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Analyzing Student Perception of Teacher Quality at Mabank High School

Juliet Pridgen

The current teacher shortage occurring across the United States in public high schools has led to the development of Alternative Certification Programs (ACPs). This study aims to analyze the difference in student perception between traditionally certified teachers and alternatively certified teachers in the state of Texas in terms of teaching practices, teacher preparation, and teaching attributes. In this mixed-method research paper, a 27-item questionnaire on a Likert scale was distributed to students at Mabank High School in the 2018-2019 academic school year. The students had the option to evaluate their second period teacher, fourth period teacher, or both. The results of this paper suggest that alternatively certified teachers are not significantly different in their teaching practices from traditionally trained teachers based off of student perception. However, the student perceptions of alternatively certified teachers were poorer in comparison to student perception of traditionally certified teachers in regard to teacher preparation and teaching attributes.

Keywords: student perception, secondary education, alternative certifications, low-income schools, teacher shortage

Introduction

The current teacher shortage in public high schools across America is creating a wide-spread demand for teachers. As the pressure to staff low-income and small schools increases, administrators have been turning to alternative routes of teaching in order to staff schools across the United States. This demand is apparent given released statistics from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). According to the Employed Teacher Demographics (2013-2017) produced by TEA, Texas employed 358,514 teachers in the 2016-2017 academic school year. In the 2012-2013 school year, Texas employed 332,587 teachers. Since 2012,

there has been a steady increase in teachers hired in the state of Texas (Parker, 2018). This indicates Texas's efforts to hire teachers more quickly, oftentimes through alternative programs, in order to address this shortage. As to whether these teachers are trained to effectively teach students is the overarching topic that will be analyzed. This study explores whether these teachers are trained competently according to the perceptions of students within a public high school.

Multiple studies exist examining the extent and effect of teacher quality on student learning. Oftentimes these studies address other reasons such as the level of college readiness of students in order to analyze school quality. However, minimal research exists that

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pertains to the effectiveness of state certification programs and how they affect student performance from the perspective of a student (Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000).

Review of Literature

In order to look effectively at the American education system in public high schools, we must refer to history to understand this system's origins. During the 1960s, the efficacy of post-secondary schooling was not widely supported as a result of unequal access to education given the racially charged time (Baum, Kurose, & McPherson, 2013). As a result, legislators began to address prevalent issues in the American education system such as limited access to post-secondary education and the United States' poor rank amongst other countries in regard to education. Thus, they realized that reforms to secondary education might enhance success in post-secondary schooling.

In 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) was enacted under President George W. Bush, which set requirements for public schools (elementary through secondary) to meet state academic standards and to increase academic testing (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015). The NCLBA created standardized tests that public schools would administer to students in order to measure school quality. Additionally, the NCLBA created qualifications that would deem certain teachers as "highly qualified" (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010). As stated by the TEA, a "highly qualified" teacher was one who held a bachelor's degree, was wholly certified to teach in Texas and demonstrated competency in their core subject (2007). However, the term "highly qualified" was no longer accepted starting with the 2016-2017 academic school year under the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The purpose of this was to remove the requirement of the "highly qualified" status; therefore, this let teachers have fewer qualifications to be staffed in high-need school districts.

Subsequently, the ESSA replaced the NCLBA in 2015 under President Barack Obama. The ESSA is an effort by the federal government to provide equal educational opportunities to traditionally underserved students (State of Washington, 2015). As to whether these policies have been effective in their existence

is subject to debate. Despite these efforts to improve education, Chelsea Chicosky (2015), author of *Reconstructing Modern Education*, concluded that the United States ranked below various countries in multiple areas such as math and reading through statistical analysis in 2015.

Alternative Certifications

When analyzing school quality, teacher qualifications must be examined. Teacher credentials are used because they are potential indicators of student achievement. (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2010). Different states have various policies that determine what classes teachers are able to teach with the certification(s) they have. (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2010). In Texas, there are two routes to enter the teaching field in public schools: a traditional certification or an Alternative Certification Program (ACP). Traditional certifications usually indicate that a person attended college specifically to become a teacher and obtained a bachelor's degree in education. In contrast, an alternatively certified teacher is someone who demonstrated an interest in the teaching field and underwent an alternative program. Typically, these teachers are employed in high need areas without any former experience with coursework in education; thus, they enter the classroom and complete their teaching requirements while teaching. Alongside alternative certifications, emergency permits and non-renewable permits can be allotted. Emergency permits can be issued when the individual has only completed 24 semester hours in the subject being taught and the district is unable to hire a certified person (DeVreis, 2017). Similarly, a non-renewable permit can be issued if an individual has not completed the proper examination requirements (DeVreis, 2017).

Students undergoing a traditional certification take education courses towards the end of their sophomore year and throughout their remaining two years in college while completing student training. However, students in ACPs may hold any bachelor's degree and they often take education courses a few months prior to when they would like to teach (Baines, McDowell, & Foulk, 2001). Once hired, they complete multiple education courses throughout the school year while teaching. Some common alternative programs for teaching include Alternative Certification

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for Teachers (ACT) and Education Career Alternative Program (ECAP). These organizations recruit prospective teachers and employ them in high-need areas. A comparative study by Baines et al., (2001) found that the requirements to obtain a traditional teaching certification are drastically more demanding than the requirements to receive an alternative certification. In 2001, researchers discovered that traditional state programs required SAT scores as an entry requirement whereas the ACPs they analyzed did not. Traditional programs also required 500-1000 hours of field experience before teaching alone whereas ACPs required zero hours. ACPs also did not have student-teaching as a requirement whereas traditional programs were required to complete a semester long of full-time teaching. It is important to note that the requirements for certain ACPs are not the same and they differ by program.

In an attempt to study the different views of teachers who experienced a traditional certification compared to teachers who underwent an Emergency Certification Program (ECP), Justice, Greiner, and Anderson (2003) contacted teacher graduates from Texas A&M-Commerce and those who experienced an ECP via telephone. A survey was utilized to measure various qualities such as teacher preparedness and orientation. As a result, researchers found that teachers on emergency permits were more likely to teach in high school (Justice, Greiner, & Anderson, 2003). Given that most teachers on emergency permits seldom have their official certification, the data revealed that non-certified teachers felt less prepared to teach in their first year when compared to certified teachers. Teachers with emergency permits expressed frustration due to four primary reasons: an inadequate amount of knowledge to convey to students, inadequacy of classroom management, lack of teaching methods, and the failure to meet student's needs (Justice, Greiner, & Anderson, 2003).

As a result of less experienced teachers, a bigger problem arises in regard to school children's preparation for post-secondary schooling. Meaning, the initial solution to teacher shortages in high school has woefully increased the problem of children's lack of preparedness when entering college as a result of less qualified and experienced teachers. Oftentimes, fresh and inexperienced teachers start their career at poorly performing schools that are in need of improved

academic standards that can only be given by experienced, highly-qualified teachers. (Justice, Greiner, & Anderson, 2003). The schools that are in dire need of highly qualified teachers are receiving new and unseasoned instructors. Therefore, an endless cycle of insufficient teachers are instructing students who perhaps need the most experienced teachers.

Additionally, a study performed in 2006 found that 168 English teachers graduated from Non-University Certification Programs; whereas, the University of Texas, Austin only graduated 27 traditionally certified teachers (Baines, 2006). This represents the growing popularity ACPs as opposed to traditional certifications that are received at four-year institutions. The expanding prominence of alternative certifications is further supported by the fact that one in four first-year teachers come from alternative programs in Texas (Baines, 2006).

In a qualitative and quantitative study that addressed prospective graduates from an ACP, O'Connor, Malow, and Bisland (2011) analyzed improvements that could potentially be implemented in the Teaching Fellows program for alternative certifications in New York City. Two months prior to graduation from the Teaching Fellows program, 68 participants were contacted. Participants were given a survey containing 52 items including Likert scale questions and free-response questions. The survey pertained to information about the program, suggestions for improvement of the program, and long-term objectives of the prospective teacher. Researchers concluded that most of the students wanted the Teaching Fellows curriculum to address classroom management (O'Connor, Malow, & Bisland, 2011). This notion supports previous research as seen in the study performed by Justice, Greiner, and Anderson (2003) in which those who went through the ECP expressed frustration because they lacked classroom management skills.

Teacher Shortage

Regardless of teacher education, the teaching profession is experiencing a dire shortage, especially in rural and metropolitan areas (Feistritzer & Chester, 2003). Research performed by Rots, Aelterman, and Devos (2014) suggest that there are three main issues that directly correlate with the current teacher short-

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age: a lack of people entering the teaching profession, an abundance of teachers leaving the field after recently entering the field, and a multitude of teachers not entering the teaching profession after recently graduating from a teaching program. Additionally, the Teaching Fellows study (2011) supports one of the biggest reasons as to why a teacher shortage is occurring. Rots, Aelterman, & Devos (2014) claim that a huge contributor to the shortage is due to the fact that a large portion of recent graduates from teaching programs leave the teaching field quickly after entering the teaching profession, creating a high turnover rate. In the Teaching Fellows study, approximately 44% of the students enrolled in the Teaching Fellows program who had completed the program had already decided that they would leave their position after two years of teaching (O'Connor, Malow, & Bisland, 2011).

Staffing Problem

Due to teacher shortages, alternatively certified teachers are more likely to teach low-income students at small, rural or urban institutions (Ness, 2010). According to an extensive study performed by Goldhaber and Brewer, students who had a tenth-grade teacher with a traditional certification consistently had higher math and science test scores than students who had teachers with probationary and emergency permits (1999). Additionally, in a study performed in Dallas, Texas, researchers found that fourth graders who were taught by experienced teachers scored higher in reading and mathematics when compared to students who were taught by less experienced teachers (Seebruck, 2015).

Student Perception

In terms of student perception on teacher quality, researchers Siti Azkiyah and Amirul Mukminin conducted a mixed-method study that analyzed teacher quality of 199 student-teachers of three schools in the English Education Program in Indonesia (EEP) (2017). Researchers used a student questionnaire paired with observational research in the classroom to develop their data and findings. Two observation instruments were used: a high inference observation instrument that measured the frequency of certain tasks performed and a low inference observation

instrument that documented each activity that the teacher performed during the teaching exercise. The student survey contained 34 items in a Likert scale format measuring factors such as instruction and orientation. The students perceived their teachers as "good enough" (a score of 3.24 out of 5) whereas the observer considered the teaching quality to be very low (a score of 1.94 out of 5). As a result, Azkiyah and Mukminin were able to develop solutions and improvements to be made for the EEP program such as refining the teaching curriculum offered by their teacher programs. Therefore, this study proves that student perception is a valuable tool to assess teacher quality. In this instance, gaining student perceptions of student-teachers allows for improvements to be made to the teaching programs themselves.

Additionally, the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project, a research project sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, found that student feedback positively influences students and teachers (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2012). Therefore, the MET project study was crucial because it deemed student perception as useful and relevant. Not only is it useful for teachers to receive feedback on their overall teaching methods but it also allows for students to communicate their thoughts about their education. Thus, student perception can be used as an adequate indicator to assess teacher quality.

Additionally, this study is heavily significant due to the fact that most research focuses on the level of preparedness of students for college and fails to address how students feel about their education. Students are ultimately affected as a result of the academic legislation that is passed in Texas. Therefore, student perception should be analyzed as a potential indicator to measure teacher quality which is what will be analyzed in this paper.

Methodology

Participants

The faculty and students at Mabank High School were utilized as participants in the study in the spring of 2019. The student participants ($N=156$) were randomly selected to include students who had different core teachers in their second or fourth period classes.

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Approximately 15.6% of the student body at Mabank High School was surveyed. All students ranged from ninth through twelfth grade and were enrolled at Mabank High School. To be included in the study, an opt-out method was used. Parents were notified of the study and were given the option to have their child opt out of the survey at their request. Participants were classified as freshman (23.7 %), sophomore (23.1%), junior (24.4%), or senior (28.8%). Refer to Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C for more information collected on the student participants in the study

Additionally, 32 teachers were surveyed for their teaching credentials in the state of Texas. The teachers selected for the study consisted of two groups: (a) traditionally trained teachers (13 teachers) and (b) alternatively certified teachers (19 teachers). Only teachers who taught core classes during their second or fourth periods at Mabank High School were surveyed.

Survey Mechanism

To examine student perception of teacher quality, data was collected by permission of administrators at Mabank High School. The survey used was broken into four categories: Teaching Practices (7 items), Teacher Preparation (4 items), Teacher Attributes (8 items), and Student Environment (8 items). Teaching Practices is characteristic of the teaching style of the instructor. Teacher Preparation is characteristic of the preparedness of the teacher upon student entrance into the classroom and the general readiness of the teacher on a daily basis. Teacher Attributes imply the teacher's personality and attitude. The Student Environment category was included to gain more knowledge about the personal student (i.e. their grade, hours spent on homework) and was not statistically analyzed as they were only collected for background knowledge of the respondents in the study. The questionnaire contained 27-items and was provided on a Likert scale with the following choices: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. Negative and positive questions were used to preserve the consistency of the respondents when answering the questions. The survey was adapted in part from the Colorado Education Initiative Student Perception Survey (SPS).

The Sole Institution: Mabank High School

For the purpose of this research, a case study of Mabank High School was performed. According to the most recent 2017-2018 Texas Academic Performance Report published by the TEA every fall, 51.6% of Mabank graduates in the 2016-2017 school year were classified as Economically Disadvantaged indicating that Mabank High School is a Title 1 school district. Title 1 institutions have large proportions of students that come from low-income families. Also, in the 2017-2018 school year, Mabank High School enrolled 1,033 students, classifying it as a 4A school in Kaufman County. According to the new enrollment alignments for the 2018-2020 school years, a school that is classified as 4A has between 505 to 1149 students; whereas larger schools have between 1150 to 2189 students (5A) and 2190 students and above (6A) (University Interscholastic League, 2017). This is important knowledge given that alternatively certified teachers are more likely to be staffed in low-income, small schools.

Data Collection and Hypothesis

The data collection process was carried out over a period of four weeks. A 27-item questionnaire was utilized to collect qualitative data provided by Mabank High School. The survey measured students' perceptions of two particular teachers in the classroom setting. Students were given the option to complete one survey evaluating their second period teacher, one survey evaluating their fourth period teacher, or both. Classes surveyed were limited to Math, Science, English, and Social Studies courses. Elective courses were not used (i.e. Art, Theater, Choir, Athletics, Physical Education, Band, Foreign Language). The surveys were distributed via cellular device through an online survey engine in the form of a Quick Response (QR) code for students to scan during lunch hours (11:23 am -12:57 pm) for students to complete. QR codes (12 copies) were created and posted in the lunchroom in various locations for students to scan. To increase the response rate, the researcher walked around the lunchroom asking for responses. Based off of experimental research, hypotheses were created and tested:

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H_0 : There will be no difference in student perception between traditionally certified teachers and alternatively certified teachers.

H_1 : Student perception of alternatively certified teachers is lower than student perception of traditionally trained teachers.

Statistical Data

To quantify the qualitative data, the qualitative data was coded using the appropriate numbers and statistical analysis was performed subsequently. The data was organized into students who measured teacher quality of an alternatively or traditionally certified teacher, forming two separate groups of respondents based off of teacher certification. It was determined that 87 students analyzed an alternatively certified teacher and 69 students analyzed a traditionally certified teacher, totaling 156 participants. The data was organized by the total number of students who answered “one”, “two”, “three” and so forth for each question out of the respondents who analyzed alternatively certified teachers. The same method was repeated for organizing the responses of the students who analyzed traditionally certified teachers. The data was analyzed using the statistical software “RStudio.” Pearson’s Chi-squared test was utilized to examine whether observed differences between alternatively certified and traditionally certified teachers based off of student perception were statistically significant at 95% confidence for each individual question. Fisher’s exact test was used to ensure the results from Pearson’s Chi-squared test were accurate due to small sample sizes at 95% confidence. For the purposes of this study, if the p value is less than or equal .05, the null hypothesis is rejected and there is more evidence that the alternative hypothesis is true indicating that students’ perceptions of alternatively certified teachers are lower. In contrast, if the p value is above .05 there is more evidence that the null hypothesis is true meaning there is likely no difference in student perception based off of teacher accreditation. See Appendix D for the final values that were generated from Pearson’s Chi-squared test and Fisher’s exact test.

Findings

The results of this study are presented in two parts. The first section aims to describe the overall difference in student perception. This section is intended to provide a general understanding of the results in its qualitative format. The second section aims to describe the data once it was quantified.

The researcher discovered that the students’ perceptions varied; however, analysis of the qualitative data showed that students view traditionally trained teachers more positively than alternatively certified teachers. In order to address the qualitative data, the researcher relied upon the percent of favorable responses to understand the general attitude of students who had teachers with alternative and traditional certifications. Percent favorable responses are the percent of the responses in the top two categories (Strongly Agree and Agree), indicating a more positive attitude toward the given teacher. If the question was negative (i.e. responses that indicated a poor teacher), then the number of students who answered in the lower two categories (Strongly Disagree and Disagree) was taken instead, indicating that the student disagreed or strongly disagreed that the teacher performed a negative action or acted negatively. The data showed that the percentage of favorable responses for the Teaching Practices category of students who evaluated an alternatively certified teacher was 57.7% whereas the percentage of favorable responses for the students who evaluated a traditionally certified teacher was 63.56%. For Teacher Preparation, the percent of favorable responses for alternatively certified was 68.1% whereas the percent of favorable responses for traditionally certified teachers was 75%. Moreover, Teacher Attributes contained 65.5% of favorable responses for alternatively certified teachers compared to the 70.65% of favorable responses for traditionally certified teachers. The percent of favorable responses indicated more positive student perceptions of traditionally certified teachers when compared to the student’s perceptions of alternatively certified teachers in all categories.

In terms of the quantitative data, students who participated in the study reported different perceptions for the specified teacher. Pearson’s Chi-squared values indicated that significant differences exist in student perception of teacher quality. For example, in the Teaching Practices category, question 2 stated that the

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given teacher was able to “break down difficult concepts and explain them in an easier way” for student understanding. This question was statistically significant, $\chi^2(4, N = 156) = .006098, p .05$, indicating that alternatively certified teachers have a poorer student perception in terms of Teaching Practices. Moreover, question 3 and 4 indicated the same results under the Teaching Practices category. In terms of the Teaching Preparation category, questions 9, 10, and 12 were significant ($p .05$), all questions which address the preparedness of the teacher upon entering the classroom from the perspective of the student. Question 9 stated that the “teacher is organized and is prepared to teach when students enter the classroom” with $\chi^2(4, N = 156) = .01074, p .05$. Question 10 addressed the ability to fix grades by claiming that “The teacher puts in grades in a timely fashion that allows me to address any failing or low grades” with $\chi^2(4, N = 156) = .02553, p .05$. Question 12 was a general question about teacher preparation for the course saying “The teacher is knowledgeable in the curriculum taught” with $\chi^2(4, N = 156) = .03079, p .05$. The p-values from questions 9,10, and 12 indicate a more positive student perception of traditionally certified teachers as opposed to alternatively certified teachers. Similarly, questions 13-20 addressed Teacher Attributes. Questions 14,16,17,19, and 20 were significant ($p .05$). For example, question 19 addressed the overall attitude of the teacher by stating “The teacher responds to my questions enthusiastically and positively” with $\chi^2(4, N = 156) < .001, p .05$. Question 20 acted in the same manner by claiming “This teacher is committed to the success of his/her students” with $\chi^2(4, N = 156) = .006909, p .05$. It is important to note that some of the items on the questionnaire were not statistically significant, generally implying that student perception is not different based off of certification status, specifically in terms of teaching practices.

Conclusion and Future Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate if student perception of teacher quality differed based off of different educator preparation programs in Texas. A questionnaire was distributed to students to collect data on teacher quality. Student perception of teacher quality differed. A general conclusion can be

made that there is a difference in student perception of alternatively and traditionally certified teachers. This study generates new findings that students perceive teachers differently when teachers have certifications from non-traditional programs compared to teachers that have underwent traditional programs. This conclusion is not surprising as it relates to the decreased preparedness and classroom management of alternatively certified teachers as addressed in research by O'Connor, Malow, & Bisland (2011). Of the teachers surveyed, a larger proportion were alternatively certified than were traditionally certified. By a simple majority, this supports the argument found in Ness (2010) that claimed that alternatively certified teachers are more likely to be staffed in low-income, small schools. Because results from the Teaching Practices category indicated less of a difference in student perception, this suggests that alternatively certified teachers are not significantly different in regard to their teaching practices (i.e. teaching methods) from the perspective of the student. However, students reported significant differences in Teacher Preparation and Teacher Attributes. The perceptions of students were less positive for alternatively certified teachers than the responses for traditionally certified teachers. This leads to the conclusion that alternatively certified teachers could potentially be less prepared or have poorer attitudes about teaching.

The study performed revealed areas of alternative certification research worth exploring in the future. Future studies could compare how specific alternative certifications such as intern certifications, probationary certifications, non-renewable permits, and emergency permits compare to standard certifications of traditional certifications. This study did not consider the various alternative certifications that the teachers had in this study; therefore, more in-depth analysis with increased specificity of teaching certifications would be more beneficial when measuring instructional effectiveness. Additionally, given that only student perception was taken into account, it would be of interest to explore how teacher perception varies based off of educator preparation programs. Given that there are many ACPs in the state of Texas, it would be interesting to understand the perception of prospective teachers who are undergoing an ACP when compared to the perception of prospective teachers who are undergoing a traditional certifica-

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tion program. It would be intriguing to compare the level of mentorship, in-class instruction, and culture of the different programs. The third area of research could be the attractiveness of the teaching profession in terms of individuals who apply for alternative certifications. Given that there is a high turnover rate for teachers, it would be interesting to understand why individuals desire to enter the teaching profession when many people spend about two or three years teaching before moving on to their next occupation. A follow-up study could be performed measuring how many of those applicants who completed the alternative certification are still teaching in the profession. Finally, this study did not take into account the level of difficulty of the class taught by the given teacher or the years of experience by the teacher. A more in-depth study taking into account outside variables could be performed.

Limitations and Implications

The findings in this study should be considered with some limitations. The small sample size of the study may not have been representative of all of Mabank students' perceptions on teacher quality at Mabank High School; therefore, the generalizability of the findings in this study to other schools should be applied with caution. A much larger sample size would widen the scope of this study. Additionally, the collective assessment of the teacher was fully subjective to the student's opinion on the teacher which could have led to response bias. Whether students have the perspective to measure instructional effectiveness is subject to debate. Also, the survey was completed during lunch hours which has the potential to affect the results as lunch is often a time of social interactions filled with numerous distractions. Moreover, this study solely dealt with perception and did not measure student achievement. Whether students with alternatively certified teachers or traditionally certified teachers perform differently in terms of student achievement in an academic environment was not explored. If so, there would be stronger evidence that alternatively certified teachers are less effective in teaching when compared to traditionally certified teachers as seen in previous work like Goldhaber and Brewer's study in 1999.

In terms of implications, it is crucial to understand that the survey in this study was not used to measure if a student liked or disliked a teacher. It was intended to determine student experience with teachers who underwent different educator preparation programs. Also, because teachers heavily influence student achievement, this study has implications for educational administrators and educational state programs. This study has the ability to change state and district policies via academic administrators given that students do recognize a difference between instruction from an alternatively certified teacher and a traditionally trained teacher.

Another implication of getting feedback from students is that these responses have the ability to transform school culture if the proper steps are taken to act on the feedback from students. Meaning, teachers have the ability to question their own method of teaching and determine how it truly affects student learning. With student feedback, administrators have the ability to understand their school(s) better in a way that can lead to significant changes in multiple areas like curriculum and teacher training.

Additionally, the overall attitudes of the students when analyzing alternatively certified teachers reflects the need to improve state certification programs. Although students reflected positive scores for some categories, in order to increase the percentage of favorable responses, educator preparation programs could use improvement in alternative programs that would emphasize training in teacher preparation and teacher enthusiasm. The profession of teaching is important because it is a job which single-handedly influences all other occupations (Baines, McDowell, & Foulk, 2001). Therefore, it is important that educator preparation programs prepare teachers to influence and instruct their students effectively. Reform efforts could be made to create a more effective licensing system or alternative educator programs could set higher standards in order to produce more qualified and competent teachers. On a local level, principals and academic administrators have the potential to analyze the effectiveness of teachers from different educator preparation program backgrounds especially in low-income, small schools. For Mabank specifically, principals could increase their standards for hiring new applicants in order to create a more productive environment for student learning.

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Appendix A

Characteristics of Student Participants: Grade Level

Table A1

Participant Characteristics: Grade

| <u>Grade</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> |
|------------------|----------|----------|
| 9th (Freshman) | 37 | 23.7 |
| 10th (Sophomore) | 36 | 23.1 |
| 11th (Junior) | 38 | 24.4 |
| 12th (Senior) | 45 | 28.8 |

1) Table A1 contains the grade level that students chose on the survey instrument as question 25.

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Appendix B

Characteristics of Student Participants: Lesson Grade

Table B2

Participant Characteristics: Lesson Grade

| <u>Lesson Grade</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> |
|---------------------|----------|----------|
| 100-90 | 70 | 44.9 |
| 90-80 | 53 | 34.0 |
| 80-70 | 28 | 17.9 |
| 70-60 | 2 | 1.28 |
| 60-50 | 3 | 1.92 |

1)Table B2 contains the lesson grade that most aligns with their grades on average that students chose on the survey instrument as question 26.

Appendix C

Characteristics of Student Participants: Average hours spent on homework per night

Table C3

Participant Characteristics: Average hours spent on homework per night

| <u>Hours spent on homework</u> | <u>n</u> | <u>%</u> |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|
| 0-1 hours | 114 | 73.08 |
| 2-3 hours | 33 | 21.15 |
| 4-5 hours | 5 | 3.21 |
| 6-7 hours | 4 | 2.56 |

1)Table C3 contains the number of hours students spend on homework per night on average that students chose on the survey instrument as question 27.

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Appendix D

Results from Pearson's Chi-squared test and Fisher's exact test

Table D4

Results from Pearson's Chi-squared test and Fisher's exact test

| Item number | Pearson's Chi-squared value | Fisher's exact value |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Q2 | 0.006098* | 0.005354* |
| Q3 | 0.8746 | 0.8841 |
| Q4 | 0.00001791* | 0.0000139* |
| Q5 | 0.03457* | 0.03566* |
| Q6 | 0.2115 | 0.2143 |
| Q7 | 0.06511 | 0.06152 |
| Q8 | 0.05662 | 0.05623 |
| Q9 | 0.01074* | 0.01013* |
| Q10 | 0.02553* | 0.02046* |
| Q11 | 0.344 | 0.3635 |
| Q12 | 0.03079* | 0.02844* |
| Q13 | 0.3329 | 0.3332 |
| Q14 | 0.05449* | 0.0536* |
| Q15 | 0.4245 | 0.4388 |
| Q16 | 0.02302* | 0.01885* |
| Q17 | 0.0486* | 0.04533* |
| Q18 | 0.2716 | 0.2827 |
| Q19 | 0.0004591* | 0.0003535* |
| Q20 | 0.006909* | 0.0052538* |
| Q21 | 0.3556 | 0.3399 |
| Q22 | 0.4079 | 0.4162 |
| Q23 | 0.6359 | 0.6442 |
| Q24 | 0.5727 | 0.5782 |

1) Table D4 contains the p-values computed from Pearson's Chi-squared test and Fisher's exact value from RStudio software

2) * = $p \leq .05$. Fisher's Exact test was used to ensure accuracy of Pearson's Chi-squared test due to small sample size