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Plunging Beneath the Surface: Uncovering Internal Dispositions

Statement of the issue:

Teacher preparation programs are being held accountable through accreditation to produce teacher candidates who demonstrate competencies to meet the needs of all students. The issue is the difficulty teacher preparation programs face in measuring candidates' competencies that can be considered internal dispositions; which impact the quality of their instruction. This study delves into the teacher performance assessment (edTPA) scores candidates are earning in correlation to their Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) level.

Literature review:

The edTPA is a national teaching performance assessment that has developed from of the work of Linda Darling-Hammond and Stanford University in order to improve teacher quality. As Darling-Hammond (2010) notes:

> For more than two decades, policymakers have undertaken many and varied reforms to improve schools, ranging from new standards and tests to redesigned schools, new curricula and new governance models. One important lesson from these efforts is the repeated finding that **teachers are the fulcrum** determining whether any school initiative tips toward success or failure. Every aspect of school reform depends on highly skilled teachers for its success. This is especially true as educational standards rise and the diversity of the student body increases. Teachers need even **more sophisticated abilities** to teach more complex curriculum to the growing number of public school students who have fewer educational resources at home, those who are new English language learners, and those who have distinctive learning needs. (p.1) [bold added]

The edTPA provides teacher licensure programs a common framework for defining and measuring teacher quality (edTPA, n.d.). The performance assessment is comprised of a series of three tasks: planning, instruction, and assessment. Each task measures a teacher candidate's competence and readiness to teach. They consists of evidence (i.e. lesson plans, video of teaching, and students work) along with a series of questions to guide a teacher candidate in reflecting upon their practice. The edTPA is designed to be an educative process as well. Darling-Hammond (2010) contends that performance-based assessments can help teachers improve their practice and not just measure it. The reflective practice required of teacher candidates as they complete the assessment causes them to take a critical look at their effectiveness in teaching and student learning.
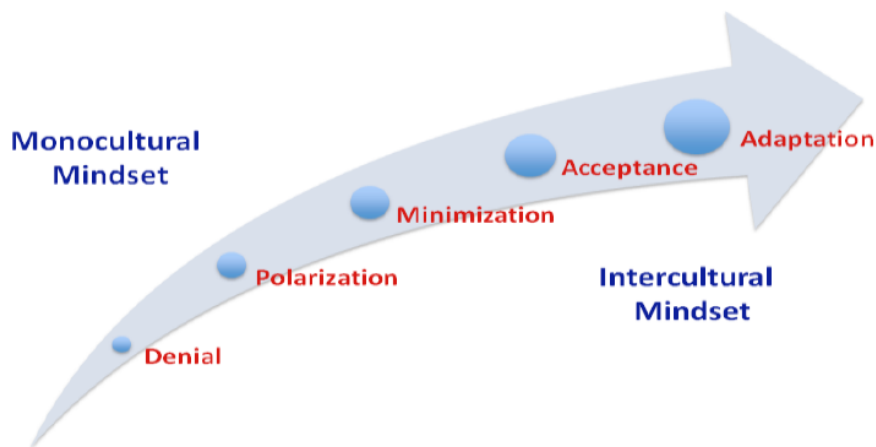
The edTPA is rapidly becoming an industry standard with thirty-four states using the assessment in some capacity. As of 2013, seven states are in the full implementation phase, meaning that they have some sort of state policy for edTPA to be used as part of program completion or for state licensure. Five additional states are moving toward full implementation (i.e. getting the assessment considered at the state level) and twenty-two others are participating in edTPA but only in an exploratory capacity (only at individual institutions and not at the state level) (edTPA, n.d.).

For the seven states that are in full implementation the edTPA is a high-stakes assessment. Passing scores are required for program completion in some states and other states require passing scores for teacher licensure. Discussions surrounding the edTPA are now referring to the assessment as the new national "bar exam" for teachers (M. Sato, personal communication, March, 2012).

If what Darling-Hammond states is true-that teachers are the "**fulcrum**" and need "**more sophisticated abilities**" to teach-then how much more important is it for teacher education that teacher candidates demonstrate an understanding of how to recognize and maneuver the cultural competencies in teaching. Can performance on the edTPA demonstrate a teacher candidate's competencies and readiness in handling the culturally and linguistically diverse student populations?

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is a measure of internal dispositions. The inventory consists of fifty, Likert-type paper and pencil items that can be easily answered in a 20 to 30 minute session. The scale was designed to measure individual and/or group intercultural sensitivity and is based on Milton Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity. Confirmatory factor analyses conducted by Hammer and Bennett supported five dimensions with reliability coefficients ranging from .80 to .85. Correlations with the World mindedness Scale and Intercultural Anxiety Scale supported the IDI's construct validity. Based on the psychometric properties associated with this instrument, the authors suggest that it is useful for purposes of assessing training needs, identifying interventions aimed at increasing intercultural competence, assisting with the selection of personnel, and program evaluation (Hammer, 2011)

Intercultural Development Continuum

Monocultural
Mindset

Adaptation

Acceptance

Minimization

Polarization

Intercultural
Mindset

Denial

(Hammer, 2011)

CAEP (2013) documents conclude that teacher education programs must embed diversity experience and cultural competence throughout all teacher preparation courses and experiences:

1. Incorporation of multiple perspectives to the discussion of content, including attention to learners' personal, family, and community experiences and cultural norms.
2. A commitment to deepening awareness and understanding the strengths and needs of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction that incorporates the histories, experiences and representations of students and families from diverse populations.
3. Verbal and nonverbal communication skills that demonstrate respect for and responsiveness to the cultural backgrounds and differing perspectives learners and their families bring to the learning environment.
4. Ability to interpret and share student assessment data with families to support student learning in all learning environments.
5. An understanding of their own frames of reference (e.g., culture, gender, language, abilities, ways of knowing), the potential biases in these frames, the relationship of privilege and power in schools, and the impact of these frames on educators' expectations for and relationships with learners and their families (InTASC, 2011).

Research Question:
1. What role, if any, does teacher candidates teaching performance correlate internal dispositions?
2. Does the edTPA scores differ by IDI orientation?

Results:

The IDI Orientation scores were analyzed in fixed-effects analysis of variance (ANOVA) with edTPA scores (Total Test Score and Average Rubric Score) as between-subject factor. The effect of IDI orientation on edTPA total test score was found to be statistically significant, $F(4,51) = 2.90$, $p < 0.03$. Additionally, the effect of IDI orientation on edTPA average rubric score was found to be statistically significant, $F(4,51) = 0.42$, $p < 0.02$. This is evidence against the null hypothesis that IDI orientation has no effect on edTPA scores.

Table 2

One-Way Analysis of Variance Summary Table for edTPA Total Scores and edTPA Average Rubric Scores by IDI Orientation Scores

Variable and source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
edTPA Total Scores					
Between-group	4	416.92	104.23	2.90	0.03*
Within-group	51	1834.85	35.98		
Total	55	2251.75			
edTPA Average Rubric Score					
Between-group	4	1.67	0.42	3.18	0.02*
Within-group	51	6.72	0.13		
Total	55	8.39			

Note. * Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$

To determine which orientation groups were different, a Gabriel post hoc test was performed for each of those variables. Based on the results of these multiple pairwise contrasts, the minimization 1 orientation group scored an average of 12.71 total points higher than the denial orientation group ($SE = 04.53$) and the minimization 1 orientation group scored an average of 0.87 rubric points higher than the denial orientation group ($SE = 0.27$).

Discussion:

The results of this study indicate that teacher candidates whose cultural competence orientation is at minimization 1 are scoring at a higher on the edTPA than those students whose orientation is denial. This suggests that developing teacher candidate cultural

competence in teacher education programs is essential in the performance of effective teaching as indicated through the edTPA. Through purposeful planning, curriculum, instruction, experiences and reflection candidates' cultural competence orientation can shift.

Remembering that intercultural competence is the ability to connect and adapt to differences and commonalities. Candidates in denial tend to be disinterested in other cultures, avoid cultural differences (perceptions, values, beliefs), limited experiences with other cultures, and use stereotypes and generalizations. When in denial candidates recognize the above the iceberg cultural characteristics and can not internalize anything below the iceberg. With the focus to foster a candidates' cultural competence into at least the minimization orientation the following goals could be set:
1. To notice as well as confront cultural differences
2. To commit to one's own cultural values and practices
3. To interact with others from different cultures
4. To recognize when they over emphasize differences without understanding
5. To purposely search out commonalties

At minimization candidates should be able to function in a transitional mindset (between monocultural and intercultural) by displaying tolerance without feeling the need to attend to differences that they are able to recognize (Hammer, 2011).

The data suggests that students who are in minimization are able to provide evidence in the edTPA assessment that they make surface level connections between students and their prior knowledge. Superficial connections are made to students and commonalities in the group are recognized.

Limitations: Data collection is at an early stage in this study and therefore the sample size is from only one cohort who has completed both the edTPA and IDI in student teaching. We will continue to add to our data and reevaluate the findings and implications.

Implications:
This study utilizes quantitative data gathered from the IDI and edTPA. Additionally, the edTPA affords future opportunities to collect qualitative data through students' edTPA written commentaries across the three tasks to be completed as well as video representation of their instruction. The intent is that the findings will empower department faculty in designing or creating high quality practices that make impactful decisions that will promote the internal dispositions of candidates.
We all recognize that there are now diversity standards for teacher preparation programs, there is an abundance of research which concurs that cultural competence is essential for 21st century teachers to meet the needs of ALL students, as well as a teacher performance assessment where candidates must prove their ability to plan, instruct, assess and reflect. The action and data of what programs are doing is lacking in the literature. The "how" we are measuring cultural competence both as an indicator of the candidate's mindset and as a guide to what programs need to include to further that growth is essential in providing effective instruction as assessed in the edTPA.

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Appendix

edTPA Rubrics that address InTASC Standard 2: Learning Differences- The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

Rubrics	Literacy Prompts	Mathematics Prompts
(1) Planning for Mathematical Understandings OR Planning for Literacy Learning	How do the candidate's plans build students' understanding of an essential literacy strategy for comprehending OR composing text and the skills that support that strategy?	How do the candidate's plans build student's conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, AND mathematical reasoning and/or problem?
(2) Planning to Support Varied Student Learning Needs	How does the candidate use knowledge of his/her students to target support for students' literacy learning?	How does the candidate use knowledge of his/her students to target support for students to develop conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and mathematical reasoning/problem solving skills?
(3) Using Knowledge of Students to Inform Teaching and Learning	How does the candidate use knowledge of his/her students to justify instructional plans?	How does the candidate use knowledge of his/her students to justify instructional plans?
(4) Identifying and Supporting Language Demands	How does the candidate identify and support language demands associated with a key literacy learning task?	How does the candidate identify and support language demands associated with a key mathematics learning task?
(6) Learning Environment	How does the candidate demonstrate a positive literacy learning environment that supports students' engagement in learning?	How does the candidate demonstrate a respectful learning environment that supports students' engagement in learning?
(7) Engaging Students in Learning	How does the candidate actively engage students in integrating strategies and skills to comprehend or compose text?	How does the candidate actively engage students in understanding of mathematical concepts?
(14) Analyzing Students' Language Use and Mathematics/Literacy Learning	How does the candidate analyze students' use of language to develop content understanding?	How does the candidate analyze students' use of language to develop content understanding?