Research Paper

Power of Practitioners: How Prior Teachers Informed the Teacher Role Identity of Thirty-Five Entry-Level Pre-Service Teacher Candidates

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Contextualization

When I was a pre-service teacher, I was in a unique position compared with most other candidates entering their professional training such as doctors, lawyers and engineers. I came to my teacher education programme after having spent thousands of hours in first hand observation of what teachers did in the classroom. It was this time spent in the classroom that provided me with my own ideas and beliefs about what I understood the role of a teacher to be. I strongly believe I have formed my opinions about what constitutes 'good' and 'bad' teachers based on those prior teacher examples from my own personal student history. For this paper, prior teachers refer to teachers from primary (students aged 5-12) and secondary (13-18 year olds) schooling.

As part of the requirements for the degree of Master of Teaching (Honours - Primary Education), I undertook a research study into this area. The study was an exploration of how pre-service teachers interpreted prior teacher experiences in reflecting on the type of teacher they did and did not want to become. This 2002 study was conducted with participants from one cohort entering a Master of Teaching degree. While this was only an exploratory study it did highlight teacher subpopulations of interest: male primary and female secondary. The study found that these teacher candidate categories brought with them very clear and distinct images of the candidates' prior teachers and how they wished to see themselves in the role as the teacher. Were the results from the previous study an anomaly? Do they represent a possible commonality across the Australasian teacher populations of male primary and female secondary teacher candidates?

Abstract: *This paper reports on a mixed-model research study that sought to uncover and explore the beliefs pre-service teachers held about teaching and the type of teacher they see themselves as being as they entered into their teacher education programmes. The results indicated that that it was those prior teachers that evidenced positive teaching practice that most informed how these student teachers saw teaching and themselves in the role as the teacher. Implications from this study highlight the vital roles in-service teachers play in shaping those who may or may not become the teachers of tomorrow.*

Introduction

Pre-service teachers are those students enrolled in their first teacher preparation course (Brookhart and Freeman, 1992). Student teachers have been shown to enter teacher education programmes with powerful and significant ideas that have developed out of their own personal histories (Carter, 1994). It is these personal histories, those prior experiences that have moulded their educational thinking (Knowles and Holt-Reynolds, 1991), that pre-service teachers use directly to predict their own future teaching practice. Through the interpretations of these schooling experiences, prospective teachers have been shown to hold images as to the type of teacher they do and do not want to become (Connelly and Clandinin, 1994).

When I began the first semester of my own teacher education training, we were required to record, discuss and elaborate upon how we saw: teaching, the role of the teacher and the role of the student. It was in discussions about these roles that the impetus for this study arose. It appeared that some of the student teachers in my cohort had clearer and more articulate reasons for deciding on teaching as a career than others. This was most notable in the female secondary and male primary student teachers. These teacher candidates recalled and discussed how two to four explicit prior teachers had set the example of how they wanted or did not want to see themselves as the teacher. Were these prior schooling experiences that were so vividly remembered representative of other pre-service teachers in other programmes? This question formed the kernel that grew into a research study that sought to explore this idea. Specifically, what do entry-level teacher candidates remember about their primary and secondary schooling experiences? Why do they remember these events and people? How do their interpretations of those prior experiences influence the type of teacher they see themselves as being as they enter their own teacher education programme?

Method

The study employed a mixed-model research design using both survey instrument and interview protocols. The first phase of the study utilized the survey instrument designed primarily to facilitate the interviews conducted in phase 2. These semi-structured interviews focused on what the participants reported in their questionnaire which led to unstructured interviews attempting to uncover the meanings and reasons behind why their responses were reported as such.

Phase 1

Out of 880 candidates entering the 2005 education training programmes leading to teacher certification at both a large Australian and New Zealand university, 354 (40.2%) agreed to participant in the questionnaire phase of the study (See Table 1, next page).

The modified self-administered questionnaire What Was School Like? (Sexton, 2004; Mahlios and Maxson, 1995) was offered to the teacher candidates before they commenced their academic year. The research study was conducted prior to the commencement of the 2005 teacher education coursework to prevent any possible course content altering pre-existing preconceptions and beliefs, as the emphasis was on exploring what beliefs and preconceptions these teacher candidates brought with them to their education programmes.

Table 1: Demographics of Sample Population - percentages

University			
Australian 41.2	New Zealand 58.8		
Programme			
Undergraduate 41.8	Post-graduate 58.8		
Education Programme			
Primary Education 46.3	Secondary Education 53.7		
Gender			
Female 75.1	Male 24.9		
Primary Education			
Female 82.9	Male 17.1		
Secondary Education			
Female 68.4	Male 31.6		
Age (years)			
<23 39.5	23-30 33.9	31-45 22.9	45+ 3.7

The questionnaire asked participants to provide demographic data, then recall both their primary and secondary school years and choose from a list of metaphors, or write in their own metaphor, that best described what these educational experiences were like. Participants reported what they wished those school experiences should have been like. The questionnaire asked participants to describe themselves using a four-point Likert scale inventory of self-esteem adapted from the short form of the Coopersmith (1967) Self-Esteem Inventory. Participants then chose from a list of metaphors or wrote in their own for how they saw teaching and finally chose eight characteristics from a list of 62 characteristics as to what they perceived were ideal student and teacher characteristics. This questionnaire was selected as it has a research history with cross-cultural populations, established validity and research use in both its original and modified forms (Sexton, 2004; Mahlios, 2002; Mahlios and Maxson, 1995; Yamamoto *et al*, 1990; Hardcastle *et al*, 1985). For this study the survey instrument's reliability was deemed acceptable as the reliability coefficient α was .75, F = 33.28, and $\rho < 0.000$.

As stated, the study sought to explore how pre-service teachers interpreted their own prior experiences. The self-esteem portion of the survey instrument allowed for each participant to be placed into categories for possible interview selection. This enabled sampling of the teacher candidates based on: very high, high, medium or low self-esteem. For the study, the maximum self-esteem score was 1.0 (strongly agree) and lowest 4.0 (strongly disagree). The researcher defined the self-esteem categories for this study. Very high was defined as the highest ten percent range (1.0 – 1.3), high as 1.31 – 1.6, medium as 1.61 – 2.5 and low 2.51 – 4.0.

Phase 2

The 35 interviewees were selected to interview the widest range of candidates entering teacher certification programmes: male, female, primary, secondary, undergraduate and post-graduate spread across the categories of self-esteem. Only one of the 13 candidates self-identified with low self-esteem agreed to be interviewed. The remaining 34 who did agree almost equally represented the three remaining categories. Of the interviewees 17 were male, of whom six were entering an undergraduate education programme and eleven a post-graduate programme. Of the interviewees 18 were female teacher candidates, of whom ten were undergraduate student teachers and eight post-graduates. There were 17 participants entering teacher training for primary education and 18 indicated secondary education. There were 18 entering the Australian university and 17 the New Zealand university.

The audio-taped interviews were conducted on the respective universities' campuses. Similar to the survey instrument phase, all interviews were conducted prior to the commencement of the programme. The researcher conducted all interviews. The interviews began as semi-structured interviews following an interview protocol asking the respondents to expound upon the reasons behind their reported responses to the questionnaire. The interviews, after establishing a prior schooling experience context, became semi- to unstructured interviews about the respondents' prior teacher experiences. Interviewees were guided by the researcher as needed to provide explicit examples of their prior teachers. Interviewees were given the opportunity to discuss why these well-remembered events were significant to them. Particular emphasis was sought as to how these prior teacher events impacted how they saw themselves as the teacher. Transcripts were returned to interviewees for data authentication prior to data analysis and any changes made by interviewees were incorporated. The interviews ranged from Grace's (all names are pseudonyms) 13 minutes to Sarah's which lasted just over an hour with an average time of 32 minutes.

The researcher was conducting all interviews in both countries prior to respective programme commencements resulting in travel back and forth, limiting the number of interviews. For example, three meetings prior to the interview were necessary to establish the relationship needed to ask questions about one candidate's personal history. This time and effort was deemed important at the exclusion of other potential interviewees as she was the only candidate self-identified with low self-esteem willing to be interviewed.

Rationale and Analysis of Life Stories

The questionnaires allowed me to gather demographic data about the participating teacher candidates but were used principally as a means of obtaining life stories, an interpretive framework through which the meaning of human experience is revealed in personal accounts (Creswell, 1994), from the interviewees. This qualitative approach allows for the documentation of the inner experiences of individuals, such as how they subjectively interpret, understand and define critical episodes of their life (Dhunpath, 2000). More importantly for the present study, the stories were a way of avoiding the excessive imposition of external theories and constructs of the researcher on the pre-service teachers so as not to stifle the story-telling urge. As such, life stories are peculiarly suited to discovering the confusions, ambiguities and contradictions of experiences as the focus is not on the factual accuracy but on the meaning the experiences had for the individual (Dhunpath, 2000).

Each person is a historian of the self, creating an internally consistent representation of their own life so that their past, present and future appear to be congruent (Chase, 2005). This recollection is interpretive and concerned more with the conceptual evaluation of the subjective structure of one's life story than with the actuality of experience (Galbo and Demetrulias, 1996). Therefore recollection is facilitating rather than displacing objectivity of recall because it provides a more comprehensive perspective.

Teacher candidates in telling their story establish a verisimilitude through the coherence of meanings. Stimulated recall interviews, a technique used to aid a participant's recall of his or her thought processes at the time (Calderhead, 1981), establishes a context which enables the opportunity to elaborate and expound upon any confusions, ambiguities or contradictions, to provide a veridical description of their experiences. Stimulated recall interviews use the respondent's own words to facilitate reflective thought.

As such, the participant's questionnaire was present for each interview in order to allow the researcher to modify the interview protocol for each interviewee. The protocol was designed to elicit incidents involving prior teachers from each participant. Thus providing a rich contextual background for the extraction of participants' beliefs about their role as a teacher and how this role has been informed by their own prior teachers.

The transcripts were analysed following Polkinghorne's (1995) analysis of narratives and narrative analysis. The transcripts were read and re-read to inductively develop concepts from the data rather than approaching the data with pre-determined expected concepts. As each concept was highlighted within the transcripts other interviews were examined to note whether similar concepts were reported. This process allowed the concepts to be refined and altered as they were derived from the body of data.

The paradigmatic analysis built the categorical definitions by continually testing their power to order the data (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). The concepts developed from the data rather than being imposed by previous theoretically derived concepts. These categories were then revised until they provided the best possible fit of a categorical scheme for the data set seeking to locate common themes or conceptual manifestations among the stories (Polkinghorne, 1995). This paradigmatic analysis provided a method to uncover the commonalities that existed across the study's stories (Guba and Lincoln, 2005) to generate

knowledge. The concepts that the student teachers held about teaching and their role as the teacher were then used to develop narratives about trends, similarities and differences.

Recalled Prior Teachers

Of the 35 interviewees, 32 were able to explicitly recall prior teachers. These teacher candidates referred to 92 prior teachers demonstrating what they believed were either 'good' or 'bad' examples of teaching. One interviewee, Thomas, was able to recall seven prior teachers where as Ryan, Chloe and Zoë, were only able to recall vague and general memories with no explicit prior teacher examples.

Out of these 92 prior teacher examples, 63 were seen as positive teacher examples and 29 were seen as negative examples. These 92 teacher examples resulted in 251 references to what these interviewees' saw as ideal teacher characteristics. Of these, 139 were positive demonstrations of the ideal characteristic. There were 76 seen as negative examples of these characteristics or that prior teachers did not possess these qualities. There were also 36 characteristics remembered with both positive and negative teacher examples.

The general or vague references referred to no one explicit teacher but tended to group all teachers into one category or description. Ella described some of her positive recollections: *good teachers make connections, personal connections with their students.* Similarly, Liam explained why his secondary teachers were examples of negative teaching: *the teachers were more, were more kind of just sitting at their desks and just kind of dull and, yeah, with the work that they gave, I don't remember a lot of teaching.*

Nearly all references to positive teachers were emotive. These emotive reasons made the students feel comfortable and encouraged by these teachers. These teachers were not only able to go above and beyond the classroom and become part of the students' lives but also showed they wanted to. Joshua expressed this best when he described three of his prior teachers and why they stood out for him as positive examples:

> (how did they demonstrate these abilities?), *by expression of genuine interests in the students by encouraging extra-curricular activities above and beyond what was expected of them, by organising sort of trips and club activities during school holidays or on the weekend, you know in boarding school often times there are a certain percentage of students who are for whatever reason are not able to go home on the weekend, so they are stuck at school and there is no requirement for them to have any tuition or, or there is no requirement for the school to provide any activities for them but these particular teachers I remember, I remember my Classics master, my English master my History master, were keen to organise extra-curricular activities which were related to our subject but were off the subject to a certain degree.*

Those teachers who were seen as negative examples of how to be teachers were remembered for not expressing these emotive characteristics. These teachers were remembered because they were cold, distant, stand-offish or dull. These teachers did not demonstrate those characteristics seen as important in a teacher such as energetic, sincere, versatile and considerate. Olivia explained how one particular teacher stood out in her memory for not demonstrating these emotive characteristics:

> *the head teacher would be nice to your parents and if you were bumbling you used to get caned and it was, he was an absolute bastard really, didn't have a clue about anything really and had no vision about what he wanted or how he saw the kids and what he wanted the kids to be in the future.*

Discussion

Positive Teaching Examples: These student teachers made 72 direct references to what they believed were good teachers from their past. In 27 of the cases these prior teachers made connections to the students. These teachers were remembered by 19 of the participating prospective teachers because of the personal relationship that was built over the year or in same cases years of teaching. Lily stated this simply in describing what makes a good teacher: *a teacher needs to be able to connect to their students to communicate their knowledge and to provide a link between the topic and the student*. Benjamin was able to describe how one teacher from his past actually did this:

> *he was a History teacher and he, could run a classroom from a desk or walking around talking to individuals, there was a real personal connection he made with us and with every student there, I wasn't just a student in the classroom, it was each student, he knew our middle name our last name, he joked, he laughed, he came and talked to you personally, he could single you out of the whole classroom and you knew that he was just talking to you, just that I reckon he was on a personal level with the students.*

Twelve of these positive teaching examples were remembered because the teacher was willing to go above and beyond their job description. These teachers showed their commitment and demonstrated an enthusiasm that made lasting impressions on their students. Sarah explained how her teachers went the extra mile then explicitly recalled one in particular:

> *they really did care and did encourage you and they didn't really quantify things, which, they really didn't count the cost, they didn't mind if you wanted to stay after school and have a discussion, I had the Deputy Principal, the Deputy Principal was my English teacher and he actually only had one class and I did a couple of subjects by correspondence for my final year so I mean we literally spent half the day having a nice chat about the English novel which we were reading and this was someone who had a lot to do, he was always staying behind and working till 5 o'clock, but he was still quite willing to engage with me as a learner.*

One in eight of these recalled teachers believed in what they were teaching and showed this self-confidence and subject knowledge to their students. James related how his prior teachers demonstrated this quality and the effect it had on him:

> *they were people who actually cared about you and cared about your learning and it, it seems more than just a you know one hour thing a nine to three sort of gig I mean, so as I think back I was important to them so as a result you had a lot more respect and more positive experience, I had a chemistry teacher who was, in that she was very passionate that she was very passionate about the subject itself and that makes a big difference.*

One out of nine were teachers who were firm in their classroom discipline and control but consistently fair in how all students were treated. Emma elaborated on how one of her teachers behaved in the classroom:

> *one of my English teachers who had a great impact on me, I had her in year 9, so it was an impressionable year and we were on of the top English class but we still had a lot of naughty kind of girls in the class and we would always test her and we wanted to know more but we were also quite a difficult class to teach, I think, she was very firm with us and very fair and in a lot of other classes we would*

> *muck up but with her we really respected her because her delivery was, quite strict but then she would get this kind of cheeky wide smile after she said something and I used to love her, I used to kind of feel we could respond to her, you wanted to go beyond what was expected of us.*

The remaining 15 good teacher examples from the interviewees' past fell almost equally into two categories: sincere teachers and teachers who made it fun.

Negative Teaching Examples: There were 39 references to prior teachers that the interviewees felt were negative examples of what it means to be a teacher. One third of these negative examples of teaching were because the teachers were seen to be either insincere or not caring about and for their students. Daniel described how one of his teachers taught class: *he would teach Mathematics with his back to us and just write things on the board.* Matthew explained how some of his teachers were not like his ideal teacher: *some teachers that were really aggressive and impatient and, results driven and, not children people.* Most of the interviewees' negative examples referred to general teaching styles and practices, unlike their positive teaching examples which in almost every case had a particular teacher associated with the memory.

The remaining two-thirds of negative teaching examples were divided almost equally between five categories: no passion in their teaching; no relationships were formed; it was just a job; they were cruel; and their teaching style was just chalk and talk. William explained how his bad teaching examples exemplified this: *teachers who did not have that sense of passion and did not have sense of energy they didn't, they seemed to be going through the motion, they didn't seemed to be very excited to be there and there was nothing new or exciting.* Ella expounded on how her prior teachers that were seen as bad did not connect with students personally*: just getting in there and teaching the subject and not forming any relationships, yeah, not creating relationships with the students.* Georgia talked about those teachers who were seen as just working a nine-to-five job: *a lot of my teachers didn't have any goals or desire to be there, they just got paid.* Zoë offered a description of how some of here prior teachers demonstrated cruelty: *they were cruel, they did things that would be constitute as cruel now, like I used to learn the piano and if you played a wrong note you got the strap, so you were terrified to play, like it wasn't conducive to learning at all.* And Joshua explained how some of his prior teachers affected him to this day with examples of what he saw as bad teaching:

> *I remember a Mathematics master in particular and a Geography master in particular, as well, who clearly had opposing views and it was clearly the old-fashioned chalk and talk approach which, perhaps might explain why I have a particular dislike to those subjects in adult life.*

Teaching Is: There were 63 references made to how they saw teaching. Out of these, almost half expressed the belief that as a teacher they would be able to change the future with their actions. Changing the future referred to making the future a better place by offering their students the chance to learn in a safe, comfortable and nurturing environment. Teaching was a way to stop the negative learning experience cycle that they had while growing up.

Just over a fifth of the interviewees wanted to be able give their students the skills needed for self-determination. They want to be able to instil in their students the skills and strategies needed to overcome those obstacles that might arise in their future. One in ten of these references referred to prior teachers who have positively influenced their decision to become a teacher. Another one in ten believed teaching is about making relationships with their students. Almost as many (9.1%) believe teaching should be fun. When teaching is fun the students want to be there and will want to learn. There were two who believed that teachers are role models and should set the standard with their own actions and behaviour.

Fortunately, there was only one interviewee, Georgia, who saw teaching as just something to do:

> *I needed to do something, I wanted to be a teacher and then I didn't want to be a teacher, mum put me in the car and made me go to the registration, she drives me and drops me off [laughs], I did have an hunger for it when I was little but yeah, she makes me actually get out of the car [laughs], I have the spare time if I don't go now then I wouldn't go later [laughs].*

Perceptions of teacher's role:

These teacher candidates articulated how they saw their role as the teacher in one of four ways, teacher as: Role Model, Facilitator, Delegator or Expert (Grasha, 1994). More than half of these candidates reported that being a teacher meant being some form of a role model for their student (see Table 2, next page). Another quarter felt that they would be a facilitator that will learn and grow with their students. Notably all of these student teachers supported Connelly and Clandinin's (1994) assertions that student teachers had clear ideas and were able to explicitly express what they saw as their role as the teacher at the onset of their respective training programmes.

Table 2: Teaching Is/How Participants see teaching

Teaching Style	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher as the Role Model		
• Teaching is profound impact	10	28.6
• Teaching is guiding/helping students	4	11.4
• Teaching is nurturing/inspiring/encouraging	3	8.6
• Teaching is a passion	3	8.6
Teacher as the Facilitator		
• Teaching is learning/growing with students	3	8.6
• Teaching is a holistic approach to students' lives	3	8.6
• Teaching is fun	2	5.6
Teacher as the Delegator		
• Teaching is being creative	4	11.4
Teacher as the Expert		
• Teaching is passing on information	3	8.6
N =	35	100

Teacher as Role Model: This teacher sets the example for the students to follow and also tends towards a teacher-centred approach to learning by modelling and demonstrating. The role model teacher encourages students to observe processes as well as content. As a role model, nearly a third of all interviewees saw teaching as having a profound impact upon the lives of their students. This impact is not just while the students are at school but affects the rest of their lives as well. Thus these student teachers saw teaching as one of the most noble and essential of professions. They believed teachers teach not only the subjects of the curriculum but also an understanding of students themselves, the world around them and other people within their world. Respondents were able to acknowledge that this impact may not always be in the best interest of the students as some of their own personal experiences were negative.

This role model teaching style was also a way to guide or help their students. These teachers would help and guide students to achieve the most for themselves and not for extrinsic but

intrinsic worth as everyone deserves the best from within themselves. These respondents felt that teaching was a way to show their students the difference between right and wrong. As role models using their own lives as examples these teachers would help students to choose the right way. Thereby students would be able to learn to reach their potential and achieve things that they never thought possible.

Within this role model category, there were those teacher candidates who saw teaching as nurturing, inspiring and/or encouraging. This teaching style is about bringing out the essence of students and allowing students to bring out the best within themselves. This type of teacher does this by accessing students' talents, opinions, inclinations and beliefs in a way that still makes each child feel comfortable with themselves and society. These respondents felt that this type of teaching would not only inspire their students as they were inspired by their teachers but also allow students to look up to their teachers and one day might even aspire to be like them.

The last group of pre-service teachers who saw themselves as role models indicated a passion for teaching needed to be demonstrated to the students. This was expressed as passion for the subject being taught and for the students in the class. These teachers are enthusiastic about their teaching and show this eagerness and excitement to their students. This opportunity to display their passion for teaching would allow these respondents to obtain a greater sense of satisfaction than if they were in other professions. These teachers would be in the unique position to share experiences with their students and watch their progression as they grow and learn.

The teacher as Facilitator: This teacher designs student-centred activities, social interactions, or problem-solving situations that allow students to practice the processes for applying course content. This model emphasizes the personal nature of teacher-student interactions. These teachers guide and direct students by asking questions, exploring options, suggesting alternatives, and encouraging them to develop criteria to make informed choices. These respondents felt that teaching was learning and growing with students. These respondents reported that even as teachers they would never stop learning themselves and that they would learn as much if not more from their students as their students would from them. As they continued to grow, learn and help their students, they themselves would become better people.

Other student teachers felt that this style of teaching would allow them to take a holistic approach to teaching. These respondents reported this teaching would allow them to inspire, encourage, listen, empathise, understand, communicate, guide and see to the heart of the matter as they would be sensitive to the needs of all their students. This holistic approach incorporated values and how we should live as well as involving communicating curriculum knowledge and expertise to students. Therefore these respondents felt they would be able to show dedication, energy and motivation, provide inspiration and understanding while being worthy of respect from peers and students.

In teacher as facilitator there were two teacher candidates who felt that teaching should be fun. These respondents remembered those teachers and classes in which they had the most fun and reported that when teaching was not fun no one listened or was interested. They wanted to provide a learning environment that mirrored the best of their own experiences and wanted to ensure their students did as well as they had. They believed students, who would be like they were as students, would know they were teachers who wanted and enjoyed being there and would therefore want to be students in fun classes.

The Delegator: This teacher places much of the learning burden on the students. This teaching style has teachers provide their students with complex tasks that require student initiative and often involves group work. Concerned with developing students' capacity to

function in an autonomous fashion their students work independently on projects or as part of teams. The teacher is available at the request of students as a resource person. These pre-service teachers felt that creative teaching was important to ensure the class and material was new and imaginative. They felt this creativity also existed within everyone and that to stifle this natural voice of self-expression would destroy the very essence of what it means to be human. These respondents reported that this teaching style would allow their students to make choices for themselves about where they are going and what they would do after school.

Teacher as Expert: This teacher as an authority figure and tends toward a teacher-centred classroom approach. The expert teacher possesses the information which is presented to the students who receive the knowledge. This passing on of information is important as it makes a difference to the next generation. These interviewees reported that teaching was a way to give back what the world had given to them as they gained a lot through their own education and wished to see this cycle continue with their own students.

Conclusion

This study was an exploratory investigation into the preconceptions and beliefs of teacher candidates on how prior teachers informed their ideas about the type of teacher they either did or did not want to become. As it has been shown, life stories are the study of the ways in which humans experience the world. They also show the extent to which humanness is learned, and how once learned, can be used expressively to shape and change one's understanding of the world.

I am reminded of Tom Barone's *Touching Eternity: The Enduring Outcomes of Teaching*. Barone (2001) hoped to better understand the nature of teaching and the long-term influence one teacher had on students. The students Barone interviewed evidenced the positive impact this teacher had not only then but also still years after they had left high school. Barone reported how a teacher touched eternity through students.

These teacher candidates were also affected by their teachers. Of these 35 prospective teachers, 31 recalled explicit examples of prior teachers impacting on how they saw teaching. Remarkably 24 remembered the positive teachers who demonstrated the characteristics that made them examples of being a good teacher and how they now wanted to see themselves. Similarly there were two candidates who used negatively remembered teachers as examples of how they would not be as the teacher. These two believed knowing what not to do would allow them to change the educational system positively for their students. The remaining nine student teachers reported they knew what they wanted to be like but were not yet confident enough in their perceived teaching abilities to be like how they wanted to see themselves by the end of their training programme.

The findings of this study made an important contribution to the effective teacher literature as there is a dearth of work relating to pre-service teachers' beliefs at the entry-level. While there is a large body of work relating to how educational institutions affect pre-service teachers' beliefs there is very little relating to what they bring with them. Future research in this area should continue.

Implications

There are several notable implications of this present research study which all centre on the fact that the actions of teachers today shape those who may or may not become the teachers of tomorrow. The conclusions drawn from this indicate that these entry-level teacher candidates did remember their time spent in the classroom as students. It was those

memories of actions both taken and not taken by teachers that have influenced the type of teacher they did and did not want to become.

This leads to the need for present in-service teachers and teacher candidates to be made aware of their own formative learning experiences. As this study has shown, classroom decisions and instructions did have an effect on some students. Teachers need to be conscious of the impact of their own prior experiences and how it influences their classroom behaviour. This classroom behaviour can be a positive and motivating force when students feel valued, cared for and supported. Teachers are not in the classroom by themselves; there are students with whom they interact on a daily basis. Teachers need to be made explicitly aware of how they conduct classes and the ways in which they relate to students. Their actions do influence students and inform future generations of teachers.

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