graduation of May 2002. Data were also collected during the early summer (first mailing June 24, 2003) and mid summer of 2003 (latest return date, October 1, 2003) following the graduation dates of December 2002 and May 2003.

Data regarding the preservice teachers' experiences with their cooperating teachers were collected via a mailed survey from those preservice teachers who graduated in May 2002. Before being mailed to May 2002 graduates, the survey was given to a small pilot group of teachers. No revisions were made following the survey pilot.

A revised survey (changes in the College of Education dimensions as reflected in question 28) was mailed to those preservice teachers who graduated in December 2002 and in May 2003. The vocabulary was also altered slightly in these surveys in the following manner. Items using the words "cooperating (mentor) teacher" were changed to items using the word "mentor" only. Item 4 was shortened from the following: "My cooperating (mentor) teacher addressed me as a

professional (Mr./Mrs./Ms.) in the presence of the students and colleagues and had prepared others to regard me as a professional” to “My mentor treated me professionally.” In item 5 the word “exhibit” was changed to “demonstrate.” In item 9, the word “discussed” was eliminated and replaced by “helped me understand.” In item 10 the words, “as a preservice teacher” were added at the end of the sentence. Item 13 was altered by the elimination of the words, “shared ways that I could” and the addition of “encouraged me to.” In item 14 the words, “learn about” were changed to “employ.” The words, “advocated becoming a lifelong learner” were changed to “modeled lifelong learning.” The Likert-type surveys consisted of 34 items and included an additional section for written comments.

Organization of the Study

The balance of this study consists of four chapters: Chapter 2 is a review of relevant literature; Chapter 3 is a description of the methodology behind the study; Chapter 4 offers a presentation (as suggested by the data) of the findings of the study; and Chapter 5 summarizes the study and provides conclusions and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Capra (1996) related Lorenz's 1960s supposition of the butterfly effect that stated that even the smallest action might lead to huge results over a period of time and over a variety of places. Keeping this thought in mind, it is imperative that those teachers who are assigned to work with preservice teachers during their preservice or student teaching placements do an excellent job mentoring them because the actions that take place during the preservice placements have the possibility of affecting a great number of people in the years that follow.

Years earlier, Dewey (1938) discussed this same idea when he warned about the dangers of what he referred to as a "miseducative experience" that could cause the injuring or halting of future growth. At the opposite end of the spectrum from the miseducative experience then is the educative experience. Feiman-Nemser (2001) used the term educative to describe appropriate mentoring and said, "Educative mentoring rests on that explicit vision of good teaching and an understanding of teacher learning" (p. 17). Feiman-Nemser continued that the educative mentor is one who will "attend to beginning teachers' present concerns, questions, and purposes without losing sight of long-term goals for teacher development" (p. 17). The preservice teacher must be correctly educated in the

process of teaching and must be assisted by the cooperating teacher in all ways imaginable because what he or she is learning to do may be the preparation for the most noble of all professions. It is imperative that cooperating teachers understand that first and foremost they have a duty to help preservice teachers learn what it means to be a teacher (Shantz & Ward, 2000).

Cooperating Teachers

It may be said that the student teaching experience, that is the preservice teaching experience, is the crowning achievement of the preservice teacher. Wittenburg and McBride (1998) said that along with the excitement of challenge the preservice teacher realizes during the student teaching or preservice placement, he or she also experiences great anxiety and stress during this time. If this is the case, the preservice teachers need to be assigned to individuals who can exhibit the greatest kind of support and nurturing. As important as professors of teacher education have been to them, and as important as university supervisors will be, it can be said that the cooperating teacher's influence will have the most importance in the life of the student teacher or preservice teacher during the preservice placement and long after the placement has ended (Osunde, 1996). Truly then, the cooperating teacher must be up to the job of teaching the student teacher the ins

and out of teaching while at the same time being aware of the issue of sensitivity regarding the student or preservice teacher.

Who should be a teacher? Who should mentor those who plan to teach? What attributes were demonstrated by those teachers we recall as being good teachers? Posner (1993) said that all teachers share particular characteristics: (1) teachers must teach, (2) teachers must have an audience to teach, (3) teachers must relay information, and (4) teachers must teach according to their particular situations. Although these factors are certainly necessary for teachers and teaching, Posner suggested a teacher does more and *is* more than these four characteristics alone imply.

Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, and Whalen (1993) said those who teach should not only inform but also bring excitement to the learning process. Fullan (1993a) wrote that teachers must be effective change agents. Weist (1999) described teachers as those who take very seriously the modeling of those behaviors they want their students to emulate. As an example, former President Jimmy Carter (1999) referred to Miss Julia Coleman as his favorite teacher because she believed in the children's ability to be more than they thought possible. Fondly, Carter remembered Miss Julia's exposing the class to art, literature, and music and always having high expectations for students in every area of learning and doing.

Griffin (1999) said that those remembered as being influential teachers are the ones who always seemed to care about how students were and how they were doing; those individuals who were able to add humor to the day; teachers who approved of students and acknowledged their value; and those who consistently reminded students to aim for and work hard to reach the stars. If these attributes are indeed ones found to be some of those most remembered and most influential, then surely those who are selected to guide and mentor preservice teachers should possess such attributes as well as other qualities that make them the best teachers possible.

The flipside of this coin is that memories are also made as the result of negative associations with an educator and an experience. There are those teachers who are, also, influential but in ways that sadly sour the teaching profession for the preservice teacher. Taylor (Personal communication, 2002) related how he remembered his cooperating teacher's interrupting his attempt to answer a student's question about the difference between a partnership and a corporation in a high school economics class by saying, "Mr. Taylor, you are making this far too difficult. The only difference is that in a partnership the income is shared equally and in a corporation it isn't." This same mentor "corrected" (actually substituted his dialect for Taylor's) Taylor's pronunciation of a word in front of his classroom students as well. While corrections are necessary and appropriate, the incorrect

timing of such a statement coupled with a negative attitude as well may permanently damage the formation of the cooperating teacher-preservice teacher relationship. Although Taylor remained dedicated to teaching throughout the years, experiences such as these have been known to cause others to make the decision to leave the teaching profession far behind once the preservice placement period has ended.

As time consuming and difficult as the job may be, there are rewards for those who mentor preservice teachers. Smith (1998) said those who seriously take on the job of mentoring preservice teachers conclude that all those involved in the process end up victorious. “Cooperating teachers in our study,” said Woods and Weasmer (2003) “identified...outcomes they hoped their student teachers would gain beyond elemental expectations. The most common...are...serving as a role model, understanding and caring about students, developing a love of teaching, establishing a positive rapport with parents, demonstrating professionalism, (and) becoming adaptable” (p.4). Boreen et al. (2000) said that mentoring preservice teachers offers a way to continue that which is good for students as well as providing an avenue to replay the wonderful experience the cooperating teacher received once upon a time from and with his or her own cooperating teacher. Murray (2001) wrote that those who are asked to mentor often have been spoken of as teachers who are “respected, admired, and noticed ...” (p. 60). Along with this

earned respect, Murray also suggested that mentors can receive a sense of renewal from these learners who are a new source of inspiration for them.

Smith (1998) maintained there is much to be gained from agreeing to be a cooperating teacher. According to Smith, the critical thinking involved in preparing for the duties of being a cooperating teacher and being able to share in what the preservice teacher will bring to the student teaching experience can only lead to the betterment of the cooperating teacher's own teaching. Smith said this in turn leads to the preservice teacher's receiving expert guidance while he or she is putting into play what has been studied while in the teacher education program. This collaborative effort, according to Smith, leads to the success of the students who are members of the class during the preservice placement.

As beginners, preservice teachers have specific needs. Goodlad (1990) reported that student teachers appreciate care and support. Wittenburg and McBride (1998) iterated this when they discussed the need and appreciation for an environment that cherishes those who are learning to teach. Ediger (1994) reconfirmed this idea when he described cooperating teachers as those who care and who help preservice teachers to grow, to evolve, and to accomplish. Because great needs exist for preservice teachers, effective cooperating teachers understand that making assumptions about what the student teachers should know or might

have learned in their teacher education programs can be unacceptable and even harmful behavior for those in the cooperating teacher's role.

Goodlad (1990) listed the following factors as important to student teachers in various levels of placements: (1) coursework and projects relevant to student teaching, (2) student teaching experiences (these were ranked much higher than earlier foundations work), (3) the need to gain more information regarding classroom management prior to student teaching, (4) too much attention paid to a classroom lesson and not enough attention given to learning about other important teaching duties, (5) not enough student teaching time, (6) lack of field experiences or lack of relevance in field experiences in relation to what was previously taught, and (7) more talk about inquiry learning than actual experimentation of such.

Darden, Darden, Scott, and Westfall (2001) stated that cooperating teachers must take care of eight areas to help the preservice teacher succeed. The eight areas listed are (1) "teach the routine, (2) encourage communication, (3) assign responsibilities, (4) model effective teaching behaviors, (5) welcome new ideas and feedback, (6) organize together, (7) remember the mission, and (8) keep it professional" (p. 51). With regard to the customs of the school day, Darden et al. suggested that because of time conflicts regarding preservice teacher's school schedules and schools of placement schedules, many preservice teachers may miss out on the first days of the placement experience. When this happens they often do

not learn about rules that are necessary for preservice teachers to know with regard to what is expected of them as teachers (and of the students they will encounter) in order for them to behave and react prudently during preservice teaching. It is imperative as well that preservice teachers know about the “culture of their school... (and) the written and unwritten rules of the workplace” (p. 51).

Darden et al. (2001) also maintained that cooperating teachers must keep the lines of communication open and make sure that preservice teachers know they are welcome to approach them with questions and needs and feel secure that responses and genuine help will be given in a timely manner. A preservice teacher must have a mentor, a cooperating teacher, who will investigate the reasoning involved in decisions made by the preservice teacher and will effectively communicate feedback with regard to both positive messages and messages concerning improvement. Pellet et al. (1999) pointed out that in this way ineffectual actions can be weeded out of the beginner’s teaching repertoire in a professional manner. Relative to this is the point that Darden et al. made that not only are cooperating teachers expected to give feedback but to be accepting and even more so be courteous and grateful for the feedback and new information they receive from the preservice teachers.

Good cooperating teachers want and welcome the opportunities to work with the preservice teachers in both structured and non-structured settings as learning

takes place in both. Effective communication is vital in delegating duties, making clear what those duties entail, and aiding the preservice teacher to learn to reflect about his or her own work and to critically evaluate that work. Good communication needs to prevail between the cooperating teacher and the preservice teacher as with the university supervisor who will work with both of these individuals.

Bruner (1960) touched on perhaps the key element of communication when he related the following about the necessity of the communicator to possess knowledge about something in order for communication to others to take place:

There is a beautiful story about a distinguished college teacher of physics. He reports introducing an advanced class to the quantum theory: 'I went through it once and looked up only to find the class full of blank faces- they had obviously not understood. I went through it a second time and they still did not understand it. And so I went through it a third time, and that time *I* understood it' (p. 89).

Darden et al. (2001) iterated the age-old idea that we learn how to behave by watching and emulating others. "Beginning teachers will tend to integrate a model's practices with their own as they seek to establish their teaching style" (p. 51). It is essential then that cooperating teachers exhibit practices that both apply to situations and that are expedient. No allowances or excuses should be made for being a poor role model for those learning how to teach. While not everything that should be taught or modeled to the preservice teacher can be done in the short amount of time he or she has during the student teaching experience, what can be

learned is not only the “dynamic process of effective instruction” but also the appropriate way “to represent and promote the profession” (p. 52). Pellet et al. (1999) agreed with this as they said, “Cooperating teachers should keep three basic principles in mind: modeling, providing appropriate practice and feedback. Clearly, student teachers need to see many demonstrations of different effective teaching behaviors before hoping to replicate them on their own” (p. 50).

Darden et al. (2001) reminded us that promoting the profession appropriately also means the cooperating teacher must maintain the attitude of a professional and thereby stressed the importance of demonstrating professionalism at all times while avoiding the dangers inherent in becoming a buddy to the preservice teacher. This Darden et al. said is best avoided by the cooperating teacher who does not allow himself or herself to become so personally involved with the preservice teacher that he or she allows the formation of a relationship that devalues consideration for those duties and procedures that are key to the development of a good teacher and to the maintenance of the nobility of the teaching profession. Danielewicz (2001) agreed with this idea in stating that “Teaching is a moral act” (p. 194). Danielewicz continued, “ A teacher education program should recognize, celebrate, and honor the intentions of prospective teachers who so often feel committed to improving the lives of others, alleviating social inequalities, and eradicating discrimination.

We (as teachers motivated by social conscience), must demonstrate visibly that we share similar convictions about the importance of values” (p. 194).

Having said this, is there nothing to relate about the duties of those who are being mentored? Portner (2002) said there is much required of the individuals who are being mentored as well as from those who are doing the mentoring. Portner continued that mentoring can only occur when both the mentor and the person being mentored are involved in a “working relationship” (p. 5). Portner suggested the following comprise a successful mentoring relationship: (1) “participate” (includes “earning and keeping the trust of the mentor”) (p.5-7), (2) “take responsibility” (this involves being “proactive” in the learning process) (p. 13-14), (3) “observe” (p. 21) (learning to observe and learning how to learn from observing, (4) “ask” (understanding that asking is a “responsibility and a right” and understanding that others have the “right to deny”) (p. 26-32), (5) chart (a) course (including “planning and setting priorities”) (p. 33-36), (6) “network” (p. 41) (this involves keeping contact with others who are being mentored), (7) “take informed risks” (p. 45) (in order to increase learning experiences), (8) reflect (“monitor professional growth”) (p. 51), and (9) “give back” (p. 58) (this involves sharing the knowledge, excitement, and enthusiasm that new teachers have).

Conceptual Framework for Teacher Education at East Tennessee State University

The 1995 East Tennessee State University College of Education Volume 1 Institutional Report for the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Tennessee State Department of Education, *Educating Leaders for the 21st Century* states, “The mission of the College of Education at East Tennessee State University is to prepare knowledgeable, competent, ethical, and caring educators who are committed to excellence in their professional pursuits” (p. 5). The conceptual framework *Educating Leaders for the 21st Century* is a plan that builds on the idea of teacher leadership. About leadership, the conceptual framework states, “Teacher education graduates possess the personal and professional qualities that enable them to take a leadership role and work constructively within schools and agencies to create learning communities that foster the growth and development of all learners” (p. 9).

Within this realm of leadership are attributes found in a leader – concern for diversity, collaboration, reflective practice, lifelong learning, caring, critical thinking, and social responsibility as well as leadership itself. Osunde (1996) said the time preservice teachers spend with their cooperating teachers is a substantial number of hours and many more than the number of hours spent in other concentrated areas of their teacher education programs. Therefore, it seems that as

important as it is for preservice teachers (as teacher education students) to have had these characteristics fostered by professors and instructors during their teacher education program, it is even more imperative that cooperating teachers foster these ideas and model such behaviors that exhibit these areas of teacher leadership in order for beginning teachers to desire to strive to become leaders in education themselves. According to the East Tennessee State University College of Education Conceptual Framework, leadership is not limited to the classroom and the school but extends into more global areas as well.

Regarding Leadership and the Importance of the Attributes of Teacher Leadership

Luckowski (1997) asserted that teachers have a moral obligation to model exemplary behaviors and attitudes for their students. Continuing, Luckowski said that as this moral obligation extends to helping all students become all they can be; it reaches out not only to students but to others in the school community and in the larger community as well. In this way teacher leadership moves far beyond the walls and grounds of the school. Kahne and Westheimer (2000) discussed the need for extending teacher leadership when they said that teachers are to be prepared to teach in the places to which they will be assigned and to those they will build.

Whitaker (1995) said, “About the only constant in education is change” (p. 357). According to Whitaker the best way for schools to work with this change is to recognize the importance of teacher leadership. Whitaker related that Burr, a high school principal, referred to teacher leaders as those informal leaders (not necessarily known to already possess a leadership degree or hold a formal leadership position) as the “superstars” essential for the evolution that takes place within a school. Wilson (1993) related that others see teacher leaders as those who are unafraid of change, helpful to students and colleagues, creative, motivating, and willing to give of their time and energy for the growth and betterment of their schools. Carr (1997) referred to these types of teachers as “collegial leaders” and said that these individuals are excited by accepting and offering challenges. They are the ones, Carr said, who support the desire for growth in coworkers and who reach out to other areas of leadership besides those called for within the school environment. These teacher leaders sense what is needed and seek resources to fulfill the needs within the school and outer communities. Students succeed and schools flourish where these people plan and work. Carr’s descriptions of these leader types suggest they are indispensable and irreplaceable if lost. Hinchey (1997) went so far to say that if teaching is ever to be accepted on the level it should be and if improvements and advancements are to be made in education, it

will be because teachers (like the ones mentioned above) assume the role of leaders.

Smylie, Bay, and Tozer (1999) said that more and more teachers are “expected to assume leadership of school reform” (p. 29). Smylie et al. said that this move toward leadership is an outgrowth of the idea that for a long, long time teachers have been seen as change agents, whether or not the avenues for change were made clear or even available to them. The leadership role connected with change is not limited to change within the school but includes change within students and change that takes place socially and culturally throughout a lifetime. Fullan (1993b) described change agency as the avenues for accomplishing what morally must be done for all of our students. Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hail (1987) commented that they preferred the term change facilitator to change agent in that “facilitators support, help, assist, and nurture ... encourage, persuade, or push people to change ... to adopt an innovation and use it in their daily schooling work” (p. 3). De Pree (1989) said, “The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between the two, the leader must become a servant and a debtor. That sums up the progress of an artful leader” (p. 11). Surely De Pree’s description fits that of a teacher leader.

Concern for Diversity

The word moral is defined as “principles, standards or habits with respect to right or wrong in conduct; ethics” (Webster, 1999, p. 936). Goodlad (1997) said it is not necessary and does not make sense to use the word moral as a descriptor for a type of education as “education is unavoidably a moral endeavor” (p. 12). In other words, education is inherently moral and concerned with values. If this is the case, all educators surely have a moral obligation to educate to the best of their ability the wide variety of students found in classrooms and to meet (or to the best of their ability try to meet) the wide variety of needs the students bring to the classroom with them.

Harris and Pickle (1992) related that all children in all schools must find places where they are individually appreciated and held in the highest regard. They stressed that children must experience fairness from the teachers they encounter. In their study regarding gender issues, Harris and Pickle found that those environments that fostered the nurturing of impartiality included the following: (1) the valuing and appreciating of each person; (2) the encouragement and celebration of friendship, cooperation, and speechmaking; (3) the encouragement to try new things and make decisions; and (4) the active and constructive challenging of those ideas and language that stereotype people (p. 16). Wiseman, Cooner, and Knight

(1999) labeled those teachers good who foster places of understanding and tolerance as well as success in learning and social development.

Posner (1993) reminded us that issues regarding diversity and tolerance are more easily discussed than addressed because teachers are involved with many more responsibilities and that this situation in itself creates a set of complicated variables with which to deal. There is also the reality that preservice teachers enter the realm of student teaching with their own backgrounds and ideas about diversity issues. Gallego (2001) referred to the preservice teacher's background as his or her own "lived experience" (p. 313). Feiman-Nemser and Buchman (1985) also discussed the impact of what preservice teachers bring to the preservice teaching experience with regard to what the preservice teacher takes away from the experience. Wiseman et al. (1999) also warned about the dangers of teachers who enter the school with preconceived ideas or beliefs about the various issues of diversity including gender, income/social status, fairness, race/ethnicity, disabilities, ability levels, and varied cultural backgrounds.

Surely the arguments of Villegas and Lucas (2002) about needed reform in teacher education regarding the preparation of culturally responsive teachers are particularly appropriate for those educators who will mentor the preservice teachers. Villegas and Lucas advised looking beyond one's own cultural identity to see how the identities of others impact their thinking, attitudes, and behavior

stating, “The more challenging tasks will be to motivate teacher candidates to inspect their own beliefs about students from nondominant groups and to confront negative attitudes they might have toward these students” (p. 24). The authors implored those who work with prospective teachers to reinforce the ideas that diverse backgrounds of students are to be appreciated and seen as wonderful places for learning to begin and continued, “culturally responsive teachers not only know their students well, they use what they know about their students to give them access to learning” (p. 27). Cooperating teachers then must be ready to help preservice teachers in the vast arena of diversity. They must help preservice teachers learn about and develop leadership in this area.

Collaboration

The term “cooperating teacher” suggests someone who displays daily collaborative efforts. Hourcade and Bauwens (2001) discussed the importance and power involved in the collaboration of teachers who actually work together for what is most beneficial for students. According to the authors, this cooperative teaching style is done best when teachers of two various specialty areas come together to offer the best of both worlds to students. Cooperating teachers who

collaborate with preservice teachers have students who have the benefit of expertise and experience as well as that of what is current in educational study.

McJunkin, Justen III, Strickland, and Justen (1998) said that a “collaborative belief or style” of supervision falls between those styles referred to as “directive and nondirective” (p. 248). Directive teaching is that which suggests control by the mentor or cooperating teacher, while nondirective teaching is that which emphasizes less authority on the part of the mentor assigned to the preservice teacher. McJunkin et al. defined the collaborative style that lies between the two opposite ends of the supervisory spectrum as that which “emphasizes shared ownership in problem solving” and views the preservice teacher as “a partner in the decision-making process” (p. 248).

Ethell and McMeniman (2000) said that in order to learn about teaching, preservice teachers must get inside the minds of effective cooperating teachers, rather than being forced to learn only from observation of those who mentor. This would suggest that it is essential for student teachers to discuss, reflect, and work closely with their cooperating teachers. Collaborative efforts may sometimes be put on hold by the constraints of the length of the school day. Davis and Resta (2002) discussed how the process of collaborative efforts can improve with and have been addressed more easily via the technology of online electronic mail services. Using electronic mail technology, cooperating teachers (as well as

university supervisors) may send feedback, suggestions, reminders, needed information, and messages of support to preservice teachers before the school day begins or long after it has ended. This technology provides an avenue for mentor and beginner to share, work, reflect, problem solve, and grow together.

In a study regarding preservice teachers, O'Shea, Williams, and Sattler (1999) said that for teachers to be effective there must be teamwork and collaboration. Preservice teachers interviewed in the study listed the following benefits reaped from collaboration: better understanding regarding problem-solving; learning to listen with an open mind; learning skills regarding patience; and learning what could be gained for students, the school, and the larger community with collaboration or lost without it.

Lifelong Learning

Scherer (1998) may have said it best when she related that becoming a teacher is a never-ending process. Cruickshank (1987) defined effective teachers as "students of teaching." While Cruickshank used the term students of teaching to apply to preservice teachers as well, he also applied it to those teachers who are already in the classroom. "Students of teaching have a high and continuing interest in the subtleties of the art and science of teaching. Specifically they want to learn

all they can about teaching from both theory and practice” (p. 2). Obviously in order to learn all there is that can be learned, the learner would require a lifetime to do so.

In an interview with Checkley and Kelly (1999), Hilliard said that becoming a teacher is something that happens over an extended period of time. Hilliard continued that whereas the beginning teacher’s goal is to instruct well, as time goes by the teacher grows to be more reflective about the whole process of teaching and learning. Hilliard did not suggest that this process ever ends but instead defined the process as on going.

Darling-Hammond, Griffin, and Wise (1992) said the following about teachers and lifelong learning:

There is a way of thinking about teacher education that is completely antithetical to what the newly conceptualized school settings require for success. Teacher education, in this view, begins when someone enrolls in a baccalaureate program of study and ends upon completion of the program and a receipt of a license to teach. This truncated view of learning to teach defies professionalism as a norm because it does not acknowledge continuous investment in getting smarter about practice. It also fights against the need for continuous new knowledge in the face of new teaching, learning, and school context variables. It also flies in the face of research findings that demonstrate that teachers in effective schools testify that they never really learn to teach, that becoming a good teacher is a continuous process of intellectual and practical evolution (p. 40).

Reflective Practice (and Critical Thinking)

Cruickshank (1987) discussed that reflection was not just the act of thinking but of carefully examining that which was thought. Cruickshank said those “teachers prepared to be career-long students of teaching ... teach and reflect on their teaching ... think deeply about the theory and practice of teaching ... reflect on teaching itself and become, in practice, thoughtful and wiser teachers” (p. 2-3). With regard to learning and teachers, those of veteran status as well as preservice teachers, Cruickshank (1987) reminded us that Holton said that reflection causes the asking of such questions as what actually occurred, why or why not an event took place, what could or should have taken place and how, and what were the actions of those involved. Ocansey, Kutame, and Chepyator-Thomson (1993) said, too, that it is questioning, not telling, that is imperative to the discovery of critical thinking.

Loughran (2002) related that regarding reflection there was a “notion of problem” present and the thinking about the action associated with that problem (p. 33). Wiseman et al. (1999) reminded that the act of reflection could bring about a clearer picture of what was occurring in the classroom. Steffy and Wolfe (2001) extended this idea by saying that reflection actually brings about stronger teacher ability. Burch (1999) defined reflection as that which makes a teacher a

“thoughtful practitioner” and said that reflection was not about justification for what takes place, rather “considering and reconsidering” to make the best better (p. 165). In agreement, regarding those who supervise preservice teachers, Paris and Gespass (2001) said the type of supervision that solely concentrates on technical performance must be transformed into a type of supervision that allows for and fosters chances to think about what takes place in the classroom. Wesley (1998) said that something to remember is that as reflecting and critical thinking are being done there is no need for a rush toward answering the questions that reflection will bring. He advocated instead that waiting for the answers to come is part of reflection.

Schon (1987), perhaps the most well-known author on the subject of reflection, discussed two types of reflection that take place. Reflection on action is reflection that gives a backwards glance on what took place and what may have caused something to happen. Reflection in action is reflection that takes place during action. Killion and Todnem (1991) expanded the ideas of Schon to include reflection for action, or that reflective process that guides what a person will do in the future. Killion and Todnem said, “We undertake reflection, not so much to revisit the past or to become aware of the metacognitive process one is experiencing ... but to guide future action (the more practical purpose)” (p. 15).

Social Responsibility

Children of all ages are inundated daily with messages from various arenas that seem to glorify the opposite of social responsibility. Some popular music themes disregard such ideas as helping and respecting each other. Herbert (2003) reported about the insanity of music that sends such messages as destroying communities by gunfire is a good thing to do. Evening dramas are filled with depictions of children being victimized by those who are anything but socially responsible. An October 2003 episode of the television show *The District* about Internet predators relayed a message at the end of the program that in the hour of time it took to present the show more than 450 children were contacted by those who, with no regard for human life, would try to devour them. Daily news columns are filled with stories about stalking, stabbing, stealing, drug abuse, deprivation, and death which all reflect humankind's inhumanity to humankind. Too many of these stories involve children as the victims or the perpetrators of such crimes.

Following the violence that took place in 1999 at Columbine High School in Colorado and other such incidences of violence in schools in various states that followed and since the terrible tragedy of September 11th, 2001, schools across the nation have developed and redeveloped and designed crisis management plans.

In *The Measure of Our Success: A Letter to My Children and Yours*,

Edelman (1992), founder of the Children's Defense Fund, gave the following advice:

“Be decent and fair and insist that others be so in your presence. Don't tell, laugh at, or in any way acquiesce to racial, ethnic, religious, or gender jokes or to any practices intended to demean rather than enhance another human being” (p. 54).

Edelman's call to “enhance another human being” was more than just a message about appropriate behavior. It was a call for social responsibility.

What does it mean to be socially responsible and why should social responsibility be part of the school curriculum? Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR), a non-profit organization formed in 1982, developed the following mission statement. “Our mission is to make teaching social responsibility a core practice in education so that young people develop the convictions and skills to shape a safe, sustainable, democratic, and just world” <http://www.esrnational.org/aboutesr.htm>.

Similar to the mission of the ESR is that of the National Council for the Social Studies which stated in the executive summary of its publication, *Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: Expectations of Excellence*, the following: “The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world” (p. vii).

Should teachers be expected to help combat such an overwhelming problem? According to Battistich, Watson, Solomon, Lewis, and Schaps (1999), school should not merely be a place to learn subject content but a place to “develop the attitudes, skills, and orientations needed to lead humane lives and to act effectively as citizens to sustain democratic institutions” (p. 415). Smyth (2000) said that teachers must look critically at their own teaching and student learning so that students will be able to ascertain when something is unjust and to not only look at what is happening in society to bring about and continue such injustices but also where they stand regarding the injustice. Likewise said Lickona (1992), “A social conscience begins with social awareness” (p. 304).

Sergiovanni (1990) related that leadership must include the empowering, enabling, and enhancement of others. Those who are teacher-leaders must instill leadership in others (certainly others includes students), remove obstacles so that others are able to be successful, and enhance the roles of others in order to bring about “increased commitment and extraordinary performance” (p. 96). Regarding social responsibility, surely this increased commitment and extraordinary performance are essential. As for the importance of not only teaching about but modeling those behaviors and actions associated with social responsibility to our children, as well as the danger inherent in not doing so, perhaps we should heed the

words found in the book of James, “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead” (James 2:20).

Caring

What exactly is meant by care and caring? Noddings (1992) suggested that caring is not something attributable to a single person but that the act of caring demands that there be a relationship for caring to take place as the act of caring is associated with someone who gives the care and someone who receives the care. Noddings pointed out that at times in education the tendency has been to show care so that learning could take place when in reality there should be care shown simply for the sake of caring. Noddings reminded us that children need to learn about the various types of care, “caring for ideas and objects ... caring for people and other living things” (p. 20). She continued that there is a challenge for teachers to care and foster caring in schools, that the “structure of current schooling works against care, and at the same time, the need for care is perhaps greater than ever” (p. 20).

As long as the areas are done well, caring seems to be at the heart of those things that Acheson and Gall (1997) said educators referred to as the crux of teaching: (1) instructing, (2) providing an environment conducive to learning, (3) meeting the instructional needs of the wide variety of learners in the classroom, (4)

managing the classroom in a way that is conducive to learning, (5) exhibiting wisdom regarding planning and decisions, and (6) “implementing curriculum change” (p. 43). This doing things well may be referred to as competence.

Noddings (1984) discussed that care, like so many other things, requires practice in order to make perfect, and that an area of competence exists in the act of caring.

Perhaps the attribute of care may be used to sum up all of the other attributes because certainly when a teacher takes the time to reflect and think critically in order to problem solve or better understand a situation for self and others, care is involved. There is care demonstrated as well when teachers commit themselves to such ideas as those brought forth by Dewey (1933) of wholeheartedness, open-mindedness, and responsibility in the search for wisdom and understanding. These high ideals are certainly part of the consideration of diversity and differences.

Coming together out of safe places of isolation in order to work together collaboratively to make decisions regarding effective teaching, best practices, and change suggests that teachers care about themselves, each other, and their students.

In the same way, teachers who view teaching and learning as a life-long process demonstrate that they care about the betterment of themselves, of their students, and about the larger communities in which they will teach and learn.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study is based upon mixed methods of research. The quantitative sections include numerical data that were collected and analyzed using descriptive statistics and frequency tables. The qualitative sections report comments and answers to open-ended questions.

Knowing how graduates of the East Tennessee State University College of Education teacher education program perceive their cooperating teachers with regard to the dimensions of leadership; diversity, collaborating, reflecting, remaining a learner for life, caring, social responsibility, and thinking critically may provide insight as to what is needed in the future to aid the cooperating teachers in helping the preservice teachers become effective teacher leaders. This information may also establish needs that may be met by the College of Education that will lead to stronger cooperating teacher-preservice teacher relationships and stronger teacher leaders for the future.

Research Design

The data were gathered previously by the student teaching office of the College of Education at East Tennessee State University following the graduation dates of the spring 2002, fall 2002, and spring 2003 semesters for the purpose of discovering how preservice teachers in the teacher education program perceive the actions and behaviors of their mentor teachers during their student teaching placements. The data aided in securing needed information regarding performance assessment as the student teaching office is charged with re-working all assessment materials and processes. Even though the data were collected earlier by the student teaching office, they were not analyzed nor summarized by the student teaching office.

Using previously collected data is referred to as secondary research. Stewart and Kamins (1993) stated that, “Secondary research differs from primary research in that the collection of the information is not the responsibility of the analyst. In secondary research, the analyst enters the picture after the data collection effort is over” (p. 3). The authors suggested that despite the term secondary the name “does not imply anything about the importance of the information” (p. 4).

According to Stewart and Kamins (1993), there are advantages to secondary research use including a savings in time and money, a beginning place for future

research, and a way to compare previous data with new data. The disadvantages associated with such research include the fact that because data have been collected with a particular idea in mind, there is the possibility that the data “may produce deliberate or unintentional bias” (p. 6). An additional problem with using existing data is that findings may be too difficult to deal with due to information that may be contradictory, inconsistent, or too vast. Another problem regarding secondary research is age and whether or not the data are useful at the current time and for current purposes.

The data used for this study were not beyond an appropriate age of use for the intent of the study. Surveys were collected following the May 2002, December 2002, and the May 2003 graduation dates of teacher education students and were analyzed in the spring and summer of 2004.

Population

One hundred eleven surveys were initially mailed to May 2002 teacher education graduates during the first week of June 2002. Three letters were returned from the post office as being undeliverable. From these 108 surveys, 56 surveys were returned to the student teaching office by July 24, 2002. All 56 returned surveys were usable.

During the first week of July 2003, 98 surveys were mailed to December 2002 graduates and 99 surveys were mailed to May 2003 graduates. Nineteen letters were returned to the post office as being undeliverable. From the 98 surveys mailed to December 2002 graduates, 31 surveys were returned to the student teaching office by September 16, 2003. Thirty of the returned surveys were usable. From the 99 surveys mailed to May 2003 graduates 36 were returned to the student teaching office by October 1, 2003. All returned surveys were usable.

Development of the Survey

The placement system in effect for the East Tennessee State University College of Education is such that the preservice teacher (in this case the preservice teacher is the student teacher who is involved in a 15-week semester of student teaching) is assigned for the first half of the 15-week semester (a period of 7.5 weeks) to a cooperating teacher in one of the grade levels pertaining to the preservice teacher's area of study for licensure. The second half of the semester is spent with a different cooperating teacher in an entirely different grade level (either a higher grade level or a lower grade level), also within the preservice teacher's area of study for licensure. Sometimes the preservice teacher will be assigned to a

different location for the second placement, but he or she usually is able to remain at the same school of the initial preservice teaching placement. At times it is necessary to relocate as a preservice teacher may be assigned during the first placement to a 1st grade class followed by a 6th grade class placement during the last half of the semester. As some schools only provide services for kindergarten through (and including) 5th grade students, a preservice teacher would have to be located at a different school for the higher 6th grade level placement.

The survey used in this study was an “intact instrument” (Creswell, 94, p. 120) prepared by the student teaching office of the College of Education of East Tennessee State University for use by May 2002, December 2002, and May 2003 graduates from the program indicated above. According to Dr. Elizabeth Ralston, Director of Field Services, (personal communication, 2003) the survey was prepared in order to gain information needed for performance assessment as the student teaching office is charged with reworking all assessment materials and processes. Ralston said, “The survey was developed to address where we are regarding the current model as we both look to revise it and as we plan for performance assessment.” Ralston continued, “The survey is important because the ones who take time to fill it out are important and what they have to say is important.”

The Likert-type survey consisted of 34 items about the preservice teacher experience with the cooperating teachers involving a ranking system including the following levels: (1) strongly disagree, (2) moderately disagree, (3) disagree, (4) agree, (5) moderately agree, and (6) strongly agree. A second section followed the ranking section of the survey and allowed for written comments regarding strengths and areas of improvement in each placement. The survey also asked questions regarding level of degree, area of licensure, major area of study, and grade level of both first and second placements of the preservice teaching experience. According to Ralston, the survey was not broken into subsections because many of the questions could be included in multiple places; however, for the purpose of analysis specific questions were assigned to six of the ten dimensions in the conceptual framework.

When asked to explain why the items included all of the dimensions except for the three areas of knowledge, Ralston explained that the survey covered professional knowledge with a number of questions (20, 30, 31, 32.) Content knowledge was referred to in question 31 as well. Regarding general knowledge, Ralston explained that this area was addressed by way of the fact that both mentor and student teacher have a basic general education as part of their degree program.

Administration of the Survey

The 34-item survey (please see Appendixes A, B, and C) was mailed to each graduating student teacher following the May 2002, December 2002, and May 2003 graduation dates. Because the survey consisted of items about the cooperating teachers, it was decided that more honest and accurate information would be given from participants while not in the presence of their cooperating teachers. Participants were instructed not to reveal their names and were reminded that in this way material sent by them to the student teaching office would remain confidential. Included with the survey was a cover letter expressing appreciation for help regarding the completion of the survey and a reminder that information given was of great value to the student teaching office and to the student teaching program at East Tennessee State University.

As suggested by Creswell (1994) with regard to following-up the survey returns (p. 122), two weeks following the initial mailing of the surveys, postcard reminders were mailed to participants who had not responded regarding the completion and the return of the survey. Two weeks after the mailing of the postcard reminders, a second copy of the complete survey was sent to non-responding participants of each survey with a reminder note concerning survey completion. This practice was carried out with each of the surveys.

Analysis of Data

All information used in the analysis of this questionnaire/survey came directly from the survey. The study is a descriptive picture of how preservice teachers perceive their mentor teachers. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and frequency tables. The characteristics discussed in question one included level of degree of graduate, area of licensure, major area of study, and grade levels of both first and second placements. Preservice teachers comments were analyzed and presented in narrative form.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore the perspectives of teacher education graduates about their mentor teachers during their preservice placements. This chapter presents findings of the study as they relate to the five research questions. Data used to answer the research questions were taken from the 34-item survey given to teacher education graduates Spring Semester 2002, Fall Semester 2002, and Spring Semester 2003.

In addition to the 34 items to which teacher education graduates responded on a Likert-type scale, there was space provided for comments. These comments were a part of the findings and are presented in association with the numerical data. Because providing all data obtained in this project including means and standard deviations for all 34 items divided into the major divisions (undergraduate and Master of Arts in Teaching), areas of study, and areas of licensure would use excessive space and not provide sufficient additional information to warrant adding multiple pages to this document, these data will be archived in the East Tennessee State University College of Education Office for Student Teaching.

Because each group of preservice teachers surveyed is the entire population of preservice teachers for the three semesters involved and because there is no logical

reason to assume that those who responded were a representative sample of the group given the opportunity to respond, presented data are descriptive of the group that responded with no attempt to extend data to other groups.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asks: What are the characteristics of the preservice teachers who responded and how did they rate the quality of their preservice cooperating teachers?

There were 123 survey forms returned of which 122 were usable. The information below is from the 122 usable forms. There were 56 program graduates who responded from the Spring Semester 2002 group, of whom 42 were undergraduates and 14 were in the Master of Arts in Teaching program. There were 30 program graduates who responded from the Fall Semester 2002 group of whom 23 were undergraduates and 7 were in the Master of Arts in Teaching program. There were 36 program graduates who responded from the Spring Semester group of whom 23 were undergraduates and 13 were in the Master of Arts in Teaching program. Summing the responses from the three semesters, there were 88 undergraduate responses and 34 responses from those in the Master of Arts in Teaching program.

Analyzed by licensure area, there were 17 pre-kindergarten graduates all of whom were undergraduates; 60 Kindergarten-grade 8 graduates, 37 of whom were undergraduates and 23 of whom were in the Master of Arts in Teaching program; 4 grades 1-8 graduates, all of whom were undergraduates; 20 grades 7-12 graduates, 10 of whom were undergraduates and 10 of whom were in the Masters of Arts in Teaching program; and 21 Kindergarten-grade 12 graduates, of whom 20 were undergraduates and 1 was a student in the Master of Arts in Teaching program.

Analyzed by academic major, there were 19 Early Childhood Education graduates, all of whom were undergraduates; 61 Elementary Education graduates, 38 of whom were undergraduates and 23 of whom were in the Master of Arts in Teaching program; 24 Secondary Education graduates, 13 of whom were undergraduates and 11 of whom were in the Master of Arts in Teaching program; 7 Special Education graduates, all of whom were undergraduates; 4 Physical Education graduates, all of whom were undergraduates; 3 Art Education graduates, all of whom were undergraduates; 3 Music Education graduates, all of whom were undergraduates; and 1 other graduate, who was an undergraduate.

The 34-item survey that was used to gather information for this study presented items using a Likert-type 6-point scale with a response of 6 indicating strong agreement and a response of 1 indicating strong disagreement. All questions were arranged so that responses of 6 were positive responses. Three areas of

information obtained, as discussed below, indicated that program graduates had high opinions about their mentors.

First, the mean response on all items for all graduates was 5.05 on a 6-point scale, with a standard deviation of 1.43. For undergraduates, the mean response was 4.99 on a 6-point scale with a standard deviation of 1.43. For those students in the Master of Arts in Teaching program, the mean response was 5.23 on a 6-point scale with a standard deviation of 1.43.

Second, when the scale was broken into two parts (agree and disagree that the cooperating teacher demonstrated and/or taught the item involved), 87.79% of the graduates indicated agree for the 34 items combined. For undergraduate students, 86.23% indicated agree while 91.87% of the students in the Master of Arts in Teaching program did so.

Third, the modal response to all 34 questions for the entire group of graduates was 6. The mode of 6 was obtained for both undergraduates and students in the Master of Arts in Teaching program.

Further analysis of there data is presented as Research Questions 3, 4, and 5 are discussed below.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 asks: To what extent are the 10 dimensions represented in the East Tennessee State University College of Education conceptual frame work being taught and modeled by cooperating teachers?

Preservice teachers who graduated in spring 2002, fall 2002, and spring 2003 wrote positive comments as well as suggestions for areas of improvement about their student teaching placements. Many of the positive comments regarding actions and behaviors of the mentor teacher reflected six of the ten dimensions of leadership represented in the East Tennessee State University College of Education Conceptual Framework including caring, collaboration, concern for diversity, lifelong learning, reflective practice, and social responsibility. Critical thinking was also an item mentioned on the first survey because at that time critical thinking was one of the dimensions in the East Tennessee State University College of Education Conceptual Framework.

The dimensions that were most often viewed positively by preservice teachers were those of caring and collaboration. One hundred fifteen of out 197 positive comments were about cooperating teachers who were supportive and nurturing and/or gave the preservice teachers opportunities to be part of a teaching team. In these written comments, preservice teachers used a variety of positive

adjectives to describe their mentor teachers during their student teaching placements that suggested the attributes of care and collaboration. These included: awesome, encouraging, excited, helpful, supportive, excellent, motivated, amazing, positive, warm, friendly, relaxed, professional, effective, patient, honest, energetic, flexible, nice, outgoing, caring, challenging, and creative. Some of the positive comments by the preservice teachers follow.

“I was so nervous, but she made me feel like I was part of an important team,” shared one preservice teacher. Another said, “My mentor teacher was very supportive and sharing. She was very open with me and discussed many different aspects of teaching in great detail.” Another comment stated, “She was a 30-year veteran and ...a wealth of knowledge. She made me feel that I had as much to offer (her) and the students as they had to offer me.” Another graduate wrote, “... My mentor was very good about sharing ideas with me and activities that she had previously used.” Other comments that reflected caring and collaboration included:

“Wonderful mentor teacher! Very warm and friendly- set a wonderful example to follow.”

“She stayed after school several afternoons to help me plan for lessons and evaluations. She made me feel like part of the 1st grade team.”

“Great attitude, very outgoing, accepting of new ideas, passion for her job, love for the children.”

“My mentor was nice and loved her students. She was encouraging –treated me as a colleague.”

“(My) teacher was very personable, cheerful, and cooperative/ very interested in my success.”

“She was positive, supportive, gave useful and constructive feedback, and made the experience wonderful for me.”

“My mentor teacher was always positive with her students and made everyone feel special, including me. She made me feel really special!”

“Wonderful mentor teacher. Made me feel comfortable.”

“She was wonderful. I was so nervous about my high-school student teaching, but she was very helpful.”

“Great with kids. Very concerned about them!”

“Excellent teacher and mentor. She was positively wonderful to work with. She loves children, is enthusiastic about teaching, and enjoys helping new teachers.”

Sixty-four positive comments from preservice teachers reflected that cooperating teachers modeled the dimensions of reflective practice and/or lifelong learning. Some of these comments included:

“... new ideas were readily welcomed and accepted.”

“She was wonderfully organized. I learned a lot about time management and the value of planning.”

“...mentor accepting and encouraging, allowed room to experiment and learn.”

“My mentor modeled wonderful planning techniques and utilized many manipulatives.”

“Extremely supportive of trying new methods, provided ideas and resources, wonderful experience.”

“The mentor was very up-to-date on her teaching strategies...”

“My mentor teacher modeled (and) gave specific positive and corrective feedback in a timely manner.”

“My mentor gave me content plans and materials to work with. The teacher also gave instructions and comments throughout the ... program.”

“Excellent middle school placement with supportive environment. Teaching styles and philosophies up to date. Mentor excited to teach me AND learn from me.”

“Knowledgeable about her content area.”

“I had a mentor who really challenged me to be independent.”

“Easy to work through problems (with).”

“She was supportive ... such as ways to improve myself.”

“...accepting of new ideas...”

“Very willing to learn! Great new teaching ideas! She really enjoys math and does a great job making it fun for the students.”

“My teacher was so excited about teaching. She inspired me...”

“Very supportive of new ideas and allowed me to try new things.”

“...The constructive criticism enabled me to develop more effective teaching strategies...”

However, based on the comments collected on this survey only a small number (12) of cooperating teachers modeled a concern for diversity. Still fewer (6) modeled the dimension of social responsibility. Even though the comments were fewer in number, many suggested positive perceptions of the modeling of both concern for diversity and of social responsibility. Some of the comments provided were:

“I had the opportunity to work and teach with students with different levels and capabilities.”

“It was amazing to see how one [teacher] could teach children of different ages and stages of development. She told me that teaching is all about meeting the needs of the children and loving them for who each is. She was an awesome teacher.”

“Teacher was very caring, helpful, and informative. She had an extensive packet for me upon arrival with items such as school calendar, emergency drills, student names, pictures, snow schedule, etc.”

“She talked to me about other school issues as well as instruction.”

“Mentor was very knowledgeable about law and required paperwork...”

“I was exposed to a highly diverse classroom. I was required to take many needs into account.”

“... directly involved with IEP meetings...”

“... allowed time to become accustomed to the learning styles of my students and to provide them with a variety of learning opportunities.”

Although an overwhelming number of comments were positive regarding the cooperating teachers and their modeling of the dimensions of the East Tennessee State University College of Education conceptual framework, other comments reflected the need for improvement. It is noteworthy that while the study reflected an overwhelmingly positive perception by preservice teachers about their cooperating teachers, there were still other comments suggesting that areas of improvement existed regarding the preservice teaching placement. The negative comments suggest (because of the high positives given numerically) that although there were high positive ratings, there were occasionally some specific areas in which preservice teachers offered comments that suggested need for improvement.

Even though a placement may have brought with it some minor disappointments for some preservice teachers, the overall preservice teaching experience was still a positive one. It is interesting to note that while the surveys brought out some negative responses, those negative responses were not verbally relayed to the Office of Student Teaching in the College of Education at East Tennessee State University. This suggests that the very nature of responses to surveys of this type seems to bring to mind any element of the experience that may have been thought of as less than perfect.

Regarding caring and collaboration, some preservice teachers stated that more frequent and varied means of feedback was needed, that they were not encouraged or praised, and that they were left on their own too early or simply left on their own. A few preservice teachers commented that their cooperating teachers displayed non-support by being absent either for complete days or from the classroom for extended periods of time. Some other preservice teachers commented about non-professional behavior from mentor teachers as well.

Some of the other negative comments that suggested the dimensions of reflective practice, lifelong learning, concern for diversity, and social responsibility were not being modeled by cooperating teachers discussed how some cooperating teachers did not use nor allow a variety of strategies in teaching or assessing student learning. Some preservice teachers said that their cooperating teachers

were not current regarding teaching practices while others complained about needing more explanation about classroom procedures and guidelines.

Also relevant to the Research Question 2 is the following information: The five items with the highest mean score for both undergraduate preservice teachers and Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers were Item 4, My cooperating (mentor teacher) treated me professionally; Item 5, My cooperating (mentor) teacher gave me opportunities to exhibit leadership; Item 11, My cooperating (mentor) teacher shared resources with me; Item 15, My cooperating (mentor) teacher cared for the students; Item 31, My cooperating (mentor) teacher was knowledgeable regarding teaching content. Some comments that reflected these items were as follows:

Item Four- *My mentor teacher treated me professionally*

“She was a 30-yr. Veteran with a PhD. and was a wealth of knowledge. She always treated me as a valued colleague.”

“My second placement was also fantastic. My mentor along with the other teachers made me feel as I was one of them. They valued my opinion and were very helpful and considerate.”

Item Five- *My cooperating (mentor) teacher gave me opportunities to exhibit leadership*

“Teachers provided me freedom to implement my own ideas and teaching strategies, and were very helpful and encouraging along the way.”

“I had more freedom to be creative and teach the students my way instead of being a copy of the teacher.”

Item 11- *My cooperating (mentor) teacher shared resources with me*

“My mentor teacher had teacher editions and a tentative schedule of what I would teach and when on our very first meeting.”

“My mentor was very helpful... She helped me with lesson/unit plans, making tests, and classroom management.”

Item 15- *My cooperating (mentor) teacher cared for the students*

“The students received positive encouragement... and to see each face light up was worth every moment in the classroom.”

“Friendly staff, neighborly teachers, lots of love and concern for students.”

Item 31- *My cooperating (mentor) teacher was knowledgeable regarding teaching content*

“Great teaching ideas. I learned a lot about how to teach language arts.”

“Very knowledgeable teacher, and has much to offer new teachers.”

Four out of five items on the survey with the lowest mean scores on the 6-point scale for both undergraduate preservice teachers and Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers were Item 1, My cooperating (mentor) teacher made

me aware of the crisis management plan in my school; Item 13, My cooperating (mentor) teacher used technology in the classroom and shared ways that I could use technology in my own teaching; Item 19, My cooperating (mentor) teacher discussed school law issues with me; and Item 26, My cooperating (mentor) teacher engaged in and helped me with reflective practice. A fifth item with the lowest mean score for undergraduate preservice teachers was Item 25, My cooperating (mentor) teacher helped me deal with issues regarding diversity. A fifth item with the lowest mean score for preservice teachers in the Master of Arts in Teaching program was Item 7, My cooperating (mentor) teacher helped me develop lesson plans and unit plans.

Even though these were the five lowest ratings for these two groups, these scores still reflect positive perceptions by preservice teachers of their cooperating teachers in all of these areas. Of the five lowest items for undergraduate preservice teachers the lowest rating was 4.00 on a 6-point scale and the highest was 4.67 on a 6-point scale. For the Master of Arts preservice teachers these five lowest ratings ranged from 4.18 to 4.94 on a 6-point scale. These areas are listed below:

Items 1 and Item 19- *My cooperating (mentor) teacher made me aware of the crisis management plan in my school* and *My cooperating (mentor) teacher discussed school law issues with me*

Item 7- My cooperating (mentor) teacher helped me develop lesson plans and unit plans

Item 13- My cooperating (mentor) teacher used technology in the classroom and shared ways that I could use technology in my own teaching

Item 25- My cooperating (mentor) teacher helped me deal with issues regarding diversity

Item 26- My cooperating (mentor) teacher engaged in and helped me with reflective practice

Because some of the items listed above are items that were included in the survey but are items that are not included directly in the dimensions of the conceptual framework (specifically, crisis management, school law issues, technology in the classroom, and preparation of lesson plans) they are discussed in a separate portion later in the chapter.

It is also worth noting that while 100 out of 152 comments from preservice teachers were positive about the East Tennessee State University College of Education preservice/student teaching placement guidelines, 52 out of 152 comments from preservice teachers suggested areas of improvement regarding the preservice placement guide/student teaching handbook, College of Education policies for preservice placement, or communication between the College of Education and the cooperating teachers. Again, because the preservice placement

guide/student teaching handbook is not one of the dimensions of the conceptual framework, this topic is discussed in Chapter 5.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 asks: Are there differences in the indications of preservice teachers' perceptions of their mentor teachers based on type of program (bachelor degree preservice teachers versus Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) preservice teachers).

When the two populations of preservice teachers were compared to each other, little difference was observed. Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers had an overall mean score on the 34-item survey of 5.23 of a possible 6.00 with a standard deviation of 1.43. Undergraduate preservice teachers had an overall mean score on the 34-item survey of 4.98 with a standard deviation of 1.43. This resulted in a difference between means of .25. This was not deemed to be an important difference. Two separate populations were measured; therefore, statistics of inference were not appropriate. However, a t-test was applied to determine the level of significance if instead of two populations two samples had been measured. The t-score was .64, which would have been significant at approximately the .50 level of confidence. Therefore, in addition to a difference that was not deemed

important, had samples been used instead of populations, the difference would have lacked significance.

Additionally, results of both groups (undergraduate preservice teachers and Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers) total scores on the 34-item survey produced modes of 6, the maximum rating obtainable. Moreover, when the 34 items were analyzed into the five highest scored and five lowest scored items, undergraduate preservice teachers and Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers had almost the same results. These results have been discussed in detail under Research Question 2. Both groups gave highest ratings to the same five items (Item 4-mentor prepared to regard me as a professional, mean 5.54 on a 6-point scale and standard deviation 1.18 for undergraduate preservice teachers and mean 5.65 on a 6-point scale and standard deviation 0.82 for Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers; item 5- mentor gave me opportunities to exhibit leadership, mean 5.39 on a 6-point scale and standard deviation 1.26 for undergraduate preservice teachers and mean 5.76 on a 6-point scale and standard deviation 0.62 for Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers; item 11-mentor shared resources with me, mean 5.43 on a 6-point scale and standard deviation 1.16 for undergraduate preservice teachers and mean 5.66 on a 6-point scale and standard deviation 0.72 for Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers; item 15- mentor cared about students, mean 5.38 on a 6-point scale and standard

deviation 1.22 for undergraduate preservice teachers and mean 5.68 on a 6-point scale and standard deviation 0.82 for Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers; and item 31- mentor had knowledge of content being taught, mean 5.50 on a 6-point scale and standard deviation 1.20 for undergraduate preservice teachers and mean 5.60 on a 6-point scale and standard deviation .72 for Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers.

The results of the five lowest rated items demonstrated one difference. Both groups rated item 1 (mentor made me aware about the school's crisis management plan, mean 4.00 (based on a 6-point scale where 6.00 is "strongly agree") and standard deviation 1.80 for undergraduate preservice teachers and mean 4.18 and standard deviation 1.50 for Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers), item 13 (mentor used technology in the classroom, mean 4.40 and standard deviation 1.56 for undergraduate preservice teachers and mean 4.44 and standard deviation 1.41 for Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers), item 19 (mentor discussed school law with me, mean 4.10 and standard deviation 1.59 for undergraduate preservice teachers and mean 4.19 and standard deviation 1.55 for Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers), and item 26 (mentor engaged in and helped me with reflective practice, mean 4.67 and standard deviation 1.37 for undergraduate preservice teachers and mean 4.94 and standard deviation 1.33 for Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers) in the lowest five. However, a

difference occurred when undergraduate preservice teachers rated item 25 (mentor helped me deal with issues of diversity, mean 4.67 and standard deviation 1.37) in the lowest 5 while Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers rated item 7 (mentor helped me develop lesson plans, mean 4.81 and standard deviation 1.32 for Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers) in the lowest five.

Undergraduate preservice teachers and Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers indicated similar perceptions about their mentor teachers. These indications of perceptions were positive. As shown above, the lowest mean obtained was 4.00 on a 6-point scale on item one by undergraduate students. This lowest ranked item still had a mean score equal to the ranking of “agree”. Also, remembering that the modal score for all items was 6.00 on a 6-point scale (strongly agree), lower scores represented greater diversity of ratings and, therefore, higher standard deviations.

Research Question 4

Research Question 4 asks: Are there differences in the indications of preservice teachers’ perceptions of their cooperating teachers based on their areas of licensure? Divided into areas of licensure, the number of preservice teachers and the means and standard deviations for their perceptions of their cooperating teachers are presented in Table 1. The Total Group mean score was 5.05 on a 6-

point scale with a standard deviation of 1.43. Mean scores ranged from 4.86 to 5.25 on a 6-point scale.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Preservice Teachers by Licensure Area

Licensure Area	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
PreK-3	17	4.98	1.44
K-8	60	5.06	1.35
1-8	4	4.86	1.70
7-12	20	5.25	1.15
K-12	21	4.92	1.49
Total	122	5.05	1.43

As can be determined by Table 1, the lowest mean (4.86) was for preservice teachers seeking licensure in grades 1-8; however, there were only 4 preservice teachers seeking licensure at this level. This was .19 lower than the total mean of 5.05. This small group also had the highest standard deviation, 1.70, indicating relative high dispersion within this group. The group of students (n=20) seeking licensure at the 7-12 level had the highest mean (5.25) and the smallest standard deviation (1.15). This group's mean was .20 above the mean of the total group.

The major findings of the analysis of data by area of licensure were the high level of ratings of perceptions of cooperating teachers by preservice teachers in all

licensure categories and the small differences between groups. All licensure groups had total score modes of 6. Each group is a population; therefore, inferential statistics do not apply. No differences between groups or between a group's score and the total score would be statistically significant.

Research Question 5

Research Question 5 asks: Are there differences in indications of preservice teachers' perceptions of their cooperating teachers when analyzed by major.

Divided into academic majors, the number of preservice teachers and means and standard deviations of their perceptions of their cooperating teachers are provided in Table 2. The overall mean was 5.06 on a 6-point scale with a standard deviation of 1.43. Means ranged from 4.70 to 5.62 on a 6-point scale.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Preservice Teachers by Academic Major

Major	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
Elementary Education	61	5.07	1.36
Secondary Education	24	5.16	1.26
Special Education	7	4.79	1.66
Early Childhood Education	19	4.95	1.46
Physical Education	4	5.62	0.79
Art Education	3	4.79	1.72
Music Education	3	4.70	1.02
Other	1	4.85	1.05
Total	122	5.05	1.43

As with the other divisions of the total population, all preservice teacher populations divided into smaller populations by academic majors indicated high, positive perceptions about their cooperating teachers. All had total survey modes of 6 on a 6-point scale. Because some academic majors were represented by a small number of preservice teachers (Special Education-7; Physical Education –4; Art Education-3; and Music Education-3), ratings in these areas are less meaningful than the ratings in areas that were represented by larger numbers of preservice teachers (Elementary Education-61; Secondary Education-24; and Early Childhood Education-19).

In the three larger populations of preservice teachers based on academic majors, there were small differences between all pairs of groups and smaller

differences between each group and the entire population. The difference between the means of the population of Secondary Education preservice teachers (mean=5.16 on a 6-point scale) and Early Childhood Education preservice teachers (mean=4.95 on a 6-point scale) was .21. Each of these two populations differed less with the population of Elementary Education preservice teachers (mean=5.07 on a 6-point scale). In addition, none of these three populations of preservice teachers differed more than .11 of a point from the mean of the entire population of preservice teachers. Although inferential statistics are not appropriate to apply to these populations, if they were applied, there would be no significant differences.

To further expand the answers to Research Question 4 and Research Question 5, Table 3 through Table 9 were developed to indicate preservice teachers' rating of their cooperating teachers regarding each of six dimensions of the East Tennessee State University College of Education Conceptual Framework including: caring, collaboration, concern for diversity, lifelong learning, reflective practice, and social responsibility.

In addition to providing data related to levels of responses for the total group of respondees (n=122) and providing data by degree (undergraduate preservice teachers and Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers), by licensure area, and by major of study, survey data were analyzed into the College of Education

dimensions of caring, collaboration, concern for diversity, lifelong learning, reflective practice, and social responsibility. Items on the 34-item survey were assigned to one or more of the six dimensions based on the researcher's judgment.

Because of the similarity of licensure areas and academic majors (See Tables 1 and 2), because of the small number of majors in many academic areas, and because of East Tennessee State University reporting data requirements being in licensure areas, data regarding the East Tennessee State University College of Education dimensions were not analyzed by academic major.

For the dimension of caring, survey items 8, 10, 15, and 22 were assigned. The mean for the Total Group was 5.24 on a 6-point scale with a standard deviation of 1.25. The 7-12 licensure group (n=20) had the highest mean score, 5.48 on a 6-point scale, with a standard deviation of 0.93. The 1-8 licensure group (n=4) and the K-12 licensure group (n=21) tied for the low mean, 5.06 on a 6-point scale. The 1-8 licensure group had a standard deviation of 1.52 and the K-12 licensure group had a standard deviation of 1.54. As can be seen from the above data and from the full data presented in Table 6, the survey respondees gave high ratings to their cooperating teachers in the area of caring.

Table 3

Caring

Licensure Area	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
PreK-3	17	5.08	1.56
K-8	60	5.29	1.22
1-8	4	5.06	1.78
7-12	20	5.48	0.93
K-12	21	5.06	1.54
Total Group	122	5.24	1.25

For the dimension of collaboration, survey items 2, 3, 4, 7, 11, 17, 1, 21, 23, 27, 32, and 34 were assigned. The mean for the Total Group was 5.15 on a 6-point scale with a standard deviation of 1.26. The 7-12 licensure group had the highest mean score, 5.31 on a 6-point scale, with a standard deviation of 0.98. The K-12 licensure group had the lowest mean, 5.01 on a 6-point scale, with a standard deviation of 1.46. As can be seen from the above data and from full data presented on Table 8, survey respondees gave high ratings to their cooperating teachers in the dimension of collaboration.

Table 4

Collaboration

Licensure Area	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
PreK-3	17	5.09	1.39
K-8	60	5.16	1.30
1-8	4	5.11	1.59
7-12	20	5.31	0.98
K-12	21	5.01	1.46
Total Group	122	5.15	1.26

For the dimension of concern for diversity, items 14, 20, 28, and 32 were assigned. The mean for Total Group was 5.01 on a 6-point scale with a standard deviation of 1.34. The 7-12 licensure group (n=20) had the highest mean score, 5.32 on a 6-point scale, with a standard deviation of 1.03. The 1-8 licensure group (n=4) had the lowest mean score, 4.72, on a 6-point scale, with a standard deviation of 1.67. As can be seen from the above data and from the full data presented in Table 5, the survey respondees gave a high rating to their cooperating teachers in the area of concern for diversity.

Table 5

Concern for Diversity

Licensure Area	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
PreK-3	17	4.74	1.56
K-8	60	4.98	1.34
1-8	4	4.72	1.67
7-12	20	5.32	1.03
K-12	21	5.01	1.34
Total Group	122	5.05	1.43

For the dimension lifelong learning, survey items 8, 13, 24, 29, 30, 31, and 32 were assigned. The mean for the Total Group was 5.07 on a 6-point scale with a standard deviation of 1.50. The 7-12 licensure group (n=20) had the highest mean score, 5.27 on a 6-point scale, with a standard deviation of 1.03. The K-12 licensure group (n=21) had the lowest mean score, 4.96 on a 6-point scale, with a standard deviation of 1.48. As can be seen from the above data and from full data presented in Table 7, the survey respondees gave high ratings to their cooperating teachers in the area of lifelong learning.

Table 6

Lifelong Learning

Licensure Area	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
PreK-3	17	5.02	1.47
K-8	60	5.06	1.26
1-8	4	5.00	1.55
7-12	20	5.27	1.03
K-12	21	4.96	1.48
Total Group	122	5.07	1.30

For the dimension of reflective practice, survey items 6, 7, 8, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 26, and 28 were assigned. The responses to these 10 items were determined for each licensure group (PreK-3, n=17; K-8, n=60; 1-8, n=4; 7-12, n=20; K-12, n=21; and the total group, n=122). For the total group the mean response was 4.99 on a 6-point scale with a standard deviation of 1.33. The licensure groups were similar to each other with a low mean of 4.70 on a 6-point scale (standard deviation=1.73) for the 1-8 licensure group (n=4) to a high of a mean of 5.18 on a 6-point scale (standard deviation =1.15) for the 7-12 group (n=20). As can be observed from the data presented above, the 1-8 group had the lowest mean score and, as Table 3 indicated, the highest standard deviation. This licensure group had four respondees, thereby creating a situation of having an extreme score causing an important effect on the licensure group's mean score. However, even this licensure group's mean

score was highly positive, 4.20 on a 6-point scale. Full data are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Reflective Practice

Licensure Area	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
PreK-3	17	4.91	1.37
K-8	60	5.02	1.31
1-8	4	4.70	1.73
7-12	20	5.18	1.15
K-12	21	4.84	1.48
Total Group	122	4.99	1.33

For the dimension social responsibility, the survey items assigned were items 1,5,9,16,19, 28, and 33. The mean for the Total Group (n=122) was 4.84 on a 6-point scale. The standard deviation was 1.36. The 7-12 licensure group (n=20) had the highest mean, 4.97 on a 6-point scale with a standard deviation of 1.21. The 1-8 licensure group (n=4) had the lowest mean, 4.70 on a 6-point scale with a standard deviation of 1.74. As can be observed from these data and from full data shown in Table 8, the survey respondees gave a high rating to their cooperating teachers in the area of social responsibility.

Table 8

Social Responsibility

Licensure Area	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
PreK-3	17	4.75	1.42
K-8	60	4.88	1.32
1-8	4	4.70	1.74
7-12	20	4.97	1.21
K-12	21	4.71	1.50
Total Group	122	4.84	1.36

These data indicated that survey respondees gave high ratings to their cooperating teacher on all six of the dimensions in the East Tennessee State University College of Education Conceptual Framework covered by the 34-item survey. The highest mean score was on the dimension of caring by the 7-12 licensure group (n=20) with a mean of 5.48 on a 6-point scale, with a standard deviation of 0.93. The lowest mean scores were on the dimension of reflective practice, mean 4.70 on a 6-point scale, with a standard deviation of 1.73, and social responsibility, mean 4.70 on a 6-point scale, with a standard deviation of 1.74 both by the 1-8 licensure group (n=4). Table 9 summarizes the mean scores for all dimensions for all licensure groups. Because standard deviations are available in Table 3 through Table 8, they are not presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Summary of Means of Dimensions in the East Tennessee State University College of Education Framework

Licensure Area	#	Caring	Collaboration	Concern for Diversity	Lifelong Learning	Reflective Practice	Social Responsibility
PreK-3	17	5.08	5.09	4.74	5.02	4.97	4.75
K-8	60	5.29	5.16	4.98	5.06	5.02	4.88
1-8	4	5.06	5.11	4.72	5.00	5.18	4.97
7-12	20	5.48	5.31	5.32	5.27	5.18	4.97
K-12	21	5.06	5.01	5.06	4.96	4.84	4.71
Total	122	5.24	5.15	5.01	5.07	4.99	4.84

Because all six dimensions received high ratings from the survey respondents in all licensure groups, the primary conclusions from the data obtained about the East Tennessee State University College of Education Conceptual Framework is that preservice teachers perceived their cooperating teachers to be demonstrating and teaching these dimensions of learning relevant to the framework. It should also be noted that the dimensions of caring and collaboration were rated highest by the Total Group and by all licensure areas except for the 7-12 licensure group that rated diversity (mean=5.32 on a 6-point scale) slightly higher than collaboration (mean=5.31 on a 6-point scale) and the K-12 licensure group that rated diversity

(mean=5.06 on a 6-point scale) slightly higher than collaboration (mean=5.01 on a 6-point scale).

The 7-12 licensure group (n=20) had the highest rating for cooperating teachers for all six dimensions, while the 1-8 licensure group (n=4) was at or near the bottom of the licensure groups for all dimensions. Some of the differences resulted from Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers comprising large proportions of some licensure groups and none in others. The overall mean for Master in Arts in Teaching preservice teachers (n=34) for the entire 34-item survey was 5.23 on a 6-point scale, while the overall mean for undergraduate preservice teachers (m=88) for the entire 34-item survey was 4.99 on a 6-point scale. Master in Arts in Teaching preservice teachers made up large proportions of the 7-12 licensure group (10 of the 20) and K-6 (23 of the 60).

A further observation based on the data in Table 3 through Table 8 is that as mean scores increased, standard deviation decreased. This is a natural consequence of measuring on a 6-point scale. The closer the scores get to the maximum score of 6, the less room there is for deviation from the mean.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study found that an overwhelming number of preservice teachers had positive perceptions about their cooperating teachers and had positive perceptions about the modeling (by cooperating teachers) of the dimensions of caring, collaboration, concern for diversity, lifelong learning, reflective practice (critical thinking), and social responsibility that are a part of the East Tennessee State University College of Education Conceptual Framework. Preservice teachers from both the undergraduate program and the Master of Arts in Teaching program reported that their cooperating teachers were supportive, positive, and caring. Undergraduate preservice teachers and Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers indicated that cooperating teachers were genuinely interested in their success during the preservice placement period (student teaching experience) as well as their continued success.

Specifically, the study found that the positive responses from preservice teachers were demonstrated in all licensure areas and for all academic majors. Furthermore, although Master of Arts in Teaching preservice teachers as a group gave higher rankings to their cooperating teachers than did undergraduate

preservice teachers, the difference was not great and would not have been statistically significant had samples been used rather than populations.

In addition to the 34-item survey that was completed by the 122 preservice teachers who responded, the instrument provided an opportunity for preservice teachers to comment. These comments were also positive by a wide majority.

The study also found that some preservice teachers' perceived areas of needed improvements based on their experiences during the student teaching placement. The recommendations that follow are in reference to the continued improving of a preservice teacher/cooperating teacher system that is not only working but working well. It is important to note that just as preservice teachers and cooperating teachers must continue to learn and grow and improve; so must a very good system that exists for the benefit of the preservice teachers and cooperating teachers continue to improve.

Preservice teachers' expressed some concerns regarding some of the dimensions in the East Tennessee State University College of Education Conceptual Framework. These dimensions included reflective practice and concern for diversity. The following gives that information and recommendations for those concerns. Again, recommendations do not imply that good work is not being done in the areas involved, after all the vast majority of responses from preservice

teachers were positive, rather recommendations imply that change and refining are a natural part of enhancing an already good system.

Regarding Reflective Practice

As suggested about reflective practice by other authors in Chapter 2, Taggart and Wilson in the same manner (1998) said, “Reflective thinking is the process of making informed and logical decisions on educational matters, then assessing the consequences of those decisions” (p.2). Smyth (1992) said to speculate was not to reflect; instead that reflecting was about “starting with reality, with seeing injustices, and beginning to overcome reality by reasserting the importance of learning” (p.300).

Reflective activities are a regular and on-going part of the East Tennessee State University teacher education program and 1 of the 10 dimensions in the ETSU College of Education conceptual framework. This dimension, like all other dimensions, was given a high rating by preservice teachers. However, more can be done to ensure that actual reflective practice takes place during the preservice teacher’s student teaching placement. Preservice teachers need opportunities to not only learn *about* reflective practice, but to *engage in* reflective practice. It is imperative that preservice teachers understand that reflection is much more than

merely journaling or making diary entries and that reflection is not about making assumptions regarding how things will go or what things might take place. This understanding can take place only through practice.

Because much reflective practice takes place as a reaction to feedback received from the cooperating teacher, it is imperative that the cooperating teacher participate in giving timely and varied feedback to the preservice teacher as well as accepting and discussing feedback *from* the preservice teacher. Wilkins-Canter (1996) wrote about how essential feedback is for preservice teachers from their cooperating teachers. She also discussed the small number of cooperating teachers who actually understood the process of giving effective feedback those preservice teachers mentored by them. The author suggested that colleges of education should provide training in this area as well as require that new strategies and techniques in this area be shared by the college of education's preservice teacher supervisors.

Wilkins-Canter (1996) also suggested that mentors or cooperating teachers provide a variety of feedback including discussion feedback as well as written feedback. She further suggested that preservice teachers write down what is discussed with them by the cooperating teachers and reflect about the feedback given. She added, "In addition, they (preservice teachers) should be encouraged to read the information often to look for recurring patterns and to develop personal goals. They should also be encouraged to ask their cooperating teachers for more

feedback and to initiate feedback conferences” (p. 176). Weasmer and Woods (2003) iterated these ideas by stating that cooperating teachers, following observation, write down what they observe and reflect on what occurred and share such written information with the preservice teacher for reflection as well.

Cooperating teachers should be provided information about strategies and techniques regarding the processes of effective feedback and reflective practice. These strategies should also be added to the cooperating teacher handbook.

Regarding Concern for Diversity

As with other dimensions, preservice teachers were highly positive about their cooperation teachers in the area of diversity. However, there were indications of the need for additional experiences in this area to warrant some recommendations. Again, the recommendations are for improving a good working system not to correct a faulty one.

What better statement to make than the following by Percival and Black (2000): “Each person... needs to embrace and celebrate his or her own uniqueness” (p. 151). The authors said this in their discussion about building classroom communities by the acceptance of diversity. Likewise Kyle, McIntyre, Miller, and Moore (2002) expressed the need for bringing the diversity of families

(not just one family) into the school and discussed the duty of teachers to forge effective relationships no matter how diverse their student population may be. As stated by Kyle et al., “The time to establish caring connections is now. We simply cannot afford the cost of waiting” (p. x).

Because diversity involves so much more than ethnicity, it is imperative that cooperating teachers discuss and model how valuable diversity is in the classroom, how each and every child and child’s family offers something remarkable to the classroom community, and ways in which preservice teachers may play a part in bringing together differences in “ethnicity, class, language, sexual orientation, religion, and cultural practices” (p. x1). Cooperating teachers should work with preservice teachers in the planning and developing of lesson plans, unit plans, and projects that celebrate this wide variety of diversity and that explore the possibilities of helping build stronger family connections through family-inclusive projects during the preservice teacher’s placement period. It is recommended that the College of Education redefine what is meant by diversity so that both preservice teachers and cooperating may gain a better understanding of what is expected during the preservice teaching placement.

Other Factors

As is the serendipitous nature of research, much more information is often discovered by a researcher than he or she may have expected to find. This study found that some preservice teachers were concerned about a variety of items that are not specifically a part of the East Tennessee State University College of Education Conceptual Framework but were a part of the 34-item survey. The following information addresses recommendations about those concerns.

Concerns About the Student Teaching Handbook

Because a student teaching handbook is such an invaluable tool for preservice teachers in their student teaching placements, it should communicate expectations and requirements as clearly as possible to both cooperating teachers and to preservice teachers. Therefore, it is recommended that a workshop for cooperating teachers be held prior to the first visit by the preservice teacher to discuss the contents of the handbook in its entirety along with the other cooperating teacher requirements regarding such items as paper work and meetings with College of Education faculty. This workshop should be hosted by the director

of student teaching, the field experience supervisor, and other members of the student teaching supervisory staff.

Specific recommendations for the student teaching handbook follow.

The handbook should reflect the current dimensions of The Conceptual Framework of the College of Education of East Tennessee State University and current information about key university contacts (both faculty members and supervisory staff).

The cooperating teacher should receive the handbook in advance of the first visit by the preservice teacher. The university supervisor should also meet to discuss the information within the handbook with the cooperating teacher. This recommendation may also be met by way of a workshop for cooperating teachers and supervisory staff mentioned previously. The information in the handbook should also be discussed by the cooperating teachers with the preservice teachers. Updated information should be sent to school offices to be added to the handbook.

Examples of completed forms should be added to the handbook along with each blank form. All items within the handbook that must be kept by more than one person involved in the preservice placement process should be made available in duplicate or triplicate format. This will eliminate the burden and expense of making copies by the cooperating teacher and avoid delays of materials being submitted on time.

Regarding Crisis Management

The area of crisis management was included on the 34-item survey. While it is an area that may well fit within the dimension of social responsibility, it should be noted that crisis management is not a specific part of the East Tennessee State University College of Education Conceptual Framework.

A crisis management plan involves everyone in a school as well as others in the outer community. Knowing the importance of this, cooperating teachers should make preservice teachers aware of the crisis management plan in their school. Cooperating teachers and administrators of schools should be asked to meet this need by supplying each preservice teacher with a copy of the crisis management plan of the school, discussing the crisis management plan, and ensuring that each preservice teacher is present for at least two crisis management drills; one regarding such events as severe weather and the other regarding procedures for acts of threat of violence. The preservice teacher should be given information about what measures are taken within the school and community when he or she is assigned to know how to deal with crises. This request should be sent in letter form to all administrators of schools and should be included in the student-teaching handbook.

Dugger and Zabel (2001) reminded the reader that crises do not develop only from an acts of violence but also from natural disasters or life-changing events and said that following any crisis a reaction is experienced by those involved and that there must be preparation to handle an endless variety of crises. The authors also stated that crisis intervention must take place following the crisis to help things get back on track because regular procedures cannot be followed. Preservice teachers should be required to attend a crisis management meeting at their school of placement and/or professional development meetings before and/or during the preservice teaching placement regarding crisis management, prevention, reaction, and intervention. Valuable to the teacher education students' plan of study would be the addition of a crisis management course or workshop.

Regarding Technology

Because all student teachers are required to use technology throughout their student teaching experience, a list of ISTEPP Technology Standards and forms entitled Technology Standards Documentation and Technology Survey for Student Teachers are included in the student teaching handbook. While technology is a vital part of the preservice teacher's agenda and a vital part of the school curriculum, all school districts do not have the funds to supply their school

classrooms with necessary technology equipment. Many times only one computer is found in a classroom beside or behind the teacher's desk –suggesting that it is for teacher-use only or that it will offer only the most limited use for the students in the classroom. In other classrooms the only technology available might be an overhead projector that may or may not be in working order or an antiquated record player. In these situations it is almost impossible for the cooperating teacher to actually model any use of technology in the classroom. It may be also true that because the school does not contain a variety of technological advancements that the teachers within the school have not been trained to use any such instruments and/or do not feel comfortable trying any new equipment they may receive.

The preservice teacher should ask about the availability of technology within the school and make a list of all available materials for use. If the preservice teacher finds that materials are not in working order, the cooperating teacher should be notified to see if items can be repaired or purchased for the appropriate use of the materials. Whether or not materials are available for use, preservice teachers from the College of Education at East Tennessee State University have access to and loan privileges regarding many sources of technology such as digital video cameras, lap-top computers, and compact disc players that they may take into the schools of placement.

Preservice teachers should submit a list of the available equipment (from their placement sites) to their supervisors – and those that are without appropriate sources of technology should be required to seek out those available from the College of Education. Preservice teachers will document in their lesson and unit plans how the technology was infused in the classroom for enhancement of the learning according to the requirements in the student teaching handbook.

Those preservice teachers who have access to technology at their placement locations should also prepare a list of available materials for their student teaching supervisors and request training on and use of such equipment from their mentor teachers. Those with access to such equipment as computer labs, laser disks, smart boards, digital cameras, flex-cams, and other technology should reflect their use in lesson plans and unit plans as much as possible during the preservice teaching experience.

Regarding School Law

It is imperative that preservice teachers understand what is appropriate, necessary, and legal concerning behaviors and actions in the school. Preservice teachers must be aware of what is required according to the law regarding state and

school district policy. They must also be made aware of school policies and procedures that are particular to each of their placement locations.

Preservice teachers (during the preservice teachers' programs of study) must be made more aware of specific local, state, and federal government policies that apply to schools prior to their student teaching placements. Specific school district policy and procedure handbooks should be given to each preservice teacher prior to the first day of placement or on the first day of placement. Cooperating teachers should then discuss such policies with the preservice teacher. As recommended regarding crisis management, a letter should be sent to the administrator of each school requesting that the policy and procedure handbooks be given to each preservice teacher and that each preservice teacher be required to discuss such policies and procedures with the cooperating teacher or a designated administrator.

Regarding Help with Lesson Plans

During the recommended cooperating teacher workshop, teachers should be reminded that all preservice teachers in *all* programs need guidance in developing effective lesson and unit plans. Cooperating teachers should be given guidelines and copies of lesson plan/unit plan formats that are required for use by the preservice teacher and that will be evaluated by the university supervisor.

Cooperating teachers should be asked to offer feedback and guidelines about how to make the lesson plan/unit plan formats more user friendly and more applicable to preservice teaching. These recommendations should be addressed during any format revisions. It is also recommended that more practice in developing lesson plans be included in the Master of Arts in Teaching program.

Implications for Future Practice and Further Research

This study had value because it gave voice to preservice teachers about their perceptions of their cooperating teachers and how those teachers modeled the 10 dimensions of leadership contained in the East Tennessee State University College of Education conceptual framework. While its findings were overwhelmingly positive regarding perceptions about cooperating teachers, several areas were noted in which improvement should and can be made. Most of these improvements can be made through the process of better and clearer communication between the preservice teachers and the cooperating teachers as well as between the cooperating teachers and the College of Education. It is important that this study continue so that communication among these triads can be monitored and refined. The study should also be continued as a means to gain more and updated information that may be used in the College of Education's continuing

accreditation process with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. This study gave evidence that the East Tennessee State University College of Education is very serious about connecting its practice to the Conceptual Framework, and vice versa.

The study also demonstrated that while the Conceptual Framework is the beginning of the process, the work must continue to find how the framework is manifested in the practice of the College of Education. The study then confirmed at least two things. The East Tennessee State University College of Education is doing a good job of applying the framework AND of assessing its program to determine how well it is doing in that regard. The study also demonstrated where the College of Education can continue to make improvements. This having been said, it must also be noted that the survey of preservice teachers perceptions of their cooperating teachers should be continued and refined. All survey items should be reviewed periodically and should be modified to more closely correspond to the dimensions of the East Tennessee State University Conceptual Framework. Also, other methods of administering the survey that would improve the response rate should be explored.

Perhaps the most important reason to continue the study and to foster the evolution of the parts of the study is because the nature of the *subject* of this study cannot help but continue and evolve. The preservice teacher/ cooperating teacher

relationships do not remain the same throughout the period of the student teaching placements. Nor do the relationships end following graduation ceremonies. Many relationships are forged during the preservice placement that last a lifetime and continue to change over that lifetime. Even if the participants never see one another again, the mark made by the cooperating teacher stays with the preservice teacher as he or she moves into his or her own classroom. This study showed that preservice teachers perceived their cooperating teachers positively. Surely this may signify the need to continue to allow the evolving of teacher education programs so that a larger variety of positive experiences may evolve for not only the preservice teachers and the cooperating teachers, but also for the classroom students with whom both teach. In 1996, former President Bill Clinton wrote about America standing between the two great forces of hope and history. It may be appropriate to use what he said about such power and possibility in an analogy regarding the dynamic duo of the preservice teacher and the cooperating teacher: “At the edge of a moment when these two powerful forces are as one... our best is yet to come” (p. 175).

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Cover Letter and Survey I



East Tennessee State University
College of Education

Office of Student Teaching • Box 70614 • Johnson City, Tennessee 37614-1709 • (423) 439-4200 • Fax: (423) 439-7560

May 14, 2002

Dear Teacher Education Graduate,

Congratulations on your recent success! Best wishes for a wonderful future as a professional educator.

As part of an ongoing challenge to make the student teaching experience richer, the student teaching office is sending out this survey in order to better understand the student teacher/cooperating teacher (mentor) relationship.

Your assistance in completing this survey and returning it within seven days from the time you receive it will be greatly appreciated. Your replies and comments are invaluable so please take the time to complete the survey and mail it back to the office.

It is imperative that you complete each section of the survey. Because your replies and comments are to remain anonymous, please do not write your name anywhere on the survey.

Please return all portions of the survey in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided and please adhere to the seven-day period.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "E. Ralston".

Elizabeth W. Ralston, Ed.D.
Director of Student Teaching

Survey of Spring 2002 Teacher Education Graduates
College of Education East Tennessee State University

Dear Teacher Education Graduate,

Congratulations on your recent success! Best wishes for a wonderful future.

As part of an ongoing challenge to make the student teaching experience richer, the student teaching office is sending out this survey in order to better understand the student teacher/cooperating teacher (mentor) relationship.

Your assistance in completing this survey and returning it within seven days from the time you receive it will be greatly appreciated. Your replies and comments are invaluable so please take the time to fill out the survey and mail it back to the office.

It is imperative that you fill out each section of the survey. As your replies and comments are to remain anonymous, please do not write your name anywhere on the survey.

Please return all portions of the survey in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided and please adhere to the seven-day period.

Thank you very much.



-
1. What degree did you receive in May 2002? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)
 - A. BS _____
 - B. MAT _____

 2. What is your area of licensure? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)
 - A. PreK-3 _____
 - B. K-8 _____
 - C. 1-8 _____
 - D. 7-12 _____
 - E. K-12 _____

 3. What was your major area of study? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)
 - F. Elementary Education _____
 - G. Secondary Education _____
 - H. Special Education _____
 - I. Early Childhood Education _____
 - J. Physical Education _____
 - K. Art Education _____
 - L. Music Education _____
 - M. Other (Please write out) _____

 4. What was the grade level of your first placement? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)

Pre-K _____	6 _____	
K _____	7 _____	
1 _____	8 _____	OTHER: (Please list and explain.)
2 _____	9 _____	_____
3 _____	10 _____	_____
4 _____	11 _____	_____
5 _____	12 _____	

5. What was the grade level of your second placement?

- | | |
|-------|----|
| Pre-K | 6 |
| K | 7 |
| 1 | 8 |
| 2 | 9 |
| 3 | 10 |
| 4 | 11 |
| 5 | 12 |

OTHER: (Please list and explain.)

Please circle responses to the following statements according to the scale. Please rank all areas of both of your teaching placements. Please remember to CIRCLE your response.

- 1 =Strongly Disagree
 2 =Moderately Disagree
 3 =Disagree
 4 =Agree
 5 =Moderately Agree
 6 =Strongly Agree

1. My cooperating (mentor) teacher made me aware of the crisis management plan of my school.
 First Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6
 Second Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

2. My cooperating (mentor) teacher introduced me to the administrator, faculty, and staff in my school.
 First Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6
 Second Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. My cooperating (mentor) teacher provided me with my own work area/space.
 First Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6
 Second Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

4. My cooperating (mentor) teacher addressed me as a professional (Mr./ Miss/ Mrs./Ms.) in the presence of the students and colleagues and had prepared others to regard me as a professional.
 First Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6
 Second Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

5. My cooperating (mentor) teacher gave me opportunities to exhibit leadership.
 First Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6
 Second Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

6. My cooperating (mentor) teacher helped me with time management strategies.
 First Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6
 Second Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

7. My cooperating (mentor) teacher helped me develop lesson plans and unit plans.
 First Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6
 Second Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

8. My cooperating (mentor) teacher helped to alleviate stress for me during my placement.
 First Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6
 Second Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

9. My cooperating (mentor) teacher discussed and helped me implement school policies including school-wide and classroom discipline policies.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
10. My cooperating (mentor) teacher cared about me and my success.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
11. My cooperating (mentor) teacher shared resources with me.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
12. My cooperating (mentor) teacher was clear about his/her expectations of me such as arrival and departure times from school and due dates concerning assignments or work.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
13. My cooperating (mentor) teacher used technology in the classroom and shared ways that I could use technology in my own teaching.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
14. My cooperating (mentor) teacher helped me learn about a variety of ways to assess and evaluate student work.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
15. My cooperating (mentor) teacher cared for the students.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
16. My cooperating (mentor) teacher discussed relevant information about the students prior to my working with the students.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
17. My cooperating (mentor) teacher shared helpful personal/professional experiences with me.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
18. My cooperating (mentor) teacher provided immediate and clear feedback.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
19. My cooperating (mentor) teacher discussed school law issues with me.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
20. My cooperating (mentor) teacher shared/modeled effective teaching strategies.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
21. My cooperating (mentor) teacher was positive and made constructive comments and suggestions.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

- 1 =Strongly Disagree
- 2 =Moderately Disagree
- 3 =Disagree
- 4 =Agree
- 5 =Moderately Agree
- 6 =Strong Agree

22. My cooperating (mentor) teacher made me feel confident, competent, and successful.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
23. My cooperating (mentor) teacher prepared me for my solo teaching period.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
24. My cooperating (mentor) teacher expressed pride in the teaching profession.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
25. My cooperating (mentor) teacher helped me deal with issues regarding diversity.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
26. My cooperating (mentor) teacher engaged in and helped me with reflective practice.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
27. My cooperating (mentor) teacher modeled the importance of collaboration.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
28. My cooperating (mentor) teacher fostered critical thinking.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
29. My cooperating (mentor) teacher advocated becoming a lifelong learner.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
30. My cooperating (mentor) teacher was knowledgeable about current trends in education.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
31. My cooperating (mentor) teacher was knowledgeable regarding teaching content.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
32. My cooperating (mentor) teacher was accepting of new ideas and new ways to teach.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
33. My cooperating (mentor) teacher helped me learn about classroom management.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

- 1 =Strongly Disagree
- 2 =Moderately Disagree
- 3 =Disagree
- 4 =Agree
- 5 =Moderately Agree
- 6 =Strong Agree

34. My cooperating (mentor) teacher expressed satisfaction in ETSU guidelines and expectations for cooperating (mentor) teachers.

First Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

Please explain this response:

Second Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

Please explain this response:

Please take the time to write any specific comments regarding your cooperating (mentor) teacher.

Positive Aspects About First Placement: _____

Areas of Improvement In First Placement: _____

Positive Aspects About Second Placement: _____

Areas of Improvement In Second Placement: _____

Appendix B

Cover Letter and Survey II



East Tennessee State University
College of Education

Office of Student Teaching • Box 70614 • Johnson City, Tennessee 37614-1709 • (423) 439-4200 • Fax: (423) 439-7560

June 24, 2003

Dear Teacher Education Graduate,

Congratulations on your recent success! Best wishes for a wonderful future as a professional educator.

As part of an ongoing challenge to make the student teaching experience richer, the student teaching office is sending out this survey in order to better understand the student teacher/cooperating teacher (mentor) relationship.

Your assistance in completing this survey and returning it within seven days from the time you receive it will be greatly appreciated. Your replies and comments are invaluable so please take the time to complete the survey and mail it back to the office.

It is imperative that you complete each section of the survey. Because your replies and comments are to remain anonymous, please do not write your name anywhere on the survey.

Please return all portions of the survey in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided and please adhere to the seven-day period.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "E. Ralston".

Elizabeth W. Ralston, Ed.D.
Director of Student Teaching

Survey of Fall 2002 Teacher Education Graduates
College of Education East Tennessee State University

Dear Teacher Education Graduate,

Congratulations on your recent success! Best wishes for a wonderful future.

As part of an ongoing challenge to make the student teaching experience richer, the student teaching office is sending out this survey in order to better understand the student teacher/cooperating teacher (mentor) relationship.

Your assistance in completing this survey and returning it within seven days from the time you receive it will be greatly appreciated. Your replies and comments are invaluable so please take the time to fill out the survey and mail it back to the office.

It is imperative that you fill out each section of the survey. As your replies and comments are to remain anonymous, please do not write your name anywhere on the survey.

Please return all portions of the survey in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided and please adhere to the seven-day period.

Thank you very much.



1. What degree did you receive in December 2002? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)

- A. BS _____
B. MAT _____

2. What is your area of licensure? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)

- A. PreK-4 _____
B. K-8 _____
C. 1-8 _____
D. 7-12 _____
E. K-12 _____

3. What was your major area of study? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)

- F. Elementary Education _____
G. Secondary Education _____
H. Special Education _____
I. Early Childhood Education _____
J. Physical Education _____
K. Art Education _____
L. Music Education _____
M. Other (Please write out) _____

4. What was the grade level of your first placement? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)

- | | |
|-------------|----------|
| Pre-K _____ | 6 _____ |
| K _____ | 7 _____ |
| 1 _____ | 8 _____ |
| 2 _____ | 9 _____ |
| 3 _____ | 10 _____ |
| 4 _____ | 11 _____ |
| 5 _____ | 12 _____ |

OTHER: (Please list and explain.)

5. What was the grade level of your second placement?

- | | |
|-------|----|
| Pre-K | 6 |
| K | 7 |
| 1 | 8 |
| 2 | 9 |
| 3 | 10 |
| 4 | 11 |
| 5 | 12 |

OTHER: (Please list and explain.)

Please circle responses to the following statements according to the scale. Please rank all areas of both of your teaching placements. Please remember to CIRCLE your response.

- 1 =Strongly Disagree
 2 =Moderately Disagree
 3 =Disagree
 4 =Agree
 5 =Moderately Agree
 6 =Strongly Agree

1. My mentor informed me regarding the crisis management plan of my school.

First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6

2. My mentor teacher introduced me to the administrators, faculty, and staff in my school.

First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6

3. My mentor provided me with my own work area/space.

First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6

4. My mentor treated me professionally.

First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6

5. My mentor gave me opportunities to demonstrate leadership.

First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6

6. My mentor helped me with time management strategies.

First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6

7. My mentor helped me develop lesson plans and unit plans.

First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6

8. My teacher helped to alleviate stress for me during my placement.

First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6

9. My mentor helped me understand and implement school policies such as school-wide and classroom discipline policies.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
10. My mentor cared about me and my success as a pre-service teacher.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
11. My mentor shared resources with me.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
12. My mentor was clear about his/her expectations of me such as arrival and departure times from school and due dates concerning assignments or work.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
13. My mentor used technology in the classroom and encouraged me to use technology in my own teaching.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
14. My mentor helped me employ a variety of ways to assess and evaluate student work.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
15. My mentor cared for the students.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
16. My mentor discussed relevant information about the students prior to my working with them.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
17. My mentor shared helpful personal/professional experiences with me.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
18. My mentor provided immediate and clear feedback.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
19. My mentor discussed school law issues with me.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
20. My mentor shared/modeled effective teaching strategies.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
21. My mentor teacher was positive and made constructive comments and suggestions.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

- 1 =Strongly Disagree
- 2 =Moderately Disagree
- 3 =Disagree
- 4 =Agree
- 5 =Moderately Agree
- 6 =Strong Agree

22.	My mentor made me feel confident, competent, and successful.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
23.	My mentor prepared me for my solo teaching period.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
24.	My mentor expressed pride in the teaching profession.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
25.	My mentor helped me deal with issues regarding diversity.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
26.	My mentor engaged in and helped me with reflective practice.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
27.	My mentor modeled the importance of collaboration.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
28.	My mentor modeled practices that develop social responsibility.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
29.	My mentor modeled lifelong learning.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
30.	My mentor was knowledgeable about current trends in education.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
31.	My mentor was knowledgeable regarding teaching content.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
32.	My mentor was accepting of new ideas and new ways to teach.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
33.	My mentor helped me learn about classroom management.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6

- 1 =Strongly Disagree
- 2 =Moderately Disagree
- 3 =Disagree
- 4 =Agree
- 5 =Moderately Agree
- 6 =Strong Agree

34. My mentor expressed satisfaction in ETSU guidelines and expectations for mentor teachers.

First Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

Please explain this response:

Second Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

Please explain this response:

Please take the time to write any specific comments regarding your experience.

Positive Aspects About First Placement: _____

Areas of Improvement In First Placement: _____

Positive Aspects About Second Placement: _____

Areas of Improvement In Second Placement: _____

Appendix C

Cover Letter and Survey III



East Tennessee State University
College of Education

Office of Student Teaching • Box 70614 • Johnson City, Tennessee 37614-1709 • (423) 439-4200 • Fax: (423) 439-7560

July 24, 2003

Dear Teacher Education Graduate,

Congratulations on your recent success! Best wishes for a wonderful future as a professional educator.

As part of an ongoing challenge to make the student teaching experience richer, the student teaching office is sending out this survey in order to better understand the student teacher/cooperating teacher (mentor) relationship.

Your assistance in completing this survey and returning it within seven days from the time you receive it will be greatly appreciated. Your replies and comments are invaluable so please take the time to complete the survey and mail it back to the office.

It is imperative that you complete each section of the survey. Because your replies and comments are to remain anonymous, please do not write your name anywhere on the survey.

Please return all portions of the survey in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided and please adhere to the seven-day period.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "E. Ralston".

Elizabeth W. Ralston, Ed.D.
Director of Student Teaching

Survey of Spring 2003 Teacher Education Graduates
College of Education East Tennessee State University

Dear Teacher Education Graduate,

Congratulations on your recent success! Best wishes for a wonderful future.

As part of an ongoing challenge to make the student teaching experience richer, the student teaching office is sending out this survey in order to better understand the student teacher/cooperating teacher (mentor) relationship.

Your assistance in completing this survey and returning it within seven days from the time you receive it will be greatly appreciated. Your replies and comments are invaluable so please take the time to fill out the survey and mail it back to the office.

It is imperative that you fill out each section of the survey. As your replies and comments are to remain anonymous, please do not write your name anywhere on the survey.

Please return all portions of the survey in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided and please adhere to the seven-day period.

Thank you very much.



1. What degree did you receive in May 2003? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)
A. BS _____
B. MAT _____

2. What is your area of licensure? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)
A. PreK-4 _____
B. K-8 _____
C. 1-8 _____
D. 7-12 _____
E. K-12 _____

3. What was your major area of study? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)
F. Elementary Education _____
G. Secondary Education _____
H. Special Education _____
I. Early Childhood Education _____
J. Physical Education _____
K. Art Education _____
L. Music Education _____
M. Other (Please write out) _____

4. What was the grade level of your first placement? (Please Check the Response That Applies.)
Pre-K _____ 6 _____
K _____ 7 _____
1 _____ 8 _____
2 _____ 9 _____
3 _____ 10 _____
4 _____ 11 _____
5 _____ 12 _____

OTHER: (Please list and explain.)

9. My mentor helped me understand and implement school policies such as school-wide and classroom discipline policies.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
10. My mentor cared about me and my success as a pre-service teacher.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
11. My mentor shared resources with me.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
12. My mentor was clear about his/her expectations of me such as arrival and departure times from school and due dates concerning assignments or work.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
13. My mentor used technology in the classroom and encouraged me to use technology in my own teaching.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
14. My mentor helped me employ a variety of ways to assess and evaluate student work.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
15. My mentor cared for the students.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
16. My mentor discussed relevant information about the students prior to my working with them.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
17. My mentor shared helpful personal/professional experiences with me.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
18. My mentor provided immediate and clear feedback.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
19. My mentor discussed school law issues with me.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
20. My mentor shared/modeled effective teaching strategies.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
21. My mentor teacher was positive and made constructive comments and suggestions.
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Second Placement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

- 1 =Strongly Disagree
- 2 =Moderately Disagree
- 3 =Disagree
- 4 =Agree
- 5 =Moderately Agree
- 6 =Strong Agree

22.	My mentor made me feel confident, competent, and successful.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
23.	My mentor prepared me for my solo teaching period.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
24.	My mentor expressed pride in the teaching profession.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
25.	My mentor helped me deal with issues regarding diversity.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
26.	My mentor engaged in and helped me with reflective practice.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
27.	My mentor modeled the importance of collaboration.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
28.	My mentor modeled practices that develop social responsibility.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
29.	My mentor modeled lifelong learning.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
30.	My mentor was knowledgeable about current trends in education.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
31.	My mentor was knowledgeable regarding teaching content.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
32.	My mentor was accepting of new ideas and new ways to teach.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
33.	My mentor helped me learn about classroom management.						
	First Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Second Placement	1	2	3	4	5	6

- 1 =Strongly Disagree
- 2 =Moderately Disagree
- 3 =Disagree
- 4 =Agree
- 5 =Moderately Agree
- 6 =Strong Agree

34. My mentor expressed satisfaction in ETSU guidelines and expectations for mentor teachers.

First Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

Please explain this response:

Second Placement 1 2 3 4 5 6

Please explain this response:

Please take the time to write any specific comments regarding your experience.

Positive Aspects About First Placement: _____

Areas of Improvement In First Placement: _____

Positive Aspects About Second Placement: _____

Areas of Improvement In Second Placement: _____

VITA

Patricia Dawn Miller Taylor

Education: East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee;
Elementary Education K-8, B.S., 1992.

East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee;
Secondary Education; Science Concentration, M.ED., 1997.

East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee;
Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, Administration
License, 1999.

East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee;
Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, ED.D., 2004.

Professional Experience: 7th-8th grade teacher, Johnson County School System,
Mountain City, Tennessee, 1993-2001.

Full-time temporary faculty; instructor and supervisor of
student teaching, Department of Curriculum and Instruction,
East Tennessee State University, 2001-2002.

Clinical Supervisor for Field Experience; Instructor,
Department of Curriculum and Instruction,
East Tennessee State University, 2002-Present