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Early field experience in career and technical education

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Early field experience in career and technical education

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the three studies in this dissertation was to enhance career and technical education in the area of agriculture, business, and family and consumer sciences. This dissertation contains three papers: (1) a Delphi study identifying the purpose, expected outcomes, and methods of documenting preservice teacher early field experience (EFE) activities in agricultural teacher education programs; (2) a national descriptive study describing agricultural teacher education early field experience (EFE) practices using the EFE Model; and (3) a national descriptive study describing business, and family and consumer sciences teacher education early field experience (EFE) practices using the EFE Model. For all studies an early field experience (EFE) was defined as all field experiences that occur prior to student teaching and the experiences could be offered within or outside of the agricultural education curriculum.

Programs required minimum number of contact hours and minimum number of lessons to be taught while in the field. The most commonly identified student assessments included: the university supervisor's review of documents, cooperating teacher signatures, reflective writing, and student journaling. The studies supports the career and technical education profession by identifying differences and similarities in EFE programming in an effort to provide a more congruent EFE experience for preservice teachers.

All three studies can be used to modify and improve EFE in career and technical education in the area of agriculture, business, and family and consumer sciences. The studies will aid the profession in providing a more congruent EFE experience for preservice teachers.

CHAPTER 1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Early field experience (EFE) is a significant component of any teacher education program. EFE provides a preservice teacher the first opportunity to experience a real classroom from a teacher's perspective and enables a preservice teacher the opportunity to engross themselves into a classroom setting. In this chapter, the background of the study will be established. A statement of the problem will be provided, objectives of the study and the organization of this dissertation will be described.

Background

Secondary teacher job satisfaction and retention has been a focal point across disciplines for numerous years (Chapman & Green, 1986). Ruhland (2001) stated, "Turnover is costly to any organization, and it is far more cost effective to retain teachers than to hire. Understanding the factors associated with teacher turnover and retention is the critical first step to developing teacher retention strategies. Turnover focuses on the movement of the individual, not the movement within the organization" (p. 58). In general, teaching has a higher turnover rate than other occupations (Ingersoll, 2002).

Lynch (1996) reported a national decline in the infrastructure for career and technical teacher education. He found problems in the availability of teacher education programs and suggested changes in the way career and technical teacher educators are prepared. Lynch (1988) suggested a need to focus on upgrading the quality of the teaching force and offered two views for teacher education reform. The two views Lynch highlighted included public perception and making the teaching profession a respected profession. Lynch indicated public perception included "inadequately prepared, nurtured, evaluated and compensated

teaching staff" (p. 115). In an effort to make teaching a respected profession, Lynch suggested establishing requirements for entering into the field, structure of the job and monitoring accountability also by enforcing ethics. The problem identified in career and technical education by Lynch has also been an issue in the agricultural education profession.

A pressing issue facing agricultural education is the shortage of qualified teachers to fill existing and future secondary agricultural education programs (Camp et al., 2002). According to Camp et al., the shortage is caused by two issues, with the first being agricultural education programs at universities not graduating enough students to fill the positions available and secondly, a significant number of agricultural educators are leaving the profession early in their career.

With the agricultural education profession facing a shortage of agricultural teacher education students, it is also necessary to review the past supply and demand for the profession. According to a supply and demand study of secondary agricultural teachers conducted by Kantrovich (2007), only 69.8% of newly-qualified graduates in agricultural education profession actually enter teaching. Additionally, a number of secondary agricultural education programs have been eliminated due to not having a qualified instructor. Camp (2002) reiterated that regionally and, perhaps, nationally, current teacher educators recognize the shortage of qualified prospective agricultural teachers to fill teaching positions as a top issue facing agricultural education.

As a means of addressing the lack of qualified agricultural education teachers, the National Council for Agricultural Education established the 10×15 initiative, which calls for 10,000 quality agricultural education programs in the United States by the year 2015. This initiative further draws on a profession that is already not able to meet the demands of the

profession. Several goals are outlined in the 10×15 initiative with one goal being specific to recruiting highly-qualified educators which is to "meet the demand for well-trained, highly qualified agricultural educators for all roles within the profession and encourage their involvement in appropriate professional organizations" (Team Ag Ed, 2007, p. 18). A true challenge has been given to the agricultural education profession to meet the shortage of qualified teachers and prepare even more qualified agricultural educators to meet the goals of the 10×15 initiative.

In an effort to meet the 10×15 initiative, all agricultural education professionals need to work together to recruit and retain additional agricultural educators. Recruiting strategies are typically grounded in cognitive theories of motivation and attribution (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Cognitive theories suggest a person's tendency to participate in an activity can be predicted based upon the observation and knowledge of the activity (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Understanding recruiting strategies is important to fully understand why individuals choose specific careers.

When selecting specific careers such as agricultural education, a teacher's expectations can either encourage or discourage a student from entering the teaching profession. Having a well developed teacher education program is a way to overcome recruiting and retention issues (McGhee & Cheek, 1989). The public schools agricultural education programs are dependent on agricultural teacher education programs because they are producing the teachers for the agricultural education profession (McGhee & Cheek, 1989). Myers, Breja, and Dyer (2004) identified seventeen issues and provided solutions in recruiting students to agricultural education programs. The most difficult problem faced by the profession is attracting and retaining quality students in agricultural education programs.

Solutions offered by Myers et al. included increasing the quality of teacher preparation and preservice programs, recruiting quality students in teacher certificate programs, certifying only qualified teachers and providing professional development for teachers. All of these issues identified can be addressed early in the preparation of agricultural teacher educators.

The need for a quality agricultural teacher program begins with preparing quality agricultural education teachers. The preparation of quality agricultural teachers boils down to the preparation program, which begins with early field experience (EFE) programs. In an EFE a preservice teacher is able to watch other professionals working in the field. Gagne (1988), a learning theorist, indicated learning results from listening to teachers who clearly communicate, learn through observations and engage in activities, which provide feedback. The expectancy theory also suggests people will perform activities and make decisions based on the expectancy for those outcomes (Vroom, 1964). By allowing a preservice teacher to be involved in an EFE, the preservive teacher is able to make decisions as a result of the activities performed and observed, which supports Fishbein's and Ajzen's (1975) belief. The motivation of the selected outcomes will lead the preservice teacher to deciding what might work for them in the classroom (Vroom, 1964). In agricultural teacher education, this provides expectancies that will encourage preservice teachers to become part of the agricultural education profession (Vroom).

An EFE provides a preservice teacher a beginning in their career development (Knowles & Cole, 1996). This career development assists the preservice teacher in becoming a lifelong learner. The learning processes begins in EFE and, as a result, will better prepare a preservice teacher as a problem-solver, critical thinker and one who is wanting to learn more (Knowles & Cole, 1996).

As the learning process continues, it provides a preservice teacher various experiences in becoming agricultural teacher educators. The entire process can encourage the preservice teacher to make decisions based on expectancies. Students have the opportunity to have experiences in activities during a quality EFE. An EFE encourages a preservice teacher to continue in the educational profession and provides a preservice student a true learning experience, which can take place early in a preservice training (NCATE, 2008). A preservice teacher has opportunity to begin thinking as a teacher during an EFE as well as experiencing the role of a teacher early in their academic career (NCATE, 2008). According to NCATE (2008), the purpose of an EFE is to apply skills and knowledge in various settings appropriate to the level of a student's program. An EFE allows a preservice teacher a chance to choose an appropriate teaching strategy as well to understand a students' cognitive and social background (Liston & Zeichner, 1991). Providing a quality early field experience encourages a young professional to continue in the education profession. Many early and ongoing secondary and postsecondary opportunities are available through early field experiences. Opportunities available could include observing, tutoring, instructing or assisting.

According to NCATE (2008), the purpose of EFE is to apply the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions of settings which are appropriate to the content and level of students program. Standard 3, entitled *Field Experiences and Clinical Practice,* states "its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so teacher candidates and other school professionals develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn" (p. 29).

The American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE) is an example of an organization which has also incorporated early field experience into its standards. The *National Standards for Teacher Education in Agriculture* provides a conceptual framework for the agricultural education profession for field experiences (AAAE, 2001). AAAE standards ensure field experiences are of high quality and consistent with the program's conceptual framework (Standard 5). Additionally, AAAE recommends early field experiences include a minimum of 40 student contact hours in a diverse school-based agricultural education program (Standard 5a).

Retallick's (2005) structure and content model of EFE represents three major components of EFE: its foundation, organization, and implementation. The foundation of the model includes the teacher education standards and a conceptual framework, which provides a basis for the evolution of EFE. Education standards include professional, state, institutional and national standards, which drive the program. Building upon the foundation of the model is the organization of EFE. In organizing EFE, teacher education programs must document experiences in providing students syllabi, forms and handbooks. The organization of the EFE experience also needs to provide students experiences, which are embedded or stand-alone experience and provide placements for students. The organization of EFE is made up of documents, placement and experiences, which leads into the implementation stage of EFE.

The implementation stage of the model includes four elements: (1) interaction among the EFE participants, university supervisors, cooperating teachers and peers; (2) the orientation to the outcomes and learning strategies; (3) the outcomes; and (4) the learning strategies necessary to accomplish the outcomes (Retallick, 2005). This entire implementation stage is critical to ensure students have a successful EFE experience. The

learning strategies within this implementation stage include exploration and teacher development. The student outcomes associated with the learning strategies allow students to gain skills through exploration, skill development, application of knowledge, melding theory and transition.

A limited amount of research has been conducted in career and technical education focusing around EFE. As a result, very little information is known about the purpose, expected outcomes and documenting preservice teacher education. No research has been conducted to determine what practices are taking place in each of the components of the EFE model.

Statement of the Problem

Although Retallick (2005) provided examples of the learning outcomes and strategies from the literature, no research has been conducted to identify the purpose, expected outcomes, and methods of documenting preservice teacher EFE activities in the implementation stage of agricultural teacher education programs. Additionally, no research has been conducted to determine what practices are taking place in each of the components of the EFE model, what elements of EFE are practiced and what extent of the EFE model reflects practice in teacher education programs.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the purpose, expected outcomes, and methods of documenting preservice teacher EFE activities in the implementation stage of career and technical education programs using the EFE model. The study focused on three research objectives.

1. Clarify the EFE model by identifying the purpose, expected outcomes and methods of documenting preservice teacher EFE activities in agricultural teacher education programs.
2. Determine the extent to which agricultural teacher education early field experience (EFE) programs utilize the EFE model.
3. Determine the extent to which business and family and consumer sciences early field experience programs utilize the EFE model.

Significance

The results of this study will provide career and technical education teacher educators who coordinate EFE a list of purposes, activities and methods for documenting EFE. By gaining a better understanding of EFE, professionals in the field will be able to develop ways to ensure the purposes, activities and ways of documenting that EFE is implemented in their programs, and the highest levels of EFE are being utilized.

Dissertation Organization

This dissertation is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 provides a general introduction to the dissertation. Chapter 2 comprises a literature review of early field experience. Chapter 3 presents a research article that describes the results of a national Delphi study in agricultural teacher education programs. Chapter 4 discusses a research paper describing agricultural teacher education EFE practices using the EFE model. Chapter 5 presents a research paper describing business and family and consumer science education EFE practices using the EFE model. Chapter 6 presents the conclusions of the dissertation.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Early field experience (EFE) is a significant component of any teacher preparation program. An early field experience provides a preservice teacher the first opportunity to experience a real classroom and allows the preservice teacher the opportunity to immerse themselves into a classroom.

This chapter will outline the theoretical framework, experiential learning, teacher education, early field experience, EFE standards, issues in early field experience, EFE model, EFE in Ag Education and Career and technical education and a chapter conclusion.

Theoretical Framework

Stakeholders of agricultural education are calling for teachers who are better prepared for improving the academic achievement of students. Whittington (2005) proposed reform efforts providing teacher educators with a process to guide career and technical teacher education programs. A four stage model was developed by Whittington that outlines the teacher preparation in agricultural education. The development of teacher preparation in agricultural education has been outlined as: (a) Building Foundations; (b) Exploring Careers; (c) Professional Planning; and (d) Professional Practice. The foundation of this model is based on experiential learning, problem-based teaching, social cognition and reflection practice, which leads into the building foundations level of the model. This level of experience takes place at the freshman and sophomore level. During the building foundation and exploring career experiences undergraduate students are provided the opportunity to confirm their intention to become prospective teachers.

Between the sophomore and junior year, students apply for admission to a professional teaching program. During the junior year students acquire professional planning and, during the senior level, they acquire professional practice. The goal of this model is to acquire knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Whittington's (2005) model has been developed and aligned with National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), Praxis, and American Association of Agricultural Educators (AAAE) standards. A component of any preservice teacher education program provides students experiences through experiential learning.

Experiential Learning

The foundation of career and technical teacher preparation is grounded in experiential learning. Dewey (1938) defined a learning experience as "every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modified in some way the quality of those which come after" (p. 35). Kolb (1984) defined experiential learning as a "means for examining and strengthening the critical linkages among education, work and personal development" (p. 4). The learning by doing philosophy is an important aspect of EFE in a teacher education program. This linkage brings the education and experience together for a preservice teacher educator. In EFE, a preservice educator is able to have experiences, which resemble and model the activities a teacher educator will have when entering the teaching profession.

Mentkowski and Associates (2000) indicated experiential learning provides students with experiences, which will lead to transfer of information. The transfer of information is

the starting point of a reflective educator (Mentkowski & Associates). Dewey (1916) stated: "An ounce of experience is better than a ton of theory simply because it is only in experience that any theory has a vital and verifiable significance" (p. 109). Rogers (1969) espoused that experiential learning happens continuously from meaningless to significant learning. Rogers identified five elements present in experiential learning: (1) direct, personal involvement, (2) learner initiation, (3) pervasiveness, (4) learner evaluation, and (5) essence is meaning. Just as experiential learning provides students with experiences, an EFE will do the same for students interested in agricultural teacher education.

Kolb (1984) defined experiential learning as a "means for examining and strengthening the critical linkages among education, work and personal development" (p. 4). The learning by doing philosophy is an important aspect of EFE in a teacher education program. This linkage brings the education and experience together for a preservice teacher educator. In EFE a preservice educator is able to have experiences, which resemble and model the activities a teacher educator will have when entering the teaching profession.

Teacher Education

In career and technical education expectations are placed on the educator. During an EFE it is a great time for the preservice teacher to realize some of the expectations of the profession. An EFE provides a foundation for the formal beginnings of career development (Knowles & Cole, 1996). This formal beginning is the starting point for preservice teacher education. The result of this experience is a more prepared student teacher or beginning teacher who is ready to address issues and who are critical thinkers and problem solvers.

As a teacher educator, it is the goal to prepare students for future careers. Beginning in 2007, the No Child Left Behind legislation mandated the measurement of student's progress in every state in the areas of science (USDE, 2006). This measurement would need to take place four times in a student's progress from third to twelfth grade (USDE). As a result of the increasing mandates career and technical programs are expected to justify curriculum contributions to student academics in sciences, mathematics and reading (Stewart, Moore, & Flowers, 2004). The same expectations can also be expected of agricultural education programs. Many of the agricultural education program expectations can be acquire during a preservice teachers EFE.

Early Field Experience

Early field experiences are common in many different professions such as education, business or medical profession. EFE allow young professionals to gain experience in the profession. Gehrke (1981) outlined reasons for having early field based experiences for learning professionals, which include helping to teach realities, motivate participants, promote career success, provide exposure at minimal costs, provide assistance to meet community needs, and provide stimulation for prospective professionals.

The Association of Teacher Educators (1973) explain a field experience as

> …a continuous exploration and examination of education possibilities in particular settings under varying conditions. It is not a static exercise in the demonstration of established productive curricular plans and imaginative teaching strategies through studied experimentation, coordinated analytical assessment and the consideration of alternative approaches. Curriculum development and instructional experimentation must be the matrix in which teacher education takes place if each new generation of teachers is to be innovative in its time. The scholarly study and practice of teaching by definition had to be an open-ended process of continuing discovery for everyone involved in the education of a teacher. (pp. 1-2)

Providing a quality early field experience encourages a young professional to continue in the educational profession.

EFE provides a preservice teacher an opportunity to begin thinking as a teacher as well as experiencing the role of a teacher early in their academic career (NCATE, 2008). According to NCATE, the purpose of an EFE is to apply skills and knowledge in various settings appropriate to the level of a student's program. An EFE allows a preservice teacher a chance to choose an appropriate teaching strategy as well to understand student's cognitive and social background (Liston & Zeichner, 1991). Providing a quality early field experience encourages a young professional to continue in the education profession. Many early and ongoing school-based opportunities are available through early field experiences. Opportunities available could include observing, tutoring, instructing or assisting.

EFE is an essential component of agricultural teacher education programs (Dobbins & Camp, 2003). An EFE provides a student a true learning experience, which can take place early in a preservice training. The Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) described early field experience as a range of school experiences, which occur prior to a student teaching in a preservice teacher education program (Guyton & Bryd, 2000). Three purposes for early field experiences were established by Kelleher, Collings and Williams (1995), which include: career exploration, melding theory and practice and developing teaching skills. A panel of experts developed a list of 20 EFE tasks (Dobbins & Camp, 2003). Concerns were raised by the panel based on the amount of time required by the cooperating teacher and university supervisor to plan for the activities suggested.

EFE is able to develop teaching skills and enables the preservice teacher to transition to a lifelong learner. Carter and Anders (1996) identified field-based pedagogies which assist

preservice teachers to develop an understanding of teaching and awareness in the classrooms. The first includes guided observations as preservice teachers work through settings of classrooms or schools. Second, teaching small lessons enables the preservice teachers to experience a variety of teaching duties. Third, the development of reflective teachers is accomplished through writing and teaching. Fourth, provide opportunities for preservice teachers to talk about their field experiences. Early field experience is governed by accreditation institutions and is governed by standards.

Standards

John Dewey (1973) proposed the question, What constitutes an educative experience? He differentiated educative from miseducative experiences as:

> the belief all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. Any experience is miseducative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experiences. (p. 25)

This statement provides a starting point for the evaluation of early field experience programs. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was the primary agency, which accredits teacher education and has provided the direction for the evaluation of nearly all of the teacher education programs (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), 1999).

Since the founding of NCATE in 1954, standards have been set that require participating institutions to have a model in place that is supported by the purpose, process and outcomes, which also bring together the campus courses and field experiences. According to NCATE (2008), the purpose of EFE is to apply the knowledge, skills and

professional dispositions of settings which are appropriate to the content and level of students program. Standard 3, entitled *Field Experiences and Clinical Practice,* states "its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so teacher candidates and other school professionals develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn" (p. 29). Recently the NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) voted to consolidate and formed a new accrediting body called the Council for the Accreditation of Education Programs (CAEP) (NCATE, 2010).

The American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE) is an example of an organization that has also incorporated early field experience into its standards. The *National Standards for Teacher Education in Agriculture* provides a conceptual framework for the agricultural education profession for field experiences (AAAE, 2001). AAAE standards ensure field experiences are of high quality and consistent with the program's conceptual framework (Standard 5). Additionally, AAAE recommends early field experiences include a minimum of 40 student contact hours in a diverse school-based agricultural education program (Standard 5a). Even though accreditation and standards have been in place, EFE is still being criticized.

Issues

Early field experiences have not been widely praised by all. Many critics have charged field experiences as encouraging imitation and conformity (Holmes Group, 1986), foster group management orientations (Lanier & Little, 1986) and foster a status quo attitude (Clary, 1991). Passe (1994) called the quality of the early field experience of teacher

education programs into question. He believed each teacher education programs should focus on evaluating their own programs to be sure the EFE was applying the methods courses which were being taught.

A major issue that comes into play for many field experience programs is the lack of purpose. Many cooperating teachers are not sure what the college expectations are for the students when they are sent into the field (McIntyre, 1983; Zeichner, 1987;). Most teacher preparation programs involve a series of courses, various field experiences and a student teaching experience. On many occasions, these components are not always coordinated and are often taught by various faculty members who do not always communicate with one another (McIntyre, Byrd and Foxx, 1996). By not having a clear purpose and coordination between field experiences teachers and college courses, a gap often exists without clear goals for guiding the teacher education preparation process.

Moore (2003) argued that many of the early field experiences are more of procedural activities which include time management, grading papers, and classroom management. He also noted that more focus should be placed on the material taught, how it is taught and what is learned from it.

Tom (1976) perceived a drawback in early field experience may be due to the lack of good cooperating teachers who are observed by preservice teachers. As a result, preservice teachers may be learning poor teaching practices very early in their careers when observing experienced teachers who are not good role models. Kay and Ishler (1980) indicated cooperating teachers are often the professionals who are most involved in the assessment of students during the early field experience yet many lack the appropriate training.

Gibson (1976) and Goodman (1985) revealed that students involved in an early field experience and student teaching were evaluated on their ability to keep students doing their work, follow a lesson plan and keep the students under control. Goodman (1985) indicated educators should be especially critical of this type of an evaluation, whereas the purpose behind an EFE is to enable a teacher to be prepared to solve problems. Goodman) believed the quality of an early field experience improves when a supervisor is more involved in the experience. The EFE is improved by having a quality program in place that is well developed and defined. From the research and literature available, a model for EFE has been developed, that highlights three major components of an EFE program.

Model

Retallick's (2005) structure and content model of early field experience identified three major components of EFE: foundation, organization, and implementation. The foundation of the model includes teacher education standards and a conceptual framework that provides a basis for EFE to evolve. The standards of EFE are organized by state, professional, institutional, and national standards.

Building upon the foundation of the model is the organization of EFE. In organizing EFE, teacher education programs must develop through various experiences. Within the organizational stage, EFE is based on the syllabi, forms, and a handbook, which are documents provided for students to outline the experience. The placement of an EFE student within an experience is critical to ensure the experience is successful. The experiences preservice students undergo are classified as being embedded within a course or a stand-alone experience.

The implementation stage of the model includes four elements. The first element of the organizational stage includes interaction among EFE peers, university supervisors, cooperating teachers, and students. The second element includes an orientation to the outcomes and learning strategies. The outcomes can either be exploratory or teacher development in nature. The third element, outcomes, is comprised of exploratory, skill development, application of knowledge, melding theory, and transition. The fourth element includes the learning strategies necessary to accomplish the outcomes.

The final stage of the model is comprised of the assessment of the experience. This assessment can be completed through a program or learner-centered evaluation. Evaluation of the experience must be reviewed at all levels. Evaluation at each level should include an examination of each of the stages of the model to ensure it is in line with the preparation of career and technical education teachers.

Agricultural Education

EFE is an integral part of career and technical education for initial and advanced teacher preparation. Camp and Bailey (1999) stated, "We can see that there is a long-standing and broad advocacy for and acceptance of field-based student teaching apprenticeship as of a paramount importance in agricultural teacher education," (p. 62). The benefits of EFE have been identified by several individuals. Myers and Dyer (2004) emphasized the importance of an EFE in agricultural teacher education programs because it assists students in decision making for the future. McLean and Camp (2000) indicated agricultural education programs are using a variety of approaches to offer preservice teacher educators curriculum.

The committee on Leadership Summit to Effect Change in Teaching and Learning, Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources, and National Research Council of the National Academies issued a report in 2009, entitled: *Transforming Agricultural Education for a Changing World.* The report called for academic institutions offering undergraduate education in agriculture to engage in planning to determine the best ways to recruit, retain and prepare agriculture graduates. It was suggested that conversations occur among stakeholders with a vast knowledge and interest in undergraduate agricultural education. It was also suggested to develop and implement strategic plans within two years, and for the plans to be revisited every 3-5 years.

Conclusion

Early field experience is an important component to any teacher education program. The EFE experience provides purposes and benefits in the area of career exploration and teacher development. EFE activities should be beneficial to every preservice teacher who takes part in the experience. During an EFE, a preservice teacher should be allowed to have a variety of experiences to explore teaching and be able to develop skills to become an effective teacher.

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CHAPTER 3. PURPOSES, ACTIVITIES, AND DOCUMENTATION OF EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE IN AGRICULTURAL TEACHER EDUCATION: A NATIONAL DELPHI STUDY

A paper prepared for submission to the *Journal of Agricultural Education*.

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Abstract

The purpose of this Delphi study was to identify the purpose, expected outcomes, and methods of documenting preservice teacher early field experience (EFE) activities in agricultural teacher education programs. A Delphi technique was used to electronically collect data via email and SurveyMonkey®. An expert panel was established and after three rounds of questioning, the panel identified 16 purpose statements, 14 activities and 9 methods of documenting EFE. The findings of this study, as established by a panel of experts who reached consensus, indicated that EFE should be documented via a combination of journaling and portfolio development. The verification of these documents should be completed by the cooperating teacher and through university assessments. Documentation of an EFE experience can be accomplished through journaling, cooperating teacher signature, reflective paper or a review of collective documents. The results of this study can be used to modify and improve EFE by clarifying the purpose, activities and ways of documented activities in agricultural teacher education programs. This study will aid the profession in providing a more congruent EFE experience for preservice teachers.

Keywords: Early Field Experience (EFE); agricultural education; preservice education; teacher education

Introduction

Early field experience (EFE) is a significant component of any teacher education program. EFE provides a young professional the first opportunity to experience a real classroom from a teacher's perspective and allows a preservice teacher the opportunity to engross themselves into a classroom setting.

EFE is the foundation for teacher education programs. Carter and Anders (1996) indicated teacher education programs should be centered on the ability of the preservice teacher to work in the classroom using knowledge they have acquired and gathered from coursework. EFE provides preservice teachers with a true learning experience, which can take place early in preservice training. The Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) described EFE as a range of school experiences, which occur prior to a student teaching experience in preservice teacher education programs (Guyton & Bryd, 2000). Three purposes for early field experiences were established by Kelleher, Collins and Williams (1995) and include career exploration, melding theory and practice, and developing teaching skills.

According to National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2008), the purpose of EFE is to apply skills and knowledge in various settings appropriate to the level of a student's program. An EFE enables a preservice teacher an opportunity to choose an appropriate teaching strategy as well as to understand a student's cognitive and social background (Liston & Zeichner, 1991). Accreditation and professional organizations

have included EFE as a requirement for licensure and accreditation and teacher education programs have incorporated it into preservice teacher curriculum.

EFE is common in many professions including medical and business fields. Gehrke (1981) developed a list of six benefits of EFE, which include learning theory, motivation, vocational choice, economy, socio-politics, and institutional revitalization. McIntyre (1983) identified benefits of EFE specific to teacher education programs. The six benefits include: (1) EFE students learn quicker if they enjoy working with children; (2) an EFE program can gauge the student's potential as a teacher; (3) students are able to practice teaching skills; (4) students are able to gain an understanding of a classroom; (5) the experience will enable students to improve communication skills; and (6) the experience allows the student to be able to transition from student to teacher.

EFE is not well received by all. Critics charge that EFE encourages imitation and conformity (Holmes Group, 1986), fosters group management orientations (Lanier & Little, 1986), fosters a status quo attitude (Clary, 1991), and is more procedural than academic (Retallick & Miller, 2007a). Moore's (2003) list of procedural activities included time management, grading papers and classroom management.

A major issue for many EFE programs is the lack of purpose and expectations. Many host teachers are unsure what the college's expectations are for the students when they are sent into the field (McIntyre, 1983; Zeichner, 1987). Similarly, Retallick and Miller (2007b) reported that most documents in agricultural teacher education had little or no reference to the role of those involved in the experience. Without a clear purpose and coordination between EFE cooperating teachers and college courses, a disconnect occurs in the preparation process of a preservice teacher.

Retallick and Miller (2007b) revealed a significant relationship when exploration, as a purpose, was compared to three activities (observation, reflection and evaluation). When observation is a means of achieving the purpose of EFE reflection and observations were identified as significant activities. When assisting in the classroom was selected as the purpose of EFE, practice teaching was identified as being significant. Moore (2003) espoused that more focus should be placed on the material taught, how it is taught, and what is learned from it.

EFE is an integral part of agricultural education for initial and advanced teacher preparation. Camp and Bailey (1999) stated, "We can see that there is a long-standing and broad advocacy for and acceptance of field-based student teaching apprenticeship as of a paramount importance in an agricultural teacher education" (p. 62). Myers and Dyer (2004) emphasized the importance of an EFE in agricultural teacher education program because it assists students in decision making for the future. Retallick's and Miller's (2007a) study concluded that programs have established requirements including a minimum number of EFE contact hours as well as a minimum number of lessons planned and taught. Additionally, EFE offerings are driven by internal and external factors including licensure and state and national accreditation. Having a quality EFE is important for any preservice teacher educators to ensure they are prepared for the profession.

This study of EFE is grounded in experiential learning. Mentkowski and Associates (2000) indicated experiential learning provides students with experiences, which will lead to transfer of information. The transfer of information is the starting point of a reflective educator (Mentkowski & Associates, 2000). Kolb (1984) defined experiential learning as a "means for examining and strengthening the critical linkages among education, work and

personal development" (p. 4). Dewey (1938) defined a learning experience as "every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modified in some way the quality of those which come after" (p. 35). Rogers (1969) espoused that experiential learning happens continuously from meaningless to significant learning. Rogers (1969) identified five elements present in experiential learning: (1) direct, personal involvement, (2) learner initiation, (3) pervasiveness, (4) learner evaluation, and (5) essence is meaning. Just as experiential learning provides students with experiences, an EFE will do the same for students who are interested in the agricultural education profession.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this EFE study was based on Retallick's (2005) structure and content model of EFE, which represents three major components of EFE: the foundation, organization, and implementation of EFE. The foundation of the model includes the teacher education standards and a conceptual framework, which provides a basis for the evolution of EFE. Education standards include professional, state, institutional and national standards, which drive the program. Building upon the foundation of the model is the organization of EFE. When organizing EFE, teacher education programs must document experiences in providing students syllabi, forms and handbooks. The organization of the EFE experience also needs to provide students experiences, which are embedded or stand-alone experience and provide placements for students. The organization of EFE is made up of documents, placement and experiences, which leads into the implementation stage of EFE.

The implementation stage of the model includes four elements: (1) interaction among the EFE participants, university supervisors, cooperating teachers and peers; (2) the

orientation to the outcomes and learning strategies; (3) the outcomes; and (4) the learning strategies necessary to accomplish the outcomes. This entire implementation stage is critical to ensure students have a successful EFE experience. The learning strategies within this implementation stage include exploration and teacher development. The student outcomes associated with the learning strategies allow students to gain skills through exploration, skill development, application of knowledge, melding theory and transition. Although Retallick (2005) provided examples of the learning outcomes and strategies from the literature, no research has been conducted to identify the purpose, expected outcomes, and methods of documenting preservice teacher EFE activities in the implementation stage of agricultural teacher education programs.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this Delphi study was to identify the purpose, expected outcomes, and methods of documenting preservice teacher EFE activities in agricultural teacher education programs.

Three research objectives were developed to achieve the purposes of study:

1. Identify the purpose of EFE in agricultural teacher education programs.
2. Identify the activities for an EFE in agricultural teacher education programs.
3. Establish a list of methods for documenting EFE activities in agricultural teacher education programs.

Methods and Procedures

The Delphi survey research technique was determined to be the most appropriate method to address the purpose of this study. The Delphi technique was implemented to more

accurately gather and interpret the perceptions of the population. Delp, Thesen, Motiwalla, and Seshadri (1977) described the Delphi technique as a group process to solicit, collate, and direct expert responses toward reaching consensus on a topic or issue. Helmer (1966) described the Delphi technique as a method of refining group opinions and computing consensus for a majority opinion. The technique uses sequential questionnaires developed through summarized information and feedback of opinions from earlier responses (Delbeq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975).

The selection of the panel of experts followed Jairath's and Weinsten's (1994) recommendation that the study participants should be experts who are knowledgeable about the field of study. Five agricultural education department chairs from research intensive/doctoral-granting institutions were asked to identify ten university agricultural education faculty members who they viewed as experts in the field of agriculture teacher education. From the nominated individuals, the 20 teacher educators who received the most nominations were selected for this study and invited via a personal phone call to participate in this national Delphi study. All selected participants are agricultural teacher educators at research intensive/doctoral-granting institutions. Dalkey (1969) stated the reliability of the study is greater than .80 when Delphi group responses numbered greater than 13.

Three rounds of questioning were conducted with the expert panel. In round one, respondents were asked to answer three open-ended questions, which were as follows:

1. What is the purpose of an early field experience in an agricultural teacher education program?
2. What are the activities of an early field experience in agricultural teacher education?

3. What methods are used in documenting preservice teacher activities for EFE in agricultural teacher education programs?

The questions were used to generate an array of responses, which were categorized and grouped into logical categories (Strauss, 1987). The second round was comprised of a list of statements generated from the first round. Participants were asked to respond to each statement using a five point Likert-type scale. A third round was used to reach group consensus. Each round was conducted using electronic media. The electronic questionnaires were distributed to 20 participants in the first round through Survey-Monkey (2010), which was used to track respondents and non-respondents.

In round one, responses to the questions were grouped into themes and served as items/statements for the second round. In the first round, question one received 96 responses regarding the purpose of EFE, which were grouped into 16 statements; question two received 90 responses regarding the activities of EFE, which were categorized into 14 statements and question three received 67 responses regarding the documentation of EFE, which were organized into 9 statements. Sixteen participants responded during round one yielding an 80% response rate.

In round two, the survey was only sent to the participants who responded to the open-ended question in round one. Participants were asked to rate each of the statements identified in the first round using a five point Likert-type scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Uncertain, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree). Respondents were allowed to provide comments to clarify their responses (Trexler, Parr, & Khanna, 2006). All participants (100%) who responded in round one *(n*=16*)* completed the second round.

Data collected from round two were analyzed using standard deviation and mean scores. It was determined *a priori* that consensus was met for each statement if the mean score was greater than 3.5 and standard deviation was equal to or less than one, which indicated a strong consensus for inclusion (Trexler et al., 2006). The statements with a standard deviation of less than or equal to 1.0 were considered to have met consensus as suggested by Shinn (1998). All statements not meeting these thresholds were dropped after round two. Three statements did exceed the 1.0 standard deviation in round three after participants adjusted their final ratings. The three statements were kept and reported in the findings section.

In the third and final round, participants were provided with their initial ratings, group means and standard deviations of statements. The participants were asked if they agreed with their initial ratings and, if not, to adjust their rating accordingly. Participants' ratings had not varied significantly in the third round indicating a fourth round was not necessary since consensus had been met. All 16 participants who responded in round two also completed round three yielding a 100% response rate for round three. All data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and reported using mean and standard deviations.

Findings

The purpose of this Delphi study was to identify the purpose, expected outcomes, and methods of documenting preservice teacher EFE activities in agricultural teacher education programs. Twenty teacher education experts as identified by five agricultural education department chairs from research intensive/doctoral-granting institutions were asked to serve as the expert panel for this Delphi study. Sixteen (80%) of the experts completed all three

rounds of the study. In comparing the findings of this study to the literature, it was discovered that the statements that reached consensus could be organized within the context of existing EFE literature. Therefore, for organizational and communicative purposes, the statements were organized and reported accordingly.

Objective one of the study was to identify the purpose of EFE. Sixteen statements for the purpose of EFE met consensus with a range in means from 4.00 – 4.87 on a five-point Likert-type scale and standard deviations ranged from 0.34 – 0.88. These statements could be organized within the five general EFE purposes found in the literature: exploration, application of knowledge, melding theory into practice, skill development, and transition from student to teacher (Table 1). The statements that garnered the greatest consensus regarding the purpose of EFE represented four of the five general purposes and included the identification of the roles of a professional educator, observation of classroom instruction, affirmation of the desire for becoming an agricultural educator, and development of an understanding of a complete agricultural education program (i.e., classroom/laboratory, FFA, SAE). While still meeting consensus, the two statements that focused on the transition of the preservice teacher from student to teacher were agreed least by the panel.

Objective two was to identify the activities for an EFE in agricultural education. Of the 14 activities identified in the first round of the Delphi, 11 met consensus as EFE activities in agricultural teacher education and could be organized into three categories from the literature: experience, observation, and reflection (Table 2).

Three statements within the observation category were the most agreed upon by the panel. The panel agreed least that an activity for EFE is to review case studies in a university

Table 1. Expert Consensus as to the Purpose of EFE

Outcomes of EFE (*n*=16)	Mean	SD
Exploration		
Affirm the desire for becoming an agricultural educator.	4.87	0.34
Have a positive experience.	4.37	0.88
Application Knowledge		
Identify the roles of a professional educator.	4.87	0.34
Identify cooperating teacher behavior/s that influences student behavior.	4.50	0.63
Awareness of student behavior.	4.43	0.62
Define and describe characteristics of effective teacher.	4.31	0.47
Recognize a successful classroom and laboratory management strategy.	4.31	0.79
Meld Theory		
Develop understanding of a complete Agricultural Education Program (i.e., classroom/laboratory, FFA, SAE)	4.87	0.34
Develop understanding of what is involved in being an agricultural teacher	4.68	0.79
Educate preservice teacher about what it means to learn to teach as they reflect on why, whom and how they will teach.	4.56	0.62
Recognize awareness of student engagement.	4.56	0.62
Skill Development		
Observe classroom instruction.	4.87	0.34
Identify skill development (classroom instruction/management, program planning) of a teacher.	4.56	0.51
Develop observational skills and techniques.	4.31	0.87
Transition		
Recognize a successful teaching strategy.	4.18	0.75
Interact with community members, school staff and administration.	4.00	0.63

Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Uncertain, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree.

setting and student-led discussion by preservice teacher both found within the reflection and experience categories, respectively.

Objective three of the study was to establish a list of teaching strategies for documenting preservice teacher EFE activities. Of the nine statements identified in the first round of the Delphi, eight of statements met consensus as ways to document EFE activities in

Table 2. Expert Consensus as to the Appropriate Activities of EFE

Learning Strategies (*n*=16)	Mean	SD
Experience		
Orientation from university faculty on the expectations of EFE.	4.81	0.40
Interviewing middle/high school students, cooperating teacher, school, counselor, principal, etc.	4.56	0.62
Preservice teacher teaching a lesson.	3.62	1.25
Review case studies in a university setting.	3.56	1.20
Student-led discussion by preservice teacher.	3.56	0.89
Observation		
Preservice teacher observation of cooperating teacher.	4.93	0.25
Note taking of observations while on EFE.	4.68	0.47
Observation of student's learning by preservice teacher.	4.68	0.47
Observation of student's behavior by preservice teacher.	4.62	0.50
Observing the supervision of students FFA projects and activities.	4.37	0.71
Observing the supervision of students SAE projects and activities.	4.31	0.70
Reflection		
Develop reflection papers throughout experience (micro-reflections).	4.62	0.61
Develop written portfolio documentation of experience.	4.50	0.73
Compile list of information regarding the EFE- program visited.	4.43	1.09

Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Uncertain, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree.

agricultural teacher education and could be organized into three categories: documentation, student development document and student development activity (Table 3).

Two statements within the student development-document, journaling and completing reflective papers, and one statement within documentation category, signature or verification of cooperating teacher, were the most agreed upon by the panel. While still meeting consensus, the panel agreed least with a way of documenting EFE activity through the development of a portfolio which is found within the student development-document category.

Table 3. Expert Consensus of the Ways to Document EFE Activities

Assessment (*n*=16)	Mean	SD
Student Development-Document		
Journaling on EFE experience	4.75	0.44
Preservice student completing a reflective paper on experience.	4.68	0.60
Collection of key resources and documents.	4.31	0.70
Development of a Portfolio	4.12	0.61
Student Development-Activity		
Seminar for EFE students to discuss and compare experiences as a group	4.43	0.51
Preservice student completing an observation of the visited agricultural education program (reviewing: teaching resources, curriculum, facilities, budget, etc.).	4.31	0.60
Documentation		
Cooperating Teacher – verification/signature	4.68	0.47
University Supervisor Review of Documents	4.62	0.50

Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Uncertain, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree.

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications

This study helped to solidify the purposes, expected outcomes, and methods of documenting preservice teacher EFE activities in agricultural teacher education programs. Twenty teacher education experts as identified by five agricultural education department chairs from research intensive/doctoral-granting institutions were asked to serve as the expert panel for this Delphi study.

There are several purposes of EFE. Agriculture teacher education experts in this study identified 16 purposes of EFE in agricultural education as categorized in Table 1. These purposes are consistent with previous literature (Jaquith, 1995; Knowles & Cole, 1996) and recommendations made by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2008). NCATE recommends EFE opportunities that include observing, assisting cooperating teacher and tutoring students. An EFE provides the student an opportunity to begin thinking and experiencing the role of a teacher in their career field (NCATE, 2008).

Eleven activities were identified to achieve the purposes of EFE and were presented in three categorizes from the literature. These activities are consistent with the activities identified by Retallick (2005) as part of his literature review and model describing EFE and Dobbins and Camp's (2003) comprehensive list of tasks for the student teaching experience. Dobbins and Camp, who surveyed agricultural education teachers and secondary school administrators, identified 60 EFE tasks that were organized into three themes, which were time, planning and cooperation. All groups involved in Dobbins and Camp's study perceived planning and cooperation should occur before EFE, which is consistent with the experiential learning cycle. As the profession looks to the future, continuous dialogue in the teacher education profession needs to occur to ensure we are enhancing the activities that need to be part of an EFE.

The findings of this study, as established by a panel of expert who reached consensus, suggest EFE should be documented via a combination of journaling and portfolio development. The verification of these documents should be completed by the cooperating teacher and through university-based assessments. All of the activities conducted during an EFE should be documented in some manner. The documenting and journaling experience provides EFE students the opportunity to reflect on their experiences. All of the learning strategies identified were grouped as engagement, experience, observation and reflection/written activities.

Documentation of an EFE experience can be accomplished through journaling, cooperating teacher signature, reflective paper or review of collective documents. All EFE activities need to be documented so the preservice teachers are able to reflect and grow from the experience. No matter what form of documentation is used; it must be an appropriate

method for the experience. Depending on the goal of the experience, the type of documentation may vary. Documentation is especially important because it helps a preservice teacher document the extent to which they meet specific teaching standards. Every EFE is different and needs to be a building experience prior to entering the teaching profession.

Retallick's (2005) structure and content model of EFE represents three major components of EFE: the foundation, organization, and implementation of EFE. The findings from this study can be incorporated into the implementation stage of this model. This study adds to the depth and substance of EFE research by defining the purpose, activities and various documentation methods for the agricultural teacher education profession.

This study has implications for agriculture teacher education programs planning to evaluate their current programs or preparing to revamp their EFE programs. The results of this study can be used to modify and improve the EFE experience by clarifying the purpose, activities and ways of documented activities in agricultural teacher education programs. By having consistency among all programs, a more educative experience for all students involved in an EFE is provided, which assists in accomplishing the goals of EFE. This study provides a refined list of EFE purposes, list of activities and methods for documenting EFE for the agricultural teacher education profession.

The findings of this study provides teacher educators who coordinate EFE a list of purposes, activities, and methods for documenting EFE, which had been agreed upon by a panel of experts within the field of agriculture teacher educators. The results of this study may be used by EFE coordinators to ensure the purpose, activities and ways of documenting EFE are being implemented in their programs and the highest level of EFE is provided.

Further research is needed to determine how often EFE is being evaluated by agriculture teacher education programs. Little information is known about whom, if anyone is reviewing the EFE programs, whether or not reviews are necessary, how program recommendations are handled and how EFE changes are implemented/incorporated into individual agriculture teacher education programs.

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CHAPTER 4. AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE EFE MODEL

A paper prepared for submission to the *Journal of Agricultural Education*.

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The purpose of this national descriptive study was to describe agricultural teacher education early field experience (EFE) practices using the EFE Model. The national descriptive study data were collected via an online survey instrument. The population for this study was comprised of all agricultural education teacher preparation programs (*N*=83) identified using the AAAE Directory of University Faculty in Agricultural Education. The agricultural teacher education coordinator was identified as the contact person representing each institution. For this study an early field experience (EFE) was defined as all field experiences that occur prior to student teaching and the experiences could be offered within or outside of the agricultural education curriculum. Programs were requiring minimum number of contact hours and minimum number of lessons to be taught while in the field. The most commonly identified student assessments included the university supervisor's review of documents, cooperating teacher signatures, reflective writing and student journaling. This study has aided the profession in providing a more congruent EFE experience for preservice teachers.

Introduction

An early field experience (EFE) is one aspect of the preparation process for any student preparing to enter the agricultural teacher education profession. The EFE experience

provides the opportunity for the preservice teacher to immerse into the classroom setting. This experience allows the preservice teacher to begin experiencing a real classroom environment.

Guyton and Byrd (2000) defined EFE as the range of school experiences that occur prior to student teaching for those students in preservice teacher education. The interaction with peers, cooperating teacher and teacher coordinator is known as the triad. This triad is vital if the preservice student is going to learn from the EFE experience and develop an understanding of the profession (McIntyre et al., 1996). Pierce (1996) suggested that learning is authentic in EFE and it should be taking place early and regularly.

Retallick's and Miller's (2007) study concluded that EFE programs have established requirements including a minimum number of contact hours as well as a minimum number of lessons planned and taught. Additionally, EFE offerings are driven by internal and external factors including licensure, state and national accreditation. Having a quality EFE is important for any preservice teacher educators to ensure they are prepared for the profession.

A major issue for many EFE programs is the lack of purpose and expectations. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2008), identified the purpose of EFE as the application of preservice teacher knowledge and skills in various settings. This purpose can be accomplished by many early and continuous school opportunities, which could include teaching lessons, tutoring students or observing in the classroom (NCATE, 2008). NCATE has addressed the lack of clear goals by requiring institutions to develop a purpose statement, outline the educational process and define student outcomes as part of a conceptual framework for their teacher education program,

which begins to meld early field experiences and courses taught on campus (McIntyre, Byrd, & Foxx, 1996).

Educators have not disputed the importance of EFE (Guyton & Byrd, 2000). Pierce (1996) suggested EFE should take place regularly and earlier throughout the preservice training. Early field experiences create significant learning experiences for preservice teachers, suggesting the need for the design of authentic classroom experiences like EFE (Aiken & Day, 1999). To ensure the effectiveness, early field experiences should be aligned with the entire teacher preparation program (Little & Robinson, 1997).

McLean and Camp (1998) stated the call of reform of agricultural teacher education preparation has gained momentum in the last 15 years. In part, the momentum of reform of agricultural teacher preparation could be attributed to the impact of EFE in preservice teacher education. Myers and Dyer (2004) emphasized the importance of an EFE in agricultural teacher education programs because it assists students in decision making for the future. The impact and effectiveness of EFE has also been plagued with issues identified by Hudson, Bergin, and Chayst (1993). The issues identified include: (1) lack of common goal, (2) lack of control, (3) limited learning due to the lack of experiences the preservice teacher can compare, (4) difference between what is being practiced in the classroom and what is being taught on campus, and (5) limited opportunities. Even though issues may still exist within EFE, Swortzel (1995) stated agricultural education faculty need to continue to evaluate their programs to determine whether or not they are accomplishing their mission of preparing qualified teachers.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

This study is grounded in experiential learning theory. Phipps and Osborne (1988) wrote that experiential learning in agricultural education has an "emphasis is on learning by doing" (p. 19). This emphasis is apparent in the attention given to laboratory work, field trips, problem solving, and supervised occupational experience programs. Kolb (1984) defined experiential learning as a "means for examining and strengthening the critical linkages among education, work and personal development" (p. 4). The learning by doing philosophy is an important aspect of EFE in a teacher education program. This linkage brings the education and experience together for a preservice teacher educator. In EFE a preservice educator is able to have experiences, which resemble and model the activities a teacher will have when entering the teaching profession.

Mentkowski and Associates (2000) indicated experiential learning provides students with experiences, which will lead to transfer of information. The transfer of information is the starting point of a reflective educator (Mentkowski & Associates). Rogers (1969) espoused that experiential learning happens continuously from meaningless to significant learning. Rogers identified five elements present in experiential learning: (1) direct, personal involvement, (2) learner initiation, (3) pervasiveness, (4) learner evaluation, and (5) essence is meaning. Just as experiential learning provides students with experiences, an EFE will do the same for students interested in agricultural teacher education.

Building on experiential learning theory, the conceptual framework for this study is Retallick and Miller's (2010) structure and content model of early field experience in teacher education identifies three major components of EFE: the foundation, organization, and

implementation of EFE (Figure 1). The foundation of the model includes the teacher education standards and

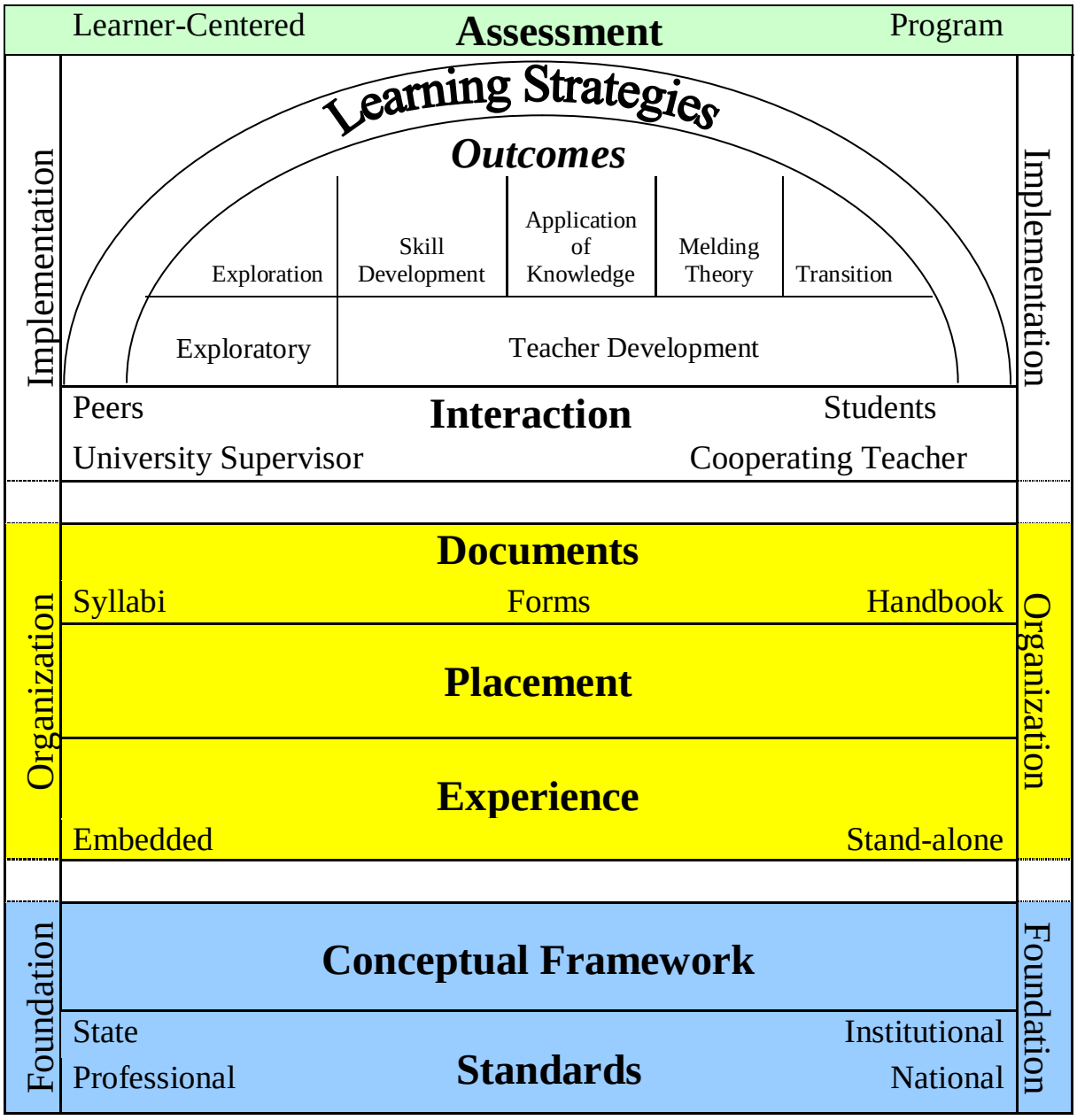

Figure 1. A model for early field experiences in teacher education (Retallick & Miller, 2010)

a conceptual framework, which provides a basis of how EFE can evolve. Building upon the foundation of the model is the organization of EFE. In organizing EFE, teacher education programs must develop through various experiences. Within the organization stage it involves the documents of syllabi, forms and handbook, the placement of EFE and the experiences, which can be embedded or stand-alone. The implementation stage of the model includes four elements: (1) interaction among the EFE participants, university supervisors, cooperating teachers and peers; (2) the orientation to the outcomes and learning strategies; (3) the outcomes; and (4) the learning strategies necessary to accomplish the outcomes.

Smalley and Retallick (2010) further enhanced the EFE model using agricultural teacher education experts to identify the appropriate types of interaction and activities. The findings of this study, as established by a panel of expert who reached consensus, indicated that EFE should be documented via a combination of journaling and portfolio development. The verification of these documents should be completed by the cooperating teacher and through university assessments. Documentation of an EFE experience can be done through journaling, cooperating teacher signature, reflective paper or a review of collective documents. Since the development of Retallick and Miller's (2010) model and the refinement by Smalley and Retallick (2010), no research has been conducted to determine what practices are taking place in each of the components of the EFE model, what elements of EFE are practiced and extent the EFE model reflects practice in agricultural teacher education programs.

Purpose and Objective

The purpose of this national descriptive study was to describe agricultural teacher education early field experience (EFE) practices using the EFE Model.

The study focused on three research questions:

1. What practices take place in each of the components of the EFE model (i.e., foundations, organization, implementation, and assessment)?
2. Are there elements of EFE in practice that are not represented in the model?
3. To what extent does the EFE model reflect actual practice?

Methods

The population for this national descriptive survey consisted of all agricultural education teacher programs (*N*=83) identified using the AAAE Directory of University Faculty in Agricultural Education (American Association of Agricultural Educators). The agricultural education teacher preparation coordinator was identified as the contact person from each institution.

Dillman's (2007) tailored design method was used in developing this descriptive survey design. The 19 principals for developing a survey instrument were used in developing the researcher- designed survey. For this study an early field experience (EFE) was defined as all field experiences that occur prior to student teaching. The experiences could either be offered in or outside of the agricultural education curriculum. This definition was provided in the cover letters and the introduction of the survey instrument.

The survey was divided into five parts: implementation, assessment, foundation, organization and demographics. Participants were asked to identify the purposes of EFE,

which for this study were categorized as either exploratory or teacher development in nature. In this study, exploratory was defined as providing a student the opportunity to investigate the profession and develop an understanding what it means to be an educator. Teacher development was defined to participants as the stage of development after students have explored and determined that teacher education was the career for them. During this stage, preservice teachers begin to transition from student to teacher by developing and enhancing skills and knowledge prior to entering the teaching profession (Retallick & Miller, 2010).

The instrument was designed to ask dichotomous close-ended and open-ended questions to obtain unique and specific information (Dillman, 2007). A panel of experts including agricultural teacher educators and graduate students were used to review the instrument for content validity. Panel suggestions were integrated into the questionnaire. The instrument was pilot tested. The participants were asked to read the items carefully and indicate if any of the items were not suitable. Cronbach's alpha was computed using the pilot test to assess the internal consistencies of the summated scales in the questionnaire. The coefficients obtained for types of interaction were .84, .81 for activities, and .74 for assessments.

Data collection followed Dillman's (2007) electronic survey plan, which included four contacts and a special contact. For this study, a special contact was a phone call to non-respondents. Data collection began on June 1, 2010 and was concluded on June 20, 2010. Surveys were returned by 53 of the 83 agricultural education teacher preparation coordinators for an initial response rate of 59%. The lower than normal response rate was attributed to the timing of the data collection. Researchers wanted to improve the response rate to better represent the profession. Therefore, a modification to the data collection procedures was

developed and approved by Institutional Review Board (IRB) to contact non-respondents after the start of the fall semester. An informational email was sent on September 1, 2010 to non-respondents notifying them this would be the only contact from the institution and encouraging their participation in the study. A link was sent on September 2, 2010 from Survey Monkey to non-respondents. As a result, of the second phase of data collection 66 of the 83 agricultural education teacher preparation coordinators responded for an overall usable response rate of 79.51%. To control for non-response error early and late respondents were compared and no significant differences were found. All data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Findings

The institutional makeup of this study consisted of 1862 land grant (57.14%), 1890 land grants (5.35%), regional/state (32.14%), and private institutions (5.35%). A majority of the programs offered a Bachelor of Science in agricultural teacher education (83.92%), 12.5% reported offering a Bachelor of Science plus one year, 44.64% offered a Master of Science in agricultural education and 25% indicated they offered other degrees in agricultural education besides a Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science plus one year or Master of Science.

Foundation stage

The foundation of the EFE model is comprised of the conceptual framework and standards of EFE. The standards include state, institutional, professional, and national standards. When asked to identify the standards that drove the teacher education program including the EFE component, agricultural teacher education coordinator identified state

standards (86.66%) as the most influential along with institutional standards (66.66%) (Table 1).

Agricultural teacher education coordinators identified the agency or organization used to accredit the program (Table 2). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was associated with the majority of programs (65.00%). During the time of the study, NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) voted to consolidate and formed a new accrediting body called the Council for the Accreditation of Education Programs (CAEP) (NCATE, 2010).

Organizational stage

The organizational stage of the EFE model is composed of the experience, placement and documents of the program. EFE programs can be implemented as part of a course or

Table 1. Standards of EFE Program

Driving the EFE Program (*n*=66)	%
State	86.66
Institutional	66.66
Professional	46.66
National	43.33
Other Standards	5.00

Table 2. Accrediting of EFE Program

Agency/Organization Accrediting (*n*=66)	%
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)	65.00
State Accreditation	58.33
Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)	8.33
Other Accreditation	5.00
Did not have Program affiliated Accrediting Agency	5.00
National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)	3.33

completed as a stand-alone experience. Agricultural teacher education coordinators were able to identify all ways that they offer an EFE experience. Program coordinators reported that their EFEs were most commonly embedded within a course (85.00%), while 65% of the experiences were considered stand-alone experiences. Programs require EFE students to complete unique EFE experiences throughout their teacher education program. Ten program coordinators reported their EFE students complete three (18.2%) to four (18.2%) experiences (36.4%).

Placement

EFE experiences are designed for many different stages of preservice teacher development. EFEs are offered at all grade levels and because of the various purposes of the EFE, including the effort to help students transition from student to teacher and the number of different experiences, no single grade level or combination of grade levels emerged from the data.

The placement of a student in an EFE is important for any preservice teacher to have a quality experience. Fifty-one percent of the agricultural teacher education programs reported that students were required to select an EFE site from an approved list. Seventy-five percent of the agricultural education programs required preservice teachers to complete the EFE in a high school/middle school program. One half of all programs did not require an EFE prior to admission to the teacher education program at the university. On average, the minimum numbers of hours expected of students to participate in EFE for licensure was 76 hours ranging from 30 to 200 hours.

An orientation program is offered to EFE students in most teacher education programs (94.54%). However, in most cases, EFE programs do not offer orientations for college/university staff (52.72%) or cooperating teachers (57.40%). Over half of the agricultural teacher education programs (54.38%) had minimum qualifications for inservice teachers to be eligible to serve as an EFE cooperating teacher. Fifty-two percent of programs did not require a minimum number of site visits to the secondary program by the preservice teacher as part of the EFE.

Documents

Documents of an EFE program can include various types and forms of documenting the experience including handbooks, planning of lessons and teaching a lesson. More than half (69.09%) of the EFE programs used a handbook or bulletin for communication with preservice teachers. Preservice teachers were expected to plan a lesson (56.36%) as part of their experience. Additionally, fifty-two percent of preservice teachers were expected to teach a lesson as part of the required EFE. On average, agricultural teacher education coordinators indicated preservice teachers were expected to teach 14 lessons during the EFE.

EFE Model Implementation stage

The implementation stage involves the interaction, activities, and assessment of an EFE. Forty-eight percent of institutions indicated some collaboration occurs among the preservice student, the EFE cooperating teacher and the teacher educator during the required EFE, while 8% indicated no collaboration occurs, 15.62% indicated very little collaboration occurs and 28.12% indicated much collaboration occurs during the EFE.

Types of interactions for EFE could be organized into two categories from the literature: exploratory or teacher development. Of the 16 types of interactions agricultural teacher education program coordinators were asked to identify the purposes of their EFE (Table 3). Most reported the purpose of an exploratory EFE was to identify the roles of professional educators (80.64%) and to have a positive experience (80.32%). Most agricultural education coordinators identified the purpose of a teacher development EFE was to recognize a successful teaching strategy (85.24%).

Table 3. Purpose of Early Field Experience Identified within Exploratory or Teacher Development

Types of Interaction (*n*=66)	%
Exploratory	
Identify the roles of a professional educator.	80.64
Have a positive experience.	80.32
Observe classroom instruction.	75.80
Define and describe characteristics of effective teacher.	73.77
Affirm the desire for becoming an agricultural educator.	72.58
Develop an understanding of what is involved in being an agricultural teacher.	67.21
Teacher Development	
Recognize a successful teaching strategy.	85.24
Recognize a successful classroom and laboratory management strategy.	79.03
Educate preservice teacher about what it means to learn to teach as they reflect on why, whom and how they will teach.	75.00
Identify skill development (classroom instruction/management, program planning) of a teacher.	70.96
Identify cooperating teacher behavior/s that influences student behavior.	70.49
Interact with community members, school staff and administration.	69.49
Recognize awareness of student behavior.	67.74
Develop understanding of a complete Agricultural Education Program (i.e. classroom/laboratory, FFA, SAE)	67.21
Develop observational skills and techniques.	67.21
Recognize awareness of student engagement.	65.00

EFE activities are events which take place prior to a student entering the student teaching experience. Table 4 represents 14 activities the agricultural education programs report using within their EFE program. Nearly all agricultural education programs (93.75%) conduct an orientation where university faculty discuss the expectations of EFE. Programs are less likely to provide student-led preservice teacher discussions (45.31%), and use on-campus case studies (32.81%).

Additional interactions identified by participants include: FFA and SAE, attending shows/fairs, coaching and judging CDE students, visiting community partners (i.e. business/government agencies), working with a cooperating teacher to plan and conduct a demonstration and reflect on the experience. Other type of engagement activities identified were: developing a service learning plan to implement with cooperating teacher, grading papers, tutoring students, observing special needs instruction, and conducting a middle school lesson.

Table 4. Types of Activities Occurring in EFE Program

Activities occurring in EFE program (*n*=66)	%
Orientation from university faculty on the expectations of EFE.	93.75
Observation of student's behavior by preservice teacher.	92.18
Develop reflection paper throughout experience (micro-reflections).	89.06
Note taking of observations while on EFE.	89.06
Preservice teacher observation of cooperating teacher.	89.06
Observation of student's learning by preservice teacher.	81.25
Preservice teacher teaching a lesson.	76.56
Observing the supervision of student FFA projects and activities.	75.00
Develop written portfolio documentation of experience.	75.00
Compile list of information regarding the EFE-program visit.	70.31
Interviewing middle/high school students, cooperating teacher, school counselor, principal, etc.	64.06
Observing the supervision of students SAE projects and activities.	64.06
Student-led discussion by preservice teacher.	45.31
Review case studies in a university setting.	32.81

Assessment stage

Two types of assessments are available in an EFE according to literature: program and student centered assessments. Agricultural teacher education coordinators were asked to identify how students EFE were documented in their program (Table 5). Nearly all agricultural teacher education programs indicated the program was being documented by university supervisors reviewing documents (95.08%), cooperating teacher signatures (88.52%), reflective writing (83.60%), and student journaling (80.32%).

Additional ways of documenting the students EFE experience identified by participants include online discussion posts, twitter, contacting cooperating teacher regarding the level of participation of preservice teacher, and a clinical interview. Participants also indicated preservice teacher develop a portfolio of lessons and review the program visited standards and do a comparison to state standards.

Table 5. Assessment of Students EFE Experiences

Student Documentation of EFE Experience (*n*=66)	%
University supervisor review of documents	95.08
Cooperating Teacher – verification/signature	88.52
Preservice student completing a reflective paper on experience.	83.60
Journaling on EFE experience	80.32
Preservice student completing an observation of the visited agricultural education program (reviewing: teaching resources, curriculum, facilities, budget, etc.)	70.49
Collection of key resources and documents.	63.93
Cooperating Teacher Evaluation	63.93
Development of a Portfolio	60.65
Seminar for EFE students to discuss and compare experiences as a group.	54.09

The program evaluation of an EFE program can be completed at various levels and is important to continue the success of an EFE program. Seventy-eight percent of agricultural teacher education coordinators indicated that their EFE program was evaluated (Table 6). An accreditation review (75.00%) was identified as the most common type of review.

Table 6. EFE Program Evaluated

Level of Review (*n*=5)	%
Accreditation	75.00
Departmental	72.91
University	56.25
State Review	47.91
Other Levels	6.25

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications

The purpose of this national descriptive study was to describe agricultural teacher education early field experience (EFE) practices using the EFE model. The population for this national descriptive survey was comprised of all agricultural education teacher preparation coordinators (*N*=83) identified using the AAAE Directory of University Faculty in Agricultural Education. The agricultural education teacher preparation coordinator was identified as the contact person from each institution.

According to the agricultural teacher education program coordinators in this study, a majority (76.55%) of the programs has either some or much collaboration occurring between the preservice teacher, the EFE cooperating teacher and the teacher educator during the required EFE experience. This interaction of peers, cooperating teacher and teacher coordinator is known as the triad. This triad is vital if the preservice student is going to learn

from the EFE experience and develop an understanding of the profession (McIntyre et al., 1996). This collaboration is essential to ensure the preservice teacher is going to have a successful EFE (McIntyre et al., 1996).

Most programs report having specific requirements and expectations of an EFE. Programs were requiring minimum number of contact hours and minimum number of lessons to be taught while in the field, which is consistent with Retallick and Miller (2007). Most of the agricultural teacher education programs were offering an orientation to the preservice teacher prior to the preservice experience.

Most agricultural teacher education programs use a variety of student assessments. The most commonly identified student assessments included the university supervisor's review of documents, cooperation teacher signatures, reflective writing and student journaling. This is consistent with, and validates the findings of Smalley and Retallick (2010) national Delphi study.

Retallick and Miller's (2010) structure and content model of EFE represent's three major components of EFE: the foundation, organization, and implementation of EFE. The findings from this study can be incorporated into the foundation, organization, implementation and assessment stage of this model. This study adds to the depth and substance of EFE research and Retallick and Miller's (2010) EFE model by identifying the type of interactions as exploratory or teacher development, activities, assessment methods, and documentation methods.

This study has implications for teacher education programs that are planning to evaluate their current programs or preparing to revamp their EFE programs. The results from this study can be used as comparisons for agricultural teacher education programs from

across the country. By developing consistency among teacher education programs, EFE will provide a better experience for all students involved in the EFE. By expanding opportunities of a preservice teacher during the exploratory and teacher development stage it will increase the number of real-world opportunities a preservice teacher has prior student teaching. Increasing the number of opportunities to a preservice teacher it could impact the recruitment and retention of preservice agricultural education students and the 20×15 goal in agricultural education (Team Ag Ed, 2010). The 20×15 long-range goal for agricultural education is to create new programs in communities not yet served by agricultural education/FFA and to strengthen the current programs by 2015 with having 10,000 quality agricultural education programs in operation.

The findings of this study provide early field experience coordinators types of interactions taking place, types of activities, and forms of assessments being used in the EFE. Results from this study can be used by the EFE program coordinators to ensure the experience is the best of quality for all taking part.

Further research needs to take place to determine if all teacher education programs associated with career and technical education areas are using the same or similar methods to assess or document the EFE experience. Little information is known if career and technical education programs' EFE experiences are being reviewed or how recommendations are being handled.

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CHAPTER 5. EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE OF BUSINESS AND FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES EDUCATION

A paper prepared for submission to the *Journal of Career and Technical Education.*

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The purpose of this national descriptive study was to describe business and family and consumer sciences teacher education early field experience (EFE) practices using the EFE Model. The national descriptive study data were collected via an online survey instrument. The population for this study consisted of all business and family and consumer sciences education teacher preparation programs (*N*=139) identified by contacting the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and the National Business Education Association. The teacher education coordinator for the program was identified as the contact person representing each institution. For this study an early field experience (EFE) was defined as all field experiences that occur prior to student teaching offered either within or outside of the business and family and consumer sciences education curriculum. Programs required minimum number of contact hours and minimum number of lessons to be taught while in the field. The most commonly identified student assessments included cooperation teacher signatures, reflective writing, and the university supervisor's review of documents. This study supports the career and technical education profession by identifying differences and similarities in EFE programming in an effort to provide a more congruent EFE experience for preservice teachers.

Introduction

An early field experience (EFE) is one aspect of the preparation process for any student preparing to enter the teacher education profession. The EFE experience provides the opportunity for the preservice teacher to immerse into the classroom setting. Such experiences enable the preservice teacher to begin experiencing a real classroom environment.

Guyton and Byrd (2000) defined EFE as the range of school experiences that occur prior to student teaching for those students in preservice teacher education. The interaction with peers, cooperating teacher and teacher coordinator is known as the triad. This triad is vital if the preservice student is going to learn from the EFE experience and develop an understanding of the profession (McIntyre et al., 1996). Pierce (1996) suggested that learning is authentic in EFE and learning should be taking place early and regularly.

Retallick's and Miller's (2007) study concluded that EFE programs have established requirements including a minimum number of contact hours as well as a minimum number of lessons planned and taught. Additionally, EFE offerings are driven by internal and external factors including licensure, state and national accreditation. Having a quality EFE is important for any preservice teacher educators to ensure they are prepared for the profession.

Smalley's and Retallick's (in press) study conducted in the agricultural teacher education profession concluded programs were requiring a minimum number of contact hours and minimum number of lessons to be taught while in the field. The most commonly identified student assessments included the university supervisor's review of documents, documentation of cooperating teacher signatures, reflective writing and student journaling.

A major issue for many EFE programs is the lack of purpose and expectations. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Educators (NCATE, 2008), identified the purpose of EFE as the application of preservice teacher knowledge and skills in various settings. This purpose can be accomplished by many early and continuous school based opportunities, which could include teaching lessons, tutoring students or observing in the classroom (NCATE, 2008). NCATE has addressed the lack of clear goals by requiring institutions to develop a purpose statement, outline the educational process and define student outcomes as part of a conceptual framework for their teacher education program, which begins to meld early field experiences and courses taught on campus (McIntyre, Byrd, & Foxx, 1996).

Pierce (1996) suggested EFE should take place regularly throughout the preservice training. Early field experiences create significant learning experiences for preservice teachers, suggesting the need for the design of authentic classroom experiences like EFE (Aiken & Day, 1999). To ensure effectiveness, early field experiences should be aligned with the entire teacher preparation program (Little & Robinson, 1997).

Educators have not disputed the importance of EFE (Guyton & Byrd, 2000). However, the impact and effectiveness of EFE has also been plagued with issues identified by Hudson, Bergin, and Chayst (1993). The issues identified include: (1) lack of a common goal, (2) lack of control, (3) limited learning due to the lack of experiences the preservice teacher can compare, (4) the difference between what is being practiced in the classroom and what is being taught on campus, and (5) limited opportunities. Moore (2003) indicated many EFE are procedural activities, which focus on time management, classroom management and expected content.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

This study is grounded in experiential learning theory. Dewey (1938) defined a learning experience as "every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modified in some way the quality of those which come after" (p. 35). Kolb (1984) defined experiential learning as a "means for examining and strengthening the critical linkages among education, work and personal development" (p. 4). The learning by doing philosophy is an important aspect of EFE in a teacher education program. This linkage brings the education and experience together for a preservice teacher educator. In EFE, a preservice educator is able to have experiences, which resemble and model the activities a presevice teacher will have when entering the teaching profession. Mentkowski and Associates (2000) indicated experiential learning provides students with experiences, which will lead to transfer of information. The transfer of information is the starting point of a reflective educator (Mentkowski & Associates).

Building on experiential learning theory, the conceptual framework for this study is Retallick's and Miller's (2010) structure and content model of early field experience, which identifies three major components of EFE (Figure 1): the foundation, organization, and implementation of EFE. The foundation of the model includes the teacher education standards and a conceptual framework, which provides a basis of how EFE can evolve. Building upon the foundation of the model is the organization of EFE. In organizing EFE, teacher education programs must develop through various experiences. Within the organization stage it involves the documents of syllabi, forms and handbooks, the placement of EFE and the experiences, which can be embedded or stand-alone. The implementation

stage of the model includes four elements: (1) interaction among the EFE participants, university supervisors,

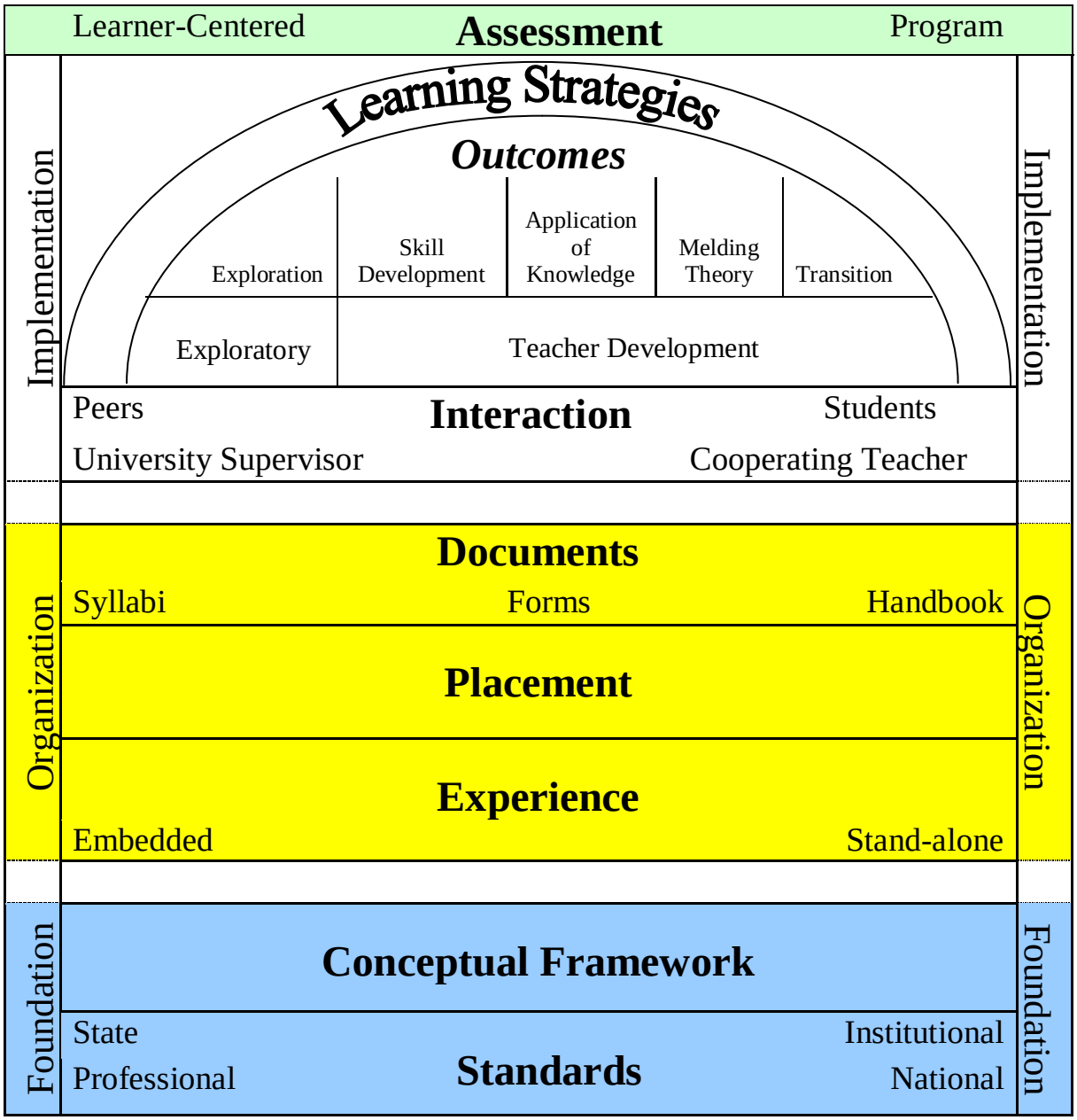

Figure 1. A model for early field experiences in teacher education (Retallick & Miller, 2010)

cooperating teachers and peers; (2) the orientation to the outcomes and learning strategies; (3) the outcomes; and (4) the learning strategies necessary to accomplish the outcomes.

Smalley and Retallick (2010) further enhanced the EFE model using agricultural teacher education experts to identify the appropriate types of interaction and activities. The findings of this study, as established by a panel of expert who reached consensus, indicated that EFE should be documented via a combination of journaling and portfolio development. The verification of these documents should be completed by the cooperating teacher and through university assessments. Documentation of an EFE experience can be done through journaling, cooperating teacher signature, reflective paper or a review of collective documents. Since the development of Retallick's and Miller's (2010) model and the refinement by Smalley and Retallick (in press), with the study being conducted in the agricultural education profession, no research has been conducted to determine what practices are taking place in each of the components of the EFE model, what elements of EFE are practiced and the extent the EFE model reflects practice in business and family and consumer sciences education programs.

Purpose and Objective

The purpose of this national descriptive study was to describe business and family and consumer sciences education early field experience (EFE) practices using the EFE Model. The study focused on three research questions:

1. What practices take place in each of the components of the EFE model (i.e., foundations, organization, implementation, and assessment) in both business teacher education and family and consumer sciences teacher education?
2. Are there elements of EFE in practice that are not represented?
3. To what extent does the EFE reflect actual practice?

4. What are the differences between business and family and consumer sciences education EFE programs?

Methods

The population for this national descriptive survey consisted of all business and family and consumer sciences teacher education programs (*N*=139) identified by contacting the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (*N*=74) and the National Business Education Association (*N*=65). The teacher education preparation coordinator was identified as the contact person from each institution.

Dillman's (2007) tailored design method was used in developing this descriptive survey design. The 19 principles for developing a survey instrument were used in developing the researcher- designed survey. For this study an early field experience (EFE) was defined as all field experiences that occur prior to student teaching. The experiences could either be offered in or outside of the business and family and consumer science curriculum. This definition was provided in the cover letters and the introduction of the survey instrument.

This study was replicated from Smalley's and Retallick's (in press) agricultural education early field experience through the lens of the EFE model study. The survey was divided into five parts: implementation, assessment, foundation, organization and demographics. Participants were asked to identify the purposes of EFE, which for this study were categorized as either exploratory or teacher development in nature. In this study, exploratory was defined as providing a student the opportunity to investigate the profession and develop an understanding what it means to be an educator. Teacher development was defined to participants as the stage of development after students have explored and determined that teacher education was the career for them. During this stage, preservice

teachers begin to transition from student to teacher by developing and enhancing skills and knowledge prior to entering the teaching profession (Retallick & Miller, 2010).

The instrument was designed to ask dichotomous close-ended and open-ended questions to obtain unique and specific information (Dillman, 2007). A panel of experts including agricultural teacher educators and graduate students were used to review the instrument for content validity. Panel suggestions were integrated into the questionnaire. The instrument was pilot tested for face validity. The participants were asked to read the items carefully and indicate if any of the items were not suitable. Cronbach's alpha was computed to assess the internal consistencies of the summated scales in the questionnaire. The coefficients obtained for types of interaction were .84, .81 for activities and .74 for assessments.

Collection data followed Dillman's (2007) electronic survey plan, which included four contacts and a special contact. For this study, a special contact was a phone call to non-respondents. Data collection began on September 14, 2010 and was concluded on October 25, 2010. Forty of the 65 (61.53%) business education, and 53 of the 74 (71.62%) family and consumer sciences teacher education coordinators responded to the study for an overall response rate of 66.90%. To control for non-response error, early and late respondents were compared and no significant differences were found. All data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Findings

The institutional makeup of this study consisted of regional/state (58.52%), 1862 land grant (14.82%), private institutions (14.63%) and 1890 land grants (12.19%). A majority of

the programs offered a Bachelor of Science in business and family and consumer sciences teacher education (89.02%), 4.87% reported offering a Bachelor of Science plus one year, 21.95% offered a Master of Science in business and family and consumer sciences, and 26.82% indicated they offered other degrees in business and family and consumer sciences education besides a Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science plus one year or Master of Science.

Research question one was to identify the EFE practices utilized by business and family and consumer science teacher education programs. The findings are reported using Retallick's and Miller's (2010) framework.

Foundation stage

The foundation of the EFE model is made up of the conceptual framework and standards of EFE. The standards include state, institutional, professional and national standards. When asked to identify the standards that drove the teacher education program including the EFE component, business and family and consumer science teacher education coordinator identified state standards (82.79%) as the most influential along with institutional standards (73.11%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Standards of EFE Program

Driving the EFE Program (*n*=93)	FCS Ed.		Bus. Ed.		Total	
	n=53	%	*n*=40	%	*n*=93	%
State	43	81.13	34	85.00	77	82.79
Institutional	44	83.01	24	66.70	68	73.11
National	36	67.92	27	75.00	63	67.74
Professional	32	60.37	26	72.20	62	66.66
Other Standards	1	2.00	0	0.00	1	1.07

Business and family and consumer science teacher education coordinators identified the agency or organization used to accredit the program (Table 2). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was associated with the majority of programs (81.72%). During the time of the study, NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) voted to consolidate and formed a new accrediting body called the Council for the Accreditation of Education Programs (CAEP) (NCATE, 2010).

Table 2. Accrediting of EFE Program

Agency/Organization Accrediting (*n*=93)	FCS Ed.		Bus. Ed.		Total	
	n=53	%	*n*=40	%	*n*=93	%
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE	42	79.24	34	85.00	76	81.72
Other Accreditation	24	45.28	21	52.50	45	48.38
State Accreditation	18	33.96	19	47.50	37	39.78
Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)	6	11.32	3	7.50	9	9.67
National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBATS)	3	5.66	3	7.50	6	6.45

Organizational stage

The organizational stage of the EFE model is composed of the experience, placement and documents of the program. EFE programs can be implemented as part of a course or completed as a stand-alone experience. Business and family and consumer sciences teacher education coordinators were able to identify all ways that they offer an EFE experience. Program coordinators reported that their EFEs were most commonly embedded within a course (80.64%). Family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 84.90% (*n*=45) of EFE experience, and business coordinators identified 75.00% (*n*=30) EFE experiences were most commonly embedded within a course. The program coordinators reported 43.01% of

the EFEs were considered stand-alone experiences. Family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 33.96% (*n*=18) and business coordinators identified 55.00% (*n*=22) were considered stand-alone experiences.

Programs require EFE students to complete unique EFE experiences throughout their teacher education program. Twenty-one (22.58%) program coordinators reported their EFE students complete four unique experiences. Family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 24.52% (*n*=13) and business coordinators identified 20.00% (*n*=8) of the coordinators conduct four unique EFE.

Placement

EFE experiences are designed for many different stages of preservice teacher development. EFE are offered at all grade levels and because of the various purposes of the EFE, including the effort to help students transition from student to teacher and the number of different experiences, no single grade level or combination of grade levels emerged from the data.

The placement of a student in an EFE is important for any preservice teacher to have a quality experience. Fifty percent of the teacher education programs reported that students were required to select an EFE site from an approved list. Eighty-three percent of the preservice teachers were required to complete the EFE in a high school/middle school education program. The remaining seventeen percent did not require the preservice teacher to conduct their EFE in a high school/middle school. Fifty-three percent of all programs did not require an EFE prior to admission to the teacher education program at the university. On

average, the minimum numbers of hours expected of students to participate in EFE for licensure was 110 hours ranging from 20 to 200 hours.

An orientation program was offered to EFE students in most teacher education programs (70.93%). Family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 67.92% (*n*=36) and business coordinators identified 75.00% (*n*=30) of the time an orientation program was offered for EFE students. However, in most cases, family and consumer science EFE programs did not offer orientations for college/university staff 41.50% *(n=22)* or for cooperating teachers 49.05% (*n*=26). Business coordinators indicated they provided an orientation program for college/university staff 50.00% (*n*=20) and for cooperating teachers 42.50% (*n*=17).

Nearly 63% (62.36%) of the teacher education programs had minimum qualifications for inservice teachers to be eligible to serve as an EFE cooperating teacher. Family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 66.03% (*n*=35) and business coordinators 57.50% (*n*=23). Approximately half (49.46%) of the programs required a minimum number of site visits to the secondary program as part of the EFE. Family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 47.16% (*n*=25) and business coordinators 52.50% (*n*=21) a minimum number of site visits the preservice teacher must make to the secondary program as part of the required EFE.

Documents

Documents of an EFE program can include various types and forms of documenting the experience including handbooks, planning of lessons and teaching a lesson. Nearly three fourths (73.11%) of the EFE programs used a handbook or bulletin for communication with

preservice teachers. Family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 66.03% *(n=35)* and business coordinators identified 82.50% (*n*=33) of programs used a handbook or bulletin for communication with preservice teachers.

Preservice teachers were expected to plan a lesson (58.06%) as part of their experience. Family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 56.60% (*n*=30) and business coordinators identified 60.00% (*n*=24) preservice teachers were expected to plan a lesson. Additionally, almost three fifths (59.13%) of programs were expected to teach a lesson as part of the required EFE. Family and consumer sciences educators identified 54.71% (*n*=29), and business coordinators identified 65.00% (*n*=26) preservice teachers were expected to teach a lesson as part of the required EFE. On average, family and consumer sciences and business teacher education coordinators indicated preservice teachers were expected to teach six lessons during the EFE.

EFE Model Implementation stage

The implementation stage involves the interaction, activities and assessment of an EFE. Slightly more than two thirds (61%) of institutions indicated some collaboration occurs among the preservice student, the EFE cooperating teacher and the teacher educator during the required EFE, while 8.79% indicated no collaboration occurs, 12.08% indicated very little collaboration occurs, and 17.58% indicated much collaboration occurs during the EFE.

Types of interactions for EFE could be organized into two categories from the literature: exploratory or teacher development. Of the 16 types of interactions business/family and consumer sciences teacher education program coordinators were asked to identify the purposes of their EFE (Table 3).

Table 3. Purpose Early Field Experience Identified within Exploratory or Teacher Development

Type of Interaction (*n*=93)	FCS Ed.		Bus. Ed.		Total	
	n=53	%	*n*=40	%	*n*=93	%
Exploratory						
Identify the roles of a professional educator.	38	71.69	27	67.50	65	69.89
Observe classroom instruction.	37	69.81	27	67.50	64	68.81
Affirm the desire for becoming a family consumer sciences teacher/business educator.	35	66.03	25	62.50	60	64.51
Develop observational skills and techniques	34	64.15	24	60.00	58	62.36
Teacher Development						
Identify skill development (classroom instruction/management, program planning) of a teacher	44	83.01	31	77.50	75	80.64
Recognize a successful teaching strategy.	42	79.24	31	77.50	73	78.49
Identify cooperating teacher behavior/s that influences student behavior.	41	77.35	30	75.00	71	76.34
Interact with community members, school staff and administration.	42	79.24	28	70.00	70	75.26
Recognize a successful classroom and laboratory management strategy.	40	75.47	30	75.00	70	75.26
Develop understanding of a complete business/family and consumer sciences program.	42	79.24	26	65.00	68	73.11
Recognize awareness of student engagement.	39	73.58	28	70.00	67	72.04
Develop understanding of what is involved in being a business and family and consumer sciences teacher	37	69.81	29	72.50	66	70.96
Have a positive experience	37	69.81	28	70.00	65	69.89
Define and describe characteristics of an effective teacher	37	69.81	25	62.50	62	66.66
Educate preservice teacher about what it means to learn to teacher as they reflect on why, whom and how they will teach.	34	64.15	27	67.50	61	65.59

Family and consumer sciences and business coordinators reported the purpose of an exploratory EFE was to identify the roles of professional educators (69.89%). Family and consumer sciences identified 71.69% (*n*=38) and business coordinators identified 67.50% (*n*=27) the purpose of an exploratory EFE was to identify the roles of professional educator. Family and consumer sciences and business education coordinators identified the purpose of a teacher development EFE was to identify skills development (classroom instruction/management, program planning) of a teacher (80.64%). Family and consumer

sciences coordinators identified 83.01% (*n*=44) and business coordinators identified 77.50% (*n*=31) the purpose of a teacher development EFE was to identify skills development (classroom instruction/management, program planning) of a teacher.

EFE activities are events, which take place prior to a student entering the student teaching experience. Table 4 represents 13 activities the business and family and consumer sciences teacher education programs report using within their EFE program. Nearly all education programs (92.47%) conduct a preservice teacher observation of cooperating teacher. Programs are less likely to provide student-led preservice teacher discussions (47.31%) and review case studies in a university setting (39.78%). Other types of engagement activities identified include grading papers, tutoring students, observing middle

Table 4. Types of Activities Occurring in EFE Program

Activities occurring in EFE program (*n*=93)	FCS Ed.		Bus. Ed.		Total	
	n=53	%	*n*=40	%	*n*=93	%
Preservice teacher observation of cooperating teacher.	50	94.33	36	90.00	86	92.47
Orientation from university faculty on the expectations of EFE.	48	90.56	33	82.50	81	87.09
Observation of student's behavior by preservice teacher.	47	88.67	31	77.50	78	83.87
Develop reflection paper throughout experience (micro-reflections).	45	84.90	32	80.00	77	82.79
Note taking of observations while on EFE.	44	83.01	32	80.00	76	81.72
Preservice teacher teaching a lesson.	41	77.35	33	82.50	74	79.56
Observation of student's learning by preservice teacher.	45	84.90	27	67.50	72	77.41
Develop written portfolio documentation of experience.	38	71.69	26	65.00	64	68.81
Compile list of information regarding the EFE-program visit.	31	58.49	23	57.50	54	58.06
Interviewing middle/high school students, cooperating teacher, school counselor, principal, etc.	30	56.60	24	60.00	54	58.06
Observing the supervision of student BPA/DECA/FCCLA projects and activities.	32	60.37	15	37.50	47	50.53
Student-led discussion by preservice teacher.	27	50.94	17	34.00	44	47.31
Review case studies in a university setting.	23	43.39	14	35.00	37	39.78

school, classroom management procedures and observing other teachers outside of the business or family and consumer sciences area.

Assessment stage

Two types of assessments are available in an EFE according to literature: program and student centered assessments. Business/family and consumer sciences teacher education coordinators were asked to identify how student EFE experiences were documented in their program (Table 5). Nearly all teacher education programs indicated the program was being documented by cooperating teacher signatures (80.64%), preservice student completing a reflective paper on experience (75.26%), and university supervisor review of documents (73.11%). Additional ways of documented the students EFE experience identified by participants include discussion with program advisory council, completing an online portfolio, completion of a lesson and a faculty member observe the teaching of a lesson.

Table 5. Assessment of Students EFE Experiences

Student Documentation of EFE (*n*=93)	FCS Ed.		Bus. Ed.		Total	
	n=53	%	*n*=40	%	*n*=93	%
Cooperating Teacher – verification/signature	43	81.13	32	80.00	75	80.64
Preservice student completing a reflective paper on experience.	41	77.35	29	72.50	70	75.26
University supervisor review of documents	40	75.47	28	70.00	68	73.11
Journaling on EFE experience	35	66.03	27	67.50	62	66.66
Cooperating Teacher Evaluation	34	64.15	26	65.00	60	64.51
Development of a Portfolio	36	67.92	21	52.50	57	61.29
Seminar for EFE students to discuss and compare experiences as a group.	36	67.92	18	45.00	54	58.06
Preservice student completing an observation of the visited business/family and consumer sciences education program (reviewing teaching resources, curriculum, facilities, budget, etc.)	34	64.15	17	42.50	51	54.83
Collection of key resources and documents.	33	62.26	16	40.00	49	52.68

The program evaluation of an EFE program can be completed at various levels and is important to continue the success of an EFE program. Seventy-eight percent of business and family and consumer sciences teacher education coordinators indicated that their EFE program was evaluated (Table 6). A departmental review (86.76%) was identified as the most common type of review.

Table 6. EFE Program Evaluated

Level of Review (*n*=93)	FCS Ed.		Bus. Ed.		Total	
	n=53	%	*n*=40	%	*n*=93	%
Departmental	34	64.15	25	62.50	59	63.44
Accreditation	36	67.92	22	55.00	58	62.36
State Review	22	41.50	22	55.00	44	47.31
University	25	47.16	12	30.00	37	39.78
Other Levels	3	5.66	0	0.00	3	3.22

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications

The purpose of this national descriptive study was to describe business and family and consumer sciences teacher education early field experience (EFE) practices using the EFE model. The population for this national descriptive survey consisted of all business and family and consumer sciences education teacher preparation coordinators (*N*=139) identified by contacting the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences and the National Business Education Association. The business and family and consumer sciences teacher preparation coordinator was identified as the contact person from each institution.

In the study some differences and similarities were highlighted by the family and consumer sciences and business education program coordinators. The majority of family and consumer sciences education coordinators classified the institution as a regional and state institution (58.52%). As compared to a study conducted by Smalley and Retallick (in press),

a majority (57.14%) of agricultural education program coordinators classified the institutions as 1862 land grants. Another significant difference included how orientation programs are offered between business education and family and consumer sciences education programs including 70.93% of programs offering an orientations program. As compared to a study conducted by Smalley and Retallick, nearly all (94.54%) agricultural education programs offered an orientation program.

In the business and family and consumer sciences education program on average a handbook was part of the EFE program 73.11%. This included family and consumer sciences programs (66.03%) and business education (82.50%), which agricultural education teacher coordinators identified a handbook was used in 69.09% of programs (Smalley & Retallick, in press). A significant difference was also identified in the number of lessons being taught on average between business and family and consumer sciences programs with 6 lessons compared to agricultural education teacher program coordinators (Smalley & Retallick) identified on average 14 lessons were taught. A difference was also identified in the amount of collaboration occurring between the preservice student, the EFE cooperating teacher and the teacher educator during the required EFE. The business and family and consumer science educators identifying some collaboration occurs 61.00% and agricultural education program coordinators (Smalley & Retallick) identified only 48.00% of time some collaboration occurs.

According to the business and family and consumer sciences teacher education program coordinators in this study coordinators differed in the type of activities occurring in EFE programs. The family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 60.37% (*n*=32) delivered observing the supervision of student FCCLA projects and activities more important

compared to business education coordinators 37.50% (*n*=15). In the study conducted by Smalley and Retallick (in press) observing the supervision of students SAE projects and activities was seen of importance with 64.06% of coordinators identifying. Another significant difference indicated included the family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 50.94% (*n*=27) perceived student led discussions were important compared to business education coordinators 34.00% *(n=17).*

Most programs report having specific requirements and expectations of an EFE. Programs were requiring a minimum number of contact hours and minimum number of lessons to be taught while in the field, which is consistent with Retallick and Miller (2007). Many (70.93%) of the business and family consumer sciences teacher education programs were offering an orientation to the preservice teacher prior to the preservice experience. This was also true in Smalley's and Retallick's (in press) agricultural teacher education program study with 94.54% of the programs having an orientation.

Most business and family and consumer science teacher's education programs use a variety of student assessments. The most commonly identified student assessments included the university supervisor's review of documents, cooperation teacher signatures, and reflective writing. The family and consumer sciences coordinators and business education coordinators differed in the assessment. Family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 67.92% (*n*=36) seminars for EFE students to discuss and compare experiences as a group compared to the business education coordinators identifying 45.00% (*n*=18). Differences were also identified with family and consumer sciences educators with 64.15% (*n*=34) on preservice student completing an observation of the visited education program (reviewing teaching resources, curriculum, facilities, budget, etc.) compared to business

educators identified 42.50% (*n=17).* A difference was also identified in family and consumer sciences coordinators 62.26% (*n*=33) in the collection of key resources and documents compared to business education coordinators identified 40.00% (*n*=49).

This study has implications for teacher education programs that are planning to evaluate their current programs or preparing to revamp their EFE programs. The results from this study can be used as comparisons for family and consumer sciences and business education programs from across the country. By developing consistency among teacher education programs, EFE will provide a better experience for all students involved in the EFE. By expanding opportunities of a preservice teacher during the exploratory and teacher development stage it will increase the number of real-world opportunities a preservice teacher has prior student teaching. Increasing the number of opportunities to a preservice teacher it could impact the recruitment and retention of preservice education students.

The findings of this study provide early field experience coordinators the practices taking place in each component of the EFE model and differences between business and family and consumer sciences education. Results from this study can be used by the EFE program coordinators to ensure the experience is the best of quality for all taking part.

Further research needs to take place in the future to determine if changes have occurred in career and technical education programs based on the activities and assessments provided to preservice teacher education students. Continuous monitoring of the EFE model needs to occur in the future to see if changes occur in the foundation, organization, and implementation stages. Little information is known if career and technical education programs' EFE experiences are being regularly reviewed or how recommendations are being handled.

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CHAPTER 6. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation research resulted in three papers that explored early field experience (EFE) in agriculture, business, and family and consumer sciences education. This chapter presents a summary, general conclusions, recommendations and implications from the three research studies.

Three studies were conducted to help solidify the purposes, expected outcomes, and methods of documenting preservice teacher EFE activities in agriculture, business, and family and consumer sciences teacher education programs. A panel of experts concluded that EFE should be documented via a combination of journaling and portfolio development. The verification of these documents should be completed by the cooperating teacher and through university-based assessments. The activities conducted during an EFE should be documented in some manner because documenting, and journaling experiences provides EFE students the opportunity to reflect on their experiences. The learning strategies could be identified as either engagement, experience, observation or reflection/written activities.

A review of the findings lead to differences and similarities in learning strategies identified by the career and technical (agriculture, business, and family and consumer sciences) education program coordinators. A handbook and lessons were used in all career and technical education programs. Business education programs tended to use a handbook in their program more often. Lessons were taught in an agricultural education EFE more than twice as often compared to business and family and consumer science program coordinators.

According to the career and technical teacher education program coordinators in this study, the coordinators differed in the type of activities occurring in EFE programs. The

family and consumer sciences coordinators identified the importance of observing the supervision of student FCCLA projects and activity at 60.37% (*n*=32) compared to business education coordinators 37.50% (*n*=15). The agricultural education coordinators identified observing the supervision of students SAE projects and activities as importance with 64.06% of coordinators identifying. Based on the delivery method used in agriculture, business, and family and consumer sciences, greater emphasis needs to be placed on the observation of student projects and activities. The results of the study are expected based on the difference in the program delivery model. In career and technical education, hands-on learning is a cornerstone of all programs and can significantly enhance a program even though each program has specific requirements and expectations.

Although specific requirements and expectations have been identified in the studies as a whole, career and technical education program coordinators identified numerous similarities between programs. The differences identified between career and technical programs need to be reviewed and addressed. Program coordinators need to ensure the differences identified are not affecting the development of the preservice student. The least amount of difference in the preservice teacher preparation seemed to be identified with the agricultural teacher education program. The agricultural teacher education programs seem to be strong and providing a guide for career and technical education with several specific requirements and expectations of an EFE.

Most programs reported having specific requirements and expectations of an EFE. Many (70.93%) of the business and family consumer sciences teacher education programs and agricultural teacher education programs (94.54%) were offering an orientation to the preservice teacher prior to the preservice experience. Providing an orientation program for

preservice teachers prior to the experiences sets the stage and enables the preservice student to understand the expectations and methods for being assessed.

Career and technical teacher education programs use a variety of student assessments. The most commonly identified student assessments included the university supervisor's review of documents, cooperation teacher signatures, and reflective writing. The family and consumer sciences coordinators and business education coordinators differed in the assessment. Family and consumer sciences coordinators identified 67.92% (*n*=36) seminars for EFE students to discuss and compare experiences as a group compared to the agricultural education coordinators (54.09%), business education coordinators identifying 45.00% (*n*=18). Differences were also identified with agricultural education educators with (70.49%), family and consumer sciences educators with 64.15% (*n*=34) on preservice student completing an observation of the visited education program (reviewing teaching resources, curriculum, facilities, budget, etc.) compared to business educators identified 42.50% (*n*=17). A difference was also identified in agricultural education coordinators 63.93%, family and consumer sciences coordinators 62.26% (*n*=33) in the collection of key resources and documents compared to business education coordinators identified 40.00% (*n*=49). The highlights identified in this study from the foundation, organizational, and implementation stage of the EFE model are reiterated through the standards, conceptual framework, experiences, placement, assessment, interaction and learning strategies. The purposes, activities and assessments identified in the studies, overall strengthen the structure and content of the EFE model.

The findings of the studies provide early field experience coordinators purposes, expected outcomes, methods of documenting, types of activities and assessments. The studies

have highlighted differences between career and technical education programs. They have implications for teacher education programs that are planning to evaluate their current programs or preparing to revamp their EFE programs. The results from this study can be used as comparisons for career and technical education programs from across the country. The studies also provide EFE coordinators with a list of purpose, activities, methods for documenting an EFE, types of interactions, activities, and forms of assessments being used in the EFE. Results can be used by the EFE program coordinators to ensure the experience is the best of quality for all taking part.

Further research should be conducted to determine if all teacher education programs associated with career and technical education areas are using the same or similar methods to assess or document the EFE experience. Little information is known if career and technical education programs' EFE are being reviewed or how recommendations are being handled.

This study has raised several questions which may warrant further research:

1. How are program recommendations being handled and how are EFE changes being implemented/incorporated into individual career and technical education programs?
2. Have changes to the EFE been made in career and technical education programs based on the feedback received from preservice teacher education students?
3. What impact does the EFE have on preservice teacher education students?
4. What activities, interactions and assessments do the preservice teacher education students find most valuable during the experience?

APPENDIX. SURVEY INSTRUMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

PURPOSES, ACTIVITIES, AND DOCUMENTATION OF EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE IN AGRICULTU RAL TEACHER EDUCATION: A NATIONAL DELPHI STUDY

Phone Script When Contacting Potential Participants

Hello Dr. _____

My name is Scott Smalley and I am an agricultural education and studies graduate student at Iowa State University. The reason I am contacting you today is for your input on important topic. Your name has been nominated as an expert in the area of teacher education by agricultural education department heads from across the country.

I am preparing to conduct a Delphi study focused on the expected student outcomes, learning strategies, and teaching strategies for early field experiences.
Your participation in this national Delphi study would require you to be contacted three different times during this study.

Round 1 would include you responding to opened questions.

Round 2 would include you evaluating a Likert-type scale.

Round 3 would include if you still agreed with your initial ratings.

Would you be interested in participating in this study?

If yes, I hope to have the study available to you in the next two weeks. Please watch for it in your email inbox as I will be emailing the details about the study and instructions of round one.

Thank you for your time.

Round 1 Participant Letter

To: Agricultural Teacher Educators

From: Scott Smalley
Agricultural Education and Studies Graduate Student

Thank you for your willingness to participate in my National Delphi study on expected learning outcomes, learning strategies, and teaching strategies for early field experiences in agricultural education. Your knowledge and experiences are crucial in preparing young professionals for a career in agricultural education.

As you know an early field experience (EFE) is a significant component of any teacher education program and consists of all field experiences that occur prior to student teaching. An early field experience provides a young professional the first opportunity to experience a real classroom. EFE allows a preservice teacher the opportunity to engross themselves into a classroom setting.

To achieve the purposes of study, three research objectives were developed.

1) Identify the purpose of EFE in agricultural teacher education programs.
2) Identify the activities for an EFE in agricultural teacher education programs.
3) Establish a list of methods for documenting EFE activities in agricultural teacher education programs.

In this study we are solely interested in group data and not individual data so confidentiality will be ensured. Your name and email will be collected for the purpose of addressing non-response. However, your personal information will be removed and not associated with the final report. The data collected in this study will be used in partial fulfillment of the requirement degree in agricultural education at Iowa State University.

The published results of this study will serve the agricultural education profession by providing information that could lead to improvements, adjustments or changes in the early field experience of young professionals.

Your knowledge and experiences is needed by taking 15 minutes of your time to answer the following questions. A link to the online survey is below:
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=998601702985

You may withdraw from this study at anytime. If you have questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact, Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu. If you have questions regarding human subjects, please feel free to contact the institutional review board at (515)294-4566

Thank you for your cooperation.

Round 1 Open-ended Questions

In round one, respondents were asked to answer three open-ended questions:

1. What is the purpose of an early field experience in an agricultural teacher education program?
2. What are the activities of an early field experience in agricultural teacher education?
3. What methods are used in documenting preservice teacher activities for EFE in agricultural teacher education programs?

Round 2 Participant Letter

To: Agricultural Teacher Educators

From: Scott Smalley
Agricultural Education and Studies Graduate Student

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this National Delphi study focused on early field experiences in agricultural education. Round 1 identified several purposes of EFE, activities and methods for documenting EFE were identified. In round 2, you will be asked to identify the level of agreement with the purposes, activities and methods for documenting an early field experience.

In this study we are solely interested in group data and not individual data so confidentiality will be ensured. Your name and email will be collected for the purpose of addressing non-response. However, your personal information will be removed and not associated with the final report. The data collected in this study will be used in partial fulfillment of the requirement degree in agricultural education at Iowa State University. The published results of this study will serve the agricultural education profession by providing information that could lead to improvements, adjustments or changes in the early field experience of young professionals.

Your knowledge and experiences is needed by taking 15 minutes of your time to answer the following questions. A link to the online survey is below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=998601702985

You may withdraw from this study at anytime. If you have questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact, Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu. If you have questions regarding human subjects, please feel free to contact the institutional review board at (515)294-4566.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Round II National Delphi Study

Instructions

Thank you in advance for your input on an important topic. The objective of this national Delphi study on early field experience is to identify the level of agreement with the purpose, activities and methods for documenting an early field experience.

The early field experience is designed to set the foundation for a successful student teaching experience and eventual teaching career by providing an overview of the roles of professional educators in agriculture. *An early field experience includes all experiences prior to the student teaching experience.*

Section I

Identify the purpose of an early field experience.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement, which explain the **PURPOSES of an early field experience**.

1= Strongly Disagree
2= Disagree
3= Uncertain
4= Agree
5= Strongly Agree

	A **PURPOSE** of EFE is to….	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Develop understanding of a complete Agricultural Education Program (i.e., classroom/laboratory, FFA, SAE)					
2.	Develop lesson plans that incorporate teaching and learning in their design.					
3.	Develop understanding of what is involved in being an agricultural teacher.					
4.	Develop classroom management techniques.					
5.	Develop observational skills and techniques.					
6.	Observe classroom instruction.					
7.	Identify the roles of a professional educator.					
8.	Identify cooperating teacher behavior/s that influences student behavior.					
9.	Identify skill development (classroom instruction/management, program planning) of a teacher.					
10.	Recognize a successful teaching strategy.					
11.	Recognize awareness of student engagement.					
12.	Recognize awareness of student behavior.					
13.	Recognize a successful classroom and laboratory management strategy.					
14.	Apply content (agri-science) knowledge.					
15.	Apply the knowledge in teaching (i.e., program planning, teaching methods, etc.).					
16.	Define and describe characteristics of effective teacher.					
17.	Incorporate teaching theory into practice.					
18.	Affirm the desire for becoming an agricultural educator.					
19.	Transition from student to teacher.					
20.	Educate preservice teacher about what it means to learn to teach as they reflect on why, whom and how they will teach.					
21.	Interact with community members, school staff and administration.					
22.	Have a positive experience.					

Box for additional comments or missing statements:

Section II

For the purpose of this study, a **student** is someone enrolled in a school-based agricultural education class. An **early field experience** includes all experiences prior to the student teaching experience. **Preservice teacher** is defined as a student in preparation for a career as an agricultural education educator, but has not completed student teaching.

What **ACTIVITIES should preservice teachers use to accomplish the purposes** of EFE (e.g. observations, teaching lesson, case studies).

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following activities, which should be used to accomplish the purpose.

1= Strongly Disagree
2= Disagree
3= Uncertain
4= Agree
5= Strongly Agree

	An **ACTIVITY** of EFE is…..	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Preservice teacher observation of cooperating teacher.					
2.	Observation of preservice teacher by cooperating teacher.					
3.	Observation of preservice teacher by university supervisor.					
4.	Observation of student's behavior by preservice teacher.					
	Observation of student's learning by preservice teacher.					
5.	Observing the supervision of students SAE projects and activities.					
6.	Observing the supervision of students FFA projects and activities.					
7.	Developing and submitting lesson plans.					
8.	Preservice teacher teaching a lesson.					
9.	Preservice teacher develop a poster to describe EFE experience.					
10.	Preservice teacher conduct a demonstration to a classroom of students.					
11.	Hands-on student activities guided by preservice teacher.					
12.	Student-led discussion by preservice teacher.					
13.	Review case studies in a university setting.					
14.	Orientation from university faculty on the expectations of EFE.					
15.	Note taking of observations while on EFE.					
16.	Interviewing middle/high school students, cooperating teacher, school counselor, principal, etc.					
17.	Compile list of information regarding the EFE- program visited.					
18.	Develop written portfolio documentation of experience.					
19.	Develop reflection papers throughout experience (micro-reflections).					

Box for additional comments or missing statements:

Section III

How should the **activities (teaching strategies) be DOCUMENTED** in an early field experience (cooperating teacher, portfolio, reflection)?

1= Strongly Disagree
2= Disagree
3= Uncertain
4= Agree
5= Strongly Agree

	EFE activities should be **DOCUMENTED** by the…	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Cooperating Teacher – verification/signature					
2.	Journaling on EFE experience					
3.	University Supervisor Review of Documents					
4.	Cooperating Teacher Evaluation					
5.	Development of a Portfolio					
6.	On-campus group discussion with preservice students after EFE experience.					
7.	Preservice student completing a reflective paper on experience.					
8.	University faculty site visit with preservice teacher.					
9.	Collection of key resources and documents.					
10.	Seminar for EFE students to discuss and compare experiences as a group.					
11.	Preservice student completing an observation of the visited agricultural education program (reviewing: teaching resources, curriculum, facilities, budget, etc.).					
12.	Cooperating teacher evaluation with a face-to-face discussion about the evaluation.					
13.	Preservice teacher develops and delivers presentation of experience to university faculty/other preservice students.					

Box for additional comments or missing statements:

Round 3 Letter to Participants

Dr. _____

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this National Delphi study focused on early field experiences in agricultural teacher education. Round 1 identified several purposes of EFE, activities and methods for documenting EFE were identified. In round 2, you were asked to identify the level of agreement with the purposes, activities and methods for documenting an early field experience. In round 3, you will be asked if you agree with your response on the Likert-type scale compared to the group mean score and standard deviation.

Attached to this email you will find an excel document, which outlines a group mean score, standard deviation and your individual score. You are asked to place an X in the column which indicates you agree or disagree with your mean score. If you choose to change your mean score you may place your new mean score in the third column.
In this study we are solely interested in group data and not individual data so confidentiality will be ensured. Your name and email will be collected for the purpose of addressing non-response. However, your personal information will be removed and not associated with the final report. The data collected in this study will be used in partial fulfillment of the requirement degree in agricultural education at Iowa State University. The published results of this study will serve the agricultural education profession by providing information that could lead to improvements, adjustments or changes in the early field experience of young professionals.

Your knowledge and experiences is needed by taking 15 minutes of your time to answer this survey.

You may withdraw from this study at anytime. If you have questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact, Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu. If you have questions regarding human subjects, please feel free to contact the institutional review board at (515)294-4566

Thank you for your cooperation.

Directions

In each of the three sections below you will find statements from round 2, which has a group mean score, standard deviation and your individual response.
In round 3, please select if you agree or disagree with your response. If you have changed your mind regarding your response, please place a new response in the last column.

For your new response in the last column please use the following Likert-type scale:
1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Uncertain, 4- Agree, 5- Strongly Agree

A purpose of EFE is to ...								
Likert-type Scale: 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 -Disagree, 3 - Uncertain, 4 - Agree, 5 - Strongly Agree	**Standard Deviation**	**Group Mean Response**		**Your Response**		**Agree with your Response Place an X**	**Disagree with your Response Place an X**	**If Changed Your New Response**
Identify the roles of a professional educator.	0.34	4.87						
Observe classroom instruction.	0.34	4.87						
Affirm the desire for becoming an agricultural educator.	0.34	4.87						
Develop understanding of a complete Agricultural Education Program (i.e., classroom/laboratory, FFA, SAE)	0.40	4.81						
Develop understanding of what is involved in being an agricultural teacher.	0.79	4.68						
Educate preservice teacher about what it means to learn to teach as they reflect on why, whom and how they will teach.	0.63	4.6						
Recognize awareness of student engagement.	0.62	4.56						
Identify cooperating teacher behavior/s that influences student behavior.	0.63	4.53						

Identify skill development (classroom instruction/management, program planning) of a teacher.	0.63	4.50						
Have a positive experience.	0.89	4.43						
Develop observational skills and techniques.	0.95	4.37						
Recognize a successful classroom and laboratory management strategy.	0.8	4.37						
Recognize awareness of student behavior.	0.63	4.46						
Recognize a successful teaching strategy.	0.95	4.12						
Define and describe characteristics of effective teacher.	0.61	4.33						
Interact with community members, school staff and administration.	0.85	3.93						

Additional Comments:

An ACTIVITY of EFE is to ...								
Likert-type Scale: 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 -Disagree, 3 - Uncertain, 4 - Agree, 5 - Strongly Agree	**Standard Deviation**	**Group Mean Response**		**Your Response**		**Agree with Your Response Place an X**	**Disagree with your Response Place an X**	**If Changed Your New Response**
Preservice teacher observation of cooperating teacher.	0.34	4.87						
Orientation from university faculty on the expectations of EFE.	0.44	4.75						
Develop reflection papers throughout experience (micro-reflections).	0.61	4.62						
Note taking of observations while on EFE.	0.61	4.62						
Interviewing middle/high school students, cooperating teacher, school counselor, principal, etc.	0.62	4.56						
Compile list of information regarding the EFE- program visited.	0.72	4.56						
Observation of student's behavior by preservice teacher.	0.51	4.56						
Observation of student's learning by preservice teacher.	0.81	4.50						
Develop written portfolio documentation of experience.	0.73	4.50						
Observing the supervision of students SAE projects and activities.	0.85	4.25						
Observing the supervision of students FFA projects and activities.	0.85	4.25						
Preservice teacher teaching a lesson.	1.19	3.68						
Review case studies in a university setting.	1.3	3.68						
Student-led discussion by preservice teacher.	1.02	3.62						

Additional Comments:

EFE activities should be DOCUMENTED by the ...								
Likert-type Scale: 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 -Disagree, 3 - Uncertain, 4 - Agree, 5 - Strongly Agree	**Standard Deviation**	**Group Mean Response**		**Your Response**		**Agree with Your Response Place an X**	**Disagree with your Response Place an X**	**If Changed Your New Response**
Journaling on EFE experience	0.44	4.75						
University Supervisor Review of Documents	0.51	4.56						
Cooperating Teacher – verification/signature	0.51	4.56						
Preservice student completing a reflective paper on experience.	0.81	4.50						
Collection of key resources and documents.	0.71	4.37						
Seminar for EFE students to discuss and compare experiences as a group.	0.80	4.37						
Preservice student completing an observation of the visited agricultural education program (reviewing: teaching resources, curriculum, facilities, budget, etc.).	0.61	4.37						
Development of a Portfolio	0.65	4.18						
Cooperating Teacher Evaluation	1.46	3.50						

Additional Comments:

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE EFE MODEL

Pre-Notice Email to Participants

To: Agricultural Teacher Educators

From: Scott Smalley
Graduate Student

Dr. Michael Retallick
Assistant Professor

In a few days, I will begin a national study exploring how early field experience (EFE) programs in agricultural education utilize the EFE model. You are being contacted because you have been identified as either the agricultural teacher education coordinator or program contact person for the agricultural teacher education program at your institution.

I will be sending you a link from Survey Monkey asking you to participate in a national survey regarding your program's early field experience for agricultural teacher education students. Your knowledge and understanding of your program are crucial in collecting accurate data for this study. *You are the only* contact person for your program. Therefore, your participation is vital. If you are not the appropriate person to represent your program, please reply to this message and provide the appropriate person and their contact information.

Please watch for an email from survey monkey in the coming days.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact either me by email (smalle16@iastate.edu or phone 517-896-7476) or Dr. Michael Retallick (msr@iastate.edu or 515-294-4810). If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515)294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515)294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.
Thank you in advance.

Notice Sent with Survey Monkey- 1 day after Pre-Notice (2nd Contact)

To: Agricultural Teacher Educators

From: Scott Smalley
Graduate Student

Dr. Michael Retallick
Assistant Professor

I am conducting a national study exploring how early field experience (EFE) programs in agricultural education utilize the EFE model. You are being contacted because you have been identified as either the teacher education coordinator or program contact person for the agricultural teacher education program at your institution.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this national study survey regarding your programs early field experience for agricultural teacher education students. Your knowledge and experiences is needed by taking 15 minutes of your time to answer the following questions. A link to the online survey is below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8D52RZL

In this study, we are solely interested in group program data and not individual data so confidentiality will be ensured. Your name and email will be collected for the purpose of addressing non-response. However, your personal information will be removed and not associated with the final report. The data collected in this study will be used in partial fulfillment of the doctoral degree requirement in agricultural education at Iowa State University. The published results of this study will serve the agricultural education profession by providing information that could lead to improvements, adjustments or changes in the early field experience of young professionals.

You may withdraw from this study at anytime. If you have questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact, Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515)294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515)294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

Thank you for your cooperation

3rd Contact Sent One Week After First Notice

To: Agricultural Teacher Educators

From: Scott Smalley
Graduate Student

Dr. Michael Retallick
Assistant Professor

Last week, you should have received an email requesting your participation in a national study regarding your program's early field experience for agricultural teacher education students. If you have responded, thank you and disregard this message. However, if you haven't responded, please consider doing so soon. Your knowledge and expertise in your program is crucial in collecting accurate data for this study.

We ask that you complete the electronic survey instrument, which should not take more than 15 minutes of your time to answer the following questions. A link to the online survey is below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8D52RZL

In this study we are solely interested in group program data and not individual data so confidentiality will be ensured. Your name and email will be collected for the purpose of addressing non-response. However, your personal information will be removed and not associated with the final report. The data collected in this study will be used in partial fulfillment of the doctoral degree requirement in agricultural education at Iowa State University. The published results of this study will serve the agricultural education profession by providing information that could lead to improvements, adjustments or changes in the early field experience of young professionals.

You may withdraw from this study at anytime. If you have questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact, Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515)294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515)294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

Thank you for your cooperation

4th Contact Reminder

To: Agricultural Teacher Educators

From: Scott Smalley
Graduate Student

Dr. Michael Retallick
Assistant Professor

This is our third attempt to contact you to participate in a national study regarding your programs early field experience for agricultural teacher education students. Your knowledge and expertise in your program are crucial in collecting accurate data for this study.

Please consider taking 15 minutes of your time to answer the following questions. A link to the online survey is below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8D52RZL

In this study we are solely interested in group program data and not individual data so confidentiality will be ensured. Your name and email will be collected for the purpose of addressing non-response. However, your personal information will be removed and not associated with the final report. The data collected in this study will be used in partial fulfillment of the requirement degree in agricultural education at Iowa State University. The published results of this study will serve the agricultural education profession by providing information that could lead to improvements, adjustments or changes in the early field experience of young professionals.

You may withdraw from this study at anytime. If you have questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact, Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515)294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515)294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

Thank you for your cooperation

5th Contact - Personal Contact by the Researcher via telephone

Hello Dr. _____

My name is Scott Smalley and I am an agricultural education and studies graduate student at Iowa State University. The reason I am contacting you today is for your input on an important topic. This is our final attempt to contact you to participate in a national study regarding your programs early field experience for agricultural teacher education students. Your knowledge and expertise in your program is crucial in collecting accurate data for this study.

Your participation in this national study would require you complete a survey, which should not take you more than 15 minutes to complete.

If yes, I will be sending you a link our survey.

Thank you for your time.

National Descriptive Survey: Early Field Experience (EFE)

Directions:
Please read each question below and respond with the information that best describes your university's agricultural education early field experience program. Please focus on how your EFE program is currently being implemented and not what you may aspire your program to become. For the purpose of this study, early field experience (EFE) is defined as all field experiences that occur prior to student teaching.

Implementation Stage

The implementation of an EFE is based on the types of interactions, purpose and outcomes of an experience.

Types of Interaction

1) What degree of collaboration occurs between the preservice teacher, the EFE cooperating teacher and the teacher educator during the required early field experience?

   No collaboration
   Very little collaboration
   Some collaboration
   Much collaboration

2) Below is a list of purposes. Please check the ones that are used and identify if they are exploratory or teacher development in nature.

   (Select all that apply)

   a. **Exploratory** provides a student the opportunity to investigate the profession and develop an understanding what it means to be an educator.

   b. **Teacher Development** is the stage of development after students have explored and determined that teaching is the career from them. During this stage, preservice teachers begin to transition for student to teacher by developing and enhancing skills and knowledge prior to entering the teaching profession.

Purpose	Exploratory	Teacher Development
Identify the roles of a professional educator.		
Observe classroom instruction.		
Affirm the desire for becoming an agricultural educator.		
Develop understanding of a complete Agricultural Education Program (i.e., classroom/laboratory, FFA, SAE)		
Develop understanding of what is involved in being an agricultural teacher.		
Identify skill development (classroom instruction/management, program planning) of a teacher.		
Educate preservice teacher about what it means to learn to teach as they reflect on why, whom and how they will teach.		
Recognize awareness of student engagement.		
Identify cooperating teacher behavior/s that influences student behavior.		
Recognize awareness of student behavior.		
Have a positive experience.		
Define and describe characteristics of effective teacher.		
Recognize a successful classroom and laboratory management strategy.		
Develop observational skills and techniques.		
Recognize a successful teaching strategy.		
Interact with community members, school staff and administration.		

Learning Strategies

1) From the following activities, please select all activities which occur in your EFE program.

   (Select all that apply)

   -Preservice teacher observation of cooperating teacher.

   -Orientation from university faculty on the expectation of EFE.

   -Develop reflection paper throughout experience (micro-reflections).

   -Note taking of observations while on EFE.

   -Interviewing middle/high school students, cooperating teacher, school counselor,

   principal, etc.

   -Compile list of information regarding the EFE –program visited.

   -Observation of student's behavior by preservice teacher.

   -Observation of student's learning by preservice teacher.

   -Develop written portfolio documentation of experience.

   -Observing the supervision of students SAE projects and activities.

   -Observing the supervision of student FFA projects and activities.

   -Preservice teacher teaching a lesson.

   -Review case studies in a university setting.

   -Student-led discussions by preservice teacher.

2) Are there other types of EFE interactions, purpose(s) or outcomes that have been listed? Yes/No

   If yes, please share them.

Assessment Stage

The program and student assessment in EFE is based on how the experience/program is documented.

Student Assessment

3) How do you assess students' EFE experience (select all that apply)?

-Journaling related to experience

-University supervisor review of documents

-Cooperating teacher – verification/signature

-Preservice student completion of a reflective paper on the experience.

-Collection of key resources and documents.

-Seminar for EFE students to discuss and compare experiences as a group.

-Preservice student completing an observation of the visited agricultural education program (reviewing teaching resources, curriculum, facilities, budget, etc.)

-Development of a portfolio

-Cooperating teacher evaluation

4) Are there other ways your EFE program document student assessment? Yes/No

If yes, please share.

Program Assessment

1) Is your EFE program evaluated?

   Yes – please answer question #2

   No – please advance to the Foundations section below

2) If your EFE program is evaluated, at what level is the program evaluated as part of your teacher education program assessment? (Select all that apply).

   Department/Self Assessment

   University Level

   Accreditation Review

   State Review

   Others – Explain

3) Are there other ways your EFE program documents program assessment? Yes/No

   If yes, please share:

Foundation Stage

The foundation of EFE development is based on the accreditation standards, recommendations of professional organizations, and the state and institutional requirements of the program.

1) What standards drive your EFE program? (Select all that apply)

   Institutional

   State

   National

   Professional

   Others – Explain

2) Which accrediting agency is your program affiliated? (check all that apply)

   -Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)

   -National Council for accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)

   -National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

   -State Accreditation – Identify Below

   -Other – Identify Below

   -None

State Accreditation/Other:

3) Does your teacher education program function within a conceptual framework as suggested by accrediting agencies?

   Yes

   No

4) Are there other standards or policies on which your EFE program is built? Yes/No

   If yes, please explain

Organization Stage

The organization of an EFE program is based on how field experiences are incorporated and EFE courses are aligned within the program.

1) What types of EFE experiences do you offer (check all that apply)?

   Embedded within a course

   Stand alone course

   Other – Explain

Explain:

2) How many different EFE are required of all preservice students/teachers?

   Select from drop down(1- over 15) Number of required early field experience opportunities

Placement

The placement of students in an EFE is based on understanding the requirements of the placement and cooperating teachers.

1) For which grade level is/are the EFE designed (check all that apply)?
   Freshman
   Sophomore
   Junior
   Senior
   Graduate

2) Are students required to select from an approved list of EFE sites?
   Yes – If yes, list the requirements for becoming an approved site.
   No

Requirements for becoming an approved site:

3) Are preservice teachers required to conduct their EFE in a high school/middle school agricultural education program?

   Yes
   No

4) Is EFE required prior to admission to teacher education at your university?

Yes – If yes, list the admission requirements.
No

Admission Requirements for EFE:

5) What is the minimum number of hours a student is expected to participate in the EFE for licensure?

Empty Box Minimum hours

6) Is an EFE orientation program offered to the following individuals involved in EFE?

Yes	No	College/university staff
Yes	No	Cooperating Teachers
Yes	No	EFE students

7) Are there minimum qualifications for teachers prior to being eligible to serve as a EFE cooperating teachers?

Yes – If yes, list the minimum qualifications.
No

Minimum Qualifications for EFE cooperating teachers:

Documents

The documentation of an EFE is a way to provide information prior to the EFE experience and a way to document the experience.

1) Are there a minimum number of site visits the preservice teacher must make to the secondary program as part of the required EFE?

   Yes – If yes, select the required number of site visits.
   No

   Selection from drop down menu Number of required site visits

2) Is an EFE handbook or bulletin available for preservice teachers?

   Yes
   No

3) How many lessons are preservice teachers expected to plan as part of their required EFE?

   Empty Box Number of Lessons Planned
   _____Not Applicable

4) How many lessons are preservice teachers expected to teach as part of their required EFE?

   Empty Box Number of Lessons Taught
   _____Not Applicable

5) Are there other things that we should know about the organization of your EFE program that have not been covered in this section?
   If yes, please share

Demographics

Please select the best response, which represents your program.

1) How would you best describe your university?

   1862 Land Grant
   1890 Land Grant
   Regional/State
   Private
   Other

2) What type of teacher education program does your program offer (check all that apply)?

   Bachelor of Science
   Bachelor of Science, plus one year
   Master of Science
   Other- Explain:

Thank you for your time in response to this survey!

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu.

If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator (515)294-4566, IRB@istate.edu, or Director, (515) 294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, 50011

Fall Contact to Non-Respondents

Pre-Notice Email to Participants

To: Agricultural Teacher Educators

From: Scott Smalley
Graduate Student

Dr. Michael Retallick
Assistant Professor

Earlier this spring you were contacted regarding a national study exploring how early field experience (EFE) programs in agricultural education utilize the EFE model. You are being contacted because you have been identified as either the agricultural teacher education coordinator or program contact person for the agricultural teacher education program at your institution.

I will be sending you a link from Survey Monkey asking you to participate in a national survey regarding your program's early field experience for agricultural teacher education students. Your knowledge and understanding of your program are crucial in collecting accurate data for this study. *You are the only* contact person for your program. Therefore, your participation is vital. If you are not the appropriate person to represent your program, please reply to this message and provide the appropriate person and their contact information.

Please watch for an email from survey monkey in the coming days.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact either me by email (smalle16@iastate.edu or phone 517-896-7476) or Dr. Michael Retallick (msr@iastate.edu or 515-294-4810). If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515)294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515)294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.
Thank you in advance.

Notice Sent with Survey Monkey- 1 day after Pre-Notice (2nd Contact)

To: Agricultural Teacher Educators

From: Scott Smalley
Graduate Student

Dr. Michael Retallick
Assistant Professor

Earlier this year we did not hear from you regarding how your early field experience (EFE) programs in agricultural education utilize the EFE model. You are being contacted because you have been identified as either the teacher education coordinator or program contact person for the agricultural teacher education program at your institution.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this national study survey regarding your programs early field experience for agricultural teacher education students. Your knowledge and experiences is needed by taking 15 minutes of your time to answer the following questions. A link to the online survey is below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8D52RZL

In this study, we are solely interested in group program data and not individual data so confidentiality will be ensured. Your name and email will be collected for the purpose of addressing non-response. However, your personal information will be removed and not associated with the final report. The data collected in this study will be used in partial fulfillment of the doctoral degree requirement in agricultural education at Iowa State University. The published results of this study will serve the agricultural education profession by providing information that could lead to improvements, adjustments or changes in the early field experience of young professionals.

You may withdraw from this study at anytime. If you have questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact, Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515)294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515)294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

Thank you for your cooperation

EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE OF BUSINESS AND FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES EDUCATION

Information to Business/Family and Consumer Science Educators

Pre-Notice Email to Participants

To: Business/Family and Consumer Science Educators
From: Scott Smalley
Graduate Student

Dr. Michael Retallick
Assistant Professor

In a few days, I will begin a national study exploring how early field experience (EFE) programs in business education utilize the EFE model. You are being contacted because you have been identified as either the business education coordinator or program contact person for your program area at your institution.

I will be sending you a link from Survey Monkey asking you to participate in a national survey regarding your program's early field experience for business education students. Your knowledge and understanding of your program are crucial in collecting accurate data for this study. *You are the only* contact person for your program. Therefore, your participation is vital. If you are not the appropriate person to represent your program, please reply to this message and provide the appropriate person and their contact information.

Please watch for an email from survey monkey in the coming days.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact either me by email (smalle16@iastate.edu or phone 517-896-7476) or Dr. Michael Retallick (msr@iastate.edu or 515-294-4810). If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515)294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515)294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

Thank you in advance.

Notice Sent with Survey Monkey- 1 day after Pre-Notice (2nd Contact)

To: Business Educators

From: Scott Smalley
Graduate Student

Dr. Michael Retallick
Assistant Professor

I am conducting a national study exploring how early field experience (EFE) programs in business education utilize the EFE model. You are being contacted because you have been identified as either the business education coordinator or program contact person for your program area at your institution.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this national study survey regarding your programs early field experience for business education students. Your knowledge and experiences is needed by taking 15 minutes of your time to answer the following questions. A link to the online survey is below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8D52RZL

In this study, we are solely interested in group program data and not individual data so confidentiality will be ensured. Your name and email will be collected for the purpose of addressing non-response. However, your personal information will be removed and not associated with the final report. The data collected in this study will be used in partial fulfillment of the doctoral degree requirement in agricultural education at Iowa State University. The published results of this study will serve the career and technical education profession by providing information that could lead to improvements, adjustments or changes in the early field experience of young professionals.

You may withdraw from this study at anytime and you may skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering. If you have questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact, Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515)294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515)294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

Thank you for your cooperation.

3rd Contact Sent One Week After First Notice

To: Business Educators

From: Scott Smalley
Graduate Student

Dr. Michael Retallick
Assistant Professor

Last week, you should have received an email requesting your participation in a national study regarding your program's early field experience for business education students. If you have responded, thank you and disregard this message. However, if you haven't responded, please consider doing so soon. Your knowledge and expertise in your program is crucial in collecting accurate data for this study.

We ask that you complete the electronic survey instrument, which should not take more than 15 minutes of your time to answer the following questions. A link to the online survey is below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8D52RZL

In this study we are solely interested in group program data and not individual data so confidentiality will be ensured. Your name and email will be collected for the purpose of addressing non-response. However, your personal information will be removed and not associated with the final report. The data collected in this study will be used in partial fulfillment of the doctoral degree requirement in agricultural education at Iowa State University. The published results of this study will serve the career and technical profession by providing information that could lead to improvements, adjustments or changes in the early field experience of young professionals.

You may withdraw from this study at anytime and you may skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering. If you have questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact, Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515)294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515)294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

Thank you for your cooperation.

4th Contact Reminder

To: Business Educators

From: Scott Smalley
Graduate Student

Dr. Michael Retallick
Assistant Professor

This is our third attempt to contact you to participate in a national study regarding your programs early field experience for business education students. Your knowledge and expertise in your program are crucial in collecting accurate data for this study.

Please consider taking 15 minutes of your time to answer the following questions. A link to the online survey is below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/8D52RZL

In this study we are solely interested in group program data and not individual data so confidentiality will be ensured. Your name and email will be collected for the purpose of addressing non-response. However, your personal information will be removed and not associated with the final report. The data collected in this study will be used in partial fulfillment of the requirement degree in agricultural education at Iowa State University. The published results of this study will serve the career and technical education profession by providing information that could lead to improvements, adjustments or changes in the early field experience of young professionals.

You may withdraw from this study at anytime and you may skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering. If you have questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact, Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515)294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515)294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

Thank you for your cooperation

5th Contact - Personal Contact by the Researcher via telephone

Hello Dr. _____

My name is Scott Smalley and I am an agricultural education and studies graduate student at Iowa State University. The reason I am contacting you today is for your input on an important topic. This is our final attempt to contact you to participate in a national study regarding your programs early field experience for business education students. Your knowledge and expertise in your program is crucial in collecting accurate data for this study.

Your participation in this national study would require you complete a survey, which should not take you more than 15 minutes to complete.

If yes, I will be sending you a link our survey.

Thank you for your time.

In this study we are solely interested in group program data and not individual data so confidentiality will be ensured. Your name and email will be collected for the purpose of addressing non-response. However, your personal information will be removed and not associated with the final report. The data collected in this study will be used in partial fulfillment of the requirement degree in agricultural education at Iowa State University. The published results of this study will serve the career and technical education profession by providing information that could lead to improvements, adjustments or changes in the early field experience of young professionals.

You may withdraw from this study at anytime and you may skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering. If you have questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact, Scott Smalley at smalle16@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515)294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515)294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

Thank you for your cooperation