5-2021

Student and Teacher Relationships At Secondary Level

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

STUDENT AND TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS
AT SECONDARY LEVEL

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

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College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
School of Teacher Education
Educational Studies

May 2021

This Dissertation by: Christine Fisher

Entitled: *Student and Teacher Relationships at Secondary Level*

has been approved as meeting the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Education in College of Education and Behavioral Sciences in School of Teacher Education, Program of Educational Studies

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ABSTRACT

Fisher, Christine. *Student and Teacher Relationships at Secondary Level*. Published Doctor of
    Education dissertation, University of Northern Colorado, 2021.

Interpersonal relationships between teachers and students built within a learning context

have a significant influence on the development of learners' social and emotional life. Higher

levels of engagement, attachment, and motivation are common among students who strongly

connect with their teachers. This study aimed to obtain a deeper understanding of care related to

student-teacher connection from students' experience. Noddings Theory of Care believes that

caring associations are ontologically essential; thus, they play a great part in the development of

student's learning process. However, care can fail to realize the expected outcomes according to

Noddings' theory if it is misinterpreted as approachability. Phenomenology research design was

used to understand the experience of teachers in building relationships between teachers and

students. A face-to-face interview was used to collect data from 12 participants enrolled in a

teaching program. Thematic analysis was primarily used to analyze the data. NVivo 12 software

program was also used to code the themes and sub-themes. Five themes emerged, including

building positive interpersonal relationships with students, demonstrating interest and

communicating concern, caring teachers provide academic and social goals, engaging, and going

the extra-mile at both class and individual levels. Students' experiences regarding care were

fundamental and the bedrock of the model of care that a teacher exhibits within a classroom

context. Teachers tend to display activities and features of care that are in line with Noddings'

model of care. Future studies are needed to develop, test, and validate the instruments used to

assess teacher care expressions founded on Noddings' (2013) model. Teachers' care aspects are receptive and demonstrate conducts that display relatedness or connection with students. The description of care facets found in this study is similar and different to some extent from Noddings' (2013) model.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank Dr. Derek Gottlieb, my dissertation chair. He pushed my writing to levels I never thought I could write. Without his guidance and patience, I would not complete this research project special to me. I am forever indebted to you, Dr. Gottlieb. I want to thank my dissertation committee, Dr. Jenni Harding, Dr. Michelle Holmes, and Dr. Connie Stewart, for their patience and feedback. All of my committee members challenged me to look at my research with a different perspective. I would also like to thank my classmates in cohort three. I could not have succeeded in this doctoral program without their support and friendships. I especially would like to thank the late Scott Miller, whose phone calls and texts got me through my first three years. I miss your smile every day!

To Ken Mumm, Gary Stubbs, Pam Pam Gallagher, and the late Donaleen Messersmith thank you for seeing me while I was your student. You accepted me, the good with the bad. I always felt nurtured, safe, and challenged while in your classrooms.
The relationships you formed with your students, including myself, have been models for me throughout my teaching career.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, who, without your support, I would have never made it. My parents, Judy and Steve, your unwavering support and patience with me is more than that I could have asked for. You kept me going when I wanted to give up. To my brothers, Mike and Thomas, thank you for being my cheerleaders. You both have always been there to listen to me when I needed to vent. Lastly, thank you to my babies, Roxie, Bella, Bailey, and

Eilís. You have always been right at my side while I spent many hours spent writing and

working in the "big green" chair, providing comfort.

DEDICATION

The thing I loved the most – and still love the most about teaching – is that you can connect with an individual or a group and see that individual or group exceed their limits.

—Mike Krzyzewski

I want to dedicate this work to all of my former, current, and future students. I have learned so much from each one of you. I could not be the teacher I am today without the relationships formed with all of you.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The interpersonal relationships that students and teachers cultivate with each other, both within and beyond the classroom, profoundly impact students' social and emotional development and life experiences. Research has revealed that students who feel a strong sense of connection and relatedness with their teachers experience higher levels of "engagement, motivation, and attachment to classrooms and schools, which in turn can foster high levels of persistence, achievement, and attainment" (Cooper & Miness, 2014, p. 265). A sense of connection and solidarity between students and teachers is an essential component of an educational relationship. Students believe they can confide in their teachers and receive feedback and support. Noddings claims the desire to care for others and encourage their moral development is a crucial teaching element. Noddings further suggests the act of caring is a mutual responsibility shared by both teachers and learners (Noddings, 1988). While many teacher preparation pathways emphasize a best practices approach to pedagogical technique, Noddings' theory implies that developing capacities around care should also be fundamental (Noddings, 1988).

Noddings is one of several theorists to focus on emotional or dispositional aspects of student-teacher relationships. Of course, all healthy educational relationships involve student and teacher satisfaction with the process and high levels of mutual attunement. For example, Boynton and Boynton (2005) showed that healthy teacher-student relationships depend on trust, mutual respect, empathy, and companionship. Meanwhile, a study by Casas et al. (2013) suggested that student satisfaction depends upon the degree of teacher care a student perceives.

However, teacher care, as Noddings conceives of it, is rarely studied directly. At present, research has tended to focus on identifying the most effective methods by which teachers can accommodate their students' needs (Fuller, 2014). Student's needs are related to care as Noddings would have recognized it but focusing on student's needs only explores "care" indirectly, if at all.

Therefore, an exploration of teacher candidates' experiences with and perceptions of teacher care stands to yield significant empirical insights on an important phenomenon that Noddings theorizes in philosophical terms. Understanding how pre-service teachers conceive of themselves as carers and conceive of the educational process in relation to caring, can help ground Noddings' theory in lived experience, and it can also guide teacher preparation in the interest of ensuring classroom teachers have the kind of disposition that promotes healthy relationships in education.

Statement of Problem

Teachers at the secondary level are often overly concerned with their students' academic success. This is not entirely their fault as recent decades of educational accountability policies have increased the precarity of teachers' jobs and made both tenure and in some cases pay dependent upon student performance on standardized tests (Gottlieb, 2016, 2020). No matter the cause, students' emotional well-being has predominantly fallen by the wayside. Unfortunately, even where schools and policymakers recognize the need to address social and emotional learning, this need is often justified in terms of social and emotional learning's impact on student achievement (Finn & Hess, 2019).

The entire approach, which places student achievement at the center of the educational mission, defies Noddings' care theory. Noddings' theory suggests teachers must cultivate caring

relationships with their students to do any genuine educational work. However, these efforts are only recognized and rewarded insofar as they benefit test scores. Further, despite established connections between socio-emotional development and academic success, teacher caring is infrequently cultivated in secondary teacher preparation programs. Indeed, "care" is often treated as an ancillary part of a teacher's job. Namely, it only seems to arise when an explanation of a student's lackluster academic performance is called into question, or when a student is coping with the effects of a trauma (Frieze, 2015). According to Noddings, this misconstrues the foundational role care plays in education. Noddings' theory suggests that nothing will fundamentally improve until teachers and teacher candidates recognize the proper place of care in educational relationships.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative phenomenological study's main purpose was to understand and humanize teacher care and evaluate the robustness of Noddings' theorization of care. This study accomplished this by: (a) comparing Noddings' theory of teacher care to pre-service teachers' reflections on their own experiences of care, and by (b) investigating the methods and strategies associated with positive experiences of teacher care as described by participants in the study. Garnering perceptions of teacher care from former secondary students who are now teacher candidates in a teacher prep program is fundamental in identifying methods and strategies associated with positive experiences of teacher care. Further, these perceptions can be used to evaluate the robustness of Noddings' theorization of care. Broadly, the study sought to include an evaluation of teacher candidates' and teachers' fundamental knowledge of care behaviors and identify common themes and practices present within their secondary-school experiences to identify the caring strategies that can be mutually beneficial in a classroom setting. In this regard,

this study purposefully explored the educational system's mental, physical, and emotional

landscapes.

The study's primary objectives were:

1.   To understand and humanize teacher care as it appears in the real lives of students.

2.   To evaluate the robustness of Noddings' theorization of the same.

The Significance of the Study

The present study contributed to the existing body of research on teacher-student

relationships by centering Noddings' theory of care. As discussed in the next chapter, there is

robust literature on social and emotional learning and trauma-informed pedagogy. Still, these

treat students' emotional lives only as affordances or obstacles to traditional academic

achievement. Noddings' theory, by contrast, suggests the emotional work signified by "care" is

central to education as such. However, Noddings' theory is not centered in teachers' educational

programs and future teachers often have an overly-technocratic view of teaching and learning.

Further, policymakers and other educational stakeholders lack concrete examples of how

care manifests in practice. Therefore, research findings could afford practitioners in the field a

deeper understanding of teacher care to inform practice and policy. Specifically, research

findings could be used to: (a) critique teacher preparation curriculum in terms of their inclusion

or exclusion of teacher care practices, (b) critique educational policies in terms of their attention

to teacher-care issues, (c) restructure teacher preparation curricula to center teacher-care issues,

(d) re-write policy to devote proper attention to teacher care, (e) provide support for constructs of

Noddings' Theory of Care and, (f) provide support for the use of elements of Noddings' Theory

of Care in informing teacher preparation curriculum and educational policy. The connection

between the potential use of the research findings and the research questions are identified in

Table 1.

Table 1

Connection Between Research Questions and Potential Use of the Findings

Research Question	Use of Research Findings
How do teacher candidates describe the phenomenon of teacher care as they experienced it during their high school years?	(a) critique teacher preparation curriculum in terms of their inclusion or exclusion of teacher care practices. (b) critique educational policies in terms of their attention to teacher-care issues. (c) restructure teacher preparation curricula to center teacher-care issues. (d) re-write policy to devote proper attention to teacher care.
How do these descriptions of teacher care compare with the way Noddings describes care in education?	(e) Provide support for constructs of Noddings' Theory of Care. (f) Provide support for the use of elements of Noddings' Theory of Care in informing teacher preparation curriculum and educational policy.

Research Questions

Q1   How do teacher candidates describe the phenomenon of teacher care as they experienced it during their high school years?

Teacher candidates were uniquely positioned for questions eliciting a description of

teacher care. They had been secondary students, and so they could reflect upon this public

phenomenon. Additionally, they had decided to enter the teaching profession as secondary

teachers, which implies they had particular views on the main purposes schooling is supposed to

serve and the kinds of impacts they expected and wanted to have on the world. Eliciting their

descriptions of teacher care as they experienced it revealed the shared phenomenon and

implicitly spoke to caring's place in each participants' hierarchy of educational values. Further, garnering insight from this population allowed the researcher to identify methods and strategies associated with teacher care's positive experiences as described by participants in the study as well as the prevalence of care strategies used in the classroom. These research findings could inform teacher preparation curriculum as it relates to the inclusion of care practices and in addressing care issues, identify teacher care issues that need to be informed by educational policies, and potentially informing policy toward teacher care.

      Q2   How do these descriptions of teacher care compare with the way Noddings describes care in education?

Exploring participants experiences of care and then comparing them with Noddings' theory of care will either provide additional support or debunk some of Noddings constructs. This analysis could also identify potentially new constructs of teacher care not otherwise identified in the literature. Research findings for this research question could be used to provide support for constructs of Noddings' theory of care and provide support for the use of constructs from the theory of care to inform teacher preparation curriculum and educational policy.

Positionality

I wanted to conduct this research study because I teach future teachers in a teacher education program. I am also a former high school teacher who feels teacher and student relationships are essential to student academic success and emotional well-being. I have been directly impacted by several caring teachers when I was a student in high school. While in high school, I was an above-average student, who took advanced placement courses, but unfortunately, I have mental health issues caused many problems. I had a group of teachers I connected with because they saw me, accepted my mental health issues and academic skills, and help me succeed in high school. Unfortunately, after I graduated high school, the school testing

era focused on American schools' academic scores. I witnessed schools and, therefore teachers, were singularly focused on academic scores. I believe this focus affected teachers being able to focus on students' emotional development. I intended to conduct meaningful research to benefit future secondary teacher educators. I wanted to show how important it is to connect with students rather than focus on students' academic skills. In today's school environment, students need to have positive student and teacher relationships to increase their academic and emotional skills and development.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the research topic explored by this study. Specifically, the chapter provided a statement of the problem, purpose of the study, identified the significance of the study, and provided the research questions under exploration. Ultimately, the purpose of this study was to understand and humanize teacher care and to evaluate the robustness of Noddings' theorization of care. This was accomplished by: (a) comparing Noddings' theory of teacher care to pre-service teachers' reflections on their own experiences of care, and by (b) investigating the methods and strategies associated with positive experiences of teacher care as described by participants in the study. The population selected for recruitment within the study was uniquely positioned to offer valuable insight to answer the research questions. The following chapter, Chapter 2, will provide a review of the literature regarding the research topic followed by the methodology used to answer the research questions in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 will present the research findings and Chapter 5 will provide an overall discussion regarding the research findings to include a discussion of the implications of these research findings for teachers and policymakers and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The interpersonal relationships students and teachers cultivate with each other, both within and beyond the classroom, affect the students' educational experiences and social and emotional development, especially in their secondary-school experience (Davis & Dupper, 2004). This chapter reviews the literature relevant to my study. Specifically, I review literature describing and interpreting Nodding theory of care, literature exploring student experiences and perceptions of teacher care, the literature on teacher candidate attitudes and dispositions, and literature on the methodological practices and uses of phenomenology. The criteria for selecting resources for this study involved searches with keywords such as: caring in teaching, care theory, Noddings' ethic of care, student perceptions on teachers who are caring, student-teacher relationships, and phenomenology. The sources of literature include journals, reports, books, and other academic publications.

Noddings' Theory of Care

Noddings (2003) understands care through an ethical and a maternal lens, contending that caring relationships are ontologically fundamental and play a crucial part in human development and therefore education. Accordingly, in this relationship of care, its main elements are the two parties involved, the one caring and the one cared-for (Noddings, 2003)

For a student-teacher relationship to occur, Noddings' care theory states there has to be engrossment, commitment, and motivational shift as illustrated in Figure 1. Engrossment is a

characteristic response to one's commitment; engrossment describes a scenario where another person's situation temporarily takes over the consciousness of the other in the caring relationship (Noddings, 2003).

Figure 1

Noddings' Characteristics of Care and Activities of Care
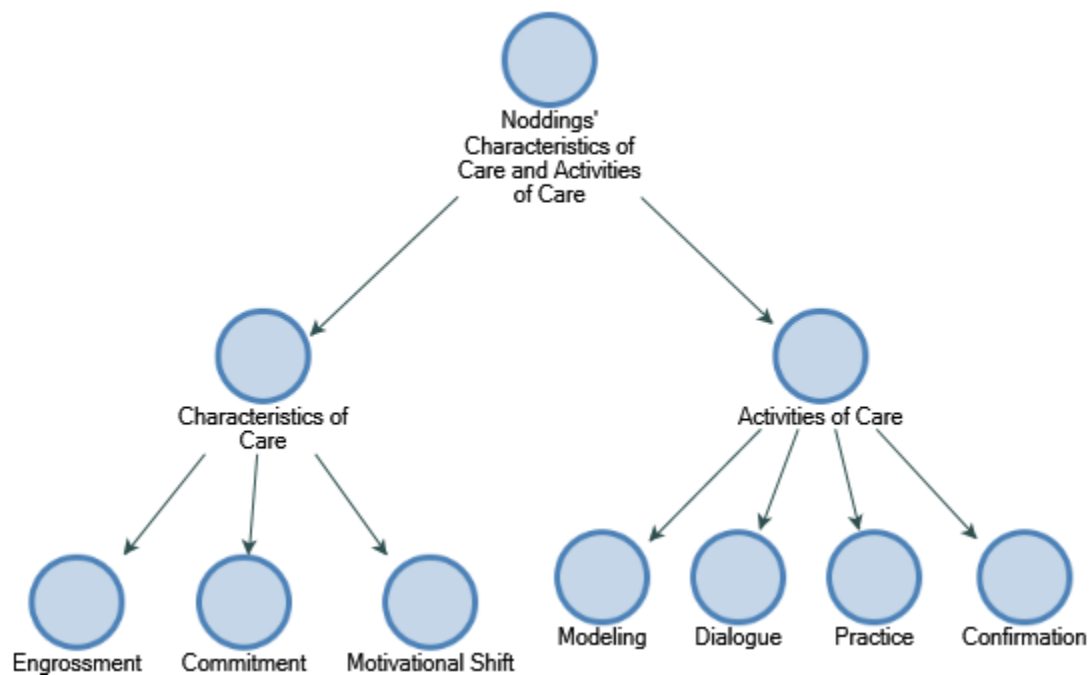
In describing commitment, Noddings (2003) says when the one caring is engrossed, "the cared-for 'fills the firmament'" (p. 74). The one caring's attention is wholly dedicated to the cared-for; that is Noddings' "commitment." For the caring relationship to thrive, attention must be diverted from oneself to create room for the other's existential condition. Essentially, the intention to care, this commitment, when coupled with receptivity, disposedness, or sympathy, is a precursor to engrossment. Engrossment, as Noddings (2003) argues, causes motivational

displacement, in which the needs of the other are taken on as the needs of the self. Ultimately, thinking on the other's behalf manifests the activity of care.

Further, Noddings' theory holds that the caring relationship is bidirectional, characterized by a give-and-take dynamic. It is not enough for a carer's intentionality to commit to the other and to experience engrossment, with its motivational displacement. It is always possible for the carer to misunderstand the needs of the other, and therefore for the carer's action to cause offense or even harm to the other. Thus, a reciprocal reception of care must result from every caring gesture, accompanying engrossment and coupled with the motivational displacement of the caregiver to the cared-for. That is to say, carers must be attentive to the effects of their actions, to the way their actions are received. The cared-for's reception of care as care completes the circuit of the caring relationship.

Although Noddings' care theory takes its cue from human nature, she also acknowledges we cannot count on our natural responses—we need to cultivate ethical care, as well. Noddings (2003) holds in situations where natural caring is inadequate, there is a need for ethical caring to be summoned up. Caring is "natural," which means it is not wholly artificial. However, "ethical caring" refers to a cultivated extension of this natural impulse. Natural caring exists between mother and child, says Noddings. Properly caring for others more generally, or for the non-human world, requires a translation of the natural sentiment.

This explanation brings up the need for the training of care where it is naturally insufficient. Noddings (2003) prefers the use of moral education in nurturing ethical ideals, thus making training the bridge that fills the gap where there is no natural care, as between strangers. For instance, while educators are supposed to care for their students, sometimes there is internal conflict related to feeling obligated but undermotivated to act, perceiving a student has behaved

in a way that merits punishment, and a general feeling of apathy (Noddings, 1988). In such a circumstance, Noddings argues that the memories of ideal pictures of individuals caring and being cared for can help teachers to act morally, which is to say, demonstrate care properly. A caring teacher should demonstrate the following: modeling, practice, dialogue, and confirmation to their students (Smith, 2017; Thijs & Fleischmann, 2015). From the students' perspective, for them to refer to a teacher as caring, there must be some form of action displaying support and connection elements (Cassidy & Bates, 2005; DuBois & Silverthorn, 2005).

People's perceptions of care vary widely, according to existing studies. Ellerbrock et al. (2015) stated individual perceptions of care vary from one person to another, depending on their experiences and beliefs. In that case, in their actions, teachers may think they are caring, but the expressions are far from care to their students. Of course, as Noddings says, a caring relationship should be reciprocal in the sense that students complete the circuit by reflecting care back toward the teacher and extending care to their mates, educators, and other people outside the school (Noddings, 2005). The variance in how would-be recipients perceive care makes the teacher's job difficult. As Bergman (2004) and Noddings (2003) argue, sustained care is therefore difficult to achieve because personality differences hamper that relationship's existence in educational settings.

However, teacher care is important because it facilitates caring students once they have entered the world. Therefore, teachers who profess the ethics of care have the responsibility of empowering their teacher candidates. According to Smith (2017), care is fundamental for every person's life and everyone needs it. For instance, Bernstein-Yamashiro and Noam (2013) noted a repeated finding that individuals demonstrated caring attributes, even out of school, which could be attributed to the caring student-teacher and peer relationships cultivated in the schooling

years. The observation supported the role of teachers in instilling caring virtues among their teacher candidates, despite the high school years.

If training is necessary for teachers to cultivate caring responses to different students, then likewise, students must learn how to be cared for, and also to care themselves (Noddings 2003, 2005). Noddings' theory is clear that the caring aspects of the caregiver are shared and expressed by the individual receiving attention (Noddings, 2003). The students copy the caring teachers' behaviors and decision-making. Consequently, they accept caring teachers as role models whom the students then emulate in their own lives beyond school (Zakrzzewski, 2012).

Research Methods Used to Investigate
Teacher-Care

Studies investigating teacher care have used both qualitative and quantitative methodology. Generally, qualitative studies explored the perceptions of participants on how teachers' understanding influenced the creation of care (Muller, 2001; Nuñez & Yoshimi, 2017; Opdenakker et al., 2012; Tosolt, 2009), while quantitative studies examined causation of caring relationship on the achievements of students (Alder, 2002; Bergeron et al., 2011; Cooper & Miness, 2014; Martin & Dowson, 2009; Roller, 2017; Wubbels & Brekelmans, 2005). The findings from the qualitative studies established care has a significant impact on student performance. Similarly, quantitative studies established positive causation between teacher care and student achievement. The following is a review of these studies.

Care Significantly Impacts Student
Performance

Qualitative Studies

Qualitative studies have explored theories of the teacher care relationship (Al Nasseri et al., 2014; Martin & Dowson, 2009), how students perceived caring teachers (Tosolt, 2009), and

how interpersonal relationships influenced students' achievements (Muller, 2001; Opdenakker et al., 2012). Opdenakker et al. (2012) conducted a research study exploring the association between teacher-student interpersonal relationships and its effect on academic motivation. The research study was conducted in the Netherlands and used 566 students from three secondary schools. Research findings suggested that the teacher-student interpersonal relationship significantly predicted students' autonomous motivation (Opdenakker et al., 2012). Muller (2001) integrated information from students and teachers on how the caring relationship impacts on productivity of students. Research findings suggested the effects of a caring teacher were more pronounced for at-risk students than other students as it pertained to mathematical achievement. However, it was found in all cases, teacher care directly influenced academic achievement in this student sample.

In several studies it was shown that care from teachers had positive outcomes on students. Muller (2001) considered the student-teacher aspect of care and student performance in relation to the theory of social capital published by Coleman (1988). The results showed teacher care and trustworthiness provide students with assurance that investing in a relationship with their teacher will provide the support needed for success. Social capital between teachers and students leads to students' perception that the teacher will act in their best interest, and this may lead to a change in negative behaviors and attitudes toward learning. Quantitative studies have also found caring teachers significantly impact student performance and are discussed in the following section.

Quantitative Studies

Research studies explore "care" in different ways and identify it using different criteria and its implication on academic performance on different student's levels. For instance, Cooper

and Miness (2014) have looked at whether teachers support the social ambition of their learners to see if they care. Additionally, Cooper and Miness (2014) indicated care is evident when teachers support not only students' academic goals but also their social ambitions. The approach is based on an analytical approach and lacks a student's personal experience based on the matter.

There are positive results associated with students' positive perceptions. Studies, such as those conducted by Martin and Dowson (2009) and Al Nasseri et al. (2014) have exemplified this correlation. Martin and Dowson (2009) revealed that students who perceived their teachers to be caring ended up with higher test scores. The researchers used several theories based on a common social-cognitive heritage that examines behavior. This study, however, solely utilized phenomenology to avoid a subjective judgment to study how students, specifically at the secondary level, perceived care. Further, it demonstrated that a positive relationship between teacher-students influences the students' process of learning. Similarly, according to Al Nasseri et al. 2014), the impact emerged from aspects of caring, trust, support, and respect, which promote student self-confidence, self-trust, and impact students' professional development. However, it is important to note teacher care must be interpreted by the student as such to be effective.

Literature Gap and Conclusion

While numerous studies have been published on how secondary students perceive and describe caring teachers, most have been based on the analysis of existing positive and negative implications of teacher-student relationships (Cassidy & Bates, 2005; Crosnoe et al., 2004; Roller, 2017). A majority of the research available tend to focus on the elementary level of education (Alder, 2002; Bulach, 2001; Cassidy & Bates, 2005; DuBois & Silverthorn, 2005; Ellerbrock et al., 2015), with few studies on the secondary level (Barone, 2004; Chukhin, 2011;

Furrer et al., 2014; Opdenakker et al., 2012). This study filled this gap by establishing how

teacher candidates on the secondary level perceive care.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study focused on understanding the student-teacher relationship's caring aspects at the secondary level as perceived by future teachers reflecting upon their own experiences. While other studies have used phenomenological approaches to explore elements related to care in various educational settings, this study is unique in that it investigated care as the phenomenon appears to participants who stand poised between student identities and teacher identities. This chapter on the research methodology describes the study participants, sampling procedures, modes of data collection and analysis, and definitions of concepts and terms.

I explored how teacher candidates perceived and described caring teachers and teacher care from their own experiences. I focused on the teacher candidates' perceptions of care to gain an insightful understanding of their relationships with their secondary teachers, focusing specifically on the aspect of teacher care to address the study's research questions (Van Manen, 1990). This chapter describes the methodology and design, participants, the means of data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, and reliability, validity, and trustworthiness.

Methodology and Design

A qualitative methodology and phenomenological design were used to collect data and answer the research questions. Because this study explored the relationship between the phenomenon of care as it appears in the world and the concept of care as it is described in Noddings' influential theory, phenomenology is the best design for answering the research

questions. Phenomenology is a design that allows researchers to fundamentally understand the world's phenomena as they are (Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2015). Teacher care, or student-teacher relationships, are not objects globally, analogous to rocks or planets. Instead, they emerge from our own lives as we live them, from our purposes and intentions and self-understandings. A research methodology and design capable of tracking this kind of phenomena, produced by our intentionality, is required.

A phenomenological investigation required two steps: a description and a phenomenological reduction. First, we have the act of describing a candidate's understanding of care, using their words and understandings, as those emerge from data collection, helps bracket prior theoretical knowledge about teacher care so the phenomenon can be identified as itself for examination. Secondly, phenomenological reduction refers to a practice where phenomenological researchers suspend or avoid personal judgment about the nature of the world to instead focus on the analysis of the experience (Lorenz, 2019).

Phenomenological reduction can be accomplished through reflexivity and bracketing (Lorenz, 2019). Reflexivity is the ability to evaluate oneself and used to identify personal biases and preconceptions to reduce the likelihood of making biased interpretations of the research findings (Lorenz, 2019; Peters et al., 2021). Bracketing is the actual process of setting aside personal experiences, biases, and preconceived notions about the research topic. Therefore, being reflexive and conducting bracketing is vital in ensuring the data found reflects the participants' views and not the biased interpretations of the researcher. Bracketing also includes setting aside any previously acquired knowledge regarding the research topic.

Bracketing can be accomplished by either: (a) using dialogue to discuss personal biases, past knowledge, and experiences with research colleagues and writing them down (bracketing

them), (b) keeping a memo or journal during data collection, analysis, and when writing up the research results section regarding any thoughts arise that are preconceived notions or biases, or (c) write down the bracketed items in the research report to allow the readers of the report to be aware of the researcher's bias to help them better interpret the research findings (Lorenz, 2019; Peters et al., 2021). For the current study, I conversed with fellow researchers regarding my own biases and past experiences and wrote them down for review throughout the research process.

Accordingly, the approach helps individuals avoid imposing their views or descriptions of a phenomenon in the investigation process; instead, they let the participants' experiences reveal the phenomenon to them. It helps free phenomenological researchers from the temptation to reify their personal attitudes and opinions with respect to accounting for real and virtual objects (Smith, 2008). The goal of phenomenology as a qualitative method is to uncover phenomena by exploring participants' lived experience. A thick and rich description of the phenomena lays out the content of those experiences. Phenomenological reduction ensures researchers do not simply see what they want to see.

Sample Participants

Phenomenology, as an approach, assumes a phenomenon such as teacher care is structurally public, that it shows up to individual perception as part of a world that each of us shares with others. Because it is public in this way, phenomena appear differently to people in different positions with respect to the phenomenon. Teacher care might look different to a student's parent than to a student's teacher or the student.

Students in high school might seem more appropriate for this research. However, given the study's research questions and objectives, teacher candidates were more relevant because their career choice invites their deep investment in this matter, and they have had time and

reason to reflect on their high school experiences. Current undergraduates in teaching programs have had the opportunity to develop their conceptions of care with an eye toward their future careers. They are less likely to confuse an 'easy' teacher with a 'caring' one. Therefore, the current research study required teacher candidates to answer the research questions.

Because my study was interested in teacher candidates' perspectives, and because I work in a school of teacher education, convenience sampling made the most sense for my study. Except for accounting for the possibility of gender differences in perceptions of teacher care, my convenience sample aimed at saturation rather than generalizability. After obtaining Institutional Review Board approval (Appendix A), I received authorization from my dean in the College of Education to conduct personal interviews within the school environment but on an individual basis as opposed to assembling all the participants (Cook-Sather, 2002). This comports with other phenomenological studies conducted in colleges to avoid wasting the teacher candidates' time. I did a search of all juniors and seniors at a Midwest university in the United States who were majoring in 7-12 or K-12 teaching endorsements. The email (Appendix B) was sent all students found in the endorsement search. Each recipient of my email as equally well-positioned with respect to the phenomenon, for the purposes of my study, and therefore I took the first 10 students who volunteered to participate, however there was only one male participant. The next two participants after ten were male, so I increased the participant count to even out gender. The participants were not compensated, and their participation was voluntary. I was the contact person and used an email account for communication. This eased communication, provided immediate feedback, and offered participants a chance to ask clarifying questions or provide additional information on their experience.

In line with the norms established by other phenomenological studies (King et al., 2018; Seidman, 2006), a total of 12 participants were selected from teacher candidates enrolled in the same teaching program. To avoid the possibility of gender bias in patterns of response, participants were both male and female. The teacher candidates had experience both as secondary school students and as teacher candidates, thus positioning them to describe their perceptions of care from a student perspective and a teacher one. On the demographic questionnaire, all participants reported attending public high school in the state of Nebraska. As illustrated in Table 1, participants were predominantly White (75%) females (75%) from rural areas (67%). Pseudonyms were assigned for each participant to protect their anonymity and are also listed in Table 1 along with other demographic characteristics.

Table 2

Participant Demographic Information and Survey Responses

Pseudonym	Sex	Age	Population Size of HS Attended	Environment	City Population Size for HS Attended	Grades Wanting to Teach	Race
Doug	M	20	<50	Rural	1000	5-9	White
Tanya	F	20	51-100	Rural	1100	K-12	White
Julie	F	20	51-100	Rural	230	7-12	White
Emelia	F	20	501-1000	Suburban	750	K-12	White
Clayton	M	20	101-500	Rural	2000	7-12	Black
Aidan	M	22	101-500	Rural	1300	7-12	White
Sofia	F	21	>1000	Urban	468,200	K-12	White
Demi	F	22	101-500	Rural	7000	5-9	Hispanic
Kimberley	F	20	51-100	Rural	4700	7-12	White
Zoe	F	19	>1000	Urban	468,200	7-12	Asian
Allie	F	20	51-100	Rural	660	7-12	White
Sarah	F	22	>1000	Suburban	335,000	7-12	White

Data Collection Procedure

Interviews were conducted on an individual basis as opposed to assembling all the participants for a group interview. This comported with other phenomenological studies conducted in colleges to avoid wasting the teacher candidates' time (Cook-Sather, 2002). The interviews were semi-structured in format, to gather insights on the phenomenon of teacher care and the candidate's experiences with caring teachers. Informed consent (Appendix C) was acquired prior to interviewing each participant and an interview protocol (Appendix D) was followed. Interview questions can be found in Appendix E. A combination of both writing and audio documented approaches was used to gather the respondents' information.

Demographic information was collected and helped distinguish the participants and is essential in determining a teacher-student relationship, especially for teacher candidates of different races. While my study was aimed at the phenomenon of teacher care in general, these demographic factors will not be pertinent to my analysis. It makes sense to collect this data in an anonymized fashion if follow-up studies appear necessary. Qualtrics is a secure platform, and therefore information shared through this platform remained confidential and secure. The participants' responsibility was to find a device, be it a smartphone or a computer, to access the software to input their demographic details as requested.

Primary data were generated via individual interviewing of the study participants. Interview times varied between 45 to 70 minutes with an average interview length of about one hour. A review of the research literature suggested no "gold standard" regarding interview length exists because of the variation between and within research topics, participant characteristics, and the level of rapport formed between the researcher and participant during the interview session (Corbetta, 2003). Therefore, interviews are expected to "have an extremely individual

character and will differ widely in terms of both the topics discussed and the length of the interview itself" (Corbetta, 2003, p. 276). Based on the research literature, the interview lengths within this study were suggested to be adequate in providing valid research findings.

These interviews were semi-structured, which means they entailed opening with general questions regarding the teacher candidates' encounters with the secondary school level learning process, particularly the caring teacher phenomena. The interview questions proceeded flexibly and fluidly, depending on specific student responses (Van Manen, 1990). This interview process allowed me to ask questions to clarify participants' experiences to obtain a rich and thick description of participants' perceptions regarding teacher care (Roulston, 2013). The interview method also allowed room for the participants to provide adequate details on the questions asked and provide recommendations to solve caring among teachers. I derived the interview questions from research on teacher caring aspects and personal exposure to teacher caring (Alder, 2002; Smith, 2017). Additionally, of course, the questions borrowed some concepts from Noddings' ethics of caring.

Smith (2008) showed that Husserl's phenomenological studies and logical investigations are used to promote a better understanding of the justification of knowledge of a phenomenon under investigation. Phenomenology interviews rely on the respondent's memory and reflections to explore their experiences through descriptive and structural questioning. Therefore, I conducted face-to-face interviews with all the study participants. Interviews were recorded using a digital audio and video device followed by a transcription. Open-ended (descriptive) questions were used and are valued as they allow for more comprehensive and in-depth responses (King et al., 2018).

Data Analysis Procedure

Thematic coding, tied to the phenomenological approach and framework, was used to analyze the data collected from the interviews and to identify themes (Van Manen, 1990). The phenomenon of teacher care perceived by teacher candidates was uncovered by identifying the thematic statements in the transcriptions. By listening to and reading the study participants' transcripts, I was able to identify the portions of the interview relevant to the teacher care concept at a secondary school level. It is from the conversations that take place during the interview process that the research themes were annotated (Smith, 2009; Van Manen, 1990).

Thematic analysis was the primary method used to analyze the data. This method is used to identify common themes, ideas, topics, and patterns that repeatedly appear from text or transcripts (Braun et al., 2019). Themes were extracted using the approach described by Braun and Clarke (2006). This approach consists of six steps that guide the analysis, including: familiarizing oneself with the data, generating codes, identifying themes, reviewing themes, defining themes, analyzing themes, and comparing the study findings with Noddings' predictions. Currently, there exist several software tools to help extract thematic codes, such as NVivo 12, ATLAS.ti, Dedoose, among others. I used NVivo 12 to assist in coding and to label the themes and sub-themes derived from participant responses (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Upon completion of each interview, I transcribed each audio file automatically using a microphone and the dictation feature in Word, then I listened to and read over each transcript and manually corrected any errors that occurred during the automated transcription process. Participants were labelled as Student 1 through 12 and then given pseudonyms. To differentiate between myself and the participant speaking in the transcripts, each speaker was labelled accordingly, and my comments were bolded. Once all transcripts had been manually checked for
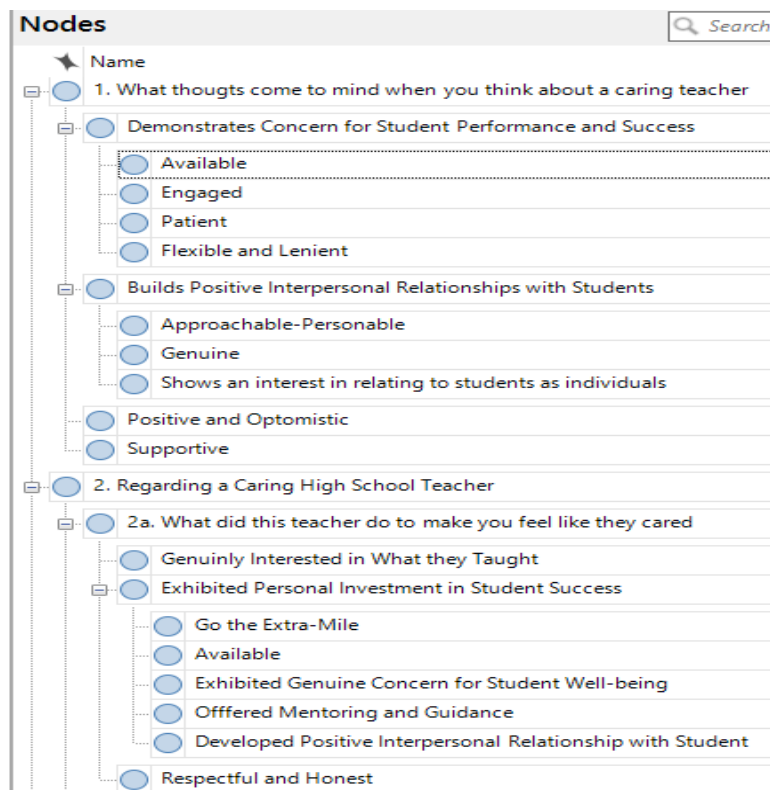
errors, duplicate words next to each other were removed from the transcripts. For example, 'the the', 'and and', etcetera.

I created a table of the interview questions to analyze the data for codes and overall themes. I grouped participant responses under the corresponding interview question with their pseudonyms for easy analysis. I then read and re-read participant responses several times under each interview question for familiarization and identify any recurrent ideas (codes). I then uploaded the data into NVivo 12 for organization and further analysis. Once uploaded to NVivo 12, nodes were created based on the interview questions illustrated in Figure 1. All transcript files were then imported into the program and participant responses were grouped under each interview question for further analysis. Once uploaded into NVivo, the recurrent ideas I identified in my initial assessment of participants' responses were created as sub nodes for each interview question. For example, when asked about what thoughts came to mind when thinking of a caring teacher, recurrent ideas from participants included availability, engagement, and flexibility. Meaning, participants specifically stated they felt a caring teacher made themselves available, engaged the student, and were flexible with assignment due dates and stated such in their interview responses. Therefore, I created sub nodes for those recurrent ideas in the NVivo 12 software program and then grouped participants' responses reflected shared ideas from the uploaded transcripts under the correct sub node.

For example, under the sub node 'available' I assigned the following participant response: "the most prominent ones that come to mind, were those who took time even when I knew that they didn't have the time to be taking, to spend time with me." Participants responses were read and re-read to generate these sub nodes or 'codes' from which a larger theme could emerge. For example, the codes available, engaged, patient, and flexible or lenient were all sub

nodes under the first interview question regarding what thoughts came to participants minds

regarding a caring teacher. A recurrent theme that ran through each of the participants responses

regarding these four sub nodes or codes is that these involved the teacher demonstrating concern

for the students' performance and success thereby creating the theme from these sub nodes or

codes.

Once this practice was followed for each interview question, all themes were identified,

and the participant responses were assigned to the respective code and or theme. Once all

responses had been coded and themes identified, the researcher reviewed all themes and coded

extracts across the data set to refine each theme's names and definitions for presentation in this

chapter. The themed responses were then reviewed to answer the research questions. It is

important to note that the NVivo 12 software program was not used to generate code

automatically or themes. I manually created all codes and themes based on the words and ideas

found in the participants' responses (see Figure 2). Upon completion of data analysis, the NVivo

12 program was able to generate a code book based on the nodes and sub nodes I created and can

be found in Appendix F. In writing up and describing the commonalities among the themes, I

answered Research Question 1. In comparing the answer to Research Question 1 with Noddings'

description of the caring relationship, as covered in the previous chapter, I answered Research

Question 2 by comparing similarities and differences.

Figure 2

NVivo 12 Nodes for Interview Questions

Nodes   Search
- Name
- 1. What thougts come to mind when you think about a caring teacher
  - Demonstrates Concern for Student Performance and Success
    - Available
    - Engaged
    - Patient
    - Flexible and Lenient
  - Builds Positive Interpersonal Relationships with Students
    - Approachable-Personable
    - Genuine
    - Shows an interest in relating to students as individuals
  - Positive and Optomistic
  - Supportive
- 2. Regarding a Caring High School Teacher
  - 2a. What did this teacher do to make you feel like they cared
    - Genuinly Interested in What they Taught
    - Exhibited Personal Investment in Student Success
      - Go the Extra-Mile
      - Available
      - Exhibited Genuine Concern for Student Well-being
      - Offfered Mentoring and Guidance
      - Developed Positive Interpersonal Relationship with Student
  - Respectful and Honest

Ethical Considerations

According to Walker (2007), the two main ethical principles applicable to the phenomenological approach are beneficence and non-maleficence, which dictate that researchers should cause no harm to the participants, whether intentionally or otherwise. In the current study, the intentions of dealing with the subjects are harmless. However, I did appreciate that the discussion could be traumatic, troubling, and stressful, and thus may be harmful to the participants momentarily. However, this potentially harmful response is not expected to last long and participants will recover completely. None of the participants experienced any profoundly painful memories. However, if they had, they would have been advised to withdraw from the study.

To protect participants' human rights, I sought permission from the university prior to data collection. Upon approval from the Institutional Review Board (Appendix A), I then obtained teacher candidates' consent to be interviewed and inform them that the dialogue would be recorded. The consent form provided participants with a synopsis of the research study to include a description of their expectations if they chose to participate in the study. Participants were also informed of any potential risks or discomforts and benefits they may experience because of participation. To ensure no coercion, participants were not compensated in any way for participating in the study. They were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without the fear of suffering any repercussions. To protect participant confidentiality and anonymity, I saved recorded interviews on a password protected laptop only accessible by me. Participants were assigned an alphanumeric when they were interviewed to conceal their identity and avoid bias during data analysis. I was also mindful of assessing the participants for any signs of distress while discussing sensitive matters, considering that previous experiences may cause them to feel stressed or troubled.

Reliability, Validity, and Trustworthiness

Numerous researchers have used several methods used in data collection and analysis, thematic description, and analysis and deducing meaning in data patterns as they provide sufficient reliability in data analysis. The selection criteria of the 12 participants, both genders, ensured the validity of the results across gender lines. Further, this research also achieves reliability since a semi-structured interview protocol was used (Appendix D). This means each participant was provided with the same questions to answer initially, which is a repeatable process. While facilitating the interviews, I asked questions designed to extract responses related to teacher caring and incidents that they had previously encountered. However, I ensured

participants were free to speak their minds and co-direct the interview's shape, which is one way of ensuring validity in this study. Validity and reliability in phenomenological research are essential because they make trustworthy knowledge and claims and improve the acceptability of other scholars' research findings. Since I relied on the in-depth accounts of the participants in the subject matter to derive the generalizations, colleagues' validity and reliability were determined by colleagues who are close friends to ascertain the validity of the interview interpretations. This helped me make a judgment using verified data. It would be inappropriate to ask credibility questions to the respondents during the interview. However, clarification questions were pivotal in determining the validity of responses.

Phenomenological research designs are reliable since their results are gathered from respondents with personal perspectives concerning a particular phenomenon, which makes the study replicable (Giorgi, 2012). Since phenomenological research cannot avoid biased responses, as positivists understand bias, I analyzed the research finding's credibility by identifying items of analytic interest, formulating themes, and establishing patterns of meaning in data. The answers were also verified by requesting the participants to review the findings and seek alternative explanations, which, according to Levy (2017), can help ascertain data credibility. I applied clarification techniques by recounting to the respondents their secondary school lived experience attitude and focusing their attention during the interviewing process (Seidman, 2006). I included some exact quotes from respondents in the research findings to ensure the meaning's quintessence in this study. The responses of each participant were not compared to each other's responses. The interview questions (Appendix D) were asked to each participant. Each participant answered the questions included in the interview protocol. I did not add additional questions based on participants' responses.

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTIONS OF CARING TEACHERS

The following chapter seeks to draw upon interview responses to identify what teacher care is in the eyes of teacher candidates. Teacher candidates have a unique perspective in that they have experience both as students in secondary school and as teacher candidates, thus positioning them to describe their perceptions of care from a student perspective and a teacher one. The two research questions that guided this study are as follows:

Q1   How do teacher candidates describe the phenomenon of teacher care as they experienced it during their high school years?

Q2   How do these descriptions of teacher care compare with the way Noddings describes care in education?

I answered the first research question by analyzing participant responses to interview questions and answered the second question by exploring the major findings derived from the interview sessions. The following section will describe participants' experiences with teacher caring as described to me in each interview and my interpretation of their experiences. The following section is grouped by the major themes identified across the interview questions and sessions to garner a broader understanding of teacher candidates' perceptions of care. Overall, teacher care was described by participants as building positive interpersonal relationships with students, demonstrating concern through specific actions, and investing in student success for both their academic as well as social goals, being engaged, and going the extra mile. I also present a section discussing the comparisons between the research findings and Noddings' Theory of Care.

**Building Positive Interpersonal Relationships
with Students**

A significant theme identified across interview questions was that teacher care is the

development of genuine interpersonal relationships with students fosters a deeper understanding

of the student as an individual. Specifically, 58% (n = 7) of participants felt cared for by their

teachers because of the positive interpersonal relationship they had developed. Participant

"Demi" describes her experience of an interpersonal relationship with a caring teacher as

follows:

> The teacher would always take time to not just only get to know me personally, but other
> students. Not too personally that it'd be weird, but on a level that would make sure like,
> hey, how are you doing with classes? Do you need help with something else? Just really
> getting involved with the class as well and really bringing discussion and just checking
> up on me always and always asking during parent teacher conference specifically, like
> making time to speak to my parents and like, just the way she would carry herself and the
> way she would converse with me, it made it seem that she really did care about me. I
> mean, not just me, but like others as well, and you could definitely see that.

As Demi described her experience of a caring teacher, it became apparent that her perception of

what teacher care is encompassed many other implicit notions, such as a caring teacher shows

care by showing attention, being genuine, being available, being committed, and showing

concern for the student's success and well-being and whether the teacher is meeting the needs

and obligations of his/her profession. This is evident in Demi's description of the teacher's

actions and how it made Demi feel. For example, Demi perceived her teacher to genuinely care

about herself and described the teacher's recurrent commitment to establish and maintain an

individual relationship with the student.

Other participants suggested caring teachers build positive interpersonal relationships by

being personable, showing sincere interest in relating to students as individuals, building rapport

through one-on-one time, being non-judgmental, and responding to students' needs and

questions. Participant "Emilia" stated that a caring teacher is "somebody who is always looking for the positive within each student, no matter what they heard from prior teachers." Emilia's account of a caring teacher suggests she believes in showing care, a teacher must show the student acceptance and the benefit of the doubt. Emilia's account also implies that a caring teacher has a positive attitude toward the students and is interested in building a positive relationship wherein the student will be positively reinforced and encouraged to flourish. Regarding responding to students' needs and questions, participant "Doug" recounted a caring teacher experience wherein he felt both accepted and valued. Specifically, Doug stated:

> Whether it be in the classroom or after school, I was always welcomed with open arms about any questions that I had or anything that even pertained to my personal life, and she would always just create the time for me, even though she might not have had it.

Based on Doug's response, it is evident that he perceived a caring teacher as being accepting, accessible, and interested in communicating. Therefore, a caring teacher responds to a student's needs and questions both verbally and nonverbally, which communicates their interest in their success and accessibility. Further, Doug perceives a caring teacher to be interested in his needs outside the classroom, which, within the context of this study, denotes one aspect of a caring teacher building positive interpersonal relationships with students.

To further support this idea, when asked to remember uncaring teachers, participants described an uncaring teacher as exhibiting exclusionary behaviors wherein they focused their time and attention on some students and not others. For example, participant "Kimberley" stated:

> I had a teacher, and you could really see the way that they would treat certain students and other students, including myself, and the teacher would make extra time for those students before and after school, but when somebody else would go up to him and ask, he's like, "Sorry, I'm busy, I have to do this, or I have to do that," and I was like, "okay," and after time you kind of just realized it and you were just like, you just felt excluded and you just felt, like if you weren't those students, he didn't really care about you, and yeah, he would answer your questions in class and stuff to be respectful, but like, one-on-

one, it wasn't just, there was no connection, there was no respect, there was no anything. So, he was just teaching the students because he had to.

As described by Kimberley, it is evident that she felt a caring teacher would show attention to all the students in the classroom equally and try to involve them in the discussion. Therefore, a caring teacher is fair. A caring teacher would show sincere interest in getting to know each student and making sure they succeed in class and beyond. A caring teacher would build rapport by providing one-on-one time with students while being genuinely committed to their success. Finally, Kimberly perceives a caring teacher to be accepting, accessible, and nonjudgmental.

Participant responses suggest a caring teacher builds rapport with their students to develop a genuine interpersonal relationship which fosters a deeper understanding of the student as an individual. As a result of this genuine relationship, a common trust is formed that brings about positive feelings, translating into many positive outcomes. In addition to participants describing the importance and impact of teachers showing care by making the committed effort to build positive interpersonal relationships with students, they also described how a caring teacher demonstrated interest and communicated concern for their academic success and well-being.

Demonstrating Interest and Communicating Concern

Participants suggested a caring teacher demonstrates an interest in what is happening in their students' lives and communicates concern. Participant responses indicate that interest and concern can be conveyed to students through support in their academic and social goals, through engagement, showing concern for the students' well-being, and going the extra mile. The following section will describe participants' accounts of a teacher's experience showing care under these major themes.

Support: Both Academic
and Social Goals

Several participants suggested that they perceived a caring teacher to be personally

invested in both their academic and social success. Specifically, participant responses suggested

that a caring teacher provides encouragement and academic or emotional help when needed.

Participant "Aidan" stated, "they made me feel like they were personally invested in my success

in high school and beyond." Participant "Sarah" stated the following about an experience she had

with a caring teacher:

> They really got to know me in the beginning of the school year, and then would
> continuously try and get to know me. They would often ask about, like I was in theater,
> so they would learn that about me at the beginning of the school year and then they
> would be like, how's the play going? Or did you audition for it? Or stuff of that nature.
> So, they really got to know me and then kind of kept checking in and just, you know,
> having a dialogue between the two of us.

As illustrated by Sarah's account of her teachers' interest in her activities outside of the

classroom, it is evident that Sarah perceives many things regarding teacher caring. Specifically,

Sarah implies that a caring teacher: (a) expresses interest in students' activities outside the

classroom, (b) acknowledges the uniqueness of each student's lived experience and therefore

demonstrates to the student through their actions that their experiences as a person are

meaningful and unique, (c) considers the student as a whole and are therefore more likely to

consider any struggles the student may have outside of the classroom, (d) shows commitment as

evidenced by the teacher's effort to maintain a connection all year long, and (e) takes the time to

build rapport through one-on-one conversations and attention.

Engagement

Participants also suggested that caring teachers demonstrated interest and communicated

concern by being engaged. Caring teachers within this study visibly invested and actively

involved themselves in their own craft and the student's success. Engaged caring teachers are passionate about what they teach and take pride in their work and its effect on students. Emilia stated that a caring teacher is "somebody who's always willing to push their students and watch them succeed in all the ways possible." Further, Doug stated:

> At one point she sat me down during that year and she kind of just told me she was like, "I'm pushing you because I know, I can see inside of you that you're writing, you can do so much better and you can do, you can go really far in life if you put forth that little extra effort, I'm just trying to get it out of you," type of thing, and then we kind of went on to talk a little bit more like about her and about me and it was kind of like at that moment that I knew that she genuinely cared about her students and that she wanted everyone to succeed to the best of their ability, and I think after that moment, like, I grew a lot of respect for her and I cared about her.

Doug's teacher demonstrates that she is fully engaged and aware of who he is as a person to make the statement that she knows he can do better. This acknowledgment illustration suggests a certain level of individuality for the participant and emphasizes several caring features his teacher possesses. First, his teacher communicates her concern regarding his current performance in the class, thereby showing him she cares. She then engages in an informal conversation with Doug regarding both his academic performance and his individual self. His teacher exhibits a genuine passion for what she teaches and pride in her ability to transfer knowledge to the student. Doug's experience with a caring teacher suggests he believes a caring teacher is genuine, invested in both their abilities as a teacher and the student's success, respectful, compassionate, open to communicate, and personable. As a result, Doug explicitly states that his respect and care for this teacher grew.

To further support participants' perceptions that a caring teacher is engaged, most participants stated their account of an uncaring teacher encompassed a lack of engagement and investment. Specifically, participants suggested an uncaring teacher did not form strong connections, and participant "Zoe" stated that they were only interested in checkmarks or

whatever done and not get to know us [students] as people," they don't pay attention or communicate concern to the student, uncaring teachers have no passion or pride in their profession and are generally unsupportive and impersonal. A comparison between participants' accounts of a caring teacher versus a noncaring one elucidates participants' understanding of the phenomenon of care. Participants also suggested that a caring teacher demonstrates explicit concern for their students' well-being by going the extra mile and is an integral component of the phenomenon of teacher care.

Going the Extra Mile

According to participants, a caring teacher is concerned for the personal well-being of their students and explicitly communicates that concern at an individual and/or class level. For example, participant "Tanya" stated:

> It was for a physics class, so we struggled sometimes, and if we didn't get it, she'd be like, "okay, we're just going to completely forget about this for a little bit. We're going to take time out of our day." She would play classical music to help calm us. She would bring salsa in for class, just sort of went the extra mile for us to make us feel comfortable.

Tanya's account of a caring teacher suggests that she believes a caring teacher possesses several characteristics: attentiveness, compassion, flexibility, patience, and a genuine passion for students' success and well-being. The perception that caring teachers go above and beyond their job description as teachers was a recurrent theme across interview questions. Participants recounted specific incidents wherein their teacher explicitly demonstrated their interest and concern for a student by: (a) buying a student lunch that did not have the money, (b) writing letters of recommendation for college, and (c) providing emotional support, council, and leniency for students experiencing hardships at home.

Participant responses suggest that teacher care for this sample of participants encompasses an extraordinary teacher that actively seeks to connect with students on a personal

level for the long-run; a caring teacher is suggested to be genuine and invested in every student's success both in and outside the classroom. According to this sample, the phenomena of care constitutes a highly motivated and compassionate person will take the extra time needed and use positive reinforcement and encouragement to maintain positive expectations of students. A caring teacher is lenient and compassionate when necessary to ensure student success.

Summary

As a result of these interview responses, several themes regarding the phenomenon of care were identified. Caring teachers were described as demonstrating concern for academic performance, success, well-being, and willingness to invest in students. Caring teachers were suggested to be passionate about teaching their subject, personable, honest, respectful, available, willing to go that extra mile, and genuine. As a result, participants reported feeling appreciative, inspired, safe, and cared for. These positive feelings engendered a deep respect for their caring teachers.

Conversely, non-caring teachers were described as exhibiting exclusionary behaviors and practices such as being judgmental and biased. They were also described as passionless about teaching, uncompassionate toward the students, and unsupportive. Non-caring teachers did not invest in their students individually resulting in the students also disinvesting in the classroom.

Comparison with Noddings' Theory of Care

The characteristics of care described by Noddings (2003) include commitment, engrossment, and motivational shift. Constructs for Noddings' activities of a caring teacher include modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation (Noddings, 2013). Below are summaries of participant responses synonymous with Noddings' (2003) characteristics of care. The

dissimilarities between the participants' perspective of care and Noddings' (2013) theory of care can be identified and discussed.

Commitment

One of Noddings' (2013) characteristics of care is commitment. According to Noddings, "I must make a commitment to act. The commitment to act on behalf of the cared-for, a continued interest in his reality throughout the appropriate time span, and the continual renewal of commitment over this span of time are the essential elements of caring" (Noddings, 2013, p. 16). Hence, commitment in Noddings' model suggests a teacher must make a longstanding choice to support a student throughout their academic career with their best interest in mind and regardless of how long or far they may falter. Consistent with Noddings' construct of commitment, several participants recounted experiences with teachers wherein the teacher demonstrated their continued commitment of encouragement and support.

For example, participant "Allie" recounted a time when a caring teacher exhibited commitment:

> Don't hate me for it [English not being my strong suit], kind of jokingly, and, yeah, I just remember the look on her face of, like, softening towards me, and she said, "I would never hate a student, "for being bad at the subject I taught," like, "this is why I'm here, is to make you better," and not only did she say those words, but she also followed through with it, of like spending that extra time and fixing my run on sentences that I had time after time after time (laughs).

In Allie's account, she displays her insecurity about the academic subject to a teacher she meets for the first time. The caring teacher in this example visibly softened her expression to convey sincerity to Allie regarding her insecurity toward the classroom subject and then made both a verbal and explicit attempt to convey her commitment to Allie's success. Allie's experience of a caring teacher is synonymous with Noddings' (2003) construct of commitment.

Another student recounted an experience where a caring teacher exhibited commitment. Specifically, Aidan recounted that her teacher, "never settled for anybody being mediocre in her class. She always knew of everyone's success levels and wanted them to reach those." In this example, the caring teacher is explicitly exhibiting her commitment to the students' success and her craft and subject matter. According to Noddings (2003), the intention to care, this commitment, when coupled with receptivity, disposedness, or sympathy, is a precursor to engrossment.

Engrossment

Engrossment is a characteristic described in Noddings' (2013) characteristics of care. A teacher exhibits the characteristic of engrossment when they are attentive, receptive, and sympathetic to a student's needs (Noddings, 1988). When a teacher is engrossed, they can sense or detect a student's feelings and acknowledge them. Several of the participants in the current study described experiences with caring teachers that illustrate this construct.

For example, one participant recalled a time when she got worked up and her teacher used this moment to recognize a student, demonstrate care, and build a relationship. Tanya stated:

> I started getting worked up, and my teacher noticed that right away, and she was like, you can leave. "You can go take a minute if you need to," so I did, and then I came back to class. She didn't really say anything to me in front of the class about it until afterwards, she was like, "hey, Tanya, "can you stay a minute?" And I was like, "yeah, sure," so I stayed. She didn't ask any details. She was just like, "you know, "if you're going through something, I'm here for you," and she was like, "don't worry about studying for this quiz, "I'll push it back.'"

Based on Tanya's recollection of the event, she experienced care when her teacher recognized and acknowledged that she needed to leave a situation because she became emotionally distraught—realizing her need to cool off demonstrated care on the part of the teacher in the

form of attentiveness and sympathy toward the student. Additionally, the teacher's willingness to be available to Tanya and push back the quiz further demonstrated care to the student. The teacher understood the individual student's needs, thus creating room for a reciprocal relationship of care to develop between Tanya and her teacher.

Participant "Julie's" experiences also mirror Noddings' description of engrossment. Julie describes an experience when her teacher was both attentive and receptive:

> they [caring teacher] could see that there was an off in my day or I wasn't my peppy super self that they'd be like, "you not having a good day, what's wrong? Do you want to talk about it? And they'd extended that, and not just because like they were teachers and they noticed it, but because they truly were like, "you're not yourself."

Synonymous with Noddings' (2003) description of engrossment, the caring teacher in Julie's example diverted attention from themself to create room for Julie's existential condition. According to Julie, a caring teacher in her experience is not only attentive to their students' emotional and physical state, but they explicitly acknowledge it and proactively engage the student to remedy the situation. In doing so, the teacher is exhibiting engrossment because they are placing other potential responsibilities aside to focus on the distressed student in front of them. Engrossment, as Noddings (2003) argues, causes motivational displacement, in which the needs of the other are taken on as the needs of the self. Ultimately, thinking on the other's behalf manifests the activity of care.

Motivational Displacement

As Noddings (2013) described, motivational displacement is when a teacher displaces their own needs and adopts the student's needs as their own. This construct also implies the teacher attempts to view the world from the student's perspective. As with the other constructs in Noddings' characteristics of care, several participants in the current study described teachers displaying this motivational displacement.

Participants recalled instances when they felt noticed and recognized by teachers' attempts to demonstrate interest in their students' lives through verbal communication. One participant remembered when a teacher remembered they were involved in theater and asked about the status of a play being put on by the school's theater team. Sarah stated, "so they would learn about me at the beginning of the school year… really got to know me and then kind checking in and just, you know, having a dialogue between the two of us." Another participant recalled when a teacher noticed they were having an off day and indicating their willingness to talk with the student about the factors that led to them having an off day. The accounts provided by both participants are descriptions of care on the part of teachers as evidenced by the teacher's willingness to demonstrate interest in their students by communicating with the students regarding pertinent matters in their lives.

Specifically, these participants described instances where teachers displaced their personal needs by taking an interest in their students and by demonstrating their willingness to communicate with these students. The descriptions mentioned in the above section are similar to Noddings' (2003) description of care.

Modeling

Modeling is one of the four activities of caring described by Noddings (2013). It is suggested that teachers should be concerned with student's growth as both carers and as cared-fors. As a result, teachers can model or demonstrate caring behaviors to teach students what it means to care. "We do not merely tell them to care and give them texts to read on the subject, we demonstrate our caring in our relations with them" (Noddings, 2018, p. 190). Noddings further describes modeling as a byproduct of genuine caring and emphasizes the importance of engaging students in dialogue when modeling caring behaviors (Noddings, 2018).

Several participants recounted experiences with teachers that exhibited modeling synonymous with Noddings' (2013) theory. Specifically, Kimberly recounted a caring teacher modeling caring behaviors:

> She was very like, she looked out for you. She encouraged you to do things. If you had a problem or you were just feeling overwhelmed, she always said, "you know, you can come to my room if you need to," and "you know, if you just need to sit in the corner and cry, and that's what you need to do to feel better," she's like, "you can do that." So, just very like an open door, kind of like, you know, "I'm here, if you ever need me" type thing.

Kimberly's account of a caring teacher encompasses many attributes already described by participants within the study. For example, this caring teacher was attentive, receptive, engaged, empathetic, compassionate, etcetera. Therefore, this recollection of a caring teacher experience is an excellent example of a teacher modeling to the student how to show care to others.

Dialogue

Noddings' (2013) second construct of activities of care is dialogue. As previously stated under the construct of modeling, dialogue is essential in engaging students and showing care. This construct is exhibited by teachers when they show interest in students as individuals and take the time to engage them through listening, sharing ideas, and taking the time to answer students' questions (Smith, 2020). Several participants within this study recalled observing and experiencing their high school teachers use dialogue in their caring practices.

> For example, Emilia recounted the following experience with a caring teacher:
>
> there was one day at practice where I was just not having the best day and he [coach] stayed for like an hour-and-a-half to just talk to me about, not even about practice, just about what was going on with school, my family, stuff like that, and he didn't have to do that, it was him being, putting aside his professional, like going home after practice had ended, and allowing me to just kind of word vomit.

Again, Emilia's recount of a caring teacher moment encompasses much more than just the construct of dialogue from Noddings' (2003) model. This teacher displayed several characteristics described by Noddings' (2003) theory of care. For Emilia, this was a significant moment where she felt that her individual needs and concerns were being recognized, acknowledged, and addressed by an adult figure, thereby validating her emotional state and personal needs. This teacher explicitly engaged the student using dialogue.

Similarly, Zoe recounted an experience where a caring teacher engaged her in dialogue by creating an opportunity for one-on-one time outside of the classroom. Specifically, Zoe stated:

> Yeah, I was a student aid for her my senior year, and at my high school, they had the food class, they had a little food thing, and she was like, "hey, want to go down with me and test out some food?" And we got to go down there and that was just really fun, and it was just me and her.

By creating an individualized and private space for Zoe and her caring teacher to get to know each other more informally, this memory sticks out in Zoe's mind because it made her feel unique and special. This event allowed Zoe to build an interpersonal relationship with the teacher recounted by participants in this study as an integral component of teacher care.

Practice

Noddings' third activity of caring is practice. Practice is a construct of caring because it is expected that those learning how to care need to practice becoming good carers. Therefore, teachers who exhibit this construct provide students with opportunities to practice what they have learned through modeling. Participants in the current study did not recount any incidents where their teacher created a collaborative space or environment in which students were grouped to collaborate or share work and exhibit caring behaviors.

Confirmation

Noddings' final construct in caring activities is that of confirmation. This construct

suggests that confirmation "is an act of affirming and encouraging the best out of others" (Smith,

2020, p. 1). Teachers demonstrated confirmation to students by encouraging them to achieve

higher standards both in and outside of school. This construct is also displayed by teachers when

they provide support for students in obtaining their goals. Several participants recounted

incidents when a caring teacher exhibited confirmation. For example, Kimberley stated:

> I was freaking out over the speech or the whatever I had to memorize, and so my teacher,
> she sat down, and she was like, "okay, now let's just take deep breaths. "She's like,
> "you've done this a million times, "you can do this," and then I ended up, oh, it was
> speech, because I ended up getting first in that round.

Kimberley's experience with this caring teacher is an excellent example of confirmation.

Specifically, Kimberley describes a time when she needed that additional support or

encouragement to succeed. Other students recounted caring teachers writing recommendation

letters for graduate and professional schools and investing time in students to ensure they

succeed thereby suggesting these teachers' confidence and support in these students' ability to

succeed.

Results from the qualitative analysis of participant responses suggest that concepts of

teacher care are comparable to Noddings' description of care in education. Unfortunately, there

was no data to explore the construct of practice in the current study. However, descriptions of

each construct for both characteristics of care and activities of a caring teacher supported

Noddings' (2013) description of care in education. However, the current study had additional

findings to report, which are covered in the next section.

Deviations from Noddings' Theory

Themes that emerged that deviated from Noddings' (2003) theory of care included the idea that perceived teacher care can be exhibited to students by teachers through their passion and investment in their own teaching skills. Students perceive this behavior as caring even if the teacher may not be intentionally trying to show care to the student. Specifically, when teachers proactively invest in their own ability to be a better teacher and are passionate about their craft, it translates over to the students as teacher care. For example, Tanya stated that teachers show care by:

> just kind of doing like a question and check answer at the end of class to see if the class understood it, because I've had teachers where none of us in the class understand it, thinking like, "okay, that's probably the teacher's fault" to sort of say if the class doesn't understand what's happening, but the teacher doesn't take responsibility for that, so the ones that just make sure we understand it, and they're there for us no matter what.

In Tanya's account of a caring teacher, the teacher implements measures to assess their own effectiveness in teaching and then alters their teaching pedagogy or platform to better suit the needs of the classroom. Regarding the concept of showing students care by being passionate about teaching, Allie stated the following regarding how a teacher can show care:

> I think of the emotions that are expressed in the classroom on a teacher's perspective of, obviously you can't have a good day every day, but expressing, enjoyment for the profession and letting kids know that you genuinely do have a passion for this career, and I think different things have opened it up to...I understand it's hard to deal with state standards, but opening the floor up to what the students are interested in learning, because that shows that you have that flexibility and if they're curious about something you take that avenue within that shows that you're caring about them and their education, not just the state standards that you're helping them in.

Allie's account of how a teacher can show care in the classroom suggests a new concept that could be added to Noddings' (2003) theory of care. The notion that the teachers disposition regarding their contentedness and passion with being in the profession could translate over to care within the student population. As described by participant "Clayton":

just having a passion for what you're teaching, trying to express that passion to others and recognize that even if this isn't something that your students are going to love to the same extent you do, there's still a lot of opportunity to build understanding.

In addition to this new concept regarding teacher care, participants in the current study offered very specific characteristics associated with a caring teachers characteristic: compassion, empathy, genuineness, honesty, trustworthiness, etc. Many of these characteristics could be grouped under Noddings' (2003) constructs for teacher care. However, these characteristics are extremely specific according to the participants in this study, thereby warranting further investigation as integral to teacher care.

Conclusion

Research question one regarding how teacher candidates describe the phenomenon of teacher care as they experienced it during their high school years revealed several themes and attributes. Specifically, caring teachers were described as demonstrating concern for academic performance, success, well-being, and willingness to invest in students. Caring teachers were suggested to be passionate about teaching and their subject, personable, honest, respectful, available, willing to go that extra mile, and genuine. Participants indicated that caring teachers strongly influenced their academic, social, and emotional success in school and beyond. As a result, participants reported feeling appreciative, inspired, safe, and cared for. These positive feelings were suggested to evoke students to form a deep respect for their caring teachers.

Conversely, non-caring teachers were described as exhibiting exclusionary behaviors and practices such as being judgmental and biased. They were also described as passionless about teaching, uncompassionate toward the students, and unsupportive. Participant responses suggested that non-caring teachers negatively influenced students' level of motivation and

performance in class. Participant responses regarding non-caring teachers suggest that if students perceive their instructor is not investing in them individually that they too disinvest.

Regarding research question two on how participants' descriptions of teacher care compare with the way Noddings describes care in education, several similarities were identified with two potentially deviating themes found. Specifically, the research findings revealed the importance of teacher care expression to students through a teacher's passion and accountability for their level of expertise in teaching as evidenced by Tanya and Clayton's statements. It is further exemplified by Tanya account of a teacher taking the time   specific characteristics of a caring teacher were identified by participants within this study, warranting further research. Chapter 5 will provide a detailed discussion regarding the research findings' implications and recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This qualitative phenomenological study was conducted to explore pre-service teachers' perceptions as it related to caring aspects of the student-teacher relationship at the secondary level. Although prior research used the phenomenological approach to explore elements relating to care in various educational settings, the current study is unique because I chose to investigate care as the phenomenon appears to pre-service teachers. The study's primary aim was to garner a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of care as it related to the student-teacher relationship as understood by future teachers and to compare pre-service teachers' understanding of care with Noddings' (2003) ethics of care theory. This chapter will discuss and conclude the research questions posed in the study, including implications of the research findings for teachers and various educational stakeholders. It will provide recommendations for future studies. The chapter will conclude with an overview of the research methodology and design, results, and concluding remarks.

Research Questions: Conclusions and Discussions

Within this study, I proposed, explored, and answered two research questions by analyzing interview responses aimed at identifying perspectives on teacher care in the eyes of teacher candidates. The data analysis indeed confirmed that teacher candidates have a unique perspective on teacher care given their emerging status as students who are evolving into teachers. The two research questions posed in this study were:

Q1   How do teacher candidates describe the phenomenon of teacher care as they experienced it during their high school years?

Q2   How do these descriptions of teacher care compare with the way Noddings describes care in education?

The analysis of the data combined with the findings and insights that emerged in the data provided distinct conclusions regarding both research questions.

Regarding the first research question, my conclusion is that participants can describe their experiences with the phenomenon of teacher care, as they experienced care during their high school years, richly and vividly, and that these experiences with care serve as a basis for the models of care that these teacher candidates will demonstrate to their students. Participants described teacher care as building positive interpersonal relationships with students, demonstrating concern, investing in student success for both their academic and social goals, being engaged, and going the extra mile. These research findings support previous research findings (Alder, 2002; Bulach, 2001; Cassidy & Bates, 2005; Dexter et al., 2016; Gupta & Simonsen, 2016; Martin & Dowson, 2009; Opdenakker et al., 2012; Smith, 2017).

The theme of building positive interpersonal relationships with students is the bedrock of the experience of the phenomenon of teacher care. When teachers develop genuine interpersonal relationships with students, the relationship then fosters a deep understanding of the student, and in turn the student is better conceptualized as an individual. The conceptualization of the student as an individual opens a world of possibility for a teacher to express care to the individual and for the teacher to individualize instruction for each student.

Positivity is another critical component of the experience of teacher care. The insights within this research suggest that positivity pervades every other element of the perception of teacher care. Without positivity, students are not able to feel and experience care from their

teachers. Positivity on the part of the teacher is likely to predict how a student perceives a personal connection to the care a teacher provides. Additionally, teachers' inconsistent demonstrations of positivity leave students feeling as if they are not valued and do not matter to the individual teacher. To this point, students notice teachers' inconsistent treatment of students, and it impacts students' perceptions and experiences with teacher care.

Demonstrations of fairness to all students is another critical building block for students to experience care from their teachers. Caring teachers can demonstrate and divide fairness to all students with whom they interact. The results also suggested that fairness is a pathway for students to experience acceptance, accessibility, and nonjudgment with their teachers. The elements of fairness, acceptance, accessibility, and nonjudgement help set the stage for rapport between teachers and students and create a climate for trust to be cultivated. Demonstration of interest and the communication of concerns on teachers are additional and critical building blocks for students to experience care. One participant stated that her teacher talked with her about her theatre involvement how the one act was doing with their current play. Another student discuss how her teacher talked with her after class about her family's troubles and how those troubles were affecting her in school. A third participant talked how his teacher created an environment where he felt he could ask questions to the teacher about anything, no matter how small his questions were or how much he was struggling. The pathways by which interest and communication of concern travel are unique for each student.

Participants all noted that teachers demonstrated interest in students by providing encouragement and support for the academic, social, and extracurricular aspects of the students' experience. However, support is not enough, participants responses suggested that engagement was also essential. It is simply not enough for a teacher to indicate they care about their students'

performance in academic, social, and extracurricular activities; teachers must also demonstrate care by engaging with students individually. Participants universally conceptualized an uncaring teacher as one who is not engaged with their students.

Finally, teacher care is experienced when teachers are willing to go the extra mile for students. Interestingly enough, participant accounts of "going the extra mile" rarely included in class or instructional behaviors. Within the realm of teacher care, going the extra mile is an entirely personalized element of teacher care where teachers make investments into the personal elements of who their students are, buying lunch for poorer students, and writing recommendation letters for college. In some ways, going the extra mile could be considered or conceptualized as a construct related to compassion.

Regarding the second research question, my conclusion is that for the most part participant descriptions of their experiences with teacher care are very similar to the characteristics and activities of care that are outlined within Noddings' (2013) model of care. The data indicated that participants could recall and describe instances where teachers demonstrated the characteristics of engrossment, commitment, and displaced motivation. While participants never used Noddings' (2013) words, they certainly captured similar essences when describing their various experiences with teacher care.

However, the most interesting insight regarding the second research question was that there were dissimilarities between participant descriptions of teacher care and those presented in Noddings' (2003) model. Specifically, other themes described by participants that differ from Noddings' (2003) theory of care include the idea that teacher care can be exhibited to students by teachers through their investment in their teaching skills exhibited by their passion for the subject, teaching, and taking the time to determine if they are reaching the student. Especially,

when teachers proactively invest in their ability to be a better teacher by determining if they are

reaching the student by surveying them and then changing their curriculum, accordingly,

translates over to the students as teacher caring. For example, Tanya stated a caring teacher will

ensure they are reaching the class whereas a noncaring teacher will not. Specifically, Tanya

stated:

> just kind of doing like a question and check answer at the end of class to see if the class
> understood it, because I've had teachers where none of us in the class understand it,
> thinking like, "okay, that's probably the teacher's fault" to sort of say if the class doesn't
> understand what's happening, but the teacher doesn't take responsibility for that, so the
> ones that just make sure we understand it, and they're there for us no matter what.

Further, participants' descriptions of teacher care characteristics were very specific,

encompassing compassion, empathy, genuineness, honesty, trustworthiness, etc. Although many

of these characteristics could be grouped under some of Noddings' (2003) constructs for teacher

care, they are very specific according to this sample and warrant further investigation as integral

to teacher care. The implications that stem from this research are discussed below.

Implications

Implications for Teachers

The first implication to emerge from this research is that the foundation for teacher care

solidifies within classrooms and environments where students first experience teachers who

model care, rather than their respective training institutions. When building a structure like a

house, for example, the process of building, pouring, and setting the foundation is exceptionally

critical. An unstable or unlevel foundation would then impact the structure's stability and

aesthetics upon which a foundation is built. There is a further implication: that teacher training

programs cannot and should not assume that they are instilling new values, habits, or practices in

future teachers; rather, they are reforming or remolding the prior experiences of pre-service teachers.

Teacher care significantly impacts student social and academic development. This insight should come as no shock, given that previous research indicates this to be a reality (Alder, 2002; Bulach, 2001; Cassidy & Bates, 2005; Gupta & Simonsen, 2016; Smith, 2017). However, participants also indicated instances where the acts of kindness and care demonstrated by teachers impacted the students at a critical developmental crossroads in their lives. Specifically, participants recalled times when their parents were going through divorces, struggling with adjustments associated with developing as an adolescent, dealing with developmental crises related to their identities, and general teenage angst as instances where teacher care directly impacted their social and academic development and likely prevented any adverse or negative outcomes. For example, Julie stated:

> Yeah. Honestly, one of my, like the teacher that I've connected with the most was my art teacher, and when my parents were getting divorced, she was super there to be like, "do you need anything? "Do you need [to be] picked up before this event?" Because cars were going to separate houses and so she was super understandable and made a point to be like, does the van need to stop at your house? Does this need to happen? Do we need to pick up a breakfast for you if we're picking you up from your house? And so, she just made points to do extra just because she knew at home things were lacking.

Further, Doug recalled a time when developmental and family issues resulted in his slacking in class and a teacher noticed. Specifically, Doug stated:

> at one point she sat me down during that year and she kind of just told me she was like, "I'm pushing you because I know, I can see inside of you that you're writing, you can do so much better and you can do, you can go really far in life if you put forth that little extra effort, I'm just trying to get it out of you," type of thing, and then we kind of went on to talk a little bit more like about her and about me and it was kind of like at that moment that I knew that she genuinely cared about her students and that she wanted everyone to succeed to the best of their ability. And I think after that moment, like, I grew a lot of respect for her and I cared about her.

Given that the foundation for teacher care sets within classrooms and environments where students first experience teachers who care, it is critical and important that these teachers be reminded of the important roles they play in modeling these characteristics and behaviors of care. Modeling of care forms the ideal picture of individual care referenced in Noddings' (2003) model. Additionally, there is no way to estimate the number of catastrophic outcomes that are prevented or mitigated due to teacher care. Finally, implications for policymakers and those who train educators are provided below.

**Implications for Policy Makers and
Those Who Train Educators**

The final implication to emerge within this research is that policymakers and those who train educators have both an opportunity and responsibility to "finish building" the structures of teacher care formed and set within the classrooms and environment where students first encounter teachers who either do or do not care. The insights in this research suggest that teacher care, as a construct, begins to form when students experience teacher care, long before they enter their educational training institutions. Given that the foundation of teacher care forms and sets within an educational context, it is only fitting that those who shape policy regarding the education of those who educate and train those who educate should then finish the process of building the construct of teacher care. However, according to Noddings (1988), there is a greater focus on practices and approaches to pedagogical technique than on developing capacities around teacher care. This research suggests that policymakers and those who train educators need not start building teacher care. Instead, these individuals have a unique opportunity to build upon a well-established foundation formed and set through direct interactions with teachers who care and in some cases those that did not. As such, this research implies that there is a need for further exploration of the construct of teacher care within various samples of those being trained

and those who are teaching, there is a need to develop quantitative measures of teacher care, and

finally, there is a need to further explore teacher care amongst various groups of students and

teachers using these quantitative measures.

<div align="center">**Recommendations for Future Research**</div>

The results of this research provided room to make several recommendations for future

research endeavors. First, these research results provided insight and support to suggest that

Noddings' (2013) theory of care is a robust enough theory to conceptualize and theorize the

phenomena of care between teachers and students. Second, the sample used within this study was

a small and highly selective sample that showed a lot of overlap in experiences of teacher care.

Therefore, it would be worth exploring if this holds for a larger and more diverse sample.

In addition, when exploring participants perceptions of caring versus non-caring teachers,

it seems that teachers that are caring had certain characteristics devoid in non-caring teachers.

Therefore, the results seem to suggest a divergence in the experiences students reported

regarding teacher's execution of specific activities of care. As stated, it looks as if the

characteristics are abilities, the quality of being able to do something, and that the activities of

care are more likened to skills, things that can be learned. Given the differences in experiences

between participants regarding the characteristics and activities of care, conducting additional

qualitative research designed to explore these differences between students is explicitly needed.

It would also be fitting to conduct a similar study, only instead focusing on existing teachers to

better understand their experiences with the characteristics and activities of care outlined in

Noddings' (2013) model.

Finally, the results of this research point toward the ability and need for quantitative

research in general. As stated, it seems as if there are differences between individuals in how

they experience characteristics and activities of care. Additionally, the results point toward the idea that characteristics of care within the model are reflective of psychological abilities and that activities of care within the model are reminiscent of skills, things that can be trained or taught. To this point, I am recommending that future studies involve efforts to build on this work, and the qualitative studies recommended above, by developing, testing, and validating and reliable measure or assessment of expressions of teacher care based on Noddings' (2013) model and these research findings. This assessment's development would be a critical first step in quantifying Noddings' (2013) model of teacher care. Once an assessment of this nature is developed and validated, then researchers can address the two ideas mentioned above through formal research investigations aimed at understanding if students experience care from their teachers in quantitatively different ways and research aimed at understanding the degree to which teachers innately possess or can learn elements of care presented within Noddings' (2013) model.

In conclusion, Noddings' (2013) model is a robust enough theory to conceptualize and research teacher care experienced by students. However, based on the research findings from this study, the model could be expanded. Second, additional qualitative research is needed to determine if students indeed differ in their experiences of elements of care within the model and to explore and validate teacher perspectives of the care they provide to their students. If anything, this research should be conducted with students who are not studying to be teachers. Finally, exploratory quantitative research is needed to develop and validate a measure of care as the phenomena are conceptualized within Noddings' (2013) model and this research study. The development of a quantitative measure would provide a mechanism for quantification of differences between students regarding their experiences with teacher care and, arguably, more

importantly, create the capacity to explore the degree to the expression of care among teachers is

an innate ability or a skill that can be learned or acquired through targeted training.

Conclusions

The current qualitative study sought to explore the perceptions of pre-service teachers'

experience of teacher care in their secondary school years and analyze how those perceptions

compare with Noddings' (2003) ethics of care. The current study also sought to raise the profile

on Noddings' (2003) ethics of care and help to prepare future candidates to implement care in the

classroom.

Research findings suggest that caring teachers: (a) build positive interpersonal

relationships with their students, (b) demonstrate concern for student performance/success, (c)

are positive and optimistic, (d) and supportive both in and outside of the classroom. Participants

suggest caring teachers build positive interpersonal relationships by being genuine,

approachable, personable, and showing interest in the student. A teacher's availability can

exhibit concern for student performance and success to the student, patients, level of

engagement, flexibility, and leniency. Participants' descriptions of caring teachers and non-caring

teachers suggest that when a teacher chooses to act by approaching a student when they appear to

be struggling shows the student that the teacher is engrossed, committed, and facilitates the

perception of a caring teacher. Participants described being seen and acknowledged by their

caring teachers, thereby solidifying their individuality and importance. An engrossed teacher

displays this to a student by being concerned or distressed about their academic performance and

overall well-being. This lets the student know they are cared for. Participants described caring

teachers as exhibiting interest and attention to all students, even those with different interests

than their own. Further, caring teachers are receptive and exhibit behaviors to display relatedness or a connection with students.

Research findings also suggested that participants' descriptions of care are similar and dissimilar from Noddings' (2003) model of care. Participants described their experiences with teacher care in similar ways to the characteristics and activities of care named and defined within Noddings' (2003) model. Participants were dissimilar in their description of teacher care in that they did not conceptualize the process as being reciprocal, bi-directional, and as a matter of giving and taking with teachers. Participants mostly described taking from teachers in the care process. Further, participants suggested very specific characteristics of a caring teacher and described a perception of teacher care garnered through indirect actions by the teacher. Namely, the teacher caring and investing in their own skills as a teacher.

Several recommendations were provided in this chapter regarding implications for teachers and various educational stakeholders. The implications within this study are that the perception of teacher care begins to be conceptualized as students observe teachers modeling activities of care and that there is an opportunity to finish building teacher care within academic institutions where teachers are trained. Finally, there are opportunities for additional qualitative and quantitative research regarding teacher care. The current research study contributes to the caring literature and provides additional support to Noddings' (2003) ethics of care theory. Future research should seek to replicate and expand the current study to encompass a larger demographic, sample size, and garner the perceptions of in-service teachers.

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APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Institutional Review Board

Date: 07/16/2020

Principal Investigator: Christine Fisher

Committee Action: **IRB EXEMPT DETERMINATION – New Protocol**
Action Date: 07/16/2020

Protocol Number: 2006003988
Protocol Title: IRB Expedited Application for STUDENT AND TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS AT SECONDARY LEVEL 6.2.2020

Expiration Date:

The University of Northern Colorado Institutional Review Board has reviewed your protocol and determined your project to be exempt under 45 CFR 46.104(d)(702) for research involving

Category 2 (2018): EDUCATIONAL TESTS, SURVEYS, INTERVIEWS, OR OBSERVATIONS OF PUBLIC BEHAVIOR. Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met: (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; (ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or (iii) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by 45 CFR 46.111(a)(7).

You may begin conducting your research as outlined in your protocol. Your study does not require further review from the IRB, unless changes need to be made to your approved protocol.

As the Principal Investigator (PI), you are still responsible for contacting the UNC IRB office if and when:

APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT E-MAIL

Subject: Request for Participation in Research Interview.

I am writing to request your participation in a research interview on student-teacher relationships at the secondary level. This follows your acceptance to participate in the research process that will involve interview questions.

Moreover, I will select a few teacher candidates for standby cases when the selected respondents fail to show up or quit the interview process. The participants will be of both genders. Upon selection, I will rely on bulk email addresses as a mode of communication and personal contacts for instant communication when necessary. I will be the contact person and will use a personal email account for communication. This will ease communication, provide instant feedback, and offer a chance for participants to ask clarification questions. The following message will be the initial email to contact the teacher candidates.

I will conduct interviews in person or by Zoom, and your feedback will be essential to the success of the research. Your response to the interview questions will help me evaluate the effectiveness of caring in a student-teacher relationship at the secondary level. This will be ideal in improving the learning environment.

The research interview will be brief and will take approximately one hour to complete. Essential personal demographic info will be collected to participate in the interview. Please click the Qualtrics link https://unk.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0p0bi6ENO5PFb1P *to fill out the demographic information, which will remain confidential and anonymous. The interview will be via Zoom to allow for clarifications and further explanation from you.*

Your participation in the research interview is completely voluntary, and all your responses will remain confidential. Once you have participated in the interview, you will be removed from the participant list. No personally identifiable information will be linked to the responses you give or

any reports compiled. The research interview has been approved by University of Northern

Colorado and University of Nebraska Kearney).

Please, should you have any comments or queries, feel free to contact me at fisherce@unk.edu or

phone at 308-224-1161.

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation. I look forward to your participation, and

your feedback will be of importance to me.

Regards

Christine Fisher

fisherce@unk.edu

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT

CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Project Title: Student and teacher relationships at secondary level
Researcher: Christine Fisher, a doctoral candidate at University of Northern Colorado
Phone: E-mail: fisherce@unk.edu or fish0839@bears.unco.edu

Advisor: Derek Gottlieb, Ph. D.
Phone: 970-351-1607 Email: derek.gottlieb@unco.edu

This form describes a research project. It has information to help you decide whether or not you wish to participate. Research studies include only people who choose to take part – your participation is entirely voluntary. Please discuss any questions you have about the research or this form with myself or my Dissertation Chair before deciding to participate – our contact info has been listed below.

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to understand the role that teacher care played in the classroom experience of high school graduates. This study brings to life the experiences of high school graduates as they reflect on their high school experience, focusing on the care participants received from individual teachers. To better understand teacher care from the perspective of the student, interviews will be set up with volunteers who graduated high school and are juniors in college who are majoring in a secondary education field. Only those individuals who are older than 19 at the time of the interview will be allowed to participate. The stories and insight you give during our conversation will be summarized and interpreted to educate teachers about the importance of teacher care, as well as the development of strategies for improving student care. I will interview the student for 60 minutes. There will be no further time commitment other than looking over the transcribed interview.

Description of Procedures

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to take part in an interview that will investigate the importance of teacher care for students. The interview will include a five-minute introduction where the study is explained, followed by a series of questions that will ask you to describe your perceptions of teacher care. The total interview time will last no more than one hour.

Risks or Discomforts

You will be asked to give your perceptions of the care you received from individual teachers during your high school career. Since you have already graduated from high school, many of the risks or discomforts associated with talking poorly or negatively about past teachers have been minimized.

However, there is still a small chance that you may experience risks or discomforts from participating in this study. Potential risks could include embarrassment or uneasiness when talking negatively about former teachers. You could feel that potential relationships with former teachers could be strained due to honest answers. Additionally, you may feel uncomfortable discussing negative situations you have shared with individual teachers. Because of these risks, participation in this research project is voluntary. You can decline to answer any questions at any time. Additionally, if you wish to remove yourself from the project, you may do so during the five weeks after you received the interview transcript. This process will be described at greater length below in the *Confidentiality* section.

Benefits

If you decide to participate in this study, there will be no direct benefit to you. However, it is hoped that the information gained in this study will benefit teachers and educational leaders by supplying guidance on how to develop quality relationships with students better. When educators receive professional development on how to care for students effectively, the hope is that the effectiveness of the teacher will improve.

Costs and Compensation

You will not have any costs from participating in this study other than the time you spend during the interview and reviewing the interview transcript. There will be no compensation for your interview.

Participant Rights

Participating in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to take part in the research or to stop participating at any time during the five weeks after you have received your interview transcript, for any reason, without penalty or negative consequences.

If you have any questions *about the rights of research subjects*, please contact the University of Northern Colorado IRB Administrator, Nicole Morse at 970-351-1910, nicole.morse@unco.edu.

Confidentiality

Records identifying participants will be kept as confidential as possible and will not be made publicly available. Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy study records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.

Several steps will be taken to protect your confidentiality. These steps are listed below. However, you must understand *there are some limitations* as to my ability to protect your confidentiality during this process completely:

Your real name will be replaced with a fake name in all of the data (transcripts of our interview). Specific descriptors that would allow the audience to determine the participant being described will not be given. Examples of these specific participant descriptors not given in the final product include specific high school accomplishments, specific classes you took, and particular physical characteristics. At no time will the name of the school you attended be mentioned in the final product.

You will be asked not to share the names of the teachers you are describing in your interview. Specific teacher descriptors that would allow the audience to determine who is being described will not be given. Examples of these specific teacher descriptors not included in the final work include specific teaching accomplishments, an exact number of years of teaching, and particular physical characteristics. At no time will the name of the school the teacher works at be mentioned in the final product.

- To alleviate any concerns this may cause, I want to remind you that I have worked in education and with students for over fourteen years, and I am very familiar with the school setting and characteristics of students and teachers. At no time will descriptions of you or your former teachers be used that would allow the audience to determine who is being described. My background and knowledge of students and teachers will allow me to use solid judgment when deciding which descriptors can be used to describe participants and teachers with minimal chance of being identified.

- Interviews will be collected on a password-protected laptop computer. A talk-to-text program called Google Voice Typing will be used to collect interview transcripts. Following the interview, the transcript will immediately be uploaded to a website called UNKbox. Once uploaded and saved to the UNKbox website, the original transcript will be deleted. The next step will be for me to will be to access the transcript and replace all participant names with fake names. Once this has been done, a link to the transcript will be emailed directly to you. If there is a portion of the interview you no longer want to be included in a final product (such as the dissertation or other presentations), you may contact me by email within three weeks of receiving an interview transcript to let me know which parts you would like changed or deleted. Those pieces of transcript data will be removed. If I do not hear from you in three weeks, I will send you another reminder email asking you for any changes you would like to make. If I do not hear from you within two weeks of this second follow-up email, it will be assumed any contents of this transcript may be used in my research. **If there is a time during the five weeks after you receive the interview transcript that you feel uncomfortable about a piece of the writing in which you are included, please make sure to let me know, and I will omit that piece of information from the study.**

- Due to Covid-19 social distancing guidelines, interviews will take place via a video conferencing app, Zoom. Each participant will have their own individual Zoom meeting,

which will be password protected. Students' interviews will be video and audio recorded for assistance in transcribing the interview.

Questions

You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study. For further information *about the study,* contact:

Christine Fisher (Principal Investigator): Email: fisherce@unk.edu or fish0839@bears.unco.edu

Derek Gottlieb (Dissertation Chair): Phone: 970-351-1607/Email: derek.gottlieb@unco.edu

Consent and Authorization Provisions

Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the research has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document, and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. Before the interview begins, you must turn in this completed Informed Consent Document. Only after this form is read over, understood, and signed will the interview begin.

Participant's Name (printed)

_____

Participant's Signature   Date

_____
                                                                          Date

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Hello, (name). Thank you for agreeing to speak with me. Today I hope to hear your perceptions about the care you received from individual teachers during your high school career. One important request that I have during this interview is that you refrain from using any teacher names. There are many reasons for me asking you not to use teacher names. The main reason is that I would not want you to regret speaking poorly about previous teachers. Do you understand the expectation that you will not use teacher names during this interview?

For ease of note-taking and not slowing down the interview, I am going to use a talk-to-text program called Google Voice Typing and Zoom to record our conversation. If you would prefer that we end our discussion at any time, please let me know, and we will do so immediately.

Do I have your permission to record our discussion? Do you have any other questions before we begin?

Possible Introductory Questions

1. How did your spring semester go?
2. What are your plans for the summer?
3. What is your subject area(s) for your 7-12 teaching endorsement?

Interview Questions

1. What are your thoughts that come to your mind when you think about a caring teacher?

2. Can you think of a high school teacher(s) that you believe cared for you? I want you to think about the teacher that you think was your most caring high school teacher(s) when you answer the following questions:
   a. What did this teacher do to make you feel like he or she cared for you?
   b. What characteristics of caring did this teacher demonstrate?
   c. Tell me about any memorable experiences with your high school teacher(s) in which he or she showed that he or she cared for you?
   d. How did that experience make you feel about your teacher(s)?
   e. Tell me about any instructor's influence on your academic, social, and emotional success.
3. What are the thoughts that come to your mind when you think of a teacher that doesn't seem to care for students?
4. Can you think of a teacher that you believe did not care about you? (If yes, proceed to the next statement. If no, move on to question seven). I want you to think about the teacher that you believe was your least caring high school teacher when you answer the following questions:
   a. What did this teacher do to make you feel like he or she didn't care for you?
   b. What characteristics did this teacher demonstrate that made you feel like he or she didn't care for you?
   c. Tell me a story about this teacher that made you feel like he or she didn't care for you.
   d. How did teacher care affect your performance/motivation to do well in this class?
   e. What could this teacher have done differently for him or her to care for you more?

5. How might teachers show their care for students in different ways?
6. Do you think that it is important that a teacher cares for their students? Explain your thinking.
7. Do you think that teacher care for students was an issue at your high school? Explain your thinking.

Modeling:

8. When thinking about the future, how do you plan to invest in interpersonal relationships with students?
9. What kinds of things do you think you will do to create these caring relationships with students?
10. What are your personal beliefs as a future secondary teacher with making connections with your students?

(If necessary, set up a date and time for follow-up interview)

Thank you so much for taking part in this interview. I appreciate your time and insights. At this time, your interview is complete.

Before you leave, I want to make sure you understand our next steps. Right now, I am going to upload the transcript to a website called UNKbox. Once the transcript is uploaded and saved to the UNKbox website, the original transcript will be deleted.

After you leave, I am going to replace all participant names with fake names. I am also going to fix any transcription errors caused as a result of using the talk to text application. I am going to email you a link to the UNKbox website, which will have the transcript of your interview. This link will allow you to access the interview transcript from home. If there is a portion of the interview you no longer want to be included in the final product, you are asked to contact me by email. I will delete any piece of transcript data that you would like removed. If I do not hear from you within three weeks of you receiving the transcript, I will send you another follow-up email reminding you about requesting the changes. If I do not hear from you after two weeks of receiving this second email, I will assume any contents of the original transcript may be used in my dissertation or any other work that results from my research. Also, please remember that if at any time during the five weeks after you receive your interview transcript, you do not feel comfortable being a part of this process, you may remove yourself from the project.

Does all of this make sense?

Thank you for providing your email address when you accepted being a part of the research study.   Remember that your email address will not appear anywhere in the research. It will be deleted after data analysis is complete.

Thanks again for your participation in the interview, and please contact me with any concerns about your transcript.

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

To answer the research questions and achieve the objectives of the study, the following items

will be employed in interviewing the participants.

1. What are your thoughts that come to your mind when you think about a caring teacher?

2. Can you think of a high school teacher(s) that you believe cared for you? I want you to think about the teacher that you think was your most caring high school teacher(s) when you answer the following questions:
    a. What did this teacher do to make you feel like he or she cared for you?
    b. What characteristics of caring did this teacher demonstrate?
    c. Tell me about any memorable experiences with your high school teacher(s) in which he or she showed that he or she cared for you?
    d. How did that experience make you feel about your teacher(s)?
    e. Tell me about any instructor's influence on your academic, social, and emotional success.
3. What are the thoughts that come to your mind when you think of a teacher that doesn't seem to care for students?
4. Can you think of a teacher that you believe did not care about you? (If yes, proceed to the next statement. If no, move on to question seven). I want you to think about the teacher that you believe was your least caring high school teacher when you answer the following questions:
    a. What did this teacher do to make you feel like he or she didn't care for you?
    b. What characteristics did this teacher demonstrate that made you feel like he or she didn't care for you?
    c. Tell me a story about this teacher that made you feel like he or she didn't care for you.
    d. How did teacher care affect your performance/motivation to do well in this class?
    e. What could this teacher have done differently for him or her to care for you more?

5. How might teachers show their care for students in different ways?
6. Do you think that it is important that a teacher cares for their students? Explain your thinking.
7. Do you think that teacher care for students was an issue at your high school? Explain your thinking.

8. When thinking about the future, how do you plan to invest in interpersonal relationships with students?
9. What kinds of things do you think you will do to create these caring relationships with students?
10. What are your personal beliefs as a future secondary teacher with making connections with your students?

APPENDIX F

CODEBOOK

Name	Description	Files	References
1. What thoughts come to mind when you think about a caring teacher		12	12
Builds Positive Interpersonal Relationships with Students		0	0
Approachable-Personable	Comfortable going to the teacher with issues or concerns, not fearing that they will be judged or ridiculed.	1	1
Genuine	The teacher is authentic with the student. The teacher isn't phony in their response to students.	1	1
Shows an interest in relating to students as individuals	Pays close attention and interest in students as a person both in and outside the context of being a student.	5	6
Demonstrates Concern for Student Performance and Success		0	0
Available	Teachers made themselves available to the student when the student needed them.	3	5

Name	Description	Files	References
Engaged	Showed personal interest in the student. The teacher visibly invested and actively involved themselves in their craft and the students	5	5
Flexible and Lenient	Willing and able to work with student regarding coursework deadlines and tasks. Ready and able to change so as to adapt to the student's different circumstances	2	2
Patient	Actively accepted or tolerated delays, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious	1	1
Positive and Optimistic	Unbiased, hopeful, and confident about student's future.	1	1
Supportive	Provides encouragement and academic or emotional help.	5	5
10. What are your personal beliefs as a future secondary teacher with making connections with your students		11	11
Important	making connections with students is important because it motivates, fulfills, is the foundation	7	7

Name	Description	Files	References
	for success, garners respect, and fosters open communication		
Fosters Open Communication	Comfortable asking the teacher questions or having an open dialogue about something	2	3
Foundation of Success	essential for the accomplishment of an aim or purpose	1	1
Fulfilling	feeling that something is more gratifying	1	1
Garners Respect	Creates a mutual feeling of deep admiration	1	1
Motivates	stimulate interest or enthusiasm for doing something	3	3
11. How do you think COVID is now going to affect how teachers care for their students		11	11
I Don't Know	unknown	1	1
Increase Verbal Care	using spoke words to show care as opposed to physical contact	1	1
Increase Virtual Care	Alternative modalities will be used to show teacher care	5	5

Name	Description	Files	References
Make it Harder to Show Care	Difficult to provide the provisions of what is necessary for the maintenance, welfare, and protection of the student's well-being. The virtual curriculum requires teachers to be more regimented and assignment oriented.	3	3
Require Teacher to Be More Lenient	require teachers to be more permissive, merciful, or tolerant	2	2
12. Additional thoughts regarding personal beliefs about caring		10	10
2. Regarding a Caring High School Teacher		0	0
2a. What did this teacher do to make you feel like they cared		12	13
Exhibited Personal Investment in Student Success		6	7
Available	Teachers made themselves available to the student when the student needed them.	2	2

Name	Description	Files	References
Developed Positive Interpersonal Relationship with Student	Built rapport with students, personal interest, and fostered trust and positive feelings	7	8
Exhibited Genuine Concern for Student Well-being	Teacher showed authentic concern for the student's comfort, health, happiness	2	2
Go the Extra Mile	exhibited behaviours that went above and beyond what is expected of a teacher	3	3
Offered Mentoring and Guidance	offered advice or training and individual interest in the student	3	3
Genuinely Interested in What they Taught	Passionate about their profession and having pride in their work and effect on students.	3	3
Respectful and Honest	Treating the students with admiration and truthfulness	2	2
2b. What characteristics did this teacher demonstrate		11	11

Name	Description	Files	References
Compassionate		1	1
Empathetic		0	0
Funny		1	1
Genuine		0	0
Honest		1	1
Invested		0	0
Nurturing		0	0
Open		0	0
Outgoing		1	1
Personable		0	0
Positive		0	0
Respectful		0	0
Trustworthy		1	1
2c. Tell me about any memorable experiences with your high school teacher in which he or she		11	12

Name	Description	Files	References
showed that he or she cared for you			
Challenged Me to Do Better		2	3
Showed Compassion and Leniency		1	1
Showed Concern for my Personal Well-Being		5	5
Went the Extra Mile for Me		3	3
Worked on Building Interpersonal Relationship		2	2
2d. How did that experience make you feel about your teacher		11	11
Appreciative		6	6
Cared For		3	3

Name	Description	Files	References
Inspired		2	3
Respectful		2	2
Safe		2	2
2e. Tell me about any instructor's influence on your academic, social, and emotional success		11	11
Strong Influence		11	14
Mental Health Important		1	1
3. What are the thoughts that come to your mind when you think of a teacher that doesn't seem to care for students		12	12
Didn't have an uncaring teacher	Nothing comes to mind, didn't have an uncaring teacher in high school	1	1
inflexible	unwilling to change or compromise, no concern for the student's success or situation	2	2

Name	Description	Files	References
Not concerned about student's future	Doesn't conduct themselves in a way that is within the best interest of the student	1	1
not involved or engaging	Doesn't show concern or interest in the student's success or interested in their individual self	9	9
4. Regarding a Non-Caring Teacher		0	0
4a. What did this teacher do to make you feel like he or she didn't care for you		9	9
Demonstrated Exclusionary Behaviors	Denying students their time, access, or attention	2	2
Judgemental	displaying an excessively critical point of view regarding the student	2	2
Negative Behaviors Toward Students	Showing the student through actions or comments that they are angry, upset, etc. with the student	3	5
No Passion for Teaching		2	2

Name	Description	Files	References
Uncompassionate		2	2
Unsupportive		2	3
4b. What characteristics did this teacher demonstrate that made you feel like he or she didn't care for you		6	6
Biased Toward Students and Student Groups	Exhibiting exclusionary behaviors toward some groups of students and inclusionary toward others.	4	5
Demonstrated a Lack of Concern with Own Performance	Ambiguous or confusing learning curriculum	1	1
Unsupportive	not providing encouragement or emotional help	1	1
4c. Tell me a story about this teacher that made you feel like he or she didn't care for you		5	5
4d. How did teacher care affect your performance		11	11

Name	Description	Files	References
and or motivation to do well in this class			
Delay Completing Work	Teacher doesn't care about me, so I don't care about what they want me to do	1	1
Reduced Motivation and Performance	didn't have a desire or willingness to do the work or put in the extra effort	9	9
4e. What could this teacher have done differently for him or her to care for you more		6	6
Be Less Biased	be less unfairly prejudiced for or against someone or something	1	1
Be More Available	able to be used or obtained, at the student's disposal	1	1
Be Professional	adhering to a standard associated with the profession	1	1
Develop Interpersonal Relationships	Get to know students on a personal level	2	2

Name	Description	Files	References
Invest in the Student	Putting forth an effort and investing time in the student	1	1
5. How might teachers show their care for students in different ways		12	12
Be Available	able to be used or obtained at someone's disposal	1	1
Be Passionate About Being a Teacher	Exhibiting intense desire or enthusiasm toward teaching the students about their subject	2	2
Demonstrates Concern with Own Performance	Taking pride in their teaching as a craft	1	1
Build Interpersonal Relationships	Take the time to get to know the student on a personal level to build mutual respect and trust.	5	6
Engaged	Making an effort to invest in the student, approached them, and attempt to occupy, attract or involve students.	3	3
Go the Extra Mile	Behaving or acting in a manner outside the expected requirements of being a teacher.	1	1

Name	Description	Files	References
6. Do you think that it is important that a teacher cares for their students- Explain your thinking		12	12
Motivates Students	stimulate students' interest in or enthusiasm for doing something	6	6
Need to be a Nurturing Role Model	help or encourage the development of students while modeling behaviors as an example to be imitated.	3	3
7. Do you think that teacher care for students was an issue at your high school- Explain your thinking		12	12
8. When thinking about the future, how do you plan to invest in interpersonal relationships with students		12	12
Being Available	able to be used or obtained, at the student's disposal	3	3

Name	Description	Files	References
Being Passionate About the Subject Taught	Showing intense enthusiasm about the subject being taught and trying to infect students with it.	1	1
Demonstrate Concern for Student Well-Being	Concern for students' comfort, health, and happiness.	1	1
Get to Know the Student on a Personal Level	Build interpersonal relationships with students to build rapport and mutual trust.	5	6
Offer Student-Centered Teaching	Assess where the students are in the learning process and curtail the curriculum toward their individual needs.	1	1
Offer Support	give approval, comfort, or encouragement to students	6	6
Engage	occupy, attract, or involve students	1	1
Patient and Lenient	able to accept or tolerate delays, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious and merciful or tolerant toward students	1	1
9. What kinds of things do you think you will do to create these		11	11

Name	Description	Files	References
caring relationships with students			
Be available	able to be used or obtained, at someone's disposal	2	2
Build strong interpersonal relationships	Get to Know Students on an Individual Level	3	3
Make the Subject Exciting	Be innovative about how to present the subject matter to students. Innovative and passionate.	4	4
Noddings' Characteristics of Care and Activities of Care		0	0
Activities of Care		0	0
Confirmation		0	0
Dialogue		0	0
Modeling		0	0
Practice		0	0
Characteristics of Care		0	0
Commitment		0	0

Name	Description	Files	References
Engrossment		0	0
Motivational Shift		0	0