

NOVICE TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF THEIR  
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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NOVICE TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF THEIR  
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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## VITA

Martha Lee Williams Pettway, daughter of Priscilla Roney, was born on July 26, 1958, in Montgomery, Alabama. She spent her early years of public schooling at Hale Elementary and Houston Hills Junior High schools respectively. Martha graduated from Robert E. Lee High School in May 1976. Upon graduation, she entered and received her Bachelors of Science Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Management, from the College of Business Administration (COBA), at Alabama State University in August 1979. She pursued several careers before entering Troy State University in Montgomery to work towards a Masters in Adult Education. Martha has held several leadership positions to include Business Department Head at Southern Technical College, and Coordinator of the Upward Bound Program, and Director of Teacher Certification at Alabama State University, where she is currently employed. She also has over twelve years of teaching experience at the post secondary level. While employed at Alabama State University, Martha enrolled and graduated with a Masters of Science Degree in General Counseling. Upon completion of this degree, she entered Auburn University to pursue her "lifelong dream," a doctorate in Higher Education Administration.

Martha Lee Williams Pettway is the proud mother of two daughters, Tamberly Lynne Pettway and Courtney Lynnette Pettway.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT  
NOVICE TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF THEIR  
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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This study seeks to discover the perceptions of novice teachers concerning the adequacy of their teacher education programs and to identify the various training practices, support and resources available in the programs. The main goal of this study was to gauge the degree to which novice teachers are satisfied with their teacher education programs.

The three selected public school systems in this study are located in the southern part of Alabama. The questionnaire, developed by the researcher was delivered to 995 novice teachers during mid-month November 2004. Of this total, 608 novice teachers responded to the 50-item questionnaire that contained four

part Likert-scale type questions, open-ended questions, and demographic information.

The overarching goal of the study was to determine: (1) certain personal background and educational characteristics that may be associated with differing satisfaction levels of their teacher preparation and (2) the multivariate relationship between certain personal and educational background information of novice teachers, and selected dimensions of teacher education programs.

The data generated from the study were coded and analyzed using a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS V.10). The data were analyzed to reflect the ten research questions designed to assess the relationship between level of satisfaction among novice teachers and major standards that impact teacher education programs. Descriptive and inferential statistics, such as Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and a post hoc procedure (Fisher LSD) to determine practical significance, were the main statistics used. The level of significance was set at  $p < .05$ .

The majority of the subjects was White/Caucasian (53.9%) and attended predominately white institutions (PWIs) (65.1%). Forty-two percent of the teachers have more than three years teaching experience, and received their initial teacher certification through a traditional Class B Bachelor's teacher education program (78.5%). The majority of the teachers are presently teaching Early Childhood/Elementary (P-5) grade levels (54.4%), in urban geographical areas (37.8%).

Findings indicated a teaching force that is overall satisfied with their teacher preparation. Four of the five independent variables showed significant differences. They were: (1) type of college (2) grade levels (3) teaching experience and (4) school locality. Significant differences also occurred on all of the dependent scales: knowledge, skills, and dispositions; field experiences and clinical practice; diversity; use of technology; and quality of instruction.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Across the nation, there is a call for improved teaching quality. According to a report issued by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF, 1996), "teacher expertise is the single most important factor in determining student achievement and ...fully trained teachers are far more effective with students than those who are not prepared" (p.12). "We propose an audacious goal.... By the year 2006, America will provide every student with what should be his or her educational birthright: access to competent, caring and qualified teaching" (NCTAF, 1996, p.1). By virtue of these words, the NCTAF challenged the nation to embrace the goal of assuring that by 2006, "all children will be taught by teachers who have the knowledge, skills, and commitments to teach children well" (p.16). This ideology is also supported by The Education Trust (1998) when it assert that the most important education investment a state can make is in highly qualified teachers.

The quality of teacher education has been a favorite topic of critics of the American educational system. Cochran-Smith (2004b) contends that since the time teacher education emerged as an identifiable activity, there have been few time periods when it was not being criticized, researched, reconsidered, reformed, and, often, condemned. Over the past two decades, attention has been focused on the issues surrounding educational reform (Kim, Andrews, &

Carr, 2004). Subsequently, providing K-12 classrooms with quality teachers has been the major objective of school reform. In order to address the issue of teacher quality, reform strategies are increasingly focusing on teacher education programs and their role in preparing prospective teachers. Reform proposals from *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) to *What Matters Most* (NCTAF, 1996) suggest that teacher education programs need to be restructured. These reports criticized traditional forms of teacher education for not thoroughly preparing teachers for their role in schools.

During the period between 1983 and 1996, findings revealed major problems with conventional teacher education preparation programs. Several studies (Bulloguh, 1990; Griffin, 1989; Lanier & Little, 1986) cited problems such as teacher education programs not providing adequate time and classroom experience for teacher preparation, oversimplified realities of teaching, and novice teachers feeling they are unprepared for classroom teaching. Menchaca (2003) noted that novice teachers rarely make smooth transitions from being students in a university classroom to teaching in their own classrooms. According to Borko (1986), Darling-Hammond (1985), and Huling-Austin (1987), education is the only profession in which the novice's responsibilities are the same or more difficult than those of more experienced professionals. Limited experiences during teacher preparation have negatively impacted the quality of graduates from traditional programs. Novice teachers often experience considerable difficulty as they move into their new profession and confront the realities of teaching (Veenman, 1984).



The goal of teacher preparation programs is to design the social, organizational, and intellectual contexts wherein prospective teachers could develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to function as decision makers (Cochran-Smith, 2004a). It is expected that once teachers have completed their teacher education program, they will be able to demonstrate required competencies acquired through their classroom experiences, field experiences and standardized assessments (McNergney and Herbert, 2001). Holm and Horn (2003) reported that schools of education are in the best position to guide the progress of pre-service and in-service teachers as they move along the continuum of professional growth from novice to master teacher. Colleges and schools of education are at a crossroad where they are able to impact the educational reform movement by making changes and contributions to the students of tomorrow.

Education reform must include the reform of teacher preparation. Between the 1980s and 1990s, the nation reached consensus that the American educational system must be transformed to meet the demands of an increasing information society (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002). Today's society needs a workforce that can apply knowledge, reason analytically, and solve problems. Preparing teachers to teach all students to meet society's demands for high performance has created a new agenda for educators and policymakers. To meet these changing demands, norms in teacher education programs and licensing are changing (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2002).

The alignment of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards require schools, colleges, and departments of education to demonstrate how they are incorporating new knowledge about subject matter, teaching strategies, learning styles, and student diversity into their teacher preparation programs. According to the United States Department of Education (USDE, 1998), the goal of accreditation is to ensure that education provided by institutions of higher education meets acceptable levels of quality. NCATE accreditation requirements mandate the quality of instruction that is to be received at a particular institution, and institutions must comply with these requirements to be successful (NCATE, 2002).

The U. S. Secretary of Education recently declared that teacher preparation and state certification policies and practices must “change dramatically” (USDE, 2002, p.8) to increase standards and align program requirements of the new federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLBA). These accountability measures are mandated to ensure that all teacher candidates are equipped with a repertoire of competencies and pedagogical skills to be successful classroom teachers. Shulman (1987), who advocates a broad conception of the expert teacher knowledge base, writes:

The goal of teacher education is not to indoctrinate or train teachers to behave in prescribed ways, but to educate teachers to reason soundly about their teaching as well as to perform skillfully. Teaching is both effective and normative; it is concerned with both means and ends. Processes of reasoning underlie both. The knowledge base must

therefore deal with the purposes of education as well as the methods and strategies of educating. (p.13)

The teaching profession is a key component in the development and education of society. Over the next decade, America will need to hire approximately 200,000 K-12 teachers annually (Fideler & Haselkorn, 2002). This demand is due to rising student enrollment, accelerated teacher retirements, and class size reduction. Since interaction between students and teachers is of primary concern in America's educational system, recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers is crucial.

#### Statement of the Problem

The literature abounds with the contention that many of the teacher education programs at colleges and universities are failing to prepare teachers to meet the education demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Although most undergraduate teacher education programs claim to provide adequate preparation, training and experiences, there is much concern about the curriculum and experiences in many of these programs (Olivas, 1993). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards are available to assist colleges, schools, and departments of education with enhancing curriculum and instruction in teacher education programs, to ensure that all future teachers possess quality teaching skills.

Teacher educators and researchers are not the only ones concerned with the quality of teacher preparation. According to the Council for Basic Education

(CBE, 1996), teachers are not often asked to talk about the quality of their preparation for their teaching profession. The CBE suggests that it is better to hear directly from teachers about their own preparation for the classroom and that in-service teachers should be consulted and asked to identify the support and resources they need in order to provide quality instructional programs in their classrooms and schools. Datnow and Castellano (2000) and Rigden (1997) contend that in making decisions about program design, it is time for in-service teachers to have an opportunity to speak. If the nation is going ahead with recommendations for changes made in “What Matters Most: Teaching for America’s Future”, it can no longer ignore the insights and vision of teachers (Rigden, 1997). When teachers talk about their teacher education, their opinions are grounded in practice. Forsyth and Tallerico (1993) support the notion that successful teacher preparation programs exist when teachers are involved in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of collaborative efforts.

This study seeks to discover the perceptions of novice teachers concerning the adequacy of their teacher education programs and to identify the various training practices, support and resources available in the programs. The main goal of this study is to gauge the degree to which novice teachers are satisfied with their teacher education programs. Six hundred and eight (608) novice teachers from three public school systems in Alabama completed questionnaires assessing their teacher education programs. The three public school systems were selected for the study because their teaching faculty was diverse in terms of ethnicity, grade levels and subject areas teaching, years of

teaching experience, type of certification pursued, as well as types of institutions attended. As well, the student population in the three participating public schools systems is diverse.

Schools and colleges of education that have incorporated professional standards (i.e. NCATE) into their programs can help teachers understand the expectations and realities of the teaching profession. These standards create a context for learning that prepares teacher candidates for the challenges present in today's classrooms and schools on their journey toward expertise. Findings from this research will contribute to the body of knowledge on teacher preparation programs and provide additional insight for teacher educators and institutions that are committed to preparing highly qualified teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Research Questions

This study examines the levels of satisfaction in novice teachers about their teacher preparation. The following ten research questions will provide the conceptual framework for the study:

1. To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with their abilities to demonstrate content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, necessary to help all students learn?
2. To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with their field experiences and clinical practice?

3. To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with their abilities and effectiveness to work with diverse learners?

4. To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with their abilities to integrate technology across the curriculum?

5. To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with the quality of instruction received in their Teacher Education Program?

6. Do novice teachers who attended Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) differ from novice teachers who attended Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) in terms of their satisfaction with knowledge, skills, and dispositions; field experiences and clinical practice; diversity; technology; and quality of instruction received in their teacher education program?

7. Do novice teachers who received an initial bachelor's certification differ from novice teachers who received an Alternative-A certification in terms of their satisfaction with knowledge, skills, and dispositions; field experiences and clinical practice; diversity; technology; and quality of instruction received in their teacher education program?

8. Do novice teachers who teach in lower grade levels (K-5) differ from novice teachers who teach in higher grade levels (6-12) in terms of their satisfaction with knowledge, skills, and dispositions; field experiences and clinical practice; diversity; technology; and quality of instruction received in their teacher education program?

9. Do novice teachers who have three years of teaching experience differ from novice teachers who have less than three years of teaching

experience in terms of their satisfaction with knowledge, skills, and dispositions; field experiences and clinical practice; diversity; technology; and quality of instruction received in their teacher education program?

10. Do novice teachers who teach in rural schools differ from novice teachers who teach in urban and suburban schools in terms of their satisfaction with knowledge, skills, and dispositions; field experiences and clinical practice; diversity; technology; and quality of instruction received in their teacher education program?

### Significance of the Study

If teacher education programs are to be restructured, classroom teachers can and should provide a plethora of valuable insights for the improvement of teacher education programs that are being redesigned and restructured for the future. To better serve the needs of the students, it is important to examine the perceptions of novice teachers on their teacher education program experiences. It is also important to identify the support and resources teachers need from these programs. However, teachers' voices are rarely included or validated (Rigden, 1996).

To discover the perceptions of novice teachers concerning the adequacy of their teacher education programs and to identify the kinds of training practices, support and resources available in the programs, this study will address the overarching question: To what degree are novice teachers' satisfied with their teacher education programs? By conducting this study, findings from the

research can be used to enhance teaching quality and contribute to the body of literature for the enhancement of teacher education programs.

Novice teachers' assessment of their teacher preparation will be examined in two parts: (1) to ascertain personal and educational background information that may be associated with differing satisfaction levels of their teacher preparation, and (2) to determine the multivariate relationship between certain personal and educational background information of novice teachers, and selected dimensions of teacher education programs. Recommendations will be made for the improvement of teacher effectiveness from colleges and universities that prepare teacher educators.

The assessment will purposefully involve novice teachers who teach in one of Alabama's selected tri-county areas rather than a few select teachers who feel positive or negative about their educational experiences. The following groups would benefit from the study:

- Novice teachers would have an opportunity to express their opinions on preparedness directly related to their profession and could also exert influence on refining their own professional development;
- District school administrators would receive information that would enable them to develop strategies aimed at improving the quality of learning available to students;
- The public school systems' central offices would have a better understanding of how to address the overall need for teaching quality;



- Colleges of Education within proximities of these public school systems could use this information to guide them in determining how satisfied pre-service teachers are with their teacher preparation.

The results of the study are expected to contribute to the body of knowledge on the importance of quality university based teacher preparation programs, and to support programs to expand the knowledge of those currently teaching in public schools.

#### Assumptions of the Study

The assumptions of this study are as follows:

- that the selected public school systems surveyed are representative of other public school systems in Alabama.
- that participants attended a teacher education program and provided factual information and experiential opinions about their teacher preparation.
- that the results of this study may not apply to novice teachers who teach in non-public schools.
- that findings may be generalized to novice teachers with similar experiences who teach outside this geographic region.

## Limitations of the Study

This study was limited by the following conditions:

- The participants in this study were novice teachers who are currently teaching in the three select public school systems who may decide not to complete the questionnaire.
- Variables on the instrument are not all inclusive of the many variables influential to determining satisfaction of teacher preparation.
- Data collection was limited to paper and pencil form; therefore, participants may have entered more acceptable responses than actual true responses.

## Definitions of Terms

The following definitions were provided to give clarity to terms used in this study:

Clinical Practice – Student teaching or internship that provide teacher candidates with an intensive and extensive culminating activity.

Dispositions – The values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affects 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, responsibility and justice.

Diversity – Differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area.

Field Experiences – A variety of early and ongoing field-based opportunities in which candidates may observe, assist, tutor, instruct, and/or conduct research. Field experiences may occur in off-campus settings such as schools, community centers, or homeless shelters.

Highly Qualified – A teacher with teaching credentials, a bachelor's degree and a major or demonstrated competency in any subject taught.

Initial Teacher Preparation – Programs at baccalaureate or post baccalaureate levels that prepare teacher candidates for the first license to teach.

Knowledge – The interaction of the subject matter and effective teaching strategies to help students learn the subject matter.

NCATE – The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as the accrediting body for colleges and universities that prepare teachers and other professional personnel for work in elementary and secondary schools.

No Child Left Behind Act 2001 (NCLBA) - A federal mandate whose objective is to improve student achievement, close the achievement gap, and improve teacher quality.

Novice Teacher – For the purpose of this study, novice teachers were teachers with three or less years of teaching experience who have not received tenure.

Skills – The ability to use content, professional, and pedagogical knowledge effectively and readily in diverse teacher settings in a manner that ensures that all students are learning.

Teacher Education Programs – Programs of study within a college or university designed to foster and develop content knowledge and pedagogy to candidates preparing to teach students in a P-12 school setting.

Technology – What teacher candidates must know and understand about information technology in order to use it in working effectively with students and professional colleagues.

### Overview of the Study

Chapter 1 includes the introduction, statement of the problem, and research questions. Chapter 2 of this study includes an extensive review of the literature on teacher preparation and the variables that promote satisfaction within teacher preparation programs. Chapter 3 contains the methodology on which the study was conducted. The questionnaire and the methods used in its analysis are also explained. Chapter 4 contains the findings and analysis of data for the study. Chapter 5 includes the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of this study.

## II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter provides a synthesis of the related literature upon which the theoretical framework for this study is conducted. The review of the literature consists of nine sections. The first section provides an overview of accreditation and teacher education programs, while the second section focuses on the demand for quality teacher education programs. The third area addresses the need for a quality teaching force and the fourth section discusses teachers' knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. The fifth section deals with field experiences and clinical practices designed for teacher candidates to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to help all students learn. The sixth section discusses diversity with regards to working with diverse students, including students with exceptionalities. The seventh section focuses on the use technology and how teachers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century must be prepared with educational computing and technological skills, while the eighth section address the need for quality of instruction that identifies the role of teacher educators modeling best professional practices as they actively engage in inquiry and various teaching approaches. Finally, the last body of literature focused on an overview of novice teachers. A conclusion is given that summarizes the literature review and sets the stage for the present study.

## Accreditation and Teacher Education

The United States has never had a single government agency that assumes full authority over institutions of higher learning. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2000), there are 4,070 colleges and universities in the United States, enrolling a total of 14.5 million students. To guarantee a basic level of quality, the practice of accreditation arose in the United States as a means of conducting non-governmental, peer evaluation of institutions of higher learning and their programs (United States Department of Education [USDE], 1998). USDE (1998) contends that “the goal of accreditation is to ensure that education provided by institutions of higher education meets acceptable levels of quality.”

According to the USDE (1998), accreditation serves the following purposes:

1. Verifying that an institution or program meet established standards;
2. Assisting prospective students in identifying acceptable institutions;
3. Assisting institutions in determining the acceptability of transfer credits;
4. Helping to identify institutions and programs for the investment of public and private funds;
5. Protecting an institution against harmful internal and external pressure;

6. Creating goals for self-improvement of weaker programs and stimulating a general raising of standards among educational institutions;
7. Involving the faculty and staff comprehensively in institutional evaluation and planning;
8. Establishing criteria for professional certification and licensure and for upgrading courses offering such preparation; and
9. Providing one of the several considerations used as a basis for determining eligibility for Federal assistance.

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has been a significant influence in the area of teacher education. Founded in 1954, NCATE is recognized by the U. S. Secretary of Education as the national professional accrediting agency for schools, colleges and departments of education that prepare teachers, administrators and other professional school personnel for work in elementary and secondary schools (NCATE 2002). This accrediting body ensures that institutions produce caring, competent, and qualified teachers who can help all students learn.

NCATE, a non-profit, non-governmental organization is comprised of 30 or more national associations representing the education profession. Its mission is rooted in accountability and improvement in teacher preparation. The primary goal is to maintain a rigorous teacher preparation program designed to ensure that all children in America are taught by experienced and highly qualified teachers. The process examines schools, colleges and departments of education

to determine whether they meet demanding standards for the preparation of teachers. (NCATE 2002)

The accreditation process is driven by six standards established by the NCATE's Standards Committee. These standards will serve as an impetus for change as institutions strive to meet them. The six standards associated with accreditation are in the areas of Teacher Candidates' Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions; Assessment System and Unit Evaluation; Field Experiences and Clinical Practice; Diversity; Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development and Unit Governance and Resources. Each standard is organized in three parts: (1) an articulation of the standard, (2) a rubric, and (3) a supporting explanation. It is the responsibility of the institution of higher learning to provide evidence to NCATE's Board of Examiners that the standards are being met. All of the accreditation standards are directly or indirectly connected to some aspect of teacher candidate development.

The NCATE standards, which are based on the belief that all children can and should learn, require schools of education to demonstrate how they are incorporating new knowledge about subject matter, teaching strategies, learning styles, and student diversity into their teacher preparation programs (NCATE 2002). NCATE continually revises its standards to reflect current research and best practices.

This study focuses on the following components of the NCATE Standards: *Candidates' Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions* (Standard 1), *Field Experiences and Clinical Practice* (Standard 3), and *Diversity* (Standard 4) respectively.



*Quality of Instruction* is included in Standard 5 and emphasis on the *Use of Information Technology* is woven throughout the standards, but is particularly addressed in Standard 6. Without a doubt, accreditation is an essential component in teacher education programs and institutions of higher learning must respond to accreditation requirements. Given the state of education, including having to respond to the federal mandate of “*The No Child Left Behind Act 2001 (NCLBA), Meeting the Highly Qualified Teachers Challenge,*” and district level accountability measures, it is imperative that all teacher candidates have a good knowledge base of these standards.

### The Need for Quality Teacher Education Programs

Teacher preparation programs in the United States has received considerable attention and an unprecedented push for reform in education since the 1983 publication of “A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). For almost a decade, “the outcomes question” has been driving reform in teacher education (Cochran-Smith, 2001a). Teacher education programs have also been sparked by harsh criticism indicating they have not been held accountable for results and that there is little evidence that higher education-based teacher education programs are sound and effective. Teacher education programs should be designed to prepare candidates to meet professional, state and institutional standards (Cochran-Smith, 2004b).

Excellence in education has become a significant issue for U.S. politicians at both the state and national levels. Over the last decade, a flurry of state and national reports voiced dissatisfaction with the quality of public schools and with programs that prepare teachers. Across the United States, there are also reform efforts that have centered on building an integrated, coherent, and extended teacher education program and on developing collaborative arrangements among university discipline faculty, teacher educators, and public school personnel. The U.S. Secretary of Education recently declared (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) that teacher preparation and state certification policies and practices must “change dramatically” (p. 8) to increase standards and align programs with the requirements of the new federal No Child Left Act (NCBLA) (2001).

Although debates over teacher preparation have been controversial and highly politicized (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001; Melnick & Pullin, 2000), state and federal policy makers have advanced swiftly to incorporate efforts to change the governance of teaching, redesigning credentialing routes, altering the regulation of teacher preparation programs, and moving to “deregulate” access to the profession by promoting alternate certification.

According to the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future [NCTAF] (1996), there is significant evidence that teachers who graduate from teacher education programs with a solid foundation in pedagogy and subject matter are more effective teachers. These teachers also have a positive influence on their student achievement. The NCTAF further claims that in order

to train prospective teachers who are grounded in subject matter and pedagogy, the place to start is in high-quality teacher preparation programs that are rigorous and thorough. Teacher education programs are intricately linked to K-12 schools. Their mission is two fold in that on one hand they strive to prepare teachers who can function effectively in today's classrooms; on the other, schools of education have the function of studying public schools and to develop strategies and programs for their improvement.

What voice do classroom teachers have in teacher education and certification? "None whatever" reported Koerner (1968). He also states,

The views of able and experienced teachers on a great many aspects of the education of a teacher are at least as valuable as those of administrators or members of the education faculty who may not have taught in a school for a decade or two, if ever.

Teacher educators and researchers are not the only ones concerned about the quality of teacher preparation. Datnow and Castellano (2000) and Rigden (1997) contends that in making decisions about program design, it is time for practicing teachers to have an opportunity to speak. It is a critical time to hear and examine what practicing teachers are saying about their teacher preparation programs. If the nation is going ahead with recommendations for changes made in "What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future", the recent report by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, it can no longer ignore the insights and vision of teachers (Rigden 1996).

When teachers talk about their teacher preparation, their opinions are grounded in practice. Schon (1987) in the literature related to teacher preparation indicated that there is a need for educators to be reflective about their practice. Fullan (1993), in recent educational reform advocates teacher leadership as an avenue to develop and sustain the changes in schools that improve student achievement. Forsyth and Tallerico (1993) support the notion that successful teacher education programs are when teachers are involved in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of collaborative efforts. Program satisfaction is the ultimate responsibility of the providers in teacher education programs.

There are many issues that result in alleged mismatch between teacher preparation and actual classroom experience. Even though teacher candidates' are excited about their educational experiences and instructional strategies during the course of their programs, the carryover into professional practice is inconsistent. Often teachers neglect to utilize practices that they learned and appreciated during their educational training. Often these teacher education programs are fragmented, separating subject matter preparation from pre-service pedagogy.

Given the diversity of teacher education programs, it is not surprising that their quality is uneven. However, most pre-service teachers are generally confident of their ability to demonstrate basic teaching skills. Shulman (1987) further contends that neither the university content specialist nor the teacher educator can effectively prepare teachers without incorporating into their efforts the fundamental pedagogical understanding of subject matter content.

Pedagogical content knowledge refers to the knowledge teachers need to represent and impart subject matter to students. Because teacher education programs often are not responsible for subject matter preparation, this orientation suggests a need for more integration between teacher education and other academic departments.

### The Demand for Quality Teaching

Teacher quality has long been an important issue for parents, educators, and policymakers (Roth & Swail, 2000). Over the past several years, a new consensus has emerged that teacher quality is one of the most, if not the most, significant factor in students' achievement and educational improvement (Cohran-Smith 2004a). The Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy (1986) published a response to "A Nation At Risk" entitled "*A Nation Prepared.*" In this report, the Carnegie Corporation called for teachers to meet new standards that would recognize teachers as true professionals. Berliner and Biddle (1995) documented that improvements have been made in teaching and the quality of teaching in America. Therefore, present day teachers are better educators than their predecessors.

According to Wright, Horn, and Sanders, (1997), quality teaching is perhaps the most crucial component of a solid education. They further contend that the deleterious effects of just one ineffective teacher may jeopardize the entire educational success of a young person, regardless of how many effective teachers one might subsequently have. The National Education Association

[NEA] (1999) supported the works of Wright, Horn, and Sanders when they reported that a 1998 survey conducted by Louis Harris and Associates found that fifty-five percent of Americans chose the quality of teachers as “the greatest influence on student learning.” A 1996 report by the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) found that fully prepared teachers are more highly rated and more effective with students than those whose background lacks one or more of the elements of formal teacher education – subject matter preparation, knowledge about teaching and learning, and guided clinical experience.

Shulman (1987) posits that content knowledge refers to the understandings that teachers have about the subjects they teach; however, knowledge of the subjects is not sufficient. Effective teachers must know the subject and must be able to communicate about the subject. He argued that teachers must draw on their content knowledge but also sensibly combine it with pedagogical or professional knowledge. Shulman further contends that this network of knowledge which he labels as “pedagogical content knowledge” enables effective teachers to use and refine student understandings of content as well as to anticipate and address areas of difficulty and misunderstandings.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2000), an estimated 2.4 million new teachers will be needed by 2008-2009 due to teacher attrition and retirement. As new teachers enter their classrooms for the first time, they are faced with unprecedented challenges related to changes in societal context, increasing ethnic diversity, and the conditions of public

education. As a group, they struggle with the transition from college student to classroom teacher; and they encounter situations where they question whether they have the necessary knowledge or problem solving skills to respond effectively (Morey & Murphy, 1990).

New teachers seldom see themselves as reflective practitioners or change agents in their schools. Britzman (1991), and Schempp, Sparkes, and Templin (1993) reported that teachers also tend to negate their theoretical influences of their teacher experiences. Griffin (1999) discusses that novice teachers do not draw upon valuable reciprocal connections made between theory and practice. Darling-Hammond (1998) contends that to be effective in drawing upon their own reasoning to make decisions, teachers must have preparation in rigorous teacher education programs which includes learning theory.

The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (2000) defines good teachers as those who know what to teach and how to teach it – this produces successful students. But teachers who are under qualified or ill-equipped do not produce successful students. Providing K-12 classrooms with effective teachers has always been one of the major objectives of school reform.

Stoddart and Floden (1995), reports that regardless of the number of teachers trained nationally, or what types of incentives have been offered, there have always been teacher shortages in high-poverty inner cities and rural communities throughout the past century. While suburban schools have often had an abundance of well-qualified teachers, high-poverty urban and rural

schools have resorted to hiring teachers who enter the classroom by virtue of emergency credentialing.

### Candidates' Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

According to King and Newmann (2000), since teachers have the most direct, sustained contact with students and considerable control over what is taught and the climate for learning, improving teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions through professional development is a critical step in improving student achievement. Individual teacher learning is the foundation of improved classroom practice therefore, teachers should also learn to exercise their own knowledge, skills and dispositions to advance the collective work of the school under a unique set of conditions (King & Newmann, 2000).

NCATE standards have always held colleges of education faculty accountable for providing preservice teachers with certain knowledge and skills. In addition, NCATE and Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC, 1992) expect teacher candidates to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and dispositions to provide learning opportunities supporting students' intellectual, social, and personal development ([www.ccsso.org](http://www.ccsso.org)). However, new policies and standards now mandate that faculty must provide evidence that teacher candidates are the right "kind" of person. By the time an individual enters college, the dispositions within which he or she has developed, have become deeply rooted habits of thoughts and feelings. Aristotle defined the term disposition "as the nature of a virtue or vice in relation to the agent and the



possession of a particular frame of mind in any given ethical or moral situation.” He further stated that a disposition is one thread in a highly complex and pervasive ethical existence that begins with a child being inculcated into virtuous habits as defined by a community (Aristotle, 1941).

According to NCATE professional standards, teacher candidates must “demonstrate to the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to help all students learn” (NCATE, 2002, p.10). It appears that the knowledge, skills, and dispositions are of equal importance. Selected verbiage implies that knowledge alone is not sufficient. However, skills and dispositions without knowledge are insufficient. Therefore, a candidate must demonstrate that he or she has acquired all three components (knowledge, skills and dispositions).

What constitutes a good teacher? Even though numerous attempts have been made to answer this question, the latest quest to define what makes a good teacher is the practice of assessing the dispositions of teacher candidates. NCATE is the agency responsible for introducing the concept of disposition(s) into the standards for accreditation of teacher education programs. Although NCATE does not indicate which dispositions should be addressed, it provides a rubric to identify indicators for each level of attainment regarding candidate’s dispositions. NCATE defines dispositions as 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 (NCATE, 2002,

p. 53). It continues to state that dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes that are related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice.

The definition given by NCATE is broad, and lends itself to multiple interpretations. With respect to the assessment of dispositions, NCATE reports the following:

The unit systematically assesses the development of appropriate professional dispositions by candidates. Dispositions are not usually assessed directly; instead they are assessed along with their performances in candidates' work with students, families, and communities. (NCATE, 2002, p. 19)

#### Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

According to the NCATE (2002), professional standards, field experiences and clinical practice are integral program components for the initial and advanced preparation of teacher candidates and candidates for other school personnel roles. These experiences provide opportunity for candidates to apply their knowledge, skills, and dispositions in a variety of settings appropriate to the content and level of their program.

The most extensive and memorable field experiences in teacher education programs are student teaching. As noted in *The Student Teacher's Handbook*, student teaching "is the only time in a teaching career that one is an apprentice under the close guidance of an experienced mentor" (Schwebel, 1996, p. 4).

Most state departments of education require students to have at least a semester-long student teaching experience in public schools before they can be certified to teach. Data obtained from nine hundred and two institutions of higher learning in the United States indicate that about sixty percent of the student teacher's time is actually spent teaching (Johnson & Yates, 1982). The remaining time is committed to monitoring and partaking in classroom activities. Parkay (2001) states that the amount of time one actually spends teaching is not as important as one's willingness to reflect carefully on the student teaching experience. Pre-service teacher education universities strive to devote a considerable portion of the curricula to clinical experiences in K-12 schools. Even though the student teacher's primary responsibility is to gain experience teaching, there are multifarious expectations of teachers beyond the classroom. Often times, field experiences enhance the quality of teacher preparation, varying in terms of purpose, timing, structure, and connection to other components of teacher preparation (Parkay, 2001).

A teacher's visibility in the learning environment as well as in the greater community invite students to see him or her as a model. Even though the student-teaching experience is a challenging and exciting time for most pre-service teachers, they often begin this period with high levels of stress. Pease and Zinco-graph (1991) suggest that these may be alleviated through supervision. The responsibility for this supervision falls on the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor who need to provide a nurturing atmosphere for the student

teacher. To enhance development, there should be open communication within the student-teaching triad (Adkins & Imwold, 1994).

Student teachers spend far more time with their cooperating teachers than with university supervisors. Although the role of the cooperating teacher has a strong effect on the student-teaching experience (Koehler, 1984), very few cooperating teachers receive instruction or training to prepare them to supervise student teachers (Rikard & Veal, 1996). The host teacher models professional behavior in his or her interactions with parents, administrators, other faculty, and support staff. The ability of the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor to converse on a regular basis can provide needed supervisory assistance. The team effort created between the university supervisors will provide consistent feedback to the student teacher.

Cooperating teachers have a powerful influence on the nature of the student teaching experience. Besides the demands the cooperating teacher and the university place on the student teacher, the expectations of the host school also tax the student teacher's focus. The cooperating teachers can identify a plethora of outcomes they hoped their student teachers would gain beyond elemental expectations. Cooperating teachers identify a multitude of expectations of student teachers beyond simple classroom practices. Therefore, the mentor teacher has much greater influence on the outcome of the mentorship, and influence of a cooperating teacher extends beyond classroom instruction (Pellet, Straye, & Pellet, 1999).

The university supervisor's role is to evaluate and support teacher education interns on their way to becoming a teacher. Their assistance is considered to be very important. The university supervisor is often removed from the student-teaching site and cannot maintain daily contact. This situation can create a "distancing" effect; that is, a breakdown may occur in the communications among the student-teaching triad members. This potential breakdown can lead to situations where members of the student-teaching triad are not sure what is expected of the other. If the university supervisor is overloaded by the number of student teachers assigned, there will be little time to devote to providing the individual attention each teacher candidate deserves. Formative supervision, or evaluation, from the university supervisor provides feedback in an ongoing and constructive manner on work in progress (Daresh & Playko, 1995).

### Diversity in Teacher Education Programs

In order to better prepare teachers for the increasing diversity in schools, teacher education programs must find effective ways of raising the multicultural awareness and sensitivity of prospective teachers. Schools, departments, and colleges of education must offer courses on diversity and/or multicultural education as a part of their teacher preparation programs. Often times there are different perceptions of what specific topics should be addressed by these courses. Some courses will focus on diversity to include class, race, gender, culture ethnicity, disability, sexual preference, learning abilities while other

courses will be more narrowly focused. However these courses are presented will have an impact on prospective teachers' attitudes and beliefs. When using the phrase students of diverse backgrounds, we refer to students who are distinguished from the mainstream by (1) social class, (2) ethnicity, and (3) primary language (Au, 1993)

The increasing diversity of the U.S. Society has extensive implications for schools (Parkay, 2001). As a result there is an increased demand for bilingual programs and teachers. Most school systems are facing a critical teacher shortage of minority teachers, and there is a dire need to develop curricula and instructional methods that address the needs and backgrounds of all students – regardless of their socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnic, racial, or culture identity (Parkay, 2001). America's classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse; more than one-third of the students in P-12 classrooms are from minority groups (NCATE, 2002).

It has been suggested that teacher education can address the challenge closing the achievement gap through the following two avenues: (a) by providing all teachers with stronger preparation for teaching students of diverse backgrounds, and (b) by recruiting prospective teachers of diverse backgrounds (Sleeter, 2001). By teachers of diverse background, we mean teachers who are distinguished from their mainstream peers by the three factors indicated: social class, ethnicity, and primary language. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2000), teachers of diverse backgrounds are in short supply. Although the cultural and linguistic diversity of students in U.S.

schools is steadily increasing, few changes have been seen in the population of teachers.

Research suggests that candidates of diverse backgrounds may enter teacher education with perspectives and experiences different from those of mainstream candidates. Generally, they bring a greater degree of appreciation for multicultural knowledge, multicultural education, and want to provide students of diverse backgrounds with challenging curricula (Sleeter, 2001). Su (1996) studied pre-service teachers who were African American, Asian American, or Latino and contrasted their views with those of their counterparts. He discovered that the candidates of diverse background showed a greater awareness of conditions of inequity in public schools. These pre-service teachers do not differ from their mainstream peers in terms of their knowledge of instruction, suggesting that they still require high-quality preparation. Rios and Montecinos (1999) pointed out evidence of the effectiveness of teachers of diverse backgrounds should not be used to minimize the need for robust and comprehensive teacher education. To prepare candidates of diverse backgrounds to become effective teachers, we must learn more about the perspective that they bring and the course of their learning during preservice programs (Guyton, Saxton & Wesche, 1996).

Preparing general education teachers to effectively teach students with disabilities is an acute concern for most teacher education programs (Bullough, 1995; Hutchinson & Martin, 1999). McLeskey, Henry, and Hodges (1998) report that the critical need for appropriate training of novice teachers are determined

by the increasing frequency with which students with disabilities are being placed in general education classrooms. This creates a cultural gap between teachers and students that seem to have a profound academic and social implication for ethnically and culturally diverse students (Ladson-Billings, 2000).

The inclusion of students with disabilities has also placed increasingly demands on classroom teachers. According to Henley, Ramsey and Algozzine (1999), general education teachers are being asked to include more students with severe disabilities in classroom settings. Baker and Zigmond (1990), and Shumm, Vaughn, Gordon, and Rothlein (1994) state that this lack of preparation is evident in studies that show general education teachers making few instructional adaptations for children with disabilities and those at-risk academically and behaviorally. Other researchers (i.e., Vaugh, Schumm, Jallad, Slusher, & Samuell, 1996) concluded that although many teachers believe that students with disabilities should be included in general education classrooms, they feel unprepared to teach them. According to Bullogh (1995) and Hutchinson and Martin (1999), preparing general education pre-service teachers to effectively teach including students with disabilities is an acute concern for contemporary teacher preparation programs.

There is a critical need for appropriate training in inclusive teaching which is underscored by the increasing frequency with which students with disabilities have been included or placed in general education classrooms, in recent years (McLesky, Henry & Hodges, 1998). Bender, Scott and Vail (1995) contend that teachers who held relatively negative attitudes toward inclusion used effective



inclusive instructional strategies less frequently than teachers with positive attitudes. If teachers do not possess the knowledge and skills to implement inclusion appropriately, the students included with disabilities in their future classes will certainly have diminished opportunities to attain desired outcomes regardless of teachers' attitudes toward inclusive reform.

Strawderman and Lindsey (1995), reports that improving inclusive attitudes and instructional skills among pre-service general educators, teacher education programs have adopted a number of reforms. One such reform requires a separate course in special education, usually taught by special education faculty. This reform has proven to positively impact inclusive attitudes of pre-service general educators. Some teacher training programs have combined their coursework such that students graduate with a dual degree in general and special education (Gilberts & Lignugaris-Kraft, 1997). One of the greatest challenges still facing general education teachers is the issue of addressing the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population to include student with disabilities. Schools of education must have the resources to train a sufficient number of well-prepared educators to ensure that the current and future challenges of diversity are successfully addressed.

Even though the overall student population has become more diverse in terms of ethnicity, language, and poverty, many general education teachers are unprepared to meet the demands that this increasing student diversity presents. A more problematic situation is the challenges that a diverse student population presents to novice teachers, who are less prepared to make adaptations for

individual students. Numerous researchers (Gold, 1996; Kagen, 1992; Munby, Russell & Martin, 2001; Reynolds, 1995; Rust, 1994) observe that novice teachers do not possess all the knowledge and skills that experienced teachers do. More specifically, novice teachers have problems determining how individual student differences influence their pedagogical choices, their selection of appropriate classroom management strategies, and their development of relationships with students and colleagues (Borko, Livingston & Shavelson, 1990; Reynolds, 1992).

In Urban school settings, novice teachers are often placed in the most difficult classrooms, and they struggle to address the needs of a student population that is often culturally and linguistically diverse, living in poverty, and exposed to violence (Colbert & Wolff, 1992). As a result, many teacher education programs have begun to align their programs with multicultural educational theories and goals outlined by experts in the field because research suggests that teachers prepared in a multicultural teacher education program are more capable of teaching diverse students than teachers who do not receive such preparation. NCATE standards exists to assist colleges of education in implementing curricular improvements to ensure that all future teachers possess competencies with regards to ensuring all student learns to include students with disabilities.

## Integrating Technology in Teacher Education Programs

The appearance of the microcomputers and related technologies has led America to become a country where much of its affairs revolve around computers and technology. In an increasingly highly technological, information and global society, today's teachers face many challenges of preparing students and the next generation of learners to live in a productive computer-dependent world. This increase of computers and technology in society should produce comparative changes in our educational system. However, these changes will not be fully realized in our schools unless changes take pace in teacher education programs at colleges and university who prepare teachers. Teacher Education Programs must provide preservice teachers with the technical and pedagogical skills necessary for curricular integration.

According to a report by the Office of Technology Assessment (1995), most novice teachers graduate from teacher education programs with limited knowledge on how to integrate technology into their instruction. Often times, teacher educators do not agree on the best approach to prepare teachers who are not proficient in computer-based instructional technologies. To ensure adequate preparation has been given to students, teacher educators need to model appropriate use, incorporating technology into the curriculum (Abdal-Haqq, 1996). Technology can be used to improve teacher education programs by providing live examples of best practices; examining case studies of teaching styles and approaches; and facilitating communication among student teachers,

classroom teachers, and teacher education faculty (Office of Technology Assessment, 1995).

According to the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE, 2000):

The challenge facing not only American schools, but schools all over the world, the empowerment of our children to function effectively in their future. This future is marked increasingly by change, the growing importance of information and information access, and evolving technologies. This future is also marked by an increasing disparity between those who have the information technology skills to cope in a modern society and those who are deprived of the opportunities to acquire those skills. To avoid even greater inequities in this information age, there is a need for schools to equip students to become effective in solving problems and managing information of relevance to themselves and to society. (p. 1)

Many of today's children are literally growing up in an environment surrounded by computers. Examples of early childhood experiences with computers include various forms of sophisticated toys, games and other learning aids that are usually found in the home. For these children, a computer is simply a part of their everyday lifestyle.

Some educators refer to computers and other contemporary technologies as imagination machines. They are the magic carpet that allows students to explore the world in a virtual reality. As we move into the new century, many

school systems are making great efforts to use technology as a tool for instruction, for benchmarking progress, and for enhancing formal assessment. Despite the increasing demand for technology use in the classroom, many teachers still feel that they are not equipped to integrate technology into the curriculum.

The ideal way to prepare teachers for incorporating technology into the classrooms is by integrating technology into the college curriculum, with university faculty modeling its use (Munday, Windam, & Sampler, 1991). Deloughry (1996) contends that only 25% of college courses were using electronic mail. Other technology tools, such as computer simulations, multimedia materials, and CD-ROMS, were being used less often. Colleges of education must take an active role and provide pre-service teachers with the opportunity to use and observe technology in classrooms. If faculty members in colleges of education do not model technology integration, then teachers will be less able to include technology in their own classrooms.

University faculty often give the same reasons for not using technology that teachers give: lack of awareness of the potential offered by technology, lack of time to master technology, technology viewed as a dehumanizing device, and lack of software and equipment (Rossberg & Bitter, 1989). In 1999, the United States Department of Education established the Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology (PT3) Program to support organizational change in teacher education to ensure that future teachers would be able to use interactive information and communication technologies for improved learning and

achievement. In a 1999 publication, “How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experiences, and School”, the National Research Council (NCR) argued that the use of technology in teacher education involves much more than simply adding technology to an existing course structure. The NCR described multiple uses of technology beyond the computational power of a computer as follows:

What has not yet been fully understood is that computer-based technologies can be powerful pedagogical tools — not just rich sources of information, but also extensions of human capabilities and contexts for social interactions supporting learning. The process of using technology to improve learning is never solely a technical matter, concerned only with properties of educational hardware and software. Like a textbook or any other cultural object, technology resources for education – whether a software science simulation or an interactive reading exercise – function in a social environment, mediated by learning conversations with peers and teachers. (p. 218)

However, most faculty members do have some knowledge of computers, as many have computers in their offices and some also have computers at home. Therefore, it is not technical knowledge that is often lacking, but knowledge of how to use computers in instruction (Wetzel, 1993). The major barrier toward integrating instructional technology seems to be that faculty members lack a vision of why or how to use technology in the classroom. There is a huge difference between personal use of technology and use in teaching. It is much simpler to learn and use basic computer skills, which are often offered through

workshops, than to find or even know where to search for effective software applications that will improve student learning.

However, educational change has proved to be difficult to achieve. When we consider what aspects of current practice need to be altered, the complexity of accomplishing actual change becomes evident. The reason for this complexity is that educational change is not a single entity. There are at least three components at stake in implementing educational change: (a) the possible use of new or revised materials, (b) the possible use of new teaching approaches, and (c) the possible alteration of beliefs. Change needs to occur in practice on all three levels in order for it to have a chance of affecting the outcome (Fullan & Stiegelbaur, 1991). Such change cannot occur through “one-size-fit-all” workshops, especially when it comes to integrating technology into the classroom. The faculty will need time to reflect on their own teaching styles. They need to examine software appropriate to their content area and need support as they begin to implement new instructional techniques. Thompson, Hansen, and Reinhart (1996) discuss the most effective way to move faculty members from personal use of computer applications to the integration of technology into their courses is through working one-on-one (mentoring) where individual needs can be addressed.

Teacher education faculty must acquire both technology skills and visions of how technology can improve learning in order to successfully integrate technology into their coursework. The greatest challenge for educators is to move beyond basic technology applications to technology applications that can

change how we teach and learn (Thompson, Hansen, & Reinhart, 1996). Butler and Sellbom (2002) identified the following barriers to faculty adoption of technology for teaching and learning: (a) reliability; (b) time to learn the technology, (c) knowing how to use the technology, (d) concern that technology might not be critical for learning, and (e) perception of inadequate institutional support.

Teacher education should include educational computing and technology competencies and experiences as an integral part of the professional preparation of teachers. However, until recently there has not been a nationally recognized set of standards for educational computing and technology to provide guidelines for pre-service teacher education programs in integrating computer-related experiences into all curricular areas. A set of National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) foundation standards is now available to assist colleges, schools, and departments of education in implementing curricular improvements to ensure that all future teachers possess minimum competencies in computer-related skills.

#### Quality of Instruction

According to NCATE (2002) Standard 5 (pp. 33-36), faculty are qualified and model best professional practices in scholarship, service, and teaching, including the assessment of their own effectiveness as related to candidate performance; they also collaborate with colleagues in the disciplines and schools. NCATE refers to modeling best professional practices in teaching as the faculty



having an in-depth understanding of their fields and are teacher scholars who integrate what is known about their content fields, teaching, and learning in their own instructional practice. They should also exhibit intellectual vitality in their sensitivity to critical issues, and be able to adjust instruction appropriately to enhance the candidate learning.

NCATE standards also require that teacher educators understand assessment technology, use multiple forms of assessments in determining their effectiveness, and use the data to improve the practice. Teacher educators in higher education and partner schools are critical to the development of a high quality teaching staff in today's public schools. Through modeling of good teaching, they can help candidates develop multiple teaching strategies to help all students learn. They provide leadership in developing, implementing, and evaluating preparation programs that embrace diversity and that are rigorous, relevant, and grounded in theory, research and best practice. Faculty in higher education are also actively involved in professional associations as shown through their provision of education-related service and leadership at the local, state, national, and international levels (NCATE, 2002, pp. 36-37).

According to Conant, Smart, and Kelley (1998), master teachers are highly effective professionals who have a burning desire to be the best teachers they can be. Motivated by the desire to identify these individuals' general differentiating student discussion, constructing syllabi, developing and grading examinations/projects, and fostering student rapport, Conant, Smart, and Kelley constructed a profile of these inspirational educators.

In a recent study by Desai, Damewood, and Jones (2001) during an effort to enhance a consumer-oriented approach to teaching, students and faculty were surveyed about their perceptions of what constitutes good teaching. The survey revealed that there were no differences between students and faculty members; however, students did more strongly associate the following characteristics with effective instruction: encouraging student input in all aspects of the class, facilitating communication between student and teacher, and making course materials (i.e. lecture notes, syllabi, study guides) readily available for students. The results were used as a basis for suggesting a value-based model of good teaching. Another study was conducted by Conant et al. (1998). The results from the survey indicated that professors who develop a good rapport with their students realize many benefits, including increased class participation, student motivation, and the personal satisfaction that comes from creating an open and fluid learning environment. The study revealed that students enthusiasm were fostered by (1) being available inside and outside of class, (2) displaying a friendly demeanor, and (3) modeling professionalism.

Teacher educators at institutions of higher learning are linked to K-12 schools. Their purposes are two fold: (1) to prepare pre-service teachers who can effectively teach in today's classrooms and (2) to collaborate with public schools to help develop strategies and programs for their improvement. This concept forms a relationship in the roles of teacher educators and public schools (Doyle, 1990).

Teacher professional development has always relied on the ideas and suggestions of experienced teacher educators to develop the curriculum needed for both pre-service and in-service teacher development. Having faculty members' model best professional practice is an expectation designed to change instruction, therefore, faculty members should be able to model the strategies that they expect their students to use.

### Novice Teachers

Over the next decade, America will need to hire approximately 200,000 K–12 teachers annually (Fideler & Haselkorn, 2002). This increased demand will result due to rising student enrollments, accelerated teacher retirements, and class size reduction. Darling-Hammond (1997) suggests that teaching is the single most important element to student achievement and the beginning years of teaching can be very challenging. Novice teachers who demonstrate a high level of efficacy are more likely to endure and remain in the profession. Teacher efficacy is a belief concept of teacher motivation. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk and Hoy (1998) defined teacher efficacy as “the teacher’s belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context” (p. 233). According to Smylie (1994), teacher beliefs play a critical role in the development of teachers because they filter the perception and interpretation of new knowledge and phenomena, which influences how teachers learn to teach, plan to teach, make

instructional decisions, and interact with students (Borko & Putnam, 1996; Richardson & Placier, 2001).

First-year teachers are frequently left in a “sink or swim” situation with little support from principals or other teachers and with few opportunities for professional development (Weiss & Weiss, 1999). Novice teachers rarely make smooth transitions from being students in a university classroom to teaching in their own classrooms. Novice teachers often step into a classroom afraid and unsure of how to manage a classroom effectively.

When determining what defines a competent beginning teacher, Reynolds (1992) stated, “indications are that many beginners do not enter teaching able to meet the expectations” (p. 26) for planning and teaching effective lessons, assessing student learning, or managing the classroom environment. In Veenman’s (1984) review of more than 80 studies, he documented problems novice teachers considered who have taught 3 years or less. He found that beginning teachers most frequently mentioned problems, in rank order: “classroom discipline,” “dealing with individual differences,” “motivating students,” “relationships with parents,” “organization of class work,” “assessing student’s work,” and “insufficient materials and supplies.” In discussing the similarities of problems found across the studies reviewed, Veenman also noted that problems encountered by novice teachers could be attributed to many factors, only one of which may be the quality of the teacher preparation program.

Lortie (1975) reported that “teaching seemed to be the only profession where the beginner became fully responsible from the first working day and

performed the same tasks as a 25 year veteran” (p. 72). He also contended that one primary reason for teachers choosing teaching as a career included time compatibility. Time compatibility refers to the number of holidays and vacation days associated with teaching. Teachers also seem to enjoy working with people and feel the need to provide service to the community. Goodlad (1984) supports the work of Lortie (1975) when he indicated that the majority of teachers tend to show characteristics of being altruistic and idealistic and would choose teaching as a career again.

### Summary

The objective in the literature review has been to show that because teaching is the single most important element to student achievement, there is a great need for teacher education programs who prepare teachers to ensure that they have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. The literature clearly indicated that there is a concern about the quality of teacher education programs and suggests that these programs follow standards outlined by The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). It was also clear that the main subject for students’ learning is the teacher. Therefore, teacher education programs have a critical role to play in requiring that teacher candidates are highly qualified and properly prepared and trained for their role in developing students of tomorrow.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This section of the study contains a brief overview of the study, information on the research design, the population and sample, instrumentation, methods of data collection, and data analysis.

Goodlad (1984) contends that the teacher, more than any other element of the educational process, contributes to the quality and success of the school. Therefore, in order to meet standards that impact teacher preparation and educational experiences in an effort to produce highly qualified teachers, additional data on satisfaction of teacher preparation is critical. The purpose of this study was to explore the degree to which novice teachers are satisfied with their teacher preparation programs. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following ten research questions that guide the study:

1. To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with their abilities to demonstrate content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, necessary to help all students learn?
2. To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with various aspects of their field experiences and clinical practice?
3. To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with their abilities and effectiveness to work with diverse learners?

4. To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with their abilities to integrate technology across the curriculum?
5. To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with the quality of instruction received in their teacher preparation program?
6. Do novice teachers who attended Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) differ from novice teachers who attended Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) in terms of their satisfaction with knowledge, skills, dispositions, field experiences, clinical practice, diversity, technology, and quality of instruction received in their teacher education program?
7. Do novice teachers who received an initial bachelor's certification differ from novice teachers who received an Alternative-A certification in terms of their satisfaction with knowledge, skills, dispositions, field experiences, clinical practice, diversity, technology, and quality of instruction received in their teacher education program?
8. Do novice teachers who teach in lower grade levels (P–5) differ from novice teachers who teach in higher grade levels (6–12) in terms of their satisfaction with knowledge, skills, dispositions, field experiences and clinical practice; diversity; technology; and quality of instruction received in their teacher education program?
9. Do novice teachers with three years of teaching experience differ from novice teachers with one or two years of teaching experience in terms of their knowledge, skills, dispositions, field experiences, clinical practice, diversity, technology; and quality of instruction received in teacher education program?

10. Do novice teachers who teach in rural schools differ from novice teachers who teach in urban and suburban schools in terms of their satisfaction with knowledge, skills, dispositions, field experiences, clinical practice, diversity, technology; and quality of instruction received in their teacher education program?

### Research Design

The design for the study is classified as survey research. Survey research is defined as that which attempts to obtain data from members of a population (or sample) to determine the current status of that population with respect to one or more variable (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). Babbie (1995) reported “survey research is probably the best method available to the social scientist interested in collecting original data for describing a population too large to observe directly” (p. 257). However, the analysis plan consists of two phases: (1) addressing the descriptive questions as they apply to the population as a whole, and (2) conducting specific comparisons within the sample to address possible differences between the subpopulations represented within the sample.

### *Population and Sample*

The population for the study consisted of novice teachers at three selected public school systems in a tri-county area of Alabama. Of these, 183 were employed in School System A, 159 were employed in School System B, and 653 were employed in School System C. Of the 995 novice teachers surveyed, 608 participated in the study.



For the purpose of this study, novice teachers are defined as non-tenured teachers with three or less years of teaching experience. These three public school systems were selected for the study because their teaching faculty was diverse in terms of ethnicity, grade levels and subject areas teaching, years of teaching experience, types of certification pursued, and types of institutions attended. As well, the student population in the three participating public schools systems is diverse.

The research took place during the 2004–2005 academic year, where approximately 3,650 teachers were currently employed in primary, elementary, middle/junior high, high schools and alternative schools located in rural, urban, and suburban areas within these three public school systems. They are responsible for the instruction of approximately 52,000 students (Autauga, Elmore and Montgomery County Boards of Education. (2004).

*School system a.* The second largest school system has an enrollment of over 10,000 students and approximately 650 teachers in 15 schools located in rural, urban, and suburb and areas. The ethnic makeup of students in this school system is 70 percent White and 30 percent non-White.

*School system b.* The smallest of the three public school systems have 13 schools located in rural, urban and suburban areas. There are approximately 8,940 students and 538 teachers within this school system. The ethnic composition of the student body is 75 percent White and 25 percent non-White.

*School system c.* The largest of the three public school systems has 60 schools located in rural, urban, and suburban geographical areas. Within this

public school system is approximately 33,000 students and 2,400 teachers. The ethnic ratio of students is 24 percent White and 76 percent non-White.

### Instrumentation

Data for this study were gathered from three select public school systems in Alabama, using a questionnaire entitled “Survey of Teacher Education Programs (STEP).” The questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed for the purpose of gathering data to determine the extent in which novice teachers are satisfied with their teacher education preparation.

The researcher developed the questionnaire using components of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE 2002), namely knowledge, skills and dispositions, field experiences and clinical practice, diversity, technology, and quality of instruction. Open-ended questions to elicit perception of overall satisfaction with teacher preparation were also included. These questions served as dependent variables. Questions to elicit demographic information served as independent variables.

Gall, Gall and Borg (2003) provided valuable information on the appropriate methods for utilizing a questionnaire for the purpose of obtaining research results. The researcher adhered to the major steps in the developments of the questionnaire as outlined by Gall (2003). These included: (1) defining research objectives, (2) selecting a sample, (3) designing the questionnaire, (4) pilot testing, (5) pre-contacting the sample, (6) preparing the cover letter, (7) distributing the questionnaire, and (8) analyzing questionnaire data.

The questionnaire will be cross-sectional in that it will be administered at one point in time. In addition, the findings from this study could generalize to the greater population of teachers in these school systems.

The questionnaire was developed after an extensive review of literature, which included a review of satisfaction surveys and NCATE standards. The instrument was created using the principles of a Likert-type scale and guidelines recommended in quantitative methods of research design according to Charles and Mertler (2002). The questionnaire is divided into seven sections purposely for obtaining information on novice teachers in public schools systems in Alabama.

In sections 2, 3 and 6, respondents were asked to respond to questions using a 4 point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly Agree. In sections 4 and 5, respondents were asked to respond to questions on the 4 point Likert-type scale: 1 = Needs Improvement, 2 = Average, 3 = Good, and 4 = Excellent.

#### *Part I: Demographic Information*

Part I requests relevant demographic information. This section solicits seven personal and professional questions about the respondents. The questions asked respondents about their educational major, type of institution attended, type of certification pursued, grade levels teaching, locality of employment, and ethnicity.

### *Part II: Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions*

This section contains ten questions on standards that focus on knowledge, skills, and dispositions of teachers. The questions in this section examine values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behavior towards students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth (NCATE, 2002). Utilizing a four-part Likert scale, respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with the standards.

### *Part III: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice*

Part III of the questionnaire is designed to solicit information concerning the aspects of teachers' field experiences and clinical practice. A four-part Likert scale gave respondents an opportunity to indicate their satisfaction response for each of the ten questions in Part III.

### *Part IV: Diversity*

Part IV contains nine questions designed to ascertain how experiences in teacher education programs contributed to their effectiveness in terms of diversity in public schools. Diversity questions included eliciting information on understanding the impact of inclusion on learning, as well as being able to work with students from diverse backgrounds. Teachers were asked to indicate their level of effectiveness, using a four-part Likert scale.

### *Part V: Technology*

This section contains five questions on major standards provided in teacher education programs that focus on technology. This section focused on

teachers expressing their judgment on developing strategies to identify and evaluate technology resources, and incorporating technology into the curriculum purposely to enhance student learning. A four-part Likert scale provided teachers the opportunity to indicate their response for each question.

#### *Part VI: Quality of Instruction*

Part VI of the questionnaire is designed to indicate the extent of agreement with teacher education standards concerning quality of instruction. Respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with the quality of instruction received during their teacher preparation. There are five questions in Part VI and a four-part Likert scale is used.

#### *Part VII: Open-Ended Questions*

This section contained four open-ended questions designed to give participants the opportunity to provide additional comments in their own words. Novice teachers were asked to identify three major strengths and/or weaknesses of their teacher education programs; to suggest two or more ways to strengthen their teacher education programs; if they could restart their career, would teaching be their choice; and to describe their overall level of satisfaction with their teacher education program.

### Validity

Huck (2000) contends that validity of the questionnaire is dependent upon its accuracy or the ability to measure what it purports to measure. To ensure that the questions developed by the researcher accurately measured novice teachers'

level of satisfaction with their teacher education program, the researcher took steps to have the questionnaire validated. First, a panel of NCATE Standard Chairs at a local university examined the face validity of the research instrument. These individuals served as experts to establish face validity and based on their feedback, the questions were revised. Secondly, the research instrument was field tested with a group of second-year doctoral students in the Educational Leadership, Policy and Law cohort at a local university. Their recommendation regarding format, phrasing of questions and clarity of purpose were used to revise the original questionnaire. In addition to examining the research instrument for formatting, phrasing of questions, and clarity of purpose, the NCATE Chairs were able to provide individual judgment about the content validity. As the questionnaire was based on standards outlined by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs (NCATE, 2002), the content validity of the instrument had already been established.

The evaluation of the research instrument was conducted according to the guidelines supported by Fraenkel et al. (2003). The panel of NCATE Standard Chairs had sufficient expertise to make the judgments necessary in the evaluation. They also provided the researcher the necessary feedback essential to the development of an instrument having an appropriate degree of validity.

### Reliability

The research questionnaire for this study was subjected to guidelines to determine its reliability as established in Fraenkel et al. The issue of reliability is

mostly concerned with consistency. It is essential to demonstrate that the instrument will remain consistent throughout its administration. The method used for assessing internal consistency reliability was Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Sowell (2001) reports that a large correlation coefficient, usually  $r = .70$  or better suggests that items are internally consistent. The scale scores for the domains of knowledge, skills and dispositions, field experiences and clinical practice, diversity, technology, and quality of instruction showed internal consistency reliability. The respective alpha scores were: Knowledge, skills and dispositions (.926); field experiences and clinical practice (.877); diversity (.934); use of technology (.945); and quality of instruction (.889).

#### Research Procedures and Data Collection

Prior to administering the questionnaire to novice teachers, permission was obtained from the superintendents of the three school systems (Appendix B). Each Superintendent noted the relevancy of this study to their school system and then notified the principals either via e-mail or by memo of the approval to conduct the study. The principals offered full cooperation and assistance with this study on novice teachers' assessment of their teacher education programs. Approval to administer the questionnaire was granted by the Auburn University Human Subjects Review Board as well.

The questionnaires were delivered to each school during mid-month November, 2004. Novice teachers at each school received an envelope containing a questionnaire (Appendix A), a cover letter from the researcher

(Appendix C) that included affirmation of support and encouraged cooperation from the superintendents. This letter also contained instructions and additional information about the study. Distribution and collection procedures were under the supervision of the principal.

The informed consent letter from the researcher included the following information: (1) introduction of the researcher, (2) the purpose of the questionnaire, (3) statement of approval by the superintendent, (4) phone number for Auburn University, Office of Human Subjects Research, (5) guaranteed anonymity, and (6) a statement that participation by the teacher was voluntary.

The packets delivered and returned were completely anonymous. Eighty-seven schools in the three school systems participated. The questionnaires were returned to the researcher by the end of November 2004.

### Data Analysis

The data generated from the study were coded and analyzed using a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS V12), a computer program designed to perform numerous statistical analyses. An item-by-item analysis of the questionnaire was conducted. Results included frequencies, mean scores, standard deviation, and percentages. Data was arranged in both narrative form and in accompanying tables. The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics to find answers to the main questions of the study.

Descriptive data extracted from the questionnaires allowed the researcher to



construct demographic profiles of the novice teachers. The report of the demographics included all numbers and percentages.

Further analysis of data was conducted. This analysis included the Multivariate analysis of variance technique (MANOVA) on the five scales of the assessment survey to determine the multivariate relationships between each scale and certain personal and educational background variables that formed the independent variables. Post hoc procedures (Fisher LSD) were conducted to determine practical significance.

Novice teacher's multiple responses to the open-ended questions were coded and also entered in SPSS. Results will include frequencies, percent of responses, and percent of cases. The data for the open-ended questions were presented on the number of responses having similar answers. The researcher determined the inclusion of answers based upon the frequency of responses.

### Summary

The purpose of Chapter Three was to present the methodology utilized by this research inquiry on the major standards that impact teacher preparation and educational experiences for novice teachers. Understanding their degree of satisfaction with their teacher preparation will provide insight and additional knowledge for teacher educators and institutions that are committed to preparing highly qualified teachers and could also have significant benefit to the school districts.

Appropriate methods of research and statistical analysis were applied to the process of this investigation. The validity and reliability of the instrument were determined according to the acceptable guidelines and review by a panel of experts. The sample received ethical treatment as outlined in the standards from the Office of Human Subjects Research at Auburn University.

The results of the information obtained according to the procedures outlined in Chapter III are analyzed and presented in Chapter IV. The summary, conclusions and recommendations of this investigation are provided in Chapter V. The researcher believes the findings of this investigation assessing novice teachers' satisfaction with their teacher preparation will provide valuable information that can be utilized by school administrators and universities committed to meeting standards of excellence in education.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This quantitative study was conceptualized as an in depth examination of the perceptions and educational experiences of novice teachers for two purposes: (1) to ascertain personal and educational background information that may be associated with differing satisfaction levels of novice teachers and their teacher preparation, and (2) to determine the multivariate relationships between certain personal and educational background variables of novice teachers, and selected dimensions of teacher education programs.

The sample for this study included novice teachers in three public school systems and was conducted during the 2004–2005 academic year. The overarching goal of the study was to explore the degree to which novice teachers are satisfied with their teacher preparation programs.

The data analyses were used to assess the levels of satisfaction among novice teachers utilizing major standards that impact teacher education programs. A descriptive analysis of the survey responses and participant demographics was completed first. In addition, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and post hoc procedures (Fisher LSD) were conducted to determine practical significance.

## Demographic Information

The population consisted of 995 novice teachers in three selected public school systems in Alabama. Responses were obtained from 608 of those novice teachers (61%) during the 2004–2005 academic year. Babbie (1995) contends that at least a 50 percent response rate is necessary for analysis and reporting, while a 60 percent response rate is considered good, and a 70 percent response rate is very good (p. 262). This return rate is therefore adequate for drawing inference from the data. All novice teachers in the three public school systems were given an equal opportunity to participate in the study.

The first seven items on the survey asked teachers to provide specific information on their educational background and experiences. These responses were analyzed and frequencies and percentages were computed for these variables. The results for these variables are provided in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Of the 608 participants in the sample population, 186 or 30.6% are Elementary Education majors. A majority of the teachers 64.5% indicated having attended Predominately White Institutions (PWIs), while 34.5% attended Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). It is also noteworthy that 77.5% of the novice teachers were enrolled in Class B - Bachelors Certification Programs. Table 1 displays the data in questions 1–3 which is pertinent to the educational background of the respondents.

Table 1

*Educational Background*

| Variables                      | <i>n</i> | %    |
|--------------------------------|----------|------|
| Teacher Education Major        |          |      |
| Early Childhood                | 113      | 18.6 |
| Elementary                     | 186      | 30.6 |
| Secondary Math                 | 31       | 5.1  |
| Secondary Science              | 43       | 7.1  |
| Secondary English              | 35       | 5.8  |
| Secondary History              | 13       | 2.1  |
| Physical Education             | 26       | 4.3  |
| Special Education              | 62       | 10.2 |
| Other                          | 98       | 16.1 |
| Type of College Attended       |          |      |
| HBCU                           | 210      | 34.5 |
| PWI                            | 392      | 64.5 |
| Initial Certification Received |          |      |
| Class B – Bachelors            | 471      | 77.5 |
| Class A - Alternative          | 129      | 21.2 |

As reported by novice teachers about 54.3% are currently teaching at the Early Childhood and Elementary (P–5) grade levels, while 45.6% are teaching at the middle/secondary (6–12) grade levels. Participants ranged in experience from 1 to 3 years, with the majority of respondents represented by teachers who have three years of experience (37.5%). Thirty six percent of the teachers

indicated that their schools were located in an urban geographical area.

Information on teaching experience and school locality is provided in Table 2.

Table 2

*Teaching Experience and School Locality*

| Variables                             | <i>n</i> | %    |
|---------------------------------------|----------|------|
| <b>Grade Level Currently Teaching</b> |          |      |
| Early Childhood/Elementary (P-5)      | 330      | 54.3 |
| Middle/Secondary (6-12)               | 277      | 45.6 |
| <b>Overall Teaching Experience</b>    |          |      |
| One year                              | 175      | 28.8 |
| Two years                             | 140      | 23.0 |
| Three Years                           | 228      | 37.5 |
| <b>School Locality</b>                |          |      |
| Rural                                 | 153      | 25.2 |
| Suburban                              | 208      | 34.2 |
| Urban                                 | 219      | 36.0 |

Of the 608 respondents, 53.6% recorded their ethnicity as White/Caucasian, 42.8% as Black/African American, 1.3% as Hispanic, 1.0% as Asian/Pacific Islander, .3% as Native Americana and .5% as other. Ethnicity data is contained in Table 3.

Table 3

*Ethnicity of Respondents*

| Ethnicity              | <i>n</i> | %    |
|------------------------|----------|------|
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 6        | 1.0  |
| Black/African American | 260      | 42.8 |
| White/Caucasian        | 326      | 53.6 |
| Hispanic               | 8        | 1.3  |
| Native American        | 2        | .3   |
| Other                  | 3        | .5   |

Results

*Research Question One*

Research Question One was: To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with their abilities to demonstrate content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge necessary to help all students learn? Novice teachers in the three public school districts indicated the degree to which they agreed with NCATE program indicators on a four-part Likert type scale. Part II of the questionnaire contained ten questions that gauged the teachers' abilities to demonstrate content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge necessary to help all students learn. Novice teachers were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with each of the ten statements in terms of knowledge, skills, and dispositions (KSD).

The data for these ten questions (KSD8-17) are represented in Table 4. On the satisfaction scale, the respondents reported the most favorable response to Question 8 regarding “providing a good foundation in their subject area.” The mean score on this question was 3.34 with a standard deviation of .70. Question 8 also had the highest percentage of strongly agree responses at 45.0%. Among novice teachers, 36.6% also indicated they “strongly agree” that their teacher education programs provided them with “substantial professional education knowledge.” This question had the second highest mean score at 3.25 and one of the lowest standard deviations at .67.

Table 4

*Part II: Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions (KSD)*

| Questions  | Distribution of Responses |      |     |     |      |      |      |
|--|---------------------------|------|-----|-----|------|------|------|
|  | N                         | M    | S   | SD  | D    | A    | SA   |
| 8. Good foundation in subject area                   | 605                       | 3.34 | .70 | 2.8 | 5.3  | 46.9 | 45.0 |
| 9. Good background knowledge outside area            | 606                       | 3.15 | .67 | 2.3 | 9.2  | 59.2 | 29.2 |
| 10. Substantial professional education knowledge     | 606                       | 3.25 | .67 | 2.0 | 7.4  | 54.0 | 36.6 |
| 11. Understanding of readiness level/learning styles | 605                       | 3.13 | .73 | 3.5 | 10.7 | 55.5 | 30.2 |
| 12. Stimulated critical thinking/problem solving     | 606                       | 3.15 | .73 | 3.0 | 11.4 | 53.5 | 32.2 |
| 13. Good knowledge of various teaching strategies    | 605                       | 3.19 | .73 | 2.5 | 11.4 | 50.6 | 35.5 |

(table continues)



Table 4 (continued)

| Questions   | Distribution of Responses |      |     |     |      |      |      |
|---|---------------------------|------|-----|-----|------|------|------|
|   | N                         | M    | S   | SD  | D    | A    | SA   |
| 14. Select/construct/use appropriate assessment tools | 604                       | 3.14 | .73 | 3.3 | 10.6 | 54.4 | 31.6 |
| 15. Opportunity to participate in professional org    | 605                       | 3.14 | .76 | 3.5 | 12.7 | 49.8 | 34.0 |
| 16. Opportunity to model and assess dispositions      | 605                       | 3.10 | .75 | 4.1 | 11.7 | 54.5 | 29.5 |
| 17. Equipped to self-assess teaching effectiveness    | 605                       | 3.15 | .70 | 3.0 | 9.9  | 56.5 | 30.6 |

Legend: N = Number of Respondents, M = Mean, S = Standard Deviation, SD = Strongly

Disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

When asked about obtaining a “good background outside of their subject area,” 88.4% of novice teachers responded that they agree or strongly agree that they did. The mean score for this question was 3.15 with a standard deviation of .67. For each of the other elements of the KSD, respondents’ reported satisfaction levels were about the same — 3.14 — and the degree of unanimity in these responses was also similar. The element receiving the lowest rated satisfaction was “opportunity to model and assess dispositions” which received a rating of 3.10. Since a four point scale was used, it is clear that on average novice teachers are satisfied that their program provided the knowledge, skills, and dispositions relative to these ten dimensions.

### *Research Question Two*

Research Question Two was: To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with various aspects of their Field Experiences and Clinical Practice?

The data for these ten questions (ST18–27) are represented in Table 5. On the ten questions in Part III (ST), novice teachers were asked to indicate the extent of agreement with various aspects of their field experiences and clinical practices.

Table 5

#### *Part III – Field Experiences and Clinical Practices (ST)*

| Questions   | Distribution of Responses |      |     |     |      |      |      |
|---|---------------------------|------|-----|-----|------|------|------|
|   | N                         | M    | S   | SD  | D    | A    | SA   |
| 18. Opportunity to apply KSDs in various settings                 | 591                       | 3.29 | .70 | 2.4 | 7.3  | 48.9 | 41.5 |
| 19. Developed necessary competencies for teaching                 | 590                       | 3.29 | .71 | 2.9 | 6.4  | 49.0 | 41.7 |
| 20. Various school-based opportunity to observe/instruct/research | 588                       | 3.29 | .72 | 2.4 | 8.8  | 46.3 | 42.5 |
| 21. Opportunity to use technology to support teaching/learning    | 586                       | 2.95 | .86 | 6.1 | 21.7 | 43.7 | 28.5 |
| 22. Clinical in supportive school environment                     | 582                       | 3.38 | .73 | 3.3 | 5.7  | 40.9 | 50.2 |
| 23. Cooperative teacher instrumental in career development        | 581                       | 3.32 | .86 | 5.5 | 9.8  | 32.0 | 52.7 |
| 24. Cooperative teacher modeled best practices                    | 579                       | 3.26 | .85 | 5.5 | 10.5 | 35.9 | 48.0 |
| 25. Clear objectives for improvement from University Supervisor   | 581                       | 3.28 | .82 | 4.6 | 9.8  | 38.2 | 47.3 |

(table continues)

Table 5 (continued)

| Questions   | Distribution of Responses |      |     |     |     |      |      |
|---|---------------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|------|------|
|   | N                         | M    | S   | SD  | D   | A    | SA   |
| 26. University supervisor wit realistic expectations of me interning            | 580                       | 3.37 | .79 | 4.7 | 5.7 | 38.1 | 51.6 |
| 27. Collaboration with faculty/ supervisor to assess my intern teaching methods | 582                       | 3.21 | .80 | 4.8 | 9.3 | 45.7 | 40.2 |

Legend: N = Number of Respondents, M = Mean, S = Standard Deviation, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

About 52.7% of the novice teachers strongly agree that “their cooperating teacher was instrumental in their career development” (Question 23). The mean score was 3.32 with a standard deviation of .86. Over 51% of the respondents strongly agreed with “My university supervisor had realistic expectations of me as an intern.” The mean score was 3.37 with a standard deviation of .79 (Question 26). Question 22 asked if the “teachers’ clinical practice was in a supportive school environment?” In response, 91% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it was. The mean score reported was 3.38 with a standard deviation of .73. The lowest ranking response in Part III was given to Question 21 on which a mean score of 2.95 and standard deviation of .86 was reported for Question 21 that asked if the teachers’ “field experiences and clinical practice provided opportunities to use technology to support their teaching and learning.” Less than 30% of the respondents strongly agreed with this statement.

Based on these data, it appears that novice teachers are relatively well satisfied with the various aspects of their field experiences and clinical practice – with the exception of the opportunity to use technology in teaching and learning.

### *Research Question Three*

Research Question Three was: To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with their abilities and effectiveness to work with diverse learners? Part IV (D28–36) consisted of a total of nine questions regarding teachers' effectiveness to work with diverse learners. Item means ranged from 2.5 (minimum) to 2.93 (maximum); standard deviations for the nine questions ranged from .85 to .95. The highest rated response in Part IV of the questionnaire was on question 29. Novice teachers were asked to rate their program regarding how well their experiences contributed to their effectiveness in several areas. On “acquiring the ability to develop meaningful learning experiences for diverse students” the mean score was 2.80 with a standard deviation of .85, with 48.7% of the respondents agreeing with the statement.

The lowest rated response in Part IV of the questionnaire was on Question 32. Teachers were asked to respond to this statement: “Communicate with parents or guardians from diverse backgrounds.” The mean score was 2.57 with a standard deviation of .93 and only 16.7% of the respondents indicating excellent on the four-part Likert scale for teacher preparation experiences contributing to their effectiveness to communicate with parents and guardians from diverse backgrounds. All questions asked in Part IV rated a mean response

below 3.0 (see Table 6). Based on these responses, it would appear that novice teachers feel less prepared in these areas than in the previous two.

Table 6

*Part IV: Diversity (D)*

| Questions  | Distribution of Responses |      |     |      |      |      |      |
|--|---------------------------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|
|  | N                         | M    | S   | NI   | A    | G    | E    |
| 28. Understand school culture                                      | 603                       | 2.74 | .86 | 9.0  | 27.4 | 44.6 | 19.1 |
| 29. Developed meaningful learning experiences for diverse students | 604                       | 2.80 | .85 | 8.3  | 23.2 | 48.7 | 19.9 |
| 30. Understand classroom environment                               | 603                       | 2.93 | .88 | 7.8  | 19.2 | 45.4 | 27.5 |
| 31. Work with students from diverse backgrounds                    | 603                       | 2.78 | .90 | 9.8  | 25.4 | 42.3 | 22.6 |
| 32. Communicate with parents from diverse backgrounds              | 604                       | 2.57 | .93 | 15.1 | 29.8 | 38.4 | 16.7 |
| 33. Understand exceptionalities/ identify indicators/meet needs    | 604                       | 2.81 | .89 | 9.3  | 23.0 | 44.9 | 22.8 |
| 34. Understand impact of inclusion on learning                     | 603                       | 2.72 | .95 | 13.3 | 23.7 | 41.0 | 22.1 |
| 35. Understand gender differences in teaching/learning             | 604                       | 2.77 | .87 | 9.1  | 25.2 | 45.0 | 20.7 |
| 36. Teach/model/integrate multicultural awareness/ appreciation    | 604                       | 2.86 | .89 | 8.9  | 20.5 | 45.7 | 24.8 |

Legend: N = Number of Respondents, M = Mean, S = Standard Deviation, NI = Needs

Improvement, A = Average, G = Good, E = Excellent

#### *Research Question Four*

Research Question Four was: To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with their abilities to integrate technology across the curriculum? Part V (T37-41) consisted of five questions with regards to teachers' abilities to integrate technology across the curriculum. Item means ranged from 2.66 (minimum) to 2.88 (maximum); standard deviations for the five questions ranged from .89 to .96.

The highest rated response in Part V of the questionnaire was on the question that asked them how well their experiences in their program contributed to their effectiveness in "Developing strategies to identify and evaluate technology resources." The mean score was 2.66 with a standard deviation of .91. The respondents agreed with this statement at a rate of 41.7%.

The lowest rated response in Part V of the questionnaire was on Question 38. Teachers were asked to respond to this statement: "Managing instruction using technology resources." The mean score was 2.64 with a standard deviation of .89 and only 17.3% of the respondents indicated excellent on the Likert scale for teacher preparation experiences contributing to their effectiveness to manage instruction using technology resources. Of the 46 questions asked on the questionnaire, Parts IV and V (see Tables 6 and 7) were the only questions asked that rated a mean response below 3.0.

Table 7

*Part V: Technology (T)*

| Questions   | Distribution of Responses |      |     |      |      |      |      |
|---|---------------------------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|
|   | N                         | M    | S   | NI   | A    | G    | E    |
| 37. Develop strategies to identify/ evaluate technology resources | 599                       | 2.66 | .91 | 12.0 | 28.2 | 41.7 | 18.0 |
| 38. Manage instruction using technology resources                 | 601                       | 2.64 | .89 | 11.1 | 31.4 | 40.1 | 17.3 |
| 39. Locating and using online resources                           | 597                       | 2.88 | .92 | 9.2  | 21.9 | 40.5 | 28.3 |
| 40. Use technology to support lesson plan development             | 596                       | 2.80 | .96 | 11.6 | 24.0 | 37.2 | 27.2 |
| 41. Use appropriate technology in instructional methodology       | 600                       | 2.71 | .92 | 11.5 | 26.7 | 41.3 | 20.5 |

Legend: N = Number of Respondents, M = Mean, S = Standard Deviation, NI = Needs Improvement, A = Average, G = Good, E = Excellent

*Research Question Five*

Research Question Five asked: To what degree are novice teachers satisfied with the quality of instruction received in their teacher preparation program? Part VI (Q42-46) consisted of five questions with regards to the extent in which teachers' agreed with the quality of instruction received. Item means ranged from 3.22 (minimum) to 3.45 (maximum); standard deviations for the five questions ranged from .62 to .69.

The highest rated response in Part VI of the questionnaire was on question 43. Novice teachers were asked to respond to the statement: Indicate the extent of your agreement with the following: "Professors in my teacher

education program modeled good teaching and helped me to develop multiple teaching strategies to help all students learn.” The mean score was 3.2 with a standard deviation of .69. The respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement at a rate of 88.7%.

The lowest rated response in Part VI of the questionnaire was on Question 42. Teachers were asked to respond to this statement: “Professors in my teacher education program used appropriate instructional materials.” The mean score was 3.3 with a standard deviation of .66 and only 40% of the respondents indicated that their professors used appropriate instructional materials. Data for quality of instruction is reported in Table 8.

Table 8

Part VI: Quality of Instruction (Q)

| Questions  | Distribution of Responses |      |     |     |     |      |      |
|--|---------------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|------|------|
|  | N                         | M    | S   | NI  | A   | G    | E    |
| 42. Professors use appropriate instructional materials         | 605                       | 3.30 | .66 | 2.0 | 5.8 | 52.2 | 40.0 |
| 43. Professors model good teach/taught multi-teaching strategy | 604                       | 3.23 | .69 | 2.0 | 9.3 | 52.6 | 36.1 |
| 44. Professor showed enthusiasm in presentation of content     | 605                       | 3.35 | .65 | 1.3 | 6.3 | 48.3 | 44.1 |
| 45. Professors showed respect for student opinions             | 605                       | 3.31 | .66 | 1.3 | 7.6 | 50.2 | 40.8 |
| 46. Professors modeled good oral/written communication skills  | 605                       | 3.44 | .62 | 1.5 | 2.8 | 46.3 | 49.4 |

Legend: N = Number of Respondents, M = Mean, S = Standard Deviation, SD = Strongly

Disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree



## Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)

While the previous analyses were descriptive in nature and represent responses from the sample as a whole, this study was also designed to explore any differences in these perceptions that might be related to one or more demographic variables. To do this, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), was conducted on the five scales of the questionnaire to determine the multivariate relationships between each scale and selected personal background characteristics that formed the independent variables.

For each analysis, the first step was to perform an overall analysis including all of the elements within that particular group along with one of the background factors. Since specific differences were not hypothesized in advance, a post hoc Fisher's LSD procedure was utilized to identify on which individual statements there were significant differences. Then those differences are interpreted.

The data in Table 9 summarizes the results of the multivariate analysis of variance for types of institutions attended. When this procedure was executed statistically significant differences were observed ( $p < .05$ ) with the Wilk's Lambda (.888). As a significant difference was indicated on the multivariate procedure, a univariate analysis of variance procedure was performed to identify where the differences lay. Results indicated that there were significant differences for four of the five factors, namely: knowledge, skills, and dispositions; student internship; diversity; and use of technology. This suggests

that novice teachers who attended Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were more satisfied with their teacher preparation programs in terms of knowledge, skills, and dispositions, student internship, diversity and use of technology than their counterparts who attended predominately white institutions (PWIs). There was no significant difference for quality of instruction.

Table 9

*Type of Institution Effect on Outcomes Scores*

| Wilk's Lambda | F      | df1<br>df2 | P    | Partial Eta. Sq. |
|---------------|--------|------------|------|------------------|
| .888          | 13.906 | 5,551      | .000 | .11              |

Univariate Follow-up Comparisons

| Factors                           | F-Value | P     | Partial Eta Sqd |
|-----------------------------------|---------|-------|-----------------|
| Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions | 5.99    | .015* | .011            |
| Student Internship                | 10.67   | .001* | .019            |
| Diversity                         | 37.72   | .000* | .064            |
| Technology Use                    | 28.27   | .000* | .048            |
| Quality of Instruction            | .31     | .579  | .001            |

\*Sig. at < .05 using Holms' Sequential Bonferroni Procedure

Table 9 (continued)

| Factors                           | Means                     |                          |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
|                                   | HBCU<br><u>Mean</u><br>SD | PWI<br><u>Mean</u><br>SD |
| Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions | <u>32.61</u><br>6.057     | <u>31.38</u><br>5.383    |
| Student Internship                | <u>33.87</u><br>6.246     | <u>32.10</u><br>5.970    |
| Diversity                         | <u>27.30</u><br>5.957     | <u>23.80</u><br>6.548    |
| Use of Technology                 | <u>14.95</u><br>3.597     | <u>13.00</u><br>4.340    |
| Quality of Instruction            | <u>16.53</u><br>2.698     | <u>16.67</u><br>2.772    |

The data reported in Table 10 revealed the results of the multivariate analysis of variance for types of teacher certification pursued. When this procedure was executed there was no statistically significant differences observed. Therefore, a univariate follow-up comparison was not required.

Table 10

*Type of Certification Effect on Outcomes Scores*

| Wilk's |       | df1   |      |
|--------|-------|-------|------|
| Lambda | F     | df2   | P    |
| .986   | 1.625 | 5,554 | .151 |

The results of the multivariate analysis of variance for years of teaching experience are displayed in Table 11. When this procedure was executed statistically significant differences were observed ( $p < .05$ ) with the Wilk's Lambda (.947). As a significant difference was indicated on the multivariate procedure, a univariate analysis utilizing Holms' stepdown procedure, determined that only the student internship dimension was different for the two grade levels. Early Childhood and Elementary novice teachers were more positive in their evaluations than those novice teachers who were teaching in the middle and high school grades.

Table 11

*Type of Grade Level Effect on Outcomes Scores*

|        |       |       |      |                  |
|--------|-------|-------|------|------------------|
| Wilk's |       | Df1   |      |                  |
| Lambda | F     | Df2   | P    | Partial Eta. Sq. |
| .947   | 6.207 | 5,555 | .000 | .053             |

**Univariate Follow-up Comparisons**

| <b>Factors</b>                    | <b>F-Value</b> | <b>P</b> | <b>Partial Eta Sqd</b> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------|------------------------|
| Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions | 0.71           | .791     | .000                   |
| Student Internship                | 12.54          | .000*    | .022                   |
| Diversity                         | .154           | .694     | .000                   |
| Use of Technology                 | 1.570          | .211     | .003                   |
| Quality of Instruction            | 2.049          | .153     | .004                   |

**\*Sig. at < .05 using Holms' Sequential Bonferroni Procedure**

Table 11 (continued)

| Factors                           | Means                 |                       |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|                                   | ECE/ELE (P-5)         | Middle/Sec. (6-12)    |
|                                   | <u>Mean</u><br>SD     | <u>Mean</u><br>SD     |
| Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions | <u>31.72</u><br>5.574 | <u>31.85</u><br>5.718 |
| Student Internship                | <u>33.50</u><br>5.948 | <u>31.68</u><br>6.146 |
| Diversity                         | <u>25.08</u><br>6.447 | <u>24.86</u><br>6.658 |
| Technology Use                    | <u>13.47</u><br>4.304 | <u>13.92</u><br>4.037 |
| Quality of Instruction            | <u>16.77</u><br>2.641 | <u>16.44</u><br>2.890 |

When a significant difference was indicated on the multivariate procedure, a univariate analysis of variance was performed on the effect to identify where the differences lay. The results of the univariate analysis of variance indicated that there were significant differences for one of the five scales according to the personal background and experience characteristics. Data pertaining to univariate analysis of variance are reported in Table 12. The results revealed that the scale where statistically significant difference occurred was use of

technology. When a significant difference was indicated on a MANOVA procedure that involved three or more subsamples, a post hoc procedure (Fisher LSD at .05 level of probability) was performed on this effect to ascertain more specifically where the differences lay (see Table 13). Results indicated that first year teachers feel more positive about their teacher preparation for using technology than do third year teachers. This suggests that the use of technology has been emphasized more within the last two years.

Table 12

*Teaching Experience Effect on Outcomes Scores*

| Wilk's<br>Lambda                  | F       | df1<br>df2 | P               | Partial Eta. Sq. |
|-----------------------------------|---------|------------|-----------------|------------------|
| .937                              | 3.303   | 10,1004    | .000            | .032             |
| Univariate Follow-up Comparisons  |         |            |                 |                  |
| Factors                           | F-Value | P          | Partial Eta Sqd |                  |
| Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions | 1.45    | .235       | .006            |                  |
| Student Internship                | 1.28    | .278       | .005            |                  |
| Diversity                         | .109    | .338       | .004            |                  |
| Use of Technology                 | 4.23    | .015*      | .016            |                  |
| Quality of Instruction            | 2.20    | .112       | .009            |                  |

\*Sig. at < .05 using Holms' Sequential Bonferroni Procedure

Table 12 (continued)

Means

| Factors                           | One Year              | Two Years             | Three Years           |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|                                   | <u>Mean</u><br>SD     | <u>Mean</u><br>SD     | <u>Mean</u><br>SD     |
| Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions | <u>31.28</u><br>5.847 | <u>32.40</u><br>4.485 | <u>31.82</u><br>5.994 |
| Student Internship                | <u>32.77</u><br>6.930 | <u>33.46</u><br>5.207 | <u>32.38</u><br>5.961 |
| Diversity                         | <u>25.59</u><br>6.574 | <u>24.49</u><br>6.094 | <u>25.30</u><br>6.777 |
| Technology Use                    | <u>14.58</u><br>4.304 | <u>14.03</u><br>4.011 | <u>13.35</u><br>4.109 |
| Quality of Instruction            | <u>16.30</u><br>3.110 | <u>16.71</u><br>2.346 | <u>16.90</u><br>2.755 |

Table 13

*Fisher's LSD Test of Difference Between Means for Significant Scales According to Teaching Experience*

| Factors    | Total Sample<br><u>Mean</u><br>SD | One Year<br><u>Mean</u><br>SD | Two Years<br><u>Mean</u><br>SD | Three Years<br><u>Mean</u><br>SD | F    | P    |
|------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|------|
| Use of     | <u>13.913</u>                     | <u>14.58</u>                  | <u>14.03</u>                   | <u>13.35</u>                     | 4.23 | .015 |
| Technology | 4.086                             | 4.304                         | 4.011                          | 4.109                            |      |      |



The data for significant multivariate analysis of variance with respect to locality of school are presented in Table 14. Since the overall MANOVA is significant ( $p = .008$ ), a univariate F test was conducted to find that only on quality of instruction, there is a difference among the three groups. Using Holms' Sequential Bonferroni, the most significant difference is only Total Quality of Instruction ( $p = .005$ ), which exceeds the minimum of .01 needed. Using Fisher's LSD test as a followup, it is noted that novice teacher in rural groups rank their quality of instruction significantly lower than do those in urban or suburban groups (see Table 15). Therefore, teachers in rural schools feel less positive about their quality of instruction than do teachers in suburban or urban schools. There is no difference between the latter two groups in this variable.

Table 14

*Locality of Schools Effect on Outcomes Scores*

| Wilk's |       | df1     |      |                  |
|--------|-------|---------|------|------------------|
| Lambda | F     | df2     | P    | Partial Eta. Sq. |
| .957   | 2.393 | 10,1066 | .008 | .022             |

Table 14 (continued)

## Univariate Follow-up Comparisons

| Factors                           | F-Value | P     | Partial Eta Sqd |
|-----------------------------------|---------|-------|-----------------|
| Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions | 2.169   | .115  | .008            |
| Student Internship                | .645    | .525  | .002            |
| Diversity                         | .340    | .712  | .001            |
| Use of Technology                 | 1.826   | .0162 | .007            |
| Quality of Instruction            | 5.303   | .005* | .019            |

\*Sig. at < .05 using Holms' Sequential Bonferroni Procedure

## Means

| Factors                           | Rural<br><u>Mean</u><br>SD | Suburban<br><u>Mean</u><br>SD | Urban<br><u>Mean</u><br>SD |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions | <u>31.03</u><br>5.546      | <u>31.65</u><br>5.653         | <u>32.31</u><br>5.827      |
| Student Internship                | <u>32.54</u><br>5.583      | <u>32.27</u><br>6.241         | <u>32.95</u><br>6.074      |
| Diversity                         | <u>24.76</u><br>6.244      | <u>24.64</u><br>6.537         | <u>25.16</u><br>6.848      |
| Technology Use                    | <u>13.68</u><br>4.115      | <u>13.15</u><br>4.241         | <u>13.95</u><br>4.262      |
| Quality of Instruction            | <u>15.97</u><br>2.817      | <u>16.90</u><br>2.583         | <u>16.77</u><br>2.851      |

**Table 15**

*Fisher's LSD Test of Difference Between Means for Significant Scales According to Locality of Schools*

| <b>Factors</b> | <b>Total</b>       |                    |                    |                    | <b>F</b> | <b>P</b> |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------|----------|
|                | <b>Sample</b>      | <b>Rural</b>       | <b>Suburban</b>    | <b>Urban</b>       |          |          |
|                | <u><b>Mean</b></u> | <u><b>Mean</b></u> | <u><b>Mean</b></u> | <u><b>Mean</b></u> |          |          |
|                | <b>SD</b>          | <b>SD</b>          | <b>SD</b>          | <b>SD</b>          |          |          |
| Quality of     | <u>16.599</u>      | <u>15.97</u>       | <u>16.89</u>       | <u>16.77</u>       | .005     | .019     |
| Instruction    | 2.770              | 2.817              | 2.582              | 2.851              |          |          |

The data in Table 16 summarizes the results of the multivariate analysis of variance for ethnicity. When this procedure was executed statistically significant differences were observed ( $p < .05$ ) with the Wilk's Lambda (.930). As a significant difference was indicated on the multivariate procedure, a univariate analysis of variance procedure was performed to identify where the differences lay. With regards to race or ethnicity, results indicated that there were significant differences for three of the five factors, namely: knowledge, skills, and dispositions; diversity; and use of technology. These findings suggest that African American teachers feel more positive about their total knowledge, skills, and dispositions, their knowledge of school culture and diversity, and their preparation to use technology than do their white counterparts. All three dimensions exhibit p values lower than required by Holms Step Down Test.

There was no significant difference for student internship and quality of instruction.

**Table 16**

**Race or Ethnicity Effect on Outcomes Scores**

| <b>Wilk's Lambda</b> | <b>F</b> | <b>Df1<br/>Df2</b> | <b>P</b> | <b>Partial Eta. Sq.</b> |
|----------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| .930                 | 8.072    | 5,539              | .000     | .070                    |

**Univariate Follow-up Comparisons**

| <b>Factors</b>                    | <b>F-Value</b> | <b>P</b> | <b>Partial Eta Sqd</b> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------|------------------------|
| Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions | 11.17          | .001*    | .020                   |
| Student Internship                | 2.90           | .089     | .005                   |
| Diversity                         | 17.39          | .000*    | .031                   |
| Use of Technology                 | 26.07          | .000*    | .046                   |
| Quality of Instruction            | .808           | .106     | .745                   |

**\*Sig. at < .05 using Holms' Sequential Bonferroni Procedure**

**Table 16 (continued)**

| <b>Factors</b>                    | <b>Means</b>   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
|                                   | <b>Black/African Am.<br/><u>Mean</u><br/><b>SD</b></b> | <b>White/Caucasian<br/><u>Mean</u><br/><b>SD</b></b> |
| Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions | <u>32.68</u><br>5.850                                  | <u>31.06</u><br>5.418                                |
| Student Internship                | <u>33.19</u><br>6.444                                  | <u>32.30</u><br>5.816                                |
| Diversity                         | <u>26.31</u><br>6.312                                  | <u>23.99</u><br>6.519                                |
| Technology Use                    | <u>14.71</u><br>3.883                                  | <u>12.91</u><br>4.242                                |
| Quality of Instruction            | <u>16.64</u><br>2.820                                  | <u>16.64</u><br>2.820                                |

**Part VII of the questionnaire contained four Open Ended Questions.**

Open Ended Question 1 (OEQ1) asked novice teachers to identify three major strengths and/or weaknesses of their teacher education program. There were 415 responses on this question from the 608 teachers who returned the survey. This represents 68% of the novice teachers surveyed in the study. Teachers' responses were collected and represent one of three common themes and patterns underlining strengths found in their teacher education program. The following themes emerged: (1) knowledgeable and caring faculty; (2) development of lesson plans; and (3) learning/teaching strategies provided by professors were cited more than 50 times by the novice teachers as strengths.

Two hundred and five teachers, which comprises 50% of the cases, listed that the “faculty were very knowledgeable in their course content and shared a sense of caring.” Several students commented in their responses “that my professors were very knowledgeable in their subject areas.” One respondent wrote, “Most of my professors were very sharp.” Another teacher commented, “My professors seemed to show a sense of caring for my learning.” The second most frequently category cited as a strength in their teacher education program was “learning how to develop lesson plans” often with the comment “My professors really prepared me on how to create lesson plans.” This response occurred in 26.5% of the cases.

The category of “learning/teaching strategies provided by professors” were listed by 100 teachers (24% of cases.) The commentary of most of these teachers were: “I learned a lot about different teaching strategies”, “I was able to incorporate various learning styles to fit all learners”, and “I am appreciative of knowing how to modify instructional strategies for teaching.”

Teacher’s responses collected in Open Ended Question 1 also cited Weakness found in their teacher education program. These responses represented one of four common themes. The themes were: (1) more classes on diversity; (2) more classes on managing the classroom; (3) longer field experiences and/or internships; and (4) the lack of using technology. Responses to Open-Ended Question one was cited 50 or more times by the 415 novice teachers who participated. The most frequently listed theme to emerge that was

found as a weakness in their teacher education program was “the lack of learning to integrate technology across the curriculum.” Frequently comments were limited to phrases “need more technology courses” or “lack of technology”. These responses were listed 119 times in 28.6% of the cases. The second most often cited theme was “longer field experiences and/or internships.” This response was cited 107 times in 25.7% of the cases. One teacher reported, “As a novice teacher, she felt that she would have been better prepared to enter the classroom if her field experiences had been longer than one semester.” Several other teachers made reference to “needing longer field experiences to gain actual practice.”

The theme of “more courses on classroom management” was listed 101 times by 24.3% of the cases. One respondent wrote, “Professors should visit the classroom to observe the children in action, before teaching a course on classroom discipline.” Another commented “what is written in the textbooks on handling discipline problems does not correspond with what we have to deal with in the actual classroom.” The theme of diversity was supported by 21.2% of the cases citing “more courses on diversity” as a weakness. Several novice teachers commented: “in most teacher education programs, you only take one special education course unless you are a special education major.” One novice teacher summarized the comments with a brief phrase, “diversity is everybody’s business”. These responses were listed on 88 of the surveys. The data for Open Ended Question 1 is reported in Table 17.

Table 17

*Major Strengths and Weakness of Teacher Education Programs*

| Variable  | <i>n</i> | % by Cases |
|---|----------|------------|
| <b>Strengths</b>                                  |          |            |
| Very Knowledgeable and Caring Faculty             | 205      | 50%        |
| Development of Lesson Plans                       | 110      | 26%        |
| Learning/teaching strategies by professors        | 100      | 24%        |
| <b>Weaknesses</b>                                 |          |            |
| Not enough classes on Diversity                   | 88       | 21.2%      |
| Not enough classes on Classroom Management        | 101      | 24.3%      |
| Need Longer Field Experiences/Internships         | 107      | 25.7%      |
| Use/integrate more technology into the curriculum | 119      | 28.6%      |

Question 2 in Part VII of the Questionnaire was an open-ended question (OEQ2) requesting novice teachers' to suggest two or more ways to strengthen their teacher education programs. Of the suggestions cited, the majority of responses paralleled with the weaknesses noted in Open Ended Question 1. The four themes that underlined this question to strengthen their teacher education program were: (1) offer more classes on diversity; (2) offer more classes on managing the classroom; (3) allow for longer field experiences and/or internships; and (4) put more emphasis on the use of technology. These



responses were clearly important to the satisfaction of their teacher education programs (see Table 18).

Table 18

*Ways to Strengthen Teacher Education Programs*

| Variables   | <i>n</i> | % by Cases |
|---|----------|------------|
| Offer more classes on Diversity                   | 88       | 21.2%      |
| Offer more classes on Classroom Management        | 101      | 24.3%      |
| Offer Longer Field Experiences/Clinical Practice  | 107      | 25.7%      |
| Use/integrate more technology into the curriculum | 119      | 28.6%      |

Question 3 in Part VII of the questionnaire was an Opened Ended Question asking teachers if they could restart their career, would teaching be their choice? Several teachers commented, "They enjoyed teaching." There were 598 responses on this question from the 608 novice teachers who completed and returned the questionnaire. This represents 98% of the novice teachers in the study. The respondents indicated at a rate of 77% that they would choose teaching as a career again, while 23% indicated that they would choose a different career. One respondent noted, "There was too much paperwork and politics involved in teaching and not enough instructional time." The data on teacher's restarting careers are found in Table 19.

Table 19

*Teachers' Restarting Careers*

| Variables                                       | <i>n</i> | %    |
|---|----------|------|
| If career restarted, would choose teaching?     | 462      | 77.0 |
| If career restarted, would not choose teaching? | 138      | 23.0 |

Question 4 in Part VII of the questionnaire was an Opened Ended Question asking novice teachers to describe their overall level of satisfaction with their teacher education program. Data results showed that most respondents were overall satisfied with their teacher education programs. Of the 608 responses on this question, 28.6% described their teacher education program as excellent; 43.3% as above average, 24.8% as average, while less than 4% rated their teacher education program as below average or poor. Data on overall program satisfaction is reported in Table 20.

Table 20

*Overall Program Satisfaction*

| Variables     | <i>n</i> | %    |
|---------------|----------|------|
| Excellent     | 173      | 28.6 |
| Above Average | 262      | 43.3 |
| Average       | 151      | 24.8 |
| Below Average | 14       | 2.3  |
| Poor          | 5        | .8   |

## V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The summary, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study are discussed in this section.

### Summary

The 1983 publication of *“A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform”* made the public aware of the concerns about the quality of teacher education. This publication also discussed the problems that the American educational system faced and will continue to face if corrective measures were not undertaken. According to Roth and Swail (2000), teacher quality has been such an important issue for parents, educators, and policymakers, to the extent that new legislation was recently enacted by Congress to oversee teacher preparation across the nation. Even though the alleged deficiencies in American schools have not been as drastic as the public was made to believe, the quality of teaching has improved. The works of Berliner and Biddle (1995) established that improvements in the teaching quality of the teaching force in the United States have been made. Therefore, today’s classroom teachers are better educators than their predecessors.

A concern about the quality of teacher education programs warranted a study and discussion on assessment in teacher education programs by novice teachers. Koerner (1968) contends that

the views of able and experienced teachers on a great many aspects of the education of a teacher are at least as valuable as those of administrators or members of the education faculty who may not have taught in a school for a decade or two, if ever. (p.181)

He further states that teacher educators and researchers are not the only ones concerned about the quality of teacher preparation. Results from assessing novice teachers' levels of satisfaction with their teacher education preparation could assist in the improvement of teacher education programs and quality teaching.

The purposes of this study were (1) to ascertain personal and background information that may be associated with differing satisfaction levels of novice teachers and their teacher preparation, and (2) to determine the multivariate relationships between certain personal and background information of novice teachers, and selected dimensions of teacher education programs. The population sample for this study included 995 novice teachers in three selected public school systems in Alabama. The 608 teachers who responded to the survey provided valuable insights and a plethora of information on teacher preparedness.

Between mid and end November 2004, data were collected by means of distributing surveys to three selected public school systems, utilizing a seven-part questionnaire described in Chapter III. The data generated from the study were coded and analyzed using a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS V10), a computer program designed to perform numerous statistical analyses. The data were analyzed to reflect the research questions designed for the study and to assess the relationship between levels of satisfaction among novice teachers and major standards that impact teacher education programs. Descriptive and inferential statistics, such as Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and a post hoc procedure (Fisher LSD) to determine practical significance, were the main statistics used. The level of significance was set at  $p < .05$ .

Regarding the background information, the findings revealed that the majority of the subjects were White/Caucasian (53.9%) that attended predominately white institutions (PWIs) (65.1%). Forty two percent of the teachers have more than three years teaching experience, and received their initial teacher certification through a traditional Class B Bachelor's teacher education program (78.5%). Most novice teachers in the study are presently teaching Early Childhood/Elementary (P-5) grade levels (54.4%), and their schools systems are located in urban geographical areas (37.8%).

Findings from this study indicate a teaching force in these three public school systems that are overall satisfied with their teacher education preparation.

The multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) on the five scales of the questionnaire determined the relationships between the selected background and educational characteristics of the novice teachers and selected dimensions of their teacher education program. Four of the five selected independent variables significantly ( $p < .05$ ) affected the dimensions of teacher education programs. These independent variables were: (1) type of college attended, (2) grade levels presently teaching, (3) years of teaching experience, and (4) school locality. Significant differences also occurred on all of the dependent scales: knowledge, skills, and dispositions, field experiences and clinical practice, diversity, use of technology, and quality of instruction.

Multivariate comparisons conducted in this study indicated that teachers who attended historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were more satisfied with their teacher preparation in terms of knowledge, skills, and dispositions; field experiences; diversity; and use of technology than their counterparts who attend predominately white institutions (PWIs).

Data showed that there were no statistically significant differences observed among novice teachers who received a Class B initial certification and their colleagues who received alternative certification. When categorized by grade levels presently teaching, novice teachers who were teaching in early childhood and elementary grade levels (P-5) were more positive in their evaluations than those novice teachers who were teaching in the middle and high school grades (6-12) with respect to student internship.

In terms of teaching experience, first year teachers feel more positive about their teacher preparation for using technology than do third year teachers. This suggests that the use of technology has been emphasized more within the last two years. When teachers were grouped by locality of schools, it is noted that novice teacher in rural groups rank their quality of instruction significantly lower than do those in urban or suburban groups. Therefore, teachers in rural schools feel less positive about their quality of instruction than do teachers in suburban or urban schools. Urban and suburban teachers do not differ from each other.

With respect to race or ethnicity, African American novice teachers feel more positive about their total knowledge, skills, and dispositions, their knowledge of school culture and diversity, and their preparation to use technology than do their white counterparts.

Finally, the open-ended questions allowed novice teachers an opportunity to express their opinions about their teacher education programs. Participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction with regards to their teacher preparation. The majority of the teachers (77%) indicated that given the choice, they would choose teaching again as a career. Goodlad (1984) confirm the works of Lortie (1975) when he pointed out that most teachers have a propensity to demonstrate character of being altruistic and idealistic and would choose teaching again as a career. The population of novice teachers appeared to be a very homogeneous group sharing a great many more similarities than differences. The teachers



strongly agreed on four weaknesses in their teacher preparation programs that included offering more classes on diversity, technology, and classroom management. They also indicated a need for longer field experiences and clinical practices. The themes of “having knowledgeable and caring faculty,” “developing lesson plans, and “learning/teaching strategies by professors” permeated a majority of the responses indicated by novice teachers as strengths in their teacher education programs.

### Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from this study. Despite numerous research and studies on the need to improve teacher education program, novice teachers in the three select public school systems in Alabama were overall satisfied with teacher education programs (71.9%). They were mostly influenced by the strengths found in their teacher education programs, which included: (1) very knowledgeable and caring faculty, (2) the ability to develop lesson plans, and (3) learning/teaching strategies modeled by professors.

In this study, novice teachers registered significant concerns about the need for their teacher preparation programs to offer more classes on dealing with diversity in the classroom, integrating technology into the curriculum, effective classroom management, and allowing for longer field experiences and clinical practices. Findings from this study could assist teacher education programs and

public school systems in their efforts to improve teaching quality and to meet the “*The No Child Left Behind Act (2001)*” which mandates no less than a “qualified teacher” in every public school classroom by 2006. Imig (1996) summarizes quality teaching best when he states:

Teaching is more than picking up a bag of instructional tricks at the schoolroom door or learning to mimic the actions of another educator – even a very good one. Good teachers are thinkers and problem solvers. They know when children aren’t learning and can adjust instruction appropriately; they know how to design and use a variety of assessment techniques – not just paper-and-pencil tests; they know how to work with parents to bring out the best in a child; they know that teams of professional educators can transform schools and expect to go about doing it. (p. 14A)

All teachers that are committed to teaching can utilize this quote as a mental guide.

### Recommendations

Additional studies on teacher education program could include the following:

1. A comparative study on novice teachers who teach in public school systems in Alabama versus those who teach in surrounding states (i.e. Florida, Georgia, Mississippi)

2. Conduct a national survey of teacher educators in colleges and universities to gauge current practices in teacher education.
3. Conduct a study to identify the common characteristics of excellent teacher education programs so that other colleges and universities can improve their own programs.
4. Conduct a major, comparative study of the effectiveness of graduates from excellent teacher preparation programs in terms of classroom practices and student achievement.
5. A study examining satisfaction levels of teacher education programs of the graduates from local universities who offer teacher education programs.
6. A comparative study on novice teachers' satisfaction with their teacher programs that attended private institutions versus public institutions.
7. A comparative study with novice teachers in Black Belt counties and non-Black Belt counties involving their satisfaction with their teacher preparation.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY OF TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS (STEP) QUESTIONNAIRE

# SURVEY OF TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS (STEP)

Data collected from this survey will be analyzed to learn more about your teacher preparation experiences. Survey participants will not be personally identified and data responses will remain anonymous.

## Part I. Demographics: Please circle or complete questions as appropriate.

1. What was your teacher education major? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How would you best describe the college/university where you received your teacher education preparation?
  - a. Historically Black College/University
  - b. Predominately White Institution
3. While completing your initial state approved teacher education program, were you enrolled in:
  - a. Class B - Bachelor's Certification
  - b. Class A-Alternative Master's Certification
4. What grade level are you presently teaching?
  - a. Early Childhood/Elementary (P-5)
  - b. Middle/Secondary (6-12)
5. How many years have you taught since completing your teacher preparation program (including the current year)?
  - a. One year
  - b. Two Years
  - c. Three Years
6. How would you best describe the location of the school where you are currently employed?
  - a. Rural
  - b. Suburban
  - c. Urban
7. Which of the following best describes your racial or ethnic background?
  - a. Asian or Pacific Islander
  - b. Black/African American
  - c. White//Caucasian
  - d. Hispanic
  - e. Native American
  - f. Other (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## Part II. Knowledge, Skills, and \*Dispositions:

\*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. Also, dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice. (NCATE 2002).

For Questions 8 thru 17 use the following scale:

- 1) Strongly Disagree      2) Disagree      3) Agree      4) Strongly Agree  
Write the number of your response in the blank next to each question.

## Indicate the extent of your agreement with the following:

8. \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher education program provided me with a good foundation in my subject area.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher education program provided me with a good background of general knowledge outside my subject area.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher education program provided me with substantial knowledge related to professional education.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher education program prepared me to understand student levels of readiness and different learning styles.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher education program stimulated critical thinking and problem solving.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher education program provided me with substantial knowledge of using various teaching strategies to adjust lessons.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher education program prepared me to select, construct, and use a variety of appropriate assessment techniques.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher education program provided me opportunities to participate in professional organizations.
16. \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher education program provided me opportunities to model dispositions expected of educators, and prepared me to recognize when my dispositions may need to be adjusted.
17. \_\_\_\_\_ My teacher education program equipped me to assess the effectiveness of my own teaching.

**Part III. Field Experiences and Clinical Practice (Student Teaching Internship):**

For Questions 18 thru 27 use the following scale:  
 1) Strongly Disagree      2) Disagree      3) Agree      4) Strongly Agree  
 Write the number of your response in the blank next to each question.

**Indicate the extent of your agreement with the following aspects of your field experiences and clinical practice:**

18. \_\_\_\_\_ My field experiences and clinical practice provided me opportunities to apply knowledge, skills and dispositions in various settings appropriate to content and grade level.
19. \_\_\_\_\_ My field experiences and clinical practice helped me to develop competencies necessary for a career in teaching.
20. \_\_\_\_\_ My field experiences and clinical practice provided a variety of school-based opportunities in which I observed, tutored, instructed, or conducted action research.
21. \_\_\_\_\_ My field experiences and clinical practice provided opportunities to use technology to support my teaching and learning.
22. \_\_\_\_\_ My clinical practice placement was in a supportive school environment.
23. \_\_\_\_\_ My cooperating teacher was instrumental in developing my career as a teacher.

24. \_\_\_\_\_ My cooperating teacher modeled best practices.
25. \_\_\_\_\_ My university supervisor outlined clear objectives for improving my teaching.
26. \_\_\_\_\_ My university supervisor had realistic expectations of me as a student intern.
27. \_\_\_\_\_ The clinical faculty and university supervisor collaborated with me to assess my teaching methodologies during clinical practice.

**Part IV. Diversity:**

|   |            |         |              |
|---|------------|---------|--------------|
| <b>For Questions 28 to 36 use the following scale:</b>                |            |         |              |
| 1) Needs Improvement  | 2) Average | 3) Good | 4) Excellent |
| Write the number of your response in the blank next to each question. |            |         |              |

**Express your judgment on how well your experiences in your teacher education program contributed to your effectiveness in the following areas:**

28. \_\_\_\_\_ Understanding the school culture.
29. \_\_\_\_\_ Acquiring the ability to develop meaningful learning experiences for diverse students.
30. \_\_\_\_\_ Understanding the classroom environment.
31. \_\_\_\_\_ Working with students from diverse backgrounds.
32. \_\_\_\_\_ Communicating with parents or guardians from diverse backgrounds.
33. \_\_\_\_\_ Understanding the areas of exceptionalities in learning and ability to identify specific indicators to meet students' needs.
34. \_\_\_\_\_ Understanding the impact of inclusion on learning.
35. \_\_\_\_\_ Understanding gender differences in teaching and learning.
36. \_\_\_\_\_ Teaching, modeling, and integrating multicultural awareness, acceptance and appreciation.

**Part V. Technology:**

|   |            |         |              |
|---|------------|---------|--------------|
| <b>For Questions 37 thru 41 use the following scale:</b>              |            |         |              |
| 1) Needs Improvement  | 2) Average | 3) Good | 4) Excellent |
| Write the number of your response in the blank next to each question. |            |         |              |

**Express your judgment on how well your experiences in your teacher education program contributed to your effectiveness in the following areas:**

37. \_\_\_\_\_ Developing strategies to identify and evaluate technology resources.

38. \_\_\_\_\_ Managing instruction using technology resources.
39. \_\_\_\_\_ Locating and using online resources (i.e., electronic database and/or web sites).
40. \_\_\_\_\_ Using technology to support the development of lesson plans.
41. \_\_\_\_\_ Using appropriate technology skills in your instructional methodologies.

**Part VI: Quality of Instruction:**

**For Questions 42 thru 46 use the following scale:**

1) Strongly Disagree      2) Disagree      3) Agree      4) Strongly Agree

**Write the number of your response in the blank next to each question**

**Indicate the extent of your agreement with the following:**

42. \_\_\_\_\_ Professors in my teacher education program used appropriate instructional materials.
43. \_\_\_\_\_ Professors in my teacher education program modeled good teaching and helped me to develop multiple teaching strategies to help all students learn.
44. \_\_\_\_\_ Professors in my teacher education program showed enthusiasm in their presentation of course content.
45. \_\_\_\_\_ Professors in my teacher education program showed respect for students' opinions.
46. \_\_\_\_\_ Professors in my teacher education program modeled good oral and written communication skills.

**Part VII. Please respond to the following open-ended questions. Your comments are appreciated.**

47. Identify three major strengths and/or weaknesses of your teacher education program.
48. Suggest two or more ways to strengthen your teacher education program.
49. If you could restart your career, would teaching be your choice? Check the appropriate response.
- yes                                       No
50. Describe your overall level of satisfaction with your teacher education program. Check the appropriate response.
- Excellent                       Above Average                       Average  
 Below Average                       Poor