DOES STANDARDS-BASED TEACHER PREPARATION MAKE A DIFFERENCE? PROGRAM DESIGN AND SUPPORTING EVIDENCE.

Selected Findings from the Teacher Effectiveness Project-Phase II:

THE LONGITUDINAL EFFECTS OF TEACHER PREPARATION ON THE PRACTICE, BELIEFS AND THINKING OF NEW TEACHERS AND THE LEARNING OF THEIR STUDENTS

Teaching Research Division
Western Oregon University
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SESSION OVERVIEW

- Focus of the broader study
- Questions, design, participants
- Focus of this session – a case study
- Western’s design for teacher preparation
- Graduates as first year teachers
- Graduates as 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} year teachers

- Questions and Answers

- Discussant: Implications for theory and research in teacher education
FOCUS OF THE BROADER STUDY

- Effects of specific characteristics within “traditional” teacher preparation programs NOT “traditional” vs. “alternative” programs.

- Degree to which specific Standards-Based teacher preparation characteristics are present or emphasized.
  - Orientation to K-12 content standards
  - Overt connections between teaching and learning
  - Developmental teacher assessment system within program
GENERAL QUESTIONS

The Central Research Question:
- Does teacher preparation – in its design, structure and character – make a difference in the practice, beliefs and thinking of new teachers and the learning of their students?

Sub-Question Areas:
- Descriptive-comparative questions focusing on what teachers do, how they think, what they believe and the quality and quantity of the learning of their students (i.e., questions focusing on what is).
- Longitudinal-development questions focusing on change and what influences change.
- Discrepancy-comparative questions focusing on teaching and learning to accepted standards (i.e., questions focusing on how what is stacks up to what is expected).
SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- Are there differences in the practices, characteristics, and/or beliefs of teachers according to the type of preservice preparation program they have experienced?

- Are there differences in students’ learning according to the type of preservice preparation program that their teachers have experienced?
  - If differences are observed, can they be robustly explained by differences in the practices, characteristics, and/or beliefs of teachers? Can these differences be traced to programs?
  - If differences in students’ learning are observed, do these persist over time? Specifically, does the effectiveness of differently prepared teachers in fostering the learning of their students change over time?
BROADER RESEARCH DESIGN

The Project in Context – Genres of Research on Teacher Education
From the chapter by Mary Kennedy in, The Teacher Educator’s Handbook, 1996.

- Production-Function Genre
- Comparing the Haves and the Have-Nots Genre
- Ask the Teacher Genre
- Experimental Genre
- Watch Teacher Candidates Change genre

- TEP-II is a hybrid and highly exploratory

- Primarily “ex post facto causal-comparative” study employing mixed-methods with a strong longitudinal component.
DATA COLLECTION METHODS

- Structured interview
- Battery of attitudinal surveys
- Classroom demographic description form
  Open-ended questionnaire
- Classroom observations
- Teacher Portfolios (extended work samples with student learning)
- Self-assessment rating form
  (proficiencies for Continuing Licensure)
- Focus groups
- Artifact review
- Extant school and district context databases (state developed)
- Third-party ratings
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

- 76 full-time first year teachers.
  - 62 were female – 14 were male
    Many went straight from high school through college and into teaching – some were starting a second career.
    A mix of the very young (21-22) and the mature (50’s).

- Public K-5/6 Elementary Schools.
- Prepared both within Oregon and outside of Oregon.
  - 60 from Oregon

- Prepared at both public and private institutions.
- Prepared in both 4-year and 5th year/MAT programs.

- Attrition has been an issue when working with beginning teachers.
  - Started with 87 first year teachers
  - Lost 10 during first year of teaching
  - Lost 17 between first & second year
  - Lost 8 between second & third year
WOU AS A CASE STUDY

- At the time the study was funded, WOU was the model underlying the research.
- Looking at graduates from a model program can be instructive.
- Graduates from Western form the largest single institution group in the study.
CASE STUDY

PARTICIPANTS

- 12 full-time first year teachers.
  - 11 were female – 1 was male
  All but one went straight from high school through college and into teaching – some were starting a second career.

- Public K-5/6 Elementary Schools.

- Attrition has been an issue when working with beginning teachers.
  - Started with 13 first year teachers
  - Lost 1 during first year of teaching
  - Lost 2 between first & second year
  - Lost 4 between second & third year
SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION

First Year Teachers
- Western graduates = 12
- Other Very High Exposure = 15
- High Exposure = 17
- Moderate Exposure = 19
- Low Exposure = 13

Second Year Teachers
- Western graduates = 10
- Other Very High Exposure = 13
- High Exposure = 14
- Moderate Exposure = 16
- Low Exposure = 10

Third Year Teachers
- Western graduates = 6
- Other Very High Exposure = 10
- High Exposure = 12
- Moderate Exposure = 10
- Low Exposure = 7
OBSERVED CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE and IMPACT ON LEARNING

Rated domains of teaching practice
- Communicating outcomes to students
- Aligning instruction with outcomes
- Varying activities/materials to meet needs of students
- Promoting understanding of content
- Generating interest in content
- Engaging students in learning activities
- Assessing/monitoring student learning and adapt instruction
- Providing feedback to students
- Managing the classroom

Incidence of specific teaching practices
- Communicating to students
- Aligning and varying instructional activities and materials
- Aligning and varying content
- Assessing student progress and providing feedback
- Managing the classroom environment
OBSERVATION SCHEDULE/SAMPLE

- First year teachers
  - Two 1 ½ hour observation periods during the spring

- Second Year teachers
  - Two 1 ½ hour observation periods during the fall
  - Two 1 ½ hour observation periods during the spring

- Third Year Teachers
  - Two 1 ½ hour observation periods during the fall
  - Two 1 ½ hour observation periods during the spring

(same day, different content areas)
DOCUMENTED TEACHER PRACTICE and IMPACT ON LEARNING

- General planning (long-term)
- Specific Planning (lessons/unit)
- Implementing/adapting lesson plans
- Assessing student learning
- Documenting and analyzing student learning data
- Reflecting on practice/beliefs
- Evidence of non-trivial learning
First Year Teachers
- A Teacher Effectiveness Portfolio (TEP) developed in the spring spanning at least one unit of instruction.

Second Year Teachers
- A Teacher Effectiveness Portfolio (TEP) developed during the year spanning at least one unit of instruction.
**SOME GENERAL FINDINGS TO SET THE STAGE**

**In the First Year of Teaching**
- Large variation in observed and documented performance.
- Some differences in practice/beliefs observed by exposure to program characteristics.
- Patterning consistent with hypothesis - though not significant.
- Responses to programs not homogeneous

**In the 2nd and 3rd Years of Teaching**
- Variation in performance increases over time
- Some differences in practice/beliefs remain over time by level of exposure to program characteristics
- Patterns observed during first year disappear in second year and in some cases reverse by third year.