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One Pre-Service Program's Dispositional Efforts Revealed

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ONE PRE-SERVICE PROGRAM'S DISPOSITIONAL EFFORTS REVEALED

by

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and the School of Education, George Fox University

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ABSTRACT

This case study examined the pre-service teacher's dispositional development in one small, undergraduate preparation program. The author conducted personal interviews with four former students and two faculty members, and analyzed and triangulated the data with archived artifacts. The study revealed four distinct expressions for dispositional development in the pre-service program: an early and sustained focus on dispositions, modeling by faculty, as well as embedded coursework and multiple practice contexts, with particular emphasis on clinical experience contexts. The four expressions functioned in tandem to foster dispositional development in the pre-service teacher. The research revealed that because the dispositional focus was embedded and integrated throughout the program, the pre-service teacher appeared to carry the dispositional awareness into the first professional teaching position. This conclusion validated the increasing burden and responsibility for pre-service programs to prepare highly qualified teachers with dispositions or heart for career longevity. Of particular significance, faculty and student participants acknowledged the unique link between the program's dispositions and the college's faith-based approach. The study affirmed the pre-service program's efforts to implement a dispositional focus with recommendations to compare programs of similar size, as well as conduct follow up interviews with participants in a longitudinal study to trace the program's dispositional efforts.

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The discipline of gratitude is the explicit effort to acknowledge that all I am and have is given to me as a gift of love, a gift to be celebrated with joy. Henry Nouwen

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

In the high stakes business of teacher education, pre-service programs are continually faced with the complexities associated with preparing teachers with: 1) a solid foundation of content, pedagogy, and skills for the K-12 classroom; and 2) dispositions or the softer, more intangible skills related to the heart of teaching. Through the years, the intricacies associated with teaching, state credential offices, the shifting social and political climates, and changing standards made creating a construct for pre-service programs an enormous challenge. In light of the recently released and highly controversial National Council on Teacher Quality's *Teacher Prep Review Report* (2013), that deemed most United States' pre-service programs failures, teacher educators face even greater public pressure to develop and deliver quality candidates for K-12 classrooms.

Over the years, most researchers and educators in the field agreed that teaching was a moral craft combining dispositions or habits of mind, heart, and practice. Researchers ascertained that there was a great deal of latitude to how institutions defined, developed, and fostered the development of dispositions in pre-service teachers (Osguthorpe, 2008; Palmer, 1998; Schussler & Knarr, 2012; Thornton, 2006). Since, to date, there continues to be no current blueprint or universal framework to define and measure professional teaching dispositions, teacher educators wrestle with how institutions construct, interpret, and assess dispositions in pre-service programs. In recent years, the urgency for more dialogue elicited the necessity to develop a dispositional framework and shared vocabulary within the academy; there is no gold standard for institutions to unite over the cause (Hughes, 2012). Traditionally, most researchers agreed that dispositions were a

significant priority in pre-service programs that could be cultivated when specific learning opportunities were provided (Darling-Hammond, 1986; Ginsberg & Whaley 2006; Harrison et al., 2006; Murrell, Diez, Feiman-Nemser & Schussler, 2010; Schussler & Knarr, 2012). Much of the past research supported pre-service programs naming, fostering, and assessing specific dispositions essential to the practice of teaching and learning (Johnson, 2008; Murrell et al., 2010; Richardson & Placier, 2001, Sockett, 2010). Traditionally there was little long-term vision in the realm of dispositions beyond the notion that dispositional work was important. One study concluded that dispositions were a mechanism to build a pre-service teacher's awareness of self so to connect intentions with practice (Schussler & Knarr, 2012). This study reinforced the claim that dispositions were a vital component of pre-service programs and teacher development. The authors recommended further exploration to construct and link dispositional awareness, experiences, and practice in the classroom with specific course components and activities.

In 2011, the pre-service program in this case study developed a dispositions statement to first identify distinct dispositions relevant to teacher development in the program. Secondly, using the dispositions statement, the program initiated efforts to foster the development of the dispositions in pre-service students (see Appendix A). Together, faculty and students committed to seek and demonstrate the dispositions in coursework and in clinical experiences.

The program of study was part of a small, undergraduate, Christian college. The program's dispositions emphasized and blended themes from the college's mission statement, the college's community life statement, and the California's Teacher

Performance Expectations (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2001).

The three dispositions of focus for the pre-service program were:

1. *Life-long love of learning* - displays curiosity and passion for learning and transferring enthusiasm for learning to others. “Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning” (NIV, Proverbs 9:9).
2. *Reflective spirit* – displays a willingness to discover and develop habits of growth and self-awareness. “I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw” (NIV, Proverbs 24:32).
3. *Compassionate professional* – displays sympathy, empathy, and responsiveness to others’ needs. “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience” (NIV, Colossians 3:12).

In an effort to foster a Christian worldview in pre-service students, the program linked each of the dispositions to Biblical scripture. These dispositions did not tell the total story of the pre-service student’s journey at this institution, but the program ascertained that the dispositions were essential to pre-service training because they arrived at the heart of teacher development. Since the emphasis on dispositions was a recent addition to the pre-service program, the impact of the program’s efforts had not yet been explored.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this case study was to explore the dispositional development of pre-service teachers at a small, undergraduate, Christian institution in California.

Specifically, personal interviews with faculty, personal interviews with former pre-

service students, and archived course artifacts were analyzed in an effort to examine program expressions and possible associations between dispositional awareness, course activities, and clinical experience in the pre-service program. Through the research process, there was potential to gain greater understanding about dispositional development and related gaps in the program of study.

Research Questions

In this qualitative study, I integrated multiple data sources to build a profile of the pre-service teacher's dispositional development in the program. As part of the investigative process I sought to answer the following fundamental questions:

1. What did the expression of pre-service teacher dispositions, as articulated by faculty, students, and archived artifacts, look like in the program of study?
2. What impact did the program's focus on dispositions have on the pre-service teacher while in the program?
3. What impact did the program's focus on dispositions have on the pre-service teacher as she continued to develop as a professional in her first teaching position?

The research questions evolved as I engaged in data collection and analysis.

Key Terms

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing – the state agency created to oversee the credentialing of California’s teachers.

California Preliminary Multiple Subject Credential – the initial professional earned credential that allows teachers to teach grades K-6 in California’s public schools.

California Preliminary Single Subject Credential - the initial professional earned credential in a specific subject or content area that allows teachers to teach grades 7 - 12 in California’s public schools.

California Teacher Performance Expectations – 13 performance expectations approved in 2001 by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The expectations serve as the current standard or rubric for pre-service programs and school districts to evaluate teacher development and performance (see Appendix B).

Clinical Experience – K-12 classroom experiences where pre-service students practice the professional art of teaching as a requirement to earning an approved teaching credential.

Dispositions – “the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development, as well as the educator’s own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by the knowledge bases and beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility and social justice. The positive behaviors support student learning and development” (NCATE, 2001, p. 30).

Dispositional Awareness – the conscious perception or self-awareness to name, define, and understand professional teaching dispositions.

Dispositional Development – the ongoing process of cultivating and applying professional teaching dispositions in practice.

National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) – a council of educators founded in 1954 to ensure the quality of teacher preparation. NCATE is committed to quality teaching providing accreditation, standards and policies, and financial support for teacher education.

National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) – an advocacy group founded in 2000 to challenge and overhaul the education system. In June 2013, the group released the *Teacher Prep Review 2013 Report* declaring most United States teacher preparation programs inadequate.

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) – Public Law Print of PL 107-110 legislation requiring all public schools receiving federal funding to administer annual state-wide standardized tests to students. The primary goal of NCLB was to increase accountability. In short, schools had to improve scores on the annual standardized tests or be subject to restructuring (The No Child Left Behind Act, 2001).

Pre-service Teacher Dispositions Statement – statement from the pre-service program of study that places particular emphasis on three pre-service teacher dispositions: *life-long love of learning, reflective spirit, and compassionate professional.*

Limitations and Delimitations

Historically, the nature of qualitative research attempted to understand the personal experiences of individuals. In the past researchers, when exploring pre-service teachers' dispositional development, most often used qualitative research. In this study, multiple data sources were used to conceptualize and contextualize the dispositional development of the pre-service teacher. The direction of qualitative research evolved as understanding of the topic deepened.

As previously mentioned, a significant dilemma existed for dispositional researchers because of the lack of uniformity to how pre-service programs defined and approached dispositional development and measurement. After examining a collection of seven case studies from various pre-service programs in the United States, researchers (Murrell et al., 2010) challenged pre-service programs to probe and articulate their own dispositional developmental and progression to best prepare 21st century teachers. Exploration of individual programs, like the one in this study, welcomed the challenge to contribute to the breadth of research in the pre-service field.

Following the case study research model, bound by place and time, I focused my research on one pre-service program. This could be considered a delimitation of the study, but I entrusted the research to reveal particulars about the human dimension of teaching and guide the pre-service program into greater effectiveness. Another delimitation of this study was the size of the participant pool. Because the program of study was small, the pool of prospective former student participants that taught and lived in close proximity to the institution was limited. The faculty participant pool was also limited due to the size of the program. This specific delimitation was strictly based on

researcher choice and convenience, justifying the need to use multiple data sources that included personal interviews with faculty, personal interviews with former pre-service students, and archived course artifacts. I chose to triangulate the interview data with available archived artifacts such as essays, reflections, and electronic portfolios in order to develop a detailed profile of the pre-service teacher's dispositional development. The data proved to deliver detailed information for study.

Summary

This case study explored the dispositional development of pre-service teachers in a single program through the perspective of pre-service faculty, former pre-service students, and archived artifacts. The next chapter contains a review of existing literature on dispositional development, demonstrating the need for additional analysis of specific pre-service programs, as well as application to the broader field.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

Introduction

The purpose of the literature review was to define dispositional development and examine factors that contributed to the development of teacher dispositions in pre-service programs. Much of the research suggested that a focus on dispositions was significant to pre-service programs, pre-service teacher preparation and effectiveness, and ultimately long-term teacher success. Some research suggested that dispositions could ultimately lead to making a difference in student achievement (Giovannelli, 2003). Others proposed that there was value and possible links between dispositional development, clinical experiences, reflection, pedagogy, and activities (Schusslar & Knarr, 2012). Implications of the research, gaps in the field, as well as suggestions for future research were explored in this literature review.

Significance and Dispositions Defined

In the last several decades, researchers engaged in lively discourse about how to define dispositions and about the role that teacher dispositions played in pre-service teacher development, effective practice, and even student achievement. Some proposed support for theoretical considerations rooted in the principles of educational philosopher John Dewey (Johnson, 2008; Meadows, 2006). Dewey claimed that dispositions and habits of mind matter to the welfare of the larger democratic society; therefore, they were valuable to educators and their pupils. His encouragement to develop dispositional awareness served as an early indication to defining dispositions as attributes (1916;

1938). This research later led to an increased awareness that dispositions could be cultivated and was relevant to teacher effectiveness (Meadows, 2006; Thornton, 2006).

In 2006, Ginsberg concluded that additional work was needed to create a framework for teacher dispositions. Dispositions then became a greater national priority for pre-service programs as research in the field stretched in different directions in search of a gold standard. Although not all pre-service programs received accreditation by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), most programs traditionally consulted NCATE as a trusted resource for professional standards. In 2001, NCATE defined teacher dispositions as “Professional attitudes, values and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues and communities. These positive behaviors support learning and development.” NCATE’s definition emphasized that there was more to teaching than curriculum and standards. Embracing NCATE’s lead, some researchers in the field began to describe dispositions as a professional action or moral commitment (Diez & Murrell, 2010). Others defined the concept of dispositions as morality at the center of a teacher’s work (Fallona & Canniff, 2010). These researchers saw dispositions as a blending of knowledge, skills, and morality. Schussler and Knarr (2012) built on this idea that dispositions were moral sensibilities needed to prepare and cultivate a quality teacher. The authors concluded that dispositions were essential to the why and what of teachers’ decisions and practice.

In the last decade, with much of the nation’s educational focus on No Child Left Behind, accountability, and testing, the moral dimension of teaching often associated with dispositions and teacher training was essentially ignored. Many studies suggested

that increased exploration of dispositional development was warranted to compensate for much of the previous decade's emphasis on skills and methods (Schussler, Stooksberry & Bercaw, 2010). Recently, Osguthorpe (2013) claimed that when the moral work of teaching was addressed in the field, the scope was usually narrow; specifically, dispositions were addressed only technically, which reduced their impact on both teacher and students. Additional attacks on teacher education, like those found in NCTQ's *Teacher Prep Review Report* (2013), brought an additional layer of controversy to the conversation, as well as increased pressure for pre-service programs to produce the best and the brightest candidates for the profession.

Other literature revealed that effective teachers prioritized and promoted intangible values in order to inform teacher decision-making and classroom climate (Nowak-Fabrykowski & Caldwell, 2002; Rinalso, 2009). Some researchers supported the idea that when dispositions were examined through classroom interactions, perceptions, and responses, dispositions contributed to a greater understanding of effective teaching (Schussler, 2006; Walker, Darcel, Lea & Summers, 2011). Conflicting research later defined dispositions as a "superfluous construct" (Murray, 2007, p. 386) for behaviors in need of further investigation. Still others in the field acknowledged that dispositions were about more than behaviors since the pre-service teacher brings her own dispositions, beliefs, and assumptions to the pre-service program and classroom (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007). This assertion supported teacher education programs that stressed the connections between learning, development, and context, and further highlighted the belief that dispositions and teacher attitudes worked hand in hand with pedagogical knowledge and practice. In other words, many researchers made distinct associations

between dispositions, skills, and competencies (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Lee & Herner-Patnode, 2010; Mueller & Hindin, 2011; Splitter, 2010).

Ultimately, although pre-service programs defined dispositions differently and without a clear framework, many researchers in the field agreed that dispositions played just as a significant a role to a pre-service teacher's training as the traditional development of content knowledge and skills (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Lee & Herner-Patnode, 2010; Schussler, Bercaw & Stooksberry, 2008). Hence, the reviewed research suggested dispositional development could not be discounted in the scope of pre-service teacher training.

The Question of Assessment

A recent study revealed that pre-service teachers' perceived attitudes and relationships were more significant to being an effective teacher than theoretical knowledge (Mueller & Hindin, 2011). The authors proposed that if teacher preparation programs emphasized more than the content and pedagogy of teaching, the efforts would increase teacher effectiveness. The study recommended further assessment of teacher dispositions in individual teacher preparation programs, offering additional support for for my intended study.

Although there was agreement that the development of teacher dispositions in pre-service teachers was a significant component for teacher preparation, the controversial topic of how pre-service programs assessed teachers' dispositions continued to be a major component of the reviewed research. Because of the lack of norms to assess teacher dispositions, discourse in the educational community most often focused on the incongruity surrounding how to measure dispositions. One study concluded that there

was a great deal of freedom for interpreting and assessing dispositions that left individual programs to borrow from one another or create their own dispositional frameworks and assessment tools (Ginsberg & Whaley, 2006). To look at particulars, some studies highlighted using only observation as the norm for a program's dispositional assessment; others suggested using surveys or a combination of both observation and survey to track awareness and student progress (Johnson, 2008; Lee, 2010; Rinalso, Denig & Sheeran, 2009). Recently data, in the form of journals and artifacts, was examined to track dispositional development (Schussler, Stooksberry & Bercaw, 2010).

Among several studies, there was significant agreement that pre-service programs must examine dispositions in meaningful ways (Harrison et al., 2006; Ginsberg & Whaley, 2006). Sustained work was recommended to develop a common understanding of the dispositions candidates should possess and display in the classroom (Wilkerson & Lang, 2007). Some studies claimed that enhancing pre-service teacher dispositions or values was grounded in building awareness. These researchers suggested that pre-service programs needed to link and provide opportunities for teachers to consider and translate their morals and values into actions in a variety of classroom contexts (Schussler & Knarr, 2012).

To date, most pre-service programs are committed to nurturing some form of professional dispositional development (Murrell et al., 2010); specifically, and as previously noted, programs approached incorporating teacher dispositions in theory, coursework, and clinical experiences in individual ways (Lee, 2010; Walker, 2011). Some suggested that if agreement was reached and dispositions were clearly defined, the

outcome could lead to accepted or standardized assessment instruments in the field (Ginsberg & Whaley, 2006).

Over the years, Darling-Hammond (1986; 1999; 2006) articulated the need for meaningful teacher evaluation so that teachers could be evaluated on good teaching practice that included making sound decisions. The author affirmed the need and importance of professional standards as a priority for highly qualified, effective teachers. Splitter (2010) argued that subjectivity was a concern when assessing teacher dispositions. He encouraged teacher education programs to engage in greater dialogue about what caused behavior and actually moved teachers to action. The author emphasized the need to develop deeper, improved thinking about teacher dispositions.

The topic of teacher dispositions remained not only part of the national education debate, but also a priority to individual states. Since 2001, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing required specific Teacher Performance Expectations or TPE's as a framework and accountability measure for pre-service programs. TPE expectations included teacher ownership and responsibility for professional and ethical obligations, the use of reflection and feedback to improve teaching practice and knowledge, and for teachers to understand, establish, and maintain a positive environment for learning. Listed under the heading of Professional and Legal Obligations, TPE 12 specifically addressed the expectation that teachers "are aware of their own their own personal values and biases and recognize ways in which these values and biases affect the teaching and learning of students" (p. 45-46). Related to professional growth, TPE 13 required that "Candidates understand and honor all laws relating to professional misconduct and moral fitness. They are aware of and act in accordance with ethical considerations and they

model ethical behaviors for students” (p. 46). Furthermore, TPE 13 focused on professional growth that involved soliciting, using and applying feedback as well as reflection to improve teaching and discern problems. These state specific expectations appeared to merge dispositions and matters of the heart as part of teacher development.

Throughout the literature, measuring dispositions, dispositional development, and a teacher’s heart and values remained a complex, multi-faceted process that required several forms of assessment (Harrison et al., 2006). This conclusion revealed the priority to, not only identify dispositions, but to explore how to translate dispositions into observable behaviors, and then design and validate assessment instruments to ensure candidate self-assessment. Increased pressure and dialogue among researchers surfaced to link dispositional awareness and development to specific actions and activities.

The Question of Practice

Agreement in much of the literature suggested an association between knowledge, skills, and the attitudes needed in teacher preparation for teacher competence (Darling-Hammond; 1999; Lee & Herner-Patnode, 2010; Schussler et al., 2008). As previously stated, many in the field agreed that dispositions were essential to the skill set that teachers needed to learn and develop (Palmer 1998; Schulman 2004; Toreman, 2011). Furthermore, one study suggested that teachers ought to teach compassionately solely for the sake of the profession (Osguthorpe, 2008). Additional research by Darling-Hammond stated that caring, competent, and qualified teachers should be well prepared, diverse, and culturally sensitive professionals. This approach added a focus on care, sensitivity, and compassion for others, and aligned with Noddings’ research related to the care of and for others (2003).

Through the years, research suggested that pre-service teachers should respect differences as social responsibility and should internalize values for their students and society's benefit (Toreman, 2011); teachers should not only be knowledgeable in content, but they should also be culturally sensitive. Additional scholars in the field concluded that it was imperative for pre-service teachers to be culturally sensitive and able to acknowledge, appreciate, and celebrate student differences (Lee & Herner-Patnode, 2010; Toreman, 2011). Similarly, a research team examined pre-service teachers and faculty at Ohio State University. The team concluded that more course assignments related to diverse student populations needed to be implemented in their program's course of study (Lee & Herner-Patnode, 2010). Additionally, to improve the teacher education program of study, the authors recommended increased reflective guidance in the area of cultural awareness and sensitivity for pre-service students, highlighting the need for more faculty training. This study supported the earlier challenge by Schussler (2006) that urged teacher education programs to value dispositions, engage in self-exploration, connect knowledge and practice in the field, identify personal values and assumptions, acquire knowledge and skills to develop the intangibles, and provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to reflect on their classroom decision making. In the same way, Johnson (2008) supported the efforts of pre-service programs to intentionally integrate the development of dispositions into teacher preparation courses and fieldwork experiences. By doing so, pre-service teachers engaged in the practice of the awareness of self and others in a broader social and cultural context, and once again, highlighted the significance of nurturing dispositional development.

The Role of Clinical Experience

For the purposes of this study, clinical experience was defined as required K-12 classroom experience where pre-service teachers practice the professional art of teaching. The theory that humans develop knowledge from an interaction between experience and ideas suggested that pre-service teachers develop dispositions through clinical experiences (Splitter, 2010). Although much of the research confirmed that pre-service programs valued and promoted professional dispositions, traditionally, pre-service programs placed more emphasis for preparation on the intellectual, or academic, over the experiential (Schussler et al., 2008). Newer research suggested that there were dispositional links to context specific activities or actions in the context of clinical experience (Schussler & Knarr, 2012; Schussler et al., 2010). One study challenged pre-service programs to provide opportunities that armed practitioners with content knowledge and dispositional awareness within classroom contexts in order to make an impact on students (Diez, 2007). Some of the research encouraged pre-service programs to prioritize developing and studying pre-service students' awareness of dispositions to specifically transfer self-awareness into action in the classroom (Dinkleman, 2003; Schussler & Knarr, 2012). This research also suggested that there was an important intersection to be explored between developing pre-service student awareness as a tool to improve practice and the preparation program.

Other researchers proclaimed that dispositions should be shaped throughout a preparation program (Stooksberry et al., 2009). The authors recommended that future research was needed to examine the development of dispositions through intellectual, cultural, and moral domains, to once again connect the mind, classroom, and heart.

Development included examining one's own belief systems in the context of a classroom and students, examining the opportunities provided for dispositional awareness within teacher education programs, and examining specific ways pre-service teachers successfully demonstrate dispositions. Hollins' (2011) reinforced support for teacher preparation that provided experiences for pre-service teachers to experience, learn, interpret, and respond in authentic classroom contexts. Howells (2012) later concluded teachers that practiced their skills, essentially invited the practice in preparation and training in order to become more highly skilled. In her unique case study on the disposition of gratitude, Howells described the famous music teacher, Shinichi Suzuki, who encouraged her own students to gain pleasure from practice itself. Suzuki concluded that character was built through consistent practice. Howells promoted Suzuki's idea that purposeful practice executed with heart moved an individual from a state of action to a state of practice and repeated performance.

Just as John Dewey (1916; 1938) affirmed that quality experiences found in human interactions resulted in the growth of an individual, strong agreement was found in the literature that clinical pre-service experiences in classrooms fostered and contributed to a heightened awareness of professional dispositions (Diez, 2007; Hollon, Kolis, McIntyre, Stephens & Battalio, 2010). Some authors claimed that teachers cultivated dispositions through interactions with students, in the context of classroom experiences, as they made decisions, reacted to students and behavior, and worked to meet the needs of students (Lee & Herner-Patnode, 2010). One study concluded that when pre-service teachers were given opportunities to integrate dispositions, knowledge and skill, they made

connections between their own assumptions and content, and transferred the connections to students' learning needs (Diez, 2007).

Some research recommended that pre-service programs intentionally plan for dispositional development by providing disposition rich learning experiences and models (Knoblauch & Hoy, 2007; Misco & Shiveley, 2010). This conclusion built on earlier claims that attitudes for good teaching were developed through experiences (Darling-Hammond, 1999). Almost a decade later, Johnson (2008) concluded that teacher preparation programs should prioritize and allow candidates to use their own experiences and classroom predicaments to develop ethical judgment in the classroom. The author was a proponent for pre-service development of dispositional skills using authentic "real life" classroom experiences linked directly to pre-service coursework.

In the reviewed literature, clinical experience emerged as a key factor in a teacher's dispositional development (Schussler & Knarr, 2012). Just as Schussler (2006) described actions and events in the clinical experience as a place or point of convergence; pre-service programs needed to provide opportunities for dispositions and the classroom experience to merge and translate into action. Moreover, clinical practice in context led and conditioned pre-service teachers to develop and learn from experience. In 2010, Lee and Herner-Patnode's inquiry aligned with this idea and determined that dispositional practice and discovery happened in various classroom settings. Hence, in the pre-service environment, researchers argued that novice teachers should be given various opportunities to make decisions about curriculum, behavior, professional attitudes, and responses to students. Only through consistent trial and error in the contexts of clinical experience can the pre-service teacher develop professional dispositions.

The Role of Reflection

It proved difficult to examine dispositions without considering the role that reflection plays in dispositional development. Mueller and Hindin (2011) argued that field experiences for the pre-service teacher often revealed mixed conclusions about dispositional development. The authors suggested that pre-service programs needed to prioritize and develop reflection as a significant tool to foster increased awareness of professional dispositions. Just as Dewey enforced the need for habits of mind, teachers needed to routinely evaluate and examine self and values. Modern day education programs must encourage self-reflection in dispositional development (Meadows, 2006; Smith & Lennon, 2011). The teacher should value each student, cultivate open-mindedness, learn from multiple points of view, and participate in active and reflective inquiry. Meadows recommended that teachers think deeply about their craft to examine dispositions and form habits that lead or transfer to teacher effectiveness. The author determined that when dispositions were valued and modeled by the teacher, they were nurtured in students, thus offering additional support to the theory that dispositions could be fostered and developed through intentional reflective practice.

In 2003, Giovannelli concluded that there was a significant relationship between reflection and effective teaching. Several years later, a group of researchers examined 30 teacher candidates in three dispositional domains: the intellectual, cultural, and moral (Schussler et al., 2008). The authors determined that the intellectual domain appeared most often to guide most classroom decisions, thus highlighting the need for teachers to become aware of personal and professional dispositions to be effective in the classroom. The researchers recommended added inquiry regarding the intersection and integration of

the domains, rather than only focus on them in isolation. They suggested that possible links between dispositions, a teacher's beliefs, experience, values, culture and intellectual abilities, and a teacher's actions led to effective instruction. Additionally, increased urgency emerged for pre-service programs to cultivate greater self-awareness of dispositions in the beginning of a pre-service program to thoughtfully track and identify how candidate's awareness develops over time. One author concluded that dispositions must be integrated throughout a program from start to finish (Sherman, 2013). Another researcher fervently cautioned against the idea of framing and examining dispositional development in isolation from coursework and practice (Osguthorpe, 2008). Hence, the question persisted of how to blend and infuse dispositions throughout a pre-service program to create meaning and purpose for the developing teacher.

Additional studies offered support for the inclusion of experiences for pre-service teachers to critique and reflect on their work (Giovannelli, 2003; Rinalso et al., 2009). Professional reflective practice in writing, internally, or verbally, most often demonstrated the intentional action, understanding, and analysis of ones' actions in the classroom. Thus, much of the literature encouraged reflective practice as a necessary tool to nurture dispositional development (Dinkleman, 2003; Schussler et al., 2010). Researchers recommended reflection be labeled and used as a helpful resource to document not only a candidate's perceptions, but also the changes in an individual's perceptions over time (Thornton, 2006).

Conclusions

Although there appeared to be strong agreement in the literature for teacher dispositions to retain a crucial role in the greater dialogue in teacher education, the scope

of the literature and topic of study was somewhat limited. In the last 20 years the breadth of related research expanded, yet many of the relevant facets of dispositional development remained ripe for study. Researchers in the field called for further exploration on the topic of dispositions and development in the pre-service teacher (Diez, 2007; Stooksberry et al., 2009). Consistently, the reviewed research identified that the craft of teaching remained a complex and multi-layered enterprise. Much of the cited research in the literature review affirmed that there was strong, significant value to incorporating professional dispositions into pre-service programs in order to develop the pre-service teacher and her practice. There was consensus among the majority of the research that there were gaps regarding the methodology and abundant options for application of professional dispositions in the pre-service field (Walker, 2011). Specific gaps also existed in the literature between perceptions and practice. Recently, research prompted the call for teacher education programs to foster learning about dispositions “from and in practice” (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 42).

In the literature review, the critical gap emerged around examining how heavy a role clinical experience should play in dispositional development. Questions developed as to the role that reflection played in dispositional development and pre-service teacher preparation. Still, future research is needed to understand the relationship between specific pre-service programs, clinical experience and practice, as well as the influences particular programs have on K-12 students. The call for additional examination, as to whether or not the awareness of professional dispositions for pre-service teachers changed through the course of individual teacher preparation programs, further supports

the need for this study. The following chapter reviews the methodology for the present study.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Introduction

For this case study, I chose to investigate the dispositional development of pre-service teachers at an undergraduate Christian institution in California. I set out to explore specific factors that contributed to the expression of the college's pre-service teacher dispositions as articulated by faculty, former pre-service students, and demonstrated by archived course artifacts. My goal throughout the study was to ascertain what the pre-service teacher's dispositional development looked like in the program of study. Using multiple data sources, I hoped to gain greater understanding about the program's efforts to express the dispositions, as well as identify related gaps in the program. I also sought to identify and articulate associations with current theory in teacher preparation, as well as the implications for future research.

This chapter outlines the key components of the research process beginning with the methodology and design for the investigation. Ethical considerations for participation in the research, the study's setting, data collection, and analysis, as well as potential contributions of the research are described.

Setting

The site for this case study was a Christian undergraduate institution located in California. At the time of the study, the college population was approximately 1200 students. The program of study hosted a liberal studies major for the bachelor's degree with the option of earning a California Preliminary Multiple Subject Teaching Credential (K - 6th grades) in either four or five years of study. Additionally, a California

Preliminary Single Subject Teaching Credential (7th – 12th grades) for mathematics, music, English, Spanish, science, art, history, or physical education majors was an offered option with a bachelor's degree in four or five years of study.

Participants and Sampling Strategy

Targeted sampling was used to select participants and also inform greater understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2013). For the study, I chose to analyze data from former pre-service students that had completed the program in the previous two years. Enrollment history for the program of study for 2011-2012 included 11 total students: five elementary candidates, five secondary candidates, and one candidate earning both multiple subject and single subject credentials. The 2012-2013 program enrollment included 20 total students with 11 elementary candidates and nine secondary candidates.

Traditionally, prospective pre-service teachers applied to the pre-service program in the spring before their fourth or fifth year of study. Pre-requisite courses, a personal philosophy of education statement, grade point average, personal recommendations, and undergraduate transcripts were considered in the application process. California's Preliminary Multiple Subject Credential and Preliminary Single Subject Credential also required coursework in language acquisition, diversity, methodology, instruction, educational psychology, teaching special populations, literacy, and health, for credential completion. Once enrolled, the pre-service program required pre-service teachers to complete three distinct clinical experiences that aligned with specific courses in the program. Clinical experience requirements included: 1) 40 pre-requisite hours as a pre-professional in a K-12 classroom assisting the teacher and working with students; 2) 30

hours serving in a K-12 classroom requiring observation, interaction with students, a literacy component, and limited teaching; and 3) a full-time student teaching experience of 12 units, with takeover and observation each day, occurring during the second semester of study of the pre-service year. These required units were taken in conjunction with three units of Student Teaching Seminar and faculty support.

In addition to the state requirements, the pre-service program of study chose to incorporate a dispositional framework into the program to highlight specific dispositions that faculty seek to demonstrate and embed in coursework throughout the program. The program acknowledged the multitude of professional dispositions for teachers, but chose to place specific emphasis on three dispositions: *life-long love of learning*, *reflective spirit*, and *compassionate professional*. Because the program of study was part of a Christian institution, the dispositions were crafted to align with the tenets of the college mission as well as Biblical scripture. The program emphasized the integration of content, pedagogical knowledge and skills, as well as dispositional awareness, to prepare qualified teachers.

The primary criteria I elected to use to select former student participants included: 1) all earned a teaching credential and completed the pre-service program between 2011 – 2013; 2) when enrolled in the pre-service program, all were aware of the program's three dispositions and committed to seek and demonstrate the dispositions in theory and practice; 3) all were willing to participate in the research and articulate their experiences; 4) all were teaching in K-12 classroom settings in close proximity to the researcher. I chose a small target participant sample to study, in order to focus my research lens on dispositional development, and invite an increased transparency to richly describe, detail,

and capture the voice of the pre-service teacher's dispositional development in the program. After identifying a pool of participants, I planned to randomly select former pre-service students that met the study's criteria. I elected to assign an identifying number to each former pre-service student and would then ask a trusted colleague to randomly choose the participants. Among the four participants, I hoped to find a balance of multiple subject and single subject credential participants that represented the program's population.

For this case study, I determined that conducting personal interviews of the former pre-service students would allow for common themes to emerge as well as preserve the independent thinking of the participants. I strategically planned to pilot a personal interview with an alternate participant in order to refine questions and procedures, as well as prevent bias. I also arranged to collect and examine course artifacts from the four former pre-service students to gather particulars, details, added depth and insight to the research profile.

At the time of the study, the pre-service program employed three full-time teaching faculty. Since I served as one of the program's faculty members, I planned to conduct individual personal interviews with my two colleagues. Each would be asked to participate in the case study to add faculty perspective. Each would be given an identifying number for confidentiality. Prospective faculty participants held 69 years combined of teaching experience in elementary schools, secondary schools, and higher education.

Research Design, Data Collection, and Analytical Procedures

As I designed the study, I concluded that qualitative study methods were the most appropriate for my research purposes, especially since case study could yield a detailed profile and in-depth understanding of the pre-service teacher's dispositional development in the program of study. Examining multiple data sources would allow for rich, in-depth analysis of the pre-service program (Creswell, 2013). In addition to the faculty and former pre-service student interviews, I planned to gather and examine archived course artifacts, such as course syllabi, essays, clinical experience reflections, and electronic portfolios to capture and accurately describe participants' perceptions and experiences. I also planned to triangulate the data by employing a three-step process to look for repetition, categories, patterns, and a priori themes. Because of the nature of qualitative research, I remained open to mining other data sources that could become relevant during the course of study.

I designed the study's personal interviews in a series of steps. First I planned to develop a set of open-ended guide questions for the faculty interviews (see Appendix C), and an additional set of open-ended guide questions for the former pre-service student interviews (see Appendix D). Questions were written to focus a lens on the nature of dispositional development in the pre-service program. I planned to give guide questions to faculty and former pre-service student participants approximately one week before each interview to stimulate thinking and reflection. I determined that each of the faculty and former pre-service student participants would participate in one individual interview. I planned to digitally record the personal interviews and conduct each in a quiet, distraction free location.

For the case study, I recognized the importance of ethical considerations for the study, including the use of bracketing, a qualitative research method that allows the researcher to honestly address the relationship of the researcher to the participants being studied (Creswell, 2013). When I took on the role of researcher, I acknowledged that I also served as one of three full-time faculty members and had previously taught or advised all of the potential research participants in the program of study. By using bracketing, I planned to minimize the effect of the past student-professor relationships on the results and conclusions of the study. I planned to collect data from personal interviews with former pre-service students, rather than current students, to minimize risk and potential pressure. The established relationships would be beneficial in establishing trust with the participants, yet I intended to make every effort to keep personal bias and assumptions to a minimum in order to maintain objectivity through the study.

At the start of the study, I had just entered my 25th year in education. Thus, as the researcher, my research lens included broad career experiences as a former junior high teacher in a public school, a former public high school administrator, and a professor of education in higher education. These career experiences would allow me to examine the data through multiple lenses that would benefit to the study.

I deliberately chose to keep thorough notes in a field journal throughout the study to bring greater awareness and accountability as the researcher. I was determined to transcribe the interviews personally to immerse myself in the details of the data and enhance my understanding of dispositional development. To ensure credibility and accuracy of the transcripts I strategized to use member checking and peer debriefing. For member checking, I intended to share transcripts with the participants to authenticate the

recorded responses. I also sought out a faculty colleague that could provide an impartial, external check of the data with the goal to remain aware of my own assumptions and biases about the topic. As I set up the study, I realized the direction of the inductive research could evolve through the research process.

Next, I planned to analyze the first hand experiences I collected. I chose triangulation as a method to focus the lens on a particular perspective or theme and validate the evidence from the various data sources (Creswell, 2013). I intended to integrate the personal interviews with site artifacts to add depth to my understanding of the data and build a profile of the pre-service teacher's dispositional development. I intended to analyze and code the data for themes and patterns shared by the participants, hoping to yield synthesis and greater meaning to the study. I planned to also categorize and describe potential themes in the study, hoping to use descriptive explanations with quotations and anecdotes as supporting evidence for the developing conclusions. In order to limit misinterpretations, I planned to present and integrate similar studies and contrasting research with the study's findings. I anticipated that recommendations for further research would emerge during the research process.

Ethical Considerations and Role of the Researcher

In the study's design, I planned to inform participants, both faculty and students, of the purposes and procedures of the study. Participants would be made aware of the time commitment, that their participation was voluntary, and that they had the right to refuse to answer particular questions, as well as withdraw from the study at any time. They would be asked to sign an informed consent letter (see Appendix E). Because the former pre-service student participants completed the college's pre-service program and had

already earned either a California Preliminary Multiple Subject Teaching Credential or a California Preliminary Single Subject Teaching Credential, there was no concern about professor or supervisor pressure to participate. For the purposes of this case study, I committed to authentically explore the data and report my findings honestly.

I arranged to apply for approval and follow the college of study's Internal Review Board (IRB) procedures throughout the study, assuring participants that their confidentiality was protected. I decided to identify participants in transcripts and artifacts with the titles of "Faculty Participant 1" and "Student Participant A" to ensure the personal identity and confidentiality of each participant. As part of the data collection, I ascertained that I would use available site documents as course artifacts from former pre-service students. According to the Code of Federal Regulations 46:101, educators are given exemption for the involvement of humans in research in "commonly accepted educational settings involving normal educational practices." I planned to inform the research participants that the data, artifacts, and digital recordings of interviews, would be kept in a locked cabinet for the duration of the study. I intended to inform participants that the study's purpose was for dissertation research and part of doctoral degree completion. Three years after dissertation publication, I planned to destroy the data.

In order to be a conscientious researcher, I prepared to assure participants that there was little to no risk for participation due to the innocuous nature of the study. Although I was personally invested in the students and the program of study, I planned to clearly articulate to the participants the need to carefully guard and monitor their perspectives, as well as my own, through the research process. I planned to make conscious efforts to remain professional throughout the study in order to construct the pre-service teacher's

story. Participation benefits included personal reflection for each participant about her own pre-service experience, and personal contribution to advance the program of study. Historically, graduates of the college have welcomed involvement and enjoyed giving back to the college community as alumni.

The college of study's IRB was responsible for primary study approval since the setting for the research was at and near the college in California. At the time of the study, since I was a doctoral student researcher, George Fox University was responsible for granting secondary IRB approval. I scheduled the research to begin in October 2013 and conclude by October 2014.

Potential Contributions of the Research

I anticipated that the intended case study analysis would provide a baseline of information for the pre-service program about effectiveness and dispositional development, and more simply stated, what worked and what did not work with dispositions in the program of study. The case study was designed with the intention to provide insight into how college faculty expressed and fostered dispositional development in the pre-service student specific to the three identified dispositions. I theorized that specific contexts, course artifacts, or pivotal experiences could provide opportunities for students to articulate the program's dispositions in meaningful ways. As I set up the study, I became eager to explore whether or not there were identifiable associations between the pre-service teacher's dispositional awareness, course activities, and clinical experiences. As the researcher, I also became curious about whether specific activities informed or enhanced dispositional awareness and development of the pre-service teacher. I hoped the research would provide a window into pre-service students'

dispositional development and contribute to ongoing dialogue in the program and the larger field.

CHAPTER 4

Results

Introduction

I examined the following questions in order to understand the pre-service teacher's dispositional development in the program of study:

1. What did the expression of pre-service teacher dispositions, as articulated by faculty, students, and archived artifacts, look like in the program of study?
2. What impact did the program's focus on dispositions have on the pre-service teacher in the program?
3. What impact did the program's focus on dispositions have on the pre-service teacher as she continued to develop as a professional in her first teaching position?

As previously mentioned in chapter three, to begin participant selection, I made a list of former student participants from the 2012 and 2013 program cohorts that, at the time of the study, were teaching full time within close proximity to the college. A list of 10 former student participants emerged and each was given an identification letter to protect confidentiality. Using nonprobability in order to eliminate bias, I asked a trusted colleague to choose four participants from the list. Of these four participants, two were teaching at the same public high school and two were elementary teachers, one at a public elementary school, and one at a private elementary school. Three of these former student participants were 2013 graduates and one was a 2012 graduate. All were female, yet were representative of the female heavy student majority in each cohort.

For convenience, I chose to interview two faculty colleagues, one from each gender group that represented two thirds of the full-time faculty in the program of study. As previously mentioned, I served as the third member of the program's faculty.

Throughout the remainder of this document and in order to limit confusion, I will refer to the two faculty participants as Faculty Participant 1 and Faculty Participant 2, and the former student participants as Student Participant A, B, C, and D.

Once identified, the six participants were formally contacted via email with a letter of consent requesting participation in the research. All agreed to participate and were informed of the process and time commitment. A pilot interview, with an additional former student who was substitute teaching, was conducted in the early stages of the study to refine and adjust interview protocols and guide questions. Interviews were scheduled at convenient times for the participants and in settings familiar to them. Several days before each interview, faculty and former student participants were reminded of the letter of consent and the purposes of the study. Additionally, a copy of the program's dispositions and a set of guide questions were sent to participants via email to stimulate thinking. At the start of each personal interview, I restated my priority to guard confidentiality, reviewed the ethical considerations, and emphasized my dedication to listen and keep personal commentary to a minimum.

The two faculty colleague interviews were each held in the faculty members' offices. One faculty interview took 42 minutes and the other lasted 81 minutes. The four student interviews were conducted in each participant's classroom after school. Student interviews varied in length from 27 to 41 minutes. The bracketing techniques mentioned in chapter three were used to acknowledge potential researcher bias in all six interviews.

To follow reliable research practice, I explicitly reminded participants that although I was invested in the program of study, I was committed to creating an accurate profile of the program's and pre-service teacher's dispositional development. As the researcher, I reminded participants that although we had rapport and history together, I planned to make intentional efforts to be an impartial observer. I also reminded participants that they could choose to not answer particular questions posed to them in the interview. I recorded the interviews with a digital recorder and transcribed each interview personally so to connect more intimately with the data.

After I transcribed the interviews, I incorporated member checking as a validation strategy (Creswell, 2013) and asked each participant to read through the interview transcript for accuracy. Aside from being self-critical about the realistic nature of the verbatim transcripts, each participant verified the accuracy of the individual account found in the transcript. Because the interview transcripts were transcribed verbatim, each portrayed the authentic sentiments of the participants and offered rich description for study.

In addition to the interview transcripts, I collected and confidentially labeled copies of archived site documents with a corresponding letter so that I could examine multiple data sources and triangulate the data. To enhance validity, various essays, course syllabi, electronic portfolios, clinical experience reflections, and clinical experience observations from the student participants were collected as data sources. These archived artifacts and their descriptions are found in Table 1. As planned, I also kept a field journal during the data collection process, wrote questions, made notes about the research process, and highlighted key ideas that I wanted to revisit later in the research.

Table 1

Program Artifacts with Descriptions

Program Artifact	Description of Artifact
Philosophy of Education Essay	Essay written in the program's inaugural Explorations in Education course highlighting the pre-service student's developing personal philosophy of education.
Course Syllabi	Outline of course expectations, assignments, and outcomes for pre-service students in each course of study.
Dispositions Essay	Pre and post essays about the inclusion and demonstration of dispositions during the clinical student teaching experience in the last semester of the program.
Weekly Reflection	A student's written weekly notes, observations, suggestions, questions, and reflections about the clinical student teaching experience in the last semester of the program.
Student Teaching Observation	Weekly faculty observation notes that include a student response component during the clinical student teaching experience in the last semester of the program.
Electronic Portfolio	Capstone project due at the conclusion of the program. The project includes essays on assessment, teaching, learning, student engagement, professional development, and artifacts from the clinical student teaching experience.

After data collection, using the process of initial coding, I combed through the interview transcripts searching for shared perspectives and experiences. I read, reread, and color-coded interview questions and verbatim responses that highlighted each of the

program's three dispositions. I then sorted the results into categories of shared perceptions and experiences. As I continued coding, I merged themes into a condensed list. Next, I examined archived artifacts from each student participant. I then triangulated the interview transcripts with archived artifacts. As I continued to code by color, anecdotal evidence emerged in support of the previously identified themes.

The last phase of coding involved examining theoretical considerations. I identified theoretical constructs and associations to a priori themes that could contribute to the broader field. For credibility purposes and because I recognized that coding was often subjective in nature, I enlisted a trusted colleague, a qualitative researcher from outside the program of study, to peer debrief with me and serve as an external and unbiased set of eyes during the research process. The colleague offered valuable guidance as I examined the perceptions and expressions of pre-service teacher dispositions in the program, and inquired about the impact, the focus on dispositions had on the pre-service teacher in the program.

Results

An Early and Sustained Focus on Dispositions

Research question #1: What did the expression of pre-service teacher dispositions, as articulated by faculty, students, and archived artifacts, look like in the program of study? In the analysis of transcripts and archived artifacts, the dominant theme emerged that student participants were made aware of the program's dispositions early in the program. For example, in the personal interview, Student Participant A recalled learning about the dispositions: "I remember looking through the handbook, um, in a meeting about the credential program." Student Participant B recalled, "I heard about them (the

dispositions) throughout my three years and definitely heard about them through the credential program.” One student participant affirmed her peers’ responses about the program’s early focus on dispositions:

I especially remember the start of my senior year which would have been at the beginning of the credential program. We had to sign it actually. So it must have been the end of my junior year and applying for it. But I definitely remember being made aware of it for sure at the start of our credential year, we really talked about it a lot. Also, during Senior Seminar, we talked about that. (Student Participant C)

Student Participant D recalled, “I was first introduced to the dispositions in my pre-professional classes and I remember writing a paper that incorporated the dispositions, and writing papers on the dispositions in student teaching in the spring.”

Student participants also recognized the significance of the three dispositions throughout the pre-service program:

Dispositions are the foundation that keeps it all together and you can always learn new information, like the Common Core, coming out this last year and who knows what is coming out in five years. You are always going to have to learn new standards but if the dispositions are your base, you are not going to lose your ability to teach. (Student Participant B)

When asked if the dispositions were valuable and useful in clinical experience, one participant responded:

Why would we be student teaching if these (dispositions) weren’t highlighted? It goes back to the Bible, back to the verses that are rooted in these elements and how you should behave, not just in teaching, but they happen to align really well with

teaching. They ground you in your practice. Why do you get up every morning and care for people and care for kids? And care for your colleagues? (Student Participant A)

Similarly, Student A cited in a Dispositions Essay, “As teachers, we are role models, and so we must behave accordingly with our values and beliefs in a way that shows honor and dignity to everyone in the school community.”

The early introduction of the program’s dispositions appeared to stimulate students’ initial awareness of the three dispositions. Highlighting the program’s dispositions and naming their importance and relevance early in the program suggested the cultivation of initial dispositional awareness. The data also suggested that early attention to the dispositions with a sustained focus throughout the pre-service program contributed to the pre-service student’s dispositional growth.

Dispositions Expressed in Modeling

An additional theme that emerged in data analysis was the theme of modeling. Student participant interviews revealed that the pre-service program modeled, both implicitly and explicitly, the three dispositions of focus: *lifelong learner*, *compassionate professional*, and *reflective spirit*. Each student participant stated individually that pre-service faculty modeled the program’s dispositions, pointing to modeling as a meaningful component of the program’s dispositional focus. Responses were not given in reaction to one particular interview question, but were stated at different times in response to a variety of questions during the personal interviews.

Evidence of modeling was described at the start of a personal interview, when the student participant was asked to name and explain what she recalled about the program's dispositions:

I think this (compassionate professional) just fits in nicely with the college in general and with what I learned at the college to always be a compassionate professional in your community. The Education Department just generally teaches that in the professors' behaviors toward students. So it wasn't really like focused necessarily, it was just always there and modeled for us, if that makes sense. That's what I remember. (Student Participant A)

When asked if there were specific assignments or activities in the program that promoted the dispositions, Student Participant B recalled:

I think actually being in the classrooms with students helped because we had to figure out what it meant to love the hardest student and how our professors treated us. I had great role models at the college of going beyond the classroom with students and having my professors actually care about me outside of the papers I turned in or the assignments I did.

During the personal interview, when asked about the disposition of compassionate professional in the program, another student participant recalled:

I honestly, that is the biggest one for me, that I feel was modeled by the professors. That if I were to share something about what I really appreciate is how I was treated in the classroom and how it was modeled to, how to be, almost overly compassionate. Totally exceeding expectations and that you are extending so much grace as a teacher and I feel like that was so helpful for me now. We had hard

projects and you had to turn them in but we were cared for the entire way through.

That is something that was modeled to me in the program and I really want to model for my students. (Student Participant C)

Another participant built on this idea when asked if she could name examples of the dispositions in the program:

I think the relationships between professor and students, although it is a college, it was a very compassionate relationship, and that was something that I saw and I thought that works in a high school, just slightly different, you just have to adapt. And I think I had reflective professors who were constantly asking how can we be better? And that didn't go so well, or always asking us about what we thought about the class? Or was this effective for you guys? And so they were always getting our feedback and that's something I think about now and I am not afraid to ask my students, did that not go so well? Did that even work? Did this do anything for you? And they are honest and they know what works for them more than I know what works for them. So that was modeled for me, just being humble enough to say, did this work or did this not work? And be willing to react to the honest answer. I think that was modeled and then, I think all professors are lifelong learners for the most part. (Student Participant D)

Additionally, this same participant recalled modeling as dispositional expression during clinical experiences, specifically by both the program of study's faculty and the cooperating teachers:

They (the three dispositions) transfer to who I am as a teacher now because they just became something that I did in the program or I was surrounded by people who were

doing them. It's like a child who sees their parents doing something and starts doing it. That's kind of how the program is, you see your mentor teachers who have those dispositions in what they do in different forms and you just pick up on them and try to do them as well. You start doing them subconsciously and start picking them up. Even when assignments were specific and in those moments, I totally knew I was being reflective. Or I am thinking about compassion in my teaching, but really I was constantly surrounded by them, and so I started noticing that I want to be like that rather than I want a reflective spirit. I want that character trait or personality.

(Student Participant D)

The theme of modeling was reinforced when a student participant described a difficult experience during the student teaching experience. The participant explained a faculty member's response to the student's dilemma placing specific emphasis on the demonstration of the disposition of reflective spirit:

I had decided I didn't want to teach because of some unfortunate things that were out of control. I think that when my professor recognized that I was just kind of at the bottom, the professor had the reflective spirit that was needed to move me. The willingness to rescue me from a discouraging place, it's why I am here today. I don't think I would be teaching if that hadn't happened and if the professor hadn't made that call to try and put me in a different place. (Student Participant C)

Just as student participants perceptions named modeling as an expression of dispositional development, faculty participants' perceptions, found in the personal interviews, explicitly identified modeling. Faculty Participant 1 recalled employing the disposition of compassionate professional during a difficult interchange with a student:

I tried to model being a compassionate professional and I really tried to articulate with the student what I was trying to do. It was so hard because I felt it was inappropriate the way the student spoke to me. I think in the end, it was probably a healthy learning experience for the student that I responded in a compassionate and professional way to the things that the student brought into my office. I think I tried to model that and followed it up with a letter to try and articulate how I was responding to a difficult situation.

Faculty Participant 1 elaborated on this point and appeared to exhibit the disposition of reflective spirit during the personal interview:

I have learned to soften a little bit and be a better listener to the students. It is hard to find a balance of being responsive to their concerns and needs and yet still be strong and hold the bar high. I think it is something I continue to work on and one thing that I have done a better job this year is just admitting when I am not sure of something in the class and maybe that is the evidence of being more compassionate rather than coming across too strong.

Additional examination of interview transcripts revealed that the theme of modeling served as an expression of dispositional development and aligned with evidence from former student participants' archived work. Student Participant A wrote in a Dispositions Essay, "Emulating respect for my cooperating teacher, colleagues, and administration physically reveals to the students that I am practicing the same behaviors that I expect of my students." This participant also noted in the same essay; "As (future) teachers, we are role models so we must behave accordingly with our values and beliefs that shows honor

and dignity to the school community.” The expression of modeling continued to emerge in the personal interviews:

I think being a compassionate professional is really important and being one that is not solely concerned with my own classroom, but being invested and available for the needs of the other teachers, so if they need something. How can I come along and support them, and that whether or not I have it in my classroom, that’s fine, but if our whole school isn’t doing well, and we want to make sure we are working together? That has been the most challenging for me and getting plugged into the community here. It might be something that I start off by modeling and maybe by demonstrating that it will be something that others choose to do after. (Student Participant C)

Additional analysis highlighted that modeling by faculty and cooperating teachers contributed to a student’s dispositional development. Supporting data was also discovered in a Dispositions Essay:

Both our weekly reflections and my cooperating teachers’ reflective spirits inspired a reflective spirit in me. Post reflection, I make notes in my binder of things to adjust, remove or add. I have also reflected on my teaching style. I have reflected on what activities, statements, policies, routines fit my personality and are most comfortable for me. (Student Participant D)

The consistent theme of expressing dispositions through modeling led me to next examine the emerging theme of embedded coursework.

Dispositions Expressed in Embedded Coursework

Through data analysis, coursework emerged to highlight increased awareness of the program's dispositions. The personal interviews with faculty and student participants referenced specific artifacts as contributing factors to the pre-service teacher's dispositional development. Throughout the personal interviews, faculty participants named a variety of coursework such as book chats, classroom management plans, and course readings as examples of embedded assignments that enhanced dispositional development. Faculty Participant 2 specifically noted that autobiographical readings and a maintained focus on cultural diversity in courses, provided opportunities for pre-service students to look at multiple perspectives and further explore dispositions.

As previously noted, student participants recalled the use of the Dispositions Essay as a pivotal assignment to dispositional awareness in the program. Student Participant A recalled, "I remember doing the Dispositions Paper at the end of student teaching. So that made me very aware of the different dispositions and was a nice assignment to cap off the end of student teaching." Student Participant D reinforced this point: "I remember writing a paper on my philosophical perspective of teaching and incorporating the dispositions into that paper and saying these are tangible ways that I can be a lifelong learner, have a reflective spirit, and be a compassionate professional." Faculty Participant 2 recognized that because of the intentional assignments referencing dispositions in the program: "Students are using the terms lifelong learning and reflective spirit or habits of reflection. They are referencing those two in particular in their assignments and their class discussion, their professional discourse, more than in the

past.” Student Participant B highlighted one of the program’s dispositions in the final capstone project, an archived electronic portfolio:

An example of how to grow as a professional is reflection. Although a tedious job at times, I have found that the time I take at the end of the week to reflect back on the lessons I learned, the pieces I would change, and the aspects I liked, often led to an increase in rewards during the next week. These reflections challenge me to take the time to process my weeks while simultaneously giving me the opportunity to make adjustments in the future. (Student Participation B)

In the same assignment, the participant referenced the disposition of lifelong learner when she stated:

There is never a time in your life when learning stops. Each day holds some new discovery to be made, lesson to be learned, or thought to be had. Teaching is no different! During my experience I have learned that even the sixth time you teach a lesson, some new realization or discovery will occur whether it is a comment from a student or a previously hidden aspect of the lesson that suddenly jumps out.

Regardless of what jumps out at me, I never want to stop putting forth the effort to make a new discovery each day. My motto for both myself and my students is,

‘Don’t settle!’ (Student Participant B)

Similarly, another participant wrote about being a lifelong learner in a Philosophy of Education Essay:

Shifting the focus of education away from memorization and test-centered learning, students should be given the freedom and opportunity to discover how to think for themselves, to experience the thrill of “light bulb moments,” and to dive deeper into

subject matters that they really care about. I need to make all learning engaging and demonstrate the value and application of academic knowledge as well as be attentive to cultivate budding interests within a child. Further, becoming a life-long learner not only applies to my students, but also to my own teaching career and professional development. Not only do I need to model a lifestyle and love of learning, but I also need to be committed to finding new and effective ways to be a better teacher for my students. (Student Participant C)

The data revealed particular and repeated emphasis of the disposition of reflective spirit. The disposition of reflective spirit and corresponding coursework stood out as a fundamental piece to the program's dispositional puzzle. All student participants repeatedly named reflective spirit as a primary disposition conveyed, practiced, and modeled in the program by faculty. Participants also noted that the disposition of reflective spirit was practiced in examples of coursework. In response to an interview question to recall specific assignments that highlighted dispositions, one participant noted:

Uh, the first one (disposition) that came to mind was doing the journals every day, so writing. I don't know if there was a word count, paragraph, whatever we had to do each day, we reflected on what had happened that day. There wasn't really a format for it if I remember correctly, um, but I think that was really informative for me even though I would forget sometimes or it would be tedious, uh, to always have to remember that. I think in the long run it really helped me, like subconsciously helped me, reflect naturally, so I think that practice of doing that every day. (Student Participant A)

When asked about the disposition of reflective spirit, another participant commented:

It (reflection) was huge. I know there were weeks when I didn't want to do it and it was one more page to write up, but then the weeks we didn't have it, I really missed having it, not because I necessarily went back and looked at it, but having to put it into words made me process the whole week and remember little things that I didn't necessarily remember in the whole scope of things. (Student Participant B)

Another student participant referenced the disposition of reflective spirit:

Well, I think the program really challenged me to have a reflective spirit. I don't think I did it super well, but it was something that was asked of me and I tried. I made an effort. I am not super at reflective spirit, just as a whole. That is something I am working on right now. I think that if anything, it (reflective spirit) really brought out lifelong love of learning. (Student Participant D)

One student participant appeared to transfer the focus on cultivating a reflective spirit in the pre-service program to her first professional teaching position:

I taught a math lesson and it didn't quite go as well as I hoped. So I try and reflect on it and I ask, well so I go and ask my fellow teachers. Have you realized the problem with this? Instead of just saying it didn't go well, I say, how can I solve that and how can I make it better? (Student Participant C)

Data confirmed that the faculty's intentional efforts to embed the three dispositions in coursework throughout the program produced increased dispositional awareness.

Embedded coursework essentially invited students to express and articulate the dispositions in order to increase dispositional awareness. Notably, the research revealed varied responses regarding coursework and the disposition of reflective spirit. The

development of this disposition appeared to happen more naturally for some student participants, yet was also described as an over-practiced or over-taught disposition by other student participants. Therefore, embedded coursework, with particular emphasis placed on the disposition of reflective spirit, emerged in data analysis as a significant conduit for the expression and development of dispositions.

Dispositions Expressed in Multiple Practice Contexts

Research question #2: “What impact, if any, did the program’s focus on dispositions have on the pre-service teacher in the program? This research question gave me the opportunity to explore whether the program’s dispositional focus was conveyed in various practice contexts. Through data analysis, I discovered that faculty and student participants articulated that the three dispositions, when intentionally practiced, heightened not only students’ dispositional awareness, but also the dispositional awareness of faculty. More simply stated, as participants became more aware of the dispositions, they cultivated a desire to practice what the program preached. In each personal interview, participants described distinct moments and activities that confirmed practicing one or more of the dispositions. One participant specifically referenced professional dialogue in program meetings:

We (the program faculty) will discuss some students who might be struggling and how we can be compassionate towards them and yet help them succeed in meeting the high standards in the program. I feel we reflect a lot about what we are doing and offer encouragement to one another. (Faculty Participant 1)

This faculty participant added, “I think we (the program) have improved in our ability to articulate that these (dispositions) are important and to help the students to articulate what

they are doing that aligns with them.” Furthermore, when asked about providing specific opportunities for practice, the same faculty participant responded:

Because we have the dispositions, it has heightened my awareness of them and the importance of them. I think I do a better job of speaking of them in relationship to assignments. So I think having a department-wide set of dispositions has improved my ability to teach and the students ability to meet the spirit of the dispositions because we are just making them more cognizant. (Faculty Participant 1)

Student participants reinforced the concept of practicing the three dispositions. When asked to name particular pre-service program practice opportunities that cultivated a reflective spirit, one student participant named the daily practice of developing, writing, and teaching long form lesson plans:

Yah, I think a lot of it goes down to even our long form lesson plans, you have to literally be reflective, thinking through why you are doing it. After every lesson, we had to write a reflection, what went well, what didn't. Those were the assignments where we got to the point and I disliked them the most, at least myself I felt that I was almost over-reflecting. That is a challenge of mine. I think sometimes to do reflection became a habit, almost so ingrained in my mind, that out here now, I am not writing long form lesson plans anymore. However, I have that reflection, or reflective spirit that says, okay what am I doing to get them excited about his now, what am I doing? Just thinking through all those steps, um, is something that helps and even makes your awareness of the different types of students you are going to have to best meet their needs. (Student Participant C)

Another student participant's comments drew attention to practice in the context of clinical experience:

Compassionate professional is a whole way of how you walk in the classroom each day. And the kids notice when you don't walk in compassionately, so even on a hard day, you've gotta walk in and be a great actress because they will pick up on it. The more that you remind yourself to be compassionate, the more it becomes natural and easier. (Student Participant B)

When asked about specific opportunities that promoted the disposition of lifelong learning, one student participant referenced the context of developing, writing, and teaching a unit plan for the first time:

The assignment where we had to create a unit and we had pretty much full range of whatever we wanted to do got me really excited to lesson plan and I think it promoted in me, um, more of a desire to do more research and kinda talk along some new things. . . and we had to create full lesson plans for each day and include any handouts that you would use with it so it was basically like a comprehensive plan which was a lot of work, but it got me really excited to pursue learning more about English. (Student Participant A)

Furthermore, during the interview transcription process, I became keenly aware that the faculty and former student participants actually displayed one or more of the dispositions during the personal interviews; participants essentially demonstrated and conveyed a disposition, such as reflective spirit, in the context of an interview. This discovery confirmed that the program's dispositional efforts extended into multiple contexts. Additionally, multiple practice contexts appeared to impact not just the

intended pre-service students' development but also the faculty's dispositional development. Evidence of this emerged when a faculty participant was asked about how the program of study chose to focus on the chosen dispositions, shared:

I believe very deeply in naming dispositions that we care about, in making what is too often implicit, more explicit, and challenging or inviting students to consider that teaching isn't just about professional knowledge or content knowledge but the teaching at the end of the day is, I can't put a percentage or figure on it, but teaching is all about dispositions whether you use that word or not. (Faculty Participant 2)

The faculty participant added:

When we review individuals and the trajectory that they are on, we do in fact, most of the time, much of the time, discuss dispositions broadly conceived even if we sometimes say I am worried about this candidate's not being prepared for an assignment. When we talk about the need to intervene individually or collectively, we tend to name dispositional issues. (Faculty Participant 2)

In response to being asked about the faculty's role in developing dispositional awareness, one faculty participant stated:

I feel like every year I am getting better at this. We do have some specific assignments in different courses, but then it's clear that I highlight them in other ways; I just try to embed these attitudes in our approach to learning. Sometimes it is explicit and sometimes it is implicit. I most naturally highlight or do lifelong love of learning. I believe that's because I have a great interest in promoting intrinsic motivation to learn. And so I am very aware of the talk in class and why we do things. For example, I teach a class where they must take a statewide exam and I

want them to succeed on the exam, but much more importantly I want them to establish skills to be a great educator. I want to remind students to not only teach their students the skills to read but also the pleasure that comes from reading. In one of my classes students select articles, artifacts, and write an essay about the lifelong love of learning. (Faculty Participant 1)

The data provided evidence to argue that intentional practice contexts within the program of study were provided for the expression and cultivation of dispositions. The data revealed dialogue in courses, discourse between faculty, lesson planning and teaching, unit planning and clinical experience, as examples of contexts where dispositions were practiced. Various contexts, both implicit and explicit, appeared to foster dispositional development in both students and faculty. Because all of the participants displayed some form of dispositional awareness during the personal interviews, the theme of expression through multiple practice contexts was further validated. The data led me to next examine the sub-theme of clinical experience.

Dispositions Expressed in Clinical Experience

Research question #3: What impact did the program's focus on dispositions have on the pre-service teacher as she continued to develop as a professional in her first teaching position? Data analysis first exposed multiple practice contexts for the expression of the program's dispositions, with particular emphasis on clinical experience as an essential context for the expression of dispositions. As previously mentioned, for the purposes of this study, clinical experience was defined as K-12 classroom experience where pre-service students practice the profession of teaching as a requirement for earning an

approved credential. One student participant described a specific discovery learned in the clinical experience classroom in a required Weekly Reflection:

The last unexpected lesson I learned today was how to deal firmly yet compassionately with students. During journal time today, I had to firmly remove a student who was getting in a tussle with his neighbor. As I walked the student to his own table, I told him that he had lost the privilege to sit at the table with his classmates because he was having trouble keeping his hands to himself and doing his work. As soon as the student sat down at his own table his head collapsed on the table and he began crying. Trying desperately not to go back on the decision I had just made, I brought my own writing to the table and sat down next to him to help him do it. Within ten minutes, the student had dry eyes and had successfully finished his journal after doing an excellent job sounding out words and writing the letters. Reflecting now, I realize how hard it was to not give into the tears, but I have also learned that by combining compassion with firm rules, I can hold students to high standards and set them up for success even after a mistake. (Student Participant C)

Another participant also commented on clinical experience in the program in a Dispositions Essay:

During this semester, I reflected after each day on the highs and lows. For example, in my freshman class, there is a student that has been a constant trouble-maker in my class. I have reflected and practiced many ways to reach her, and she has finally come around for the most part. She has a lot of issues going on at home so motivating her when her grades are already so low is very difficult. I have had multiple chats with her expressing my concern and need for her cooperation. I have

learned how to pick my battles and remain consistent in my patience and kindness.

(Student Participant A)

Clinical experience was also noted in a participant's Weekly Reflection:

Today, I had the opportunity to work with a small group of students who have Individualized Education Plan's on a lesson that I have taught to other groups throughout the week. The lesson was a great reminder of how to modify a lesson for students and how to simplify language without losing important content concepts. I learned that although it may take a little more time, if the students are provided with enough repetition and visual aide they can be as successful on the assignment as other students. I also learned that it is okay to hold the students to high standards as long as you help them reach those standards. . . overall working with this small group was extremely rewarding as I learned that I am capable of modifying a lesson and successfully teaching content to a more challenging group. (Student Participant B)

Additional evidence of practice in the context of clinical experience appeared in the form of a written response from Faculty Participant 2 to Student Participant B. In a required Weekly Reflection, Faculty Participant 2 stated, "Your presence conveyed compassion to this student, yet you were able to get him back on task. Wonderful."

The anecdotal evidence found in interviews and artifacts suggested that multiple practice contexts, with specific emphasis on clinical experience, played an important role in the pre-service teacher's dispositional development. The participants' shared perceptions supported the notion that the context of clinical experience was central to dispositional expression and prompted additional dispositional growth. The data also suggested that student participants were able to name and practice the dispositions in

clinical experience; they then appeared to transfer and apply their heightened awareness to contexts found in their first teaching jobs. One particular response uncovered a student participant's demonstration of the dispositions of both compassion and reflection in the first teaching position:

I have this one girl who failed term one and the counselor and I have been working with her, but I found that she is just in really bad shape . . . how is she going to be able to do academics if her health and emotions are not at a stable place? So I have been really pressed. How do I intervene? Because the school is telling me to intervene, figure out how to get her grade up and you know we have to start from scratch. We have to show her so much compassion and sometimes it is contrary to the grading system. So I have really been struggling with that and my role as a teacher but also someone as someone who just cares for so I am hoping term two turns the tide a bit. (Student Participant B)

Additional interview data highlighted the transmission of the disposition of reflective spirit into the first teaching position:

I think it is instilled in me to be reflective. Just naturally, um, I was actually thinking about it today. My principal observed for the second time. I was nervous but not as nervous as the first time. He gave me some great feedback and I was more reflective in my approach, naturally. And it kinda shocked me that I wasn't offended, but I took a more reflective stance toward what he was talking about like with a little suggestion. (Student Participant A)

Another student participant commented on the disposition of compassionate professional in relationship to colleagues in her first teaching position:

I think being a compassionate professional is really important and being one that is not solely concerned with my own classroom but being invested and available for the needs of the other teachers. How can I come along and support them? (Student Participant C)

The rich data lent favorable and key support toward clinical experience as a significant context for dispositional growth. The data confirmed that clinical experience explicitly enhanced students' dispositional awareness and in some cases translated into practice beyond the boundaries of the program into the first teaching position.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications for Future Study

Discussion and Conclusions

After examining anecdotal evidence from interviews and archived artifacts, the data strongly suggested that the dispositional efforts in the program of study produced four fundamental expressions to promote dispositional development in the pre-service teacher. Most notably, the data revealed a blending of explicit and implicit expressions that heightened dispositional awareness. First, the research uncovered that faculty made early, intentional efforts to name and highlight the dispositions for students. These efforts were sustained throughout the program. Secondly, faculty made implicit and explicit efforts to model the dispositions of lifelong love of learning, reflective spirit, and compassionate professional. A third expression for dispositional development named the faculty's priority to design and embed coursework to provide opportunities for pre-service students to identify, examine, and dialogue about the dispositions throughout the program. The coursework came primarily in the form of essays, weekly reflections, and electronic portfolios, referenced in chapters three and four. The last and fourth expression for dispositional development was identified as multiple practice contexts, with specific emphasis on clinical experience settings for the expression of dispositions. The program of study revealed a unique and blended combination of dispositional expressions that suggested enhanced dispositional development for students (see Figure 1). The blending of the four identified expressions appeared to elevate dispositional awareness and contribute to the development of the dispositions for student participants.

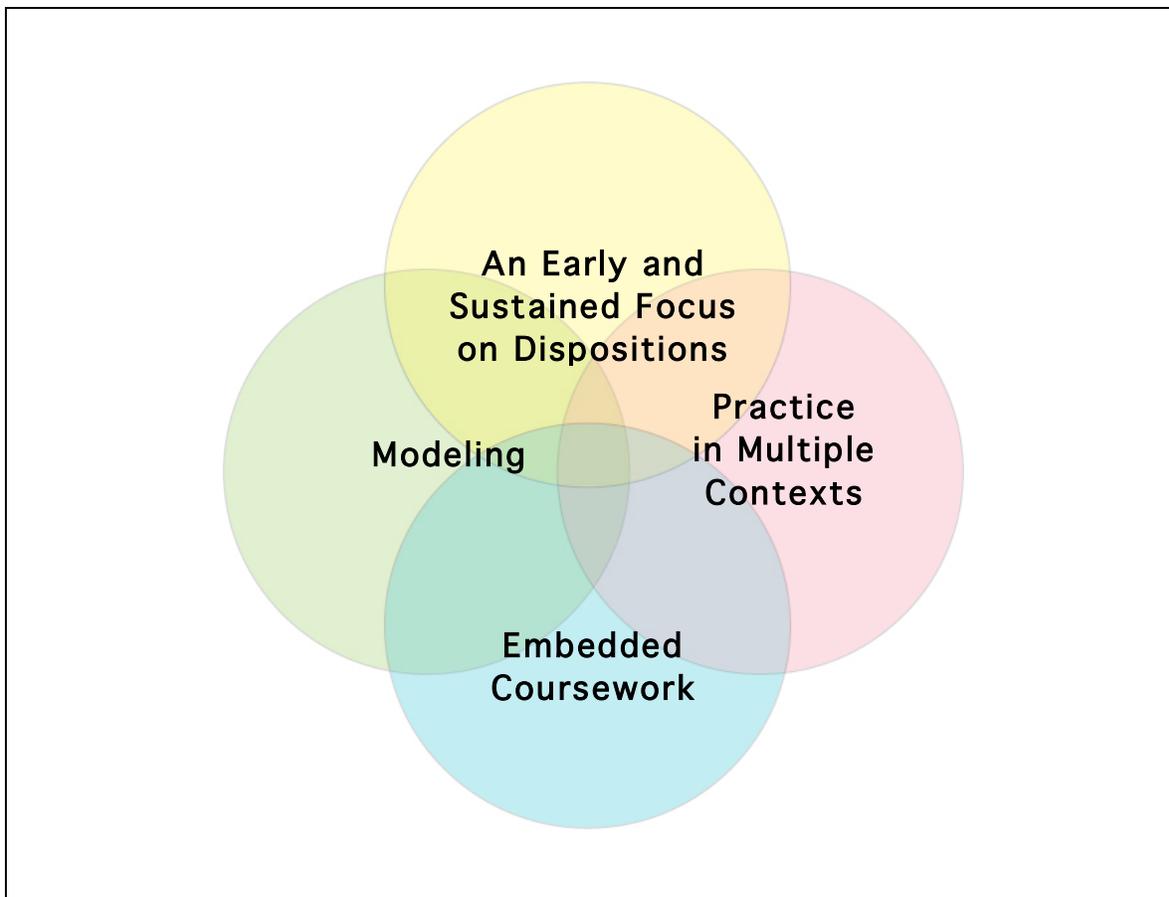


Figure 1. Implicit and explicit program expressions of dispositional development for the pre-service teacher.

The program's expressions for dispositional development supported Diez and Murrell's (2010) claim that when the contexts of teaching were nested or scaffolded, they built on a pre-service teacher's own commitment to take responsibility for students, build collegiality, and strengthen school community experiences. The authors recommended that programs help pre-service students understand professional teaching dispositions in multiple contexts throughout training.

At the time of the present study, the program's dispositional focus had only been introduced and implemented with two cohorts of developing teachers. The researcher recognized that although the dispositional efforts were essentially in infancy, the findings supported future advancement of dispositions throughout the program of study. The

results should serve to empower the program of study's faculty to expand and deepen the integration of dispositions in the program. Since the program's efforts were realized through four specific expressions, the study's results affirmed the program's intentional efforts to stimulate dispositional development in the pre-service teacher.

Curiously, personal interview data revealed that each faculty and student participant identified a personal affinity toward one of the dispositions. Several participants even referenced and linked the three dispositions together, reinforcing the idea that the three dispositions scaffold, lean on, and support the other dispositions to make the greatest impact. For instance, one student participant claimed:

I think they (the dispositions) all go really well together, I mean. I just feel like reflective spirit is the root of everything, being able to take a humble position and just be able to reflect on what happened, uh, will instill a deeper desire to be compassionate as professionals. (Student Participant C)

Another participant addressed linking the dispositions in the personal interview when she stated:

I think when you are compassionate, you are reflecting as an outward form of reflection and how you can help them (students), serve them, and make them better. I think that when you reflect you realize things you need to learn, it's whether you act on those. Everyone can be reflective but doing anything about it, that's where the real difference is made. When you act on your reflections, and so I think they are entwined in a lot of different ways. But they (the dispositions) can also stand on their own in conversations. (Student Participant D)

This participant's interview response further supported the notion to intermingle and connect the dispositions when she wrote in a Dispositions Essay:

The three dispositions are not independent from one another. All three are intertwined and go hand in hand with the others. As we develop a reflective spirit, we will contribute to our love of learning and growth. As we seek to show compassion towards our students and coworkers, we must reflect on how we can improve. (Student Participant D)

The program's four identified expressions for dispositional development supported previous arguments in favor of embedding a dispositional focus throughout a pre-service program (Cummings, Harlow & Maddux, 2007; Thornton, 2006). Specifically, researchers at the University of North Carolina Wilmington concluded that weaving a variety of experiences throughout a pre-service program allowed teacher candidates to grasp the multiple roles of a teacher and to develop the relevant content, skills, and dispositions needed in the profession (Fishetti, Imig, Ndoye, & Smith, 2010).

Furthermore, the present case study revealed that although the faculty and student participants expressed a strong desire to continue efforts and movement forward in developing a dispositional plan, the data did not disclose whether the findings for the program would transfer to other institutions and programs. Future research is needed to determine whether the results of this study uncovered the winning combination for dispositional expression for pre-service programs in general. The results may be unique only to the program of study, reinforcing past research findings that one size or blueprint for dispositional development may not fit all (Ginsberg & Whaley, 2006).

Most notably, the program's decision to combine and sustain dispositional activities throughout the course of study strengthened Sherman's (2013) current research for pre-service programs to create spaces for teacher candidates and their students to grow in multiple ways. The author ascertained that teacher educators bring particular qualities, such as openness, reflection, and a strong work ethic to the field and they try to model these qualities. Sherman recommended that pre-service programs make efforts to transfer dispositional awareness between teacher educator and pre-service teacher, as well as between pre-service teacher and student. The program of study revealed support for the author's recommendation, yet how this should occur within other pre-service programs remains an open question for individual programs to investigate.

Of particular significance, within the program of study, faculty and student participants acknowledged the distinct and strong link between Christian faith and the program's dispositions. In personal interviews, student participants recognized that the alignment of the program's dispositions with the college's faith based mission served to reinforce the participants' depth of understanding of the program's dispositions. This finding suggested that the alignment also reinforced a participant's personal motivation or calling to pursue the profession. One student participant in particular commented:

I think, we would hope coming from a Christian school, your compassion goes deeper than on the surface level. It is because of your love of God, you are then wanting to love these students because you see these kids through God's eyes and that is huge. (Student Participant C)

Another student participant shared: "I am in the public school and without even the Christian underlying of them (the dispositions), I would not be as well prepared for this

job.” The study affirmed that the alignment of dispositions, between this particular pre-service program and the college’s mission, enhanced participants’ dispositional development. Since most pre-service programs in the state of California or even around the country, are not faith based, the researcher cannot specify whether this particular finding translates to larger, or even secular, pre-service institutions. Nevertheless, the finding serves as welcome reinforcement for the program of study, its faith based approach to the teaching profession, and the college’s values. As the researcher, I believe the link between faith and the program’s dispositions could extend to add endorsement to faith-based pre-service programs striving to develop quality teachers of faith and character. In light of recent controversies and challenges that question the conventional four year model in higher education in the United States, this finding also reinforces the important work being done in pre-service programs, like the one in this study, that endorse a traditional undergraduate model. The research clearly supported continued efforts for the program to infuse the three dispositions throughout a student’s course of study. Faculty and student participants acknowledged that the three dispositions contributed to their progress as professionals. Whether or not the three dispositions of focus serve as the most fruitful combination and quantity for the program was not determined in this study.

The study indicated strong agreement among student and faculty participants naming dispositions as integral to understanding the larger framework and long-term trajectory needed in a professional teaching career. Faculty Participant 2 articulated this finding in the personal interview: “Teachers need to find some appropriate blend of confidence and humility and recognize that dispositions are important over the journey.” This finding

aligns with Sherman's (2013) acknowledgement of the significant responsibility for novice teachers to recognize the enormous sense of responsibility vital to the profession. The author affirmed that becoming a teacher is a lifelong endeavor; the daily and unavoidable challenges of the profession require professional judgment to make difficult decisions with courage and integrity. This premise also validated Darling-Hammond's (1986) early research that supported the call for good teaching practice where teachers possess strong content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and professional judgment to make sound teaching decisions. Additional researchers (Walker et al., 2011) concluded that teacher preparation programs should include teacher dispositions as a paradigm to help ensure full teacher effectiveness. Researchers (Harrison et al., 2006) argued that teachers must not only possess knowledge and skills, but also heart. Additional evidence for understanding the long-term impact of dispositions for the teaching profession was captured by a faculty participant:

Under the category of lifelong learning, they (pre-service students) need to know that they just need to understand, that at a much deeper level, that they are not going to have it all together for a while and that it is normal to struggle and that if they aren't struggling a bit, that they may have lapsed into complacency and unimaginative box checking. And there are so many enormous challenges in the field, to know that there's lots of new challenges that they could be facing over 25 years and not to think that they have to have it all figured out at the beginning. (Faculty Participant 2)

This example affirmed the theory to nurture dispositions within the pre-service teacher for the short-term with the long-term in mind (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007; Wilkerson & Lang, 2007).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the data revealed four fundamental expressions for dispositional development in the program of study: an early and sustained focus on dispositions, modeling, embedded coursework, and multiple practice contexts. When linked together, these expressions appeared to produce heightened dispositional awareness in the pre-service teacher. More profoundly, the research revealed that because the dispositional focus was embedded and integrated throughout the program, the pre-service teacher appeared to carry the dispositional awareness into her first teaching position. This argument validates the increasing burden and responsibility for pre-service programs to prepare highly qualified teachers for the first teaching position with the long-term career trajectory in mind (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Recommendations and Implications for Future Study

The researcher concluded that there were positive perceptions and support by both faculty and student participants for the program's dispositional efforts. Program faculty participants expressed a strong desire to engage in future dialogue regarding the program's progress on dispositions. Faculty participants named the dispositions important in the pre-service teacher's training, yet they identified different levels of faculty investment in promoting the dispositions. Thus, I recommend that the program's faculty uniformly invest in future dialogue to discuss and adjust the dispositional focus and expected outcomes as needed. While the inaugural implementation efforts by the program to embed a meaningful dispositional focus for pre-service students should be commended, the program has only scratched the surface. In addition to the four blended expressions for dispositional development found in this study, other dispositional expressions should be explored to expand the program's present focus on dispositions

and increase dispositional growth for the pre-service student throughout the program. Blended opportunities for dispositional expression that move the pre-service student from initial dispositional awareness to intentional and repeated action should be explored; pinpointing when the practice of a particular disposition develops into a discipline, habit, or engrained value necessitates additional study in the pre-service field. Program faculty should also consider building on the initial stages of their work by creating a detailed and cohesive trajectory for the pre-service teacher's dispositional development within the program.

In this study, dispositional development was fostered when an early and sustained focus on dispositions, modeling, embedded coursework, and multiple practice contexts intermingled. The research suggests additional inquiry into the distinct combinations for dispositional expression that clearly jumpstart, increase, and yield dispositional growth in the broader field. Since a layered or scaffolded approach to dispositional development throughout the pre-service program of study heightened dispositional awareness and students' perceptions, investigation into other pre-service programs, their artifacts and practices, could reveal important particulars and program models that cultivate dispositional development in the broader field and pre-service arena. Furthermore, within the program of study, the role of classroom discourse in dispositional development, as well as the question of how to assess or self-assess dispositional development, beyond existing coursework, warrants future examination.

The research strongly supports the need for future inquiry into how dispositional awareness, developed during the pre-service experience, transfers and extends into the first teaching position. Tracing the long-term impact of the program's dispositions could

be considered for future research. Interviewing the study's student participants in subsequent years to track dispositional development over time is recommended. Limitations, such as the size of the program and the number of participants in this study, could also be expanded to include future cohorts. More broadly, researchers could conduct a longitudinal study around several pre-service programs to investigate the notion that increased dispositional awareness translates into greater career longevity for beginning teachers. Comparing programs of similar size and scope would be valuable for pre-service educators. The study also indicates that future inquiry about the significance of the match between pre-service teachers and cooperating teachers in relationship to dispositions is warranted. The alignment between a pre-service program's dispositional values and those of the cooperating mentor teacher could be explored to determine if dispositional development is enhanced when this particular form of alignment exists.

The focus on professional teaching dispositions is not new to education, nor is the dialogue to how programs foster dispositional development in the pre-service teacher. Because of the changing and increasing demands on schools and teachers, K-12 classrooms require highly qualified teachers equipped to not only teach, but to make moral and ethical decisions. This case study of one small, undergraduate Christian institution, affirmed the need for future long-term research into the pre-service teacher's dispositional development. As pre-service programs strive to prepare future teachers with skills, content and pedagogy, dispositions and the intangible matters of the heart cannot be ignored. The significant burden that pre-service programs carry as they develop the heart of the next generation of teachers remains an extraordinary privilege and challenge.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Dispositions

The Education Department is committed to the **mission** of the college, the **profession** of teaching, the **guidelines and expectations** for teachers in the state of California, and most importantly students' **personal and professional growth** within the context of a **Christian worldview**.

Dispositions, as defined by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (2010), are the values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty and social justice.

The Education Faculty is committed to nurturing professional dispositions in education students. Although there are a multitude of professional dispositions for teachers, particular emphasis is placed on the following dispositions:

- **Life-long Love of Learning** ~ displays curiosity and passion for learning and transfers enthusiasm for learning to others. *Proverbs 9:9 ~ Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning.*
- **Reflective Spirit** ~ displays a willingness to discover and develop habits of growth and self-awareness. *Proverbs 24: 32 ~ I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw.*
- **Compassionate Professional** ~ displays sympathy, empathy and responsiveness to others' needs. *Colossians 3:12 ~ Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.*

Statement of Commitment

Education students, along with Education Faculty, seek and commit to demonstrate the above dispositions in credential classes, fieldwork experiences and in student teaching.

Candidate Signature _____ Date _____

Faculty Advisor Signature _____ Date _____

*Dispositions will be further defined and discussed in credential courses and required assignments.

Appendix B

California Teacher Performance Expectations

California Teaching Performance Expectations

TPEs At-A-Glance with Salient Features

A. Making Subject Matter Comprehensible to Students

TPE 1 – Specific Pedagogical Skills for Subject Matter Instruction

- a. **Subject-Specific Pedagogical Skills for Multiple Subject Teaching Assignments**
 - *Understanding the state-adopted academic content standards*
 - *Understanding how to teach the subject matter in the standards*
 - *Planning instruction that addresses the standards*
 - *Demonstrating the ability to teach to the standards*
- b. **Subject-Specific Pedagogical Skills for Single Subject Teaching Assignments**
 - *Understanding the state-adopted academic content standards*
 - *Understanding how to teach the subject matter in the standards*
 - *Planning instruction that addresses the standards*
 - *Demonstrating the ability to teach to the standards*

B. Assessing Student Learning

TPE 2 – Monitoring Student Learning During Instruction

- *Determining student progress toward achieving the state-adopted academic content standards*
- *Using instructional strategies and techniques to support students' learning*

TPE 3 – Interpretation and Use of Assessments

- *Understanding a range of assessments*
- *Using and interpreting a range of assessments*
- *Giving feedback on assessment results*

C. Engaging and Supporting Students in Learning

TPE 4 – Making Content Accessible

- *Addressing state-adopted academic content standards*
- *Prioritizing and sequencing content*
- *Selecting and using various instructional strategies, activities, and resources to facilitate student learning*

TPE 5 – Student Engagement

- *Understanding of academic learning goals*
- *Ensuring active and equitable participation*
- *Monitoring student progress and extending student thinking*

TPE 6 Developmentally Appropriate Teaching Practices

- a. **Developmentally Appropriate Practices in Grades K-3**
 - *Understanding important characteristics of the learners*
 - *Designing instructional activities*
 - *Providing developmentally appropriate educational experiences*

b. Developmentally Appropriate Practices in Grades 4-8

- *Understanding important characteristics of the learners*
- *Designing instructional activities*
- *Providing developmentally appropriate educational experiences*

c. Developmentally Appropriate Practices in Grades 9-12

- *Understanding important characteristics of the learners*
- *Designing instructional activities*
- *Providing developmentally appropriate educational experiences*

TPE 7 – Teaching English Learners

- *Understanding and applying theories, principles, and instructional practices for English Language Development*
- *Understanding how to adapt instructional practices to provide access to the state-adopted student content standards*
- *Drawing upon student backgrounds and language abilities to provide differentiated instruction*

D. Planning Instruction and Designing Learning Experiences for Students**TPE 8 – Learning about Students**

- *Understanding child and adolescent development*
- *Understanding how to learn about students*
- *Using methods to learn about students*
- *Connecting student information to learning*

TPE 9 – Instructional Planning

- *Establishing academic learning goals*
- *Connecting academic content to the students backgrounds, needs, and abilities*
- *Selecting strategies/activities/materials/resources*

E. Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning**TPE 10 – Instructional Time**

- *Allocating instructional time*
- *Managing instructional time*

TPE 11 – Social Environment

- *Understanding the importance of the social environment*
- *Establishing a positive environment for learning*
- *Maintaining a positive environment for learning*

F. Developing as a Professional Educator**TPE 12 – Professional, Legal, and Ethical Obligations**

- *Taking responsibility for student academic learning outcomes*
- *Knowing and applying professional and ethical obligations*
- *Knowing and applying legal obligations*

TPE 13 – Professional Growth

- *Evaluating teaching practices and subject matter knowledge*
- *Using reflection and feedback to improve teaching practice and subject matter knowledge*

Appendix C

Faculty Participant Interview Guide Questions

1. Please introduce yourself and give a brief history of your career in education.
2. How long did you teach in K-12? How long in pre-service programs? Be as specific as possible.
3. As Education Faculty, how do you perceive your role in developing students' dispositional awareness for the teaching profession?
4. How do you define professional teaching dispositions?
5. Can you describe how the program chose to focus on three dispositions?
6. In your opinion, what does the disposition of *lifelong love of learning* look like in professional practice?
7. In your opinion, what does the disposition of a *compassionate professional* look like in professional practice?
8. In your opinion, what does the disposition of a *reflective spirit* look like in professional practice?
9. Have you designed specific activities or assignments to promote awareness of the department's dispositions in your courses? Please describe and be as specific as possible.
10. Please describe the purpose for the assignments.
11. Please describe the last time you discussed dispositions with a colleague.
12. Please describe the last time you discussed dispositions with a student.
13. Please describe the last time you discussed dispositions with a class.
14. Are there any outcomes from the program's recent focus on three dispositions? If so, please describe.
15. If you did make discoveries, do they inform your practice? Please describe why or why not.
16. Are there areas within the realm of the program's dispositional focus that you would like to see changed, improved, or removed from the program? Please explain and give specific examples if possible.

17. Do you have anything else to share or add?

Appendix D

Former Student Participant Interview Guide Questions

1. Please introduce yourself and describe your journey into teaching.
2. Please share what year you completed the pre-service program. Please share what credential you earned from the pre-service program.
3. How long have you been teaching?
4. Where are you teaching? What grade levels and content areas? Have you taught elsewhere?
5. When were you made aware of the pre-service program's dispositions?
6. Can you name and describe the three dispositions from your pre-service program?
7. Were there specific assignments or activities in the program that promoted a *reflective spirit* in you? Please explain.
8. Were there specific assignments or activities that promoted *compassion* in you as a *professional*? Please explain.
9. Were there specific assignments or activities in the program that promoted a *life-long love of learning*? Please explain.
10. What role if any did weekly reflection play in your pre-service development? Please explain.
11. For you personally, does one disposition stand out above the others? Please explain.
12. Can you think of specific activities or course assignments that heightened your awareness of any or all of the dispositions? Please explain and give examples if you can.
13. Do any of the particular activities you describe inform your dispositional awareness? Please describe why or why not.
14. Do any of the particular activities you describe inform your current classroom practices? Please describe why or why not.
15. Can the program's focus on dispositions be improved? Please explain.

16. Was the dispositional focus relevant to and for your current position in K-12 education? Please explain.
17. Do you have anything else to share or add?

Appendix E

Letter of Consent for Study: The Pre-Service Teacher's Dispositional Development Revealed

Dear Professional Educator,

My name is Michelle Hughes and I am an assistant professor of education in the Department of Education at a small, undergraduate institution in California. You are invited to participate in a case study of dispositional development in pre-service teachers. I am conducting this study to fulfill the dissertation requirement for doctoral study at George Fox University. The study was approved by the college of study's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects Research on October 2, 2013 and secondary approval was immediately granted by George Fox University's Institutional Review Board. The project is supervised by Dr. Suzanne Harrison, Ph.D. at George Fox University.

I invite you to engage in an hour-long personal interview. The personal interview questions are general, innocuous, and should not create distress. You may choose to not answer any question during the personal interview and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Refusal to answer a question or withdrawal from participation involves no penalty.

The results of this study will only be used for research and dissertation purposes, and may be used for presentations or publication at a professional conference. Personal interviews will be digitally recorded and later transcribed. Information will be analyzed and presented anonymously. I affirm to keep any personal information and identities confidential.

All research materials (i.e., digital recordings, transcriptions, artifacts, and signed consent forms) will be locked in separate, secure locations for a period of no more than three years. I will be the only individual who will have access to these materials. After three years, I will personally destroy all relevant materials and delete the digital recordings.

Although this research does not address the following, I am required to inform you that there are two exceptions to the promise of confidentiality. Any information you reveal concerning suicide, homicide, or child abuse and neglect is required by law to be reported to the proper authorities. Should any information contained in this study be the subject of a court order, the college might not be able to avoid compliance with the order or subpoena.

If you would like a copy of the results of the study, I will be happy to provide one for you. You will, however, receive no compensation for your participation in the project. If you have any concerns or complaints about how you were treated during the research sessions, please contact Assistant Professor Michelle Hughes (805-565-6257) and the Chair of the Institutional Review Board (805-565-6138) for the Protection of Human Subjects. You may keep this page for your records. Please sign below if you understand and agree to participate.

I have read and understand the foregoing descriptions of the study, A Profile of the Pre-service Teacher's Dispositional Development. I have asked for and received a satisfactory explanation of any language that I did not fully understand. I agree to participate in this study, and I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty. I have received a copy of the consent form.

Signature

Date

_____ I agree to be digitally recorded.

_____ I do not agree to be digitally recorded.

Signature

Date

