

**Analysis of Student Teacher Morale  
Before and After Student Teaching**

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The experience called student teaching has been an important segment in the curriculum of teacher education programs in the United States since 1823, when Samuel Hall established the first teacher-training institution in Concord, Vermont. Although many changes have been made in student teaching programs since their establishment, the importance attached to student teaching is evidenced by the continued changes and emphasis placed on this field experience.

Because of the nature and importance attached to student teaching, it is important to investigate what goes on during this crucial period of time. There have been studies related to personality, job satisfaction, and attitudes of student teachers and cooperating teachers. However, there have been few studies related to student teachers' morale, especially as it relates to their cooperating teacher's morale.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there is a significant difference in the morale of student teachers before and after the student teaching experience. Related purposes were to determine whether selected personal and situation variables and the morale of cooperating teachers are related to any change in student teachers.

Hypotheses

The null hypotheses were as follows:

1. There will be no difference between the morale of student teachers before and after the student teaching experience as measured by the nine factors on the *Purdue Student Teacher Opinionnaire*. (Bentley and Price 1972; 1976).

2. There will be no difference between the morale of student teachers before and after the student teaching experience as measured by the total scores on the *Purdue Student Teacher Opinionnaire*.

3. There will be no relationship between selected personal variables and the morale of student teachers before the student teaching experience as measured by the total scores on the *Purdue Student Teacher Opinionnaire*.

4. There will be no relationship between personal and situational variables and the morale of student teachers after the student teaching experience as measured by the total scores on the *Purdue Student Teacher Opinionnaire*.

5. There will be no relationship between the morale of student teachers and the morale of their cooperating teachers as measured by the total pretest scores on the *Purdue Student Teacher Opinionnaire* and the total scores on the *Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire*.

6. There will be no relationship between the morale of student teachers and the morale of their cooperating teachers as measured by the pretest scores on the nine factors of the *Purdue Student Teacher Opinionnaire* and the morale of their cooperating teachers as measured by the 10 factors on the *Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire*. (Bently and Rempel 1973; 1980).

7. There will be no relationship between the morale of student teachers as measured by the total posttest scores on the *Purdue Student Teacher Opinionnaire* and the morale of their cooperating teachers as measured by the total scores on the *Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire*.

8. There will be no relationship between the morale of student teachers as measured by the posttest scores on the nine factors of the *Purdue Student Teacher Opinionnaire* and the morale of their cooperating teachers as measured by the 10 factors of the *Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire*.

### Methods and Procedures

Data were collected during the fall semester of 1980 from Mississippi State University student teachers in the College of Education and their cooperating teachers who would agree to participate in the study. The College of Education consists of: elementary education, secondary education, special education, physical education, agricultural education, business education, home economics education, and industrial education. The sample consisted of 155 student teachers and 136 cooperating teachers.

The Personal Data Questionnaire and the *Purdue Student Teacher Opinionnaire* (PSTO) were administered to the participants approximately six weeks before they left campus to student teach.

The Situation Questionnaire and the PSTO were mailed to the student teachers approximately two weeks before they completed the student teaching experience. The Situation Questionnaire was designed to gather information about the student teaching situation.

The cooperating teachers were mailed the *Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire* (PTO) approximately two weeks before the student teachers had completed the student teaching experience. The PTO yielded a total score and a score for each of the 10 factors.

### Results

The statistical analysis of the data to test the hypotheses consisted of the use of the following statistics: correlated *t*-test, multiple regression, Pearson product-moment correlation, and canonical correlation. The .05 level of significance was established for the rejection of each hypothesis.

1. A correlated *t*-test was used to analyze the nine factor scores on the PSTO pretest and posttest. The analysis revealed that student teachers had significantly more positive morale scores between pretest and posttest measures on the PSTO factors: "rapport with supervising teacher," "rapport with principal," "teaching as a profession," "school facilities and services," "rapport with students," "rapport with other teachers," and "student teacher load."

2. The total scores on the PSTO pretest and posttest were analyzed using a correlated *t*-test. The results revealed a significant positive change in student teachers' total morale scores between pretest and posttest measures with a calculated *t*-value of 5.43.

3. Multiple regression was used to test the relationship between the variables on the Personal Data Questionnaire to the total pretest scores on the PSTO. Two of the variables made statistically significant contributions to the regression equation. These two variables were: early experience programs related to education had a correlation of .21 and an  $R^2$  of .04, and the student teachers' role expectations in the school setting where they planned to student teach increased the multiple *R* to .29 and the  $R^2$  to .09.

4. Multiple regression was used to test the relationship between the variables on the Personal Data Questionnaire and the Situation Questionnaire and the total posttest scores on the PSTO. Seven variables made statistically significant contributions to the regression equation. Total pretest scores had a correlation of .42 and an  $R^2$  of .18. Cooperating teachers' effectiveness working with the student teacher increased the multiple *R* to .58 and  $R^2$  to .34. School discipline increased the multiple *R* to .63 and  $R^2$  to .39. These variables

had an *F*-value significant at the .01 level. Cooperating teachers' desire to work with the student teacher increased the multiple *R* to .66 and *R*<sup>2</sup> to .43. Student teacher's acceptance as a professional educator increased the multiple *R* to .67 and *R*<sup>2</sup> to .44. Cooperating teacher's effectiveness as a classroom teacher had a multiple *R* of .67 and the *R*<sup>2</sup> increased to .45. The *F*-value for these variables was significant at the .05 level. The addition of the other 11 variables increased the multiple *R* to .70 and *R*<sup>2</sup> to .48.

5. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to test the relationship between the student teachers' pretest scores on the PSTO and the cooperating teachers' total scores on the PTO. The results of the analysis revealed there was not a significant relationship between student teachers' total pretest morale scores and their cooperating teachers' morale scores.

6. Canonical correlation was used to test the relationship between the student teachers' pretest factor scores on the PSTO and the cooperating teachers' factor scores on the PTO. The correlation was not significant.

7. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to analyze the student teachers' responses on the posttest of the PSTO and the cooperating teachers' responses on the PTO. The analysis resulted in a correlation coefficient of .42. This correlation was significant at the .001 level of probability.

8. Canonical correlation was used to determine the relationship between the student teachers' responses on the posttest scores on the nine factors on the PSTO and their cooperating teachers' responses on the 10 factors of the PTO. The analysis revealed three significant canonical relationships between the factors of the student teachers' morale scores on the PSTO after the student teaching experience and factors of their cooperating teachers' morale scores on the PTO. The three significant canonical roots are shown in Table 1.

The first canonical root was yielded when student teachers scored positively to "rapport with principal" and negatively on the factors "teaching as a profession" and "rapport with other teachers" when their cooperating teachers scored positively on the factor "teacher rapport with principal" and negatively to the factors "rapport among teachers" and "community pressures."

The second canonical root revealed that student teachers scored positively to the factors "student teacher load" and "rapport with students" and negatively to the factors "rapport with supervising teacher," "teaching as a profession," and "professional preparation" when their cooperating teachers scored positively to the factors "teacher salary," "teacher load," and "satisfaction with teaching" and negatively to the factors "rapport among teachers" and "teacher status."

Table 1

*Canonical Correlation Between Factors of the Posttest on the Purdue Student Teacher Opinionnaire and Factors on the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire*

Variables	Canonical roots		
	I	II	III
<b>Predictor Variables: PSTO Factors</b>			
1. Rapport with supervising teacher	-.06	(-.43)	-.11
2. Rapport with principal	(.72)	-.36	-.29
3. Rapport with university supervisor	.23	.02	.18
4. Teaching as a profession	(-.54)	(-.40)	(.75)
5. School facilities and services	-.34	.29	.23
6. Professional preparation	.09	(-.75)	-.06
7. Rapport with students	.13	(.95)	.22
8. Rapport with other teachers	(-.83)	.01	(-.86)
9. Student teacher load	.17	(.43)	.12
<b>Criterion Variables: PTO Factors</b>			
1. Teacher rapport with principal	(.60)	-.36	(-.41)
2. Satisfaction with teaching	-.20	(.88)	-.15
3. Rapport among teachers	(-.60)	(-.65)	(-.61)
4. Teacher salary	.15	(.72)	(-.53)
5. Teacher load	.30	(.50)	.24
6. Curriculum issues	-.17	.16	-.33
7. Teacher status	.03	(-1.00)	(.84)
8. Community support of education	.12	.25	.17
9. School facilities and services	-.37	-.12	(.76)
10. Community pressunes	(-.46)	.08	-.23
Roots ( $R^2$ )	.3593	.2663	.1989
R	.5994	.5161	.4460
Chi Square	159.9939	111.0189	76.9493
df	90	72	56
Probability	.001	.002	.033

The third significant canonical root revealed that student teachers scored positively to the factor "teaching as a profession" and negatively to the factor "rapport with other teachers" when their cooperating teachers scored positively on the factors "teacher status" and "school facilities and services" and negatively on the factors "teacher rapport with principal," "rapport among teachers," and "teacher salary."

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings of this study revealed distinct differences to certain aspects of student teacher morale. Consequently, the following statements appear worthy of consideration by persons involved in teacher education.

1. There was a significant positive change in student teachers' morale from pretest to posttest scores in the following areas: "rapport with supervising teacher," "rapport with principal," "teaching as a profession," "school facilities and services," "rapport with students," "rapport with other teachers," and "student teacher load." However, there was not a significant change for the morale of student teachers in the areas of "rapport with university supervisor" and "professional preparation." In fact, the mean scores for some of the teacher groups was less positive after the student teaching experience. Since both of these less positive factors involve university preparation and supervision, analysis of current programs and procedures should be considered.

2. Early experience programs related to education and the student teachers' role expectations in the school setting contributed most to the student teachers' morale scores before the student teaching experience. Therefore, students in teacher education should have an opportunity to participate in more educational experiences prior to student teaching.

3. The student teachers' acceptance as a professional educator by cooperating teachers and other school personnel contributed significantly to the student teachers' morale after the student teaching experience. Persons involved in teacher education should attempt to present a positive attitude toward the professionalism of teaching and also try to transmit this attitude to cooperating teachers.

4. There was not a significant relationship between the morale of student teachers before the student teaching experience and the morale of their cooperating teachers. However, there was a significant relationship after the student teaching experience between student teachers' morale and the morale of their cooperating teachers. The canonical correlation revealed three significant relationships. Consequently, the cooperating teachers should be made aware of how their positive or negative attitudes influence the morale of their student teachers.

5. Since there was a significant correlation between the student teachers' morale scores and the morale scores of their cooperating teachers after the student teaching experience, more consideration needs to be given to the area of cooperating teacher selection and training. Special attention is needed in the identification of cooperating teachers who have a sincere desire to work with student teachers.

6. School discipline contributed significantly to the student teachers' morale after the student teaching experience. Consequently, more extensive programs should be designed to help students identify the teacher's role in dealing with school discipline as they progress through the teacher education program.

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