

Evaluating Teacher Candidates Dispositional Qualities in Special Education



TED 2013

Background

- Traditionally- Measured knowledge of content & Skills
- 1990's- Dispositions became a requirement in Teacher Education programs
- 2002- NCATE Disposition mandates

(Wise, 2005)

Definition

- *“Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with candidates, families, colleagues, and communities.*
- Attitudes, beliefs related to values like caring, honesty, fairness, empathy, respectfulness, responsibility, and thoughtfulness

(National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Educators (NCATE), 2007)

Measuring Dispositions

- NCATE expects institutions to assess professional dispositions based on observable behaviors in educational settings.
- 2 professional dispositions:
 - Fairness
 - Belief that all students can learn

(NCATE, 2007)

What are Professional Disposition Qualities?

- Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, and responsibility.
 - Example(s):
 - Belief all students can learn.
 - Commitment to a safe and supportive environment.

(NCATE, 2007)

Why Assess?

- Predictive of how teachers might act in their own future classrooms.
- Applies knowledge & skills in their own classroom teaching
- Leads to an increase in quality of student learning
- Leads to an increase in job satisfaction

(Borko, Liston, & Whitcomb, 2007; Wadlington & Wadlington, 2011; Rushton, Morgan, & Richard, 2007; Kokkinos, 2007; Teven, 2007).

Why Assess?

- Teacher Candidate (TC):
 - ▣ To know what is expected of them
 - ▣ Understand and learn that dispositions are just as important as knowledge & skills.
 - ▣ Increases awareness by monitoring & assessing dispositions throughout the program.

(Rike, 2008; Wayda & Lund, 2005, Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000)

When should dispositions be assessed?

- ❑ Entry into teacher education program.
- ❑ During all field experiences.
- ❑ During student teaching.
- ❑ Anytime a concern is raised.

Assessing Dispositions

- Teacher Education Programs:
 - Need to be flexible & determined by local cultural norms & expectations.
 - Ongoing reflection process at the beginning & throughout training program.
 - Provides support if performing poorly.

(Beverly, Santos, & Kyger, 2006; Flowers, 2006; Hillman, & Scarano, 2006; Schulte, Edick, Edwards, & Mackiel, 2004).

Purpose

- Assess teacher candidates' self-reflections on their professional dispositions in comparison with cooperating teachers' perceptions of those dispositions.
 - ▣ Conducted during student Teaching in SPED program.

Professional Disposition Qualitative (PDQ)

□ Assumptions

1. Dispositions are developmental & will improve overtime
2. Dispositions are observable
3. Dispositions are changeable
4. Dispositions are situational

□ Goal

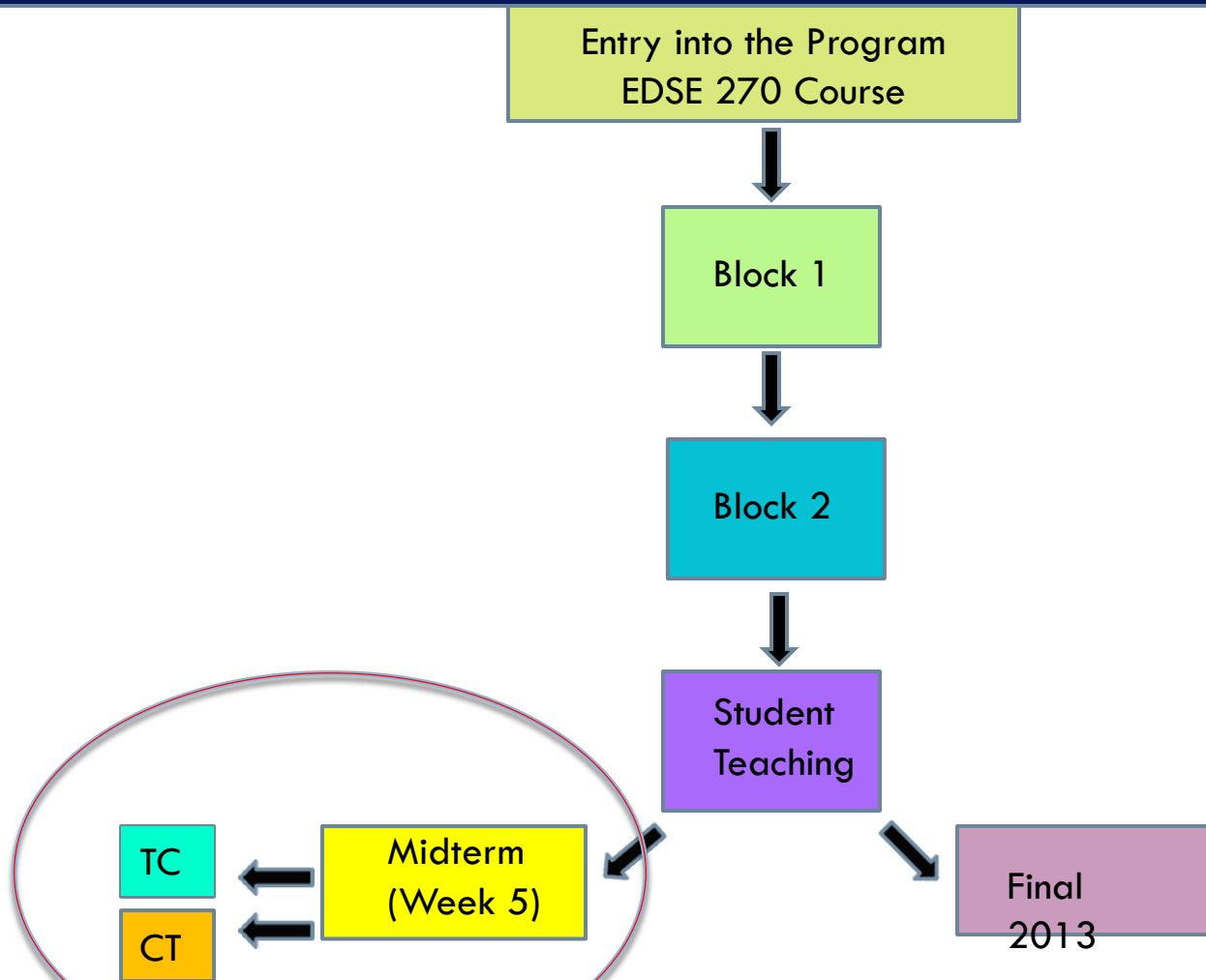
- ▣ Assess teacher candidate dispositions and cooperating teachers' perceptions of those dispositions.

(Lindquist, Altemueller, Brewer, and Kincaid, 2011)

Context


- Who:
 - ▣ Teacher Candidate (TC):
 - Teacher in training
 - ▣ Cooperating Teacher (CT):
 - Practicing in-service teacher in K-12 classroom
- When:
 - ▣ Midterm- Student Teaching semester

Context



Background Rubric

Professional Dispositions Qualities (PDQ)

Initial Pilot (2004)	Version 2 (2008) 
37 items	27 items
5 pt scale	3 pt scale
3 Contents: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Professional Commitment & responsibility•Inter-Intrapersonal skills•Attitudes toward learners	3 Contents: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Professional behavior•Inter-Intrapersonal skills•Responsible behavior

(Lindquist, Altemueller, Brewer, and Kincaid, 2011-paper)

Research Questions

1. Do teacher candidate self-reflection ratings on professional dispositions differ from cooperating teachers' disposition ratings?
2. What three items on the PDQ are the highest and lowest rated items for:
 - a. CT
 - b. TC

Method

- Participants
 - Teacher Candidates
 - Spring 2012 (N=12)
 - 2012-2013 (N=31)
 - Cooperating Teachers
 - Spring 2012 (N=14)
 - 2012-2013 (N=27)

PDQ Instrument

- Teacher Candidates & Cooperating Teachers
- Paper form
- Midterm Survey during Student Teaching
- 27-item questionnaire
- Assess teacher candidate's dispositions
 - Likert Scale:
 - 1 (Unacceptable)
 - 2 (Appropriate)
 - 3 (Advanced)

PDQ

Categories	Items	Example
Professional Behavior	1-13	--“Considers all points of view and shows appreciation for diversity”
Interpersonal/Intrapersonal Behavior	14-23	-- “Demonstrates high energy and enthusiasm when teaching” --“Uses effective communication strategies when speaking with students, families peers and professionals”
Responsible Behavior	24-27	--“Prepares, organizes, and meets assignment due dates”

Data Analysis

- First step: Reliability Analysis

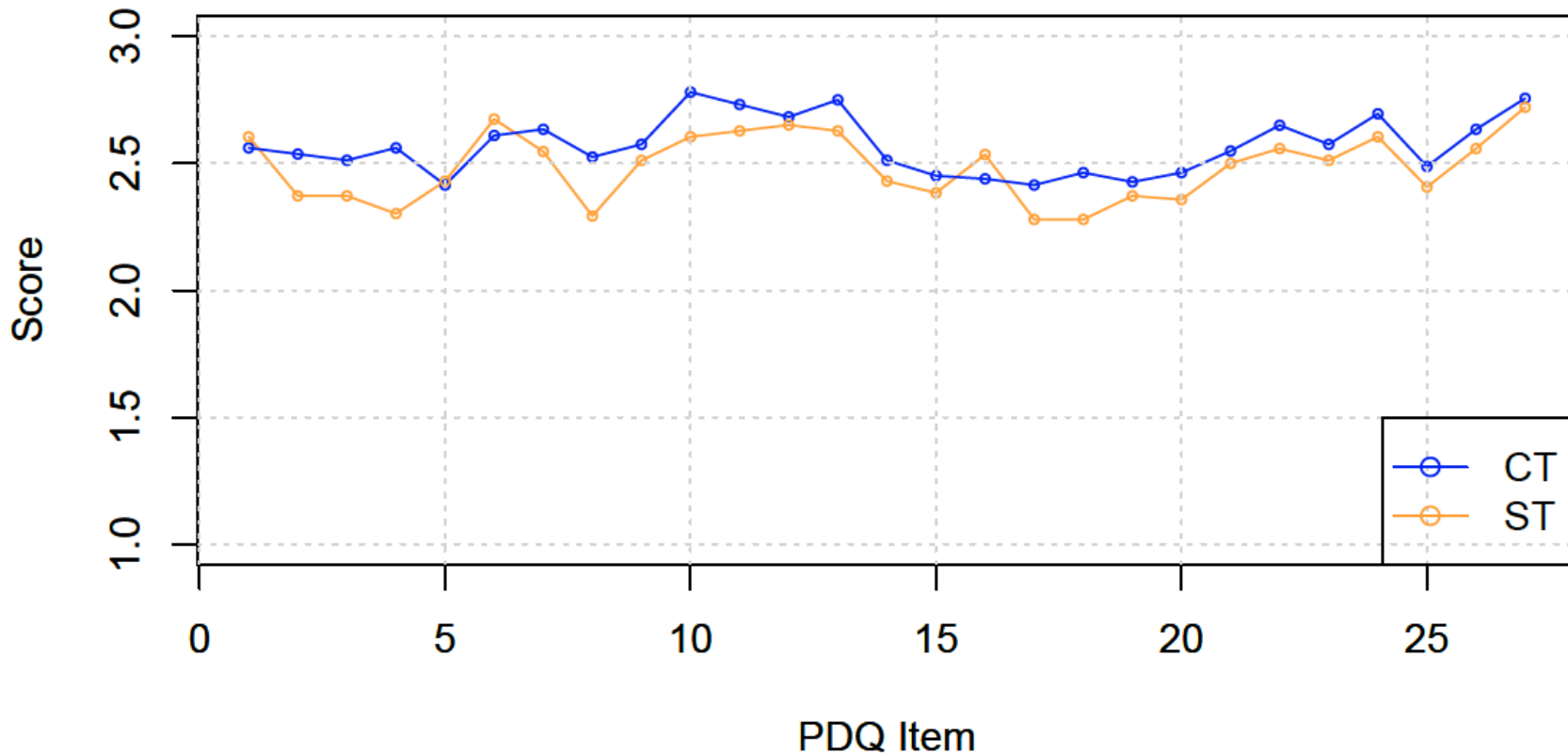
- **Question 1:** CT ratings differ from TC ratings?
 - T-Test, Logistic Regression
- **Question 2:** What three items on the PDQ are the highest and lowest rated items for:
 - a. CT
 - b. TC
 - Descriptive Statistics
 - Top 3 and Bottom 3 Items per Group
 - Logistic Regression

Reliability

- The Professional Dispositions Qualities Rubric was tested for reliability.
- Cronbach's alpha $0.959 > 0.9$
 - Very high internal consistency

PDQ Score Comparison

PDQ Comparison CT and ST



Results: Q1

TC and CT ratings

- The TC self rate was overall lower than the CT's rating.

	Teacher Candidate	Cooperating Teacher
Mean	2.49	2.54

- However, there was not a significant difference in the overall mean score between TC and CT ($t = 0.7085$, $p\text{-value} = 0.481$).

Results: Q2

Table 1. Three highest rated items by student teachers, cooperating teachers from the PDQ Survey. 2012-2013

Rank	Item #	Survey Items	Mean	SD
Teacher Candidate				
1	27	Demonstrates enthusiasm for learning	2.72	0.457
2	6	Maintains professional boundaries with all individuals	2.67	0.477
3	12	Dresses appropriately for the situation.	2.65	0.485
Cooperating Teachers				
1	10	Interacts positively with learners, including those from diverse backgrounds.	2.79	0.415
2	27	Demonstrates enthusiasm for learning.	2.76	0.431
3	13	Arrives on time	2.75	0.435

Results: Q2

Table 1. Three lowest rated items by student teachers, cooperating teachers from the PDQ Survey. 2012-2013

Rank	Item #	Survey Items	Mean	SD
Teacher Candidate				
1	17	Uses effective communication strategies to teach learners.	2.28	0.445
2	18	Collaborates equally during group activities.	2.28	0.445
3	8	Collaborates effectively with peers.	2.29	0.452
Cooperating Teachers				
1	5	Conveys confidence when interacting with students peers and or professionals in small group situations.	2.41	0.500
2	17	Uses effective communication strategies to teach learners.	2.41	0.501
3	19	Contributes relevant information during group activities.	2.43	0.496

Question 2: Logistic Regression

Logistic Regression was run to test out if there was a difference between responding as proficient or advanced for CT verses TC from the highest and lowest items.

The following top and lowest items were found to be significant:

- ▣ Item #10: CT score higher than TC, ($\alpha = 0.06$).
 - The odds that a CT scores TC as a 3 verses a 2 is .473 times the amount a TC will score themselves a 3.
- ▣ Item #27: CT score higher than TC, ($p = 0.08$).
 - The odds that a CT scores TC as a 3 verses a 2 is .459 times the amount a TC will score themselves a 3.
- ▣ Item #8, CT score higher than TC, ($p = .018$)
 - The odds that a CT scores TC as a 3 verses a 2 is .328 times the amount a TC will score themselves a 3.
- ▣ Item #18 CT score higher than TC, ($p = .044$)
 - The odds that a CT scores TC as a 3 verses a 2 is .39 times the amount a TC will score themselves a 3.

Discussion

- Overall
 - Dispositions are an important component to assess in a teaching training program.
 - Midterm data is useful to determine if interventions are needed.
 - Teacher candidate's self reflection and cooperating teachers ratings of the teacher candidates helps to keep teacher candidates accountable. Good for consistency.
 - Developed a measure to assess student's dispositions.
 - Assessed if TC and CT differ in their ratings.

Implications

- Lead to disposition task force.
- Development of a new rubric
 - 2014 Proposed Rubric
 - ▣ 12 items in rubric form
 - ▣ Assessed at Midterm & End of semester by both CT and TC.
 - ▣ Will be used across SPED and Elementary Undergraduate programs.
 - ▣ Introduced at first contact in the program.