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## Emotional Dimensions of Teaching in Elementary Education Preparation

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## Emotional Dimensions of Teaching in Elementary Education Preparation

### Abstract

Student teaching is a pivotal event in teacher education preparation programs, and there is a need to investigate emotions in teaching. This study examined how one elementary program navigated the emotional dimensions of teaching. Findings revealed that the emotional dimensions of student teachers were influenced by individualized factors unique to the teacher; certain emotions were perceived as more acceptable to express; and supervisors needed to support student teachers to manage and respond to the emotional dimensions of teaching. The recommendation is to go beyond the technical and academic aspects of teaching and address the emotional dimensions to best prepare the whole teacher.

### Keywords

teacher education, student teaching, elementary education, edTPA, case study, emotional dimensions of teaching

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# Emotional Dimensions of Teaching in Elementary Education Preparation

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Student teaching is a pivotal event in teacher education preparation programs, and there is a need to investigate emotions in teaching. This study examined how one elementary program navigated the emotional dimensions of teaching. Findings revealed that the emotional dimensions of student teachers were influenced by individualized factors unique to the teacher; certain emotions were perceived as more acceptable to express; and supervisors needed to support student teachers to manage and respond to the emotional dimensions of teaching. The recommendation is to go beyond the technical and academic aspects of teaching and address the emotional dimensions to best prepare the whole teacher.

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## Introduction

Emotions in education are by no means a new terrain, as concerns have been expressed about emotions not receiving much-needed attention in the work of teachers, in the mission of schools, in implementation of educational policy, and in the conduct of educational research (Hargreaves, 2000; Zembylas, 2007). Although emotions are recognized in schools, they are not included as a measurable component of teaching effectiveness. To understand the emotional dimensions of student teachers or pre-service teachers (both terms will be used interchangeably in this study), it is critical that conversations transpire among student teachers, their colleagues, their mentor teachers, and their selves (Pinar, 2004). In these conversations, teacher educators need to gain an understanding of the emotional dimensions of student teachers beyond the technicalities of academic teaching to prepare the *whole* teacher, just as teachers prepare the whole child both academically and non-academically.

Teacher educators need to foster student teachers' understanding of their own emotional experiences with a focus on the positive factors involved during the student teaching experience to ensure success in the classroom (Timošćuk & Ugaste, 2012). There is a need for teachers to learn how to increase their awareness of their own emotions in order to strengthen their effectiveness in the classroom (Sutton, 2004). This increased awareness provides teachers the opportunity to realize emotional barriers and pressures that can harm their teaching abilities. Therefore, attending to these emotions can improve student learning and openness to curriculum adjustments or other necessary actions (Zembylas, 2005).

It is known that teacher education programs prepare teachers for these academic and technical aspects of the classroom; however, unknown is how the other non-academic aspects, specifically emotions, are addressed with student teachers. Since the student teaching experience is a pivotal event in the development of a teacher, it is important to investigate how the emotional dimensions of teaching are managed and responded to during this experience, to ensure full preparedness when leading future classrooms. Furthermore, how these emotions are

addressed in teacher education preparation programs, specifically during student teaching, has been understudied. Therefore, the following two research questions guided this study: (1) What are the emotional dimensions that student teachers encounter during their student teaching experience, and how do they manage and respond to these experiences? and (2) How do supervisors help student teachers manage and respond to the emotional dimensions of teaching?

### Review of the Literature

Teachers' emotions have been studied through psychological and sociological approaches (Zembylas, 2007). From a psychological viewpoint, emotions are not only commonly shared across cultures, but are also limited to personal or privatized experiences and not the associations or engagement with others (Savage, 2004; Zembylas, 2007). Whereas a sociological framework suggests that emotions are constructed through both social and cultural interactions (Savage, 2004; Zembylas, 2007). Combining these two approaches leads to a third framework for understanding emotions, the interactionist approach that argues, "emotion comes into being when biophysical, personal and social experience interact" and "people emotionally respond and react to other people through a social exchange occurring in a given context" (Savage, 2004, p. 27).

Two seminal waves of research have examined the role of emotions in teaching (Zembylas, 2003). The first wave aimed to gain a general understanding of the role of emotions and how schools and stakeholders residing within could benefit from awareness of emotions to combat emotional exhaustion, stress, and burnout. The second wave examined the role of teachers' emotional complexities and social interactions within schools. Teaching is far more than technical or procedural, and it is more than knowing the content to be taught, as "it is a way of *being* and *feeling*, in relation to others" (Zembylas, 2005, p. 469). Additionally, there has been an absence of studying emotions from a political lens. Therefore, there is a great need to understand how school practices force teachers into emotional management and the need to "develop pedagogies that account for the intersections of teacher emotion, power relations, and ideology" (Zembylas, 2003, p. 122).

Supervisors of pre-service teachers should move beyond supporting just the technical aspects of teaching, and they should delve deeper into the emotions of teaching (Fantozzi, 2013). Due to supervisors providing varying levels of support for their assigned pre-service teacher, it remains critical to examine the role and influence of the university supervisor, as this role is often discounted and deemed not as qualified as the classroom teacher/clinical supervisor. Woods and Weasmer (2003) examined the student teaching experience to better understand the expectations supervisors maintain of their student teachers that fall beyond the basic practices of teaching, and these included student teachers acting as role models, caring for students, and developing a passion for the teaching profession. Additionally, the need for clear and timely communication of mutual expectations between schools and universities was noted.

From the beginning it is critical for supervisors to build close relationships with the student teacher in order to determine the means in which to best meet the individual student teacher's needs (McNally et al., 1994). This requires clarification of the roles and support systems of supervisors (Borko & Mayfield, 1995). The student teaching experience should not be a prescriptive experience, meaning all student teachers should not be doing the same thing in the same manner within teacher education programs. It is important to understand the student teaching path, rather than identifying if student teachers begin and finish in the *right* place (Rozelle & Wilson, 2012).

Student teaching is a core component of virtually every teacher education program in the United States. It is important to develop pre-service teachers' understandings of themselves and how their personalities, attitudes, and beliefs can impact who they are as teachers (Jamil et al., 2012; Knobloch & Whittington, 2002). Just as children develop at different cognitive, social, maturational, and emotional levels, so do pre-service teachers as they leap from the role of student to teacher (McNally et al., 1997). Additionally, the notion of student teachers feeling a sense of isolation during their experiences is well documented (Bloomfield, 2010; Knobloch & Whittington, 2002; Koerner et al., 2002; Valencia et al., 2009). The student teachers may feel they are neither a student nor a teacher, but rather, somewhere in the middle as they develop their own teaching identity (McNally et al., 1997). When student teachers do not consider themselves part of the communal group, or consider themselves feeling isolated, it is possible their growth as a teacher is inhibited (Bloomfield, 2010; Knobloch & Whittington, 2002; Koerner et al., 2002; Valencia et al., 2009). Student teachers find themselves wanting to be in charge of the classroom, treated as a colleague, and to be a part of the school community; however, they realize their position is a university student who not yet resides within the inner circle (Koerner et al., 2002).

Many pre-service teachers perceive student teaching as difficult, challenging, and stressful. Pre-service field experiences serve as the highest risk points for stress and burnout (Greer & Greer, 1992). Typically, students are able to perform successfully in their coursework, but since experiences in actual classrooms can be unpredictable, and sometimes undesirable, field experiences become the most stressful portion of programs of study in colleges of education (Greer & Greer, 1992).

Due to their fluid and complex nature, the study of emotions with pre-service teachers is just as convoluted as the emotions themselves. Emotions, "within the educational context, for ethical reasons, do not lend themselves to traditional research methods... [because] they can be quick to occur and quick to change" (Schutz & DeCuir, 2002, p. 125). A systematic means of researching emotional dimensions in teaching has not clearly been identified, as researchers in the field of education have focused primarily on studying the technical or academic aspects of teaching. The majority of studies emphasized the need for teacher education preparation programs to revise their program of study or reconsider the composition of the student teaching experience in order to prepare teachers for the emotional facets and challenges of teaching (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Fantozzi, 2012, 2013; Griffin, 1989; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002; Rozelle & Wilson, 2012; Valencia et al., 2009; Wideen et al., 1998). While the researchers did recognize the need for change in order to develop better prepared practicing teachers, very few studies provided viable, concrete recommendations. Thus, it has become evident that further research is needed on non-academic dimensions of teaching to prepare the whole teacher.

### **Role of the Researcher**

As teacher scholars with extensive practitioner experience, we are dedicated to ensuring effective teacher preparation. After working with preservice teachers in their field placements, we observed a range of emotions and sought to closely examine how teacher educators and mentor/cooperating teachers were supporting their preservice teachers in order to best prepare them for the emotional realities of the classroom upon program completion.

We are committed to examining the role of preservice teachers' emotions, specifically the stress they endure, and extend this to the first years of teaching as a teacher of record. This investment will allow us to begin tying this research to teacher retention and how we, as teacher educators, can better prepare preservice teachers for the more difficult, emotional aspects of teaching that are often forgotten. We paid careful attention to removing our own bias from our research by continuing to focus on the necessity of having effective teacher preparation

programs to train teachers to be successful during their preservice experiences and be best prepared for today's classrooms.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

When studying human emotions, it is important to understand that it is difficult to examine emotions neatly or objectively through quantitative, formulated measures. Merriam (2009) states, "Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (p. 5). In order to fully understand (1) how the emotional dimensions of teaching are addressed during student teaching, (2) how teacher educators and clinical supervisors help student teachers understand the role of difficult emotions in teaching and learning, and (3) how student teachers express the emotional experiences they encounter during student teaching and how they respond to or manage those emotions, it is critical that the researcher did so through an emic, or insider's perspective, as opposed to an outsider's perspective. This allowed rich and meaningful data to be collected that delineated the personal narratives, or histories, of pre-service teachers' emotional experiences in their field placements. For these noted reasons, a case study analysis with semi-structured interviews as the primary research mode was selected to examine how pre-service teachers managed and responded to the emotional dimensions of teaching during their student teaching experience, as well as examine the role of supervisors in this work.

### **Setting**

This study was conducted at a rural mid-sized university located in the southeastern region of the United States and examined one teacher education preparation program, the Elementary Teacher Education Preparation Program. This program leads to a Bachelor of Science Degree and teacher certification in pre-kindergarten through grade five. Throughout the program, the teacher candidates spend over 1,000 hours in different field placements that begin the semester before they are admitted to the preparation program. Upon entry to the program, the pre-service teacher enrolls in a variety of courses held on campus, and each semester they are placed in a field experience. In order to ensure diversity in field placements, each semester teacher candidates are placed in varied grade levels and are placed with a host of supervisors within a multitude of schools with differing populations of students.

University supervisors are faculty (full and part-time) at the university. These faculty members hold advanced degrees and have had a minimum of three years of teaching at the elementary level. Clinical supervisors are classroom teachers who have also had at least three years of teaching experience. Clinical supervisors are selected based on numerous factors including a recommendation by the school level administrator, teaching aptitude, and willingness to mentor teacher candidates. All placements were in public schools located within a 60-mile radius from the college campus, and the pre-service teachers were blocked in small cohorts of three to eight teachers within these selected schools to serve as a support system. As the pre-service teachers moved through the program, the number of hours and teaching responsibilities increased.

The final semester of the student teaching program was comprised of a fifteen-week field placement (600+ hours) in an elementary classroom. Throughout this placement, the student teacher took increasing responsibility in leading the classroom and ultimately assumed full responsibility of the classroom for a minimum of four weeks. Each week, student teachers

were responsible for submitting lesson plans to their clinical supervisor for review and approval, and midway through the semester they planned and taught a three to five-day unit. During the semester, the student teachers were provided with informal daily feedback, weekly evaluations and informal and formal observations of instruction conducted by their university and clinical supervisors. Student teachers were also enrolled in a seminar course, which entailed submitting weekly open-ended reflections to their university supervisor and participating in meetings throughout the semester with their university supervisor on selected topics.

Upon completion of this culminating student teaching placement, teacher candidates graduate and, depending on their successful completion of a state mandated certification assessment, become state-certified educators. Recently, a state mandated certification assessment entitled Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) was adopted. The purpose of the edTPA Elementary Education assessment is to measure novice teachers' readiness to teach, assess both literacy and mathematics in the elementary grades, and is designed with a focus on student learning and principles from research and theory (Standford Center for Assessment, Learning, & Equity [SCALE], 2016). To support the student teachers, on campus support seminars, online feedback, and designated writing days with onsite university supervisors were provided throughout the semester to assist with the development of their required portfolios.

In order to understand if this particular teacher preparation program addressed the emotional dimensions during student teaching, participants were selected for this study by using purposeful sampling. A typical sample of the population of student teachers was selected in order to reflect the average person, situation, or instance of the phenomena (Merriam, 2009). The first sample of participants were eight student teachers who were under the supervision of both a university and clinical supervisor. Participants were selected from a wide range of schools with diverse populations, as well as numerous grade levels. The second sample of participants were three full-time faculty members who served as university supervisors for this cohort of student teachers. The third sample of participants were three clinical supervisors, often referred to as cooperating teachers, who supervised these student teachers. The participants selected remained largely reflective of the population of the identified teacher education preparation program for all participants (student teachers, university supervisors, clinical supervisors). Prior to contacting potential participants and conducting interviews, the researcher requested and received permission from the university Institutional Review Board (IRB).

## **Data Sources**

Multiple sources of data were utilized in order to explore the emotional dimensions of teaching through case study analysis. This ensured greater credibility of findings and allowed for an in-depth understanding of all dimensions of the selected teacher educator preparation program. Member-checking, triangulation, peer debriefing, and bracketing of data were conducted and likely resulted in higher levels of accuracy (Yin, 2009). Specifically, semi-structured interviews served as the major source of data for this study. All participants were interviewed regarding the role of emotions during student teaching. The interviews of university supervisors and clinical supervisors occurred throughout the semester. The interviews of the student teachers occurred at the end of the semester after their experiences in the classroom had concluded. This was important, so they had an understanding that what they shared in the interviews would not have had an impact on their final course grade, allowing them to speak freely about their experiences.

There was a set of previously piloted questions posed to each participant, and probes were used to extend, clarify, or redirect responses. Each participant was asked to sign a consent

form, and upon consent and selection of the participants, they were interviewed in a one-on-one private setting. The interviews for clinical supervisors occurred at the teachers' school sites, and the interviews for university supervisors and student teachers occurred on the university campus. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed for analysis, and coded. Files were password protected to ensure confidentiality.

Another key source of data that were collected and analyzed were the student teachers' open-ended weekly reflections. Student teachers submitted weekly reflections on topics of their choosing to their university supervisors. These reflections resulted in meaningful narratives of student teachers' experiences and how they emotionally managed and responded to the day-to-day actions within the classroom including interactions with students, parents, other student teachers, and their university and clinical supervisors. Lastly, other data sources for this study included a document analysis of relevant materials including the course syllabus for student teaching and support materials (student teaching guidelines and teacher education preparation standards).

## Data Analysis

Data analysis began with transcribing and analyzing the audio-recorded semi-structured interviews for each participant. The primary author engaged in the following data analysis process for each participant prior to the cross-case analysis. First, she read through the transcript two to three times to gain context of the participant's experiences. Second, after initial read throughs, she used a line-by-line open coding approach (Bradley et al., 2007) to identify key words and phrases that emerged as meaningful units that described the essence of the participant's experience. Third, she reviewed the transcripts using axial coding and identified initial themes that emerged from connected codes. Fourth, she identified overarching themes that manifested from the emergent themes. This four-step process was repeated for each participant's transcript. After all transcripts had overarching themes for each participant, a cross-case analysis was completed, where the researcher identified common themes across participant experiences. Those themes are identified as the three main themes for all participants. Table 1 notes the key concepts compiled from the multiple data sources to support the research questions at hand.

**Table 1**

*Data Sources*

Data Source	Research Questions	Key Concepts
Semi-Structured Interviews	Research Questions 2, 3	emotions in teaching, emotions in student teaching, student teaching expectations and requirements, positive and negative emotions, emotional regulation, teacher education, roles of university and clinical supervisors, gender, teacher attrition
Weekly Reflections	Research Questions 2, 3	emotions in student teaching, emotional rules, positive and negative emotions, emotional regulation, student teaching expectations and requirements roles of university and clinical supervisors



ECED Student Teaching Syllabus/Course Packet	Research Questions 1, 2	teacher education, teaching standards, student teaching expectations and requirements, roles of university and clinical supervisors
College of Education Student Teaching Guidelines	Research Questions 1, 2	teacher education, teaching standards, student teaching expectations and requirements, roles of university and clinical supervisors
InTASC Standards	Research Question 1	teacher education, teaching standards
CAEP Standards	Research Question 1	teacher education, teaching standards
ACEI Standards	Research Question 1	teacher education, teaching standards

The second phase of data analysis included a document review of the student teaching course syllabus and support materials. The documents were thoroughly reviewed and coded, and categories were created. After given consent, fifteen student teachers' weekly reflections were selected and de-identified (ranging from six reflections to 10 reflections per participant). The reflections were placed into categories. The reflections were coded based on significant patterns of words and phrases. Any time instances of emotion surfaced those sections were highlighted and identified as either negative or positive emotions.

Inevitably, one's personal biases, perspectives, and prejudices have the potential to cause limitations to the research design's implementation and analyses of a study; therefore, triangulation was conducted. First, member checking was utilized to validate the credibility of the results. Initial findings were shared with the participants in order to seek their feedback to make certain all data were interpreted accurately and captured their thoughts, ideas, and perspectives. Data were returned to the participants to confirm that transcribed data were the intended words and descriptions of the participants. Second, peer debriefing was conducted in order to validate the data collected by sharing the findings with a qualified peer researcher who provided input into the clarity of the themes, which were incorporated into the final findings. Third, bracketing was used to intentionally place the researcher's beliefs about the phenomenon being studied aside throughout the investigation. Applying these criteria assisted in preventing potential biases, prejudices, that the researcher may have inadvertently held during the data analysis and interpretation process.

## Results

Overall, the results of this study concluded that the emotions of these pre-service teachers were prevalent during student teaching. The first finding revealed that "emotional experiences during student teaching were influenced by factors individualized to the student teacher." The second finding noted "positive and certain negative emotions were perceived as more acceptable to express." The third findings highlighted "supervisors need to support the emotions of their student teachers to manage and respond to the emotional dimensions of teaching during student teaching." Furthermore, Table 2 notates identified characteristics and demographics of the participants in this study.

**Table 2**  
*Participant Identified Characteristics*

Characteristic	Student Teacher	University Supervisor	Clinical Supervisor	Recent Program Graduates
Gender				
Female	4	3	3	3
Male	1			
Race				
White	4	3	2	3
Black	1		1	
Grade Level				
PK-K	1		1	2
1 <sup>st</sup> - 3 <sup>rd</sup>	2		1	
4 <sup>th</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup>	2		1	1
Years of Supervision Experience				
1-5		1	1	
6-10		1	1	
11+		1	1	
University Supervisor				
Tenured or Tenured-Track		1		
Clinical Instructor		2		
Years of Teaching K-5 Experience				
1-5			1	3
6-10		2	1	
11+		1	1	

First, findings indicated, *emotional experiences during student teaching were influenced by factors individualized to the student teacher*. The data that speaks to the quality of this findings was evidenced in the data analysis noting that student teachers acknowledged that they felt well-equipped for the technical and academic aspects of teaching but ill-prepared for the emotional realities involved in being a teacher. Each felt as if nothing could have

prepared them for a classroom of their own. They noted that this is partly due to the fact that during student teaching, student teachers are not the ultimate person responsible for what happens in the classroom, rather, their clinical supervisor holds that role. Several student teachers shared experiences in which they were left alone or without support, which was stressful. Most often they were flustered with the routines of the classroom as well as behavior management. One student teacher's reflection at the beginning of the semester revealed an instance of this feeling in the following way:

I remember one day that was particularly stressful...The classroom parapro was not present...When it was time for groups, the computers were not set up. When it was time to pack up, the folders were not packed with the student work and in their cubbies. In addition, the behavior management was off because quite frankly, the classroom parapro for this room has a bit of a fear factor with the students. The entire day, I felt like I was playing catch up, always realizing that I forgot to do something that would normally be done with her assistance. When one member of the team is not present, stress is created, and I saw the effects of that firsthand.

A university supervisor noted in her interview that she believes when student teachers assume lead responsibilities, the student teachers still view the class as someone else's responsibility, and they become overwhelmed because they are not the "teacher" yet; they are still a student.

The student teachers are officially, as they call it, "adulting" while their other college friends are leading the lives of what they once experienced as college students. One university supervisor commented in her interview, "...the expectation of student teaching, planning, and teaching all day, every day and not being a 21-year-old anymore even though they are. They [the student teachers] can't be up all night and in the classroom at seven and feel good." She noted, they are wedged in the middle of being a university student and feeling as if they are not a "real" teacher.

On the contrary, one student teacher stated in a reflection, "It is definitely starting to feel like I am trusted more as a teacher in the room. It's also good to feel like the students trust you and need you." Another student teacher described her experience at her first faculty meeting and her feelings of happiness and belonging after the assistant principal introduced and thanked the student teachers for being at their school. She noted in her reflection, "He told us that we were a part of the faculty and that we were appreciated. I don't know why, but this made me feel happy. I felt like I was really a part of the school." At the end of the semester, another student teacher noted in an interview that he, "...realized when I have my own classroom from the very beginning, I'll be the teacher in a lead role. I won't be the student with the blue name tag on. I'm the teacher with...whatever school name...and they will see me in charge." This student teacher realizes his transition and sees himself ready to be in his own classroom as the teacher in charge, and not just a college student with the discernible little blue badge.

The second finding revealed *positive and certain negative emotions were perceived as more acceptable to express*. The data that speaks to the quality of this findings was evidenced in the data analysis noting that student teachers openly shared positive emotions such as joy, excitement, and pride in self and others, especially their own student's successes. Certain negative emotions such as stress, anxiety, frustration, nervousness, and sadness for others also openly surfaced. Student teachers consistently managed and responded to their emotions, whether intentional or not, as there is a hidden understanding that emotions must be addressed in order to demonstrate their competence as teachers.

When student teachers wrote about feeling happy or described times of excitement, they almost always referred to proud moments involving their students and, occasionally, pride in themselves for having a “good” lesson. In an interview with a student teacher, she was asked “What do you think student teaching has taught you about emotions that you’ll have as a classroom teacher?” The student teacher responded to the prompt in the following manner:

I feel when you come to school and they [the students] see you smiling as soon as they walk in the classroom, they’ll probably be smiling and happy and because you never know. You might be the only smile they see that day...just being a positive influence on the children and being that positive role model and just exhibiting positive behaviors because they’re always watching every second, every minute, every hour. I guess just to enjoy teaching. You have to love it in order to do it because the kids pick up on it if you really don’t want to do it. They’re not going to really want to do it but if they see you enthusiastic or something about something and they’ll be that.

Beyond this, she also noted teachers are watched “every second, every minute, every hour,” so showing negative emotions at any time could reveal to students that teachers are not always happy and are, perhaps, fake.

While student teachers do share positive emotions, negative emotions also emerged and student teachers expressed these feelings freely, which indicated, certain negative emotions may be acceptable to experience and express. Of all the negative emotions felt by the student teachers, feeling stressed-out was the most often written about in reflections and talked about in interviews. In fact, the student teachers expressed this emotion far more than any other and did not seem shamed to divulge events and factors that cause them to feel stress. Many of the causes of stress were the simple technical requirements of student teaching, which included being in a new placement from the previous semester, behavior management, developing lessons, learning new content, being evaluated, increasing teaching responsibilities, and completing their edTPA portfolio to attain their teaching credentials.

One source of stress that some student teachers openly revealed was evaluations of their instruction by their supervisors. One student teacher wrote in a reflection at the beginning of the semester the following:

With student teaching I may be able to rehearse my lessons, and be as prepared as I can ahead of time, but when the lesson actually begins, and my evaluator, my teacher, starts to take notes based on my every word and action, I can almost feel my stress level rising...I also feel that my stress builds because of the debrief that I know is going to happen at the end, which is a different type of stress because now I have listened to all of the comments whether good or bad that my teachers think about my teaching...I know that my current and previous supervisors are only trying to make me the best teacher I can be, and for that I am grateful, but I still find the whole process stressful.

Student teachers openly indicated the workload was stressful. The workload both inside and outside of the classroom overwhelms beginning teachers who are still fine-tuning basic technicalities of teaching; they find it incredibly difficult to balance all the responsibilities of being a teacher. One teacher described her feelings of stress in a weekly reflection in the following manner:

Even though this was a good week for me, I had some stressful moments outside of the classroom. I was feeling really overwhelmed trying to plan my

math lessons for next week, because I am still trying to adjust to being in kindergarten after being in fifth grade last semester.... I went to school just feeling stressed and overwhelmed. I didn't have a bad day, but it wasn't a good day either. Honestly, it is all a blur to me right now.

In all these feelings of being stressed-out and overwhelmed, student teachers also blatantly discussed their feelings of being tired and exhausted, both physically and mentally, and they do this because they believe or have learned that it is acceptable to express these negative emotions. At the beginning of the semester, one student teacher wrote:

The first week in my classroom was fun! Exhausting, but fun! I have never been so exhausted, mentally, and physically. This week, a lot of information was placed on my plate and I'm trying to get the feel of how things run at this school and in my classroom. I'm sure things will get better as the semester continues. Right now, I'm just taking it one day at a time, but my brain is on overload from all of this new information!

In turn, even when the student teachers experienced negative emotions in their placements, they consistently put a positive twist on the circumstance, so the student teachers possessed the notion that schools are to be "happy" places, and negative emotions should be controlled, especially in front of students, supervisors, and parents. The student teachers disguised feelings of anger by using more gentle terms such as "upset me" or "felt discouraged," and they admitted to masking those harsher negative feelings and faking positivity instead. There were instances noted where student teachers were shunned by the clinical supervisor for crying because of "bad" lessons or management. One student teacher in an interview noted how she and her clinical supervisor handled emotions differently. This led the student teacher to say, "I guess I need to be a little...I don't know – have tougher skin, so the kids don't see me crying."

One clinical supervisor in an interview indicated while it is acceptable to show emotions, it is unacceptable to show emotions in front of children. In her interview, she stated that she explicitly tells student teachers her exact feelings of being "happy" or "sad" because a certain event occurred, and "we always do it in a closed environment not around students...it just makes it much easier." A student teacher also maintained the notion that unacceptable emotions should not be brought into the school building. She stated, "Leave emotions back home – you're to work with the kids. You don't bring your personal life to work at all. I was very prepared for that because it was reiterated all the time."

One student teacher was asked, "Was there anything that ever made you feel angry or caused you to feel angry?" and she stated:

I guess being stressed – not angry at the students that much, but some days where I felt like maybe just exhausted or tired. Or I didn't teach that lesson right, or how can I work better at not getting agitated or aggravated. I guess just angry at myself.

Additionally, another key factor stressor, was the assessment mandate set forth by the state for certification. To address the call for increased accountability states are adopting the edTPA. The edTPA situates the student teachers in a dual role as both a student and a teacher, as they are assessed as both. Moreover, the student teachers understood that their work would be evaluated by a source outside of their teacher preparation program, and this also caused them to feel stressed-out and apprehensive. Student teachers acknowledged that the edTPA was

a high stakes assessment, and even though they felt prepared for the content of each of the tasks, the whole process of the edTPA, was not only confusing and frustrating, but also emotionally draining and physically exhausting.

Undoubtedly, the edTPA served as a core source of stress for the student teachers and negative emotions consumed them until the day they officially submitted their required edTPA portfolios. It was not until after the student teachers submitted their work that they began expressing more positive emotions and truly enjoying their experiences in the classroom. The student teachers experienced feelings of stress and frustration, and those feelings seemed to have hindered their personal and professional growth as teachers during their experience. Simply said, the student teachers lost focus of their final experience in learning to teach under the guidance of a mentor teacher, as they remained fixated on the quest to meet the bottom-line – their certification.

The third findings noted that, *supervisors need to support the emotions of their student teachers to manage and respond to the emotional dimensions of teaching during student teaching*. The data that speaks to the quality of this findings was evidenced in the data analysis noting that while there are no specific standards set forth regarding the roles of supporting student teachers' emotions, supervisors played an integral role in the emotional development of the student teachers. However, each supervisor supports their student teacher differently, and some of these approaches were noted by the participants as inequitable.

When supervisors recognized a student teacher was struggling, most supervisors moved quickly into action to support the student teacher on an individual basis. Supervisors expressed empathy and companionship by telling stories of similar personal experiences. One university supervisor stated, "You know it's important to let them know you've gone through the same thing, and you can tell them about a similar time you've had." One of the student teachers stated in her interview that, "...in Senior Seminar [co-requisite course to student teaching] she [university supervisor] was able to talk to us a lot about her own experiences in the classroom, and we could tell her this and that happened and she would always have a story or advice...stories about kids are things they'll never forget."

When interviewed, every clinical and university supervisor discussed the importance of building relationships with their student teachers early in order to support them emotionally. One university supervisor noted that these relationships are necessary, "So, when those times of crying come on, they'll feel like they can come to me and it's not going to be a sign of weakness...just genuine emotions with another human being." Student teachers recognized the importance of relationships with their supervisors. They know that difficult conversations are much easier when a relationship has been established and they feel like they are in a "safe spot" with their supervisors. In an interview, one student teacher stated, "All of my emotions were addressed because it was easy to go to my supervisors because I felt supported from the very beginning...I knew they were just a text or email away and I was comfortable going to them no matter what the question or problem was."

The interviews revealed that clinical supervisors are likely to recognize their role in supporting student teachers' emotions. One clinical supervisor, a first-time supervisor of a student teacher, was asked what advice she would give to other clinical supervisors to best support the aspects of teaching that caused difficult emotions, and she responded by saying,

You need to be open and honest...there is a relationship built between the clinical supervisor and student teacher. If you can find out what they're interested in from the very beginning and find out about them personally and build that trust, it makes it easier to have harder conversations later because they feel comfortable talking to you.

The incorporation of support meetings on campus that take place at the very beginning of the student teaching semester and at the very end of the semester prior to student teaching proved to be successful. When asked how the teacher education program addresses emotions, one student teacher responded:

I think we are very supported in meetings we have on campus beginning in Curriculum [first class in the program of study] all the way to student teaching. There are previous students who come in and tell us about their experiences and give us advice and we also get to ask questions. That really helped me feel better and less nervous - even though you really have to experience it for yourself to know how to handle your own emotions in schools.

One other student teacher recognized faculty at the university gave fair warning at the beginning of the semester, in that student teachers were told student teaching would be an incredibly busy semester and consume a lot of time outside of the school hours. This student teacher stated in a reflection mid-way through the semester:

I know that in the pre-field experience seminars we spoke about how much time student teaching will actually take from your social lives, but I really thought it was mostly scare tactics. It may have taken 8 weeks for me to finally figure this out, but it was no scare tactic. They were speaking the truth.

In an interview with a university supervisor, she was asked if she believed she supported the emotions of her student teachers, and she responded:

I think we do on an individual basis when we see a student in crisis. I think we have procedures in place to where we address that and problem-solve that. I'm not sure that we do it holistically, and we don't do it preventatively that I...I think preventatively we do it only in the aspect of building relationships.

In summary, this study is significant in that there is a need for teacher education preparation programs to re-envision the student teaching experience to prepare teachers for the emotional facets and challenges of teaching. Additionally, there is a need for more collaboration between the university, the supervisors, the schools, and the student teacher. It is crucial that teacher preparation programs begin to bridge technical and academic aspects of teaching and, in turn, teacher preparation programs need to develop a framework for how teacher education programs can best prepare the whole teacher. The inevitable emotions that inhabit the teaching practice requires attention to avoid stress, burn-out, and attrition in the profession.

This study was not without limitations. Because the participants were only one small sample that was representative of a single elementary teacher preparation program, findings may not be generalizable to other preparation programs. The time in which interviews took place during the semester could have also been a factor that served as a limitation of the study as student teachers were interviewed after the semester concluded, the other participants (university supervisors and clinical supervisors) were interviewed throughout the semester. For the university and clinical supervisors, their responses could have revealed different information depending on what was happening at that time with their assigned student teachers. Lastly, a limitation was the short-sighted use of a line-by-line manner instead of focusing on shorter units and units longer than an arbitrary line of text (Chenail, 2012).

## Discussion

Student teachers in this study experienced, shared, managed and responded to a wide range of emotions, and much of this can be attributed to their individualized factors unique to them. Even with all of the stress expressed, in the end the student teachers in this study were grateful for their experience and felt prepared for their own classroom. Student teachers understood emotions in teaching were unavoidable; thus, they openly shared their emotional experiences on how they managed and responded to those experiences, by working collectively with their supervisors to navigate these stressors. This study of student teachers' emotions revealed important findings and implications for teacher preparation programs in support of developing the whole teacher. Re-envisioning teacher preparation in order to prepare teachers who have a full understanding of the emotional facet of teaching, beyond just the technicalities of teaching must become a focus, specifically positive emotions (Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2012). From the findings, it is evident that teacher preparation programs need to provide further support to ensure that programs focus on both the academic and emotional dimensions of teaching becoming the norm rather than the exception in preparing the whole teacher. Moreover, further research is needed in order to best prepare teachers for classrooms of their own, so they, in turn, are able to respond to and meet the emotional needs of their own students and, in doing so, avoid stress and burn-out to remain in the classroom.

Thus, teacher education programs need to develop these universal centers of care and concern and support the emotions of pre-service teachers through conversations that are complicated (Pinar, 2004). Caring teachers listen and respond differentially to individual student needs, and when teachers respond to diverse needs emotional and trusting bonds are formed. It is not until these relationships are formed and students know they are cared for, that real learning inside and outside of classrooms can transpire.

Additionally, these findings provide a suggestion for teacher education programs to include strategies to support the emotional dimensions of teachers, specifically to combat the stressors of the state certification assessment. Student teachers' individual personalities and confidence levels can also be connected to formal evaluations of teaching. Furthermore, the student teachers' individual personalities clearly contributed to how they responded to certain contexts, such as stress and burnout (McCarthy et al., 2009). For example, the unexpected finding of edTPA being a predominant stressor during student teaching is timely as this assessment is being adopted in numerous states. While there is very little research on how the edTPA impacts student teachers' emotions, the stress that the student teachers experienced directly aligns with the recent work of Greenblatt (2016), where she stated:

On balance, many candidates feel overwhelmed by the edTPA's requirements on top of an already stressful student teaching experience...student teachers were reduced to tears because of the pressure they felt to pass the edTPA while keeping up with their other personal and academic responsibilities. Teacher candidates have reported sleep deprivation, stress, and severe effects on personal relationships and their health. (p. 52)

Of note, empirical evidence suggests that candidate performance on the edTPA is marginally predictive of teacher value-added (Goldhaber et al., 2016). Additionally, we do not know whether implementation of the edTPA within teacher preparation programs could lead to changes that result in more prepared teacher candidates. This is particularly important because the edTPA is described by its developers as an educative assessment that supports candidate learning and preparation program renewal (edTPA, 2015).



Thus, the dissemination of these findings is vital to re-envisioning our teacher preparation programs. Considering the results of this study and knowing that teaching is far more than technical or procedural, emotions in teaching are inevitable. Positive emotions and negative emotions surface at different times and, for a range of reasons, are openly and regularly expressed by student teachers and recognized and supported by their supervisors. It is crucial for programs to understand the importance of addressing the complex emotions that emerge during student teaching. When novice teachers enter their own classroom, they need to be well-equipped to handle their own emotions that they will inevitably experience supporting the emotional dimensions of teachers. It is time to ensure teacher education supports the development of the whole teacher, specifically during student teaching, just as teachers support the development of the whole child in schools.

Lastly, there is a call for the further development of more explicit roles and responsibilities of supervisors through training that includes how to support student teachers' emotions. Overall, the findings met the intended goal of gaining a rich and deep understanding of how teacher preparation programs prepare and develop the whole teacher to navigate both the technical and academic aspects of teaching, as well as the non-academic and emotional dimensions of teaching in order to improve classroom practices.

Concluding thoughts have led to four recommendations for future research. The first recommendation we have for future research is to examine other teacher education programs to determine if and how programs explicitly address emotions in teaching. The second recommendation is to examine the personalities or dispositions of student teachers more closely and how this impacts the emotions they experience during student teaching. In this examination it would also be important to determine how the personalities and dispositions of supervisors and student teachers plays a role in building relationships. A third recommendation is that different programs such as middle grades education, special education, and secondary education examine the emotional experiences of their student teachers to determine if elementary student teachers encountered similar or dissimilar emotional experiences. The fourth and final recommendation is to conduct an in-depth study of student teachers' emotional experiences, specifically, focused on edTPA in order to identify specific elements that cause stress and to identify evidence-based practices that can be used to alleviate said stress.

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