

Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Doctor of Education Dissertations

School of Education

Spring 2021

What Teachers Say Versus What They Do: Examining the Relationship of Teacher Dispositions and Teacher Behaviors as it Impacts Learning Environments

Carrie McKeown

Gardner-Webb University, cmckeown@wcpss.net

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/education-dissertations>



Part of the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

McKeown, Carrie, "What Teachers Say Versus What They Do: Examining the Relationship of Teacher Dispositions and Teacher Behaviors as it Impacts Learning Environments" (2021). *Doctor of Education Dissertations*. 37.

<https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/education-dissertations/37>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Education at Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctor of Education Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. For more information, please see [Copyright and Publishing Info](#).

WHAT TEACHERS SAY VERSUS WHAT THEY DO: EXAMINING THE
RELATIONSHIP OF TEACHER DISPOSITIONS AND TEACHER BEHAVIORS AS
IT IMPACTS LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

By
Carrie Phillips McKeown

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Gardner-Webb University School of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Gardner-Webb University
2021

Approval Page

This dissertation was submitted by Carrie Phillips McKeown under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Gardner-Webb University School of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

Kelly Clark, EdD
Committee Chair

Date

Karen Sumner, EdD
Committee Member

Date

Dale Lamb, EdD
Committee Member

Date

Prince Bull, PhD
Dean of the School of Education

Date

Acknowledgements

Throughout the writing of this dissertation, I have received a great deal of support and assistance from my professors, family, friends, and professional colleagues. First and foremost, I want to thank my mother, Judy Phillips. Throughout this entire process, she has been by my side, my rock, my critical thinker, my motivator, and my collaborator. I am inspired by her passion and knowledge about life and new learnings every day. I owe her so much more than just acknowledgment and dedication written on a page. My gratitude for her goes far beyond what I can write for her in words. Mom, I hope you know what your constant support and drive have helped me to accomplish. You never allowed me to let go and kept me strong the entire way. I also want to thank my father, Andy Phillips, who is a diamond in the rough of children's book authors about whom the world must learn. His imagination, creativity, and understanding of the world around him make him one of the best fathers I know. As a children's book writer, he provided his support for revising, editing, and making suggestions to improve sentences so they flowed better and made sure the writing was clear and effective. I want to thank my husband Chas McKeown and my two amazing children, Marian and Sullivan. I have been on this journey for quite some time, and you all have continued to support me throughout the years. We have lots of time to make up together. To my sister Stacey Webb, thank you for always listening to me share my challenges as well as my victories for each goal I met throughout this study. You are my consistent smile.

This expedition began with two amazing friends and colleagues, Latoya Gantt and Molly Dibble, who started with me in the master's program at Gardner-Webb University. It was Molly who convinced me to take the next step and work on a Doctor of Education degree. I knew my friend Latoya would have to join us on the crazy path; and sadly, due

to health issues, we lost Latoya too early in life. She was an amazing person who already had so much on her plate but never once complained of the task she had in front of her. She inspired me to keep putting one foot in front of the other, and I will continue to do so. You will forever be missed my sweet friend. Thank you, Molly, for encouraging me to take this next step in my educational path and for being a support not only in your friendship but as a valuable piece to this study. Aaron Weis, I am honored to have had the opportunity to meet and learn from you about the data piece of this study. You were always readily available to problem solve and answer all of my questions when needed. Anisa Rhea, thank you for being my inside person and dear friend to get me through the data and accountability challenges. I appreciate all you have done to help me with this study.

To the Academic Language coaches, thank you for your continued support over the years. You held me accountable and asked some great questions that encouraged me to maintain my motivation and focus on my topic. To the school, principal, and teachers who participated in my study, thank you for allowing me into your classrooms, for being so flexible, and for taking the time to respond to my questions.

To my dissertation chair, Dr. Clark, I am so glad we got to finish this out together. I value your knowledge and skills as an educator, writer, and professor and am so happy and privileged to have had you as my leader through this process. Dr. Greer, Dr. Parker, Dr. Palermo, and Dr. Wesson, thank you for providing well-organized and valuable information to our cohort. I am grateful for the collaboration, professionalism, and positive and enthusiastic attitudes towards learning. Thank you to my committee members, Dr. Lamb and Dr. Sumner. I am indebted to your time and feedback.

Abstract

WHAT TEACHERS SAY VERSUS WHAT THEY DO: EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP OF TEACHER DISPOSITIONS AND TEACHER BEHAVIORS AS IT IMPACTS LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS. McKeown, Carrie Phillips, 2021: Dissertation, Gardner-Webb University.

When focusing on the teacher as the key variable in the classroom, professional dispositions are the greatest factor impacting student achievement (Diez & Raths, 2007; Haberman; 2004; Marzano; 2001). The intent of this study was to answer three questions: What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by North Carolina End-of-Grade Assessments (NCFE) data? What observed behaviors do effective practicing teachers demonstrate that stimulate student success as measured by NCFE data? To what extent do observed behaviors correlate between teacher self-professed dispositions and observations of an administrator? A key element was whether dispositions teachers indicated they demonstrated correlated to dispositions observed in the classroom. Participants included eight secondary teachers from a public school in central North Carolina. This was a mixed methods study merging the following: quantitative data from observations and student NCFE scores; and qualitative data from written response questions, a focus group session, and phenomenological research data. Data were collected through observations from me and an assistant principal, teacher self-assessments, and the participants' self-professed dispositions. Pearson's correlation coefficient indicated a relationship existed between EDA administrator observations and student achievement. A moderate, positive correlation also existed between higher performing self-professed teacher behaviors (composite of written, focus group, and teacher self-assessment) and the EDA administrator observations. This consistency of

correlations indicated that a relationship existed between the higher performing self-professed teacher behavior composite and student achievement. Effective oral communication, professionalism, and preparedness for teaching and learning emerged as key dispositions, above the mean, impacting student success.

Keywords: beliefs, dispositions, effective teachers, dispositional behavior, professional dispositions, social cognitive theory, teacher professionalism

Table of Contents

	Page
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Dispositions	7
Purpose of the Study	9
Research Questions	10
Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study	10
Summary of Relevant Research.....	12
Definition of Terms.....	15
Assumptions.....	17
Limitations	18
Delimitations	18
Summary	18
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	20
Overview	20
Theoretical Framework.....	20
Defining Dispositions	28
Importance of Professional Dispositions	30
Impact of Professional Dispositions	31
Dispositions Definition and Assessment History and Challenges	34
Teacher Quality, Beliefs, Characteristics, and Behaviors	38
Dispositions Enhance Moral Sensibilities	42
Educational Philosophy “All Students Can Learn”	43
Teacher Behaviors	44
Summary	45
Chapter 3: Methodology	47
Introduction	47
Research Design.....	47
Research Setting.....	57
Participants	58
Researcher’s Role	59
Research Procedures and Instrumentation	60
Data Collection	63
Written Response Questions	65
Data Analysis	67
Limitations	69
Delimitations.....	69
Summary	70
Chapter 4: Results	71
Restatement of Purpose.....	71
Descriptive Data.....	71
Written, Focus, and Self-Assessment Data	87
Self-Professed Composite Correlations Between EDA Administrator	
Teacher Behavior Counts.....	108
Lower Performing Teachers Professed Correlations	108
Summary of Research Questions	112

Demographic Data for Phenomenological Research	117
Summary	119
Chapter 5: Discussion	122
Statement of the Problem	122
Summary of Findings.....	124
Connections to Theoretical Framework	129
Connections to Literature	130
Connections to Phenomenological Research	132
Implications.....	133
Recommendations.....	136
Limitations	139
Final Remarks	141
References	144
Appendices	
A District Permission for Study.....	153
B Permission to Conduct Study from Principal.....	155
C EDA	157
D Permission to Use the EDA	159
E Rater Calibration Training	162
F Teacher Consent Form.....	164
G Focus Group Questions.....	168
H Phenomenological Research–Teacher Responses	171
Tables	
1 EDA	51
2 Demographics of Teacher Participants	59
3 Data Collection and Analysis Plan	64
4 The Pearson Correlation Coefficient	69
5 EDA Composite Descriptive.....	74
6 NCFE Assessments-Standardized Descriptive	75
7 The Pearson Correlation of EDA and NCFE Student Scores	76
8 Disposition Counts by EDA Observations	81
9 Teacher Level Scores by Observation Type	84
10 Administrator Disposition Counts by Higher and Lower Performing Teachers ...	86
11 Written Response Comparison of Higher and Lower Performing Teachers	90
12 Question 1Code Application.....	91
13 Question 2 Code Application.....	92
14 Question 3 Code Application	93
15 Question 4 Code Application.....	94
16 Question 5 Code Application.....	95
17 Question 6 Code Application.....	96
18 Question 7 Code Application.....	96
19 Question 8 Code Application.....	97
20 Total Dispositions Code Applications in Written Responses	98
21 Focus Group Comparison of Higher and Lower Performing Teachers	101
22 Self-Assessment Disposition Counts of Higher and Lower Performing Teachers	103
23 Self-Assessed Disposition Count Correlation with Administrator	

	Observations of Higher Performing Teachers	105
24	Self-Professed Lower and Higher	111
Figures		
1	Common Causes of Achievement Gaps	6
2	Bandura's Reciprocal Causation Model	8
3	Convergent Parallel Mixed Method Design	56
4	NCFE Scores by EDA Researcher-Observed Scores	77
5	NCFE Scores by EDA Administrator-Observed Scores	78
6	NCFE Scores by EDA Teacher Self-Assessment Scores	79
7	Code Application-Written Response	89
8	Code Application-Focus Group	100
9	The Pearson Correlation for Lower Performing Teachers	108
10	The Pearson Correlation for Higher Performing Teachers	109
11	Administrator EDA by Self-Professed Responses	110
12	Experiences that Changed Beliefs & Values-Code Application	118
13	Situations from Experiences that Influenced or Affected Beliefs and Values-Code Application.....	119

Chapter 1: Introduction

For many years, teacher quality and effectiveness focused on two factors: teacher knowledge of curriculum and teacher possession of the skills to help children learn (Fives & Gill, 2015); yet achievement gaps, students scoring below proficiency levels, and low-performing schools continue to be of significant concern in the United States (Public Impact, 2018). A third key factor, essential to understanding professional principles, is often overlooked and should be considered if educators are to have a significant positive impact on decreasing achievement gaps, improving learning proficiency, and establishing consistently high-performing schools. It involves a complex structure more reflective of the context of teaching and learning than is typically regarded. This key factor relates to teacher dispositions, defined as the professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and nonverbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities (Simpson, 2011; Thornton, 2006). Diez and Rath (2007) believed addressing knowledge, skills, and dispositions as synergistic operations was more effective than perceived as independent functions.

Over the last 50 years, plans have been designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity and equality, and improve the quality of instruction such as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) enacted in 1965, the No Child Left Behind Act (Paige, 2002) enacted in 2001, and most recently, the Every Student Succeeds Act enacted in 2015 (ESSA; U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Those actions highlighted the requirement that all students be held to high academic standards to ensure progress and provide support as needed regardless of race, ethnicity, income, location, disability, culture, home language, or background.

Efforts to address the achievement gap and execute the actions designed to improve educational outcomes focused on several studies which examined teacher effectiveness, preparation, certification, characteristics, and beliefs. When researchers focused on the key variable in the classroom—the teacher—they found (regardless of high-performing or low-performing schools) professional dispositions were the greatest factor impacting student achievement (Diez & Rath, 2007; Haberman; 2004; Marzano et al; 2001). These researchers reported that some potential causes for low-performing students were related to teacher beliefs about students coming from low socioeconomic status situations. These students were perceived as not being as capable of learning or of achieving high success (Schmid, 2011). Schmid (2011) also stated other causes related to student low performance included being assigned to classes led by noneffective teachers, minimal parent education, lack of effective teacher training, and minimal levels of experience.

Haberman (2004), a Professor Emeritus of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Education and founder of The Haberman Educational Foundation, studied teacher beliefs and dispositions. Haberman found untenable teacher professional dispositions were affecting the performances of their students' success (Haberman, 2004). Haberman believed highly effective teachers held beliefs and inspiring behaviors despite challenging circumstances (Hill-Jackson et al., 2018). Through years of research, Haberman (2004) developed a measurement tool called the "Star Teacher Pre-Screener" to measure 10 skills and dispositions of "Star" effective teachers. The tool was used to guide administrators in hiring the most promising applicants and providing support training programs to improve the capacities of practicing teachers (Hartlep et al., 2015). Through the use of the pre-screener, educators

had a proven method for selecting highly effective teachers and administrators (Haberman, 2004). Haberman's (2004) pre-screener was able to identify if a preservice teacher's coursework and certification had prepared and developed their knowledge, skills, and dispositions for effective teaching.

Most research around this topic included a focus on preservice teachers and preparation programs to develop effective teachers going into the profession. Within program institutions, it is mandatory to assess student dispositions; however, there is a lack of research on how practicing teachers are held accountable for their professional dispositions. I searched for what dispositions practicing teachers exhibited that demonstrated support or lack of support for student success and how the learning environment was impacted by teacher characteristics, beliefs, and practices deployed in the classroom.

Statement of the Problem

“Students in the United States are continuing to underperform academically” (Schmid, 2018, p. 1). The disconnect in the relationship between “real-world” teacher dispositions and the generally accepted dispositions found in district belief statements, core values, and mission statements and the impact on the success or lack of success of children in schools was a concern. The problem is that currently practicing teachers are not demonstrating professional dispositions in correlation with their knowledge and skills which impact a successful learning environment regardless of low-performing school status. The new education law, ESSA, signed and enacted by President Obama in 2015, was developed to support low-performing schools. Within 3 years of the ESSA plan, the Condition of Education (2018) reported little to no improvement over the past year in

mathematics and reading skills. The results stated the reading performance score for the average fourth grader in 2017 was 222, about 40%, which was higher than the 217 score in 1992. The score for 2015 was not measurably different from 2017. In mathematics, students scored 240 in 2017, also about 40%, which was higher than the 1990 score of 213 but again, not measurably different in 2015. In science, 38% were proficient (McFarland et al., 2018).

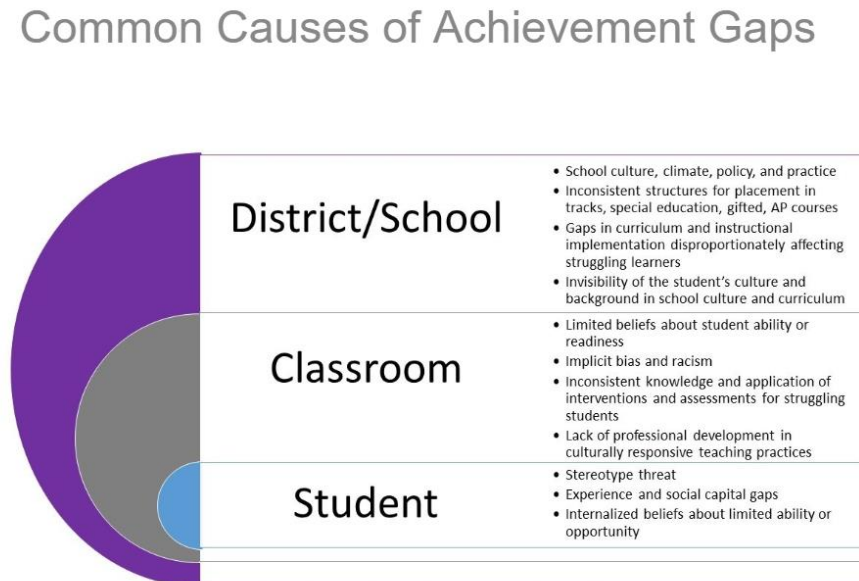
In 2016, the Effective Teaching Framework of XXX County, asked 28 county schools to participate in a belief study where 50% of the teachers responded they did not believe all their students could perform at grade level even if they had sufficient support. Twenty-seven percent of the participants strongly agreed or agreed most students with learning disabilities achieved grade-level benchmarks in literacy and math. The results of the belief survey raised questions about whether or not teacher unconscious beliefs—such as low expectations about some students—were hindering attempts to raise achievement levels (Hui, 2016). One intervention teacher responded in an interview regarding the results: “We do believe this, but it doesn’t show. How can we address it?” (Hui, 2016, para. 5).

The teachers who participated in the belief survey were also asked to be part of a training program called Multi-Tiered System of Supports. This was a system put in place by the district to allow teachers to quickly identify student needs and the best methods to address them by using data more effectively and approaching their work more strategically. The teachers were provided training after taking the initial belief survey. After the training, these same teachers were to take the belief survey again to see if their beliefs changed. Unfortunately, 2019 did not have the same respondents. The turnover in

schools and lack of consistency of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports professional learning training provided by the training teams to their staffs contributed to disparities. I did not uncover information that the district had demonstrated evidence to support taking additional actions to improve the teacher belief concern based on data which identified a number of teachers in the district did not believe their students were capable.

Student achievement results over the years have remained stagnant. Policies in place have been written and rewritten in which no positive outcome addressed the concerns (Schmid, 2018). Studies where factors concerning teacher characteristics and beliefs were contributing to the achievement gap were now putting teachers back in the spotlight (Schmid, 2018). The achievement gap identified three complex levels with variables containing factors that might affect school systems: district/school leadership, classroom, and student (Corwin, n.d.). Significantly, at the classroom level, a listed factor of the achievement gap stated students were “profoundly influenced by the messages they received from the significant people in their lives” (Corwin, n.d., p. 1). Teacher beliefs about their students were portrayed unconsciously through their body language, tone in their voice, word choice, and behavior (Corwin, n.d.). This indicated that teachers may require more self-reflection and self-observance to understand how their professional dispositions and behaviors impact the learning environments they provide for their students.

Figure 1 details the achievement gap at three levels.

Figure 1*Common Causes of Achievement Gaps*

Note. Corwin (n.d.).

A new term being discussed in educational reform, since 2014, is the belief gap (Noonan, 2015). The term has been used to describe what drives the culture and educational environments existent in persistently low-performing schools. In an education post by Barbic (2014), the belief gap was described as the divide between what parents believed their children were capable of doing and what some educators, through words and behaviors, believed the very same children could do. Practical evidence of the belief gap was identified in a 1968 study by psychologist Robert Rosenthal and school principal Lenore Jacobson, in which they set up classrooms to prove the Pygmalion effect—positive expectations could change a person's perception of a situation just as dramatically as negative expectations. They wanted to show the extent to which teacher expectations could affect student intellectual performance.

Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) told elementary school teachers that a certain number of students in their classrooms had been identified as “late bloomers” and would be expected to do very well. The teachers were told that these students were identified on the basis of an IQ test, which tested “academic blooming,” taken by everyone in the school. What the teachers did not know was that the students were not actually selected because of their scores but were selected randomly. Teachers were told not to tell the students about any of the results of the IQ test.

The teachers began to treat those identified students differently from the other students. The identified students began to think of themselves differently and in the end performed significantly better than their peers. Those students were transformed by their teacher’s positive expectations, therefore indicating that it did make a difference if a teacher believed a student was a high performer or a low performer (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). The problem this study addressed was not only should currently practicing teachers possess pedagogical knowledge and skills, but they must also demonstrate professional dispositions to positively impact the learning environment for all students (Almerico et al., 2017).

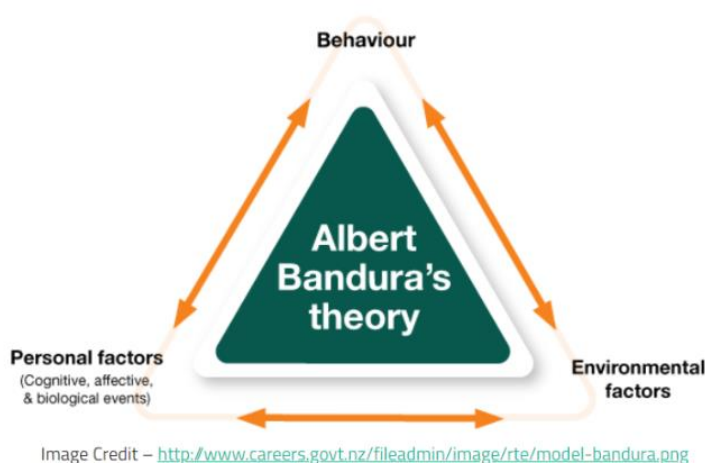
Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Dispositions

Bandura’s (1989) SCT provided a framework for how dispositions were shaped and controlled by environmental influences, the common interactions of the person, and the behaviors they exhibited as educators in relation to one’s self-efficacy. This concept considered the distinctive ways in which a person acquired and maintained their behaviors while also reflecting on their social environment in relation to the performance of the behavior (Bandura, 1989). Bandura’s (1989) theory suggested how people

controlled their behaviors and were reinforced by their dispositions through observational learning, imitation, and modeling. Continuous interaction between behaviors, personal factors, and the environment integrates Bandura's (1997) theory which was referred to as the Reciprocal Causation Model.

Figure 2

Bandura's Reciprocal Causation Model



Note. Bandura (1997).

The model explains how environmental factors and personal cognitive factors can influence the learning that occurs within a social context.

Bandura's (1989) two principles addressed how a person should be made aware of their teaching behaviors, how they were encouraged to recall their behaviors, how they modeled their behaviors, and how they continuously applied them (Simpson, 2011). Bandura's (1989) theory was based on the implication that a person's belief was an outcome of a given behavior that could determine whether the person would demonstrate the behavior and apply it in the field of education (Schmid, 2011).

An example of Bandura's (1989) theory was explained by Villegas (2007) in how teachers played a critical role in the sorting process where school practices were equitable

and fair for all students. Teachers needed to understand the barriers that existed when teaching children from low-socioeconomic backgrounds. The existence of these barriers caused the children to be perceived as unable to learn and, thus, were treated differently. Applied in the context of learning to teach, Bandura's (1989) theory implied that the beliefs teachers developed and exhibited were brought to their institutions and influenced what and how they taught in their learning environment (Villegas, 2007). SCT explains how developmental changes, environmental influences, and other personal factors teachers experience over the course of their careers can cultivate their dispositions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to distinguish if there is a disconnect in the relationship between professional teacher dispositions that may have a profound impact on the success or lack of success of students in school. The disconnect between the capacity of teachers to examine their self-awareness of generally held values, commitments, and professional ethics and their capacity to implement strategies and actions reflecting these values, commitments, and professional ethics creates learning environments that are not conducive to the successful achievement of all students (Haberman, 2012).

This study explored a secondary school, Grades 6 through 8, and examined teachers within the school who had 3 consecutive years of either high-, middle-, or low-achieving student scores. I captured the differences in dispositions among high-, mid-, and low-effective teacher achievement scores and observed the correlation for what teachers say they believe versus what their actions reveal in the classroom.

Research Questions

1. What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by North Carolina End-of-Grade Assessment (NCFE) data?
2. What observed behaviors do effective practicing teachers demonstrate that stimulate student success as measured by NCFE data?
3. To what extent do observed behaviors correlate between teacher self-professed dispositions and observations of an administrator?

Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study

There has been a disconnect in assessing dispositions linked to knowledge and skills teachers are to demonstrate in their performances (Diez, 2006). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2008) provided little to no guidance for how to assess the professional dispositions that were included in their standards. In 2009, teacher evaluation systems were updated in 37 states (Baxter & Morgan, 2018). Even with updated evaluative systems in place, some school leaders struggled to provide constructive feedback on the specifics of teacher roles and expectations. This was due to a lack of experience in understanding the way to pose cognitive questions to encourage reflective thinking. Constructive feedback presented more questions pertaining to knowledge and skills (Baxter & Morgan, 2018; Diez, 2006).

The complexity related to assessing dispositions comes from the lack of understanding the meaning of dispositions, how to fairly assess dispositions, and which dispositions impact teacher effectiveness (Simpson, 2011). The threat of legal challenges created a negative environment related to assessing dispositions (Diez, 2006). Examples

of student stories of negative statements by teachers and observations of teacher behaviors and actions addressing students unprofessionally have been identified across many institutions (Diez, 2006; Haberman, 2011; Smith et al., 2005). Additionally, the responses and results of behaviors related to teacher dispositions identified the core of the importance of the impact a teacher had on the difference in the success of students (Thornton, 2006).

Embedded in the NCATE (2008) definition and standard target were positive observable behaviors teachers were expected to recognize and demonstrate in the learning environment. To explain further, NCATE provided clarification to institutions about two professional dispositions: the belief that all students can learn and fairness “based on observable behaviors in the educational setting” (p. 90) to be assessed. To do this, institutions needed to assess the two dispositions in order to hold teachers accountable for meeting the standard requirements but also recognize, outline, and operationalize additional professional dispositions (NCATE, 2008). NCATE had in place an expectation for institutions to provide equity in the belief that all students could learn and to stress the importance of how teacher professional dispositions and behaviors should reflect the expectation (Simpson, 2011). In 2016, NCATE legacy standards were no longer used, and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation’s (CAEP) accreditation standards were fully implemented. Professional dispositions were mentioned as the components of Standard 1: Content and Pedagogical Knowledge, with a new definition to the term dispositions as “the habits of professional action and moral commitments that underlie an educator’s performance” (CAEP, 2013, p. 1). At the same time updates were addressed with CAEP, updates were also made to the Interstate New

Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) professional teaching standards. These standards were not only intended for beginning teachers but also included targeting practicing teachers throughout their careers and developmental stages of performance. Assessing, tracking, and monitoring candidate performances as they progressed in their learning and studies was a fundamental task of teacher education programs (Almerico et al., 2017). Assessing, monitoring, and tracking currently practicing teachers was not found by me as a mandatory task for schools.

Summary of Relevant Research

Institutional teaching standards were also in place within national and subnational education systems and varied for how teachers used them to evaluate their own teaching practices. Countrywide, for practicing teachers, the standards were addressed in the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) to improve the quality of teaching (Call, 2018). In 2017, research indicated only 3% of teachers in the United States had opted to acquire their NBPTS certification, and little evidence had been collected to prove the impact the professional certification had on student success (Call, 2018). The standards were in place to encourage teachers to take ownership of their practices and to “do what they set out to achieve” (Call, 2018, p. 103).

As states had their own institutional teaching standards, they also had a set of core beliefs associated with the standards. Most American school districts had a set of core beliefs and commitments that served as guiding principles. Dispositional core beliefs across the United States included such tenants as teachers were encouraged to be lifelong learners; every student was uniquely capable; intentional planning of rigorous and equitable activities that asked for the best an individual could do was important;

educating the whole child was critical; nurturing, being respectful, and cultivating differences in children was vital; teachers should provide inspiration and prepare students to be lifelong learners; teachers should develop a good rapport with students; teachers were responsible for the success of all students regardless of their background; and all students were expected to and could learn and succeed. These core beliefs were the dispositions researchers had identified effective teachers held that had a positive impact on student achievement (Haberman, 2004).

Most research described the importance of ensuring beginning or preservice teachers entering the field of education were well prepared in the three elements of knowledge, skills, and dispositions; but little has been found for connecting knowledge, skills, and dispositions as a functioning, synergistic unit for practicing teachers (Welch & Areepattamannil, 2016). Understanding of the impact of teacher educational dispositions developed over time. Teacher beliefs, self-reflections, self-awareness, and personal behaviors affected student success in schools (Diez & Raths, 2007).

Educational theorists suggested that the disconnect between the capacity of teachers to examine their self-awareness of generally held values, commitments, and professional ethics and their capacity to implement strategies and actions reflecting these values, commitments, and professional ethics created learning environments that were not conducive to the successful learning of all students. Teachers were simply going through the motions of teaching without seeking ways to improve and apply their teaching dispositions to their practice (Haberman, 2004). Too many education systems in place had historically sanctioned a “learn the facts and do the job” (Minnesota Board of Teaching, 1986, p. 14) approach. There was a need for demonstrating values where the

teachers took responsibility for themselves, their behaviors, their strengths, and their beliefs. It was determined they needed to have the capacity to reflect on the decisions they made and adapt to situations in the classroom as they arose (Haberman, 2004). More attention needed to be focused on the dispositions necessary to teach and reach students that went beyond just stressing knowledge and skills. This was critical in order to provide the kind of education expected for students to experience and succeed in school (Haberman, 2004).

To add to the problem, the scrutiny of teacher efforts to carry the core belief that all students can learn has continued to be a challenge in schools (Schmid, 2018).

Accountability and assessments of dispositions in teacher education have involved a series of evidence, rating scales, rubrics, interviews, observations, checklists, artifacts, and self-evaluations, but such measurements of assessment of dispositions typically reflected more on the pedagogical practices than dispositions (Thornton, 2006).

Pedagogical knowledge was at the forefront for evaluating teacher best practices; and the need to include teacher beliefs, practices, and dispositions was essential for understanding and improving our educational systems (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2018).

Teacher moral judgement affects the way they perceive what happens in the classroom and how they make decisions to perform (Haberman, 2004). “To understand a classroom environment, it is not only important to examine the actions of the individual, it is also imperative to examine how they interpret situations based on their interactions with others” (Schussler & Knarr, 2013, p. 74). There were several concepts of specific professional dispositions to note: teacher professional behaviors such as attendance, work

ethic, planning, reliability, sense of humor, appearance, morals, capacity for self-reflections, ethics, and equity (Thornton, 2006).

NBPTS and NCATE maintained the belief that one of the keys to improving student learning was to improve teaching practices, but the organizations provided little guidance as to how a teacher should apply the standard for professional dispositions. In essence, this meant describing how a teacher put into practice, aligned with, and was to be held accountable to a district's core beliefs (Simpson, 2011).

Schools are facing more and more issues related to recruitment and retention of qualified teachers (Haberman, 2004). The challenge was not just selecting a certified teacher for the job but a qualified teacher whose deep-seated beliefs about education aligned to their behaviors in the classroom. Evidence indicated teachers were leaving the profession after serving less than 11 years due to teacher burnout and wondering why they were so emotionally and physically exhausted (Haberman, 2004). In schools, teachers were constantly asked about their beliefs and values related to how students learned, how students learned best, and could ALL students learn.

Improving teacher knowledge and skill sets was generally prevalent in the research review. Based on the significance of this study, the substance of research on teacher dispositions was also found to be outdated. Several studies proved that teacher dispositions did inform their behaviors (Schmid, 2018). I considered the timing of this study would provide updated results for future research on the topic.

Definition of Terms

The following are the definitions and key terms used throughout this dissertation.

Beliefs

Sayings, perspectives, attitudes, values, rules of practice, preconceptions, practical principles, and constructs (Smith et al., 2005).

Dispositions

Intellectual and emotional investments in events, situations, and people. Pre-service and in-service educators develop positions toward teaching and learning that direct their work with students, parents, and colleagues. Dispositions are made manifest through intentional, practiced behaviors that can be challenged, developed, and enhanced even as they denote behavioral tendencies that endure over time. (Diez & Raths, 2007, p. 51)

Effective Teachers

Teacher effectiveness: “The idea that a teacher cares about students as individuals and communicates that ethic by creating thoughtfully planned, executed, and assessed instructional opportunities in a productive classroom environment in an effort to increase the achievement of each student” (Stronge & Hindman, 2006, p. 10).

Dispositional Behavior

“A behavior, either verbal or nonverbal, that projects a particular disposition. For example, wait time is a nonverbal behavior that demonstrates consideration for students who need processing time before responding” (Diez & Raths, 2007, p. 51).

Professional Dispositions as Defined by NCATE

Professional Dispositions: Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student

learning and development. NCATE expects institutions to assess professional dispositions based on observable behaviors in educational settings. The two professional dispositions that NCATE expects institutions to assess are fairness and the belief that all students can learn. Based on their mission and conceptual framework, professional education units can identify, define, and operationalize additional professional dispositions. (NCATE, 2008, p. 53)

SCT

Explains how people acquire competencies, values, and styles of behavior as well as how people motivate and regulate their behavior (Davidson & Davidson, 2003).

Teacher Professionalism

“The teacher exhibits a commitment to professional ethics and the school’s mission and participates in professional growth opportunities to support student learning, and contributes to the profession” (Barge, 2012, p. 1).

Assumptions

It is my assumption the disconnect between the capacity of less-effective teachers to examine their self-awareness of generally held values, commitments, and professional ethics and their capacity to implement strategies and actions reflecting these values, commitments, and professional ethics creates learning environments that are not conducive to the successful achievement of all students.

It was assumed the teacher participants would answer the self-assessment tool honestly but score themselves much higher than administrator and my observation scores. I maintained the confidentiality of all teacher participants and the selected school to ensure honest and authentic responses and actions during the data collection.

Limitations

Limitations of the study included my explanation to the participants about the topic of the study. In the interests of transparency, I needed to inform the teacher participants about the purpose of the Educator Disposition Assessment (EDA) they used for collecting data. The dispositions, identified on the EDA, were categorized descriptions of teacher behaviors. Knowledge of this could have resulted in teacher participants either not choosing to do the study due to fear of being observed about their dispositions or possibly withholding authentic behaviors because they knew what I was looking for.

Delimitations

I chose the school specifically because of principal and assistant principal interest in the topic and the support in having the assistant principal participate in the observations with me.

Summary

Research indicates the importance for teachers to include positive and professional dispositions as part of the knowledge and skills they demonstrate in the classroom which they believe encourage and help students to perform successfully. Over the years, accountability for teacher dispositions has been neglected in the course of dialogue related to teacher quality. Since 1999, it has become nonexistent (Thornton, 2006). With so much focus on the two elements of teacher knowledge and skills, the third key—related to dispositions that guided a teacher’s goals, emotions, decision-making, behaviors, and actions in the classroom and was fundamental to the success of all students—was disregarded (Fives & Gill, 2015). An educator’s effectiveness was directly

affected by their dispositions (Wadlington & Wadlington, 2011). The inherent problem was the disconnect in the relationship between “real-world” teacher dispositions and generally accepted dispositions and this relationship’s impact on the success or lack of success of children in schools.

This study was intended as an effort to help educators become aware of the importance of the role professional teacher dispositions play in a classroom. Teachers create and establish the climate of the learning environment regardless of a school’s performance status. Research establishes the significance of understanding professional learning constructs and how they may reveal the ability to be self-aware, to self-manage, to be socially aware, to make logical choices, and to develop and support positive healthy relationships. Understanding how it impacts a teacher’s capacity to align their professional competence, performance, and conduct and reflect their dispositions about education, goals, values, responsibilities, and purpose is critical. It directly impacts and optimizes the capacity to achieve greater student success (Almerico et al., 2017).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview

This research study distinguished if there is a disconnect in the relationship between professional teacher dispositions and generally accepted dispositions that may have a profound impact on the success or lack of success of students in school. The study explored deep-seated beliefs teachers have about teacher professionalism, their ethical practice of teaching, and moral actions in the classroom. Sufficient yet outdated research was found on the impact dispositions have on teacher effectiveness on the learning environment. Therefore, this chapter embodies a review of literature related to the history, values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students (Karges-Bone & Griffin, 2009).

Theoretical Framework

SCT of human behavior, a comprehensive theory, explains how people acquire competencies, values, and styles of behavior as well as how people motivate and regulate their behavior (Davidson & Davidson, 2003). In SCT, self-development, modification, and change occur through an interchange of one's behavioral and environmental influences (Davidson & Davidson, 2003). It provides a framework for how dispositions were shaped and controlled by environmental influences, the common interactions of the person, and the behaviors they exhibited as educators in relation to one's self-efficacy. A person's knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values, and genetics affect how they will behave. Research implied that professional dispositions had a significant effect on student success (Hallam, 2009). Arthur W. Combs, a humanistic psychologist and the past president of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, studied teacher

dispositions over a time period of 40 years. Combs (1999) found that effective dispositions were strongly related to positive teacher self-reflection, teacher focus on their students, and teacher engagement involving purposeful tasks for all students. Combs found that ineffective teachers did not demonstrate these traits (Hallam, 2009). An individual's personality traits and characteristics were shaped by one's attitudes and beliefs (i.e., dispositions). The dispositions and beliefs teachers possessed influenced their behavior in the learning environment and were just as important to effective teaching as skills and knowledge (Behar-Horenstein et al., 1996; Wadlington & Wadlington, 2011). Dispositions guided the goals teachers made, their emotions, the decisions they made day to day, their actions and behaviors, and their reactions in the learning environment (Bandura, 1997).

A Brief History on the Construct of Dispositions in Teacher Education

The concept of measuring a person's attitude through the notion of opinion was published in an article by Thurstone (1928) who stated an attitude signifies "the sum total of a man's inclinations and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats, and convictions about any specific topic" (p. 530). Thurstone proposed that in order to understand a person's attitude, one needed to examine the person's opinions around a specific topic or issue. What Thurstone had not addressed was the predictive relationship between a person's belief and their behavior. Over time, Thurstone's concept generated an initiative to link attitudes and behaviors for identifying the ideal teacher (Diez & Rath, 2007). Buss and Craik (1983) and Katz and Rath (1985, 1986) developed the notion of dispositions as "actions of an individual" (Diez & Rath, 2007, p. 8). The Minnesota Task Force on Teacher Education in 1986 introduced the concept of

dispositions into redesigning beginning teacher preparation programs with a list of dispositions toward self, toward the learner, toward teaching, and toward the profession.

The 1990s ushered in the beginning of teacher educator discussions about the desirable behaviors of teachers, administrators, and school service personnel related to “dispositions.” Before the 1990s, the traditional domains of teacher education were considered to be knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Due to the re-forming of “attitudes” being included in teacher education programs, a major shift in thinking about attributes for teachers and administrators was ingrained in discussions and continued to be talked about regarding effective teaching. It was not until 10 years later that NCATE established the concept of dispositions, as a requirement, into their standards, rules, and regulations that governed the teaching certification in many states. The domains were modified into three key areas: knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions (Freeman, 2007).

NCATE (2008) standards stated,

The candidate performance standards focus on learning outcomes. They required units to use evidence to demonstrate that teacher candidates are gaining the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to have a positive impact on P-12 student learning. The standards elevate the role of assessment in program improvement and promote increased accountability for teacher candidate learning.

(p. 1)

Changes and updates were made over the years. NCATE standards stated,

Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions.

Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other school professionals know and demonstrate the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge

and skills, pedagogical and professional knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards. (p. 12)

Both standards kept regard for knowledge, skills, and dispositions and criteria for meeting the professional state standards.

NCATE was founded in 1954 as a nonprofit, nongovernmental accrediting body replacing the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), also responsible for the accreditation in teacher education. NCATE was created by five instrumental organizations for ensuring quality teacher education training. Those five organizations were AACTE, the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, the National Education Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National School Boards Association. Every 7 years, NCATE revised its reports on unit accreditation standards to ensure the standards for educator preparation were based on significant emergent research (NCATE, 2008). This included Standard I: Content and Pedagogical Knowledge for components of teacher education knowledge, skills, and professional disposition standards for educator preparation. The reports were sponsored by a variety of organizations such as the National Academy of Education, the National Academy of Sciences, the American Education Research Association, and the National Institute of Child and Health Development.

The following is a brief timeline of NCATE's merger with CAEP. In 1997, the Teacher Education Accreditation Council was founded to improve the academic degree of programs for professional educators who teach and lead in prekindergarten through

12th grade. In 2009, a design team was appointed by NCATE and Teacher Education Accreditation Council Boards of Directors. The following year, it was agreed to consolidate NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council into CAEP to “enable the profession to speak with a single voice about the preparation of teachers, administrators and other P-12 professional educators and eliminate overlapping activities from the same field” (NCATE, 2008, p. 2). On August 29, 2013, the CAEP Board of Directors approved the new accreditation standards and by July was fully operational for education preparation providers (NCATE, 2008). Standard 1: Content and Pedagogical Knowledge continues to carry the component for candidate knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions and is expected to be followed and articulated through the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards and NBPTS Five Core Propositions. CAEP (2013) defined teacher dispositions as “professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors establish a teacher’s professional demeanor and promote student learning and development” (p. 1). This standard embodies the expectation that teachers should have the ability to reflect, evaluate, and improve their teaching practice and own learning as a guiding belief (Welch & Areepattamannil, 2016).

The efforts to include dispositions into standards across the country has resulted in countless discussions among educational institutions to determine what was meant by the term disposition (Freeman, 2007). Within NCATE Standard 1, knowledge and skills in the field of education are easily definable and measurable. Teacher dispositions have been more difficult to assess and define in relation to effective teaching (Welch &

Areepattamannil, 2016). According to NCATE (2008), teacher dispositions were guided by their attitudes and beliefs in relation to their values such as thoughtfulness, caring, honesty, fairness, empathy, respectfulness, and responsibility to their practice. The attitudes and behaviors of teachers were critical for providing effective teaching. Over the years, dispositions have been one of the most difficult to measure and define due to the variety of terms associated with the nature of describing teacher beliefs and values about education. Smith et al. (2005) made an effort to provide a clear understanding for what a disposition is by acknowledging the “sheer volume of research efforts toward identifying what causes or lies behind teachers’ actions” (p. 14). Dispositions embraced the “why” of a teacher’s decisions or actions but did not get at the “what.” Schussler and Knarr (2013) described dispositions as “context specific, connecting intended purposes with one’s inclination to think and act in particular ways. They align well with the cultivation of a teacher’s moral sensibilities” (p. 76). In other words, a teacher’s deepest rooted beliefs, sense of purpose, belonging, and their abilities to achieve their purpose must align.

The field of dispositions has continued to grow, and measuring dispositions has become a popular topic among AACTE. To collect a valid and reliable identification of a teacher’s capacity to put what they believe into practice has become a combination of dispositions in accountability, policy, moral sensibilities, behaviors or capacities for behaviors, inclinations, sensitivities reflection, and teacher effectiveness (Schussler & Knarr, 2013; Wilkerson & Lang 2007).

NCATE (2008) published the definition of professional dispositions as “professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and

communities. *These positive behaviors support student learning and development*” (pp. 89-90). NCATE’s target for a teacher to meet the professional disposition standard stated a teacher should

work with students, families, colleagues, and communities in ways that reflect the professional dispositions expected of professional educators as delineated in professional, state, and institutional standards. *Demonstrate classroom behaviors that create caring and supportive learning environments and encourage self-directed learning by all students.* Recognize when their own professional dispositions may need to be adjusted and are able to develop plans to do so. (p. 20)

In the 1990s, teacher quality became a focus in educational systems and helped turn the corner for significant changes in teacher education (Simpson, 2011). No Child Left Behind addressed teacher quality by focusing on teacher knowledge to ensure teachers were “highly qualified” (Simpson, 2011, p. 1). This meant teachers were required to earn a bachelor’s degree. This included state certification and an assessment for teachers to demonstrate their knowledge within the subject area they taught in order to gain accreditation and highly qualified status (Tatem, 2015). During the same year, state accreditation agencies, such as NBPTS, InTASC, and NCATE, now known as CAEP, added teacher professional dispositions to their standards. These were first recognized as knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Simpson, 2011). The standards were built on the belief that all students can and should learn. Significant research reflected these findings by the National Academy of Education, the National Academy of Sciences, the American Education Research Association, and the National Institution for Child and Health

Development (NCATE, 2008).

The late Martin Haberman's (2004) philosophy was based on teacher preparation as a matter of school success for students. His research was focused on developing interviewing techniques educators could use to identify "star" teachers and administrators who would be most successful in working with low-socioeconomic children (Quirk, 2017). Haberman's theory also derived from the construct of strengthening belief systems which accounted for and predicted human behaviors (Haberman, 2004). In order to know who should teach, how that person should be prepared to teach, and how to evaluate their success were criteria deeply rooted in teacher dispositions (Haberman, 2004).

The first step was to identify what skills and dispositions teachers currently had and how they impacted the learning environment. Haberman (2004) provided a list of 10 measurable skills and dispositions:

1. **Persistence** predicts the tendency to work with children who present learning and behavioral problems daily, without giving up on them during the school year.
2. **Organization and Planning** gets at how and why effective teachers plan, as well as their ability to manage multifaceted learning environments.
3. **Values Student Learning** measures the dispositions to make student learning the highest of importance.
4. **Theory to Practice** taps the respondent's ability to see the applied implications of generality as well as the broader theories represented in specific practices.
5. **At-Risk Students** predicts the probability that the respondent will be able to

connect with and teach students of all backgrounds and levels.

6. **Approach to Students** predicts how the respondent will attempt to connect to students and the effectiveness of the approach.
7. **Survive in Bureaucracy** predicts whether the respondent can teach and function in a large establishment.
8. **Explains Teacher Success** measures how the respondent comprehends moral teaching and whether the principles the respondent uses are applicable to teaching in schools.
9. **Explains Student Success** deals with the principles the respondent uses to determine students' success and whether these are pertinent to students in schools.
10. **Fallibility** signifies how the teacher anticipates dealing with mistakes in the learning environment. (para. 8)

The 10 dimensions assessed have allowed administrators to select the type of teacher needed for their school to provide a greater impact on student achievement, healthier morale, and less teacher turnover.

Defining Dispositions

“Dispositions seem to be essential to our characterization of the world” (Armstrong, 2016, p. 7). A number of definitions have been developed for the term dispositions related to effective teaching. Given the essential knowledge and skills, dispositions are what dispose a person to be an effective teacher (Smith et al., 2005). NCATE (2008) defined dispositions as “the professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with

students, families, colleagues, and communities” (p. 89). These positive behaviors support student learning and development. NCATE expects institutions to assess professional dispositions based on observable behaviors in educational settings. The two professional dispositions NCATE expects institutions to assess are fairness and the belief that all students can learn. Based on their mission and conceptual framework, “professional education units can identify, define, and operationalize additional professional dispositions” (NCATE, 2008, p. 53). InTASC defined the concepts of dispositions as “adopts, appreciates, believes, is committed, has enthusiasm, persists, realizes, recognizes, responds, seeks, is sensitive to, understands, and values” (Almerico et al., 2017, p. 2). Diez and Rath’s (2007) definition of dispositions is stated as “specific, observable behaviors to inferable personality traits and typically include one or more elements which include teacher behaviors, teacher characteristics, and teacher perceptions” (p. 54). In the philosophy of the mind, behaviorists and philosophers of beliefs and mental states rendered beliefs as a disposition to act and/or to speak (Armstrong, 2016). Smith et al. (2005) made an effort to provide clarity and the historical background in determining what a disposition is. Smith et al. provided a table of examples of various research and terminology associated with dispositions in literature and research summaries from 1963-1995. Terminology included attitudes, personality and characteristics, values, beliefs, personality factors, affective dispositions, expectations, sense of efficacy, theories, conceptions, and perceptions (Smith et al., 2005). Combs (1999) identified five dispositions of effective teachers: empathy, positive view of self, positive view of others, authenticity, and meaningful purpose and vision. In addition to having knowledge and skills, professional teachers must act in an ethical

manner, applying such dispositions as professionals and modeling professionalism every day (Notar et al., 2009).

Dispositions can be impacted by the environment and are subject to change, strengthened or weakened by experiences and interactions that happen on a daily basis (Notar et al., 2009). To study teacher dispositions comparative to identifying effective teaching, one must also address teacher beliefs. Smith et al. (2005) specified that once beliefs are formed, people are inclined to make meaning as explanations of their beliefs regardless of if truthful or not. The behaviors observed were reinforced by the perceptions that were influenced by the original beliefs. In essence, the “beliefs drive action or behavior” (Smith et al., 2005, p. 6).

Importance of Professional Dispositions

Smith et al. (2005) stated in order for schools to improve for the sake of better instructional opportunities for students, teachers must teach differently. The importance of learning new subject matter and instructional techniques was not the only significant change that should be a primary focus for teachers. They must alter their beliefs and concepts of their practices. School improvement should look closer at how teachers learn and adjust (Smith et al., 2005). As teacher candidates enter the education profession, dispositions are assessed as having high importance. Many schools of education discourage and may even disqualify prospective teachers who lack the professional dispositions expected for an effective teacher (Diez & Raths, 2007). This “begs” the question: If this was of such high importance for preservice teachers, should the same expectations not be for in-service teachers?

Diez (2006) described five principles that guide the development and importance

of assessing dispositions as a continuous process for a teacher candidate: making the invisible visible through action; the use of ongoing observation; assessing dispositions over time as part of an ongoing reflection process; making known the use and purpose of the basis of the assessment; and the process of making the assessments have moral meaning through modeling professional dispositions for teacher candidates. Haberman (2004) found that in-service teachers have not been held accountable for their dispositions and ongoing reflections on their behaviors and actions daily and therefore have begun responding mechanically to questions and events about their beliefs in education which have lost the true professional dispositions needed to impact children positively. Due to the vast insufficiency of research in the field and lack of guidance from accreditation organizations, teacher education institutions have grappled with the charge of addressing disposition requirements which has resulted in a large volume of uncertainty of respect to addressing the requirements (Simpson, 2011).

Impact of Professional Dispositions

This section of the literature review presents qualitative and quantitative findings based on the impact and importance professional dispositions have on student success. Studies indicated the critical importance dispositions played for teaching success and academic achievement; however, many of the findings were focused on new teachers or preservice teachers.

Benson and Peterson (2012) had concerns about teachers entering the education profession and wanted to know if their behaviors in the programs correlated with their behaviors in K-12 schools. They surveyed faculty and staff from 30 NCATE-accredited certification programs to identify the most important dispositions a candidate should

develop before student teaching occurred. Forty-three educators consisting of full professors, associate professors, assistant professors, lecturers, field supervisors, and staff members participated in a survey response and demographic questionnaire. Benson and Peterson's results identified three themes based on the highest responses: civility and compliance, diversity and tolerance, and emotional and social maturity. In other words, components of dispositions for teacher candidates should embody a positive and cooperative attitude, professional ethics regarding student backgrounds and cultural differences, and the capacity to self-reflect and control behaviors that may affect personal lives and impact their effectiveness (Benson & Peterson, 2012).

Simpson (2011) conducted a study to measure the seemingly importance and efficacy of specific dispositions within a large population of preservice teachers, inservice teachers, educators, and administrators as well as to determine which dispositions were not common with a program unit but identified as essential to students majoring in health and physical education. Simpson's study was built upon prior work of Simpson and Diez in 2007. Ten disposition clusters were identified from their study and used as the foundation for developing Simpson's study. The 10 clusters were

1. Responding to students' social and educational needs
2. Building rapport with entire educational community
3. Exhibiting personable qualities that make you approachable to students
4. Communicating enthusiasm to students
5. Exhibiting psychosocial maturity
6. Exhibiting appropriate appearance and hygiene
7. Demonstrates awareness of one's own strengths and limitations

8. Is capable of responding appropriately to challenging situations
9. Effectively manages resources
10. Professionalism. (p. 112)

Participants were asked to rate the importance and efficacy of each of the 10 identified clusters of dispositions as well as list dispositions critical to all fields of education and teaching health and physical education. Simpson's (2011) study resulted in three findings: (a) each of the 10 cluster dispositions was found to be significantly important, but the degree of importance varied among specific groups of teachers participating in the study; (b) the institution program developing the teacher dispositions was found to be preparing teachers well; and (c) within the different fields of education, dispositions varied within a degree of importance among the groups of teachers. There was a lack of teacher understanding for what a disposition is when asked to list specific dispositions important to them in the content area of health and physical education. Simpson found that some responses from the teachers were based upon their knowledge or skills and not naturally associated with dispositions. Simpson identified a thin line between teachers not being disposed to doing something and not having the knowledge and skills that are needed as identified as true for student teachers. Teachers need to understand and know what dispositions are and what their behaviors and actions "look like" when a specific disposition is demonstrated to understand the importance and impact it has on children in the learning environment (Simpson, 2011).

Schmid (2011) sought to identify what strategies, behaviors, and beliefs three teachers exhibit who work in low-performing schools but have 3 years consistently high-performing student achievement and scored 10% above the state average on the

California Standards Test in a former Reading First school. Schmid (2011) wanted to know what the teachers believed and what they did in the classroom that contributed to their students' success. Teachers and administrators participated in a set of interview questions, and teachers were observed to discover if their behaviors corresponded to their beliefs. Schmid's (2011) study found that the three teachers each held the following beliefs based on their observed classroom behaviors:

1. All students can and will learn, which is a reflection of the teacher.
2. Professional learning correlates into students' success.
3. Appropriate instruction enables students to succeed. (p. 146)

The results of this study indicated the importance professional dispositions and beliefs have on student achievement even when working in a low-performing school.

Dispositions Definition and Assessment History and Challenges

Research about teacher dispositions has brought to the attention of educators that a compelling correlation exists between the dispositions of teachers and the quality of their students' learning (Almerico et al., 2018). The research findings about the impact of teacher dispositions, teacher quality, and student success reinforce the need for providing a stronger focus on preparing teachers for creating and implementing a successful learning environment for all students (Singh & Stoloff, 2007). NCATE's disposition definition was designed to make sure teachers were following a process to accredit themselves with the expectation for embodying professional dispositions in academic programs (Karges-Bone & Griffin, 2009). The efforts to include dispositions into standards across the country had resulted in countless discussions among educational institutions to determine what is meant by the term disposition (Freeman, 2007). Teacher

dispositions have been more difficult to assess and define in relation to effective teaching (Welch & Areepattamannil, 2016). Philosopher Douglas McKnight looked at dispositions as a virtue based on Aristotle's work (Welch & Areepattamannil, 2016). Scholar Sarah Broadie learned dispositions were developed over a lifetime and could easily be changed or displaced (Benson & Peterson, 2012). Broadie found that assessing them could be problematic and concluded they were easier studied rather than assessed (Benson & Peterson, 2012). Dewey (1922) and Combs (1999) came around in the 20th century and studied what personal perceptions made teachers more effective. Their studies were influenced by what a teacher thought influenced what a teacher did, aligning the teacher beliefs to the behaviors in the learning environment. Several methods for assessing dispositions over the years included portfolio development, written reflections, entry and exit interviews, performances during internships, and self-assessments. Additionally, based on the validity and reliability for assessing dispositions, it could be a struggle when determining if the internal conditions of a person's dispositions are naturally rooted, whether they can be embedded or even shaped (Benson & Peterson, 2012).

According to NCATE (2008), teacher dispositions were guided by their attitudes and beliefs in relation to their values such as thoughtfulness, caring, honesty, fairness, empathy, respectfulness, and responsibility to their practice. The attitudes and behaviors of teachers were critical for providing effective teaching. Over the years, dispositions have been one of the most difficult to measure and define due to the variety of terms associated with the nature of describing teacher beliefs and values about education. Smith et al. (2005) made an effort to provide a clear understanding for what a disposition is by acknowledging the "sheer volume of research efforts toward identifying what causes or

lies behind teacher actions” (p. 14). Dispositions embrace the why of a teacher’s decisions or actions but do not get at the what. Schussler and Knarr (2013) described dispositions as “context specific, connecting intended purposes with one’s inclination to think and act in particular ways. They aligned well with the cultivation of teacher moral sensibilities” (p. 76). In other words, the teacher’s deepest-rooted beliefs and sense of purpose and belonging and their abilities to achieve their purpose must align.

Diez (2006) identified five principles to guide practices for assessing dispositions:

1. Assessing dispositions requires “making the invisible visible” through active means.
2. Dispositions can (and should) be assessed both in structured ways and through ongoing observation of the teacher in action.
3. Dispositions should be assessed over time, as part of an ongoing reflection process.
4. Criteria used in the assessment of dispositions should be public and explicit.
5. The process of assessing dispositions has moral meaning for teacher educators and for their practice. (p. 49)

These principles provided a link through which states and NCATE’s required attention to assessing dispositions could close the gap created among the focus for assessing teacher knowledge, skills, and dispositions without issues of legal challenges (Diez, 2006). Institutions maintained their teacher standards and created their core beliefs and strategic plans to implement those actions. Diez (2006) stated the importance of holding teachers and educators accountable for demonstrating the dispositions created in the assessments in order to build moral approaches to student success. The values and

commitments that defined teacher performance were powerful predictors of professional behaviors, and the goal was to identify those teachers who modeled appropriate and professional dispositions (Haberman, 2011; Smith et al., 2005).

The lack of a clear definition and individual teacher education programs identifying what they deem as the most critical set of dispositions has made assessing and measuring dispositions a challenge (Benson & Peterson, 2012). Almerico et al. (2018) disclosed challenges for assessing dispositions may be too insensitive, especially considering the design, administration, and interpretation of assessment tools when measuring a phenomenon such as dispositions. However, the need to assess dispositions is important in answering the question of whether teachers are prone to apply their knowledge and skills gained in their preparation programs and integrate them into their classroom practices. Even if a teacher has the knowledge and skills to teach content, it does not necessarily mean that teacher will teach effectively in the learning environment (Almerico et al., 2018). Almerico et al. (2018) identified several purposes for assessing dispositions in teacher preservice programs such as

- providing expectations of professional dispositions;
- professional obligations;
- researched-based measures;
- teacher awareness of who they are and how their beliefs will impact the students they teach; and
- teachers have more than just knowledge and skills, and understanding their dispositions plays a vital role in student success.

Regardless of a teacher's content knowledge and pedagogical skills, a teacher can lack the essential dispositions to implement effective teaching, which is the rationale behind the importance for assessing dispositions. Almerico et al. (2017) designed the EDA, a psychological measurement instrument. The instrument was developed with an effort to clear up any confusion about the expectations for making inferences about teacher dispositions in an educational program. The EDA is a valid and reliable measure of teacher candidate dispositions and is intended to track and monitor dispositions at multiple stages as a teacher progresses throughout an education program (Almerico et al., 2017). The EDA is also used as an assessment prior to program admission and allows teachers to reflect on their individual dispositions and adjust as needed. The data from the EDA are used to identify the effectiveness and dispositional progression of a teacher candidate.

Professional teaching standards are evaluated each year; however, several institutions across the country do not assess teacher dispositions related to core beliefs, principles, values, and core priorities embedded within their standards and strategic plans. Some states' strategic plans do not have dispositions or core beliefs stated at all. Today, in the CAEP standards, Standard 1, professional dispositions are mentioned as a component of the standard but do not provide a description related to how a teacher is to be held responsible for demonstrating them in the learning environment (CAEP, 2013); yet many public school districts across the state include dispositions in their core beliefs, missions, and principles, but they are not assessed.

Teacher Quality, Beliefs, Characteristics, and Behaviors

It is important to understand why teacher quality was imperative to student

achievement. Throughout the 1900s, teacher quality has been an issue in the American education systems and has continued to be a national focus into the 21st century (Welch & Areepattamannil, 2016). Considering the fact that teachers may come with the necessary knowledge and skills, the quality and effectiveness of the teacher was of critical importance in what and how much students learn (Haberman, 2011). Teachers have a substantial impact and influence on the education of their students. Since No Child Left Behind (Paige, 2002) was put into action, all students in the United States were expected to be taught by highly qualified teachers. In a 1996 report from the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, a consensus on ensuring teacher quality was proposed (Welch & Areepattamannil, 2016). The ideas proposed by the Commission were to ensure by 2006:

1. What teachers know and can do is the most important influence on what students learn.
2. Recruiting, preparing, and retaining good teachers is the central strategy for improving our schools.
3. School reform cannot succeed unless it focuses on creating the conditions in which teachers can teach and teach well. (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996, p. 10)

This proposal would make certain every student in America would have the right and access to an education that was caring, knowledgeable, and highly capable of providing teachers who understand their content, can differentiate what students need to be successful, and deliver rigorous instruction. This was not the case based on a research study over 2 years (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996).

Several barriers to reaching this goal were identified: Teachers had low expectations for student success; teacher standards not being enforced; beginning teacher programs were inconsistent; and careless teacher recruitment was occurring within schools.

Highly qualified teachers, certified to teach in their area of accreditation are generally selected based on their qualifications for the job and must be considered high-quality employees, but this does not guarantee a teacher will be successful with students (Stronge & Hindman, 2006). There is a requirement to recruit teachers with higher order thinking skills, quality teaching methods, appropriate subject area knowledge, and professional decision-making skills and competencies to apply conceptual concepts (Haberman, 2011). If this was the case, teacher perceptions and cognitive abilities, which are essential to the success of their students, should also be considered when recruiting teachers and not just one component of certification. These qualities are what make up the composite picture of teacher effectiveness in the classroom instead of focusing on a teacher's skills alone or their dispositions alone (Stronge & Hindman, 2006).

Additionally, Stronge (2018) added there was no single method for developing the perfect, most effective teacher; but there were collective characteristics that highlighted the most effective teachers. A teacher's influence and imprint on a student is powerful. Students are directly affected by their teachers. They interact on a consistent basis. Teachers determine what they learn, how much they learn, and how they will respond to the world around them (Stronge, 2018). Teachers must consider the degree to which they influence students and whether their skills and knowledge of content and best practices alone will benefit all student success. An effective, qualified teacher also believes in building positive attitudes about school success, creates an interest in learning, and is

prepared to apply those beliefs to their everyday craft or practice (Stronge, 2018). The studies of the 1920s focused on teacher traits and characteristics but have since, today, focused on teaching practices and methods and reactions toward student learning and mastery of the content.

Haberman (2011) provided information from multiple studies conducted to research the “developmental abilities leading to success in any field: empathy, autonomy, symbolization, and commitment to democratic values” (p. 23). Haberman (2011) mentioned how all four of the abilities are related to maturity for success but not to SAT scores. An understanding of a teacher’s characteristics and educational beliefs is generally not associated with the qualifications of a teaching position. Teacher quality or expertise is the least studied measure in teacher practice (Knoeppel et al., 2005); yet the educational beliefs of the teacher cannot be identified solely by National Board certification, preservice teacher training, teacher preparation programs, veteran teacher experience, possession of a master’s degree, scores on a licensing examination, or years of experience. Teacher effectiveness is not stimulating students to be successful in the classroom learning environment, yet an effective teacher is one who is the key to student improvement (Goodman, 2016).

Stronge (2018) introduced the Framework for Effective Teaching and its six domains: professional knowledge, instructional planning, instructional delivery, assessment, learning environment, and professionalism as an operational definition for teacher effectiveness. Within those domains, Haberman’s (2012) research looked closely at how the effective teachers defined themselves and their beliefs during each of the dimensions and how teachers could be more effective within their roles if they acted on

their beliefs.

Dispositions Enhance Moral Sensibilities

In teaching, Schussler and Knarr (2013) explained the aspects of teacher behaviors and how what they wanted to achieve embodied their moral sensibilities which were aligned to the moral activities in the classroom. It is important to know if teachers are self-aware of their intended outcomes. Many teachers have not reflected on their own feelings and reactions to situations that occurred each day and tended to meet their highest tolerance level of anxiety. Their frustrations could lead to hostility and put them in a state of anger which turned to blaming the students and blaming the external conditions of their environment. Ironically, they have no idea that they created this situation on their own (Haberman, 2012). Teachers need to have a sense of their perceptions and an awareness of self in order to understand different teaching circumstances through their own personal “perceptions of the world” (Schussler & Knarr, 2013, p. 78) lens.

Teachers, like students, learn by doing which is understood as the fundamental way of learning. The behaviors teachers portray are learned behaviors, and dispositions are an essential component of quality teaching. Environments, support, and challenges can alter one’s dispositions, so teachers need to understand and nurture their dispositors in order to increase how effective they are with students (Schussler & Knarr, 2013). Effective teachers are aware of self and understand how this awareness guides what behaviors or actions they base decisions on in the classroom. To increase their effectiveness in the classroom, all teachers must develop an awareness of self and understand how to align their intentions with their beliefs and values (Schussler & Knarr,

2013).

Educational Philosophy “All Students Can Learn”

NCTASC Principle 3 states: “The teacher believes that all children can learn at high levels and persists in helping all children achieve success” (Smith et al., 2005, p. 19). Smith et al. (2005) suggested behaviors and action are driven by beliefs and influence the “act of teaching” (p.19). The beliefs were determined by experiences and translated into how people behaved, acted, or made decisions. Extensive research has been conducted on the nature of teacher cognition as it related to teacher beliefs and what influences caused their behaviors. Cognition, as defined, was “the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses that included thinking, reasoning, understanding, learning and remembering” (Cherry, 2020, p. 1). A shift toward teacher reasoning, understanding, awareness, and thought were now being correlated to their behaviors.

What did teachers mean when they said, “all students can learn?” Campbell (2009) elaborated on the questions by asking if teachers meant all children could learn at the same rate and same level of expertise at the same time.

The beliefs of teachers motivated the pedagogy they decided to implement. Maintaining high expectations, Haberman’s (2012) work discussed the years and years of frequent directions given to teachers on how to teach the curriculum regardless of the skills students may lack. Teachers created their lessons, delivered their lessons, and gave the same assignments to the whole class. Teachers professed to know that students came with different skill levels, but they continued to teach to a one-size-fits-all class, knowing some students would not be successful (Haberman, 2012). There is no question that

teaching a class of students and taking the time to differentiate and provide scaffolding and support for a variety of students can be a difficult challenge. However, not meeting this challenge does not align to the politically correct claim by teachers that all students can learn, if their behaviors do not indicate they really believe it. It is certainly possible that teachers may be unaware of their dispositions having an influence on their behaviors and how they instruct on a daily basis. Educational researchers agree beliefs are resistant to being easily changed (Smith et al., 2005).

NCATE has based their standards on the belief that all children can and should learn from a qualified, caring, and knowledgeable educator. School establishments are tasked with ensuring teachers are creating an environment for a diverse community of students. This means teachers are reflecting on their practice, providing rigorous instruction, and embracing continuous improvement and learning of their craft (NCATE, 2008).

Campbell (2009) shared a belief of a school superintendent from the West Coast District and how he changed his belief to all students could learn and progress if their different assets and abilities were met in school. Classroom practices were affected by teacher beliefs. Teachers must understand and be made self-aware if classroom practices are to be improved.

Teacher Behaviors

Teaching involves complex components that teachers must be mindful of when reflecting on the perspective of their practices, actions, and decision-making as it affects the quality of their practice (Welch & Areepattamannil, 2016). Welch and Areepattamannil (2016) asserted that teachers who could reflect on their teaching

practices and thinking possessed essential values and beliefs for effective teaching.

Haberman (2012) also mentioned the complexity and difficulty of teaching and implied how teachers should understand this comes with the job. Teachers experienced multiple anxieties from the constant pressures of feeling judged based on their work performance. There is no question this can affect their teaching behaviors. Knowing the anxieties they will face on a day-to-day basis, teachers should continue to reflect on themselves and their practices to reach the highest levels of self-understanding and redirect their behaviors to correspond to their beliefs and values.

Stronge and Hindman (2006) discussed the importance of a positive attitude a teacher should model in order to be effective. A negative attitude portrayed a lack of professionalism. There was a deficiency of professionalism occurring within schools which produced several state and national initiatives intended to improve the quality of teachers. NCATE and the Association for Childhood Education International integrated standards in which teachers would be recognized as professionals but would also need to participate in their own reflective practices and behaviors (Welch & Areepattamannil, 2016). Teachers relied on their beliefs and values as their best indicator for making instructional decisions, implementing classroom practices, creating tasks, and problem-solving more than they relied on their knowledge (Simpson, 2011).

Summary

While the importance of teacher preparation, teacher qualifications, knowledge, and skill set are contributing factors, research has indicated that these are not merely the only important components of a quality teacher. Professional dispositions should be guided by why we want to educate students and not just the “what” (Singh & Stoloff,

2007). They are the core values, commitments, and professional ethics that transform a good teacher into an effective one; and only through observable and measurable behaviors can information about teacher dispositions be acquired (Diez & Raths, 2007). The history of dispositions written in the standards reminds educators to address the attitudes and behaviors of professional dispositions as they impact student success in the learning environment. The EDA data identified which teacher dispositions had the biggest impact on the learning environment by using the tool to observe teacher behaviors in the classroom to see if dispositions and behaviors aligned to core beliefs.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

“Students in the United States are continuing to underperform academically” (Schmid, 2018, p. 1). Research indicates the impact teachers have in contributing to student academic success is greater than any other factor, even in low-performing schools (Schmid, 2011). This study sought to determine if a disconnect exists in the alignment of what teachers say they believe about professional dispositions and core beliefs with their actual behaviors and actions in the learning environment. The purpose of this phenomenological research study identified the relationship of teacher dispositions and generally accepted district beliefs to see if there is a difference in professed teacher professional dispositions and actual behaviors in the learning environment and whether this difference may impact on the success or lack of success of student performance. Permission was granted by the district and the school principal (Appendices A and B).

Research Design

As stated in Chapter 1, this study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by NCFE data?
2. What observed behaviors do effective practicing teachers demonstrate that stimulate student success as measured by NCFE data?
3. To what extent do observed behaviors correlate between teacher self-professed dispositions and observations of an administrator?

I utilized phenomenological research to conduct this study. Phenomenological

research is the study of a person's lived experiences as they relate to a concept or phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In order to develop a deeper understanding of the features of professional dispositions, I utilized a phenomenological approach to understand each teacher's shared experiences in the learning environment. I used an open-ended survey protocol to ask two broad questions: (a) What have you experienced in education that has challenged your beliefs and values in the learning environment; and (b) What situations from your experiences have influenced or affected your beliefs and values?

I focused on describing what each teacher had in common with the phenomenon of professional dispositions. By collecting data from the teachers, who have an awareness of professional dispositions, I observed the teachers' actions in the learning environment and assessed whether their dispositions have an impact on their students' achievement. This form of research was appropriate and necessary because it provided a level of deep learning for educators and potential "transformation of consciousness, heightened perceptiveness, and increased thoughtfulness" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 82).

The study used a mixed method design to answer the research questions and identified if there was a difference in what teachers professed to believe versus what was observed in their actions. Mixed method design is dependent on the cooperation of the qualitative and quantitative processes of collecting, analyzing, and mixing of data to determine the research questions (Creswell, 2015a). Qualitative studies are reflective of information collected through observations and whether beliefs and values are significant to the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). In this case, the qualitative data collected included an open-ended survey protocol in which teachers included written responses.

The quantitative data collected in this study looked at teacher end-of-grade (EOG) scores, teacher self-assessments, and observations using a Likert scale. Quantitative studies identified the relationship between variables with the initial goal being to analyze and signify the relationship mathematically through statistical analysis (Creswell, 2015a). This mixed methods design allowed me to analyze data from teacher self-assessments, administrator observations, my observations, and written response questions and then analyze them in relation to teacher EOG data.

I chose to use the EDA to conduct my research (Appendix C). The EDA was used as a multiple measurement for teacher self-assessment, assistant principal observations, and my observations and analysis to triangulate the data. Data were collected based on the EDA, with observations done in multiple measurements and then triangulated to determine validity of the study. I was granted permission to use the EDA (Appendix D). It is a valid and reliable assessment tool initially used to inform teacher candidates of a program's dispositional expectations as well as to assess baseline dispositional data which are then monitored throughout a teacher candidate's program (Almerico et al., 2017). I used the tool to assess currently practicing teachers. The EDA is aligned with CAEP standards, InTASC standards, and other evaluative instruments used to measure professional dispositions program (Almerico et al., 2017). The EDA uses a 0 to 2 Likert scale to address the CAEP and InTASC standards. I used the EDA with only Standard 1: Content and Pedagogical Knowledge to evaluate disposition expectations. I completed a form contained on the EDA-Watermark site, in order to gain information about questions regarding the instrument. I spoke with a representative on the phone, at which time the representative provided the names of contact persons who were research professors from

the University of Tampa. I contacted the professors to discuss the needs and uses of the EDA. The professors agreed to allow me to use the EDA in this study as well as provided rater calibration training to ensure valid and reliable results using the EDA (Appendix E).

The EDA consists of nine dispositions and 27 indicators, described in Table 1.

Table 1*EDA*

Disposition	Associated indicators		
	Needs improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets expectations 2
1. Demonstrates effective oral communication skills	Does not consistently demonstrate professional oral communication skills as evidenced by making <i>major</i> errors in language, grammar, and word choice	Demonstrates professional oral communication skills as evidenced by using appropriate language, grammar, and word choice for the learning environment, yet makes some common and noticeable errors	Demonstrates strong professional oral communication skills as evidenced by using appropriate language, grammar, and word choice for the learning environment
	Does not vary oral communication to motivate students as evidenced by monotone voice with visible lack of student participation	Strives to vary oral communication as evidenced by some students demonstrating a lack of participation	Varies oral communication as evidenced by encouraging participatory behaviors
	Choice of vocabulary is either too difficult or too simplistic	Occasionally uses vocabulary that is either too difficult or too simplistic	Communicates at an age appropriate level as evidenced by explaining content specific vocabulary
2. Demonstrates effective written communication skills	Communicates in tones that are harsh or negative as evidenced by fostering negative responses	Communicates respectfully and positively but with some detectable negative undertones, evidenced by unproductive responses	Communicates respectfully and positively with all stakeholders as evidenced by fostering conventional responses
	Demonstrates <i>major</i> spelling and grammar errors or demonstrates frequent common mistakes	Demonstrates <i>common</i> errors in spelling and grammar	Demonstrates precise spelling and grammar

(continued)

Disposition	Associated indicators		
	Needs improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets expectations 2
3. Demonstrates professionalism Danielson (1996): 4f; InTASC: 9(o)	Does not respond to <i>communications</i> and does not submit all assignments	Delayed response to <i>communications</i> and late submission of assignments	Responds promptly to <i>communications</i> and submits all assignments
	Fails to exhibit punctuality and/or attendance	Not consistently punctual and/or has absences	Consistently exhibits punctuality and attendance
	Crosses <i>major</i> boundaries of ethical standards of practice	Crosses <i>minor</i> boundaries of ethical standards of practice	Maintains professional boundaries of ethical standards of practice
	Divulges inappropriate <i>personal</i> life issues in the classroom/workplace as evidenced by uncomfortable responses from others	Occasionally divulges <i>inappropriate</i> personal life issues into the classroom/workplace, but this is kept to a minimum	Keeps <i>inappropriate</i> personal life issues out of classroom/workplace
	Functions as a group member with no participation	Functions as a collaborative group member as evidenced by minimal levels of participation towards productive outcomes or monopolizes conversation	Functions as a collaborative group member as evidenced by high levels of participation towards productive outcomes
4. Demonstrates a positive and enthusiastic attitude Marzano et al. (2001): 29	Often complains when encountering problems and rarely offers solutions	Seeks solutions to problems with prompting	Actively seeks solutions to problems without prompting or complaining
	Resists change and appears offended when suggestions are made to try new ideas/activities	May tentatively try new ideas/activities that are suggested yet is often unsure of how to proceed	Tries new ideas/activities that are suggested
	Demonstrates a flattened affect as evidenced by lack of expressive gestures and vocal expressions	Overlooks opportunities to demonstrate positive affect	Demonstrates an appropriately positive affect with students as evidenced by verbal and non-verbal cues

(continued)

Disposition	Associated indicators		
	Needs improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets expectations 2
5. Demonstrates preparedness in teaching and learning Danielson (1996): 1e, 3e, 4a; InTASC: 3(p)	Rejects constructive feedback as evidenced by no implementation of feedback	Somewhat resistant to constructive feedback as evidenced by a lack of follow through on some suggestions	Accepts constructive feedback as evidenced by implementation of feedback as needed
	Possesses an inaccurate perception of teaching/learning effectiveness as evidenced by limited concept of how to improve	Reflection contains inaccuracies as evidenced by needing assistance for corrective measures of improvement	Learns and adjusts from experience and reflection as evidenced by improvements in performance
	Comes to class unplanned and without needed materials	Comes to class with some plans and most needed materials	Comes to class planned and with all needed materials
	Does not have awareness to alter lessons in progress as evidenced by activating no changes when needed	Aware that lesson is not working but does not know how to alter plans to adjust	Alters lessons in progress when needed as evidenced by ability to change plan mid-lesson to overcome the deficits
6. Exhibits an appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity Danielson (1996): 1b, 2a, 2b; Marzano et al. (2001): 36, 39; InTASC: 2(m), 2(n), 2(o), 3(o), 9(m), 10(q)	Demonstrates inequitable embracement of all <i>diversities</i>	Goes through the <i>expected and superficial motions</i> to embrace all <i>diversities</i>	Embraces all <i>diversities</i> as evidenced by implementing <i>activities and behaviors</i> with goals of <i>total</i> inclusiveness through cultural, ethnic, and cognitive frames of reference
	Is challenged to create a <i>safe classroom</i> as evidenced by ignoring <i>negative</i> behaviors by students	Strives to build a <i>safe classroom</i> with zero tolerance of <i>negative</i> behaviors towards others but needs further development in accomplishing this task	Creates a <i>safe classroom</i> with zero tolerance of negativity to others as evidenced by correcting <i>negative</i> student behaviors

(continued)

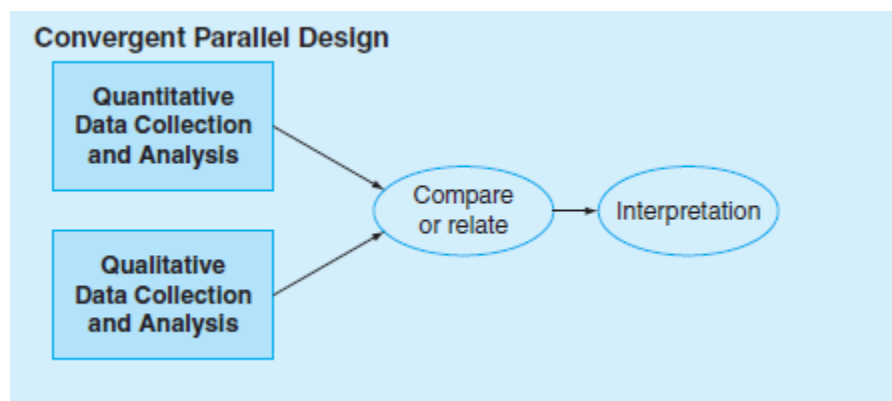
Disposition	Associated indicators		
	Needs improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets expectations 2
7. Collaborates effectively with stakeholders Danielson (1996): 4c, 4d; Marzano et al. (2001): 55, 56; InTASC: 1(k), 3(n), 3(q), 7(o)	Is inflexible, as evidenced by inability to work well with others and does not accept majority consensus	Demonstrates some flexibility ^[1] _{SEP} Maintains a respectful tone in most circumstances but is not consistent	Demonstrates flexibility as evidenced by providing considered responses and accepts majority consensus
	Tone exhibits a general lack of respect for others as evidenced by interruptions and talking over others	Shares teaching strategies as evidenced by some effort towards collaboration	Maintains a respectful tone at all times, even during dissent as evidenced by not interrupting or talking over others
	Rarely collaborates or shares strategies and ideas even when prompted		Proactively shares teaching strategies as evidenced by productive collaboration
8. Demonstrates self-regulated learner behaviors/takes initiative Danielson (1996): 4e; Marzano et al., 2001): 57; InTASC: 9(l), 9(n), 10(r), 10(t)	Is unable to self-correct own weaknesses as evidenced by not asking for support or overuse of requests for support	Is beginning to recognize own weaknesses and asks for support making some effort to become involved in professional growth	Recognizes own weaknesses as evidenced by seeking solutions before asking for support
	Does not conduct appropriate research to guide the implementation of effective teaching as evidenced by a lack of citations in work	Level of research needs further development to acquire fully and integrate resources leading to implementing different and effective teaching styles	Researches and implements most effective teaching styles as evidenced by citing works submitted

(continued)

Disposition	Associated indicators		
	Needs improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets expectations 2
9. Exhibits the social and emotional intelligence to promote personal and educational goals/stability Marzano et al. (2001): 37, 38	Demonstrates immaturity and lack of self-regulation as evidenced by overreacting to sensitive issues	Demonstrates level of maturity to self-regulate after initial response is one of overreaction to sensitive issues	Demonstrates appropriate maturity and self-regulation as evidenced by remaining calm when discussing sensitive issues
	Does not demonstrate perseverance and resilience (grit) as evidenced by giving up easily	Demonstrates perseverance and resilience (grit) most of the time	Demonstrates perseverance and resilience (grit) as evidenced by tenacious and determined ability to persist through tough situations
	Demonstrates insensitivity to feelings of others as evidenced by a lack of compassion and empathetic social awareness	Demonstrates sensitivity to feelings of others most of the time	Demonstrates sensitivity to feelings of others as evidenced by compassionate and empathetic social awareness

Note. Almerico et al. (2017).

I triangulated the data utilizing a convergent parallel mixed methods model. The convergence model allowed the data to be analyzed separately and then merged (Creswell, 2014). Figure 3 details the description of the convergent parallel mixed methods design.

Figure 3*Convergent Parallel Mixed Method Design*

Note. Creswell (2014).

I analyzed the data separately and then combined the qualitative and quantitative data to compare the results to identify if there was a correlation (Creswell, 2014).

I proposed to use the Pearson correlation statistical test to identify if there was a correlation between the EDA results, the open-ended survey protocol responses, and the teacher NCFE scores. The Pearson correlation is used to determine the strength and direction of a linear relationship between two continuous variables (Laerd Statistics, 2017). The rationale for the mixed method research design allowed me to collect, analyze, and combine quantitative and qualitative methods to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2015a).

The study researched teacher social and behavioral responses to answer the research questions. The study utilized multiple sources of data collection through observations from self-assessments, administrator observations, and researcher observations utilizing the EDA. The data were triangulated to include different perspectives in the study providing enhanced validity and reliability (Creswell, 2015b).

I conducted observations of the teachers participating in the study. I used the EDA

to formally assess teacher dispositions. The EDA is aligned to the CAEP and InTASC standards and is research based. The purpose of the assessment instrument was to collect valid and reliable measures of teacher dispositions as a foundation for the study. The EDA was developed using psychometric properties, to scale, to collect results of teacher dispositions of construct validity and estimates in inter-rater reliability (Almerico et al., 2018). The EDA consists of nine dispositions and 27 associated indicators. The order of the dispositions is indicative of importance. The EDA uses a 3-point Likert scale: 0, needs improvement; 1, developing; and 2, meets expectations (Almerico et al., 2017). The purpose of the teacher observations was to triangulate the behaviors observed with the responses from the EDA in order to understand the different perspectives and to build a coherent justification for the study (Creswell, 2015b).

Research Setting

The study was completed in a secondary year-round public school in central North Carolina. The identified school has a total of 1,112 students in Grades 6-8. The school's demographics were as follows: 13% Asian, 3% Hispanic, 8% African American, 63% Caucasian, and 3% two or more races. Fifteen percent of the students are eligible for the free and reduced lunch program. There are a total of 70 classroom teachers: 100% are fully licensed, 34.3% have advanced degrees, and 21 hold National Board certification. The years of teaching experience at this school varied from 10 teachers (14%) with less than 3 years of teaching experience, 12 teachers (17%) with 4-10 years of teaching experience, and 48 teachers (69%) with 10 or more years of teaching experience.

I selected this school for the following reasons: (a) bias was absent due to me not being familiar with the secondary school curriculum; (b) I have worked primarily in

elementary school settings and am not familiar with the teachers who work in this school. This allowed for complete impartiality toward the instruction to be observed; (c) I had no preconceptions of the teachers prior to the study and would be able to provide reliable responses to the observation tool; and (d) the principal and assistant principal expressed great interest in having the study conducted at their school as they believe the topic to be of great importance in the school district and are curious about the study results and how they might move forward following the study.

Participants

I met with the principal and the assistant principal to discuss the details of the study. I stated the need for an administrator to take part in the observations and agree to be trained by the professors who developed the EDA for rater calibration training. The administrator chosen to conduct the observations was the assistant principal. The assistant principal took the 1-hour rater calibration training, along with me, in order to establish strong inter-rater reliability using the EDA. I requested a date to meet with the staff at the school for a brief meeting to explain the study and asked for at least six participants from each grade level. I planned to meet with teachers during a staff meeting. Teachers heard a brief explanation of the study and the need for participants who had been teaching at the school for at least 3 consecutive years in order to provide overall EOG scores. A volunteer sheet was provided following the explanation of the study for teachers to sign if willing to participate. Once I received approval to conduct the study, each confirmed participant signed an informed consent to participate with full confidentiality (Appendix F). Three teachers volunteered from sixth grade, two teachers volunteered from seventh grade, and three teachers volunteered from eighth grade. Teacher demographics of the

teacher participants are described in Table 2.

Table 2

Demographics of Teacher Participants

Teacher	Grade level taught	Years of experience	Years of experience in current grade level
001	6	23	16
002	6	21	20
003	6	16	10
004	7	21	12
005	7	4	4
006	8	24	1
007	8	15	15
008	8	14	5

Teachers are departmentalized and teach a specific content area. Since content area is not a focus for this study, I had no concerns related to teacher subject area responsibilities.

Researcher's Role

I was the observer in the study. First, I emailed the teachers to complete a demographic questionnaire about their teaching experience. Following the completion of demographics collection, using the EDA, I observed each teacher twice: once during an instructional lesson and the second during a teacher meeting to observe what teachers were saying about students. Once all observations were completed, I sent out a set of eight written response questions to be completed by the teachers as part of the phenomenological approach. Once the written responses were collected, I sent out the

EDA for each teacher to complete a self-assessment. Following the completed self-assessments, I then held a virtual focus group meeting with the teachers. The purpose of the focus group was to gain additional evidence of participant understanding and commitment of specific dispositions within the study. My role was to gather a number of different ideas and opinions in the time allocated. A set of nine predetermined questions were created based on the feedback from the written response questions.

Research Procedures and Instrumentation

To initiate the study, I contacted the teachers and requested teacher demographic information such as their name (indicated as 001, 002, 003, 004, etc.), grade level taught, years of experience, and years of experience in current grade level. Also attached to the demographic information were two general questions: (a) What have you experienced in education that has challenged your beliefs and values in the learning environment; and (b) What situations have influenced or affected your beliefs and values from your experiences?

I coded the qualitative data from the two general questions using the Dedoose program. The Dedoose program is a data visualization engine designed to reveal hidden patterns and themes within the data (Dedoose, n.d.). I involved an additional outside researcher who is familiar with mixed method research and has received a doctoral degree to assist in the coding to provide valid and reliable information.

Once I received the responses and demographic information from each teacher, I worked with the administrator to determine the time frame for administrator and researcher observations to occur within the next 18 weeks. The teachers were informed that I would come into their classrooms two times between the first and/or second

quarters to observe an instructional lesson using the EDA. I informed the teachers that the observations would be unannounced. Additionally, within the first and/or second quarter of the school year, I also observed the teachers during a tier talk meeting. The purpose of tier talk meetings was to make plans for students who are not responding to Tier 1 (core) instruction and have shown they need more support. The teachers discuss the needs of their students and design Tier 2 (supplemental) plans with research-based strategies for the students. Teachers also discuss their progress monitoring and possibilities of moving students who are not responding to Tier 2 strategies to Tier 3 (intensive).

Following the observations, I had created a set of eight written response questions for each teacher to complete individually. The eight written response questions were created to answer Research Question 1, “What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by NCFE data?”

Written Response Questions

1. What have you experienced in education that has challenged your beliefs and values in the learning environment?
2. What situations from your experiences have influenced or affected your beliefs and values?
3. What behaviors do you exhibit that contribute to your students' success and how is that evidenced in your teaching?
4. What enables students to succeed?
5. In your opinion, what does an excellent teacher look like?
6. Why is teaching an important profession and where does it rank in importance compared to other professionals?

7. In what ways do you know that teachers believe that all students can learn?
8. What beliefs about students and teaching do you hold that contribute to your students' success?

I obtained a schedule of the participating teachers' instructional times and tier talk meeting times to organize a schedule for my observations. The assistant principal was familiar with the teachers' schedules and completed the EDA observations throughout the day with as many teachers as possible during the first and/or second quarters. The assistant principal's visit was unannounced. She observed each teacher once for a 50-minute instructional lesson using the EDA over the course of 18 weeks. Throughout the 18 weeks, I visited two to three teachers' classrooms for a 50-minute observation either during instruction and/or tier talk meeting.

Once the observations and written response questions were completed, I sent out the EDA self-assessment to be completed by each teacher individually and they then sent it back to me. I chose to have the teachers complete the self-assessment after the observations so as not to persuade or sway their behaviors during observations. I explained the EDA and asked the teachers to select an instructional lesson they presented during the day to self-assess.

At the end of the 18-week period, or when all observations, written response answers, and EDA self-assessments were completed, I contacted each of the participating teachers to schedule a time to meet as a virtual focus group. The original proposal stated the focus group would meet face to face; but due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), a disease that was identified in late 2019 and declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020, I scheduled a virtual meet using a school-approved platform called

Google Meet. A set of predetermined questions were written based on the feedback from the written response questions completed. The discussion was free flowing with the opportunity for one person's comment to stimulate and influence another person. It was important to note the questions about their experiences and thoughts pre-COVID-19. Upon consensus of the participants, the focus group discussion was recorded but not shared with anyone other than me. The discussion was scheduled to last 90 minutes.

Data Collection

The research questions would be answered based on the data collection and analysis plan below.

Table 3*Data Collection and Analysis Plan*

Research questions	Data	Data collection	Data organization	Data analysis
1. What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by NCFE data?	Written response questions/ focus group	Obtained by teacher written response and focus group meeting	Written response and transcribed recording of focus group question/answers will be coded for themes and frequency using Dedoose	Qualitative codes /themes will be merged into quantitative variables and then combined with quantitative data
1. What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by NCFE data?	EDA observations	Researcher conducts observations	Average composite score will be organized across nine dispositions	Find the average score of two observations and use Pearson correlation to compare to the NCFE data, observations
2. What observed behaviors do effective practicing teachers demonstrate that stimulate student success as measured by NCFE data?				
1. What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by NCFE data?	EDA Admin-observations	Obtained by administrator observations	Average composite score will be organized across nine dispositions	Use the Pearson correlation to correlate between teacher's data with mine, assistant principal's observations and NCFE data
2. What observed behaviors do effective practicing teachers demonstrate that stimulate student success as measured by NCFE data?				
3. To what extent do observed behaviors correlate between teacher self-professed dispositions and observations of an administrator?				

(continued)

Research questions	Data	Data collection	Data organization	Data analysis
1. What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by NCFE data?	EDA-Self assessment	Obtained by teacher self-assessment	Average composite score will be organized across nine dispositions	Use the Pearson Correlation to find correlation between researcher and teacher's self-assessment scores
2. What observed behaviors do effective practicing teachers demonstrate that stimulate student success as measured by NCFE data?				
1. What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by NCFE data?	NCFE data	Obtained from teacher's NCFE data	Will measure does not meet, meets, or exceed expected growth	Find the average score of three consecutive years and use Pearson Correlation to compare to EDA observations using a Likert scale of small, medium or strong
2. What observed behaviors do effective practicing teachers demonstrate that stimulate student success as measured by NCFE data?				

Written Response Questions

The qualitative data collected for this study included Written Response Questions

1-8:

1. What have you experienced in education that has challenged your beliefs and values in the learning environment?
2. What situations from your experiences have influenced or affected your beliefs and values?
3. What behaviors do you exhibit that contribute to your students' success and how is that evidenced in your teaching?

4. What enables students to succeed?
5. In your opinion, what does an excellent teacher look like?
6. Why is teaching an important profession and where does it rank in importance compared to other professionals?
7. In what ways do you know that teachers believe that all students can learn?
8. What beliefs about students and teaching do you hold that contribute to your students' success?

I asked participants to respond to the eight questions in written form. The responses were coded for themes using the Dedoose program and then compared to the observational data.

The quantitative data collected for this study included NCFE (teacher overall scores of 3 consecutive years), EDA self-assessments, and EDA observations.

NCFE Data

Teachers provided me with 3 consecutive years of NCFE data. One average score was determined from the 3 consecutive years of data. I correlated the dispositions to the average NCFE data to identify a significant correlation.

EDA Self-Assessment

Teachers completed a self-assessment based on an instructional lesson recently taught or remembered. The participants completed the self-assessment after the observations had been completed so as not to sway authentic actions or behaviors from the participants. The Likert scale was used to assess the dispositions as either needs improvement, developing, or meets expectations. A total average composite score was determined across the nine dispositions.

EDA Observations

The assistant principal observed the participants one time, for 50 minutes, during an instructional lesson. The same Likert scale was used to assess the dispositions as either needs improvement, developing, or meets expectations. A total average composite score was determined across the nine dispositions. I used the same EDA and observed the participants twice: once conducting an instructional lesson and once during a tier talk peer meeting. An average of the three scores was used to compare with the quantitative data.

Data Analysis

I conducted a phenomenological research study using a mixed methods design. The qualitative data and the quantitative data were converged to determine the correlation between teacher dispositions and their NCFE data. Within the analysis there were two variables to assess: the triangulated self-assessment, administrator's observation, and researcher's observation using the EDA; and teacher NCFE data. The Pearson correlation would measure the strength and direction of the relationship between the two ordinal variables (Laerd Statistics, 2017, p. 1). Pearson calculates a coefficient, r_s or ρ , which is a measure of the strength and direction of the association/relationship between two continuous or ordinal variables (Laerd Statistics, 2017). There were three assumptions I needed to consider when analyzing the data:

1. The two ordinal variables can be measured continuously.
2. The two variables signify paired observations.
3. I must determine if there is a monotonic relationship between the two variables (Laerd Statistics, 2017). Monotonic: If the value of NCFE data

shows high growth, so does the value of the dispositions (Laerd Statistics, 2017).

Upon analysis of the data, I determined the best statistical test to use was the Pearson correlation. Like the Spearman's' Rho, the Pearson correlation is used to determine the strength and direction of a linear relationship between two continuous variables (Laerd Statistics, 2017).

The NCFE data ranked students on a continuous scale and could be calculated and measured. I took an average score of teacher overall NCFE data over 3 consecutive years.

I found the percentage growth between the NCFE data and the EDA observations. The EDA observations used a Likert scale. The Likert scale is used to assess the dispositions as either needs improvement, developing, or meets expectations. A total average composite score was determined across the nine dispositions. The single disposition score was correlated with the NCFE data to look for a correlation between teacher disposition and student growth. The self-assessment was also correlated with student growth.

The qualitative data consisted of the teachers' written responses to eight questions. The written responses were coded for themes using the Dedoose program and converted to ordinal values. My design and each of the identified variables complied with the assumptions of the Pearson correlation and proved to be applicable for this study. The Pearson correlation provided me with a chart indicating the correlation coefficient and the statistical significance of the correlation coefficient (Laerd Statistics, 2017).

Table 4*The Pearson Correlation Coefficient*

Coefficient value	Strength of association
$0.1 < r < .3$	Small correlation
$0.3 < r < .5$	Medium/moderate correlation
$ r > .5$	Large/strong correlation

Note. Laerd Statistics (2017).

The Pearson correlation is designed to measure the relationship between two factors—as one increases the other increases and to what extent. The Pearson correlation requires continuous data which can fall anywhere between 0-100.

Limitations

It was assumed the limitations in the study would include the number of teacher participants available, travel and work time for me, and teacher awareness of my study. The number of teacher participants was unknown at this time, but I knew that even a small number of willing participants may not provide the larger picture for the study results. I was employed in the same county in which I conducted the study. Challenges such as scheduling, working around testing days, and travel occurred during the time spent conducting observations with the teachers. The teachers were provided some information about the study which limited authentic actions, behaviors, and responses demonstrated by the teachers.

Delimitations

I chose to have the assistant principal only observe one time because they were familiar with the teachers and would not need to observe more than once to record the

teacher scores. Another delimitation included my choice to utilize the EDA in this study over other researched disposition assessment tools.

Summary

This study applied the phenomenological research approach to develop a deeper understanding of the features of professional dispositions and understanding of teacher shared experiences in the learning environment. In order to enhance reliability, the assistant principal and I participated in calibration training of the EDA. The research design used a mixed methods study which included the following data collection: eight written response questions, self-assessment using the Likert scale, and observations also using the Likert scale. Themes of the qualitative data responses were coded using the Dedoose program. The qualitative composite scores and quantitative data average scores were correlated to identify if there was a relationship between the two variables. The findings are composed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results

Restatement of Purpose

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to distinguish if there was a disconnect in the relationship between professional teacher dispositions that might have a profound impact on the success or lack of success of students in school. The study determined if dispositions practicing teachers demonstrated correlated with the dispositions they stated they practiced and if these dispositions supported student success.

Chapter 2 explained the history of teacher dispositions throughout education and defined the definition and importance of teacher dispositions in the school environment.

Chapter 3 described how phenomenological research would be used to conduct this study to identify what each teacher had in common with the phenomenon of professional dispositions. The Pearson correlation was used to identify if there was a correlation among the EDA, the written response questions, and teacher NCFE data.

Chapter 4 discusses the data analysis results from this study. A thorough explanation for the use of the statistical test and the process of coding the qualitative data for the written response questions and focus group meeting is explained in this chapter. Also included are descriptive statistics to describe qualitative data collected. The results of this mixed methods study are provided for each data source collected.

Descriptive Data

Participants

As described in Chapter 3, the participants were eight secondary school teachers from a large district in central North Carolina. The teachers' years of experience ranged between 4 and 24 years. The grade levels, represented by the group of participants,

included sixth through eighth grade. Each teacher volunteered for the study and was given an explanation of the data to be collected. Gathering demographic information involved asking each teacher two general questions:

1. How did you obtain your teaching degree?
2. Did your educational path include teacher licensure through a traditional or nontraditional program such as an alternative licensure, lateral entry, or regular education program?

Seven of the eight teachers obtained their degree and teacher certification through a traditional education program from a university. One teacher, upon college graduation, obtained licensure in an education for adults degree program: Legal Education Accelerated Degree Program.

Observational Quantitative Data

Observational data were used to examine the correlations of teacher dispositions and student achievement to answer Research Question 1, “What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by NCFE data?”

Teachers were observed a total of three times. An assistant principal observed one time for 50 minutes during an instructional lesson. I observed two times, once during an instructional lesson and the other during a tier talk meeting. The tool used to conduct the observations was the EDA. It was a valid and reliable assessment tool initially used to inform teacher candidates of a program’s dispositional expectations as well as to assess baseline dispositional data which were monitored throughout a teacher candidate’s program (Almerico et al., 2017). I utilized the EDA to assess currently practicing teachers. The EDA was aligned with CAEP standards, InTASC standards, and other

evaluative instruments used to measure professional dispositions (Almerico et al., 2017).

The EDA used a 0 to 2 Likert scale to address CAEP and InTASC standards.

The EDA was utilized to measure the dispositions of teachers from four observable perspectives: tier talk observations, researcher classroom observations, administrative observations, and teacher self-assessment. For each perspective, I completed the EDA based on the criteria of each of the nine areas using the Likert scale of 0, needs improvement; 1, developing; and 2, meets expectations. These data were utilized to derive a composite score for each of the four observation types. Composite computation was done by calculating the mean of the nine areas and setting scores on a 0-100 scale. Two thirds of the EDA items were required to be present to derive a score for each teacher. Due to the nature of the tier talk meetings, numerous items were not applicable; therefore, only five of eight teachers had enough data to derive an EDA composite for this observation type. Additionally, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was unable to complete all eight of the tier talk observations. These observations were not used in the final analysis.

Table 5 exhibited observations of the four observation types. Researcher classroom observations shared mean scores near 70. Administrator and teacher self-assessment observations had mean scores of 83.50 and 90.46.

Table 5*EDA Composite Descriptive*

EDA composite score	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
Tier talk meetings	5	58.45	82.08	70.29	8.76
Researcher observation	8	55.31	86.77	70.82	10.75
Administrator observation	8	54.26	100.00	83.50	13.91
Teacher self-assessment	8	81.56	100.00	90.46	7.43

Administrator observations were higher than researcher observation scores. This might be attributable to the administrator being more familiar with the teachers overall, thus implying a more well-rounded understanding of the teachers' dispositions. The highest mean scores came from the teacher self-assessments.

Student Achievement Data

The student achievement data were based on the NCFE or final course grade results for each teacher. Up to 3 consecutive academic years were averaged for each teacher to obtain a more holistic measure of teacher effectiveness on student achievement. Due to varying subjects and grades taught among the studied teachers, the NCFE or final course grade scores were normalized to allow for a standard scale to be applied to the analysis.

As there was not a common score type (NCFE, final course grade) available for analysis in which to measure student achievement (at the teacher-level) consistently, the analysis utilized the scores available.

Student z scores were calculated by dividing the difference between the actual student score and the minimum score from the sample by the difference between the

sample's maximum and minimum scores.

Table 6

NCFE Assessments – Standardized Descriptive

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
Average normalized student achievement score	8	0.59	0.76	0.70	0.07

Table 6 was constructed by taking the average of student scores for each teacher within the 3 years being utilized for the study and the average of the subject's standardized scores across the 3 years. For each subject, the minimum and maximum range of that test was applied and normalized against the minimum and maximum. This supported being able to define where the scores fell in the range of the test relative to the subject. This was done for each subject area to obtain a normalized score for analyzing the data across all eight teachers on the same scale. Those scoring above the average of 0.7 indicated higher student success, and those scoring lower indicated lower student success.

Correlations of EDA and NCFE Scores

The two measures in this analysis, EDA composites and NCFE standardized scores, were both continuous in nature. To examine the correlation between the NCFE student scores and the three separate observation types of EDA scores, the Pearson correlation was computed for each relationship.

Table 7*Pearson Correlations of EDA and NCFE Student Scores*

Correlations	Statistic	EDA R composite score	EDA admin composite score	EDA self-assessment composite score
Standardized NCFE student scores	Pearson correlation	0.10	0.68	0.59
	Sig. (2-tailed p-value)	0.82	0.06	0.13
	N	8	8	8

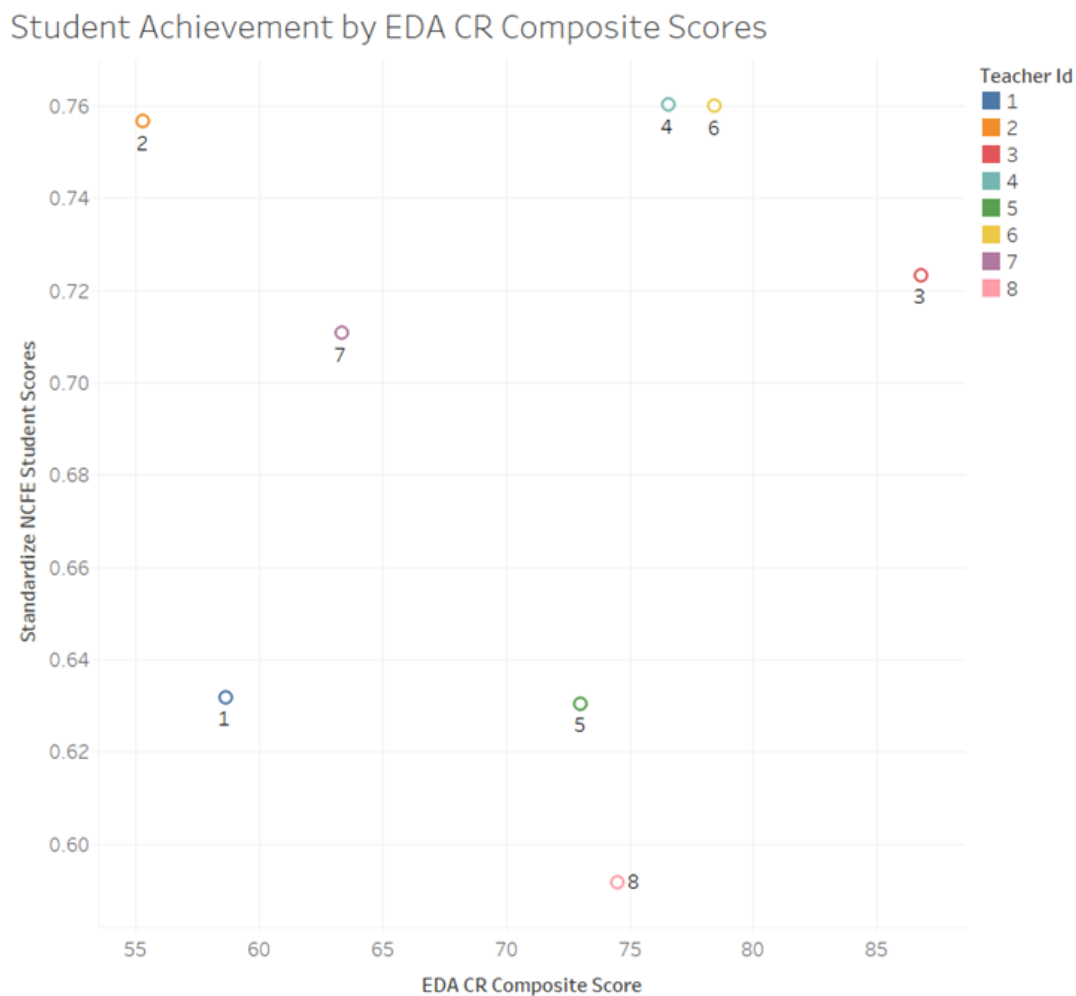
As seen in Table 7, there was no correlation (0.10) between the researcher-observed EDA score and student achievement. The Pearson statistic exhibited a moderate to strong correlation between the administrator-observed and self-assessed EDA scores with student achievement. It was important to note that all three of these correlations were not statistically significant (p value > 0.05). The lack of significance could likely be attributed to the small sample size, indicating a potential need for further research and larger sample sizes.

Relationship of Teacher Dispositions and Student Achievement

Scatterplots displayed the NCFE student scores in relation to the EDA researcher composite score, the EDA administrative composite score, and the EDA teacher self-assessment composite score. Figures 4-6 are scatterplots. Each dot represents a teacher's NCFE student and EDA composite scores. Figure 4 represents the EDA researcher observation composite scores.

Figure 4

NCFE Scores by EDA Researcher-Observed Scores



The EDA researcher observation plots showed the lesser defined relationship as indicated in Figure 4.

Figure 5 represents the administrative observation composite scores.

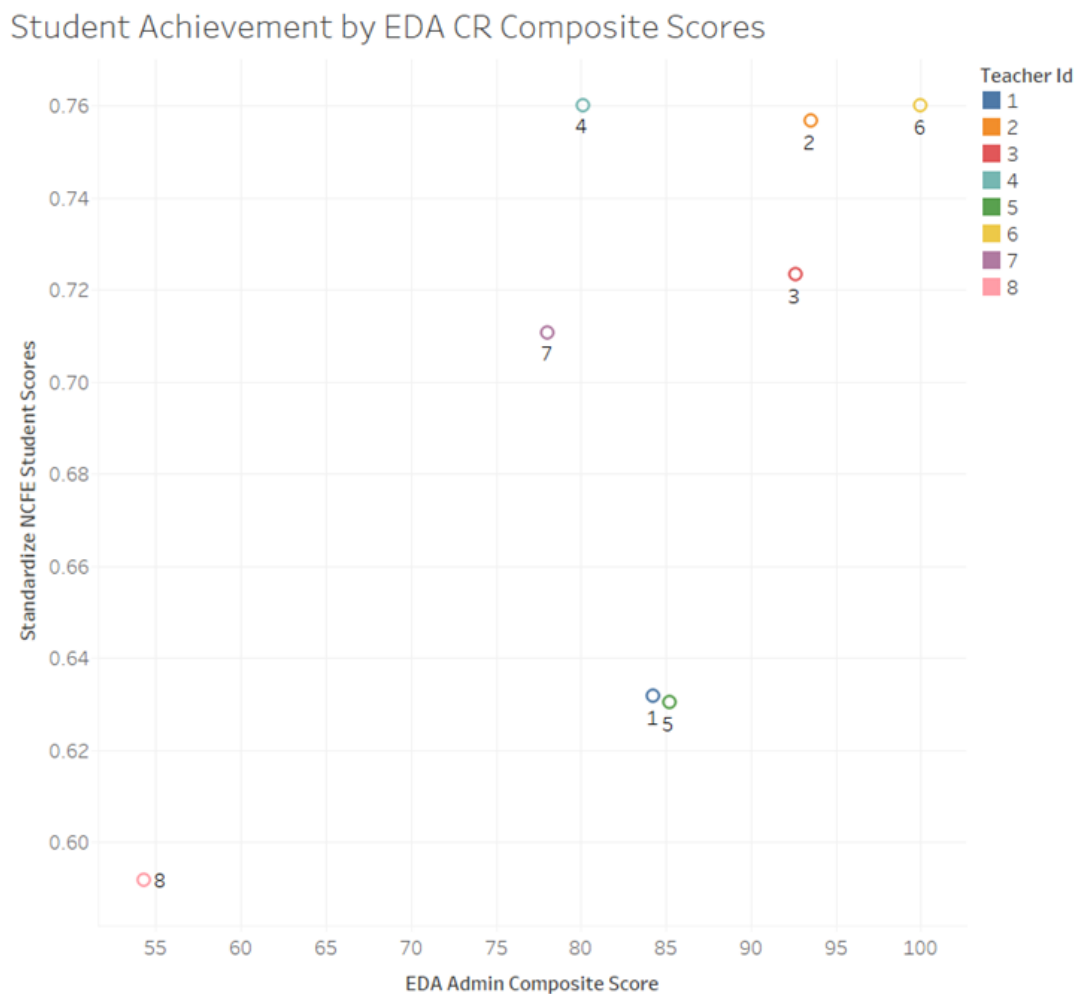
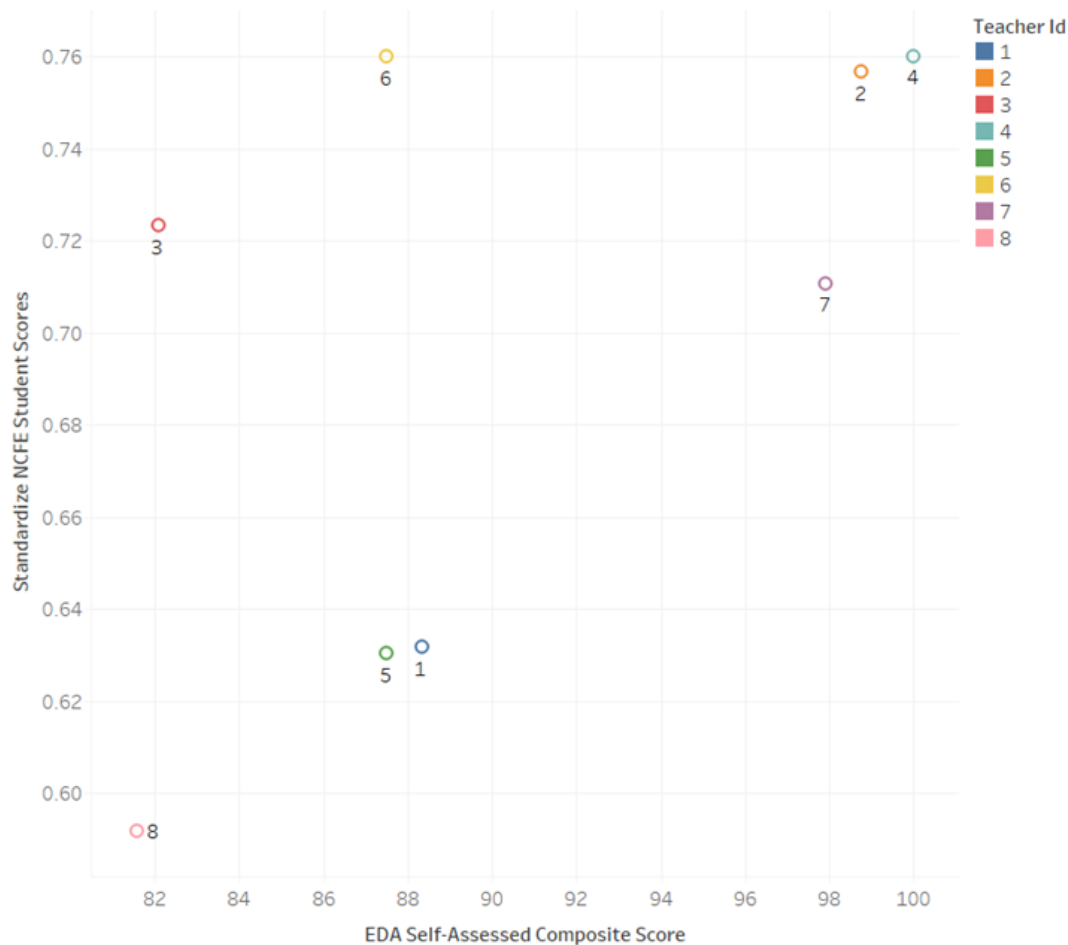
Figure 5*NCFE Scores by EDA Administrator-Observed Scores*

Figure 5 showed a more defined moderate to strong relationship emerging. This was supported by the Pearson correlation statistic from Table 7. Its low sample size likely reflected why the p value was > 0.05 . The relationship was not statistically significant.

Figure 6 represents the teacher self-assessment composite scores.

Figure 6*NCFE Scores by EDA Teacher Self-Assessment Scores*

Student Achievement by EDA CR Composite Scores



Sum of Eda Sa vs. sum of Z Score Mean. Color shows details about Teacher Id. The marks are labeled by Teacher Id. Details are shown for Teacher Id.

There was a moderate to strong correlation in the EDA teacher self-assessments supported by the Pearson correlation statistic from Table 7.

The researcher-observed EDA plot showed a lesser defined relationship. There was little connection between the EDA scores and student achievement. These phenomena could be explained by the lack of familiarity of the rater with the teachers. The scatterplots for EDA administrative and teacher self-assessment appeared to have a

more defined relationship emerging. The administrator worked with the teachers on a regular basis and would have a more comprehensive understanding of the teachers' dispositions than me, because I observed only a single class for each teacher.

The EDA administrative and teacher self-assessment (Figures 5 and 6) display five teachers who scored above the average of 0.7, which indicates higher student success. These teachers (002, 003, 004, 006, and 007) were analyzed by me for disposition trends as higher performing teachers. Using the same figures, three teachers (001, 005, and 008) were analyzed by me for disposition trends as lower performing teachers.

Correlations of Dispositions and Administrative Observations, Researcher Classroom Observations, and Teacher Self-Assessments

Dispositions represented on the EDA were a categorized description of teacher behaviors that affected a positive influence in the professional setting and promoted gains in Pre-K-12 student learning (Almerico et al., 2017).

Table 8 combines the administrative, researcher classroom observations, and teacher self-assessment counts into one table. This table represents the EDA ratings of 0, needs improvement; 1, developing; and 2, meets expectations. When using the EDA with teacher candidates, scores from an initial assessment could be compared with scores from later assessments to determine effectiveness and disposition growth. In this study, I used descriptive statistics with the data for identification of disposition trends and patterns by focusing on the meets expectations variable (Almerico et al., 2017).

Table 8*Disposition Counts by EDA Observations*

#	Disposition	Observation type	0 Needs improvement	1 Developing	2 Meets expectations
1	Effective oral communication skills	Admin	0	2	22
1	Effective oral communication skills	R	2	6	16
1	Effective oral communication skills	Self-Assessment	0	2	22
		Total	2	10	60
2	Effective written communication skills	Admin	0	3	13
2	Effective written communication skills	R	Not Observed	Not Observed	Not Observed
2	Effective written communication skills	Self-Assessment	0	3	13
		Total	0	6	26
3	Professionalism	Admin	0	3	37
3	Professionalism	R	0	9	30
3	Professionalism	Self-Assessment	0	4	36
		Total	0	16	103
4	Positive and enthusiastic attitude	Admin	0	13	11
4	Positive and enthusiastic attitude	R	1	9	11
4	Positive and enthusiastic attitude	Self-Assessment	0	8	17
		Total	1	30	39
					(continued)

#	Disposition	Observation type	0 Needs improvement	1 Developing	2 Meets expectations
5	Preparedness in teaching and learning	Admin	1	6	25
5	Preparedness in teaching and learning	R	6	9	15
5	Preparedness in teaching and learning	Self-Assessment	0	0	32
		Total	7	15	72
6	Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	Admin	0	4	12
6	Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	R	0	11	5
6	Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	Self-Assessment	0	1	15
		Total	0	16	32
7	Collaborates with stakeholders	Admin	0	8	16
7	Collaborates with stakeholders	R	1	10	11
7	Collaborates with stakeholders	Self-Assessment	0	10	14
		Total	1	28	41
8	Self-regulated learner	Admin	2	10	4
8	Self-regulated learner	R	1	12	2
8	Self-regulated learner	Self-Assessment	0	66	10
		Total	3	28	16
					(continued)

#	Disposition	Observation type	0 Needs improvement	1 Developing	2 Meets expectations
9	Social and emotional intelligence	Admin	0	9	15
9	Social and emotional intelligence	R	2	10	11
9	Social and emotional intelligence	Self-Assessment	0	4	20
		Total	2	23	46

From Table 8, when analyzing using only the administrator observation filter, effective oral communication, professionalism, and preparedness in teaching and learning were the highest observed dispositions that met expectations. When analyzing using only the teacher self-assessment filter, effective oral communication, professionalism, preparedness in teaching and learning, and social and emotional intelligence had the highest counts using the meet expectations criterion measure. Overall, the most observed dispositions that met expectations when combining three observation types (researcher classroom observation, administrator observations, teacher self-assessment) were professionalism, preparedness in teaching and learning, and effective oral communication.

Combined EDA Composite Scores

Table 9 was constructed by combining EDA scores for three different types (teacher self-assessment, administrator observations, and researcher observation) for each teacher. For each of the EDA composites, the computation was done by calculating the mean of the nine areas and setting scores to a 0-100 scale. Two thirds of the EDA items were required to be present to derive a score for each teacher; therefore, tier talk observations were not included. The final column calculates the average EDA composite

score for each teacher.

Table 9

Teacher Level Scores by Observation Type

Teacher	Standardized NCFE student scores	EDA R composite score	EDA admin composite score	EDA self- assessment composite score	Avg EDA composite scores
001	0.63	58.65	84.26	88.33	77.08
002	0.76	55.31	93.52	98.75	82.53
003	0.72	86.77	92.59	82.08	87.15
004	0.76	76.56	80.09	100	85.55
005	0.6	73.0	85.19	87.5	81.90
006	0.8	78.4	100	87.5	88.65
007	0.7	63.3	78.06	97.92	79.77
008	0.6	74.5	54.26	81.56	70.10

Higher performing teachers (002, 003, 004, 006, and 007) had a combined EDA administrator composite score of 88.85; and lower performing teachers from the same grouping (001, 005, and 008) had a combined administrator EDA composite score of 74.6. A higher score from the higher performing teachers indicated more dispositions were observed with the higher performing teachers than observed with the lower performing teachers. Higher performing teachers (002, 003, 004, 006, and 007) had a combined EDA self-assessment composite score of 93.25; and lower performing teachers from the same grouping (001, 005, and 008) had a combined teacher self-assessment EDA composite score of 85.8. Teachers were instructed to rate themselves on the EDA teacher self-assessment using an instructional lesson recently taught or remembered prior

to COVID-19. The meets expectation rating indicated the teacher had considerable evidence of understanding and commitment to the disposition being rated. More dispositions that met expectations were rated by the higher performing teachers than the lower performing teachers. The administrator-observed dispositions composite score for higher performing teachers was 88.85, and the teacher self-assessment disposition composite score for higher performing teachers was 93.25. This indicated teachers said they met expectations at a higher rate than the administrator observed the dispositions.

The data established higher performing teachers indicated they met expectations at a higher rate than the administrator observed the dispositions; however, it cannot be concluded which, if any, dispositions impacted student success in the learning environment. The disposition data are further analyzed in the next sections to determine the correlations of observed dispositions and student achievement.

Observational Disposition Data

The disposition data were used to examine the correlations of teacher dispositions and student achievement to answer Research Question 2, “What observed behaviors do effective practicing teachers demonstrate that stimulate student success as measured by NCFE data?” Table 10 exhibits administrative observations on the EDA rating of 2, meets expectations. Five teachers’ standardized NCFE student scores, above 0.7, were grouped as higher performing and three teachers’ standardized NCFE student scores, below 0.7, were grouped as lower performing. The Pearson statistic exhibited a moderate to strong correlation between the administrator-observed EDA scores with student achievement. Descriptive statistics were used with the data for identification of disposition trends and patterns by focusing on the meets expectations variable (Almerico

et al., 2017).

Table 10

Administrator Disposition Counts by Higher and Lower Performing Teachers

Higher performing teachers disposition items	Meets expectations	Lower performing teachers disposition items	Meets expectations
Professionalism	24	Professionalism	13
Preparedness in teaching and learning	16	Preparedness in teaching and learning	9
Effective oral communication skills	14	Effective oral communication skills	8
Collaborates with stakeholders	12	Effective written communication skills	4
Social and emotional intelligence	12	Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	4
Effective written communication skills	9	Collaborates effectively with stakeholders	4
Positive and enthusiastic attitude	9	Social and emotional intelligence	3
Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	8	Positive and enthusiastic attitude	2
Self-regulated learner	4	Self-regulated learner	0

From Table 10, administrative observations identified three top dispositions:

effective oral communication skills, professionalism, and preparedness in teaching and

learning as the most observed dispositions for both the higher performing and lower performing teachers. Administrator observations noted two additional dispositions, collaborates with stakeholders and social and emotional intelligence, with counts that included them in the top five of nine. Counts for the lower performing teachers for these same two dispositions placed in the bottom four of nine, indicating these two dispositions were not observed as much with the lower performing group. The counts for the higher performing group of teachers were higher for every disposition than the counts for the lower performing group.

Written, Focus, and Self-Assessment Data

Written Response Questions

The eight written response questions were created specifically in relation to Research Question 1, “What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by NCFE data” and Research Question 3, “To what extent do observed behaviors correlate between teacher self-professed dispositions and observations of an administrator?” The questions were emailed individually to each teacher. Teachers were asked to return their responses upon completion. I utilized the Dedoose program to code for themes and patterns in teacher responses. The codes used to analyze the written responses were the following nine EDA dispositions: 1, appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity; 2, collaboration with stakeholders; 3, effective oral communication skills; 4, effective written communication skills; 5, positive and enthusiastic attitude; 6, preparedness in teaching and learning; 7, professionalism; 8, self-regulated learner; and 9, social and emotional intelligence. It should be noted that Disposition 3 (effective oral communication skills) was not mentioned in the results for

this section, due to the nature of the activity requested as a written response only.

Disposition 4 (effective written communication skills) was not mentioned in the final results, as the disposition was meant to identify behaviors in using appropriate grammar and word choice, encouraging participatory behaviors of students, and explaining content specific vocabulary for students. For analysis purposes, these dispositions were blacked out.

It was important to note the numbering differences between the EDA dispositions format and the Dedoose program disposition format. To rectify this issue, I referred to the name of the disposition when identifying trends and patterns.

After the written response questions were coded for themes and patterns using the Dedoose program, I analyzed the data by teacher.

Figure 7*Code Application–Written Response*

Media	Codes									Totals
	Appreciation of an value of cultural	Collaborates effectively with	Effective Oral Communication Skills	Effective Written Communication	Positive and Enthusiastic Attitude	Preparedness in teaching and	Professionalism	Self-regulated Learner behaviors/	Social and emotional intelligence to	
800.pdf	10	3			3	4	2	10	10	42
700.pdf	1	1			3		5	1	1	12
600.pdf	2	3			5		2		3	15
500.pdf		2			4	2		3	3	14
400.pdf	2				3	1			1	7
300.pdf	12	3			8	2	3		9	37
200.pdf	5				2			2		9
100.pdf	12	4			9	8	5	2	9	49
Totals	44	16			37	17	17	18	36	

Note. Dedoose (n.d).

Appreciation of and value for cultural diversity, positive and enthusiastic attitude, and social and emotional intelligence were coded from the Dedoose program with most applications or counts.

All eight teachers were grouped as higher or lower performing depending on a score of .07 and above for higher performing and below a score of .07 for lower performing. The dispositions were then displayed from highest count to lowest count by

these two groupings.

Table 11

Written Response Comparison of Higher and Lower Performing Teachers

Higher performing teachers disposition items	Meets expectations	Lower performing teachers disposition items	Meets expectations
Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	22	Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	22
Positive and enthusiastic attitude	21	Social and emotional intelligence	22
Social and emotional intelligence	14	Positive and enthusiastic attitude	16
Professionalism	10	Self-regulated learner	15
Collaborates with stakeholders	7	Preparedness in teaching and learning	14
Self-regulated learner	3	Collaborates effectively with stakeholders	9
Preparedness in teaching and learning	3	Professionalism	7

The higher and lower performing groups identified the same three dispositions above their respective mean. These dispositions were appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity, positive and enthusiastic attitude, and social and emotional intelligence. The higher and lower performing teachers both wrote about appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity as the top count disposition

for both groups. The teacher participants incorporated responses about a safe and sufficient learning environment which included embracing diversity. This disposition is encouraged throughout the curriculum and the district vision, mission, and beliefs in the district where the research was conducted.

The following summaries of the responses found in Tables 12-19 for each question were provided in the order the questions were written. All teacher participant responses were considered when providing evidence of the written disposition within the questions.

Question 1: What have you experienced in education that has challenged your beliefs and values in the learning environment? Answers to this question revealed that Disposition 8 (self-regulated learner) was mentioned seven times.

Table 12

Question 1 Code Application

Disposition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
Code application	3	2	0	1	3	4	1	7	5	26

Teachers 001, 002, and 008 mentioned several challenges they found related to issues of time, self-reflection, and interest in being self-regulated learners. Teacher 001 wrote, “There is a ton of research to support the need for recess and the importance of brain breaks, but most educators resist the idea.” Teacher 002 wrote, “I used to think that teaching was just showing up and making sure that kids understood the content. Now, we seem to be responsible for the whole student-content and social emotional development.” Teacher 008 wrote,

One must get into the profession and be able to reflect back; being able to accept

that though you tried to do your best at the time and applied all of your skill and knowledge, you did not fail your former students, but have become a better teacher for your current students.

Although challenging their beliefs and values, these teachers were able to recognize their own weaknesses and teaching styles as evidenced in their responses indicating a strong awareness of Disposition 8 (self-regulated learner). Disposition 7 (professionalism) was not indicated by the teachers as a challenge they faced relating to changing their beliefs and values in the learning environment.

Question 2: What situations from your experiences have influenced or affected your beliefs and values? Responses to this question identified Disposition 5 (positive and enthusiastic attitude) and Disposition 7 (professionalism) to be the most influential.

Table 13

Question 2 Code Application

Disposition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
Code application	1	0	0	1	3	1	3	1	2	12

Four of the eight teachers indicated positive teacher attitudes, student relationships, and ethical and honest behaviors as top priorities that influenced or affected their beliefs and values. Teacher 006 wrote, “I have been most influenced by the relationships formed with my students. They have to know that I am for them.” Teacher 007 wrote, “Ethical and honest behavior were top priorities in my household growing up. I believe in finding the good, doing your best, honoring your history, speaking the truth, and using common sense.” These teachers indicated the importance of maintaining a

professional boundary of ethical standards of practice and demonstrating positive affect with students in building relationships.

Question 3: What behaviors do you exhibit that contribute to your students' success, and how is that evidenced in your teaching? Disposition 5 (positive and enthusiastic attitude) was mentioned nine times as a behavior teachers felt they exhibited the most that contributed to their students' success.

Table 14

Question 3 Code Application

Disposition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
Code application	5	4	0	1	9	3	2	4	3	31

Six of the eight teachers wrote of demonstrating Disposition 5 (positive and enthusiastic attitude). They mentioned behaviors such as smiling, using positive expressions and tones, being welcoming and kind, and showing encouragement that all their students could be successful. Teacher 007 wrote,

I smile every day. It sounds so simple, but it really makes a difference. I actually like teaching and being with my students, so showing them that with the expressions and tone I use in the classroom makes a difference.

This teacher's response demonstrated the appropriate positive affect with students, as evidenced by verbal and nonverbal cues.

Question 4: What enables students to succeed? Teachers mentioned Disposition 1 (appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity) nine times. All teachers mentioned the following teacher behaviors they believed enabled students to succeed: teaching strategies, believing in their students, showing passion for teaching,

and having students trust in them. The majority indicated that they must create a safe and sufficient learning environment which also included embracing diversity.

Table 15

Question 4 Code Application

Disposition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
Code application	9	3	0	1	6	0	2	0	3	24

Teachers 002 and 008 wrote that meeting all their students' needs, creating an environment where all students felt comfortable asking questions, and letting students know they were cared for contributed to a positive learning environment. Teacher 008 wrote,

A least restrictive environment-a safe place where students feel comfortable asking questions and being wrong, knowing that it is ok as long as they work to understand why they were wrong and caring that every student has needs in different ways.

Teachers did not mention being prepared in their teaching and learning or being self-regulated learners as contributors to student success.

Question 5: In your opinion, what does an excellent teacher look like?

Responses to this question identified Disposition 9 (social and emotional intelligence) eight times.

Table 16*Question 5 Code Application*

Disposition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
Code application	4	2	0	1	6	6	2	3	8	32

Disposition 9 (social and emotional intelligence) spoke of demonstrating perseverance and resilience (grit) while also demonstrating sensitivity to feelings of others. All eight teachers indicated the importance of being student centered and making connections between students' real lives with the content and skills they were required to teach. They also mentioned how excellent teachers could handle difficult situations on a case-by-case basis and remember at the end of the day that the student came first.

Teacher 008 wrote,

I would say that an excellent teacher is one that actively strives to help students to better their lives, is able to appreciate wins and not dwell on losses, reflects on their practices to be a better practitioner, and believes that each and every student has the ability to grow and make the world better.

Question 6: Why is teaching an important profession, and where does it rank in importance compared to other professionals? Dispositions 5 (positive and enthusiastic attitude) and 9 (social and emotional intelligence) were mentioned four times.

Table 17*Question 6 Code Application*

Disposition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
Code application	3	1	0	1	4	1	3	0	4	17

Teachers noted that they could positively or negatively impact students in the learning environment. Several considered teaching as the number one profession in the world, and that teachers could spark a student's interest in what they might study or become in the future. Teacher 001 wrote,

Over the course of a thirty-year career, a teacher will positively or negatively impact thousands of children. Futures can be shaped by what we do in the classroom. We have the opportunity to shape children's knowledge, character, and confidence. That's pretty darn important.

Several times both dispositions were combined in one or two sentences to explain this question.

Question 7: In what ways do you know that teachers believe that all students can learn? Disposition 1 (appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity) was mentioned two times.

Table 18*Question 7 Code Application*

Disposition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
Code application	2	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	6

Teacher 001 wrote, "When teachers have high expectations for all students,

regardless of their address, disability, or background, I know they believe all students can learn.” Teacher 003 wrote,

First of all sadly, not all teachers believe that all students can learn. But for those of us that do, you can tell by how they treat students. What type of work and with how much rigor and what they expect as a product from the student.

These responses were recognized through their reflection of the following behaviors/ beliefs: demonstrated high expectations for all students regardless of their demographics or cultures, analyzed student performances and accommodated their instruction for learning, taught students to have a good work ethic and motivated those who did not, met students where they were, and did not give up on those who struggled.

Question 8: What beliefs about students and teaching do you hold that contribute to your students’ success? This question was coded 10 times for Disposition 1 (appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity).

Table 19

Question 8 Code Application

Disposition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
Code application	10	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	13

Teacher 001 wrote,

I believe in the value and worth of each child, regardless of country of origin, native language, religion, or race. That has made me an effective teacher of all students, not just those who look like me or share my middle-class background.

Asking teachers written questions about their beliefs and values was an important part of this study. This allowed and challenged the teachers to personalize and

acknowledge in writing their perceptions about their own dispositions.

Written Response Summary

To display which dispositions were coded the most from the written responses, Table 20 summarizes the data from the eight questions.

Table 20

Total Dispositions Code Applications in Written Responses

Disposition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Written response totals	37	12	0	8	32	16	13	15	28

To support answering Research Question 3, “To what extent do observed behaviors correlate between teacher self-professed dispositions and observations of an administrator,” the following dispositions were coded from the Dedoose program with most applications: appreciation of and value for cultural diversity, positive and enthusiastic attitude, and social and emotional intelligence. I used a focus group to further investigate the attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of the teachers.

Focus Group Data

Teachers received an email regarding a date and time for all to be present for a focus group. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus group was held remotely using the Google Meet platform approved by the studied district. Embedded within the platform was the option to record meetings. This proved to be an efficient way to capture the discussion during the focus group session. The teachers were told the format involved an open discussion where everyone had the opportunity to participate. I played the role of facilitator, to keep the format open and spontaneous, in order to gather a number of different ideas and opinions in the time allotted. I created a set of predetermined

questions based on teacher feedback from the written response questions. The teachers were reminded the discussion would be free flowing with the opportunity for one person's comment to stimulate and influence another. It was important to note that I asked questions about teacher experiences and thoughts pre-COVID-19. The teachers were told they may find themselves changing their thoughts and opinions during the discussion and that was acceptable. I told the teachers the focus group discussion would be recorded but not shared with anyone other than me.

I opened the focus group meeting with the following purpose statement: "The purpose of this focus group is to gain additional evidence of participants' understanding and commitment to specific dispositions within this study." Focus group ground rules were shared, and I asked each question aloud. Each question was aligned specifically to the dispositions in the EDA (Appendix G).

The focus group meeting was transcribed and coded for themes and patterns using the Dedoose program. The left side of Figure 8 depicts the number of times each teacher spoke and was given credit for mentioning dispositions. The right side of the chart indicates the number of times teachers shared in the discussion describing a specific disposition.

Figure 8*Code Application–Focus Group*

Media	Codes																	
	001	002	003	004	005	006	007	008	Appreciation of an valuecultural and	Collaborates effectively with	Effective oral communication	Effective written communication	Positive and enthusiastic attitude	Preparedness in teaching and	Profes sionalism	Self-regulated learner behaviors/	Social and emotional intelligence to	Totals
008-SMS Focus Group Meeting								4		2	1				1			8
007-SMS Focus Group Meeting							14		2		2	3	3	4	1		3	32
006-SMS Focus Group Meeting						15				3	3	1	1	1	4	2	1	31
005-SMS Focus Group Meeting					13				1	1	2	4	2	3	1	2	2	31
004-SMS Focus Group Meeting				15					1	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	1	35
003-SMS Focus Group Meeting			16						4	2	2	2	1		4	1	1	33
002-SMS Focus Group Meeting		18							2	4	1	1	3	3	6	1	2	41
001-SMS Focus Group Meeting	6								1		1	2	1	1			1	13
Totals	6	18	16	15	13	15	14	4	11	15	15	15	13	15	20	8	11	

Note. Dedoose (n.d).

Each of the eight teachers participating in the focus group meeting were asked to answer the questions asked by me. Overall, the dispositions that identified from the focus group questions were professionalism, collaborates with stakeholders, effective oral communication, and preparedness for teaching and learning.

Table 21 combines the number of times dispositions from the focus group were shared from Figure 7 and grouped by higher and lower performing teachers as identified as scoring above or below 0.7.

Table 21*Focus Group Comparison of Higher and Lower Performing Teachers*

Higher performing teachers disposition items	Meets expectations	Lower performing teachers disposition items	Meets expectations
Professionalism	18	Effective written communication skills	6
Collaborates with stakeholders	12	Effective oral communication skills	4
Effective oral communication skills	11	Preparedness in teaching and learning	4
Preparedness in teaching and learning	11	Positive and enthusiastic attitude	3
Positive and enthusiastic attitude	10	Social and emotional intelligence	3
Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	9	Collaborates effectively with stakeholders	3
Effective written communication skills	9	Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	2
Social and emotional intelligence	8	Professionalism	2
Self-regulated learner	6	Self-regulated learner	2

As seen in Table 21, the focus group identified four top dispositions from the higher performing group to be professionalism, collaborates with stakeholders, effective

oral communication skills, preparedness in teaching and learning. From the lower performing teachers, effective written communication skills emerged with the highest count. Effective oral communication skills and preparedness in teaching and learning were both listed in the top three from both groups.

The disposition counts trend for the higher performing group of teachers was higher for every disposition than the counts for the lower performing group. This led me to conclude that the higher performing group discussed more dispositions.

When comparing administrator disposition counts (Table 10) with focus group counts (Table 21) for the higher performing teachers, four of the top five were the same. These were professionalism, preparedness in teaching and learning, effective oral communication skills, and collaborates with stakeholders. The fifth disposition from the administrator count was social and emotional intelligence, and the fifth disposition from the focus group was positive and enthusiastic attitude.

I could not measure the extent teacher self-professed dispositions correlated with observations of an administrator. A pattern of higher performing teachers discussing more dispositions than lower performing teachers (Table 21) could be established and were observed by the administrator as displaying more dispositions (Table 10).

Self-Assessment Data

Following the researcher and administrative observations, each teacher was asked to use the same EDA to complete a self-assessment. Each teacher received their own copy of the EDA and completed it based on the most recent instructional lesson presented to their students, pre-COVID-19.

Table 22 displays the total self-assessment dispositions counts identified on the

EDA of the higher performing teachers in descending order (Teachers 002, 003, 004, 006, and 007) and the lower performing teachers in descending order (Teachers 001, 005, and 008). Professionalism, preparedness in teaching and learning, effective oral communication skills, and social and emotional intelligence were the top four dispositions for both groupings.

Table 22

Self-Assessment Disposition Counts of Higher and Lower Performing Teachers

Higher performing teachers disposition items	Meets expectations	Lower performing teachers disposition items	Meets expectations
Professionalism	23	Professionalism	13
Preparedness in teaching and learning	20	Preparedness in teaching and learning	12
Effective oral communication skills	14	Effective oral communication skills	8
Social and emotional intelligence	13	Social and emotional intelligence	7
Collaborates with stakeholders	11	Positive and enthusiastic attitude	7
Positive and enthusiastic attitude	10	Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	5
Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	10	Effective written communication skills	4
Effective written communication skills	9	Collaborates effectively with stakeholders	3
Self-regulated learner	8	Self-regulated learner	2

The three self-professed teacher behaviors (written, focus, and self-assessment) had some dispositions that showed up; however, there were no significant trends. Upon focusing on the higher performing teachers, social and emotional intelligence was evidenced in the written and self-assessment responses. Professionalism and collaborates with stakeholders were evidenced in the focus and self-assessment responses. Focusing on the lower performing teachers, social and emotional intelligence and positive and enthusiastic attitude was evidenced in the written and self-assessment. The focus group counts for the lower performing teachers was low.

Table 23 displays the total self-assessment dispositions counts and the administrator-observed dispositions identified on the EDA of the higher performing teachers in descending order (Teachers 002, 003, 004, 006, and 007).

Table 23

Self-Assessed Disposition Count Correlation with Administrator Observations of Higher Performing Teachers

Teacher self-assessment disposition	Meets expectations	Administrator-observed disposition	Meets expectation
Professionalism	23	Professionalism	24
Preparedness in teaching and learning	20	Preparedness in teaching and learning	16
Effective oral communication skills	14	Effective oral communication skills	14
Social and emotional intelligence	13	Collaborates with stakeholders	12
Collaborates effectively with stakeholders	11	Social and emotional intelligence	12
Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	10	Effective written communication skills	9
Positive and enthusiastic attitude	10	Positive and enthusiastic attitude	9
Effective written communication skills	9	Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	8
Self-regulated learner	8	Self-regulated learner	4

Professionalism, preparedness in teaching and learning, and effective oral communication skills emerged as the higher performing teachers' top three self-professed

dispositions which correlated with the top three observations of the administrator as indicated below by a summary of the meets expectations criteria of measurement for the top three dispositions. It provided additional information of what I found from the coding of the session.

Indicators at the meets expectations level for oral communication as indicated by Almerico et al. (2017) were

- Demonstrates strong professional oral communication skills as evidenced by using appropriate language, grammar, and word choice for the learning environment.
- Varies oral communication as evidenced by encouraging participatory behaviors.
- Communicates at an age-appropriate level as evidenced by explaining content specific vocabulary. (p.18)

Effective oral communication was one of the top three dispositions teachers indicated as demonstrating considerable evidence of understanding and commitment. This correlated with a top observation by the administrator.

Indicators at the meets expectations level for professionalism as indicated by Almerico et al. (2017) were

- Responds promptly to communications and submits all assignments.
- Consistently exhibits punctuality and attendance.
- Maintains professional boundaries of ethical standards of practice.
- Keeps inappropriate personal life issues out of the classroom/workplace.

- Functions as a collaborative group member as evidenced by high levels of participation towards productive outcomes. (p.19)

Professionalism was one of the top three dispositions teachers indicated as demonstrating considerable evidence of understanding and commitment. It correlated with a top observation by the administrator.

Indicators at the meets expectations level for preparedness in teaching and learning as indicated by Almerico et al. (2017) were

- Accepts constructive feedback as evidenced by implementation of feedback as needed.
- Learns and adjusts from experience and reflection as evidenced by improvements in performance.
- Comes to class planned and with all needed materials.
- Alters lessons in progress when needed as evidenced by ability to change plan mid-lesson to overcome the deficits. (p. 20)

Preparedness in teaching and learning was one of the top three dispositions teachers indicated as demonstrating considerable evidence of understanding and commitment. It correlated with a top observation by the administrator.

I found a pattern existed among the top three dispositions from the higher performing teachers' EDA self-assessments (effective oral communication, professionalism, and preparedness for teaching and learning) and EDA administrator observation (effective oral communication, professionalism, and preparedness for teaching and learning).

Self-Professed Composite Correlations Between EDA Administrator Teacher Behavior Counts

To determine if a relationship existed between the self-professed teacher behaviors (written, focus, and self-assessment), the three were combined into one variable and tested to determine whether there was a correlation between this composite and the EDA administrator counts. The mean of the written, focus groups, and self-assessments for each teacher was created into a new variable to represent self-professed behaviors.

Lower Performing Teachers Professed Correlations

Figure 9 displays the Pearson correlation for lower performing teachers between the self-professed and EDA administrator teacher behavior counts.

Figure 9

The Pearson Correlation for Lower Performing Teachers

		Professed Dispositions: Average of Written, Focus Group, and Self- Assessments	Administrator Disposition Counts
Professed Dispositions: Average of Written, Focus Group, and Self- Assessments	Pearson Correlation	1	-.077
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.844
	N	9	9
AdministratorDisposition Counts	Pearson Correlation	-.077	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.844	
	N	9	9

For lower performing teachers, there was no correlation between the self-professed and EDA administrator teacher behavior counts (-0.077).

Figure 10 displays the Pearson correlation for higher performing teachers between the self-professed and EDA administrator teacher behavior counts.

Figure 10

The Pearson Correlation for Higher Performing Teachers

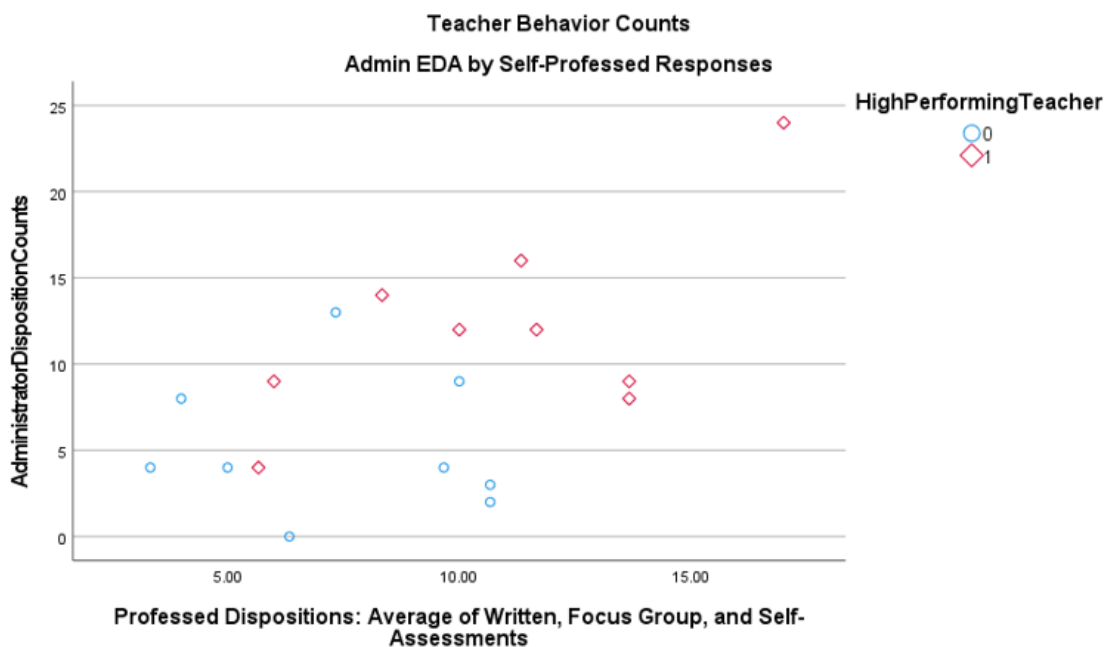
		Professed Dispositions: Average of Written, Focus Group, and Self- Assessments	Administrator Disposition Counts
Professed Dispositions: Average of Written, Focus Group, and Self- Assessments	Pearson Correlation	1	.625
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.072
	N	9	9
AdministratorDisposition Counts	Pearson Correlation	.625	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.072	
	N	9	9

For higher performing teachers, there was a moderate, positive correlation (0.625).

In the high performing teacher field, Figure 11 displays the 0s as lower performing teachers and the 1s as the higher performing teachers.

Figure 11

Administrator EDA by Self-Professed Responses



The scatterplot represents the correlation between the composite counts of written, focus group, and self-assessments for each teacher and the EDA administrator counts.

There was not a correlation between the composite professed and EDA administrator-observed behaviors for lower performing teachers, but there was a moderate, positive correlation for higher performing teachers. I concluded that a relationship did exist between higher performing teacher composite self-professed (written, focus, and self-assessment) dispositions and administrator observations, and a more defined moderate to strong relationship was found between EDA administrator observations and student achievement. This moderate, positive correlation of the higher performing teacher composite self-professed dispositions with the EDA administrator observations was consistent with the correlations of the EDA administrator observations

moderate to strong correlation with student achievement. To determine a stronger relationship, further research involving positioning of student achievement data with individual teacher behavior data at the disposition level could be developed.

Table 24 displays the raw data combining the counts for lower and higher performing teachers of the self-professed (written, focus, and self-assessment) dispositions.

Table 24

Self-Professed (Written, Focus, Self-assessment) Lower and Higher

Lower performing	Meets	Higher performing	Meets
Positive and enthusiastic attitude	32	Professionalism	51
Social and emotional intelligence	32	Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	41
Preparedness in teaching and learning	30	Positive and enthusiastic attitude	41
Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity	29	Social and emotional intelligence	35
Professionalism	22	Preparedness in teaching and learning	34
Self-regulated learner	19	Collaborates with stakeholders	30
Collaborates with stakeholders	15	Effective oral communication skills	25
Effective oral communication skills	12	Effective written communication skills	18
Effective written communication skills	10	Self-regulated learner	17

The data now suggest an answer to Research Question 1, “What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by NCFE data?” The dispositions from the higher performing teachers of the self-professed (written, focus, and self-assessment) are professionalism, appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity, positive and enthusiastic attitude, social and emotional intelligence, and preparedness in teaching and learning for the higher performing teachers.

Summary of Research Questions

Research Question 1: What Professional Dispositions Impact Student Success in the Learning Environment as Measured by NCFE Data?

To Examine the correlation between the NCFE student scores and the three separate observation types of EDA scores, the Pearson correlation was computed for each relationship. There was no correlation (0.10) between the researcher-observed EDA score and student achievement. The Pearson statistic exhibited a moderate to strong correlation between the administrator-observed and self-assessed EDA scores and student achievement. It was important to note that these correlations were not statistically significant (p value > 0.05). These results might provide anecdotal evidence that the teacher dispositions had a positive relationship with student achievement and impacted student success in the learning environment. However, due to the limited sample size for this study, further research would need to be conducted to provide more concrete evidence.

The scatterplots for EDA administrative observations and self-assessments appeared to have a more defined relationship. The administrator worked with the teachers

on a regular basis and would have a more comprehensive understanding of the teachers' dispositions than me, because I observed only a single class for each teacher. The scatterplot for the EDA administrator composite represented five teachers (002, 003, 004, 006, and 007) having student achievement scores above 0.7, indicating higher student success. Three teachers (001, 005, and 008) had scores below 0.7, indicating lower student success. When comparing the five higher performing teachers to the three lower performing teachers, the higher performing teachers' composite score for the EDA administrator composite was 88.85 and the lower performing teachers was 74.6. More dispositions were observed with the higher performing group.

The scatterplot for the EDA self-assessment also reflected a higher composite score of 93.25 for the five higher performing teachers. The lower performing teachers' composite score was 85.80. A higher score from the higher performing teachers indicated they rated themselves as demonstrating more evidence and understanding and commitment to the dispositions. Likewise, the lower performing teachers did not rate themselves as high in relation to demonstrating more evidence and understanding and commitment to the dispositions.

The EDA administrator composite score for the higher performing teachers was 88.85 and the EDA self-assessment composite for the same group was 93.25. This indicated teachers stated they met expectations at a higher rate than the administrator observed the dispositions. This led me to conclude there may be a disconnect in the relationship between the professional dispositions that might have an impact on the success of students in school, as these dispositions the practicing teachers demonstrated had only a moderate to strong correlation to the dispositions teachers stated they

practiced.

Although the data indicated higher performing teachers said they met expectations at a higher rate than the administrator observed the dispositions, it could not be concluded which, if any, dispositions impacted student success in the learning environment. The written responses and focus group questions determined which dispositions impacted student success.

Research Question 2: What Observed Behaviors Do Effective Practicing Teachers Demonstrate That Stimulate Student Success as Measured by NCFE Data?

Higher Performing teachers had a combined EDA administrator composite score of 88.85, and the lower performing group of teachers had a combined composite score of 74.6. A higher score from the higher performing group indicated more dispositions were observed than from the lower performing group.

When analyzing from the teachers' own perspectives using the filter of meets expectations from the EDA self-assessment, the higher performing group had a combined score of 93.25, and the lower performing group had a score of 85.8. More dispositions that met expectations were indicated from the higher performing group.

The administrator-observed disposition composite score for higher performing teachers was 88.85, and the self-assessment disposition composite score for higher performing teachers was 93.25. This indicated practicing teachers who had higher student achievement scores rated demonstrating and/or practicing dispositions at a higher rate than the administrator observed.

To determine what observed behaviors effective practicing teachers demonstrated that stimulated student success, the five higher performing teachers were selected to

determine if trends emerged from what the teachers stated in the self-assessment. I considered the higher performing teachers' NCFE student scores in relation to the EDA administrator observations. The Pearson correlation was moderate to strong between the administrator-observed EDA and student achievement.

The top three dispositions of higher performing teachers and the top three dispositions of the lower performing teachers were the same from the administrator EDA disposition counts. These dispositions were professionalism, preparedness in teaching and learning, and effective oral communication skills. When the dispositions were displayed from the highest to the lowest, the counts for the higher performing group of teachers were higher than the counts for the lower performing group for every disposition. The data established the presence of more dispositions with higher performing teachers supported student success.

As measured by combining the most coded dispositions from the administrator observations of the five higher performing teachers, I found the following dispositions emerged as impacting student success: professionalism, preparedness in teaching and learning, and effective oral communication skills.

Research Question 3: To What Extent Do Observed Behaviors Correlate Between Teacher Self-Professed Dispositions and Observations of an Administrator?

To understand what dispositions correlated with administrator observations, I reviewed the EDA data through the lens of the five higher performing teachers (002, 003, 004, 006, and 007) using the meet expectations criterion of measurement from the self-assessment. A more defined relationship appeared to emerge between the EDA administrator observations and teacher self-assessments. The higher performing teachers'

EDA self-assessment and EDA administrator's observation identified the following same three top dispositions: effective oral communication, professionalism, and preparedness for teaching and learning.

I led a focus group to further investigate the attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of the teachers. The meeting was transcribed and coded for themes and patterns using the Dedoose program. For each of the nine dispositions, I coded more dispositions from the higher performing group. When comparing the focus group results of higher and lower performing teachers, the data indicated higher performing teachers discussed dispositions being studied more than the lower performing teachers.

The administrator-observed dispositions composite score for higher performing teachers was 88.85, and the self-assessment disposition composite score for higher performing teachers was 93.25. Although the data could not determine statistically the extent to which dispositions practicing teachers demonstrated correlated with the ones they stated they practiced, these data did provide insight. The extent to which all teacher self-professed dispositions correlated with observations of an administrator proved to be minimal. This indicated a potential need for further research and larger sample sizes.

I concluded that a moderate, positive correlation (.625) did exist between higher performing teachers' composite self-professed (written, focus, and self-assessment) disposition counts and administrator observation disposition counts. This correlation was consistent with the more defined moderate to strong relationship found between EDA administrator observations and student achievement. To determine a stronger relationship, further research would be needed.

Demographic Data for Phenomenological Research

I focused on what each teacher had in common with the phenomenon of professional dispositions. Within the requested demographic questions, I asked two questions to gain an understanding of each teacher's lived and shared experiences in the learning environment (Appendix H): (a) What have you experienced in education that has challenged your beliefs and values in the learning environment; and (b) What situations from your experiences have influenced or affected your beliefs and values? I coded for patterns and commonalities of lived experiences to identify the professional dispositions of the group of teachers.

Figure 12 represents the experiences each teacher wrote in response to Demographic Information Question 1, "What have you experienced in education that has challenged your beliefs and values in the learning environment?"

Figure 12*Experiences That Changed Beliefs and Values-Code Application*

Media	Codes								Totals
	Appreciation of and value for	Collaborates with stakeholders	Oral Communication	Positive Attitude	Preparedness in teaching and	Professionalism	Self-regulated learner	Social and emotional intelligence	
008					2		1		3
007	1				2			1	4
006					1				1
005	2							2	4
004	1				1		1		3
003					1			1	2
002	1				1		1	2	5
001					4				4
Totals	5				12		3	6	

Note. Dedoose (n.d).

All eight teachers provided written responses to the demographic questions.

Overall, the disposition that was identified from the demographic data was preparedness in teaching and learning.

Figure 13 represents the experiences each teacher wrote in response to Demographic Information Question 2, “What situations from your experiences have influenced or affected your beliefs and values?”

Figure 13

Situations From Experiences That Influenced or Affected Beliefs and Values – Code Application

Media	Codes	Appreciation of and value for	Collaborates with stakeholders	Oral Communication	Positive Attitude	Preparedness in Teaching and	Professionalism	Self-regulated learner	Social and emotional intelligence	Written Communication	Totals
008			1		3	2	1		1		8
007		2			1		2		1		6
006		1			1						2
005		1				1	3				5
004		1				1					2
003			1		1						2
002		2	1	1		2			1	1	8
001		2									2
Totals		9	3	1	6	6	6		3	1	

Note. Dedoose (n.d.).

In Figure 13, the commonality of situations from experiences that influenced or affected beliefs and values was embedded in the appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity disposition.

Summary

EDA scores from dispositions were compared to final exams data in the area of student achievement. A Pearson correlation was analyzed to determine if a relationship

existed between dispositions and student achievement. The analysis was conducted to determine the strength of the relationship between the variables. No significant correlation was found between the researcher-observed EDA scores and student achievement; however, a moderate to strong correlation appeared between the administrator-observed and self-assessed EDA scores with student achievement. It was important to note that all three of these correlations were not statistically significant (p value > 0.05). Eight teachers were not sufficient to show statistical significance, and further research may be needed.

Composites of administrator and self-assessment observation calculations indicated more dispositions were observed with higher performing teachers than observed in lower performing teachers. The self-assessment calculations of higher performing teachers indicated teachers said they met expectations at a higher rate than the administrator observed the dispositions.

Disposition data counts that compared higher performing teachers with lower performing teachers showed the counts for higher performing teachers to be higher for every disposition than the counts for the lower performing group. This indicated the presence of more dispositions did support student success. I found that both the higher performing teacher self-assessment and the EDA administrator observation identified effective oral communication skills, professionalism, and preparedness in teaching and learning as the top dispositions. The extent that teacher self-professed dispositions correlated with observations of an administrator proved to be minimal.

The qualitative data, written response questions, and a focus group session presented several trends. I used descriptive statistics to describe disposition trends that

emerged from observations, teacher self-assessments, written responses, and focus group questions. Trending throughout these data were professionalism, preparedness in teaching and learning, and effective oral communication skills.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Statement of the Problem

Currently practicing teachers were not demonstrating professional dispositions correlated with their knowledge and skills which impacted a successful learning environment regardless of low-performing school status. “Students in the United States are continuing to underperform academically” (Schmid, 2018, p. 1). This study attempted to distinguish if there was a disconnect in the relationship between professional teacher dispositions that might have a profound impact on the success or lack of success of students in school.

This chapter provides a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations following the analysis of the data collected from the EDA observations, written response questions, and focus group meeting reported in Chapter 4. This chapter is organized into the following sections: summary of findings, connections to literature, theoretical framework, implications and recommendations, limitations of the study, and conclusions.

Bandura’s (1989) SCT provided a framework for how dispositions were shaped and controlled by environmental influences, the common interactions of the person, and the behaviors they exhibited as educators in relation to one’s self-efficacy. This concept considered the distinctive ways in which a person acquired and maintained their behaviors while also reflecting on their social environment in relation to the performance of the behaviors (Bandura, 1989). Bandura’s (1989) theory suggested how people controlled their behaviors and were reinforced by their dispositions through observational learning, imitation, and modeling.

Three research questions were considered to determine if dispositions practicing teachers demonstrated correlated with the dispositions they stated they practiced and if these dispositions supported student success. The three research questions which guided this study were

1. What professional dispositions impact student success in the learning environment as measured by NCFE data?
2. What observed behaviors do effective practicing teachers demonstrate that stimulate student success as measured by NCFE data?
3. To what extent do observed behaviors correlate between teacher self-professed dispositions and observations of an administrator?

The participants were eight secondary school teachers from a large district in central North Carolina. Observational data by me and an administrator, teacher self-assessment data, participant written responses to specific questions, focus group participation, and student achievement data were used to examine the correlations of teacher dispositions and student achievement. The tool used to conduct the observations and self-assessments was the EDA. The student achievement data were based on the NCFE or final course grade results for each teacher. Up to 3 consecutive academic years were averaged for each teacher to obtain a more holistic measure of teacher effectiveness on student achievement. Due to varying subjects and grades taught among the studied teachers, the NCFE or final course grade scores were normalized to allow for a standard scale to be applied to the analysis. The Pearson correlation was utilized in order to provide a more evolved and continuous data identification to determine if there was a correlation among the EDA and NCFE data. The Pearson correlation was also utilized to

determine if there was a relationship among the self-professed dispositions (written, focus, and EDA self-assessment) and NCFE data.

Summary of Findings

The focus of this study was to distinguish if there was a disconnect in the relationship between professional teacher dispositions that might have a profound impact on the success or lack of success of students in school. The results presented in Chapter 4 did not show a significant correlation between the researcher-observed EDA scores and student achievement; however, the Pearson statistic exhibited a moderate to strong correlation between the administrator-observed and self-assessed EDA scores with student achievement. It was important to note that these correlations were not statistically significant (p value > 0.05). The qualitative data collected from written response questions, teacher self-assessments, and the teacher focus group identified which dispositions correlated with observations through the lens of the five identified higher performing teachers. The EDA administrative observations and EDA teacher self-assessments appeared to have a more defined relationship emerging. Dispositions trending throughout these data were professionalism, effective oral communication skills, and preparedness in teaching and learning. When analyzing the higher performing teachers with the lower performing teachers from the EDA administrative disposition counts, collaborating effectively with stakeholders was a disposition that appeared to diverge in relationship between higher and lower performing teachers. It was found in the top five of higher performing teachers and the bottom five of lower performing teachers.

Three research questions were used to determine if a correlation existed between teacher dispositions and student achievement. My observations, administrator

observations, and student NCFE scores were used to determine the correlation between the variables. Teacher EDA teacher self-assessments, written response questions, and focus group responses were used to identify patterns and trends from what teachers self-professed about dispositions as well as what each teacher had in common with the phenomenon of professional dispositions.

Research Question 1: What Professional Dispositions Impact Student Success in the Learning Environment as Measured by NCFE Data?

After Computing The Pearson Correlation of the relationship among the student NCFE scores and the three separate observation types of EDA scores, no correlation (0.10) was found between the researcher-observed EDA score and student achievement. A moderate to strong correlation was observed between the administrator-observed (0.68) and teacher self-assessed EDA (0.59) scores and student achievement, but the correlations were not statistically significant (p value > 0.05).

The scatterplot for the EDA administrator composite represented five higher performing teachers having student achievement scores above 0.7, indicating higher student success. When comparing the five higher performing teachers to the three lower performing teachers, the higher performing teachers composite score for EDA administrator composite was 88.85 and the lower performing teachers composite score was 74.6, indicating more dispositions were observed among the higher performing group.

The scatterplot for the EDA teacher self-assessment also reflected a higher composite score of 93.25 for the five higher performing teachers. The lower performing teachers composite score was 85.5, indicating that the higher performing teachers rated

themselves higher than the lower performing teachers in relation to demonstrating more evidence and understanding and commitment to the dispositions.

The EDA administrator composite score for the higher performing teachers was 88.85 and the EDA teacher self-assessment composite for the same group was 93.25, indicating the teachers stated they met expectations at a higher rate than the administrator observed the dispositions.

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a disconnect in the relationship between professional teacher dispositions that might have a profound impact on the success or lack of success of students in school. The findings did not support a profound impact on the success or lack of success of students in school, but it did indicate dispositions had a correlation with student success. The dispositions from the higher performing teachers of the Self-Professed data (written, focus and self-assessment) were Professionalism, Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity, Positive and enthusiastic attitude, Social and emotional intelligence, and Preparedness in teaching and learning.

Research Question 2: What Observed Behaviors Do Effective Practicing Teachers Demonstrate That Stimulate Student Success as Measured by NCFE Data?

The top three dispositions of higher performing teachers and the top three dispositions of the lower performing teachers were the same from the administrator EDA disposition counts. These dispositions were professionalism, preparedness in teaching and learning, and effective oral communications skills. Smith et al. (2005) stated that in order for schools to improve for the sake of better instructional opportunities for students, teachers must teach differently. If high-performing and low-performing teachers all

demonstrated common dispositions for professionalism, being prepared with their teaching and new learning and providing constructive oral communication skills, school improvement should look closer at how teachers learned and adjusted (Smith et al., 2005).

The following two additional dispositions were also noted from the administrator observations: collaborates with stakeholders and social and emotional intelligence. These had counts that included them in the top five of nine. The counts for the higher performing group of teachers was higher for every disposition than the counts for the lower performing group. This led me to conclude that the presence of more dispositions did support student success. Almerico et al. (2017) said collaboration required teachers to be willing to share and support each other, and it might be that the lower performing teachers were not as skilled and confident in this area. I knew teachers across the district participated in professional learning teams on a weekly basis. Even though those teams had an activator (aka, facilitator), the meetings did not always lend themselves to being productive or effective based on the skills of the activator or knowledge of the team members on how to collaborate on a professional level within their teams. Social and emotional intelligence would require teachers to promote creativity, problem-solving, and communication among students in the classroom (Almerico et al., 2017). My own work in classrooms and professional learning teams supported the administrator observations that this was not as evident when observing lower performing teachers.

Research Question 3: To What Extent Do Observed Behaviors Correlate Between Teacher Self-Professed Dispositions and Observations of an Administrator?

The top three dispositions from higher performing teacher EDA teacher self-

assessments and EDA administrator observations were professionalism, preparedness in teaching and learning, and effective oral communications skills.

When comparing the focus group results of higher and lower performing teachers, the qualitative data indicated higher performing teachers discussed dispositions being studied more than the lower performing teachers.

The administrator-observed disposition composite score for higher performing teachers was 88.85. The teacher self-assessment disposition composite score for higher performing teachers was 93.25. This study did not determine statistically the extent to which dispositions practicing teachers demonstrated correlated with the ones they stated they practiced.

I concluded that a moderate, positive correlation (.625) did exist between higher performing teacher composite self-professed (written, focus, and teacher self-assessment) disposition counts and administrator observation disposition counts. The dispositions from the higher performing teachers of the Self-Professed data were Professionalism, Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity, Positive and enthusiastic attitude, Social and emotional intelligence, and Preparedness in teaching and learning. This correlation was consistent with the more defined moderate to strong relationship found between EDA administrator observations and student achievement. To determine a stronger relationship, further research would be needed.

One observation emerging from the study indicated both lower and higher performing teachers exhibited behaviors associated with the dispositions of professionalism being the top disposition from the EDA administrator observations. The two groups diverged when discussing professionalism in the focus group. This

disposition was the top ranked item for the higher performing teachers and ranked low for the lower performing teachers. Further in-depth study of the factors contributing to this could be the topic of additional research. For example, did the two groups diverge in the understanding of legal and ethical rules educators must follow; or in the area of professional behaviors, such as positive relationships with colleagues, parents, and students; or in the area of professional responsibilities that included active participation in professional functions (Almerico et al., 2017).

Collaborating effectively with stakeholders was another disposition that appeared to diverge in relationship between higher and lower performing teachers. This divergence could be explained in the culture found within schools. Further research would be needed to determine if teachers were willing to share, support each other, and explore together. Almerico et al. (2017) stated studies showed that when teachers collaborated, students performed better; and this study did indicate this disposition was higher ranked with higher performing teachers than with lower performing teachers.

Connections to Theoretical Framework

Teachers in this study were observed for their behaviors relating to specific dispositions. They engaged in answering a set of written response questions and focus group questions that revealed how their own dispositions were shaped and controlled by environmental influences, the common interactions of the person, and the behaviors they exhibited as educators in relation to one's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1989). The social cognitive theory concept considered the distinctive ways in which each teacher acquired and maintained their behaviors while also reflecting on their social environment in relation to the performance of the behavior (Bandura, 1989). The teachers expressed

several environmental factors and personal cognitive factors that influenced their learning that occurred within a social context. The results showed anecdotal evidence that teacher dispositions might indeed have a positive relationship to student achievement. However, due to the limited sample size for this study, further research would need to be conducted to provide more concrete evidence.

Connections to Literature.

The 1990s ushered in the beginning of teacher educator discussions about the desirable behaviors of teachers, administrators, and school service personnel related to dispositions. It was not until 10 years later that NCATE established the concept of dispositions as a requirement in their standards, rules, and regulations that governed teaching certification in many states. According to NCATE (2008), teacher dispositions were guided by their attitudes and beliefs in relation to their values such as thoughtfulness, caring, honesty, fairness, empathy, respectfulness, and responsibility to their practice. The attitudes and behaviors of teachers were critical for providing effective teaching. This standard embodied the expectation that teachers should have the ability to reflect, evaluate, and improve their teaching practice and own learning as a guiding belief (Welch & Areepattamannil, 2016).

The teacher participants in this study were observed using the EDA. This provided them an opportunity to reflect on their own teaching and learning through a series of written questions, open discussion forum, and self-assessment to establish if they met expectations for possessing necessary professional dispositions that impacted on Pre-K-12 student learning. By aligning the written response questions and focus group questions to the EDA dispositions, every teacher had an opportunity to reflect on their

teaching and learning. Teacher 002 spoke of their original belief that teaching was just showing up and making sure that kids understood the content. Teacher 002 said they now understood through their experiences that teaching meant being responsible for the whole student-content and social emotional development. This comment provided evidence of reflection and experiences altering their beliefs. Teacher 008 said that in the teaching profession, you should be able to reflect back and accept that though you tried to do your best at the time and applied all of your skills and knowledge, you did not fail your former students but had become a better teacher for your current students. This comment was evidence of reflection and positive behavior based on a mindset for improvement through learned experiences. This teacher's response is reflective of Schussler and Knarr's (2013) work on dispositions which they described as "context specific, connecting intended purposes with one's inclination to think and act in particular ways (and) aligns well with the cultivation of a teacher's moral sensibilities" (p.76). In other words, a teacher's deepest rooted beliefs, sense of purpose, belonging, and ability to achieve their purpose all must align.

The late Martin Haberman's (2004) philosophy was based on teacher preparation as a matter of school success for students. Haberman's theory derived from the construct of strengthening belief systems which accounted for and predicted human behaviors (Haberman, 2011). In order to know who should teach, how that person should be prepared to teach, and how to evaluate their success were criteria deeply rooted in teacher dispositions (Haberman, 2011). Seven of the eight participating teachers obtained their degree and teacher certification through a traditional education program from a university. One teacher, upon college graduation, obtained licensure in an education for

adults degree program: Legal Education Accelerated Degree Program.

Two issues considered during the focus group discussion specifically looked for answers that might align to Haberman's (2004) theory: (a) Focus on an opportunity where each of you had to receive feedback. Describe that occurrence and describe your willingness to grow professionally; and (b) Share some examples of how you pursued your personal and academic goals. Not all teachers responded to these questions. Of those who did, the responses to the first issue related to receiving feedback and not about growing professionally. In relation to the second issue, responses related only to their personal goals.

Combs (1999) identified five dispositions of effective teachers: empathy, positive view of self, positive view of others, authenticity, and meaningful purpose and vision. Participating higher performing teachers in this study identified the following three top dispositions based on their EDA administrator observations: professionalism, preparedness in teaching, and oral communication. This study identified three additional dispositions to Combs's study. Notar et al. (2009) added that in addition to having knowledge and skills, professional teachers must act in an ethical manner. They should apply dispositions as professionals, model professionalism every day, and encompass the top three dispositions identified for the higher performing teachers in this study. To study teacher dispositions comparative to identifying effective teaching, one must also address teacher beliefs. The work of Smith et al. (2005) specified that once beliefs were formed, people were inclined to make meaning as explanations of their beliefs, regardless if truthful or not. For this study, the written responses and focus group data indicated the higher performing teachers identified the same dispositions as well as an added

disposition: collaborates with stakeholders.

Connections to Phenomenological Research

Chapter 2 discussed the work of Notar et al. (2009) that dispositions could be impacted by the environment and subjected to change, strengthened or weakened by experiences and interactions that happened on a daily basis. The commonality of experiences that changed this group's beliefs and values most was embedded within the preparedness in teaching and learning disposition. Several teachers wrote of schedules, curriculum topics, and supporting student needs. This indicated a desire to learn and to adjust from their experiences and reflect on their improvements. Some also shared the importance of effective teaching, how students would engage in the learning process, and how they would adjust to instruction along the way to support their needs. They shared concerns that some of their training did not support the initiatives the district expected teachers to know how to do. The feeling of knowing they needed to be prepared for students and current educational demands reflected that their training and ability to adapt to engage students was a challenge.

The group of teachers wrote about social justice, positive and/or negative teacher interactions, strong family values and morals, student relationships, and intrinsic motivation. Teachers in this group, collaboratively, were aware of embracing all diversities and possessed a mindset for instructional activities, the classroom community, and interactions with others.

Implications

Educational Practice

I found two implications of this study on educational practice: the need for

teacher awareness of their behaviors and beliefs and the need for continuous professional learning through modeling and observation.

For the research study, the written response questions and the focus group questions were specifically written to ask each volunteer about their own teacher behaviors and beliefs. It was apparent to me that some of the responses from the participants addressed what they thought other teachers should do or believe or what they thought students needed. Rarely did the teacher participants speak of their own beliefs and the impacts their beliefs had on student achievement. Many of these responses began with

- I think teachers should...
- Some teachers...
- I think that kids need more...
- The behaviors that contribute to my students' success is when they...
- I believe that teachers with good attitudes toward learning...

Responses such as these indicated that teachers should have an awareness of their own behaviors and beliefs in the classroom as opposed to focusing on what they thought others should do. Prior to this time, the teacher participants had taken the EDA as a self-assessment. Interestingly, not once in the focus group meeting did they mention the dispositions or ask questions regarding the impact of the ones addressed in the study. I felt this indicated a heightened awareness of these dispositions would be important and valuable for teachers.

Phenomenological research is the study of a person's lived experiences as they related to a concept or phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In order to develop a

deeper understanding of the features of professional dispositions, I felt it was important for teachers to be aware of their own beliefs and behaviors to be able to understand their shared experiences in the learning environment.

Being able to collect data on teacher beliefs about learning and providing continuous professional development throughout the year would be an important practice. While belief surveys had been collected off and on in past years, there had been no continuous effort to provide professional development on the importance of those belief surveys to teachers. Administration of the surveys had been inconsistent at best and would be best utilized to consistently involve teachers in a reflection on their progress and/or the impact of their beliefs on student learning.

Bandura's (1989) SCT provided a framework for how dispositions were shaped and controlled by environmental influences, the common interactions of the person, and the behaviors they exhibited as educators in relation to one's self-efficacy. This concept considered the distinctive ways in which a person acquired and maintained their behaviors while also reflecting on their social environment in relation to the performance of the behavior (Bandura, 1989). Bandura's (1989) theory suggested how people controlled their behaviors and were reinforced by their dispositions through observational learning, imitation, and modeling. If teachers could discuss and reflect on how their dispositions were shaped and controlled by environmental influences, the common interactions of the person, and the behaviors they exhibited as educators in relation to one's self-efficacy, their knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values, and genetics might affect how they would behave.

Recommendations

Recommendations Based on Data

The data from the study indicated there was no significant correlation found between the researcher-observed EDA scores and student achievement; however, a moderate to strong correlation to student achievement appeared between the EDA administrator-observed scores. This same, moderate to strong correlation between student achievement and EDA self-assessment was found. The qualitative data collected from the three areas (written response questions, teacher EDA self-assessments, and the teacher focus group) were combined and referred to as self-professed dispositions. Trending throughout the qualitative data, the top dispositions in the focus group meeting, and EDA self-assessment was professionalism. Trending in the written response and phenomenological research data was appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity. Trending in phenomenological research was preparedness in teaching and learning. Collaborating effectively with stakeholders was a disposition that diverged between higher and lower performing teachers.

I have three recommendations: (a) Teachers should become aware of the importance of their behaviors, develop an understanding of professional dispositions, and understand the impact of their behaviors and beliefs on student achievement; (b) The district should consider utilizing Haberman's (2004) Pre-Screener Tool to prescreen prospective teachers prior to interviews for employment; and (c) Colleges and universities should provide awareness of positive dispositions for preservice and beginning teachers in their educational studies.

Since professionalism was rated as one of the most observed and stated

dispositions, teachers should be provided continuous reflection and development on what professionalism looked and sounded like in the classroom, with stakeholders, and among colleagues. Having an awareness of their professional dispositions could enhance the performance of all teachers, not just those who are considered high performing. It would help them to perceive themselves as effective, to believe all students could learn, to see a larger purpose for what they did, and to pay attention to the “people” element of how we learned emotionally (Hallam, 2009). This awareness would also align with an appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity dispositions for teachers.

Quantitative data identified a moderate to strong correlation between the administrator-observed and self-assessed EDA scores with student achievement and phenomenological research data identified the preparedness in teaching and learning disposition. For this reason, I recommend districts and administrations learn about and utilize Haberman’s (2004) Star Pre-Screener interviewing tool for prescreening prospective teachers prior to interviews for employment. Haberman’s (2004) 50-question questionnaire evaluated teacher knowledge and skills and identified a 95% accuracy rate in predicting which teachers would stay in the profession and succeed and which ones would fail or quit. Additionally, I recommend colleges and universities include knowledge and awareness of dispositions in preservice teacher studies. Important as well for preservice teachers would be to learn how their positive behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes were demonstrated through both verbal and nonverbal interactions with students and stakeholders and how it supported student learning and development (Hallam, 2009).

Recommendations for Future Research

I have five recommendations for future studies of the same or similar topic: (a)

observe over a longer period of time at the elementary level, (b) incorporate a larger sample size, (c) utilize Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) data in place of the NCFE data, (d) institute a study based on Bandura's (1989) principles, and (e) institute a study of beginning teacher dispositions.

The research design for this study was proposed for an 18-week duration but was shortened due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Identified dispositions were found for high-performing teachers; however, I believe that with more time and capability to conduct more than a single researcher classroom observation, the outcomes might have been significantly stronger. I also believe stronger results would have been obtained had the study been conducted at the elementary level. I knew of more people who would have been interested in volunteering, and teacher experiences and performance goals were different between secondary and elementary school levels. A longer study at the elementary level would give teachers more opportunities to model observed behaviors for consistency and better data purposes.

Because the teacher volunteer group was small, the data were not statistically significant. A larger sample size would provide more data. The findings could prove more statistically significant.

A replication of this study should gain access to the use of EVAAS data as opposed to NCFE data. EVAAS measures student progress and allows you to obtain a consolidated view of student progress and teacher effectiveness. It will provide stronger data in determining which professional dispositions impact student success.

During the study, teachers were informed of the purpose of the study but not the specific dispositions considered. They were observed using the EDA twice, once by me

and once by the administrator. Later in the study, the teachers conducted a self-assessment using the same EDA as that used by me and the administrator. This was the first time they were made aware of the dispositions used in the study. Following the self-assessment, the teachers were exposed to written response questions and a focus group meeting with questions that focused on the specific dispositions from the EDA. I believe a future study could be conducted on these same teachers using Bandura's (1989) principles of how a person should be made aware of their teaching behaviors, how they were encouraged to recall their behaviors, how they modeled their behaviors, and how they continuously applied them. This future study might provide a framework for how dispositions were shaped and controlled by environmental influences, the common interactions of the person, and the behaviors they exhibited as educators in relation to one's self-efficacy and reinforced their dispositions through observational learning, imitation, and modeling (Bandura, 1989).

Finally, this study observed secondary veteran teachers who had been in the profession ranging from 4 to 23 years. I recommend a study to determine if dispositions beginning teachers demonstrated correlated with the dispositions they stated they practiced and if these dispositions supported student success. This study would provide an awareness of dispositions to beginning teachers early in the profession and could be tracked throughout their career to learn how their dispositions were altered or changed over time and if they influenced what and how they taught in their learning environment.

Limitations

Several limitations arose during the course of the study. These limitations included a small sample of teachers who volunteered for the study; teacher limited

awareness of the specific dispositions in the study; use of EVAAS scores; number of classroom observations conducted, excluding tier talk; and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The proposed research plan included six volunteer teachers from each grade level of sixth through eighth grade who taught English/language arts or science, which was already a limitation due to its small size. I believe there may have been a larger number of teacher participants had the study been conducted at the elementary level where there was a greater familiarity with more educators than at the secondary Level.

The original research plan also included the use of teacher EVAAS scores from an average of 3 years (2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019) for English/language arts and then each year's single data. The data and accountability department in the county in which the study was conducted did not approve the use of teacher EVAAS scores; therefore, I substituted teacher EOG scores to gain evidence of student achievement data. For science, I could only obtain eighth-grade EOG data for each year and was no longer able to collect math scores for the study.

From the data collected from the EDA observations, the initial research plan included me observing three times in the classroom. A change was made, and I conducted one classroom observation and one observation of a teachers' meeting for tier talk with their grade level. A third observation was conducted by the assistant principal. I felt the data might be different had three classroom observations been conducted and the tier talk meeting omitted. My data did not show significant correlations after conducting only one classroom observation. The tier talk observations were removed due to not enough dispositions observed based on the structure and organization of the EDA and incomplete observations due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As of March 16, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the district closed its schools for health and safety precautions for the remainder of the school year. I was unable to complete tier talk observations using the EDA. The pandemic also affected the structure of the original research plan which involved conducting a face-to-face focus group meeting with the teacher participants. I used an online Google Meet platform and recorded the meeting. I felt more in-depth responses from the group of teachers could have been collected if the meetings had been face to face, allowing for higher quality conversations about the questions referring to the specific dispositions for the study to occur.

Final Remarks

In this country, efforts have continued to address issues related to the improvement of educational outcomes for all students, to close achievement gaps, to increase equity and equality, and to improve the quality of instruction. Paramount within these actions should involve the requirement that all students be held to high academic standards to ensure progress and provide support as needed regardless of race, ethnicity, income, location, disability, culture, home language, or background. The existence of an achievement gap has continued to be at the forefront of educational outcome improvement efforts. These efforts have focused on improving teacher effectiveness, preparation, certification, characteristics, and beliefs. In essence, they have focused on the key variable in the classroom: the teacher. Regardless of high-performing or low-performing schools, professional dispositions are the greatest factor impacting student achievement (Diez & Rath, 2007; Haberman; 2004; Marzano et al., 2001).

Much of the focus related to this issue has been on preservice teachers and

preparation programs to develop effective teachers going into the profession. What has been lacking, however, has been information about and the development of strategies on how to hold practicing teachers accountable for their professional dispositions. I have maintained that a disconnect exists in the relationship between real-world teacher dispositions and the generally accepted dispositions found in district belief statements, core values, and mission statements, and the impact on the success or lack of success of children in schools. At issue is whether practicing teachers are demonstrating professional dispositions in correlation with their knowledge and skills: knowledge and skills that impact a successful learning environment regardless of a school's status as high or low performing. My efforts, through this study, have been to determine what dispositions practicing teachers exhibit that demonstrate support or lack of support for student success and how the learning environment is impacted by teacher characteristics, beliefs, and practices deployed in the classroom.

Clearly, the above-stated limitations – the small sample of teachers who volunteered for the study, the teachers' limited awareness of the specific dispositions in the study, the use of only EOG scores and not EVAAS scores to determine student achievement, the limited number of classroom observations conducted (excluding tier talk), and the COVID-19 pandemic – have contributed to a less-than-preferred picture of the capacity of practicing teacher dispositions and how they impact the learning environment. However, the data from this study revealed some emerging trends related to the relationship teacher dispositions do have on student achievement, the identity of the key dispositions that appear to have the most impact, and the critical importance of focusing on teacher dispositions.

Based on the correlation coefficient with the EDA composite scores, student achievement scores, and the moderate to strong correlation between the administrator-observed and self-assessed EDA scores with student achievement, I concluded, from the provided anecdotal evidence, that teacher dispositions do indeed have a positive relationship to student achievement.

Based on the scatterplots, moderate to strong correlation between the administrator-observed EDA and student achievement, and the disposition counts for the higher performing group of teachers, I concluded the presence of professionalism, preparedness in teaching and learning, effective oral communication skills, collaboration with stakeholders, and social and emotional intelligence support student success. Based on the EDA administrative observation, self-assessments, and higher performing teachers, I concluded the extent teacher self-professed dispositions correlated with observations of an administrator proved to be minimal, which would seem to support the critical need for further training and development of administrators and teachers in how they might work together to improve the learning and teaching environment.

It is imperative that we continue improving educational outcomes for students, continue to work on closing achievement gaps, increase equity and equality, and improve the quality of instruction in the classroom. Researchers and administrators must continue to focus on the teacher – the key variable in the classroom (regardless of high performing or low performing) – as professional dispositions are still considered to be one of the greatest factors impacting student achievement.

References

- Almerico, G., Johnston, P., Henriott, & Shapiro M. (2010). Dispositions assessment in teacher education: Developing an assessment instrument for the college classroom and the field. *Higher Education Journal*, 1-19.
<https://www.aabri.com/manuscripts/10665.pdf>
- Almerico, G., Johnston, P., & Wilson A. (2017). EDA technical guide.
<https://www.watermarkinsights.com/educator-disposition-assessment/>
- Almerico, G., Johnston, P., & Wilson A. (2018). EDA: Educator disposition assessment. Watermark. Presentation.
<https://uploadsbiz.watermarkinsights.com/2017/12/20045624/EDA-Rubric-p1.pdf>
- Armstrong, D. M. (2016). *Dispositions: A debate*, edited by Tim Crane, Taylor & Francis Group. *ProQuest Ebook Central*. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.gardner-webb.edu/lib/gardner-webb-ebooks/detail.action?docID=180042>
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W. H. Freeman.
- Bandura, A. (1989). Social cognitive theory. In R. Vasta (Ed.), *Annals of child development: Six theories of child development* (Vol. 6, pp. 1-60). JAI Press.
- Barbic, C. (2014). Charter school critics blinded by “belief gap.”
<https://www.tennessean.com/story/opinion/contributors/2014/12/29/belief-gap-blinds-charter-critics-reality/20875559/>
- Barge, J. (2012). Georgia Department of Education teacher keys effectiveness system fact sheet. <http://www.ciclt.net/ul/cpresa/S9FactSheetProfessionalism.pdf>

- Baxter, A., & Morgan, R. L. (2018). *How states can get teacher evaluation systems right*. Education First. <https://education-first.com/how-states-can-get-teacher-evaluation-systems-right/>
- Behar-Horenstein, L., Pajares, F., & George, P. (1996). The effect of teachers' beliefs on students' academic performance during curriculum innovation. *The High School Journal*, 79(4), 324-332. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40364501>
- Benson, K. M., & Petersen, N. J. (2012). The importance of professional dispositions: A survey of diverse teacher educators. *Northwest Journal of Teacher Education*, 10(1), Article 9. <https://doi.org/10.15760/nwjte.2012.10.1.9>
<https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/nwjte/vol10/iss1/9>
- Buss, D. M., & Craik, K. H. (1983). The act frequency approach to personality. *Psychological Review*, 90(2), 105-126.
- Call, K. (2018). Professional teaching standards: A comparative analysis of their history, implementation and efficacy. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(3), 94-102. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2018v43n3.6>
- Campbell, G. (2009). Demonstrating the belief that all kids can learn. https://www.cabe.org/uploaded/Media_Tips/July_1,_2013_Demonstrating_the_belief_that_all_kids_can_learn.pdf
- Cherry, K. (2020, July 25). What Is cognition? Verywell mind. <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-cognition-2794982>
- Combs, A. W. (1999). *Being and becoming: A field approach to psychology*. Springer.
- The Condition of Education. (2018). <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2018144>

- Corwin. (n.d.). *Common causes of the achievement gaps*. Sage. <https://us.corwin.com/en-us/nam/equity-causes-of-achievement-gaps>
- Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. (2013). Excellence in education preparation. <http://caepnet.org/~media/Files/caep/standards/caep-standards-one-pager-0219.pdf?la=en>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2015a). *A concise introduction to mixed methods research*. Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2015b). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage Publications.
- Danielson, C. (1996). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching* (2nd ed.). <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/106034/chapters/The-Framework-for-Teaching@-An-Overview.aspx>
- Davidson, J., & Davidson, F. (2010, June 22). Bandura's social cognitive theory: An introduction [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4N5J9jFW5U>
- Dedoose. (n.d.). User guide. <https://www.dedoose.com/userguide/researchbasics>
- Dewey, J. (1922). *Human nature and conduct: An introduction to social psychology*. Modern Library.

- Diez, M. E. (2006). Assessing dispositions: Five principles to guide practices. In H. Sockett (Ed.), *Teacher dispositions: building a teacher education framework of moral standards* (pp.49-68). AACTE.
- Diez, M. E., & Rath, J. (2007). *Dispositions in teacher education. A volume in advances in teacher education*. Information Age Publishing.
- Fives, H., & Gill, M. G. (2015). *International handbook on research on teachers beliefs. Educational psychology handbook series*. Routledge Taylor & Francis.
- Freeman, L. (2007). An overview of dispositions in teacher education. In M. E. Diez and J. Rath (eds), *Dispositions in teacher education* (pp. 3-29). Information Age Publishing.
- Goodman, J. S. (2016). *A case study of teacher attitudes, beliefs systems, and behaviors associated with substantive student academic achievement in a charter school serving an economically disadvantaged urban population* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Houston]. Clear Lake. <http://hdl.handle.net/10657.1/618>
- Haberman, M. (2004). *Star teachers. The ideology and best practice of effective teachers of diverse children and youth in poverty*. The Haberman Educational Foundation.
- Haberman, M. (2011). The beliefs and behaviors of star teachers.
<https://habermanfoundation.org/the-beliefs-and-behaviors-of-star-teachers/>
- Haberman, M. (2012). *Teacher talk: When teachers face themselves*. Haberman Educational Foundation.
- Hallam, M. K. (2009). *Why teacher dispositions are a crucial aspect of student success*.
http://video.wallace.edu/pd/articles/2013/2013_TLE_Jan09_Article.pdf

Hartlep, N. D., Hansen, C. M., & Horn, B. R. (2015). Measuring the dispositions that make teachers effective: Research brief.

<https://journalistsresource.org/studies/society/education/measuring-dispositions-that-make-teachers-effective-research-brief/>

Hill-Jackson, V., Stafford, D., James, M. C., & Hartlep, N. D. (2018). *The white paper: How to hire the best school leaders using Martin Haberman's protocols for selecting "star" teachers and principals* [White paper]. Houston, Texas: The Haberman Educational Foundation, Inc.

Hui, T. K. (2016). Wake County teachers challenged on their beliefs about students.

<https://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/education/article66045747.html>

Karges-Bone, L., & Griffin, M. (2009). Do they have the right dispositions? Teacher education in the new conceptual age. *SRATE Journal*, 18(2), 27-32.

Katz, L. G., & Rath, J. D. (1985). Dispositions as goals for teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 1(4), 301-307.

Katz, L. G., & Rath, J. D. (1986). Dispositional goals for teacher education: Problems of identification and assessment. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED272470.pdf>

Knoepfel, R. C., Logan, J. P., & Keiser, C. M. (2005). *Measuring teacher quality*.

Continuing the search for policy-relevant predictors of student achievement.

(ED526999). ERIC. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED526999.pdf>

Laerd Statistics. (2017). Spearman's correlations.

<https://statistics.laerd.com/premium/spss/sroc/spearmans-rank-order-correlation-in-spss.php>

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (2006). *Designing qualitative research* (4th ed.). Sage.

- Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D. J., & Pollock, J. E. (2001). *Classroom instruction that works: Researched-based strategies for increasing student achievement*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- McFarland, J., Hussar, B., Wang, X., Zhang, J., Wang, K., Rathbun, A., Barmer, A., Forrest Cataldi, E., & Bullock Mann, F. (2018). *The condition of education 2018* (NCES 2018-144). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2018144>
- Minnesota Board of Teaching. (1986). Minnesota's vision for teacher education: Stronger standards, new partnerships. Report of the Task Force on Teacher Education for Minnesota's Future. https://archive.org/stream/ERIC_ED274662/ERIC_ED274662_djvu.txt
- National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (1996). *What matters most: Teaching for America's future. Report of the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future* (ED395931). ERIC. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED395931.pdf>
- National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. (2008). *Professional standards for the accreditation of schools, colleges, and departments of education*. NCATE. <http://www.ncate.org/~media/Files/caep/accreditation-resources/ncate-standards-2008.pdf?la=en>
- Noonan, J. M. (2015). *To close the belief gap*. <https://scholar.harvard.edu/jmnoonan/blog/close-belief-gap>

Notar, C. E., Riley, G. W., & Taylor, P. W. (2009). Dispositions: Ability and assessment. *International Journal of Education*, 1(1), E4.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). (2018). Teacher questionnaire. <http://www.oecd.org/education/school/TALIS-2018-MS-Teacher-Questionnaire-ENG.pdf>

Paige, R. (2002). *No child left behind act: A desktop reference*. U.S. Department of Education. <https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/nclbreference/reference.pdf>

Public Impact. (2018). Closing achievement gaps in diverse and low-poverty schools: An action guide for district leaders. https://publicimpact.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Closing_Achievement_Gaps_in_Diverse_and_Low-Poverty_Schools.pdf

Quirk, K. (2017, November 8). *Haberman's career dedicated to quality public education*. Kwirx Admin. <https://habermanfoundation.org/habermans-career-dedicated-to-quality-public-education/>

Rosenthal, R., & Jacobson, L. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom: Teacher expectation and pupils' intellectual development*. Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Schmid, R. (2011). *Effective teachers: Beliefs and behaviors that lead to high student achievement at reading first schools* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of San Diego.

Schmid, R. (2018). *Pockets of excellence: teacher beliefs and behaviors that lead to high student achievement at low achieving schools*. SAGE.

- Schussler, D. L., & Knarr, L. (2013). Building awareness of dispositions: enhancing moral sensibilities in teaching. *Journal of Moral Education Ltd*, 42(1), 71-87.
- Simpson, L. (2011). *Dispositions in teacher education* (Publication No. 3530543) [Doctoral dissertation, University of West Virginia]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Singh, D. K., & Stoloff, D. L. (2007). *Measuring teacher dispositions* [Unpublished thesis]. University of Eastern Connecticut State.
- Smith, R. L., Skarbek, D., & Hurst, J. (2005). *The passion of teaching: Dispositions in the schools*. The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.
- Stronge, J. H. (2018). *Qualities of effective teachers* (3rd ed.).
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/118042/chapters/Qualities-of-Effective-Teachers@-An-Introduction.aspx>
- Stronge, J. H., & Hindman, J. L. (2006). *The teacher quality index. A protocol for teacher selection*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Tatem, P. M. (2015). *Dispositions of effective elementary teachers in an urban district in southeastern Virginia* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.
- Thornton, H. (2006). Dispositions in action: Do dispositions make a difference in practice? *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 33(2), 53-68.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/23478934>
- Thurstone, L. L. (1928). Attitudes can be measured. *American Journal of Sociology*, 33, 529-554.

U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). Every student succeeds act.

<https://www.ed.gov/essa>

Villegas, A. M. (2007). Dispositions in teacher education: A look at social justice.

Journal of Teacher Education, 58(5), 370–380.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487107308419>

Wadlington, E., & Wadlington, P. (2011). Teacher dispositions: Implications for teacher

education. *Childhood Education*, 87(5), 323-326. [http://ezproxy.gardner-](http://ezproxy.gardner-webb.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.gardner-webb.edu/docview/875892820?accountid=11041)

[webb.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.gardner-](http://ezproxy.gardner-webb.edu/docview/875892820?accountid=11041)

[webb.edu/docview/875892820?accountid=11041](http://ezproxy.gardner-webb.edu/docview/875892820?accountid=11041)

Welch, A. G., & Areepattamannil, S. (2016). *Dispositions in teacher education: A global*

perspective. The development of a disposition for reflective practice (pp. 3–30).

Sense Publishers.

Wilkerson, J. R., & Lang, W. S. (2007). *Assessing teacher dispositions: Five standards-*

based steps to valid measurement using the DAATS model. Corwin Press.

Appendix A

District Permission for Study


Mail - Carrie McKeown _ [redacted] - Outlook - Google Chrome

[redacted]

Reply Delete Junk Block ...

Re: Carrie McKeown Study Proposal Changes

You replied on Thu 10/24/2019 3:42 PM

 [redacted] Staff - SchoolAccountability
Thu 10/24/2019 11:17 AM
Carrie McKeown _ Staff - Title1: [redacted] Staff - ProgramAccountability; [redacted] Staff - ProgramAccountability ✕

Carrie,

We reviewed your revised proposal and have decided to approve your research request.

Since the majority of your study is qualitative and focused on teachers who will voluntarily participate in the study, we do not have any objections to your proposed research methods, including interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations.

However, we have concerns about using student EOG scores to draw conclusions about their relationship to teacher dispositions and other characteristics, especially considering the small sample of teachers in your study. Student test scores and proficiency are affected by many variables besides teacher qualities. Without properly controlling for these other factors, any correlations you find may be spurious and ungeneralizable.

Notwithstanding these concerns, we are prepared to assist you in providing the data you need to carry out your study.

Sincerely,
[redacted]
External Research Committee

Appendix B

Permission to Conduct Study from Principal

Dissertation Study

M

Tue 8/20/2019 8:50 AM

To: Carrie McKeown <[redacted]>

Mrs. McKeown,

We are excited to be housing your dissertation study this school year. We are very interested in knowing more about our teacher dispositions and how we can use your research for our school improvement. Please let me know if you need me to do anything as you move forward in this process.

Assistant Principal

Reply

Forward

Appendix C

EDA

Educator Disposition Assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____

Evaluator: _____

Directions: Please use the following numbers to rate the individual on each disposition based on the following scale by marking the corresponding number in the cell. Please note that italicized constructs are further explained in the technical manual. Indicators for each disposition are found in the cells. Scores for each of the nine dispositions will be averaged to calculate an overall composite score. Lastly, please add comments to support ratings as needed.

0-Needs Improvement: minimal evidence of understanding and commitment to the disposition

1-Developing: some evidence of understanding and commitment to the disposition

2-Meets Expectations: considerable evidence of understanding and commitment to the disposition

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
1. Demonstrates Effective Oral Communication Skills	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not consistently demonstrate professional oral communication skills as evidenced by making <i>major errors</i> in language, grammar, and word choice <input type="checkbox"/> Does not vary oral communication to motivate students as evidenced by monotone voice with visible lack of student participation <input type="checkbox"/> Choice of vocabulary is either too difficult or too simplistic	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates professional oral communication skills as evidenced by using appropriate language, grammar, and word choice for the learning environment, yet makes some common and noticeable errors <input type="checkbox"/> Strives to vary oral communication as evidenced of some students demonstrating a lack of participation <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally uses vocabulary that is either too difficult or too simplistic	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates strong professional oral communication skills as evidenced by using appropriate language, grammar, and word choice for the learning environment <input type="checkbox"/> Varies oral communication as evidenced by encouraging participatory behaviors <input type="checkbox"/> Communicates at an age appropriate level as evidenced by explaining content specific vocabulary

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
2. Demonstrates Effective Written Communication Skills	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Communicates in tones that are harsh or negative as evidenced by fostering negative responses <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates <i>major</i> spelling and grammar errors or demonstrates frequent common mistakes	<input type="checkbox"/> Communicates respectfully and positively but with some detectable negative undertones, evidenced by unproductive responses <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates <i>common</i> errors in spelling and grammar	<input type="checkbox"/> Communicates respectfully and positively with all stakeholders as evidenced by fostering conventional responses <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates precise spelling and grammar

Appendix D

Permission to Use the EDA

From: Carrie Sharp, Staff - [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, April 21, 2019 1:02 PM

ATTENTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. You may see messages with a UT from line (xxx.ut.edu) but they are being transmitted through an external email system. Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello [REDACTED]

My name is Carrie Sharp. I am located in the US and pursuing my doctorate from Gardner-Webb University in Bolling Springs N.C. in which I am currently in the process of writing a dissertation on what teachers say versus what they do where I will study the relationship of teachers beliefs/dispositions and their behaviors as it impacts learning environments. I would like to conduct my study with a school here in the [REDACTED] area (where I am from) that is a Title I low performing school. I will interview several teachers, conduct a survey, and observe teachers to see if there is a disconnect between the capacity of teachers to examine their self-awareness of generally held values, commitments, and professional ethics and their capacity to implement strategies and actions reflecting these values, commitments, and professional ethics creates learning environment which are not conducive to the successful achievement of ALL students. My hopes are to have a few teachers who have consistently high students scores and a few teachers who have consistently low students scores to participate in the study. I am very interested in the possible use of the EDA tool to survey the teachers in my study and would love to speak with you more about my plans. I recently spoke with [REDACTED] on the phone (from Watermark) and he provided me with your contact information in hopes we could discuss the use of your tool further. My contact information [REDACTED] I would greatly appreciate an opportunity to speak with you about my study and how I might be able to use the EDA tool. Thank you so much!

Carrie

Mrs. Carrie P. Sharp (aka. McKeown)

[REDACTED]



From: Carrie Sharp, Staff - [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 25, 2019 10:19 AM
Subject: re: meeting times

ATTENTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. You may see messages with a UT from line (xxx.ut.edu) but they are being transmitted through an external email system. Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello [REDACTED]

May 7th at 4:30 works great for me. I am looking forward to speaking with your team about the EDA tool! Again, thank you for your time.

Carrie

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2019 10:08 PM
Subject: Meeting Times

Hi Carrie,
I asked [REDACTED] to join us as well. She is the third member of the EDA Team. Our available times are:
May 2nd 4:30-5:30
May 7th 4:30-5:30 Adrienne has to leave at 5 – but I can talk with you until 5:30 and I think [REDACTED] can too.
Let me know what works and I'll send you a Zoom invitation.
Gina

[REDACTED], Ph.D.
[REDACTED] Organization Development

EDA



Carrie (GA) [redacted]

Tue 5/7, 4:55 PM

Carrie (GA) [redacted]



Reply | v

You replied on 5/8/2019 4:33 PM.



EDA Rubric Cells with AI...
39 KB



EDA Technical Guide 3-...
71 KB

2 attachments (110 KB) Download all Save all to OneDrive - [redacted] Schools

Hi Carrie,

It was nice talking with you this afternoon. Your research sounds interesting and I hope using the EDA will help as you further your inquiries. Here is the EDA tool and the technical guide. I am happy to talk with you any time about its development and use. I am looking forward to finding out what you discover through your research.

Best,



Thu 4/25, 12:56 PM

Carrie (GA) [redacted]

You replied on 4/25/2019 1:04 PM.

Hi Carrie,

EDA Consultants is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: EDA Conversation with Carrie

Time: May 7, 2019 4:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

[redacted]

One tap mobile

+16468769923,,595672896# US (New York)

+14086380968,,595672896# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

+1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 595 672 896

Find your local number: [redacted]

See you on May 7th.

[redacted]

[redacted] Ph.D.

[redacted]

The University of Tampa

Department of Education

[redacted]

Appendix E

Rater Calibration Training

EDA Consultants is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: EDA Calibration Training Carrie

Time: Jun 20, 2019 1:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/547713832>

One tap mobile

+16468769923,,547713832# US (New York)

+14086380968,,547713832# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

+1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 547 713 832

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/abAZoen6eo>

 [REDACTED]

Appendix F

Teacher Consent Form

Gardner-Webb University IRB
Informed Consent Form

Title of Study: What Teachers Say vs What They Do: Examining the Relationship of Teacher Dispositions and Teacher Behaviors as it Impacts on Learning Environments.

Researcher: Carrie P. McKeown, EDCI

Purpose

The purpose of the research study is: The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship of teacher dispositions and teacher behaviors as it impacts on learning environments. This study will explore a secondary school grades six through eight and examine teachers within the school who have three consecutive years of high, mid and low achieving scores. The researcher will capture the differences in dispositions among high, mid and low effective teachers' achievement scores and observe the correlation for what teachers say they believe versus what their actions will reveal in the classroom.

Procedure

What you will do in the study:

The researcher will observe sixth, seventh and eighth grade teachers from Salem Middle School. The researcher will use a tool called the Educators Dispositions Assessment (EDA). The EDA instrument was designed and developed by educational dispositional assessment consultants composed of three research professors from The University of Tampa. It is a valid and reliable measure of teacher dispositions and is generally used to track and monitor candidate dispositional behaviors as they progress through teacher prep programs. The researcher will use the tool with currently practicing teachers through multiple measurements using the EDA tool. One way will be through a teacher self-assessment, a second will be through an administrator at Salem Middle School observation, and the third through the researcher's observations. The triangulated data will be analyzed and correlated with the teachers EVAAS scores. The duration of the study will consist of a schools First Quarter Instructional Period.

Time Required

It is anticipated that the study will require about 40 hours of your time. The participants will take a self-assessment with the EDA tool for 10-15 minutes. The assistant principal will observe the participants for a total of 10 hours (not consecutively). The researcher will observe each participant three times which will need 30 hours to complete over a quarters instructional period. The majority of the time required is done through observations and does not require the participants to prepare anything.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time without penalty. You also have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) for any reason without penalty. If you choose to withdraw, you may request

that any of your data which has been collected be destroyed unless it is in a de-identified state.

Confidentiality

All information obtained in this study is confidential. The participants will be assigned numbers: 1,2,3, or 4 etc. The assigned numbers will be recorded on the self-assessments, administrator observations and the researcher's observations. The name of the school will not be mentioned or documented. Participants EOG scores will not be identified by participant name.

Data Linked with Identifying Information

The information that you give in the study will be handled confidentially. Your information will be assigned a *code number (or pseudonym.)* The list connecting your name to this code will be kept in a *locked file*. When the study has been completed and the data have been analyzed, this list will be destroyed. Your name will not be used in any report.

Anonymous Data

The information that you give in the study will be handled confidentially. Your data will be anonymous which means that your name will not be collected or linked to the data. Because of the nature of the data, it may be possible to deduce your identity; however, there will be no attempt to do so, and your data will be reported in a way that will not identify you.

Risks

There are no anticipated risks in this study. *If there is a potential risk to the participant, describe the risks and what you will do to minimize the risks, as described in your Application to Conduct Research. Include all possible physical, psychological, professional, or personal risks and/or hazards for the participants. **Any risks listed in your Application to Conduct Research must be addressed in this section. However, it is important not to overstate the risks as well.** If arrangements have been made for a counselor to be available in the event of participant discomfort, state the following: If, as a result of the study, you experience discomfort and would like to discuss your thoughts or feelings with a counselor, please contact the following individual for assistance. List the name and contact*

Benefits

There are no direct benefits associated with participation in this study. The study may help us to bring an awareness of how we can begin to hold educators accountable for implementing professional dispositions into our work to have a greater impact on the learning environment.

The Institutional Review Board at Gardner-Webb University has determined that participation in this study poses minimal risk to participants.

Payment

You will receive no payment for participating in the study.

Right to Withdraw From the Study

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

How to Withdraw From the Study

Please modify this section so it accurately describes how to withdraw from the study while it is being conducted and how to withdraw after it is completed, where appropriate (it may be impossible to withdraw if the data are anonymous).

- If you want to withdraw from the study, inform the researcher.
- There is no penalty for withdrawing.
- If you would like to withdraw after your materials have been submitted, please contact Carrie McKeown, cmckeow@gwu.edu, 704-736-5586

If you have questions about the study, contact the following individuals.

Researcher's Name: Carrie P. McKeown

Department: EDCI

Gardner-Webb University

Boiling Springs, NC 28017

Researcher Telephone Number: [REDACTED]

Researcher Email Address: cmckeow@gwu.edu

Faculty Advisor Name: Kelly Clark, EdD

Department: EDCI

Gardner-Webb University

Boiling Springs, NC 28017

Faculty Advisor Telephone Number

Faculty Advisor Email Address

If the research design of the study necessitates that its full scope is not explained prior to participation, it will be explained to you after completion of the study. If you have concerns about your rights or how you are being treated, or if you have questions, want more information, or have suggestions, please contact the IRB Institutional Administrator listed below.

Dr. David Granniss

Chair of IRB

Gardner-Webb University

Boiling Springs, NC 28017

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Appendix G

Focus Group Questions

Questions:

1. Let's think a moment of the process of communicating with your students, especially when it is effective. Describe the components you include when communicating with your students. (Disposition 3: Effective Oral Communication Skills)
2. There are a variety of opportunities to provide written communication to all stakeholders. Explain the elements you incorporate when you communicate in writing. (Disposition 4: Effective Written Communication Skills)
3. Let's go in-depth into the area of professionalism. (Disposition 7: Professionalism)
 - a. Share examples that demonstrate your beliefs about legal and ethical rules educators must follow.
 - b. Share examples that demonstrate your beliefs about developing and maintaining positive relationships with all you come in contact within the school environment.
 - c. Share examples that demonstrate your beliefs about active involvement in professional organizations, volunteering at functions, and or attending school events.
4. A positive and enthusiastic attitude was identified 37 times in the written responses. In what ways would an observer to your classroom see a positive and enthusiastic attitude? What are you doing? What are you saying? (Disposition 5: Positive and enthusiastic attitude)
5. Think about how your students engage in the learning process. In what ways do you alter and/or adjust your instruction to meet the needs of all your students? (Disposition 6: Preparedness in teaching and learning)
6. In analyzing your written responses, a majority of you discussed an appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity. Think about your classroom. If all students are

capable and can succeed in their academics, what specific things do you do and/or say to support **all** your students? (Disposition 1: Appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity)

7. Let's discuss what a professional culture looks like. (Disposition 2: Collaborates with stakeholders)

- a. Describe an opportunity where each of you collaborated with a colleague.
- b. Focus on an opportunity where each of you had to receive feedback. Describe the occurrence and describe your willingness to grow professionally.

8. Let's look deeper into the area of self-management. (Disposition 8: Self-regulated learner)

- a. Share examples of what you are doing and saying when you manage stress.
- b. Share examples of how you pursue personal and academic goals.

9. There were strong responses regarding safe and healthy classroom environments. Site some specific evidence of how you set the tone in your classroom. What does that look like? What does that sound like? (Disposition 9: Social and emotional intelligence)

Appendix H

Phenomenological Research—Teacher Responses

Teacher	Experiences that changed beliefs and values	Situations from experiences that influenced or affected beliefs & values
001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedules, not enough time to read • Not enough time for brain breaks, exercise • Loss of autonomy of control over curriculum • Boring topics to teach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racism • Social justice and equality
002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being responsible for whole student now, different in the past-content and social emotional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and emotional coaching offering peer mediation and “restorative justice” practices respond to parent emails about social/emotional stressors, and host SEL lessons during our classroom time-as opposed to just teaching content
003	Unexpected variables such as students’ moods, unprepared labs, fire drills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other teachers, positively and negatively
004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggling students who worked hard to graduate to next grade level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who struggled and through my work finally understand
005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beliefs from others that students are not at the top of the list • No common goals to support students first 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entire schedules and job placements revolve around pacifying certain teachers in the building and not focused for the purpose of student success • Inappropriate teachers move within the building hinder the school-to-community relationships and trust
006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive relationships formed with my students
007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students not receiving the help or support they need for issues that go way beyond the classroom • Students with serious mental health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong family values and morals • Ethical and honest behavior

	<p>issues, or behaviors that are dangerous for other kids to be around, or experiencing home problems that go way beyond what I am trained to help them with</p>	
008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Most everything one needs to be a great teacher is not and cannot be taught or learned in college. One must get into the profession and be able to reflect back; being able to accept that though you tried to do your best at the time and applied all of your skill and knowledge you did not fail your former students, but are a better teacher for your current students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hard work, intrinsic motivation, a positive outlook, and parent support ● Pushing expectations and challenging students to push themselves