

**PERCEIVED DIFFERENCES, BY GENDER,
IN STUDENT TEACHER - COOPERATING TEACHER INTERACTIONS**

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Abstract

The interaction cooperating teachers have with student teachers is important. The purpose of the study was to describe the differences in the psychosocial support cooperating teachers provided student teachers and the satisfaction of the student teacher-cooperating teacher interaction by gender as reported by both student teachers and cooperating teachers for the University of Missouri and the University of Illinois. Findings suggest a difference between male and female student teachers for two of the five psychosocial functions provided, and a difference between male and female cooperating teachers for one of the five psychosocial functions. Although there is a difference in interaction satisfaction between male and female student teachers, a difference was not found between male and female cooperating teachers. The implications for this study suggest that teacher educators monitor student teacher-cooperating teacher interactions for gender differences, and perhaps intervene to secure a successful relationship.

Introduction

There is some body of research that has identified variables leading to success in student teaching (Darling-Hammond & Hammerness, 2005). One element is the length of student teaching experience. Research suggests that lengthening experiences, in concert with adding graduated responsibilities to the student teacher, can improve that student teacher's teaching and self-confidence. In addition, having student teaching experiences clearly linked with coursework also influences a student teacher's teaching and self-confidence. Yet another indicator is a stronger clinical experience and more teacher education coursework can improve the achievement of student teachers' students. Finally, the support the student teacher receives is also important to that student teacher's success. Different individuals can provide support such as university supervisors, informal mentors and cooperating teachers as a formal mentor.

Kitchel and Torres (2005; 2006) synthesized that the cooperating teacher is the most important aspect to student teaching in agricultural education. This is supported by research in the field (Deeds, Flowers, & Arrington, 1991; Edwards & Briers, 2001; Garton & Cano, 1996; Harlin, Edwards, & Briers, 2002; Norris, Larke, & Briers, 1990; Schumacher & Johnson, 1990). In reviewing a study by Harlin, Edwards, and Briers (2002), student teachers rated the cooperating teacher-student teacher relationship as the most important element when compared to the other elements of student teaching. This ranking was consistent before and after student teaching.

In piecing together potential variables of interest into one theoretical framework, the use of Dunkin and Biddle's model has been used (Kitchel and Torres, 2006). Two sets of variables exist in this model: *presage* and *context*. The variables affect pupil behavior. Presage variables, such as experiences, personal traits and teacher training, are variables that influence the behavior of the teacher. Context variables, such as experiences, properties or traits, and school and community contexts, are variables that influence the behavior of the student. As the presage and context variables interact in the classroom, process variables such as teacher and student behaviors, develop. As a result of the interaction and process variable development, product variables result. These product variables can be either immediate or long-term for the student. Immediate results include attitude toward subject and growth of other skills; long-term results include adult personality and professional or occupational skills.

Kitchel and Torres (2006) proposed that the Dunkin and Biddle model can be applied to the context of student teaching whereas a student teacher assumes the role of *pupil* and cooperating teacher assumes the role of *teacher* because of the cooperating teacher's supervision role with the student teacher. For student teaching, the *classroom* is the cooperating center, of which the interaction between the pupil (student teacher) and teacher (cooperating teacher) results in immediate and long-term product variables for the pupil. Therefore, because of the change in venue can occur, from university classroom to a cooperating site, the classroom is changed to *learning environment*. Within the learning environment, there is an expected interaction between the teacher (cooperating teacher) and pupil (student teacher). Figure 1 illustrates the model as used for student teachers and cooperating teachers.

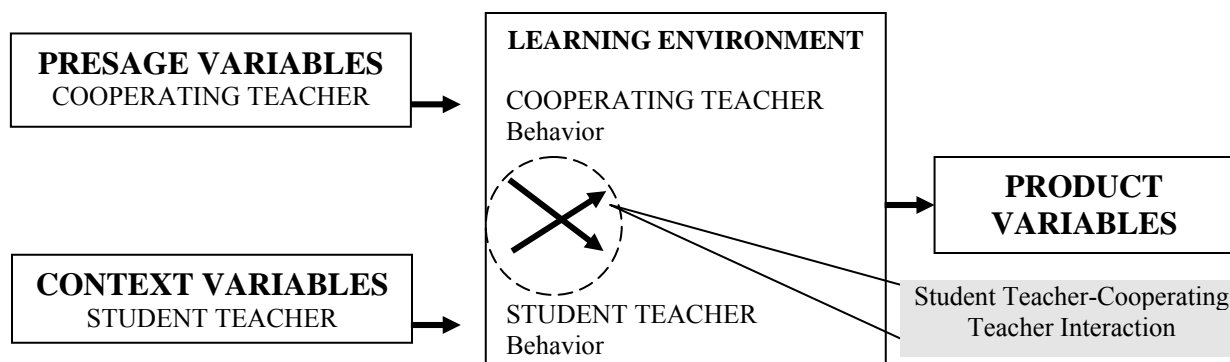


Figure 1. Components and variables of interest in the current study
Gender as a Presage and Context Variable

A characteristic both student teachers and cooperating teachers hold is gender. In general, there are gender differences. At its core, the feminists theory purports *gender equality* (Chafetz, 2004). The bottom line is that males enjoy greater access to resources than females. This inequality is “produced socioculturally and is not immutable” (p. 966). In dealing with such an important issue set within a social (and arguably cultural) context such as the student teacher-cooperating interaction, ignoring gender differences would be an oversight.

How differences in gender manifest in education is still a topic of investigation. One difference in gender among teachers exists in the field of study a teacher might select. “Female teachers are more likely to teach at the elementary level than are males. The reverse was true at the high school level” (Zumwalt & Craig, 2005, p. 123). Gender results for middle schools were found to fall in line with those of high schools. More female teachers were found in the areas of kindergarten, special education, bilingual education, ESL and secondary high school English teachers. Perhaps there are intrinsic reasons why males gravitate toward secondary and females toward elementary levels. In agricultural education, then, we would expect more male than female teachers.

Differences in gender also exist in the area of teacher movement. Zumwalt and Craig (2005) report that younger women have a higher probability of leaving the profession than younger men. This could be explained by women who chose to have children and stay at home, but does it explain all cases. The opposite holds true for older women and older men, in that, older men are more likely to leave the profession than older women. What kind of gender phenomenon is influencing these behaviors in teachers?

There have been several studies on gender in the context of agricultural education (e. g. Baker & Bagget, 1995; Cano & Miller, 1992; Dillingham, Ramirez, & Amsden, 1993; Foster, 2001; Hoover & Yoder, 1994; Johnson, Wardlow, & Franklin, 1998; Thorp, Cummins, & Townsend, 1998). In one study, Cano and Miller (1992) investigated in-service agriculture teachers from Ohio. They found male teachers to be significantly older and to have more experience. In addition, it was found that there was no significant difference in job satisfaction

by gender. Does this have anything to do with the younger, less experienced female group? Related, Fritz and Miller (2003) studied concerns expressed by student teachers from Iowa State University. Student teachers concerns were investigated by gender. The teacher concern areas identified in the study included self-adequacy, teaching tasks and teaching impact. The findings indicated a negligible association between gender and aforementioned teaching concerns. Even though concerns may be similar, how do these concerns influence behavior?

Baker and Bagget (1995) found gender differences when they investigated female agricultural education graduates in Pennsylvania. In looking at raw data from the study, in 1980 there were 23 female agriculture teachers and 341 male agriculture teachers. The proportion was somewhat closer in 1992, but there was still a distinct difference. In 1992, there were 29 female agriculture teachers and 249 male agriculture teachers. From other findings, the researchers concluded that “career guidance is [sic] lacking for women in agricultural education” (p. 515). If this disproportionate trend is widespread and there are concerns about career guidance for female agriculture teachers in general, then questions should be raised as to the mentoring experience female student teachers are receiving. Burris, Kitchel, Greiman and Torres (2006) noted that mentoring research indicates that gender could be an influence in the mentoring relationship. How could this gender influence affect how a mentor interacts with a protégé or mentee?

Interaction Defined

Kitchel and Torres (2006) utilized Kram’s (1985) Mentor Role Theory to describe the interaction between student teachers and cooperating teachers. Hall (1986, p. 161) described “relationships between junior and senior colleagues that contribute to career development” as mentoring relationships. A transfer takes places as the student teacher becomes the junior and the cooperating teacher becomes the senior colleague. According to Hall (1986), these psychosocial functions “enhance a sense of competence, clarity of identity, and effectiveness in a professional role” (p. 162).

There were five *functions* or aspects of psychosocial assistance identified from Kram’s (1985) work. The *Role Modeling* function is “demonstrating valued behaviors, attitudes and/or skills that aid the junior in achieving competence, confidence, and a clear professional identity” (Hall, 1986, p. 162). The *Counseling* function is when a mentor is “providing a helpful and confidential forum for exploring personal and professional dilemmas” (p. 162). When a mentor provides “mutual caring and intimacy that extends beyond the requirements of daily work tasks” and is “sharing experiences outside the immediate work setting,” then he/she is providing the *Friendship* function (p. 162). In providing support related to the *Acceptance* function, a mentor is “providing ongoing support, respect, and admiration, which strengthens self-confidence and self-image” (p. 162). Greiman (2002, p. 22) identified the *Social* function as one that includes “social interaction and informal exchanges about work and outside work experiences.”

Kitchel and Torres (2006) concluded that both student teachers and cooperating teachers perceived that cooperating teachers were providing psychosocial function, but not all at the same rate. The researchers studied this interaction in light of the presage and context variable of personality type. For the most part, there were relatively little to no relationships between personality type and the extent psychosocial functions were being provided. In addition to

psychosocial function support as a means of explaining student teacher-cooperating teacher interaction, Kitchel and Torres (2005) defined the interaction by the amount of satisfaction that occurred within the interaction. Interaction satisfaction was used a dependent variable with personality type. Personality type was not identified as being influential to satisfaction; however, perceived overall similarity was found to be related to satisfaction of the interaction. Perhaps these teachers feel this way because the gender piece assisted in making these pairs feel similar and/or satisfied.

There have been several questions raised in terms of student teacher and cooperating teacher interaction and the gender influence. There are gender differences, but to what degree and how those differences manifest is uncertain. Given the importance of cooperating teachers and their role in student teaching, the interaction the pair has becomes an important aspect to research. The Harvard Business School (2004) reports that women must work “harder and smarter in establishing good mentoring relationships” (p. 119). Therefore, does gender play a role in student teacher-cooperating teacher interactions?

Methods

The purpose of this relational study was to describe the differences in the psychosocial support cooperating teachers provided student teachers and the satisfaction of the student teacher-cooperating teacher interaction by gender as reported by both student teachers and cooperating teachers from the University of Missouri and the University of Illinois. The following objectives were developed to meet the study’s purpose:

1. Describe characteristics (gender, number of students at cooperating school ag program, age and years of teaching by cooperating teacher) of the student teachers and cooperating teachers.
2. Describe the differences in the psychosocial support cooperating teachers provided student teachers by gender.
3. Describe the differences in the satisfaction of the student teacher-cooperating teacher pair by gender.

Based upon the objective, the following null hypotheses were created for this study:

- H₀₁: There are no differences in the amount of psychosocial support student teachers perceive they receive from cooperating teachers by gender.
- H₀₂: There are no differences in the amount of psychosocial support cooperating teachers perceive they are giving students teachers by gender.
- H₀₃: There are no differences in satisfaction mean scores by gender, as reported by student teachers.
- H₀₄: There are no differences in satisfaction mean scores by gender, as reported by cooperating teachers.

Population and Sample

The target population for this study was agricultural education student teachers and their

cooperating teachers from the University of Missouri and the University of Illinois. Oliver and Hinkle (1982) argue that students of a given year could be representative of other enrollment classes. The type of sample ($n = 60$) was a time and place sample of the population for the 2003-2004 academic year, thus yielding 16 pairs of teachers from the one university and 12 pairs from the other university, with inferential statistics being applied to student teaching classes from the University of Missouri and University of Illinois over time. It should be noted that there were two cases where more than one cooperating teacher was identified for one student teacher.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected utilizing the Mentor Relationship Questionnaire (MRQ), as developed by Grieman, 2002 and modified by Kitchel and Torres (2005; 2006). The questionnaire was created utilizing Kram (1985) as a framework. The first part of the instrument addressed psychosocial assistance. There were 15 items constructed to assess the psychosocial functions that the cooperating teacher was providing the student teacher. The student teacher version measured the extent the cooperating teacher provided and the cooperating teacher version measured the extent the cooperating teacher thought he or she provided the psychosocial functions to his or her student teacher. A 7-point, Likert-type scale was utilized, with a scale of: 1 = not at all, 3 = some extent, 5 = large extent, and 7 = very large extent.

There were five items in another part of the MRQ that assessed overall satisfaction of the student teacher-cooperating teacher interaction. For both versions, both the student teachers and cooperating teachers rated these areas from their respective perceptions. Responses were based upon a 7-point, Likert-type scale where 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = disagree, 5 = agree, and 7 = strongly agree. The last part of the questionnaire consisted of demographic information. For the cooperating teacher version, cooperating teachers were asked their age, gender, and years taught. For the student teacher version, student teachers were asked to identify their age and gender.

There were two types of validation on the MRQ. A panel of experts ($n = 8$) reviewed the MRQ for face and content validity. A pilot test was conducted for both instruments with second and third year teachers not in the study to establish reliability. Cronbach's alpha was calculated as reliability estimates on several parts of the instrument, including the part regarding psychosocial functions. These alphas ranged from .93 to .99, between both versions, which was well in the parameters established by Nunally (1967).

For student teachers, the instrument was delivered during student teaching seminars at the end of student teaching. The instrument was administered by university faculty. For cooperating teachers, the MRQ was mailed at the end of student teaching to the cooperating teachers using modifications of Dillman's (2000) Total Design Method. E-mail pre-notices and reminders were sent in place of post cards, because both institutions utilized e-mail to correspond with cooperating teachers. In addition, cooperating teachers were administered a separate instrument (not a part of this study) at the beginning of student teaching with notification that the MRQ was forthcoming at the end of student teaching.

Using data from mailed questionnaires can introduce concerns. This is an issue of non-response. In handling non-response issues, the first strategy Miller and Smith (1983) introduced

was to get back as many responses as possible. Because this strategy was used with personalized initial delivery and continuous personal contacts, non-response was not an issue for this study. For student teachers, 100% response rate was achieved and for cooperating teachers, a 96.6% return rate was achieved. Two student teachers did not have a single cooperating teacher that could be identified from having been placed in a multiple teacher program; therefore, data were collected from both cooperating teachers and student teachers were given two separate MRQ's for each cooperating teacher.

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 12 for Windows platform computers. In determining the appropriate analysis of the data, the primary guidance was scales of measurement. To analyze objective one, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for interval and ordinal data; percentages and frequencies were calculated for nominal data. To analyze objective two, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for each of the five psychosocial functions separately by gender and reported separately for student teachers and cooperating teachers. To calculate statistical significance between genders on psychosocial assistance scores, independent samples *t*-tests were calculated with a *p*-value of .05 set *a priori*. Similarly, for objective three, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for interaction satisfaction, separately by gender and reported separately for student teachers and cooperating teachers. In addition, to calculate statistical significance between genders on psychosocial assistance scores, independent samples *t*-tests were calculated with a *p*-value of .05 set *a priori*.

Findings

Objective one sought to describe characteristics of the student teachers and cooperating teachers. Table 1 summarizes the findings. There were more female student teachers (61%) than male student teachers (39%). For cooperating teachers, the results were the opposite with more male cooperating teachers (72%) than female cooperating teachers (28%). There were, on average, 178.38 agriculture students per school (*SD* = 144.89). The mean age of student teachers was 22.15 years (*SD* = .95) and the mean age of cooperating teachers was 36.79 years (*SD* = 6.37). Cooperating teachers taught, on average, 13.97 years (*SD* = 6.64).

Student teachers were asked to what extent they felt their cooperating teacher provided psychosocial support. For male student teachers, the mean Acceptance (*M* = 6.56), Counseling (*M* = 6.39), Friendship (*M* = 6.44), Role Model (*M* = 5.06), and Social (*M* = 5.22) function mean scores fell in the real limits of large extent. For female student teachers, the mean Acceptance (*M* = 5.68), Counseling (*M* = 5.40), Friendship (*M* = 5.21) and Role Model (*M* = 5.04) function mean scores fell in the real limits of large extent. The Social (*M* = 3.63) function mean score fell in the real limit of some extent (Table 2).

Cooperating teachers were asked to what extent they felt they provided psychosocial support to their student teacher. For male cooperating teachers, the mean Acceptance (*M* = 6.44), Counseling (*M* = 6.02), Friendship (*M* = 6.00), and Role Model (*M* = 5.73) function mean scores fell in the real limits of large extent. The Social (*M* = 3.87) function mean score fell in the real limit of some extent. For female cooperating teachers, the mean Acceptance (*M* = 5.29), Counseling (*M* = 6.21), Friendship (*M* = 6.13) and Role Model (*M* = 5.46) function mean scores

fell in the real limits of large extent. The Social ($M = 3.00$) function mean score fell in the real limit of some extent (Table 3).

As reported by student teachers, the largest difference between males and females was found with the Social function, with a difference of 1.59. The second largest difference between the genders, which was 1.23, was found with the Friendship function, followed by the Role Model function with a difference of 1.02, then the Counseling function with a difference of .99, followed by the Acceptance function with a difference of .88. All differences indicated higher mean scores for males than females in all functions. In addition, except for the Social function, scores were in more of agreement, as indicated by standard deviations, for males. For the functions Acceptance ($SD_{\text{female}} = 1.65$; $SD_{\text{male}} = .69$), Counseling ($SD_{\text{female}} = 1.63$; $SD_{\text{male}} = .63$) and Friendship ($SD_{\text{female}} = 2.02$; $SD_{\text{male}} = .62$), standard deviation scores were more than double for females than males (Table 2).

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Student Teachers (n = 28) and Cooperating Teachers (n = 29)

Characteristic	Mean	S.D.	Frequency	Percent
Student Teacher Gender				
Male			11	39.29
Female			17	60.71
Cooperating Teacher Gender				
Male			21	72.41
Female			8	27.59
Number of Students in Cooperating School's Agriculture Program	178.38	144.89		
Age of Student Teacher	22.15	.95		
Age of Cooperating Teacher	36.76	6.37		
Years Cooperating Teacher Taught	13.97	6.64		

Table 2
Extent Cooperating Teacher Provided Psychosocial Functions as Reported by Student Teachers

Function	Both (n = 31)		Male (n = 12)		Female (n = 19)		Difference ($M_m - M_f$)
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Acceptance	6.02	1.41	6.56	.69	5.68	1.65	.88
Counseling	5.78	1.41	6.39	.63	5.40	1.63	.99
Friendship	5.69	1.72	6.44	.62	5.21	2.02	1.23
Role Model	5.43	1.64	6.06	1.05	5.04	1.84	1.02
Social	4.25	2.30	5.22	2.21	3.63	2.02	1.59

Note. Scale is 1 = not at all, 3 = some extent, 5 = large extent, and 7 = very large extent

Table 3

Extent Cooperating Teacher Provided Psychosocial Functions as Reported by Cooperating Teachers

Function	Both (<i>n</i> = 29)		Male (<i>n</i> = 21)		Female (<i>n</i> = 8)		Difference (<i>M_m</i> - <i>M_f</i>)
	Mean	<i>S.D.</i>	Mean	<i>S.D.</i>	Mean	<i>S.D.</i>	
Acceptance	6.13	.92	6.44	.73	5.29	.88	1.15
Counseling	6.07	.46	6.02	.44	6.21	.50	-.19
Friendship	6.03	.61	6.00	.63	6.13	.59	-.13
Role Model	5.66	.77	5.73	.84	5.46	.53	.27
Social	3.63	1.78	3.87	1.84	3.00	1.55	.87

Note. Scale is 1 = not at all, 3 = some extent, 5 = large extent, and 7 = very large extent

Table 4

Independent T-test Results Comparing Males to Females for Each of the Psychosocial Functions as Reported by Student Teachers and Cooperating Teachers

Function	Student Teachers (<i>n</i> = 31)		Cooperating Teachers (<i>n</i> = 29)	
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Acceptance ^a	2.04	26.02	3.59 *	27.00
Counseling ^a	2.37 *	25.28	-1.01	27.00
Friendship ^a	2.49 *	23.02	-.48	27.00
Role Model ^{a,b}	1.96	28.82	1.06	20.18
Social	1.96	29.00	1.19	27.00

* $p < .05$; ^a Equal variance not assumed for student teachers; ^b Equal variance not assumed for cooperating teachers

As reported by cooperating teachers (Table 3), the largest difference between males and females was found with the Acceptance function, with a difference of 1.15. The second largest difference between the genders, which was .87, was found with the Social function, followed by the Role Model function with a difference of .27, then the Counseling function with a difference of .19, followed by the Friendship function with a difference of .13. Males' mean scores for the Acceptance, Role Model and Social functions, were higher than females.

T-tests were calculated between males and females for both groups of teachers by each psychosocial function (Table 4). For student teachers, statistically significant differences were found between males and females for the functions Counseling and Friendship. For cooperating teachers, only one function, Acceptance, indicated statically significant differences. Therefore, for Counseling and Friendship, null hypothesis one that states there are no differences in the amount of psychosocial support student teachers perceive they receive from cooperating teachers by gender was rejected. For the functions Acceptance, Role Model and Social, the researchers failed to reject null hypothesis one which states there are no differences in the amount of psychosocial support student teachers perceive they receive from cooperating teachers by gender. For null hypothesis two, which states there are no differences in the amount of psychosocial support cooperating teachers perceive they are giving students teachers by gender, the hypothesis was rejected for the Acceptance function, but the researchers failed to reject the null hypothesis for the remaining functions.

The third objective was to describe the differences in the satisfaction of the student teacher-cooperating teacher pair by gender. Each of the satisfaction mean scores and standard deviations has been reported by function and differentiated by gender. Independent *t*-values were also calculated to determine if statistically significant differences existed between genders. Table 5 summarizes the mean score results; Table 6 summarizes for *t*-test findings.

Table 5

Amount of Satisfaction of the Student Teacher-Cooperating Teacher Interaction by Gender, as Perceived by Student Teachers and Cooperating Teachers

Perceived By	Both		Male		Female		Difference ($M_m - M_f$)
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Cooperating Teacher	6.32	1.28	6.52	1.18	5.78	1.43	.74
Student Teacher	5.94	1.73	6.90	.29	5.33	1.98	1.57

Note. Scale is 1= Strongly Disagree, 3 = Disagree; 5 = Agree; 7 = Strongly Agree

Table 6

Independent T-test Results Comparing Males to Females on Satisfaction of Interaction as Reported by Student Teachers and Cooperating Teachers

Function	Student Teachers (<i>n</i> = 31)		Cooperating Teachers (<i>n</i> = 29)	
	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Satisfaction ^a	3.41 *	19.20	1.44	27.00

**p* < .05; ^a Equal variance not assumed for student teachers

For student teachers, the perceived satisfaction on interaction mean score reported by male student teachers of was 6.90 (*SD* = .29), placing it in the real limits of Strongly Agree. The perceived satisfaction mean score reported by female student teachers was 5.33 (*SD* = 1.98), placing it in the real limits of Agree. The difference in mean scores, by gender, was 1.57. It should be noted that the difference in standard deviations between males and females on Satisfaction was 1.69 (Table 5). For cooperating teachers, the perceived satisfaction mean score reported by males was 6.52 (*SD* = 1.18), placing it in the real limits of Strongly Agree. The mean score reported by females was 5.78 (*SD* = 1.43), placing it in the real limits of Agree. The difference in mean scores, by gender, was .74 (Table 5).

Table 6 includes the independent samples *t*-test findings for student teachers and cooperating teachers. The *p*-value was less than .05 for student teachers whereas the *p*-value was greater than .05 for cooperating teachers. Therefore, null hypothesis three, which states there are no differences in satisfaction mean scores by gender, as reported by student teachers, the hypothesis is rejected. For null hypothesis four, which states there are no differences in satisfaction mean scores by gender, as reported by cooperating teachers, the researchers failed to reject the null hypothesis.

Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

According to student teachers, there are no statistically significant differences between

the extent male and female student teachers are receiving psychosocial assistance from their cooperating teaching for the functions Acceptance, Role Model and Social. There are statistically significant differences for the functions Counseling and Friendship. Burris et al. (2006) noted that gender influences mentoring; the findings of the current study shed light as to where the differences exist and do not exist.

Why is there a disparity among the functions? This has implications for female student teachers, as they do not feel they are getting the same friendship and counseling support from the cooperating teachers as male student teachers do. A question this study cannot answer is how these differences are affecting female student teachers. It is recommended that cooperating teachers be aware of the amount of Counseling and Friendship offered to the student teachers and perhaps how they are being perceived. In addition, teacher educators may need to intervene to ensure that female student teachers are receiving the proper amount of Counseling and Friendship functions. Interventions may include assigning outside mentoring or establishing assignments that build on the cooperating teacher providing the Counseling and Friendship functions more.

In additions, for the functions Acceptance, Counseling and Friendship, female student teachers were less agreeable across scores than males; standard deviations for female student teachers were more than double than males for these functions. This implies that there is a disparity in thought among the females as some felt their cooperating teacher provided much more of a certain function than others. Teacher educators should investigate this phenomenon to replicate the aspects that make these perceptions scores high and eliminate aspects that make these low scores so low.

According to cooperating teachers, there are no statistically significant differences between male and female cooperating teachers in terms of the extent student teachers are receiving psychosocial assistance for the functions Counseling, Friendship, Role Model and Social. There are statistically significant differences for the functions Acceptance. Why do female cooperating teachers believe they are doing a poorer job of helping their student teachers acclimate to the profession?

The implications of this conclusion are that females cooperating teachers may either be doing a poorer job of profession acclimation, or that they have a different or higher standard for the Acceptance function than their male counterparts. It is recommended that interviews be conducted with student and cooperating teachers to discover a more in-depth rationale for these differences. It is also recommended that teacher educators monitor the amount of Acceptance function cooperating teachers are providing, as interventions may need to occur to either increase the amount of Acceptance a cooperating teacher is providing a student teacher or use interventions to alleviate potential stress that a female cooperating teacher is experiencing due to their lower perception of providing the Acceptance function.

In terms of satisfaction on the student teacher-cooperating teacher interaction, there were statistically significant differences in satisfaction between male and female student teachers, but not cooperating teachers. Again, this study cannot uncover the reason behind the differences. Does this affect the amount of female teachers we have in our profession? Could this be a piece

to the findings of Baker and Baggett (1995)? Perhaps many dissatisfied female student teachers end their educational career because they are receiving a poorer experience (or at the least they perceive they do). It is recommended to investigate, via interviews, potential interaction dissatisfiers to aid teacher educators in increasing the satisfaction.

Yet another area for further research, in regard to research objectives two and three, it is suggested to investigate the male-female relationships further. The findings of this study only investigate male and female differences from a rudimentary level. Each pair should be identified as being a female-female, female-male, male-female, and male-male to see if gender arrangement has an influence on psychosocial assistance and interaction satisfaction.

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