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The Influence of Teacher Preparation Programs' Field Experiences on Pre-Service Teacher Candidates' Sense of Teaching Efficacy

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THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS' FIELD EXPERIENCES ON PRE-SERVICE TEACHER CANDIDATES' SENSE OF TEACHING EFFICACY

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ABSTRACT

THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS' FIELD EXPERIENCES ON PRE-SERVICE TEACHER CANDIDATES' SENSE OF TEACHING EFFICACY

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In this descriptive, mixed methods study, the researcher investigated the influence of teacher preparation programs' field experiences on teacher candidates' sense of teaching efficacy. Tschannen-Morgan & Woolfolk-Hoy's (2001) Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire was sent to 221 teacher candidates enrolled in one of five teaching license paths in a large metropolitan university in the eastern part of the United States. Seventy-seven percent of the questionnaires were returned. Questionnaires were analyzed to determine the degree the number of hours of elementary teacher candidates' field experiences influence their perceptions of their teaching efficacy. The questionnaires were also used to compare the mean scores among teacher candidates' teaching efficacy beliefs that have completed their required teacher license paths' field experiences. Further, eleven interviews were conducted from the five license paths to determine components of candidates' field experiences that contributed towards increasing their teaching efficacy. Results indicated that multiple field experiences benefited candidates by exposing them to multiple cooperating teachers, students, and various learning environments. The regression analyses indicated a slight to moderate positive correlation of the number of hours of field experiences to teacher candidates' teaching efficacy. The analyses of variance (ANOVA) tests determined a statistically significant difference

among overall efficacy of those in one of the license paths with less than 430 hours and the other four license paths. However, since this particular path's participants' population was very small, this might provide a limitation to the findings. Further, qualitative results indicated numerous factors during candidates' field experiences that contributed to the increase in confidence levels as future educators. Evidence suggested that field experiences should provide candidates the flexibility to try different instructional strategies, ways to engage students, and teaching techniques to help classroom management. Formal field experiences that emphasized communication and collaboration among the candidates, the university supervisors, and the cooperating teachers promoted candidates' teaching efficacy. Candidates expressed the strength in regular self-reflection and continual feedback from these key players during their field experiences. Along with feeling supported, results indicated the importance of a working professional relationship among the university supervisor, the teacher candidate, and the cooperating teacher. Findings also suggest informal field experiences (completed before entering the teacher preparation program) that were paid or volunteered, contributed towards increasing candidates' teaching efficacy prior to enrolling in their teacher preparation program.

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New teachers must be prepared to face the challenges of the teaching profession. Each day, educators must make multiple and complex context specific decisions with increasingly diverse groups of students (Berry, 2010). New teachers must continue to motivate students, meet state and national standards, and prepare students to face the world on a global level (Erawn, 2011).

In order to prepare new teachers to be confident and successful in facing these challenges, teacher preparation programs should focus on the best, most effective practices and experiences for pre-service teacher candidates (Berry, 2010). Specifically, high quality coursework and field experiences should be provided to pre-service teachers to better prepare them for the real world experiences that they will soon encounter (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

While being able to successfully deliver instruction is vital in the classroom, an equally important factor in education includes teachers' strong sense of teaching efficacy. Teachers' sense of efficacy is crucial in linking skills, knowledge, and preparation towards effective and efficient teaching and learning practices (Erawan, 2011).

Over the past 30 years, Anita Woolfolk-Hoy has researched teacher candidates and in-service teachers' sense of teaching efficacy. In Shaughnessy's (2004) interview with Woolfolk-Hoy, she stresses the importance of high quality teacher preparation programs with the real-world teaching opportunities:

> The preparation of teachers should be seen as ongoing development, not as the completion of requirements. Any teacher preparation program must support and encourage increasing autonomy. Becoming a teacher should be seen as a continuing process, not something that magically occurs after all courses are completed. This means

> prospective teachers need to assume more and more responsibility for real teaching over the course of their preparation as they gain knowledge and skill (p. 162).

High quality teacher preparation programs' field experiences for pre-kindergarten-6th grade teacher candidates may serve as the link between preparing for the real-world classroom and increasing teacher candidates' teaching efficacy. Field experiences can be progressively integrated within methods classes and seen as encompassing concepts that are first introduced in the methods courses. Field experiences create opportunities for teacher candidates to gain experience and practice ideas through observations and student teaching practices. These future teachers begin to move from understanding educational theory to combining the theory with actual practice (Clift & Brady, 2005).

Theoretical Framework

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is part of a wide-ranging topic around the issues of mastery, human agency, and control. Developed by Albert Bandura in 1977, self-efficacy has become an important issue within social psychological research because of its association with various favorable academic consequences. It is also compatible with the Western world's emphasis on such values as self-reliance, mastery, and achievement (Gecas, 1989).

Instead of focusing on personal qualities, self-efficacy measures perceived performance capabilities (Zimmerman, 2000; Schunk & Gunn, 1986). Researchers explain that self-efficacy often influences persistence, task accomplishments, one's choice of activities, and the amount of effort used in a task (Schunk & Gunn, 1986). It also involves judgments of one's ability to perform given activities (Schunk, 1981) and

believing that one can perform a given task successfully (Lent, Brown, & Larkin, 1984). Self-efficacy is an individual's sense of confidence and competence related to performance in a particular domain (Berry & West, 1993).

In measuring self-efficacy, researchers usually ask subjects how well they can perform at a specific level of a particular task and then ask them how confident that they are in performing that task (Lee & Bobko, 1994). It is easier to measure the predictive value of self-efficacy on specific tasks rather than broader tasks. The broader the realm being measured, the less accurate their predictive value (Pajares, 1996).

Self-Efficacy and Teaching

The theoretical framework for teaching and self-efficacy (teaching efficacy) is based on Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy. According to Gresham (2008), there are two factors involved in the construct of teacher efficacy. The first, personal teaching efficacy represents a teacher's confidence in his or her skills and capabilities to be an effective teacher. The second, teaching outcome expectancy is a teacher's belief that successful teaching can bring about student learning despite external factors such as family background, parental influences, and home environment.

Swars (2005) explains that teacher efficacy involves effective classroom instructional strategies and the willingness to try new teaching ideas. Individual teacher efficacy is highly associated with teacher motivation. Teachers who are willing to try new instructional ideas and persist when faced with obstacles are more likely to implement new approaches and to integrate the innovations into the classroom. These teacher behaviors are linked to academic success for students (Bruce & Ross, 2008).

Further, teachers with a strong sense of personal teaching efficacy tend to spend more time planning what they teach. They tend to be more open to new ideas and teaching approaches, set higher goals, are more willing to try new strategies, and persevere through the profession's challenges (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000). Since teacher efficacy is context specific, teachers are not equally efficacious in all teaching situations. A teacher's efficacy depends on the subject they are teaching and the students they are instructing (Bandura, 1993, 1997; Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000). For example, a teacher may feel efficacious in teaching science but not efficacious in teaching language arts.

Self-efficacy and Learning

Educators' beliefs about their teaching capabilities can be strong indicators to whether or not their students are successful academically. In fact, teachers who do not expect their students to succeed are less likely to put forth the effort to successfully deliver the instruction needed to reach the students who are struggling academically (Tuchman, & Issacs, 2011). Teachers of struggling students tend to give up quicker when faced with students' learning challenges. Teacher's teaching efficacy perceptions are predictive of student achievement (Bandura, 1993; Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000). This indicates self-efficacy beliefs in education can act as self-fulfilling prophecies, which can validate beliefs of students' capabilities and achievement (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2007). In other words, the teachers who believe they can positively influence students' learning have more success with their students' achievement than teachers with lower efficacy in teaching.

Since teacher efficacy involves integrating and applying skills from one's learning academics, the influence of self-efficacy on academic teaching performance rises as academic abilities are mastered (Shell, Murphy, & Bruning 1989).

Teachers' teaching efficacy beliefs are developed in a variety of ways. For example, teachers, whose students continually perform poorly in specific content areas such as mathematics, reading, science, or social studies, often, develop a negative teaching efficacy of those specific subjects. This can lead to a sense of inability that impairs their performance in other teaching situations. Teachers who develop this mindset often act upon established self-beliefs without reevaluation (Pajares, 1992). Highly efficacious teachers often have a more positive outlook towards their students and usually implement strategies that incorporate a positive approach to discipline and classroom management (Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990).

In summary, teacher willingness to try new instructional ideas, in particular those that may be difficult to teach, depends on teacher beliefs about their ability to impact student learning (Bruce & Ross, 2008). Teachers with a higher confidence to teach have been attributed as having a strong teaching efficacy (Guskey, 1988).

Preparing Future Teachers: Field Experiences in Teacher Preparation Programs

Field experiences have been a part of teacher-training programs since the era of the American Normal School (1830's to 1950's) (Ogren, 2005). Specifically, formal field experiences began in the early 1900's. Formal field experiences include a variety of prearranged pre-kindergarten through 12^{th} grade classroom-based experiences for teacher candidates in public or private schools. The goal of these field experiences is to provide real world opportunities to gain teaching knowledge through observation, assisting,

instructing, and/or conducting research before earning a teaching license (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002).

Teacher preparation programs vary in required coursework and field experiences. Traditional teacher preparation programs usually require more coursework and a greater variety of field experiences than alternative teacher degree programs. Both sets of teacher candidates are able to earn similar endorsements, yet are involved in different types of field experiences. The length of the experiences, the number and variety of school placements, and the contextual factors of the cooperating schools are all characteristics that differentiate one program from another. For example, some programs contain one student teaching semester whereas others involve a year-long internship before graduation. Some teacher preparation programs include field experiences throughout the freshman, sophomore, and junior years, while others only require one field experience before earning a teaching license (Zeichner & Conklin, 2008).

A common field experience throughout most teacher preparation programs is the student teaching component. This experience is typically the final phase of most teacher preparation programs. During these placements, teacher candidates gradually assume total teaching responsibilities under the joint supervision of a cooperating teacher and a university supervisor. Teacher candidates enter their student teaching semester with established teaching efficacies, attitudes, beliefs, and values on teaching and learning. A lifetime of classroom experiences have influenced and formed their ideas of best teaching practices (Plourde, 2002). To promote teacher efficacy, most teacher education programs implement field experiences to provide pre-service teachers opportunities to integrate knowledge and experience, practice teaching skills, and connect theory to practice (Liaw,

2009). The question remains whether different programs and license paths, with varying field experiences have more influence in the levels of teaching efficacy in pre-service teacher candidates.

Problem Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of the current study is to provide colleges of education quantitative and qualitative research about teacher preparation programs' field experiences and the factors that contribute to pre-service teacher candidates' teaching efficacy. Learning about teacher candidates' opinions of their field experiences is particularly important to the success of a teacher education programs and involve reflecting on the past field experiences of the teacher candidates (Chang, 2009). The overall goal of field experiences is to encourage confidence and continued commitment in the field of education.

This study focuses on three main questions:

1. To what degree does the number of hours of elementary teacher candidates' field experiences influence their perceptions of their teacher efficacy?
2. To what degree are there differences among teacher candidates' teaching efficacy beliefs who have completed their required license paths' field experiences?
3. What components of the teacher candidates' field experiences influence teacher efficacy?

Overview of Study

This non-experimental, mixed methods design involved 167 teacher candidates enrolled in one of five teacher license paths resulting in their Pk-6 teaching license degree. All participants were enrolled in the same large public university in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States.

Quantitative and qualitative measures were used to address the three research questions. The first question, "To what degree does the number of hours of elementary teacher candidates' field experiences influence their perceptions of their teacher efficacy?" was analyzed quantitatively through a within group regression analysis among different stages of completed hours of field experiences. A within-group regression analysis was conducted to determine whether elementary teacher candidates' field experience hours influence their perceptions of their teaching efficacy. The regression analysis results analyzed the different tiers' completed hours of field experiences in the same Interdisciplinary Studies path. Data from questionnaires with three teaching efficacy subscales were used for the regression analyses.

The instrument that was used to determine a personal belief in teacher efficacy is the Tschannen-Morgan & Woolfolk-Hoy's (2001)'s Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire. The reliable and valid questionnaire on teacher beliefs is designed to help educators gain a better understanding of the types of situations that create complications for teachers in their school activities. Teacher candidates rated a series of statements on a 9-point Likert type scale. Number 1 indicated the candidate's feelings that there is nothing that he or she can do to help a particular educational circumstance, a number 3

indicated very little, a 5 indicated some influence, a number 7 indicated quite a bit, and a number 9 indicated the candidate's beliefs he or she can do a great deal about a particular educational circumstance.

Data collected with the questionnaire were also used to address question 2, "To what degree are there differences among teacher candidates' teaching efficacy beliefs who have completed their required license paths' field experiences?" Using a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), the means of teacher efficacy levels among teacher candidates from five license paths were analyzed. A One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was also used to analyze means of the three subcategories of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale. These three subcategories include efficacy of student engagement, efficacy of classroom management, and efficacy of instructional strategies. Each participant in the five license paths has recently completed their final field experience from one of five license paths. Each license path has a different number of required formal field experiences.

The third question, "What components of the teacher candidates' field experiences influence teacher efficacy?" was analyzed qualitatively through semi-structured personal interviews. The interview questions focused on components of the teacher candidates' field experiences that influence program satisfaction, intention to stay in the field, and overall teaching efficacy.

Chapter I provides a rationale for the research questions that were addressed in this study. The theoretical framework surrounding self-efficacy and teacher efficacy are addressed. Chapter II investigates the current research surrounding field experiences

relating to teacher candidates and in-service teachers' teaching efficacy. In particular, the research describes various components in field experiences that contribute towards teacher candidates' efficacy. Chapter III further and more specifically outlines the methodology that was used in this research study. Chapter IV describes the findings of the three research questions and Chapter V discusses the significance of these findings.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

According to Feiman-Nemser (2001), teachers who survive the first few years of their teaching profession are likely to continue to teach for many more years. Because of these realities, high quality teacher preparation programs' field experiences should be provided to teacher candidates in order to better prepare them for their teaching career.

The following literature review provides a framework for investigating effective field experiences that relate to pre-service teachers' sense of teaching efficacy. A variety of teacher education programs and the various impacts that contextual factors have on pre-service teachers' sense of teaching efficacy are discussed. Findings regarding content specific teaching efficacy is also explored. Finally the importance of the triangular relationship among the teacher candidates, the cooperating teachers, and the university supervisors for increasing pre-service teachers' teaching efficacy is explained.

Field Experiences Relating to Teacher Efficacy

A plethora of teaching license preparation programs exists in thousands of schools of education. Programs often vary in their course requirements, hours and expectations of practica, and student teaching placements. According to Gurvitch & Metzler (2009), "authentic field experiences" are considered those that include a broad range of contextual factors in elementary through high schools. Experts view authentic field experiences as providing strong, real-world and in-class experiences to teachers in training. There also may be variant emphases on the relationships among the cooperating

teacher, university supervisor, and teacher candidate. Below are various research findings regarding the diverse field experiences in teacher preparation programs.

Contextual Factors of Cooperating Schools Influencing Teacher Candidates' Teaching Efficacy

Teacher candidates may experience a variety of contextual factors through their teacher preparation field experiences. Contextual factors include the school's students' households' range of socio-economic statuses, the school's demographics, and the social and cultural factors of the surrounding community. Knoblauch & Woolfolk-Hoy (2008) studied teacher candidates' efficacy beliefs by using the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale. The primary focus of these teacher candidates was to analyze their cooperating schools' setting and contextual factors (i.e. urban, suburban, and rural) and determine whether these factors influence the development of the teacher candidates' efficacy beliefs .The questionnaire's scale was completed before beginning student teaching, midway through the process, and after the student teacher placement. Results display 102 candidates from various contextual factors had a significant increase in Teaching Efficacy after student teaching. These findings show the strength in placing candidates in a variety of contextual factors. Martin Haberman (1995), an urban studies professor, states, "Completing a traditional program of teacher education as preparation for working in this emotional caldron [urban, high-poverty schools] is like preparing to swim the English Channel by doing laps in the university pool" p. 2.

In a related study, Siwatu (2011) investigated the progression of student teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in a variety of school contexts, including rural, suburban, and urban school districts. The results demonstrated an increase in teaching efficacy after a semester

of student teaching in each of the school types. Findings suggest distinctive differences between urban and suburban school contexts may influence teacher candidates and in-service teachers' sense of teaching efficacy if not given the preparation needed. Because of this reality, urban school systems continue to struggle with recruiting and retaining teachers. Unfortunately, the data revealed our country's largest, urban public school systems are forced to fill many positions with applicants who are only partially qualified or are not certified to teach (Chester & Beaudin, 2009).

Siwatu (2011) studied a variety of contextual settings relating to pre-service teachers' sense of efficacy. Specifically, teacher candidates were exposed to urban and suburban cooperating schools during their formal field experiences. Four questions regarding candidates' sense of preparedness were given to the candidates before and after each placement that directly related to working in the urban school and suburban school setting. Each question had a likert scale ranging from 0 (not at all prepared) to 10 (extremely prepared). The results suggest that the contextual factors of the school do matter when relating to teacher efficacy. The pre-service teachers in this study felt more prepared to teach in suburban schools compared to in urban schools.

Informal and Formal Field Experiences

According to The National Bureau of Economic Research (2008), teachers with a variety of formal field experiences before beginning their teaching career have higher student achievement growth in their first year of teaching than those without these varieties of field-based experiences (Boyd et al., 2008). In order to specifically promote teacher efficacy, most teacher education programs implement formal field experiences

that provide pre-service teachers opportunities to integrate knowledge and experience, practice teaching skills, and connect theory to practice (Liaw, 2009).

Formal field experiences include a variety of dimensions, including the length of experiences, the number and variety of placements, and the cooperating schools' contextual factors. These varying characteristics can drastically distinguish teacher education programs from one another. For example, some programs contain one student teaching semester whereas others involve a year-long internship. Some programs include field experiences throughout a preparation program, while others implement them when the preparation program's coursework is complete (Zeichner & Conklin, 2008). Regardless of the preparation program or licensure path, it is important that teacher preparation programs are effective and emphasize authentic field experiences. Erawan (2011) studied pre-service teachers' attitudes toward the teaching profession, program effectiveness, and practica experiences. Findings suggest that all of these components are significant predictors of teaching efficacy.

Tuchman & Issacs (2011) examined the connections between informal and formal formative pre-service experiences relating to teacher efficacy in teachers grades K-5. Informal field experiences are those experiences that are not required through a university's teacher preparation program and are participated in before entering the teacher preparation program. Specifically in this study, the informal field experiences included teaching at a day care, being a youth advisor, and/or a camp counselor *prior* to the preparation programs' formal field experiences. The measures of this study included the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire and The Personal Teacher Efficacy Subscale of the Teacher Efficacy Scale. Findings of the study also provided some

evidence that pre-service experiences in informal education may also help to build efficacy beliefs about teaching. Informal experiences such as being a youth advisor, camp counselor, and a child care supervisor were all found to be positively associated with teacher efficacy.

In these instances the relationship between informal and formal experiences regarding teacher efficacy did not appear to fade over time. Informal and formal experiences seemed to relate to different aspects of teacher-efficacy beliefs. Specifically, formal teacher field experiences and earning a state issued teaching credential were most predictive of high efficacy for instructional practices. In contrast the various informal experiences were most strongly associated with high efficacy for student engagement (Tuchman & Issacs, 2011).

In agreement, Boyd et al. (2008) explain that formal field experiences are vital to the teacher preparation experience. Preparation programs that provide opportunities for future educators to gain experiences in the classroom create better equipped and more effective first year teachers. Pre-service teachers who actively engage in teaching practices such as planning a guided reading lesson, listening to a child read for the purpose of assessment, and/or analyzing student math and science work show greater student gains during their first year of teaching than those without such experiences.

Candidates who actively participate in cooperating schools show evidence of an increase in teaching efficacy levels. Haverback & Parault (2011) investigated two groups of teacher candidates with differing field experiences. Both groups of teacher candidates were assigned to their field experiences during their third or fourth year of their

undergraduate program. The two groups consisted of 1) those who tutored students in small group settings and 2) those that observed students in a whole class classroom setting, but did not work with the students in a small group setting. Both groups were also a part of a semester long, language development and reading acquisition course. Results indicated both groups of candidates had an increase in teacher efficacy after their experiences. However, tutors expressed the active participation with their tutoring groups to be more relevant to their changes in efficacy and content knowledge than the observing participants.

Darling-Hammond's book *Powerful Teacher Education* (2006), discusses several examples of teacher preparation programs that have distinctive models of success. Each of these teacher preparation programs has extended formal field experiences. As measured, the self-efficacy of new teachers in programs with extended field experiences was significantly higher than other teacher preparation programs without these key elements. These newly hired teachers showed higher confidence in teaching their students regardless of the student's background, socio-economic status, home environment, or student internal drive. Further, the studied graduates were more likely to state that their ideas regarding teaching and learning came from their individual teacher preparation program. In contrast, the comparison group without an extended formal field experience was more likely to express their ideas about teaching spawning from their own experiences as students in the K-12 classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Clift & Brady (2005) researched the efficacy beliefs of pre-service teachers regarding their teaching practices after completing a combination of teacher preparation methods courses and field experiences. Findings indicate the early field experiences

provide gainful opportunities for pre-service teachers to interact with students through tutoring, observation, simulation, and small group instruction. These experiences influenced the development of pre-service teachers' efficacy levels and teaching skills.

Zientek (2006) studied new teachers' classroom demographics, teachers' sense of preparedness to enter the classroom, student achievement in the classroom, and new teachers' sense of teaching self-efficacy. Zientek's findings indicated that teacher licensure paths contributed towards teachers' perceptions of preparedness. Findings also implied that positive student teaching mentoring experiences and prior classroom experiences may have helped counterbalance differences between certification routes. Complications did arise, however, when detecting specific differences in teachers' opinions about sense of preparedness because of the myriad certification programs (traditional and alternative) and their varying components.

Content Specific Teaching Efficacy

Teachers' views about the curricula's content often correspond to their beliefs about teaching and learning (Burton & Pace, 2009). McDonnough & Matikins (2010) discussed the importance of core content specific field experiences for elementary pre-service teachers. For their study, students were enrolled in a science methods course while participating in their student teaching experience. The teacher candidates' supervisors were also their science methods coursework instructors. These supervisors' roles were to oversee, observe, and provide feedback on the field experience. Students were also trained to reflect and critique their own teaching in the context of the support of the science methods course. After comparing efficacy beliefs in teaching science with a comparison group, without the methods course and content specific supervisor, findings

suggested that linking the science methods course to field experiences is an effective strategy for preparing elementary teachers of science. In fact, the comparison group that did not have a supervisor to teach their methods' course had a decrease in science teaching efficacy after their placement.

In another study, Utley, Bryant, & Moseley (2005) investigated the change in teacher efficacy beliefs regarding science and mathematics teaching during participation in methods courses and student teaching. Data indicated that as the science and math methods courses continued, science and mathematics teaching efficacy significantly increased. However, these findings seemed to decrease slightly by the end of their student teaching experience. The data also revealed a significant difference in both the personal mathematics and personal science teaching efficacy scores, as well as mathematics outcome expectancy. Further, teacher candidates' personal mathematics and science teaching efficacies were directly related, as were their science and mathematics teaching outcome expectancies.

Interactions among the Candidate, the Cooperating Teacher, and the University Supervisor

In order for formal field experiences to be successful, research suggests a clear communication among the teacher candidate, the cooperating teacher, and the university's supervisor. The roles and responsibilities of each field experience team is imperative to creating highly efficacious teachers in each field experience (Enz, Freeman, & Wallin, 1996).

According to Graham (2006), "cooperating teachers, interns, and university liaison[s] contribute[d] different areas of expertise" p. 1124. Graham conducted various

interviews with cooperating teachers, teacher candidates, and university supervisors to determine how their role was best implemented during the formal field experiences. Findings from the interviewees revealed best practices of cooperating teachers included those who monitored teacher candidates' progress and provided models of teaching practices. Cooperating teachers who gave the candidates classroom control, provided feedback about organizing lessons, monitored student growth, and motivated students to learn were especially advantageous. University supervisors who extended candidates' understanding about sharing the perspective of the cooperating teacher along with understanding the different classroom's dynamics were beneficial. Candidates also benefited when their supervisors helped them to connect their field experiences with formulating "their professional identify and capacities as well as develop[ed] understanding of the teaching and learning dynamic".

O'Hair & O'Hair (1996) explain that communication among the cooperating teacher, the university professor, and the teacher candidate promotes successful field experiences. Communicating connects the formation of teaching and learning, translates emotions and perceptions into actions, and sets the stage for personal growth and professional development. According to O'Hair & O'Hair, (1996), communication serves "as the adhesive connecting what we understand about good teaching with the actual practice of good teaching" p. 162.

Specifically, Darling-Hammond (2006) suggests cooperating teachers should be experts in the field and embrace the opportunity to mentor a pre-service teacher. The university professor should provide the cooperating teachers clear examples of tasks for the teacher candidates to encounter and guidelines of what is expected of them.

Goodfellow & Sumsion (2000) explain that field experiences for cooperating teachers play a mutual dependent relationship for sharing enthusiasm and commitment to the teaching profession. Teachers with a strong passion for education provide strength for the pre-service teachers. This enthusiasm provides future teachers with resolve to face the everyday frustrations that the profession often involves. The cooperating teachers also expressed the importance of formulating one's own teaching philosophy from personal and professional knowledge and experiences (Goodfellow & Sumsion, 2000).

Guyton & Wesche (1996) explored educational attitudes of practicum and student teachers in a low socio economic status school. They found that even though the candidates were in schools with at-risk students, candidates assigned to schools with a high morale, enjoyable surroundings, and friendly and compatible cooperating teacher can positively contribute towards teacher candidates' attitudes. Cooperating teachers who were good role models were considered an important factor in pre-service teachers' opinions regarding successful full-time field experiences.

Participants in Kahn's (2001) qualitative study identified many key elements towards making the team (the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, and the teacher candidate) effective for successful field experiences. Data revealed that the effective qualities of cooperating teachers include giving frequent constructive feedback, multiple opportunities to teach the classroom, and giving the student teachers flexibility in the classroom. Findings also emphasized views regarding the importance of a mutual learning relationship between cooperating teacher and student teacher. Cooperating teachers expressed their interest in expanding their traditional role as the cooperating teacher. They wanted more information regarding the methods courses that the students

had taken, and how they could act as a consultant to the methods instructors in the university. Participants recommended more support from their university, and expanding the traditional cooperating teacher role.

In agreement with Kahn's study, Graham (2006)'s study demonstrated the cooperating teacher's belief in the importance in communication among all participants in the student teaching experience. They described positive partnering experiences as being collaborative. The role of the supervisor was also mentioned in these interviews. They commented on the fact that the supervisors from the cooperating institution were "team players" and were present in the schools and supportive to the cooperating teachers. According to the cooperating teachers, this encouraged successful collaboration between the school and university.

Fives, Hamman, & Olivarez (2007) analyzed varying degrees of student teachers' feelings of burnout during their student teaching semester. They studied how their teaching efficacy was related to their cooperating teacher's and university supervisor's support in alleviating stresses. Results suggest that as student teachers' level of efficacy increases, their likelihood of burnout decreases. The researchers also suggest that students who described their cooperating teachers as supportive and demonstrated positive guidance early in their student teaching semester, had considerably higher levels of teaching efficacy for instructional teaching practices at the end of the semester.

Summary

In summary, a teacher's sense of teaching efficacy influences the goals they set, the willingness to try new instructional strategies, and the effort they put forth as they deliver instruction to their students (Ball, 1996). Pre-service teacher candidates' efficacy

can be increased through practicing classroom instruction and management techniques that are gained through field experiences in schools as part of an undergraduate or graduate teaching licensure degree paths. This type of training can provide teacher candidates knowledge and formal, supervised, classroom experience that will provide teacher candidates with the necessary skills for instruction (Erawn, 2011).

Formal field experiences that involve high quality mentors, a variety subjects taught, and authentic learning experiences provide pre-service teachers with opportunities that enhance their teaching efficacy. The multiple facets of teacher education encourage mastery experiences through the support of skilled teachers mentoring pre-service teachers. Mentoring relationships, by university supervisors and cooperating teachers encourage and scaffolds self-confidence and provides positive reinforcements for enhancing teacher-efficacy. Vicarious experiences are gained through student teaching experiences, allowing prospective teachers to gain insight through practice and observation into the teaching field. Continual and open communication through constructive feedback among cooperating teachers and university supervisors can encourage pre-service teachers' preparedness for being practicing teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

The current research study focuses on investigating the various factors involved in teacher preparation programs' field experiences that contribute to the increase of teacher efficacy in teacher candidates. After reviewing the literature, questions evolved regarding the specific components in field experiences' components and each experience's duration's impact on teacher candidates' increase in teacher efficacy. This study begins to address the gap in the literature by investigating whether the number of hours of field

experiences influences students' perceptions about their teaching efficacy. Although the literature provides a glimpse into various preparation programs, the literature fails to compare traditional preparation programs to nontraditional preparation programs in the same study. Quantitative and qualitative measures will determine differences among teacher preparation programs' paths and which specific components of the pre-service teachers' field experiences influence pre-service teacher efficacy.

This study focuses on three main questions:

1. To what degree does the number of hours of elementary teacher candidates' field experiences influence their perceptions of their teacher efficacy?
2. To what degree are there differences among teacher candidates' teaching efficacy beliefs who have completed their required license paths' field experiences?"
3. What components of the teacher candidates' field experiences influence teacher efficacy?

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology that was used to evaluate the influence of teacher preparation programs' license paths' field experiences on teacher candidates' sense of teaching self-efficacy. A detailed description of the participants is provided, followed by the study's procedures, its measures, its instruments, and the methods of data analyses.

This study focuses on three main questions:

1. To what degree does the number of hours of elementary teacher candidates' field experiences influence their perceptions of their teacher efficacy?
2. To what degree are there differences among teacher candidates' teaching efficacy beliefs who have completed their required license paths' field experiences?"
3. What components of the teacher candidates' field experiences influence teacher efficacy?

Participants

The study's population includes undergraduate and graduate teacher candidates enrolled in the same large metropolitan university in the eastern part of the United States. The sample of 167 participants are working towards earning a Pre-Kindergarten-6th grade state's teaching license or have recently earned a teaching license. The participants are

enrolled in one of two teacher preparation programs and one of five license paths. Each path varies in the required number and duration of formal field placements.

The first preparation program is an approved state elementary education pre-kindergarten-6th grade teaching license program (Program 1). In this program, four license paths are offered. All four of the paths in Program 1 are approved by the state and result in a teaching license. Program 2 is an alternative, state-funded Career Switchers license program to support career switchers. Program 2 only has one offered path and results in a provisional state license. Table 1 displays the required hours and number of formal field experiences in each of the two teacher preparation programs and their corresponding license paths.

Table 1

The Pk-6 Teaching License Paths and Required Field Experiences

		30 hours of classroom observation (PK-3rd 50%) (4th-6th 50%)	40 hours of practicum (PK-3rd 50%) (4th-6th 50%)	70 hours of practicum (PK-3rd 50%) (4th-6th 50%)	150 hours of practicum (PK-3rd 50%) (4th-6th 50%)	14 weeks of student teaching (PK-3rd 50%) (4th-6th 50%)
Program 1 Path 1 Interdisciplinary Studies degree plus Fifth Year MS in Education for Initial License Elementary (4+1 years)		x	x (depending on the year beginning program)	x	x	x
Program 1 Path 2 4+1 years Primary/ Elementary Emphasis – Post Baccalaureate license endorsement	IDS	x	X	x	x	x
	Non-IDS	x			x	x
Program 1 Path 3 MS in Education with Initial License		x		x	x	x
Program 1 Path 4 MS in Education with license degree designed for military families		x				X (10 wks)
Program 2 (Path 5) Career Switchers Alternate Route Program earning a one year provisional teaching license		x				

Between Group Comparison for Question #2

X= experience required with program's license path

Path 1 is the 4+1 year path that results in a Master of Science in Education for initial license elementary (Prek-6). This five year path (4+1 years) results in students earning a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) and a Master of Science in Education which results in earning a state teaching license. During the first four years of this license path, candidates participate in a variety of formal field experiences. As an undergraduate in this path, 30 hours of classroom observation and between 70 and 110 hours of practica experience are required. As a Master of Science in Education graduate student, an additional 150 hour practicum and 14 weeks of student teaching are completed. During the 30 hours of classroom observation, 15 of these hours are in a PK-3 classroom setting outside of the university and the other 15 hours are in a 4^{th}-6^{th} grade classroom setting. The second field experience is a 40 hour practicum where the teacher candidate works with small groups of students in a classroom and continues to observe various teaching practices. Half of the 40 hours are with PK-3 students and the other half are with 4-6^{th} grade students. The third field experience required in this path includes a 70 hour practicum. Again, half of the 70 hours will be completed in a PK-3 classroom and the other half will be completed in a 4-6 grade classroom. During the Master's portion of this license path, the teacher candidates participate in a 150 hour practicum including 75 hours with PK-3^{rd} grade students and 75 hours with 4-6^{th} grade students. Candidates of the first path also complete 14 weeks of student teaching. The student teaching field experience involves the teacher candidate giving small groups and whole class instruction in a variety of subject areas, managing classroom behavior, creating lesson plans, and implementing instructional strategies independently.

The study separated Path 1into five tiers A-G. These seven tiers include candidates at various placements during their field experiences. Tier A includes participants who completed a 70 hour practicum. These students transferred from a community college and may or may not have had the opportunity to do a 30 hour observation. Tier B included teacher candidates who completed a 30 hour observation and a 70 hour practicum, totaling 100 hours of field experiences. Tier C included participants who completed the 30 hour classroom observation, the 40 hour practicum, and the 70 hour practicum which totaled 140 hours of formal field experiences. Tier D included participants who completed a 30 hour observation, 70 hour practicum, and 150 hour practicum, totaling 250 hours of formal field experiences. Tier E included teacher candidate participants who completed the 30 hour classroom observation, the 40 hour practicum, the 70 hour practicum, and the 150 hour practicum, totaling 290 hours of formal field experiences. Tier F included participants who completed the 30 hour classroom observation, the 70 hour practicum, and the 150 hour practicum, and 14 weeks of student teaching, totaling 810 hours of formal field experiences. Tier G included teacher candidate participants who completed the 30 hour classroom observation, the 40 hour practicum, the 70 hour practicum, and the 150 hour practicum, and 14 weeks of student teaching, totaling 850 hours of formal field experiences.

Candidates in Path 2 result in earning a post baccalaureate license endorsement. These candidates are college students who wish to earn their teaching license *without* earning a Master's degree. These candidates previously earned a BS or BA degree that did not result in a teaching license. Some of Path 2's candidates earned a BS or BA degree from a different university. After enrolling in the researched university's

preparation program and path, candidates needed to complete a 30 hour observation field experience, a 150 hour practicum, and 14 weeks of student teaching. Other candidates in Path 2 participated in the researched school's undergraduate program in Interdisciplinary studies. These students completed equivalent education courses as Path 1 and participated in 30 hours of classroom observation, 260 hours (40+70+150 hours) of practica, and 14 weeks of student teaching. Path 2's practica hours are split by grade levels similarly to Path 1.

Path 3 is designed for candidates who previously earned a non-education BS or BA degree from another university and wish to earn their Masters of Science degree in Education resulting in a teaching license. This Master's program includes the same Masters level education courses as Path 1 and similar formal field experiences. All of the required field experiences remain the same as Path 1 (30+70+150+14 weeks of student teaching).

Path 4 is designed for candidates who are in the military, are military spouses, and/or select service personnel. This license path requires 30 hours of observation and 10-14 weeks of student teaching. The 40, 70, and 150 hour practica are not required for the degree. These participants earn a Master of Science in Education degree after completing this path.

Path 5 is an alternative route to the state's license called Career Switchers. Only one option for this license path is provided which results in a one year provisional state license. Only one 30 hour observation field experience is required in this path. A

provisional license means that the candidate must complete other requirements before earning a five year valid teaching license.

Procedure

A total of 221 teacher candidates from the five different license paths were invited to participate in a 24 item questionnaire called the Tschannen-Morgan & Woolfolk-Hoy's (2001)'s Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale through email. Specifically, Path 1, the 4 +1 Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) and Master of Science in Education teacher preparation path's students in Tier A, Tier B, Tier C, Tier D, Tier E, Tier F, and Tier G received the questionnaire. Also, students in Path 2, Path 3, Path 4, and Path 5 who had completed their license path's final required field experience received a questionnaire. The title of the survey was changed to "Future Teacher Survey: What Do You Think?" for the purposes of this study. The 221 candidates from the five license paths were sent the questionnaires through email. After sending follow up reminder emails, a paper copy with a self-addressed envelope was sent to the remaining participants' home addresses. Participation in the study was voluntary, and confidentiality was guaranteed.

An opening letter explained the purpose of the research and the confidentiality of the responses to the questionnaire (Appendix A). The cover letter also asked volunteers to participate in a follow up face-to-face or phone interview to discuss their opinions regarding their field experiences that influenced their teaching efficacy. Candidates were asked questions to determine their license path and the number of field experiences they completed (Appendix B) followed by the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire (Appendix C).

Of the 221 candidates who were sent the questionnaire, 171 (77%) participants responded. Seventy-eight percent of the candidates who recently completed all required field experiences from the five paths responded. Seventy-seven percent of the candidates in the 4+1 IDS +MS path responded.

Each participant was assigned a number in order to track responses and for confidentiality of responses. Individuals were not asked to write their name on the completed questionnaire.

At the end of each questionnaire, teacher candidates who recently completed all of their preparation programs' paths' field experiences were invited to participate in a brief interview. The first 11 participants to volunteer from the five different license paths were interviewed. The purposive sample of participants included two teacher candidates from each license path, except for the 4+1 Interdisciplinary Studies + Masters' students (Path 1), which included the first three participants to volunteer. This path included three participants, instead of two, because of its large population size relative to the other license paths. In summary, three teacher candidates were interviewed from the Interdisciplinary Studies and Masters of Science 4+1 license path (Path 1). Two candidates were interviewed from the Master of Science in Education license path (Path 2). Two candidates were interviewed from the Primary/ Elementary Emphasis – Post Baccalaureate license endorsement (Path 3). Two candidates were interviewed from the Master of Science in Education license path designed for military families (Path 4), and two candidates were interviewed from the Career Switchers license program (Path 5). All interviewees were given a pseudonym for privacy purposes. All interviewees were read

an opening script (Appendix D) and asked to sign an informed consent (Appendix E) before beginning the interview process.

Table 2 presents the interviewees' names, corresponding license path, and the number and hours of completed formal field experiences. All 11 of the participants had recently completed their teacher preparation program's license path's course requirements and license path's required formal field experiences.

Table 2

Interviewed Participants

Interviewee	License Path	Completed Field Experiences						Completed hours of field exp.
		30 hour observation	40 hour practicum	70 hour practicum	150 hour practicum	10 week st. teaching	14 week st. teaching	
Alice	IDS + Post Baccalaureate Endors.	x	x	x	x		x	850 hrs
Rae	Post Baccalaureate Endors.	x			x		x	740 hrs
Julie	IDS +MS (4+1 yrs)	x		x	x		x	810 hrs
Sammy	IDS +MS (4+1 yrs)	x		x	x		x	810 hrs
Dawn	IDS +MS (4+1 yrs)	x		x	x		x	810 hrs
Ashton	MS in Ed	x		x	x		x	810 hrs
Mary	MS in Ed	x		x	x		x	810 hrs
Beth	MS for Military Families	x				x		430 hrs.
Laura	MS for Military Families	x				x		430 hrs
Nema	Career Switchers Program	x						30 hrs
Jayla	Career Switchers Program	x						30 hrs

*All interviewees' names are pseudonyms

Instrumentation

Both quantitative and qualitative measures were used to collect data and were analyzed to answer the research questions.

Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale

The first and second research questions were examined quantitatively using a questionnaire called the Tschannen-Morgan & Woolfolk-Hoy's (2001)'s Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire (See Appendix C). This questionnaire about teacher efficacy is designed to help educators gain a better understanding of the types of situations that create complications for teacher candidates and in-service teachers while teaching students. On the questionnaire, teacher candidates had the option of choosing 1-9 for each response. A number 1 indicates the teacher candidate's belief that there is *nothing* that they can do to help a particular classroom circumstance, a number 3 indicates *very little*, a 5 indicates *some influence*, a 7 indicates having *quite a bit* of influence, and a 9 indicates the teacher can *do a great deal* about a particular classroom circumstance.

There are three subscales in the teacher efficacy questionnaire. These include efficacy of student engagement, efficacy of instructional strategies, and efficacy of classroom management. The eight items on the questionnaire that focused on efficacy of student engagement were the following:

Item 1 - How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?

Item 2- much can you do to help your students think critically?

Item 4- How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?

Item 6- How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?

Item 9- How much can you do to help your students value learning?

Item 12- How much can you do to foster student creativity?

Item 14- How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?

Item 22- How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?

The eight items from the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire that were designed to measure efficacy of instructional strategies are the following:

Item 7- How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students?

Item10- How much can you gauge student understanding of what you have taught?

Item11- To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?

Item 17- How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?

Item 18- How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?

Item 20-To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?

Item 23- How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?

Item 24- How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?

The eight items from the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire that were designed to measure efficacy of classroom management are the following:

Item 3- How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?

Item 5- To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?

Item 8- How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?

Item 13- How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?

Item 15- How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?

Item 16- How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?

Item 19-How well can you keep a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson?

Item 21- How well can you respond to defiant students?

According to Tschannen-Morgan & Woolfolk Hoy (2001), reliabilities for the teacher efficacy subscales were 0.94 for overall teachers' sense of efficacy, 0.87 for engagement, 0.91 for instruction, and 0.90 for management. Correlations between the subscales of engagement, instruction, and management were 0.58, 0.60, and 0.70, respectively ($p<0.001$). Table 3 displays Tschannen-Morgan & Woolfolk Hoy's (2001) reliability data regarding the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale.

Table 3

Reliability for the Teachers Sense of Efficacy Scale

	Long Form Test		
	Mean (1-9)	SD	alpha
TSES	7.1	.94	.94
Engagement Subscale	7.3	1.1	.87
Instruction Subscale	7.3	1.1	.91
Management Subscale	6.7	1.1	.90

*TSES-Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale

Tschannen-Morgan & Woolfolk-Hoy (2001) also determined the construct validity of the answers of the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy scale. In order to additionally test the validity of the scale, the researchers examined construct validity by assessing the correlation of the measure with other existing teacher efficacy measures (Kerlinger, 1986). Positive correlations with the other personal teaching efficacy measures support the construct validity (Tschannen-Morgan & Woolfolk-Hoy (2001). The researchers ran the correlations using the responses from in-service teachers with very similar results to ensure that the correlations were not skewed by the inclusion of teacher candidates. Given this evidence, this instrument is reliable and valid.

Interview Protocol

The third research question was addressed through qualitative measures. Interviews were semi-structured and were conducted face to face and by phone. A $5 gift card was given to those who participated in the interviews. The following questions were asked.

1. Describe any *informal* field experiences you have had with children aged PK-6 before you began your teacher preparation course work. Examples: Child care, church, day camps, etc. Please explain.
2. How did these *informal* field experiences contribute to your confidence working with children?
3. What components of your preparation program's *formal* field experiences strengthened your sense of preparedness to enter the field of education?
4. What components of your preparation program's *formal* field experiences weakened your sense of preparedness to enter the field of education?
5. What role did your university supervisor play in contributing towards your sense of preparedness as a future educator during your recent field experience?
6. What role did your cooperating teacher play in contributing towards your sense of preparedness as a future educator during your recent field experience?
7. How confident do feel that you will stay in the field of education? What factors might influence your decision?
8. Which subject area do you feel most confident to teach and why?
9. Which subject area do you feel least confident to teach and why?
10. What factors in your field experiences contributed to your confidence level in gaining student engagement?

11. What factors in your field experiences contributed to your confidence level in instructional methods?
12. What factors in your field experiences contributed to your confidence level in classroom management?
13. Describe the relationship among your university supervisor, cooperating teacher, and yourself.
14. Is there anything you want to tell me about your field experiences and your feelings of preparation to teach that I have not asked you? Please explain.

All of the interviews were conducted in the same open ended interview format. The exact wording and sequence of questions were the same which increased the comparability of the responses. In order to ensure credibility of the qualitative data, individual interviews were transcribed for accuracy. Inter-rater reliability was used to code and classify the interviewee responses. Categories were judged by internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity. Neutrality was kept between the interviewee and the interviewer to encourage unbiased responses from the interviewees.

Data Analysis

For the first two research questions, responses were analyzed from The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire. Data were disaggregated according to license path and total number of hours completed of formal field experiences including observation, practica, and student teaching.

In order to analyze research question 1, "To what degree does the number of hours of elementary teacher candidates' field experiences influence their perceptions of their teacher efficacy?" candidates in the Interdisciplinary Studies program were compared using the questionnaires' results. Specifically, candidates were separated according to the number of hours of field experiences they completed. Some of these candidates recently completed their student teaching experience. Candidates' efficacy levels were compared within-group according to tiers A-G of accomplishments. Table 4 displays the 129 participants who responded from the Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies +MS in Ed. license path (Path 1). Path 1's within-group participants were separated into tiers according to their progress in the program and their completed formal field experiences. Tier A (n=5) included participants who completed a 70 hour practicum. These students transferred from a community college and may or may not have had the opportunity to do a 30 hour observation. Tier B (n=37) included teacher candidates who completed a 30 hour observation and a 70 hour practicum, totaling 100 hours of field experiences. Tier C (n=18) included participants who completed the 30 hour classroom observation, the 40 hour practicum, and the 70 hour practicum, totaling 140 hours of formal field experiences. Tier D (n=15) included participants who completed a 30 hour observation, 70 hour practicum, and 150 hour practicum, totaling 250 hours of formal

field experiences. Tier E (n=13) included teacher candidate participants who completed the 30 hour classroom observation, the 40 hour practicum, the 70 hour practicum, and the 150 hour practicum, totaling 290 hours of formal field experiences. Tier F (n=26) included participants who completed the 30 hour classroom observation, the 70 hour practicum, and the 150 hour practicum, and 14 weeks of student teaching, totaling 810 hours of formal field experiences. Tier G (n=12) included teacher candidate participants who completed the 30 hour classroom observation, the 40 hour practicum, the 70 hour practicum, and the 150 hour practicum, and 14 weeks of student teaching, totaling 850 hours of formal field experiences.

Table 4

Within-Group Tiers A-G of Accomplishments from Path 1- Students Participating in the Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies and Master of Science in Education 4 + 1 Pk-6th grade teacher license path

Path 1's Tiers	Within-group Regression Analysis -Path 1	Total Hours of Completed Field Experiences	30 hour observation	40 hour practicum	70 hour practicum	150 hour practicum	14 week Student Teaching
Tier A N=5		70 hours			x		
Tier B n=37		100 hours	x		x		
Tier C n=18		140 hours	x	x	x		
Tier D n=18		250 hours	x		x	x	
Tier E n=13		290 hours	x	x	x	x	
Tier F n=26		810 hours	x		x	x	x
Tier G n=12		850 hours	x	x	x	x	x

Four separate regression analyses determined whether hours of field experiences influence the perceptions of overall teaching self-efficacy, efficacy of student engagement, efficacy of classroom management, and efficacy of instructional strategies. A within-group regression analysis of Path 1's Tiers A-G was conducted to determine whether elementary teacher candidates' field experience hours influence their perceptions of teaching efficacy.

In order to analyze Question 2, To what degree are there differences among teacher candidates' teaching efficacy beliefs who have completed their required license paths' field experiences?" a between group One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed. Data were taken from the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale's questionnaire responses to determine differences in degree programs' teacher efficacy. For these analyses, questionnaire responses were analyzed from candidates who recently completed their final field experience from one of the five license paths (in most cases student teaching). A between group One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was also used to compare means of the three subcategories of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale: efficacy of student engagement, efficacy of classroom management, and efficacy of instructional strategies.

In order to analyze research question 3 "What components of the teacher candidates' field experiences influence teacher efficacy?" the semi-structured open-ended interviews were examined, classified, and coded to determine common themes by myself and another researcher in the field of education. These themes helped determine what components of the teacher candidates' field experiences influence program satisfaction, intention to stay in the field, and teaching efficacy.

To begin the interview process, the teacher candidates were asked the types of informal field experiences that they participated in before entering their university's teacher preparation program. Informal field experiences include volunteering and paid working positions that provide opportunities to work with children. All interviewees, except one, (91%) participated in some type of informal field experiences with children before starting their university's teacher preparation program's license path. Eighty percent volunteered with children and 90% worked in paid positions that were with children. Eight/10 (80%) had both volunteer and paid working experiences with children prior to starting their university coursework and formal field experiences. The candidates who experienced informal field experiences were from all five license paths. Appendix G displays the specific informal field experiences of each interviewee.

In summary, the methodology of this study displayed in Table 5 includes both quantitative and qualitative measures used. Research Question 1 investigated the hours of field experiences relating to teacher efficacy by regression analyses. Research Question 2 compared the mean efficacy scores of the participants in the different license paths by a one way analysis of variance. Finally, Research Question 3 was analyzed by determining components that influence teacher efficacy by the eleven interviews.

Table 5

Research Questions and Methods of Analyses

Research Question	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Analysis
1	Hours of field experiences	Teacher's Overall Sense of Efficacy	Regression Analysis
1	Hours of field experiences	Subscale of TSES-Efficacy of Student Engagement	Regression Analysis
1	Hours of field experiences	Subscale of TSES-Efficacy of Instructional Strategies	Regression Analysis
1	Hours of Field experiences	Subscale of TSES-Efficacy of Classroom Management	Regression Analysis
2	Teacher license path	Teacher Sense of Efficacy (TSES)	Analysis of variance (ANOVA)
2	Teacher license path	Subscale of TSES-Efficacy of Student Engagement	Analysis of variance (ANOVA)
2	Teacher license path	Subscale of TSES-Efficacy of Instructional Strategies	Analysis of variance (ANOVA)
2	Teacher license path	Subscale of TSES-Efficacy of Classroom Management	Analysis of variance (ANOVA)
3	Factors in the field experiences	Teacher's Overall Sense of Efficacy	Interview Descriptions

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter describes the findings for the three research questions regarding teacher candidate's sense of teaching efficacy. Results are based on data from the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire and the eleven interviews. The findings, both quantitative and qualitative will be described according to research question.

Research Question 1: To what degree does the number of hours of elementary teacher candidates' field experiences influence their perceptions of their teacher efficacy?

In order to determine whether the number of hours of elementary pre-service teacher candidates' field experiences influence their perceptions of their teacher efficacy, I analyzed survey responses from 129 participants enrolled in or recently completed the Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies degree program. Participants, who recently completed 14 weeks of student teaching in the 4+1 License path, already earned their Interdisciplinary Studies degree and were completing their Master of Science degree. Five participants completed a total of 70 hours of formal field experiences. These participants transferred from a community college and may or may not have completed the 30 hour observation. Thirty-seven participants completed a total of 100 hours (30+ 70 hrs), 18 participants completed a total of 140 hours (30+40+70 hours), 18 participants completed a total of 250 hours (30+70+150), 13 participants completed a total of 290 hours (30+40+70+150 hours), 26 participants completed a total of 810 hours

(30+70+150+14 weeks student teaching), and 12 student completed a total of 850 hours (30+40+70+150+14 weeks of student teaching). Table 6 displays the number of participants who completed their formal field experiences in the IDS degree program and its corresponding MS degree.

Table 6

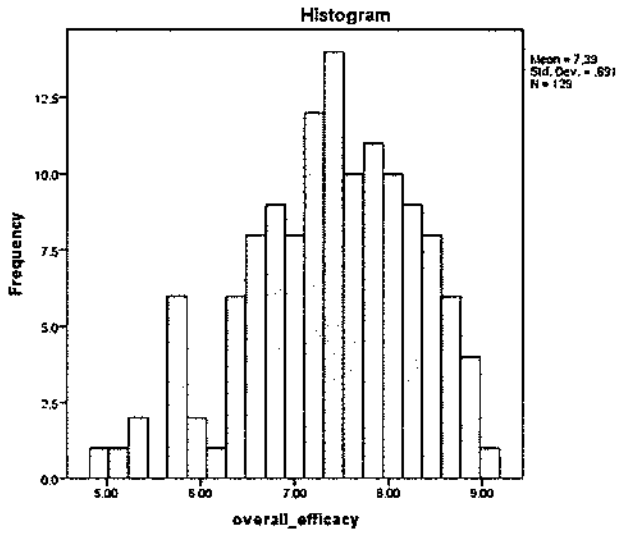
Completed Hours of Formal Field Experiences in the Interdisciplinary Studies Degree Program

Total Hours of Formal Field Experiences	Total Participants' Responding from the IDS and IDS+MS degree program N
70 hours (IDS degree)	5
100 hours (IDS degree)	37
140 hours (IDS degree)	18
250 hours (IDS degree)	18
290 hours (IDS degree +MS)	13
810 hours (IDS degree +MS)	26
850 hours (IDS degree +MS)	12
	Total N= 129

Overall Efficacy

Before testing the regression analyses, I tested to see if the five basic assumptions of linear regression were met. The histogram in Graph 1 displays the participants in the 4+1 IDS +MS path's (Path 1) overall efficacy scores being normally distributed with a slight skew to the left.

Graph 1



Since the data were normally distributed, the other four basic assumptions for regression analyses were tested. These four assumptions included testing for linearity, independence of errors, the homogeneity of variances, and normality of errors.

In the Lack of Fit Test displayed in Table 7, the probability of the F test statistic *(F=.720)* was *p=.610*. Since $p > 0.01$, the assumption of linearity is satisfied (Gamst, Meyers, and Guarino, 2008). .

Table 7

Lack of Fit Test for Overall Efficacy

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Lack of Fit	2.735	5	.547	.720	.610
Pure Error	92.687	122	.760		

In order to test the assumption of independence of errors, the Durbin-Watson statistic was performed. Results displayed in Table 12 indicated that the statistic for overall efficacy is 2.74. Therefore, the analysis satisfies the assumption of independence of errors. The statistic ranges in value from zero to four. When the error terms are independent the values are expected to be close to 2. "Small" values suggest that error terms tend to be a positive cluster and have an autocorrelation.

In testing the homogeneity of variances, a Levene's test was performed. Table 8 displays the Levene's test of equality of variances $F(6,122) = 2.435$, $p = 0.029$. Since the alpha was greater than the 0.01, the assumption of homogeneity of variances is satisfied.

Table 8

Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variances for Overall Efficacy

F	df1	df2	Sig
2.435	6	122	.029

Since the data were normally distributed the Shapiro-Wilks test was performed to determine the assumption of normality of errors. Table 9 displays the test yielded a statistical value of .979, and a probability of $p = .044$ which was greater than the alpha level of 0.01.This means that the assumption of normality of errors is satisfied.

Table 9

Shapiro-Wilks Tests of Normality for Overall Efficacy

	Statistic	df	Sig
Overall Efficacy	.979	129	.044

Since the four basic assumptions were met, linear regression analyses were conducted between the number of hours of formal field experiences and overall efficacy, efficacy of student engagement, efficacy of instructional strategies, and efficacy of classroom management.

The linear regression test indicates that the total number of hours of formal field experiences is a significant predictor of overall efficacy. Table 10 shows a positive relationship between total hours of field experiences and overall efficacy, $F\ (1,127) = 8.392,\ p < 0.05$.

Table 10

Linear Regression for Overall Efficacy

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.306	1	6.306	8.392	.004[b]
	Residual	95.422	127	.751		
	Total	101.727	128			

Dependent Variable: Overall efficacy

b. Predictors: (Constant), Total Hours

Table 11 displays the coefficients for overall efficacy. Results indicated the total hours of formal field experiences is a significant predictor of efficacy of overall efficacy with $p=0.004$. The predictor variable for the unstandardized coefficients of Total Hours indicated $\beta = .001$.As the number of hours of completed field experiences increases so does overall teaching efficacy.

Table 11

Coefficients for Overall Efficacy

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.131	.117		60.972	.000
	Total Hours	.001	.000	.249	2.897	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Overall Efficacy

The model summary of overall efficacy, displayed in Table 12, indicates $r = .249$ and *r square* $= .062$. This indicates that 6% of the total variance in overall efficacy can be explained by the number of hours of formal field experiences. Six percent is considered to be a slight to moderate variance.

Table 12

Model Summary for Overall Efficacy

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.249[a]	.062	.055	.86680	2.274

a. Predictors: (Constant), Total Hours

Efficacy of Student Engagement

Efficacy of student engagement is a subscale of the overall efficacy questionnaire. The linear regression indicated the number of hours of formal field experiences is a

significant predictor of the efficacy of student engagement. Table 13 shows a positive relationship between total hours of field experiences and efficacy of student engagement, with. $F\ (1,127) = 5.228,\ p < 0.05$.

Table 13

Regression Analysis for Efficacy of Student Engagement

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.568	1	4.568	5.228	.024b
	Residual	110.976	127	.874		
	Total	115.544	128			

b. Predictors: (Constant), Total Hours

Table 14 displays the coefficients for efficacy of student engagement. Results indicated a significant predictor of efficacy of student engagement with $p=0.024$. The predictor variable for the unstandardized coefficients of Total Hours indicates $\beta=.001$. As the number of hours of completed field experiences increase so does efficacy of student engagement.

Table 14

Coefficients for Dependent Variable Efficacy of Student Engagement

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.068	.126		56.044	.000
	Total Hours	.001	.000	.199	2.286	.024

The model summary of efficacy of student engagement, displayed in Table 15, indicates *r = .199* and *r square = .040.* This indicates that 4% of the total variance in efficacy of student engagement can be explained by the number of hours of formal field experiences. Four percent is considered to be a slight effect.

Table 15

Model Summary for Efficacy of Student Engagement

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.199[a]	.040	.032	.93479

a. Predictors: (Constant), Total Hours

Efficacy of Instructional Strategies

Efficacy of instructional strategies is a subscale of the overall efficacy questionnaire. The linear regression indicated the number of hours of formal field experiences is a significant predictor of the efficacy of instructional strategies. Table 16 shows a positive relationship between total hours of field experiences and efficacy of instructional strategies, $F(1,127) = 5.090, p < 0.05$.

Table 16

Linear Regression for Efficacy of Instructional Strategies

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.564	1	4.564	5.090	.026[b]
	Residual	113.874	127	.897		
	Total	118.438	128			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Total Hours

Table 17 displays the coefficients of total hours of formal field experiences is a significant predictor of efficacy of instructional strategies with $p=0.026$. The predictor variable for the unstandardized coefficients of Total Hours indicates $\beta=.001$. As the number of hours of completed field experiences increase so does efficacy of instructional strategies.

Table 17

Coefficients of Efficacy of Instructional Strategies

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.224	.128		56.549	.000
	TotalHrs	.001	.000	.196	2.256	.026

Dependent Variable: Efficacy of Instructional Strategies

The Model Summary of efficacy of instructional strategies, displayed in Table 18, indicates $r = .196$ and $r\ square = .039$. This indicates that 4% of the total variance in efficacy of instructional strategies can be explained by the number of hours of formal field experiences. Four percent total variance is considered to be a slight effect.

Table 18

Model Summary of Efficacy of Instructional Strategies

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.196	.039	.031	.94691

Predictors: (Constant), Total Hours

Efficacy of Classroom Management

Efficacy of classroom management is a subscale of the overall efficacy questionnaire. The linear regression indicated the number of hours of formal field experiences is a significant predictor of the efficacy of classroom management. Table 19 displays a positive relationship between total hours of field experiences and efficacy of classroom management, $F\ (1,127) = 12.940,\ p < 0.05$.

Table 19

Linear Regression for Efficacy of Classroom Management

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.625	1	10.625	12.940	.000[b]
	Residual	104.282	127	.821		
	Total	114.906	128			

Dependent Variable: Efficacy of Classroom Management

b. Predictors: (Constant), Total Hours

Table 20 displays the coefficients of efficacy of classroom management. This indicates the total hours of formal field experiences is a significant predictor of efficacy of classroom management with p=0.000. The predictor variable for the unstandardized coefficients of Total Hours indicates β=.001. As the number of hours of completed field experiences increase so does efficacy in classroom management.

Table 20

Coefficients of Efficacy of Classroom Management

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.099	.122		58.066	.000
	Total Hours	.001	.000	.304	3.597	.000

Dependent Variable: Efficacy of Classroom Management

The model summary of efficacy of classroom management, displayed in Table 21, indicates $r = .304$ and *r square* $= .092$. This indicates that 9% of the total variance in efficacy of classroom management can be explained by the number hours of formal field experiences. Nine percent is considered to be a moderate effect.

Table 21

Model Summary of Efficacy of Classroom Management

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.304	.092	.085	.90615

Predictors: (Constant), Total Hours

In summary, the number of hours of completed formal field experiences is positively related to feeling efficacious. The most being efficacy in classroom management. The overall efficacy, efficacy in student engagement, and efficacy in

instructional strategies had a slight variance and efficacy of classroom management had a moderate variance.

Research Question 2: To what degree are there differences among teacher candidates' teaching efficacy beliefs who have completed their required license paths' field experiences?

In the following section, I describe the differences among teacher candidates' teaching efficacy beliefs that have completed one of the five license paths. Table 22 displays the five license paths and the number of participants who completed both the questionnaire and all of their license path's formal field experiences.

Table 22

Participants Recently Completing All Required Formal Field Experiences for Each Path

Path	License Path's Name	Field Experiences Hours	*N*
1	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	810-850 hrs.	38
2	Post Baccalaureate License Only (IDS & Non IDS)	740-850 hrs.	13
3	Master of Science in Ed only	810 hrs.	8
4	MS in Ed Path for Military Families	430 hrs	6
5	Career Switchers Alternate Route	30 hrs	10
Total Participants			75

Seventy-five participants responded to the 24 questioned Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale survey using a Likert response scale ranging 1 to 9 for each question. A 1 indicated the participant never agrees with the questionnaire's teaching efficacy statement

and 9 represented the participant always agreed with the teaching efficacy statement. Table 23 displays the mean and standard error for each license path's participants' overall efficacy score. Participants in the IDS 4+1 year MS in Education license path (Program 1, Path 1) had the highest mean efficacy score of 7.70 with a standard error of 0.62.

Participants in the IDS 4+1 year MS in Education license path (Path 1) had the highest e mean efficacy score of 7.70 with a standard error of 0.62. Participants in the 4+1 year post baccalaureate license only (Path 2) has a mean score of 7.60 with a standard error of 0.68. Participants in the Career Switchers Alternative Route (Path 5) had a mean score of 7.40 and a standard error of 0.64. Participants in the Master of Science in Education (Path 3) had a mean score of 7.14 with a standard error of 0.80.Participants in the Master of Science in Education for military families (Path 4) had the lowest mean score of 6.32 and a standard error of 0.66.

Table 23

Mean and Standard Error Scores for Overall Efficacy of Participants

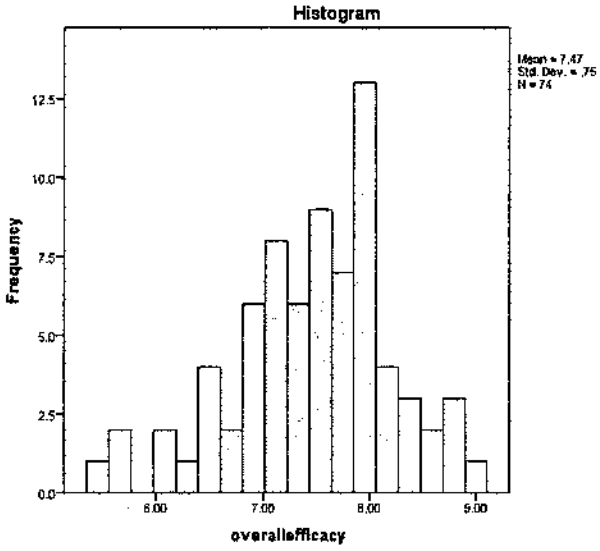
License Path	Mean (1-9)	Std. Error
IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed.	7.70	0.62
4+1 year Post Baccalaureate License Only	7.60	0.68
Career Switchers Alternate Route	7.40	0.64
MS in Ed only	7.14	0.80
MS in Ed. Path for Military Families	6.32	0.66

Before conducting the analyses of variances on the five paths' mean scores, I tested to see that the basic assumptions were met. First the assumption of normality was

analyzed by examining the distribution of overall efficacy scores. Graph 2's histogram displays the normal distribution of the data.

Graph 2

Histogram of Overall Efficacy



Second, the assumption of equal variances was tested by performing the Levene's test of equality of variances. The Levene's test indicated that we can assume homogeneity of variances for overall efficacy scores. Table 24 displays that the variances were not significantly different, $F\ (4,\ 69) = .030,\ p = .99$ meaning we can proceed with the validity of our ANOVA comparison of overall efficacy.

Table 24

The Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for Overall Efficacy

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.030	4	69	.998

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across paths.

In order to compare the overall efficacy of the five license paths' participants, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. Results of the one-way analysis of variance indicated a significant difference in overall efficacy scores based upon the five license paths, $F(4,69) = 6.42$, $p=.000$. Table 25 displays the results.

Table 25

Analysis of Variance for Overall Efficacy among the Five License Paths

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	11.12	4	2.78	6.42	.000
Within Groups	29.89	69	.433		
Total	41.02	73			

Since the ANOVA test was found to be statistically significant at $p<0.05$, a Bonferroni Multiple Comparisons test was performed. Table 26 describes the Multiple Comparisons of Overall Efficacy among the five license paths. The results indicate a statistically significant difference in overall efficacy between the MS in Science for military families and the IDS + MS (4+1) degree path, $p= .000$, the Career Switchers path, $p=.027$, and the Undergraduate+ Post Baccalaureate endorsement path, $p=.002$.

Table 26

Multiple Comparison Tests for Overall Efficacy among the Five License Paths

(I) License Path	(J) License Path	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	.10670	.21149	1.000
	Master of Science in Ed only	.56223	.25604	.315
	MS in Ed for military	1.38341*	.28915	.000
	Career Switchers	.30470	.24400	1.000
4+1 Post Baccalaureate	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	-.10670	.21149	1.000
	Master of Science in Ed only	.45553	.29577	1.000
	MS in Ed for military	1.27671*	.32486	.002
	Career Switchers	.19801	.28542	1.000
Master of Science in Ed only	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	-.56223	.25604	.315
	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	-.45553	.29577	1.000
	MS in Ed for military	.82118	.35547	.239
	Career Switchers Route	-.25752	.31983	1.000
MS in Ed for military	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	-1.38341*	.28915	.000
	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	-1.27671*	.32486	.002
	Master of Science in Ed only	-.82118	.35547	.239
	Career Switchers	-1.07870*	.34691	.027
Career Switchers	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	-.30470	.24400	1.000
	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	-.19801	.28542	1.000
	Master of Science in Ed only	.25752	.31983	1.000
	MS in Ed for military families	1.07870*	.34691	.027

The partial eta square for the dependent variable overall efficacy is *.271*. This means that 27% of the total variance of overall efficacy can be accounted for by the License Path. Table 27 displays the between subject effects of the overall teacher efficacy scores.

Table 27

Between Subject Effects of the Overall Teacher Efficacy Scores

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	11.123[a]	4	2.781	6.419	.000	.271
Intercept	2583.600	1	2583.600	5963.490	.000	.989
License Path	11.123	4	2.781	6.419	.000	.271
Error	29.893	69	.433			
Total	4174.816	74				
Corrected Total	41.016	73				

a. R Squared = .271 (Adjusted R Squared = .229)

The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire was also disaggregated into three subcategories of teacher efficacies: student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management.

Efficacy of Student Engagement

Table 28 displays the mean and standard error subscale scores for the participants in the five license paths regarding their efficacy of student engagement. Participants in the IDS 4+1 year MS in Education license path (Path 1) had the highest mean efficacy

score of 7.56 with a standard error of 0.12. Participants in the 4+1 year post baccalaureate license only (Path 2) had a mean score of 7.48 with a standard error of 0.21. Participants in the Career Switchers Alternative Route (Path 5) had a mean score of 7.07 and a standard error of 0.26. Participants in the Master of Science in Education (Path 3) had a mean score of 6.95 with a standard error of 0.27. Participants in the Master of Science in Education for military families (Path 4) had the lowest mean score of 6.29 and a standard error of 0.31.

Table 28

Mean and Standard Error Scores of Efficacy of Student Engagement

License Path	Mean (1-9)	Std. Error
IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed.	7.56	.12
4+1 year Post Baccalaureate License Only	7.48	.21
Career Switchers Alternate Route	7.07	.26
Master of Science in Ed only	6.95	.27
MS in Ed Path for Military Families	6.29	.31

The Levene's test of equality of variances for efficacy of student engagement indicated that we can assume homogeneity of variances. Table 29 displays that the variances are not significantly different, $F(4, 69) = .385$, $p = .818$. This means we can

proceed with the validity of our ANOVA comparison of the efficacy of student engagement's mean scores.

Table 29

Levene's Test of Equality of Variances for Efficacy of Student Engagement

F	df1	df2	Sig
.385	4	69	.818

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across paths.

In order to compare the five license paths' participants' efficacy of student engagement, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. The results indicated a statistically significant difference between groups in efficacy of student engagement, $F(4,69) = 4.44$, $p=.003$. Table 30 displays the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for the comparison of mean scores of efficacy of student engagement.

Table 30

Analysis of Variance for Efficacy of Student Engagement among the Five License Paths

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	10.44	4	2.61	4.44	.003
Within Groups	40.51	69	0.59		
Total	50.94	73			

Since the ANOVA test was found to be statistically significant at $p<0.05$, a Bonferroni Multiple Comparisons test was performed. Table 31 displays the Multiple Comparisons test of efficacy of student engagement between the participants of the five license paths' mean scores. Results indicate a statistically significant difference in mean scores between the MS path for military families *(M=6.29)* and the IDS +MS (4+1) degree *(M=7.56), p=.004* and the MS path for the military families and the 4+1 Post Baccalaureate endorsement *(M=7.48), p=.025*. All other paths did not show a statistically significant difference in efficacy of student engagement with $p > .05$.

Table 31

Multiple Comparisons of Efficacy of Student Engagement -Bonferroni

(I) License Path	(J) License Path	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	.0752	.24619	1.000	-.6388	.7891
	MS in Ed only	.6028	.29805	.470	-.2616	1.4672
	MS in Ed for military fam.	1.2643*	.33659	.004	.2881	2.2404
	Career Switchers	.4865	.28404	.913	-.3373	1.3102
4+1 Post Baccalaureate	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	-.0752	.24619	1.000	-.7891	.6388
	Master of Science in Ed only	.5276	.34430	1.000	-.4709	1.5262
	MS in Ed for military fam.	1.1891*	.37816	.025	.0924	2.2858
	Career Switchers	.4113	.33225	1.000	-.5522	1.3749
Master of Science in Ed only	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	-.6028	.29805	.470	-1.4672	.2616
	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	-.5276	.34430	1.000	-1.5262	.4709
	MS in Ed for military fam.	.6615	.41380	1.000	-.5386	1.8615
	Career Switchers	-.1163	.37231	1.000	-1.1961	.9634
MS in Ed for military fam.	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	-1.2643*	.33659	.004	-2.2404	-.2881
	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	-1.1891*	.37816	.025	-2.2858	-.0924
	MS in Ed only	-.6615	.41380	1.000	-1.8615	.5386
	Career Switchers	-.7778	.40383	.582	-1.9489	.3934
Career Switchers	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	-.4865	.28404	.913	-1.3102	.3373
	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	-.4113	.33225	1.000	-1.3749	.5522
	MS in Ed only	.1163	.37231	1.000	-.9634	1.1961
	MS in Ed for military fam.	.7778	.40383	.582	-.3934	1.9489

Based on observed means. *. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

The error term is Mean Square(Error) = .587.

Tests of between-subjects effects were performed and determined the partial eta square for the dependent variable efficacy of instructional strategies is *.205* (Table 32). This means that 21% of the total variance of efficacy of instructional strategies can be accounted for by the License Path.

Table 32

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for Efficacy of Student Engagement

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	10.436[a]	4	2.609	4.444	.003	.205
Intercept	2469.658	1	2469.658	4206.725	.000	.984
License Path	10.436	4	2.609	4.444	.003	.205
Error	40.508	69	.587			
Total	4011.578	74				
Corrected Total	50.944	73				

a. R Squared = .205 (Adjusted R Squared = .159)

Efficacy of Instructional Strategies

Table 33 displays the mean scores and standard error for the five license paths in efficacy of instructional strategies. The Career Switchers Alternate Route (Path 5) had the highest mean score of 7.71 with a standard error of 0.25. The IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed (Path 1) had the second highest mean score at 7.70 with a standard error of 0.12. The 4+1 year post baccalaureate license only group's (Path 2) mean score was 7.58 with a

standard error of 0.21. The MS in Ed group's (Path 3) mean score was 7.00 with a standard error of 0.26. The MS in Ed for military families (Path 4) had the smallest group's mean of 6.56 with a standard error of 0.30.

Table 33

Mean and Standard Error Scores for Efficacy of Instructional Strategies

License Path	Mean (1-9)	Std. Error
Career Switchers Alternate Route	7.71	.25
IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed.	7.70	.12
4+1 year Post Baccalaureate License Only	7.58	.21
MS in Ed only	7.00	.26
MS in Ed Path for Military Families	6.56	.30

The Levene's test of equality of variances for efficacy of instructional strategies indicated that we can assume homogeneity of variances. Table 34 displays that the variances are not significantly different, $F(4, 69) = .288$, $p = .885$. This means we can proceed with the validity of our ANOVA comparison of the efficacy of instructional strategies' mean scores.

Table 34

The Levene's Test of Equality of Variances for Efficacy of Instructional Strategies

F	df1	df2	Sig
.288	4	69	.885

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across paths.

In order to compare the five license paths' participants' efficacy of instructional strategies, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. The results indicated a statistically significant difference between groups $F(4,69) = 4.28$, $p=.004$. Table 35 displays the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for the efficacy of instructional strategies' mean scores' for the five license paths.

Table 35

Analysis of Variance for Efficacy of Instructional Strategies among the Five License Paths

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	9.31	4	2.32	4.28	.004
Within Groups	37.5	69	0.54		
Total	46.8	73			

Since the ANOVA test was found to be statistically significant at $p<0.05$, a Bonferroni Multiple Comparisons test was performed. Table 36 displays the Multiple Comparisons test of efficacy of instructional strategies between the participants of the five license paths' mean scores. Results indicated a statistically significant difference in mean scores between the MS path for military families *(M=6.56)* and the IDS +MS (4+1) degree *(M=7.70), p=.008* and the MS path for the military families and Career Switchers Alternative Route participants *(M=7.71), p=.044.* All other paths did not show a statistically significant difference in efficacy of instructional strategies with *p >.05.*

Table 36

Multiple Comparisons of Efficacy of Instructional Strategies -Bonferroni

(I) License Path	(J) License Path	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	.1270	.23694	1.000	-.5601	.8142
	Master of Science in Ed only	.7039	.28685	.167	-.1280	1.5359
	MS in Ed for military fam.	1.1414*	.32395	.008	.2020	2.0809
	Career Switchers	-.0044	.27337	1.000	-.7972	.7884
4+1 Post Baccalaureate	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	-.1270	.23694	1.000	-.8142	.5601
	Master of Science in Ed only	.5769	.33137	.861	-.3841	1.5379
	MS in Ed for military fam.	1.0144	.36396	.069	-.0411	2.0699
	Career Switchers	-.1314	.31977	1.000	-1.0588	.7960
Master of Science in Ed only	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	-.7039	.28685	.167	-1.5359	.1280
	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	-.5769	.33137	.861	-1.5379	.3841
	MS in Ed for military fam.	.4375	.39826	1.000	-.7175	1.5925
	Career Switchers	-.7083	.35833	.521	-1.7475	.3308
MS in Ed for military fam.	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	-1.1414*	.32395	.008	-2.0809	-.2020
	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	-1.0144	.36396	.069	-2.0699	.0411
	Master of Science in Ed only	-.4375	.39826	1.000	-1.5925	.7175
	Career Switchers	-1.1458*	.38866	.044	-2.2730	-.0187
Career Switchers	IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed	.0044	.27337	1.000	-.7884	.7972
	4+1 Post Baccalaureate	.1314	.31977	1.000	-.7960	1.0588
	Master of Science in Ed only	.7083	.35833	.521	-.3308	1.7475
	MS in Ed for military fam.	1.1458*	.38866	.044	.0187	2.2730

Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square(Error) = .544.

**. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.*

Table 37 displays the between-subjects effects for the efficacy of instructional strategies among the five license paths.

Table 37

Between Subjects Effects for Efficacy of Instructional Strategies

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	9.308[a]	4	2.327	4.279	.004	.199
Intercept	2640.283	1	2640.283	4855.250	.000	.986
LicensePath	9.308	4	2.327	4.279	.004	.199
Error	37.522	69	.544			
Total	4224.344	74				
Corrected Total	46.830	73				

a. R Squared = .199 (Adjusted R Squared = .152)

The partial eta square for the dependent variable efficacy of instructional strategies .199. This means that 20% of the total variance of efficacy of instructional strategies can be accounted for by the License Path.

Efficacy of Classroom Management

Table 38 displays the mean scores and standard error regarding efficacy of classroom management. The IDS 4+1 year MS in Education group (Path 1) had the highest mean score of 7.85 and a standard error of 0.12. The 4+1 year post baccalaureate license only group (Path 2) had the next largest mean score of 7.73 and a standard error

of 0.21. The Master of Science in Education group (Path 3) had a mean score of 7.47 and a standard error of 0.26. The Career Switchers alternative route group (Path 5) had a mean score of 7.42 and a standard error of 0.25.The Master of Science group for military families (Path 4) had the smallest mean score of 6.10 and a standard error of 0.30.

Table 38

Means and Standard Errors for Efficacy of Classroom Management

License Path	Mean (0-9)	Std. Error
IDS 4+1 year MS in Ed.	7.85	.12
4+1 year Post Baccalaureate License Only	7.73	.21
MS in Ed only	7.47	.26
Career Switchers Alternate Route	7.42	.25
MS in Ed Path for Military Families	6.10	.30

The Levene's test of equality of variances for efficacy of classroom management indicated that we can assume homogeneity of variances. Table 39 displays that the variances are not significantly different, $F(4, 69) = .365$, $p = .833$. This means we can proceed with the validity of our ANOVA comparison of the efficacy of classroom management's mean scores.

Table 39

The Levene's Test of Equality of Variances for Efficacy of Classroom Management

F	df1	df2	Sig
.365	4	69	.833

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across paths.

In order to compare the five license paths' participants' efficacy of classroom management, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. The results indicate a statistically significant difference between groups $F(4,69) = 7.48, p=.000$. Table 40 displays the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for the participants' of the five license paths' efficacy of classroom management mean scores.

Table 40

Analysis of Variance for Efficacy of Classroom Management among the Five License Paths

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	16.43	4	4.11	7.48	0.00
Within Groups	37.88	69	.55		
Total	54.31	73			

Since the ANOVA test was found to be statistically significant at $p<0.05$, a Bonferroni Multiple Comparisons test was performed. Table 41 describes the Multiple Comparisons of efficacy of classroom management among the five license paths' participants. The results indicated a statistically significant difference in efficacy of classroom management between the MS in Science for military families all other license paths, $p<0.05$.

Table 41

Multiple Comparisons between Total Hours of Field Experiences and Efficacy of Classroom Management

License Path (I)	License Path (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
IDS +MS in Ed (4+1)	Post Bach	.1179	.23807	1.000	-.5725	.8083
	MS in Ed	.3799	.29922	1.000	-.4559	1.2158
	MS in Ed. military fam.	1.7445*	.32549	.000	.8006	2.6885
	Career Switchers	.4320	.27467	1.000	-3.646	1.2286
Post Bach	IDS + MS in Ed (4+1)	-.1179	.23807	1.000	-.8083	.5725
	MS in Ed	.2620	.33295	1.000	-.7036	1.2276
	MS in Ed military fam.	1.6266*	.36569	.000	.5661	2.6871
	Career Switchers	.3141	.32129	1.000	-.6177	1.2459
MS in Ed	IDS + MS in Ed (4+1)	-.3799	.28822	1.000	-1.2158	.4559
	Post Bach	-.2620	.33295	1.000	-1.2276	.7036
	MS in Ed military fam.	1.3646*	.40015	.011	.2041	2.5251
	Career Switchers	.0521	.36003	1.000	-.9920	1.0962
MS in Ed for military families	IDS + MS in Ed (4+1)	-1.7445*	.32549	.000	-2.6885	-.8006
	Post Bach	-1.6266*	.36569	.000	-2.6871	-.5661
	MS in Ed	-1.3646*	.40015	.011	-2.5251	-.2041
	Career Switchers	-1.3125*	.39051	.013	-2.4450	-.1800
Career Switchers	IDS + MS (4+1)	-.4320	.27467	1.000	-1.2286	.3646
	Post Bach	-.3141	.32129	1.000	-1.2459	.6177
	MS in Ed	-.0521	.36003	1.000	-1.0962	.9920
	MS in Ed military fam.	1.3125*	.39051	.013	.1800	2.4450

Based on observed means
The error term is Mean Square(Error) = .549
* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

Table 42

Tests of Between Subjects Effects for Efficacy of Classroom Management

Dependent Variable: Efficacy of Classroom Management

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	16.434[a]	4	4.109	7.484	.000	.303
Intercept	2642.787	1	2642.787	4813.905	.000	.986
License Path	16.434	4	4.109	7.484	.000	.303
Error	37.880	69	.549			
Total	4320.578	74				
Corrected Total	54.314	73				

a. R Squared = .303 (Adjusted R Squared = .262)

The partial eta square for the dependent variable efficacy of classroom management is .303 (Table 42). This means that 30% of the total variance can be accounted for by the License Path.

Research Question 3: What components of the pre-service candidates' field experiences influence teaching efficacy?

Eleven interviewees shared the components of their field experiences that influenced their teaching efficacy. Three teacher candidates were interviewed from the Interdisciplinary Studies and Masters of Science 4+1 license path. Two candidates were interviewed from the Master of Science in Education license path. Two candidates were interviewed from the Primary/ Elementary Emphasis – Post Baccalaureate license endorsement, two candidates were interviewed from the Master of Science in Education license path designed for military families, and two candidates were interviewed from the Career Switchers license program

Informal Field Experiences and Teacher Efficacy

Of the ten interviewees who experienced informal field experiences before beginning their license path at the university, nine said that their informal field experiences contributed towards their efficacy levels in working with children. For example, Ashton (810 hrs) said "[the informal field experiences] definitely gave me more experience with working with different age groups which I very much appreciated". Alice (850 hrs) shared that the informal experiences "gave me a sense of comfort getting to know how to interact with [children], how to talk to them on their level, so that they understand what you might expect of them". Nema (30 hrs) said "It gave me the

confidence to realize that I was actually good at [working with children]…[The informal experiences] gave me a chance to realize that I can [teach] because I was able to approach it from a different angle". Laura (430 hrs), who homeschooled eight of her children for the majority of 18 years said "[these informal experiences helped] quite a bit because in addition to homeschooling our own children, I set up classes for others in the community whether it be science classes or history. So a lot of that prepared me for wanting to help others".

Specifically, half of the interviewees explained that their informal field experiences (before starting the university's license path) helped them to realize that they wanted to go into the field of education. Sammy (810 hrs) expressed "I felt like when I was volunteering I finally figured out this is what I want to do, this is the path I want to take, I want to be a teacher." Ashton (810 hrs) said that after teaching preschool for a year, she was convinced to go back to school to get her degree in education. Rae (740 hrs) said that her informal experiences in the IDS + post baccalaureate path "made me want to be a teacher even more". Jayla (30 hrs), who had prior substituting experience said "When you do a long term sub [position], you're basically treated exactly like a teacher"…"The funniest thing is that my hardest [substitute teaching] job was what made me decide to become a teacher".

Formal Field Experiences: Feeling Prepared

Multiple experiences

Over half of the interviewees involved more than one field experiences (410+ hrs) through the university expressed the benefits of experiencing various grade levels and teachers. Many shared that by observing a variety of teachers and grade levels, it helped

them to formulate their own teaching beliefs. Alice (850 hrs) explained that the field experiences "gave me a good chance to see what a school setting was like, what the etiquette was like, [and] what a normal school day's schedule looks and feels like". She also talked about how the experiences helped her to see "the kind of relationships that you have with other teachers and administration in the school setting". Sammy (810 hrs) explained that she was glad to have experienced multiple classrooms through her license path. She said, "you learn much more in a classroom field experience setting than in a university classroom reading textbooks about theories because when you are in the classroom you are able to see it for yourself". She further explained the multiple experiences helped her to "see all the different methods that the teachers use". She explained, "No one teacher is the same…seeing a whole bunch of teachers and teaching styles is interesting and it helps you to see what you do and don't want to do when you have your own classroom." Further, Sammy stated that by participating in the multiple field experiences, they "help you to figure out your own teaching style and your beliefs about teaching". Mary (810 hrs) expressed that "seeing the stages developmentally that the university has taught her [is] insurmountable and you really can't get that from anywhere else other than just teaching". She continued by saying that all of the required field "experiences were good and they prepared me specifically for [the] age I was interested in and the subject[s]…[they] have definitely helped me to tailor where I think I want to go". Rae (740 hrs) said that she enjoyed learning about the differences among grade levels and teaching styles through her varying field experiences.

Beth (430 hrs) stated, "I think it's a great part of the program that you do step into the classroom before graduating and I don't know what you could do to supplement that".

Beth said that the program was "very much a practical program…from the trenches…this is what teaching is like and this is what you do". She explained that many of the professors talked about their "bag of tricks and I liked that and I think it's been helpful in the classroom". Laura (430 hrs) stated, "I loved the observations. I loved the student teaching. I enjoyed my coursework tremendously and even though I was s distance learning student, I just loved the whole thing".

Lesson Planning

Dawn and Ashton, who experienced multiple field experiences (810 hrs) during their license path, shared their concerns about the university's required lesson plan format. Dawn complained that she did not feel confident in creating the extensive lesson plans that the university required. She suggested the candidates have different lesson plan options and more direction from the university on how to write the in-depth lesson plans. She felt unsure about writing the plans. She stated, "that really took away from some of my confidence from working in a classroom because I was always worried about what if my lesson plans format isn't the right way and what if I'm not putting them together that's the best for the students".

Similarly, Ashton said that the university's extensive outline of a lesson plan was difficult to grasp. She exclaimed, "The lesson planning was super hard for me". She also stated that she felt intimidated by the lesson plan requirements. She said, "[I] felt like I wasn't exactly sure what I was supposed to be including and questioned if I had all of the parts [of the lesson]". She felt like the structure was very "intimidating…rigid and structured" and caused her to "step back from it and not take it head on at first". Both Dawn and Ashton explained that once they were free to use other formats in their

cooperating classroom, their confidence levels increased with the creation of formal lesson planning.

Gaining Confidence in Student Engagement, Implementing Instructional Strategies, and Developing Classroom Management

All interviewees were asked to share the factors in their field experiences that contributed towards their increase in confidence in student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. These questions were intended to build upon the subcategories of the questionnaire that the 167 participants responded to on teacher efficacy.

Student Engagement

Learning by Observing

A little over half of the interviewees commented on the strength that they felt in observing students and teachers and how it helped them to gain confidence student engagement. Sammy (810 hrs) explained that observing classrooms during various lessons helped to show what types of lessons encourage student engagement. Sammy shared that as she observed during her multiple field experiences, it was "easy to see which students were lost in the lesson…and see [which] students were tuning things out helped me to see what works and what doesn't work as far as getting students involved". Beth (430 hrs) gained confidence in student engagement by "having the 2 weeks to observe the teacher [during student teaching] and trying [her] best to emulate her [cooperating teacher] because she was a very good teacher". Dawn (810 hrs) shared, "the first part of getting your students engaged is you have to know how they learn as individuals. The first thing that I did the first week was I learned their names, I learned

their habits, and I learned what they were as little people". She explained that it was "very important to [me] to know who they were so that when it came time for me to be up there with them…I knew how to keep them engaged if they got off path". Rae (740 hrs) explained that "actually paying attention to the students and seeing what their interests were and seeing what would keep their attention" helped her to see what interested the students.

Laura (430 hrs) observed that the students were most engaged in their cooperating teacher's lessons when the cooperating teacher was silent. "When she was physically quiet they would listen to her more than when she would keep talking and talking and talking. They tended to drone her out and not pay attention, but when she was silent, they did look up and stop". Jayla (30 hrs) learned from observation that "giving the students the ability to work as a group is really important to break the day up so that they can have fun learning experiences".

Connecting to the Students

Connecting to the interests of the students was another factor involved in increasing student engagement. Thirty-six percent of interviewees from a wide range of completed hours explained how their efficacy in student engagement strengthened as they worked towards connecting to the students' interests. Dawn (810 hrs) explained, "The most important thing for me is to keep them engaged and to use whatever tricks I have in my toolbox to keep them engaged to keep them attached to the lesson and to be able to bring them back when they lose focus". Mary (810 hrs) explained that keeping lessons interactive "would consistently keep students engaged. She said, "if you can get them up and get them moving and have some kind of thing that connects with them, that's where

you're going to hold on to them and make it wear they actually learn". In order to keep her student engaged, Rae (740 hrs) and her cooperating teacher allowed "the students to come up to the smart boards and circle vocabulary words, [and] have them do math problems on the board just to keep them engaged". Jayla (30 hrs) explained that keeping the students active was important in helping their engagement. She said "it is important that you have those group activities so that they can talk to each other so when the time comes that they have to sit quietly and work it's not so grueling for them".

University Coursework

Mary (810 hrs), Beth (430 hrs), and Jayla (30 hrs) commented on the university's coursework contributing towards their teaching efficacy in student engagement. Mary explained that the factors that contributed towards her confidence in gaining student engagement were the courses that she took. Specifically "the science and math [courses] were constantly interactive and involv[ed]". Beth also thought the university's coursework and books helped, especially her technology class "because that was the only way that [the students] were usually engaged is through technology integration". Jayla thought that the professors "had a great deal of experience and were able to really give us a lot of things that we could use a lot of information and strategies that we could use with the children".

Instructional Strategies

When candidates were asked about the factors in field experiences that contributed towards their confidence in instructional strategies, various patterns arose. Candidates mentioned that the use of technology, the ability to try things (trial and error),

and being encouraged to self-reflect helped their confidence increase in using instructional strategies.

Technology

Rae (740 hrs) explained how using the technology resources as an instructional strategy helped her during classroom instruction. She noted that her cooperating teacher showed her many ways to use computers, Smartboards, and the IPAD regularly to teach student lessons. Julie (810 hrs) learned how to use flipcharts on the promethean board to teach the curriculum. She noted "I enjoyed the technology that I used". She said that she watched her cooperating teacher use tools and then she would get to try the tools from active inspire. She stated, "For my lessons I knew my kids liked technology or learned best from it, so I would try to utilize the technology in my lessons, or at least try to make them hands on".

Trial and Error

Three participants, who experienced 810+ hours, shared that having the flexibility to try different instructional strategies was mentioned by three of the interviewees. Sammy (810 hrs) explained that having the opportunity to try different methods in the classroom helped her confidence with teaching. She stated, "What works in language arts may not work for science or social studies. Being able to try different things and see different things from teachers helped a lot". Similarly, Dawn (810 hrs) explained that "what helped was a lot of trial and error during the practicum experience". Alice (850 hrs) explained that she tried new techniques as often as she could in the classroom.

Observing Students and Teachers

Four of the interviewees expressed the benefits of being able to observe children and teachers during instruction helped increase their confidence in instructional strategies. Mary (810 hrs) explained that watching her cooperating teacher model ways to connect to the students helped her see strong teaching methods. She explained the importance of relating to the students when instructing them. She explained that her cooperating teacher "never left anyone lost [in a lesson], and I think that's the best thing I could have seen in a mentor teacher". Dawn (810 hours) shared that watching and learning about the students "effect[ed] my teaching methods and that helped me to assess what was going on with them and to change what I'm doing in order to get the best delivery of that lesson to involve the students".

Laura (430 hours) saw student engagement when students played educational games. She expressed that before the formal field experiences, she wasn't aware of all of the educational games that could help with teaching. Jayla (30 hours) observed how transition time between subjects is important. She saw learning opportunities happening during these times through songs about the curriculum, while transitioning into a new subject. She explained that her cooperating teachers "used the moments for reviewing, maybe an alphabet song, or poem of a topic they needed to know....I thought that was a really great way to transition from one way to another and they are still earning...I was really impressed".

Classroom Management

Various patterns surfaced when candidates were asked the factors that contributed to their feelings of confidence in managing the students in the classroom. Observing

effective and ineffective discipline strategies was a common pattern that arose. Specifically, experiencing different discipline strategies, learning patience, and giving ownership to the teacher candidate were factors that contributed to increasing teaching efficacy in classroom management.

Discipline Strategies

Julie, Sammy, and Dawn (all in the IDS+MS license path – 810 hours) commented on how seeing these "good" and "bad" management strategies helped them determine their own teaching management styles. Julie stated that seeing different types of management styles throughout the different field experiences helped her to see what worked and what did not work in the classroom. Sammy also enjoyed seeing different teachers' management styles. She continued to explain that seeing both good and bad examples strengthened her teaching beliefs regarding classroom management because she was able to see effective and ineffective methods. Sammy enjoyed observing the different teachers' management styles, desk arrangements in each classroom, and daily routines that students needed to follow. Seeing these different classroom management systems helped her to see what worked and what did not. Dawn explained that the multiple practica allowed her to be in "a real working classroom to observe students and teachers both good and bad". She said that the experiences helped to "get the feel of what it's like to be there in the trenches with a teacher and watching them do what they do as far as classroom management…it gives you ideas of what you want to do and what you don't want to do [as a future teacher].

Laura (430 hours) explained that she learned that "moving around the classroom and not being in the same spot" helped the students stay focused during instruction. She

explained that she learned these strategies from her university's coursework. She said that her student teaching cooperating teacher, however, did not model this technique because "she did a lot of teaching directly from her desk".

Positive Discipline and Reinforcement

Incorporating a positive discipline approach was mentioned by four of the 11 interviewees as having a strong influence on their classroom management growth. Rae (740 hrs) explained that her cooperating teacher shared positive reinforcement strategies that were used with individual children in the classroom and as reinforcement for the whole group. She noted that one of her cooperating teachers worked on focusing on the positive behaviors instead of the negative. Ashton (810 hrs) gave many examples of how she learned the effectiveness of positive reinforcement through her field experiences. Ashton explained that "all of my [field] experiences and [specifically] my cooperating teachers helped me with positive reinforcement". She reflected the importance of "using positive reinforcement, highlighting the good, and trying not to focus on the bad as much as telling the students what [behaviors] you want them to do". Mary (810 hrs) expressed that she uses positive discipline strategies that she learned from her university's coursework regularly. She stated that "the positive reinforcement is quite amazing". She explains, "I use [the positive discipline strategies] all of the time...It's so much easier than fighting". Jayla (30 hrs) explains that her observation field experience "made me concentrate on being more positive and I've definitely noticed a difference in the way that I teach".

Patience / Learning to Pick Battles

About half of the interviewees explained that their field experiences helped them to gain patience with students while in the classroom. Specifically, candidates were able to self-reflect and determine student behaviors that required various actions from the teacher. Dawn (810 hrs) shared that her formal field experiences helped her gain patience with the students and helped her "to pick [her] battles" with unfavorable student behavior. She explained that she was able to learn the differences between student behavior that should cause for stopping instruction, and student behaviors that were simply "annoying me but not impacting the lesson or impacting the learning of other students". Dawn further explained that learning to be "patient allows for those things that will definitely effect what you're doing because kids are kids and they do a lot of goofy things throughout the day", and learning "to be flexible has really helped me in my classroom management". Jayla (30 hrs) admits that her observation experience "changed some of the ways I would look at things when you have a tough child that is always disrupting the class". She further explains that she was able to realize what behaviors needed to be addressed immediately and which behaviors could be ignored. Jayla explains that the Career Switcher program taught her to be more patient with her students.

Some of the candidates mentioned less favorable actions of their cooperating teachers which helped them to see ineffective strategies (not to adopt) as well in classroom management. Julie (810 hrs) explained that sometimes the discipline strategies that were observed in the classrooms conflicted with the management strategies that were taught in her university coursework. She noted, "I had a couple of [cooperating] teachers

who just lacked discipline and management which helped me to learn…what I didn't want to do". Nema (30 hrs) stated "I was kind of shocked at some of the things I saw in the school setting". She explained that she sometimes saw behaviors that she did not want to emulate. She explained "there was a teacher that was across the hall…I could hear her yelling at her students and to me that was pretty alarming". She also saw problems with a lack of professionalism among teachers in the school because she heard them having inappropriate conversations. While observing, Jayla (30 hrs) realized the importance of gauging student attention during instruction. She saw students not paying attention and being loud and not listening to routine lessons. Observing this behavior showed her to be conscious of all students while teaching the lessons.

Although Beth (430 hrs) did not mention her cooperating teacher as struggling with classroom management, Beth personally seemed to struggle with it throughout her student teaching experience. Beth explained that she found it beneficial to get "different ideas each week from my cooperating teacher and different strategies…but [classroom management] is the area that I struggled with the most and I don't feel like I ever overcame my problems". Beth completed one 30 hour observation and 10 weeks of student teaching.

Taking Ownership in the Classroom

Three interviewees shared their desire to feel a sense of ownership in their cooperating teacher's classroom. Julie (810 hrs) expressed that she thought they "should have made the [class] rules together and then start to enforce them together so I could see what it's like to have rules go into effect". Alice (810 hrs) shared that it "was a little bit difficult at first because I came in the middle of the school year, so they already had a

behavior plan in place, they already had a routine in place, and they already had a schedule, so when I came into the classroom, I didn't want to disturb too much at first". However, after the beginning of the placement, she was able to experiment with some different management techniques. She stated, "My cooperating teacher didn't seem to mind what I tried, as long as I kept her color card [behavior plan] system". Beth (430 hrs) was conflicted on whether she should continue using the cooperating teacher's classroom management system, which seemed to be working for the cooperating teacher, or try to come up with her own. She stated, "I [felt] like everything was running so smoothly with [classroom management] systems that why would I change something that was working, but then it didn't work for me so maybe I should have come up with my own rules or my own systems".

The Cooperating Teacher

Another major theme included the important role of the cooperating teacher to the candidates' during their field experiences. Strong communication among the cooperating teachers and the candidates helped to strengthen candidates 'confidence. Specifically, communication included the cooperating teacher's feedback about the candidate's teaching and the cultural awareness about the school environment. Cooperating teachers who were viewed as being strong role models also encouraged the teacher candidates' confidence during the field experiences. Further, the candidates expressed their appreciation in gaining ideas for instruction by their cooperating teachers sharing his/her resources.

Communication

Dawn (810 hrs) shared that she and her cooperating teacher communicated regularly. She said "Every single day that I went into the classroom, I talked to my cooperating teacher and it was 5 minutes here, 10 minutes there, we were always in constant communication". Ashton's (810 hrs) cooperating teacher gave ideas about implementing positive reinforcement in the classroom. Beth (430 hrs) shared that her cooperating teacher was easy to reach and that they "would often email each other back and forth after school hours".

Feedback

Julie (810 hrs) and Beth (430 hrs) voiced the importance of getting feedback from their cooperating teacher. Julie said her cooperating teacher "[gave] weekly feedback that talked about what I did well and what I needed to work on…I realized that I needed to work on my timing because I often ran over". She noted that her teacher suggested that she differentiate more while teaching. Julie explained that she would have liked some more guidance from her cooperating teacher regarding differentiation. Beth was impressed with her cooperating teacher's insightful feedback each day. Her cooperating teacher gave feedback every day with "glows and grows" on a sheet of paper. Her cooperating teacher "would give me things specific for the day on it and so the daily feedback was not anticipated, but very helpful". She also felt like the required weekly feedback form that the university encouraged the cooperating teacher to fill out and the reflections of the candidate "gave her a lot of good tips". Beth said "it was very helpful

that we were required to write responses even though [my cooperating teacher] never looked at those, it was just for me and to make a plan using her advice".

Cultural Awareness

Dawn and Alice, who both completed multiple field experiences (810+ hours), appreciated their cooperating teachers' openness with them about the ins and outs of the teaching profession. Dawn explained that her student teaching field experience helped her to see the importance of building relationships with the school's faculty. Further, Dawn shared that her cooperating teacher and grade level teachers "were very honest with me about the teaching profession". She said "they talked about teachers in the building and how certain personalities come into play and how to deal with the different personalities". Alice's cooperating teacher explained the demographics of the class and guided her through the different routines in the school. Alice said, "I never felt left out or confused".

A Strong Role Model

Another theme that surfaced throughout the interviews included having strong role models as cooperating teachers. A little over half of the candidates mentioned that they viewed their cooperating teacher as a strong role model in the classroom. For example, Mary (810 hrs) said, "I am so grateful that I got a teacher that was just amazing…she was probably one of those teachers that we all hope is teaching our children and she put every effort forth". Rae (740 hrs) said "my cooperating teacher was amazing in just showing me the different ways to work with the students".

Beth (430 hrs) explained that her cooperating teacher was "very organized" and "had a plan from the beginning" regarding Beth transitioning into teaching the class during the student teaching experience. Beth also stated that one of the most helpful parts of the field experience was having the 2 weeks to observe her cooperating teacher before the teaching the class. Beth said she tried "[her] best to emulate her [cooperating teacher] because she was a very good teacher". She enjoyed being able to "observe good teaching and knowing what it looks like, what the room feels like, and that it can be accomplished". Laura expressed [430 hrs] "I think [my cooperating teacher] is a very strong teacher". Laura appreciated the advice regarding organizational tools. Laura did express, however, that her cooperating teacher seemed a bit burnt out from the teaching profession. She explained that even though she saw strong teaching qualities in her cooperating teacher, she did not demonstrate good examples of what teachers should do for lesson preparation. She also commented that she saw her cooperating teachers applying for other positions during the school day. Nema (30 hrs) said, "I did luck out…the teacher I was with was a 20 year veteran teacher so I was able to watch someone that was experienced and had learned all the ropes…I saw really good classroom management taking place and things like that". Jayla (30 hrs) believes that both teachers that she observed "implemented the more casual, positive, very laid back approach which I had not been familiar with….to see that teaching style was good for me".

Shared Resources

Julie, Ashton, and Rae, who all experienced 740+ hours of formal field experiences, appreciated their cooperating teachers sharing instructional resources with

them. Julie (810 hrs) stated "[my cooperating teacher] gave me resources that I would need for my upcoming lessons". Ashton's (810 hrs) cooperating teacher taught kindergarten and she "let me take over her folders", which were organized by unit of study. She said, "I had a teacher that was willing to share all of her materials with me and even if I didn't use them I created my own based on the materials she gave me". Rae (740 hrs) said that her cooperating teacher "would let her look through her lesson plans and show where she would pull information from and what was going on in the county and what she was focusing on each month".

University Supervisor

Evidence from the interviewees suggested the important role of the university supervisor in contributing towards the success of the field experiences. Many patterns arose throughout the candidates' responses. University supervisors who were informative, easy to contact, open to communicate, and acted as a team player were all deemed important qualities by the teacher candidates.

Being Informative

Three candidates described their university supervisors as being informative about the field of education and about the specific placement. Sammy (810 hrs) stated "I feel like my supervisor brought a lot to the table as far as his own personal experiences in education. He was really able to bring us a good perspective". She appreciated his expertise in the education field and his advice about working with the staff at various schools. She said "he would talk about his own experiences and things that he had seen when he was an administrator in the schools". He also "gave his perspective as an administrator on things that we needed to make sure that we did as first year teachers and

student teachers". Alice (850 hrs) said that when her supervisor met with the group for the first time "she was really helpful [by] answering any questions that we had" about their upcoming field experiences. Alice said, "I really felt prepared as far as that goes before going into it". Nema (30 hrs) explained her university supervisor was "fresh in the field" and knew relevant topics in the school setting. She appreciated her supervisor helping her understand "the big picture" when planning a lesson.

Availability/Easy to Contact

Another pattern that surfaced included the supervisor's availability to the candidates. Dawn (810 hrs), Alice (850 hrs), and Nema (30 hrs) noted their supervisor was easy to contact. Dawn explained "I'm an email kind of person and when I have questions I sent [my university supervisor] emails back and forth, so we communicated quite a bit that way". Alice said that her supervisor "was always available through phone or email [and] even text messages…as soon as I would email her, she would email me right back…so I knew that if I ever had a problem, I could easily get to her". Nema said her supervisor "was just very available".

Encouraged Reflection/Self-Assessment

Three of the interviewees (740+ FE hours) mentioned the strength in the supervisor's emphasizing their candidates self-assessing and self-reflecting on their experiences in the classroom. Dawn (810 hrs) said that her university supervisor "was very involved in everything" regarding her field experience. Dawn explained her supervisor often asked "how I felt about my classroom performance, how I interacted with my students, and how I felt a as student teacher". Dawn further explained that her supervisor "also encouraged me to evaluate and reevaluate what I was doing every day to

assess my lesson plans and my teaching environment". Dawn enjoyed communicating with her university supervisor because it "helped me to focus on specific goals for my lessons for myself as a teacher and/or my classroom management". Ashton (810 hrs) said that her supervisor "challenged me as a person" and would ask insightful questions that would require her to reflect upon her philosophy and techniques in the classroom. Rae stated that her university supervisor "was amazing". Rae (740 hrs) enjoyed her supervisor visiting every two weeks and discussing her journal entries.

Feedback

A little over one half of the interviewees, from various license paths, mentioned the strength in regular feedback from their supervisor. This feedback was explained as being specifically helpful towards their growth as a future educator. Julie (810 hrs) explained that her university supervisor helped her to become aware of what she was doing well, and anything to focus on changing. Julie appreciated that her supervisor pointed out her strengths. Ashton (810 hrs) explained, "I knew [my supervisor] was there to pull out all of my strengths and let me know what I needed to work on for the next time which would make me a better teacher". Ashton's supervisor would speak to her about the positive parts of the observed lesson and the parts that she could improve. "She was great. She was always encouraging and very positive", Mary said. Mary (810 hrs) noted that she appreciated all of the praise that her supervisor gave.

Beth (430 hrs) stated, "I did appreciate his feedback". She particularly remembered a statement that her supervisor said to her stating, "believe it or not these kids really want to please you". She liked how her supervisor was "there to support but he didn't get in the way". "I liked the arrangement", she said. Laura (430 hrs) said the

best thing was her [supervisor's] encouragement and feedback because I wasn't getting it elsewhere…she gave very helpful detailed feedback". Nema (30 hrs) said her supervisor "gave a lot of feedback and had good suggestions for me". Jayla (30 hrs) had to teach one lesson during her one observation field experience. She said that her supervisor also taught one of her university courses. She said that her supervisor "happened to like everything that I did…I think it's because I had all that experience behind me [substituting] so she didn't really discuss anything new with me that I hadn't already done. So I didn't get a lot from her since I already had a lot from my experience substituting there wasn't much for her to tell me".

Working as a Team: Collaboration among the University Supervisor, the Cooperating Teacher, and the Teacher Candidate

Collaboration and communication among the university supervisor, cooperating teacher, and teacher candidate was a major theme that surfaced from the interviewees' responses. Almost half expressed the importance in meeting with the cooperating teacher, the supervisor, and candidate together.

Julie, Sammy, Ashton, and Mary (all 810 hrs), spoke favorably about their cooperating teachers, university supervisors and themselves meeting together. Julie appreciated her university supervisor's tactfulness when bringing up any concerns with her cooperating teacher. Sammy enjoyed meeting together with her cooperating teacher and university supervisors because it "helped clear anything up and just helped everyone to get to know each other a little better. Ashton appreciated how her university supervisor "would highlight all [my] positives with my cooperating teacher to make sure she was aware of them in case she wasn't aware of them already". Mary explained that her

supervisor and cooperating teacher would discuss her progress in the back of the room while she taught the students a lesson. Then, as a group discussion would take place about her teaching the lesson. She said, "[my supervisor] would talk about how I was doing and include me and ask me how I felt about everything". Mary said she liked how "[her cooperating teacher and supervisor] didn't talk as if I wasn't there. They were very inclusive and it was good". Rae (740 hrs) said her supervisor "talked with the teachers to see if there was anything that I needed to work on". She said the three of them "did sit a few times [together] just to see the midterm review and the final review, just to see where my progress was and to see if there was anything that he could do to help if I was struggling in an area".

In contrast, Laura, (430 hrs) often met with her supervisor alone without her cooperating teacher's presence because "the cooperating teacher was frequently stepping out of the room when the university supervisor stepped in". She further explained, "there were a couple of times that they talked together but the three of us together, that never happened until the last day when there was some paperwork to be signed".

Collaboration

Another theme that was prominent throughout the interviews was the importance of collaboration. Seventy-three percent of interviewed candidates voiced their opinions about collaborating being present in their field experiences. Collaboration among teacher candidates, cooperating teachers, the staff of the cooperating schools, and the university supervisor was mentioned. Specifically, collaboration that encouraged self-reflection among the teacher candidates helped the candidates' teaching efficacy as a future teacher.

All seven candidates completing 740+ hours of FE expressed the importance of collaboration. Julie (810 hrs) said "[My cooperating teacher] planned with me every week, so I wasn't on my own. We planned with another teacher as well, so that really helped...we would bounce ideas off each other". Sammy (810 hrs) expressed, "If I had questions, I had no problem coming to [my cooperating teacher] and saying hey, I'm not sure about this, or what can I do about this? or how can I try this?" Dawn (810 hrs) explained "I had 3 different teachers that were working with me almost all of the time". All three ladies (teachers on the team) were always there to say, you know that [lesson] was awesome, can you do this [next time]? or can you add this [aspect] to your lesson?" Ashton (810 hrs) said "I would pick through [my cooperating teacher's materials] and would say, oh I really like these [materials], what do you think? And she would say, oh that [activity] was really good, or no that didn't work. I was then able to take it from there and put my own spin on it". Mary's (810 hrs) cooperating teacher would walk through the courses' curricula together and talk through different activities with her. She would allow for autonomy as well by letting her try new things. She said "It was really about taking the content and pulling it out and figuring out what is the best way for your students to learn it". Alice (850 hrs) felt like she had a different ideal of how her classroom should be run than her cooperating teacher. Alice said, "I would ask some of the other kindergarten teachers that were on our team for ideas and I kind of tried new stuff as often as I could". Rae (740 hrs) shared "[My cooperating teacher] would [sit] down with me each week...and let me look through her lesson plans and show me where she would pull information from and what was going on in the county. She helped me to create my own lesson plans off of the students' needs".

Beth (430 hrs) explains, "The group [of grade level teachers] that I was with, would do whole group/grade level planning. Each teacher on the grade level [took] one subject for the whole year and [did] weekly lesson plans…That was a huge help and that helped me greatly…I think I would have really struggled if I had to have it done it all on my own". Beth noted that although she felt that collaborating with her grade level's team of teachers was helpful, she was uncertain if it was a crutch for her future teaching career. She was concerned about this because most of the lesson plans were created for each other as a team, so she did not have to create many on her own.

Feeling Supported

Feeling supported was another important feature that contributed towards candidates' feelings of preparation. Almost all candidates, from each of the five license paths, indicated evidence of feeling supported by their cooperating teacher and/or university supervisor.

Julie (810 hrs) expressed, "If I ever needed anything, [my cooperating teacher] was always there to answer questions". Sammy (810 hrs) said "If I had an idea she would let me just go with it, and she would look over my lesson plans…she was just very supportive of anything that I was trying or wanted to do". Dawn (810 hrs) said "I didn't just get a cooperating teacher; I got a cooperating teacher team. It's that feedback and the- give and take - that helps with the positive encouragement". "[The student teaching experience] always felt like a team teaching approach...[I] was never in an alone sense where I felt there was no one there to support me". Ashton (810 hrs) expressed "[My university supervisor] was willing to support me and suggest that I be hired". Ashton noted that she was particularly impressed with her university supervisor's continual

support even after the student teaching semester was complete. Ashton said she was appreciative of her university supervisor being willing to be her advocate in helping her find a job placement. Alice (850 hrs) said, "[My cooperating teacher] talked me through everything that I was doing, what was going on, the different routines of school, so I never felt left out of confused about anything". Rae (740 hrs) shared "[My cooperating teacher] was always going over something, asking me questions, and just making sure that I was getting out what I needed to get out of student teaching".

Laura (30 hrs) stated that the best thing about my [university supervisor] was her encouragement". Nema explained that she really appreciated that her university supervisor took the time to understand the city and state standards that she didn't understand while planning a lesson to teach. Jayla's (30 hrs) university supervisor made her feel at ease when having to plan a lesson to teach, and told her not to worry about going above and beyond but to "just teach how we would usually teach a class".

Confidence to Stay in the Field of Education

Interviewees were asked how confident they felt about staying in the field of education after completing their license path. All replied that they wanted to have a future in education.

Dawn (810 hrs), explained "I have been working on my teaching degree for 8 years. This is what I have always wanted to do since I was young....I want to do this. I have wanted to do this for such a long, long time and I'm so excited and I want to spend the rest of my life teaching". Julie and Sammy (also 810 hrs) showed concern about getting hired as a teacher after graduation into a school system now that they have completed their license path. Julie said "I know I am going to stay in [the field] if I find a

job of course". Sammy stated "I feel pretty confident about staying in the field of education. I think the only thing right now that would be influencing it would be finding a job and with everything going on with the budget hopefully that will happen. But, I feel very confident about staying in the field of education".

Further responses from participants explained their hopes to stay in the field of education. For example, Alice (850 hrs) explains "even if I'm not a general education teacher for the rest of my life, I definitely want to stay involved in the school environment...kids, learning, and the whole school environment is very important to me". Rae (740 hrs) affirmed "yes, I am definitely staying in the field. I [have] wanted to be a teacher since I was in fourth grade". Laura (430 hrs) asserted "I would say I'm pretty confident [to stay in the field]. I really enjoy imparting knowledge to others. And most of all I think it's pretty wonderful to see kids come through the system that are from all different backgrounds and being able to give them a little bit of knowledge or tools for learning". Nema (30 hrs) felt "very strongly that I'm going to stay in [the field of education] because I took my time getting in to it. Nema felt comfortable that she will stay in the field because she's been able to experience other jobs and realizes that education is the career choice for her.

Forty percent of the interviewed candidates said that even though they see their future as an educator, there is a possibility that they will not stay in a public PK-6th grade school classroom. A variety of factors influenced their opinions. Mary (810 hrs), who pursued a MS in Education to earn her teaching license and had multiple field experiences, explained her frustrations centered on pressures of following the curriculum, budget issues, and the overall setting of a public school system. She said that these

factors "detract from what your job is, which is teaching". She gives herself 5 years to work in a public school system. Mary states "There's no question about staying in the field of education, now teaching, um I think the politics are going to kinda push me away…I don't think I will ever be out of education, I just think it will be out of another venue". Alice (850 hrs), who completed multiple formal field experiences, explained that if she does not stay in the classroom, it may be to pursue an administrative role in education, or may work towards specializing as a technology educator for the schools. Beth (430 hrs), a military wife, decided to get her Master of Science in Education from the researched university since the license path offered was designed for military families and she knew she would complete it in 2 ½ years , which was the length of time they would be in the area. In her license path, she completed one 30 hour practicum and a 10 week student teaching experience. Although she does not mind teaching students in the classroom and admits the profession "will be a great safety net" to fall back on when her children get older, she hopes that the Master's degree will help her to pursue her passion of working in community outreach and public health. Another candidate, Jayla (30 hrs) of the Career Switchers Program, explains that she wants to stay in education as long as she stays in her town's smaller school division. She is concerned that if she moves to a larger school system "things [may be] much more politically correct" and have "so many rules". She likes how one doesn't have to watch everything you say and do" in her present area.

Field Experiences: Feeling Prepared

Areas to Improve

Rae (740 hrs), who completed multiple field experiences before graduating, did not enjoy her 6th grade observation experience because she felt her "degree was not

geared towards 6th graders", so she did not think she was getting as much out of it as she did the other grade levels. Sixth grade is considered middle school in her cooperating school's city. She said that during the observation "I just kind of sat around and watched the teacher and sometimes interacted with the students but it was mostly just me sitting there so I don't feel like I got a lot out of the observation".

Julie and Ashton (both 810 hrs), both noted their desire for clearer university expectations regarding their early field experiences. Julie explained that during her 30 hour observation field experience, she became familiar with the daily routines in the elementary school classroom but did not feel particularly prepared to teach by that field experience. However, Julie voiced her first practicum of 70 hours in an elementary school classroom (after the observation requirement) gave more preparation. She liked the university's set expectations for her 70 hour practicum and recommends that the observation experience have more specifics for students to accomplish. She felt a lack of direction in the observation field experience. Ashton thought she did not get "much control in the classroom prior to student teaching". She expressed being "kind of nervous to jump to ask if I could help out with activities in my observation and practica experiences" She would like to have the cooperating teachers in the observation and practicum setting more aware of examples of when she could help out in the classroom. Further, she would have liked her observation and 70 hour practicum to have more "check ins" from the university.

As a teacher candidate in the Career Switchers program, Nema (30 hrs), was only required to complete a 30 hour observation for her license path. She said, said "I really do wish that it could have been more than 30 hours" of field experiences. Nema also

wondered if there "is anything that I am missing or did I get enough preparation because I didn't have [student teaching]". She was also concerned because a lot of her coursework was condensed because of the quicker program's requirements.

Most and Least Confident Subjects to Teach

Most Confident Subject

Interviewees were asked which subject they felt most confident to teach. Most mentioned Math as the subject they felt most confident to teach and most felt confident about math before starting their teacher preparation programs. Laura (430) and Jayla (30 hrs), had an educational major relating to math. Julie and Alice, who both had multiple field experiences (810+ hours), mentioned that their formal field experiences through the university helped them feel more confident in using a variety of instructional strategies while teaching math.

A large portion of the candidates mentioned Language Arts/Reading as their most confident subject area to teach. Three of the candidates (Sammy 810 hrs, Alice 850 hrs, and Nema 30 hrs) expressed having prior teaching efficacy in the subject before beginning their teacher preparation program. However, Dawn said she felt most confident to teach reading because of the strong emphasis that her cooperating school had on the subject in order to bring up the school's state testing scores. Three candidates, Ashton, Laura, and Beth, felt most confident to teach Science. Of these three, Laura and Beth who were part of the license path for military families, expressed having a lot of prior knowledge of the subject. Two candidates mentioned history and social studies as being their most confident subject to teach. Rae (740 hrs) said, "I feel most confident in history

because I am a big history buff and in social studies. I'm always watching the news and what's going on in the world. I just feel like I have a lot of knowledge in that area".

Least Confident Subject

When asked which subject they felt the least confident to teach, almost all shared specific subject areas in which they felt least confident to teach. Results indicated that four of the candidates feel least confident to teach Language Arts/Reading. Three of the four candidates with low efficacy in teaching Language Arts would have liked to have more pre-service training and experience in teaching the subject while in the teacher preparation program. Julie (810 hrs) believed that her university's coursework did not prepare her adequately to teach Language Arts. She also attributed her lack of confidence of teaching language arts towards not having the opportunity to teach in a cooperating classroom that focused on Language Arts. Julie's student teaching placement was part of a team teaching approach, where her teacher taught Science, Social Studies and Math. Further, Ashton (810 hrs) expressed, "I'm new to guided reading and they focus so much on it and reading in the classroom that it kind of intimidates me…I'm worried [because] it takes such a big part of the [elementary school's] day". Beth (430 hrs) explained that she "has the least amount of experience in [Language Arts]". She said, "Just because you know how to read doesn't mean you know how to teach it". One of the four candidates, Jayla (30 hrs), attributes her low confidence in teaching the subject to previous life experiences as a pre-college student.

Three of the candidates felt least confident to teach Math. Two of these particular candidates attributed their lack of confidence in the Math to not personally understanding the subject. One of the candidates, Rae (740 hrs), believed that her low confidence in

math was caused by struggling to find appropriate activities to match the curriculum. However, Rae expressed her increase confidence in the subject after completing student teaching. Rae said, "My cooperating teacher was amazing in showing me the different ways to work with the students during math…it was great working with her [because] she gave me a better understanding of how to teach math".

One interviewee, Alice (850 hrs) felt least confident to teach Social Studies, however she clarified that her feelings were not a strong dislike, and does not have any particular reasoning to choose this subject as her least favorite. Nema (30 hrs) felt least confident to teach Science because her personal struggles with the subject. She expressed an increase in confidence to teach science after taking a course on teaching science through the university's teacher preparation Career Switcher's program. Nema stated, "I'm more willing and open now to teaching [Science], and I see that maybe there could be some positive in it, but before the career switcher program I would have never thought that".

Instead of giving a specific grade level, Laura (430 hrs) expressed her lack of confidence in teaching preschool through first grade aged children. She shared that she did not think that she knew the specific skills that the younger students learned.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Teacher preparation programs strive to implement field experiences that encourage the growth of teacher candidates' efficacy and their commitment to the field of education. In order to increase pre-service teacher candidates' efficacy, many teacher preparation programs require candidates to participate in formal field experiences. The variety and length of each formal field experience depend on the requirements of the preparation program's license path.

The purpose of this study was to use quantitative and qualitative data to explore to what extent formal field experiences influence teacher candidates' perceptions about their teaching efficacy. It also focused on specific factors during the field experiences that contributed to teacher candidates' teacher efficacy.

This study investigated three research questions:

1. To what degree does the number of hours of elementary teacher candidates' field experiences influence their perceptions of their teacher efficacy?
2. To what degree are there differences among teacher candidates' teaching efficacy beliefs who have completed their required license paths' field experiences?
3. What components of the teacher candidates' field experiences influence teacher efficacy?

Regression analyses, analyses of variance (ANOVA), and the analyses of eleven interviews were used to answer the research questions. In order to analyze question 1, total hours of formal field experiences were examined to determine the influence of teacher efficacy according participants' responses to the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire. To determine the amount of influence, participants' responses from the IDS+MS path (Tiers A, B, C, D, E, F, and G) were analyzed. The regression analysis indicated a slight to moderate, positive correlation between the number of hours of field experiences and overall teacher efficacy. The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale questionnaire was also disaggregated into the following three subcategories: efficacy in instructional strategies, efficacy in student engagement, and efficacy in classroom management. Regression analyses determined a slight, yet significant, positive correlation among the hours of formal field experiences with each of the subcategories efficacy of instructional strategies and efficacy in student engagement. The subcategory, efficacy of classroom management had the strongest correlation to number of hours of field experiences and yielded a slight to moderate positive correlation. In summary, those who completed more hours of formal field experiences demonstrated more efficacy towards teaching.

In order to compare the means of the five license paths' candidates' overall efficacy score for research question 2, a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. Results indicated a statistically significant difference in the means of the students who completed the MS degree program for military families with each of the other four license paths. Students in the MS path for military families felt less efficacious than those prepared through the IDS + MS, IDS + post baccalaureate endorsement, the

MS in Ed degree, and the Career Switchers program. It should be noted, however, a limitation of these findings include the small population and sample size (n=6) of the MS degree path designed for military families.

After conducting the quantitative tests, I investigated research question 3 qualitatively by investigating the components of the formal field experiences that contributed towards feeling prepared and confident to teach. Eleven interviews were conducted and responses were grouped according to components that contributed towards teacher candidates' teaching efficacy. Responses were also disaggregated according to license path and the total number of completed field experiences that each participant completed. Interview responses were organized according to major themes and patterns that surfaced.

The Field Experiences

Interview responses gave a strong indication that both informal and formal field experiences contributed to the increase in teacher candidates' efficacy. The results below are presented separately by informal and formal field experiences.

Informal Field Experiences

Almost all of the interviewees from the five license paths experienced a variety of informal field experiences prior to entering the university's teacher preparation programs. Overall, evidence suggested informal field experiences that were paid or volunteered, contributed towards increasing candidates' teaching efficacy. Further, these informal experiences helped the candidates pursue their education degree before entering college. These findings concur with Tuchman & Issacs' (2011) qualitative study involving participants who were involved in similar informal field experiences such as being a child

care supervisor, camp counselor, and youth advisor prior to beginning their teacher preparation programs. In agreement with the findings of the current study Tuchman & Issacs' results also suggest that informal field experiences build teacher efficacy.

Formal Field Experiences

The eleven candidates each experienced formal field experiences, however, the number of placements varied. The interviewees' responses presented strong evidence that multiple field experiences contribute towards increasing teacher candidates' teaching efficacy. Candidates expressed that observing classrooms, participating in practica, and experiencing student teaching helped to formulate candidates teaching philosophies and teaching styles. Multiple field experiences provided the candidates more opportunities to experience different age groups of children and a variety of teaching techniques. Multiple field experiences also permitted the candidates to see numerous classroom management methods, instructional strategies, and ways to engage students in the learning process. Many candidates expressed the value in observing both effective and ineffective teaching because it demonstrated what worked and what did not work while instructing students. Although candidates with less than 430 hours of formal field experiences shared the benefits of their one or two formal field experiences, those who had four or more formal field experiences (740+ hours) had more personal reflections to share. These findings support Goodfellow & Sumsion's (2000) results as teacher candidates expressed the importance of formulating their own teaching philosophy from the personal and professional knowledge gained during their different field experiences.

Candidates in the study who completed multiple formal field experiences (740+ hours) expressed their concerns regarding the lack of direction given from the university

in their early observation and practica placements. In contrast, these same candidates expressed that their longer practica provided more direction and had more expectations to follow from the university. These comments generated concerns to whether the license paths' candidates who are only required to complete one or two short field experiences (with less total hours) are getting the same fruitful experiences as those experiencing multiple field experiences with longer hours and more specific guidelines during their placements.

Most and Least Confident Subjects to Teach

Plourde (2002) explains that many candidates enter their formal field experiences with established efficacies, attitudes, values, and beliefs about individual subjects. In agreement with Plourde, the current study suggested that having personal experiences with various subjects (such as Math or Science) prior to entering their preparation program's license path attributed to candidates having more confidence in teaching these specific subject areas. Importantly, there were also many examples from candidates who stated that their field experiences strengthened their sense of confidence to teach specific subjects. According to the interviewees, none of the formal field experiences weakened their sense of confidence to teach specific subject areas.

Numerous candidates from multiple license paths mentioned math as their most confident subject to teach. The majority of these candidates believed they were confident to teach the subject prior to beginning their coursework and field experiences at the university. However, many candidates who experienced multiple formal field experiences through the university believed these experiences helped their confidence to increase further by learning a variety of math instructional strategies in the classrooms.

Candidates who lacked efficacy in teaching math attributed their lack of confidence to not personally understanding the subject. However, the license paths' required coursework and the cooperating teachers in each field placement helped to increase candidates' confidence levels. Those who felt especially confident to teach science or social studies attributed their confidence levels to prior experiences and background knowledge with the subjects.

Findings suggest many candidates felt most confident to teach language arts and reading. Interestingly, these candidates expressed having their high sense of teaching efficacy in language arts prior to beginning their teacher preparation program. However, candidates that experienced multiple field experiences conveyed feeling an increase in confidence after teaching language arts in their cooperating schools.

Few candidates did state, however, that they would have liked more guidance from their university's coursework and formal field experiences regarding instruction in teaching language arts. Candidates explained that their cooperating schools put a strong emphasis on language arts, which reiterated the importance of knowing how to teach the subject. Those who felt least confident to teach language arts would have liked more guidance towards teaching the variety of language arts components. Specifically, guided reading was a language arts component that was mentioned that candidates wanted more direction.

Most of the teacher candidates, regardless of their license path, and number of formal field experiences, believe they will stay in the field of education. However, many believe they will eventually branch out to pursue positions other than being a classroom teacher. Concerns regarding politics in the school systems, curricula changes, and the

emphasis of state standards brought concerns about the candidates' future as classroom educators.

Gaining Confidence in Instructional Strategies, Student Engagement, and Classroom Management

Various patterns arose from candidates' interviews' responses regarding efficacy in student engagement, efficacy in instructional strategies and efficacy in classroom management. Observing students and teachers during instruction, using available classroom technologies, the freedom to try new teaching techniques in the classroom, having a sense of ownership of the classroom, and constant self-reflection helped candidates gain confidence in these three subcategories of teaching efficacy.

Many candidates mentioned the benefits of observing the students and teachers during the different field placements. Watching teachers and students' actions during the field placements helped candidates see good teaching and learning practices. Seeing students respond to the different teaching strategies gave candidates confidence to implement teaching strategies during instructional opportunities. Observing the different classrooms also allowed candidates to see different classrooms' dynamics. Candidates were able to see the importance of differentiation by observing the different ability levels of the students before trying to teach them. Embracing and understanding student characteristics and interests encouraged student engagement during instruction.

Candidates, from a variety of license paths commented on the university's coursework contributing towards their teaching efficacy in student engagement. Professors teaching coursework with teaching experience gave valuable information and teaching strategies to implement in the classroom.

Observing effective and ineffective discipline strategies helped candidates determine their own management styles and view how students respond to different teaching and management approaches. Specifically, candidates who saw and tried different discipline strategies, learned patience, and were able to gain ownership of teaching in the classroom. These findings concur with Erawn (2001) who explained that teacher candidates' efficacy can increase by practicing classroom instruction and management techniques that formal field experiences can provide. Candidates who have multiple field experiences have more opportunities to use and try these various techniques and strategies.

Many candidates shared that they gained more patience with children after completing their field experiences. Specifically, self-reflection about responses to student behaviors was helpful. Positive discipline approaches were mentioned by interviewees as having a strong part of their teaching growth in classroom management. Using positive reinforcement in the classroom was noted by students of varying hours of field experiences. The candidates said that being positive helped their patience and classroom control.

Less favorable actions of cooperating teachers helped candidates to see ineffective classroom management strategies. When cooperating teachers lacked classroom management or had a less favorable rapport with the students, candidates observed how these methods were unproductive. In many instances, candidates learned the importance of staying professional, keeping calm, and remaining patient. One of the candidates who experienced a total of two field experiences (one observation and one student teaching placement-430 hours) felt very insecure about her ability to manage a classroom. She

attributed her lack of confidence to being a personal problem, however, it is possible that more experiences in the classroom would have helped her gain this confidence.

Further, interviewees also expressed the strong desire to feel a sense of ownership in their cooperating teachers' classrooms. Tasks such as creating classroom rules with the cooperating teacher, designing behavior plans for students, and creating classroom routines were desired. Many spring student teacher candidates noted that most classroom routines were already established by their cooperating teachers because school had already been in session for five months when candidates entered the cooperating classroom. Possibly, candidates would feel more ownership in these classroom management opportunities if their placements were in the fall semester before the elementary school year begins.

Another concern that surfaced during the interviews was the complex lesson plan format required by the university. Two participants, who completed 810 hours of field experiences, shared their concerns. Both participants felt that the university's formal format was very extensive and time consuming to complete. The format was described as intimidating and rigid. The candidates expressed that their lack of confidence in writing the lesson plans took away from their confidence to teach the actual lesson because they were so concerned about following the university's lesson plan guidelines. Both explained that once they were free to use other lesson planning formats in their cooperating classroom, their confidence levels increased.

The Cooperating Teacher

The cooperating teachers played a crucial role in increasing candidates' teacher efficacy among the five license paths' field experiences. Cooperating teachers, who were

communicators, collaborators, and strong role models, were characteristics that candidates deemed most important.

Frequent communication and collaboration among cooperating teachers and teacher candidates were important to the candidates' growth as future educators. Specifically during the collaboration, candidates appreciated ongoing constructive feedback. Constructive feedback and positive affirmation made candidates feel confident and feel strong about implementing their teaching strategies. These multiple findings concur with Kahn's (2001) study as candidates expressed the importance of cooperating teachers giving frequent and constructive feedback, multiple opportunities to teach in the classroom, and giving the student teachers flexibility in the classroom. Collaborating by sharing resources was also appreciated by the candidates.

Cooperating teachers who shared instructional resources with their teacher candidates helped encourage confidence. Sharing instructional materials helped students feel secure in their teaching because it gave examples of what they could use, even when candidates chose to create new materials.

Communication among the cooperating teachers and the candidates strengthened their teaching strategies and confidence. Specifically, communication that encouraged self-reflection was valuable. Giving constructive feedback and keeping the candidates aware of the school's daily routines was important also. Cooperating teachers who were open about the teaching profession helped the candidates feel prepared about the teaching career and the possible struggles that often occur.

Candidates expressed that cooperating teachers who were strong role models contributed towards increasing confidence in teaching. Cooperating teachers who served as role models helped the candidates to see teaching in a positive light. Further these cooperating teachers showed candidates how to be organized, how to be effective educators, and how to have a healthy teacher/student relationship. All of these qualities helped optimize the learning environment. Goodfellow & Sumsion (2000) explained that cooperating teachers with a strong passion for education provide strength for the candidates. Cooperating teachers' enthusiasm helps the educator to resolve every day frustrations that the teaching profession often endures. Similarly Guyton & Wesche's (1996) study coincides with the current study. Educational attitudes of practica and student teachers determined that cooperating teachers who were good role models were an important factor in candidates' opinions about their field experiences' successes.

Interestingly, most of the comments about the importance of the cooperating teacher were from candidates who experienced multiple field experiences. It is possible that this is because they had more opportunities to work with cooperating teachers in a variety of classroom settings.

University Supervisor

Another contributing factor in candidates' overall efficacy gained during field experiences was the role of the university supervisor. Specifically, university supervisors who were informative, easy to contact, open to communicate, and acted as team players were deemed important by the teacher candidates.

Candidates appreciated their supervisors guiding them through the different lenses of the cooperating school's personnel and its unique school setting. University

supervisors who were "in the know" of the current public school systems were desired by the candidates. Further, candidates voiced their desire for their supervisors to be informative about the requirements of the particular field experiences.

Communication was also a key element in creating a successful teacher candidate and university supervisor relationship. Specifically, candidates appreciated the strength in the supervisor's encouragement to self-assess and self-reflect about their classroom experiences. Supervisors who were involved in the field experiences encouraged students to feel confident about their growth and progress as future educators. Supervisors who encouraged self-reflection helped the candidates focus on specific goals while working with the classroom dynamics. Providing regular feedback to the candidates provided strength and development during field placements. Positive feedback was just as important as constructive feedback to the candidates during their placement. Further, the supervisor's availability to the candidates was another important trait to the candidates. Candidates wanted access to their supervisors with ease through phone and email.

Literature on field experiences provided many examples to the importance of the relationship among the teacher candidate, the cooperating teacher, and the university supervisor. Enz, Freeman, & Walling (1996) explained the roles and responsibilities of each of these team members is very important to creating highly efficacious teachers in each field experience. Each team member provides a unique area of expertise that the other can benefit from (Graham, 2006). Communicating among the three players, connects the formation of teaching and learning, sets the stage for personal growth and professional development (O'Hair & O'Hair, 1996).

In the current study, most candidates shared that collaboration and constant communication among the teacher candidate, cooperating teacher, the staff of the cooperating school, and the university supervisor was vital in feeling prepared. Specifically, collaboration that encouraged self-reflection among the teacher candidates and that focused around working as a team helped increase the candidates' teaching efficacy. Although many shared that collaboration among the team was important, interview responses indicated that the university supervisor, the cooperating teacher, and the teacher candidate only met together a few times to touch base on progress. Most of the communication and collaboration occurred between the candidate and supervisor together and the candidate and cooperating teacher together.

Directions for Further Research

Findings from the current study did not indicate whether the cooperating teachers felt supported by their candidates' corresponding university and supervisors. Graham's (2006) study indicates that when the university supervisor shows support to the cooperating teacher, collaboration is often present among the university and the cooperating school. Further research involving cooperating teachers' opinions regarding their roles in the field experiences would be beneficial to investigate.

Teacher candidates' efficacy should be studied further while experiencing varying contextual factors during field experiences. According to Gresham (2008), teaching outcome expectancy, is a teacher's belief that successful teaching can bring about student learning despite external factors such as family background, parental influences, and home environment. Siwatu (2011) studied a variety of contextual settings relating to pre-service teachers' sense of efficacy with regards to teaching in urban and suburban

schools. Results suggest that the contextual factors of the school do matter when relating to teacher efficacy. Many pre-service candidates in Siwatu's study felt more prepared to teach in suburban schools compared to in urban schools.

Also, since many students enter their preparation path with preconceived efficacies about teaching particular subjects, it might benefit candidates to determine their most and least confident subjects to teach prior to beginning their coursework. By encouraging self-awareness, candidates can focus on increasing their efficacy levels of the subjects they are not as confident to teach. It would also be valuable to administer the efficacy scale questionnaire to candidates at the beginning of their teacher preparation program, and monitor their growth as they complete their required formal field experiences. Further, since candidates' informal field experiences may affect their efficacy levels before they enter a preparation program, questions regarding these informal field experiences should be included in the efficacy scale questionnaire given prior to beginning each preparation program.

Additionally, some of the license paths had numerous distance learning students. Teaching efficacy levels of those who are taking a majority of teacher preparation classes through Tele-tech-net should be compared to those in courses that meet face to face.

Other topics of research include whether a candidates' professional disposition affects their confidence and feelings of preparedness throughout their teacher preparation program. In addition, research investigating whether teacher candidates' efficacy calibrates with effective teaching and learning would be beneficial.

Limitations

Since this study does not focus on specific contextual factors (such as socio-economic status and other demographic information) affecting teacher candidates' teaching efficacy, findings might be different depending on whether the cooperating schools are in an urban, a rural, or a suburban school environment. Urban and rural schools often present different challenges than those in suburban school settings.

There are a variety of university supervisors and cooperating teachers that are assigned to the different teacher candidates within each license path. Individual opinions about supervisors or cooperating teachers may not accurately represent all university supervisors or cooperating teachers working with the university. Since all of the participants are from the same university, a universal conclusion may not be accurately represented of all teacher preparation programs in the United States.

Interviewees who did not experience multiple field experiences, may not have mentioned certain factors contributing to their confidence because they did not know what it was like to experience these factors.

Also, due to the various ages and types of informal field experiences of the participants, it may be difficult to generalize the entire group as having the same teaching efficacy levels before beginning their teacher preparation program and field experiences. Past informal field experiences may contribute to the increase or lack of efficacy in teaching children prior to enrolling in the preparation program.

Finally, group size among some of the license paths' participants should be noted. Since the participants all came from the same university, many of the paths' sizes had

small numbers. Specifically, the path with the least number of participants was the path to have statistically significant differences in efficacy compared to the other paths. The small population may be a limitation to these findings.

Conclusion

In conclusion, multiple field experiences are important components of teacher preparation programs. Multiple field experiences provide exposure to real-world classroom teachers, students of a variety of ages and developmental stages, and teaching situations. Since the regression analyses indicated that there is a slight to moderate correlation of the number of hours of field experiences to teacher candidates' teaching efficacy, teacher preparation programs should work towards providing candidates with many hours of multiple field experiences.

Results also revealed through analyses of variance that there is a statistically significant difference among overall efficacy of those in the Master's program for military families with the other four license paths. However, since this particular group's participants' population was very small, this provides a limitation to the findings.

Further, qualitative results indicated teacher candidates, who experienced multiple field experiences, have an increase in overall teacher efficacy. Teacher candidates from a variety of license paths shared numerous factors they believed to help increase their confidence as future educators. Findings indicated that multiple field experiences provided candidates opportunities to experience a variety of cooperating teachers, classrooms, and groups of students.

Findings suggested informal field experiences (completed before entering the teacher preparation program) that were paid or volunteered, contributed towards

increasing teacher efficacy prior to enrolling in a teacher preparation program. Universities should note these informal experiences as important and incorporate reflection opportunities into the program. Further these informal field experiences may influence the decision to admit a candidate into a particular license path. For example, a candidate who has no prior experience in working with children may benefit from a path with more field experiences, whereas a candidate with multiple informal field experiences with teaching children may not need as many formal field experiences.

Evidence suggested that giving candidates the flexibility to try a variety of instructional strategies, try different ways to engage students, and implement techniques to help classroom management should be targeted during formal field experiences. Multiple formal field experiences gave more opportunities for candidates to use a variety of approaches.

Results indicated that teacher preparation programs should note the influential role of the university supervisors and cooperating teachers. Programs should emphasize communication and collaboration among these key players in all field experiences and promote the strength in these relationships.

Feeling supported was another important factor that most candidates mentioned as contributing towards their feelings of preparation to enter the education field. Recommendations include universities communicating with the cooperating teachers and university's supervisors the importance of these findings. Supervisors and cooperating teachers who were available to answer questions, available to guide candidates through the field experience, and gave verbal praise and support helped the candidates' teaching confidence increase. Further, building relationships among the cooperating teacher and

university supervisor was crucial to building candidates' confidence levels. Self-reflection encouraged personal growth and motivation to better skillset and efficacy. Along with feeling supported, results indicate the importance of a working professional relationship among the university supervisor and the teacher candidate and the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate.

Findings indicated that candidates who only participated in one 30 hour observation did not have the opportunity to collaborate with the cooperating teacher about the multitude of strategies that the candidates with multiple experiences had.

Recommendations also included adding more formal field experiences to teacher preparation programs with only one or two field experiences. Multiple field experiences are proven to expose candidates to practices that encourage growth in student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. Multiple field experiences provide a variety of classroom experiences that increases the overall efficacy of teacher candidates by collaborating and communicating with cooperating schools' staff, and university supervisors while working in real, working classrooms.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Classroom Observation Field Experience-a field experience where teacher candidates observe a public or private school classroom in a grade level that they would like to teach.

Cooperating teacher- a public or private school teacher who is working with a teacher candidate and university by providing a mentor/mentee relationship in a classroom setting of PK-12th grade.

Cooperating school- a public or private school that works with a local university's teacher preparation program by allowing a teacher in training to observe and practice instructional strategies to a real classroom of students.

Contextual factors-factors that may influence a classroom's environment such as the demographics and socio-economic statuses of the students

Formal field experiences- assigned experiences in a private or public cooperating school's classroom that are required as part of a teacher preparation program. These are intended for students without a teaching license. These formal experiences may include various practica and student teaching placements.

Informal field experiences- non-required experiences that a teacher candidate may have experienced involving working with children in a leadership role. Examples include experiences such as a day camp leader, church leader, or babysitter.

In-service teacher-a teacher who has a teaching license and is a practicing teacher in a public or private school

Practicum- a field experience in a cooperating public or private school that is usually a requirement in an education program. Practica in education involve teacher candidates who observe a public or private school classroom and learn from the teacher's practices, and teach small groups of students in the classroom while taking coursework at the university

Pre-service teacher- (synonym: teacher candidate) - a student in training to be a teacher. He or she has not yet earned his/her teaching license

Student Teaching-an internship that is usually completed as a last field experience requirement *before* earning a teaching license

Teacher candidate- (synonym: pre-service teacher) A tteacher candidate is a student who has: 1) declared an undergraduate major and has been admitted into the undergraduate teacher education program; 2) admitted into a graduate teacher education program with initial license; or 3) admitted into a post-baccalaureate endorsement program.

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APPENDIX A

Dear Future Educator, April 30, 2012

I am a PhD of Education Candidate in Curriculum and Instruction at Old Dominion University. I am conducting a study with future educators to better understand their sense of readiness to work in the classroom. Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated and will help the growth of the university's teacher preparation programs.

The following survey should take less than 5 minutes. After completion, please return it in the self-addressed envelope as soon as possible. Your name and return address is not needed.

The last question asks you whether you would be willing to participate in a completely confidential interview. If you are willing to participate in this less than 30 minute interview, please select YES with the question and provide your phone number or email address in order to be reached. Those who participate in the interview will receive a $5 gift card to Starbucks or Tropical Smoothie.

Thank you in advance,

Alison Reddy
PhD Student-Education
Curriculum & Instruction
Old Dominion University
aredd555@odu.edu

RPI: Shana Pribesh, PhD
Associate Professor
Educational Foundations
and Leadership
Old Dominion University
spribesh@odu.edu

APPENDIX B

Please circle the licensure path that applies to you.

- IDS 4+1 Fifth Year MS in Education for Initial Licensure Elementary (Continuation of undergraduate Interdisciplinary Studies Teacher Preparation Concentration)
- 4+1 Primary/ Elementary Emphasis - Post Baccalaureate licensure endorsement for students who have earned a non-teaching BS or BA degree who want to obtain licensure to teach in in PK-6 (not resulting in a Masters)
- Master of Science in Education with Initial Licensure Post Baccalaureate path earning a Masters for students who transfer from another university
- Master of Science in Education with licensure degree Post Baccalaureate aimed to support military families and selective service
- Career Switchers Alternate Route Program earning a one year provisional teaching license

I have completed or am currently enrolled in the following field experiences (circle all that apply).

30 hour observation

40 hour practicum

70 hour practicum

150 hour practicum

10 week student teaching experience

14 week student teaching experience

I would like to volunteer for a brief and confidential phone or face-to-face interview to discuss my experiences as a teacher candidate and receive a $5 gift card to Starbucks or Tropical Smoothie.

Please check if YES: _____

Contact Information _____Email: _____

APPENDIX C

Future Teacher Survey

What do you think?

Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for future teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your **opinion** about each of the statements below by bubbling in one number per question. Your answers are confidential. There is no "right" or "wrong" answer.

	Nothing	Very little	Sometimes	Quite a Bit	Almost Always
1. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
2. How much can you do to help your students think critically?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
3. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
4. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
5. To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
6. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
7. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
8. How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
9. How much can you do to help your students value learning?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
10. How much can you determine student understanding of what you have taught?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
11. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
12. How much can you do to foster student creativity?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
13. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
14. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
15. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
16. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
17. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
18. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
19. How well can you keep a few problem students form ruining an entire lesson?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
20. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
21. How well can you respond to defiant students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
22. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
23. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)
24. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for quicker learners?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) (5) (6) (7)	(8) (9)

APPENDIX D

Opening Script for Interview

Good afternoon! My name is Alison Reddy and I am a PhD candidate in Education with an emphasis in Curriculum and Instruction. Thank you for agreeing to meet with me for a brief interview. Your opinion is valued and I appreciate you taking time out of your schedule to share your thoughts.

I am currently researching the influence of teacher preparation programs' field experiences on pre-service teachers' sense of teaching self-efficacy for my dissertation. I am interested in learning about teacher candidates' opinions about their field experiences during their teacher preparation program. All of your responses will be kept confidential and your name will not be revealed in any part of the data or results. If at any time you would like me to stop our interview please let me know.

The types of questions that I will be asking you may require a few moments of reflection. Please take your time with your responses. If you are unsure of any terminology or would like me to rephrase any question please do not hesitate to ask.

I would like to record the interview, if you are willing, and use the tapes to accurately inform the writing of my research paper. I will record the interview only with your written consent, and will ask that no personal identifiers be used during the interview, to ensure your anonymity. Please feel free to say as much or as little as you want. You can decide not to answer any question, or to stop the interview any time you want.

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

PROJECT TITLE: The Influence of Teacher Preparation Programs' Field Experiences on Pre-Service Candidates' Sense of Teaching Self-Efficacy

INTRODUCTION
The purposes of this form are to give you information that may affect your decision whether to say YES or NO to participation in this research, and to record the consent of those who say YES.

RESEARCHERS
Alison Reddy – Project Investigator
Dr. Shana Pribesh- THE RPI: Responsible Project Investigator

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY
Several studies have been conducted looking into the subject of new teacher confidence levels. None of them have explained the influence of teacher preparation programs' field experiences on pre-service teachers' sense of teaching efficacy.
If you decide to participate, then you will join a study involving research of teacher preparation programs' field experiences. If you say YES, then your participation will last for approximately 10 minutes through the survey program. Approximately 200 teacher candidates will be participating in this study.

EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA
You should have completed the survey Future Teacher's Survey: What do you think?

RISKS AND BENEFITS
There are no foreseen or benefits or risks by participating in this study. All information collected for this project is completely anonymous. No names will be used in any of the findings or results.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS
The researchers are unable to give you any payment for participating in this questionnaire. However, if you agree to take a follow up confidential interview, you will be paid with a $5 gift card to Starbucks or Tropical Smoothie.

NEW INFORMATION
If the researchers find new information during this study that would reasonably change your decision about participating, then they will give it to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY
The researchers will take reasonable steps to keep private information from the questionnaires confidential. The researcher will remove identifiers from the information gained from the survey. All response will be completely confidential.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE
It is OK for you to say NO. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and walk away or withdraw from the study -- at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with Old Dominion University, or otherwise cause a loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

By signing this form, you are saying several things. You are saying that you have read this form or have had it read to you, that you are satisfied that you understand this form, the research study, and its risks and benefits. The researchers should have answered any questions you may have had about the research. If you have any questions later on, then the researchers should be able to answer them:

Alison Reddy – Project Investigator at aredd555@odu.edu

Dr. Shana Pribesh- THE RPI: Responsible Project Investigator at spribesh@odu.edu

Dr. Nina Brown – Current Chair of the Human Subjects Review Committee at nbrown@odu.edu

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should call Dr. George Maihafer, the current IRB chair, at 757-683-4520, or the Old Dominion University Office of Research, at 757-683-3460.

And importantly, by signing below, you are telling the researcher YES, that you agree to participate in this study. The researcher should give you a copy of this form for your records.

Subject's Printed Name & Signature	**Date**

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

I certify that I have explained to this subject the nature and purpose of this research, including benefits, risks, costs, and any experimental procedures. I have described the rights and protections afforded to human subjects and have done nothing to pressure, coerce, or falsely entice this subject into participating. I am aware of my obligations under state and federal laws, and promise compliance. I have answered the subject's questions and have encouraged him/her to ask additional questions at any time during the course of this study. I have witnessed the above signature(s) on this consent form.

Investigator's Printed Name & Signature	**Date**

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

PROJECT TITLE: The Influence of Teacher Preparation Programs' Field Experiences on Pre-Service Candidates' Sense of Teaching Self-Efficacy

INTRODUCTION
The purposes of this form are to give you information that may affect your decision whether to say YES or NO to participation in this research, and to record the consent of those who say YES.

RESEARCHERS
Alison Reddy – Project Investigator
Dr. Shana Pribesh- THE RPI: Responsible Project Investigator.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY
Several studies have been conducted looking into the subject of new teacher confidence levels. None of them have explained the influence of teacher preparation programs' field experiences on pre-service teachers' sense of teaching efficacy.
If you decide to participate, then you will join a study involving research of teacher preparation programs' field experiences. If you say YES, then your participation will last for approximately 20 minutes in a face to face or phone interview.

EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA
You should have completed the survey Future Teacher's Survey: What do you think?

RISKS AND BENEFITS
There are no foreseen or benefits or risks by participating in this study. All information collected for this project is completely anonymous. No names will be used in any of the findings or results.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS
The researchers are unable to give you any payment for participating in this questionnaire. However, if you agree to take a follow up confidential interview, you will be paid with a $5 gift card to Starbucks or Tropical Smoothie.

NEW INFORMATION
If the researchers find new information during this study that would reasonably change your decision about participating, then they will give it to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY
The researchers will take reasonable steps to keep private information from the interview confidential. The researcher will remove identifiers from the information gained from the interview. All response will be completely confidential.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE
It is OK for you to say NO. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and walk away or withdraw from the study -- at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with Old Dominion University, or otherwise cause a loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled

VOLUNTARY CONSENT
By signing this form, you are saying several things. You are saying that you have read this form or have had it read to you, that you are satisfied that you understand this form, the research study, and its risks and benefits. The researchers should have answered any questions you may have had about the research. If you have any questions later on, then the researchers should be able to answer them:

Alison Reddy – Project Investigator at aredd555@odu.edu

Dr. Shana Pribesh- THE RPI: Responsible Project Investigator at spribesh@odu.edu

Dr. Nina Brown – Current Chair of the Human Subjects Review Committee at nbrown@odu.edu

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should call Dr. George Maihafer, the current IRB chair, at 757-683-4520, or the Old Dominion University Office of Research, at 757-683-3460.

And importantly, by signing below, you are telling the researcher YES, that you agree to participate in this study. The researcher should give you a copy of this form for your records.

Subject's Printed Name & Signature	**Date**

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

I certify that I have explained to this subject the nature and purpose of this research, including benefits, risks, costs, and any experimental procedures. I have described the rights and protections afforded to human subjects and have done nothing to pressure, coerce, or falsely entice this subject into participating. I am aware of my obligations under state and federal laws, and promise compliance. I have answered the subject's questions and have encouraged him/her to ask additional questions at any time during the course of this study. I have witnessed the above signature(s) on this consent form.

Investigator's Printed Name & Signature	

APPENDIX F

Interview Protocol

1. Describe any *informal* field experiences you have had with children aged PK-6 before you began your teacher preparation course work. Examples: Child care, church, day camps, etc. Please explain.
2. How did these *informal* field experiences contribute to your confidence working with children?
3. What components of your preparation program's *formal* field experiences strengthened your sense of preparedness to enter the field of education?
4. What components of your preparation program's *formal* field experiences weakened your sense of preparedness to enter the field of education?
5. What role did your university supervisor or mentor play in contributing towards your sense of preparedness as a future educator during your recent field experience?
6. What role did your cooperating teacher play in contributing towards your sense of preparedness as a future educator during your recent field experience?
7. How confident do feel that you will stay in the field of education? What factors might influence your decision?
8. Which subject area do you feel most confident to teach and why?
9. Which subject area do you feel least confident to teach and why?
10. What factors in your field experiences contributed to your confidence level in gaining student engagement?

11. What factors in your field experiences contributed to your confidence level in instructional methods?
12. What factors in your field experiences contributed to your confidence level in classroom management?
13. Describe the relationship among your university supervisor, cooperating teacher, and yourself.
14. Is there anything you want to tell me about your field experiences and your feelings of preparation to teach that I have not asked you? Please explain.

APPENDIX G

Informal Field Experiences before Entering a License Path Program

Interviewee	Types of Informal Field Experiences
Sammy	-volunteered during 12th grade in a Kindergarten class -completed 200 hours of volunteered community service, mainly in elementary schools -substituted for various schools
Dawn	-volunteered at a church's vacation bible school program -worked at Colonial Williamsburg-specialized in programming for state standards and preschool programs -worked for 2 different daycare centers
Ashton	-worked in a church's nursery -worked as a nanny for 4 years -taught a year of preschool
Mary	-taught swimming lessons to children for 12 years -ran swimming instruction programs at the YMCA -worked at the Yacht Club-gave swimming lessons for preschool children
Alice	-volunteered at a vacation bible school -worked in the nursery at her church -worked for the Boys and Girls Club
Rae	-worked at a daycare before transferring to the university -volunteered in the Future Teachers Association in high school and went into elementary schools to volunteer
Beth	-volunteered in the summer with kids in a housing project -worked as a teacher assistant in Spain teaching Language Arts
Laura	-taught homeschooling to 8 children for the majority of 18 years -set up classes and science labs for other homeschoolers in the community
Nema	-worked in a daycare setting -worked as a teacher's aide at her church -volunteered in schools in in Jamaica -worked as a teacher's aide in a public school for a year
Jayla	-taught Sunday School at her church -substituted including multiple long term substitute positions

VITA

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EDUCATION

Dec. 15, 2012	Expected Date of Completion Ph.D. in Education, Curriculum and Instruction Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia Dissertation Topic: The Influence of Teacher Preparation Programs' Field Experiences on Pre-Service Teacher Candidates Sense of Teaching Efficacy
2007	Master of Science in Education Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia
2004	Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies Longwood University, Farmville, Virginia

EXPERIENCE

2004-Present	**Teacher**, 3rd Grade, Rosemont Elementary School, Virginia Beach, Virginia-Experience Teaching Inclusion, Regular Education, and Gifted Learners, Grade Level Chair - four years
2011	**Adjunct Faculty**, Classroom Management and Discipline, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia
2010	**Graduate Teaching Assistant**, Teaching Mathematics in the Elementary Classroom, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia
2007-2011	**Social Studies and Science Curriculum Writing Committee Participant** Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Virginia Beach, Virginia
2009-2011.1	**Science Lead Teacher**, Rosemont Elementary, Virginia Beach, Virginia

AWARDS

2012	Teacher of the Year, Rosemont Elementary School, Virginia Beach, Virginia
2009	Reading Teacher of the Year, Rosemont Elementary School, Virginia Beach, Virginia

PRESENTATIONS

Reddy, A. & Chester, M. (November 2011). *Using the Six Traits of Writing in the Elementary Classroom.* Virginia Beach Reading Conference, Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Reddy, A. & Drumm, J. (December 2011).*Using 21st Century Skills in the Social Studies Classroom.* Virginia Beach City Public Schools Professional Development Course. Virginia Beach, Virginia

Reddy, A. & Baldwin, T. (June 2009). *Enhancing the Social Studies Curriculum.* Virginia Beach City Public Schools Professional Development Course, Virginia Beach, VA.

Reddy, A. & Flannegan, J. (June 2005). *Understanding the Science Curriculum for New Teachers*. Teacher Orientation and Continuous Learning Institute, Virginia Beach, Virginia.