ADULT LEARNERS IN TEACHER EDUCATION: DEVELOPING A SENSE OF SELF AS A TEACHER

By

Lesa N. Louch

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

K-12 Educational Administration- Doctor of Philosphy

2013

ABSTRACT

ADULT LEARNERS IN TEACHER EDUCATION:
DEVELOPING A SENSE OF SELF AS A TEACHER

By

Lesa N. Louch

The purpose of this research was to gain an understanding of how returning adult learners, who were enrolled in a teacher preparation program within a career college, understood and made sense of their experiences in the program. This qualitative study centered on the experiences and stories of six adult learners who were student teaching while attending a career college.

The developmental nature of teacher identity was a central finding of this research. There were four major themes that highlighted the experiences of these adult learner pre-service teachers, which included: (1) disorienting experiences, (2) the importance of remembered individuals, (3) the influence of cooperating teachers (CTs), and (4) an emerging sense of identity as a teacher.

The findings suggest that adult learners perceived their experiences within the teacher education program as ones in which they developed a preliminary sense of identity as a teacher. The participants' construction and reconstruction of their identities were guided by their conceptualizations of what it meant to be a teacher and what it meant to teach. The findings of this study continue the discussion as to how adult learners make sense of their teacher preparation experiences.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge with appreciation the support that I have received from my dissertation chair, Dr. John Dirkx. His unwavering patience, discussion, and intellectual coaching encouraged my own personal transformation in this journey.

I would also like to acknowledge my colleagues who provided the much needed community that it takes to persist through the rigorous process of working full-time and engaging in the process of writing a dissertation.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the love and support of my family. Specifically, my husband, Eddie Louch, whose belief in me is immeasurable and to my daughter, Ava Louch, who I aspire to be a strong female role model for.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES vi

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION 1
Statement of the Problem 4
Background to the Study 7
Research Question 8
Significance of the Study 8

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 9
Returning Adult Learners 9
Adult Learners in Teacher Preparation 13
Developing a Professional Identity 15
Discussion of Teacher Identity 20
Teacher Identity and Quality 22
Teacher Identity Formation in Adult Learners 26
Challenges to Adult Learners 28
Conclusion 29

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS 31
Research Design 31
Context of Research Sites 32
Role of the Researcher 37
Participant Selection and Recruitment 39
Data Collection 40
Data Analysis 43
Trustworthiness 45

CHAPTER 4: Findings and Interpretations 46
Stories of the Participants 46
Tina 47
Tiffany 50
Keith 53
Tonya 55
Becky 58
Cassie 60
Making Sense of the Students' Experiences 63
Disorienting Experiences 63
Externally-Driven Experiences 64
Internally-Driven Experiences 65
Remembered Individuals 66
Emotionally-Laden Memories 66
Ways of Knowing and Being 67

Influence of Cooperating Teacher 69
Positive Relationships 70
Negative Relationships 71
Emerging Sense of Identity 72
Core-Identity 75
Acquisition-Identity 76
Summary 76

CHAPTER 5: Discussion and Conclusion 78
Discussion of the Findings 79
Life Transitions as a Stimulus for Enrolling in the Program 80
The Role of Remembered Lives 82
Relationships with Program Faculty and Cooperating Teachers 85
Life Experiences and Roles 87
Contributions to Teacher Identity Formation 89
Implications 91
Future Research 94
Personal Reflections 97

APPENDICES
Appendix A-Table 1: Teacher Preparation Required Fieldwork 100
Appendix B-Student Teaching Duties 101
Appendix C-Student Teaching Outcomes 102
Appendix D-Consent Form 104
Appendix E-Demographic Survey 106
Appendix F-Interview Guide 107

REFERENCES 110

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Teacher Preparation Required Fieldwork.....100

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Cathy is a 52-year-old white female who is married and is the mother of three teenage boys**.** Prior to coming to college, Cathy was a stay-at- home mother and her husband, though recently laid off, worked in a factory setting. At the age of 47, Cathy, with no prior formal post-secondary education, was admitted into a teacher preparation program to pursue her lifelong dream to become a teacher. Throughout the course of her journey to become a teacher, Cathy's college instructors and cooperating teachers recognized and acknowledged behaviors that distinguished her from other classmates. For example, Cathy, as a member of a senior seminar class, was accompanied by 15 of her classmates, all of whom could be characterized as traditional students in terms of age, 25 years old or younger. The students in the seminar were sitting in a roundtable fashion, discussing pedagogical theory and its implications in the classroom. The mood of the group was serious and exuded professionalism, reflecting the students' commitment to becoming teachers. Tom, who was one of the students in the seminar, made a relevant and thoughtful statement, but Cathy, who was sitting next to him, leaned over and struck him on the back of the head, saying "Really, you think that would work in the classroom?" After that action, the discussion in the room was silenced, and Tom's face turned flush.

Behaviors such as these are incongruent with the norms and expectations that are deeply attached to the culture and profession of teaching. However, it is not uncommon to observe returning adult students, such as Cathy, engage in these behaviors with their peers. Within the context of a teacher preparation program, how might we understand and make sense of such behaviors demonstrated by some returning adult students? What do these behaviors suggest

about how these students are negotiating the transition from who they were to who they are trying to become? The broad purpose of this research is to gain an understanding of how returning adult learners, like Cathy, who are enrolled in teacher preparation programs, understand and make sense of their experiences.

Over the past 30 years, higher education has witnessed an increased enrollment of adult learners, students who are 25 years old or older (NCES, 2007). From 1980 to 2000, the population of students who were 25 years old or older grew from 4 million to 6 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). This phenomenon still continues; as of 2007, there was a 13 percent increase in enrollment into college for adult students, and this number is projected to continue to rise over the next decade (NCES, 2007). Acknowledgement of this phenomenon is evident in the national higher education agenda, specifically through the grander theme of meeting the needs of our nation's undergraduate population, with a particular focus on adult learners. For example, Dennis Jones, president of the National Center for Educational Management Systems (NCES), has indicated the need to more effectively serve returning adult students (Jones, Mortimer, & Sathre, 2007). Additionally, in President Obama's proposed plan to "Restore America's Leadership in Higher Education," he addresses such issues as persistence and access for all students, especially returning adult students (Winning the Future through Education, Miami, FL, March 4, 2011). As a result of this phenomenon of increased enrollment of adult learners, academics are also participating in this discussion as to how they can meet the needs of this distinct population who are returning to college (Chao & Good, 2004; Kasworm, 2010; NCES, 2006; Walsh, Abi-Nader, &, Poutiatine, 2005).

The current recession is one contributing factor that continues to push adult learners to enroll in various higher education programs. There is substantial evidence of increased

enrollment of this population across diverse educational institutions and programs; specifically, there is a significant population who enter professional programs such as engineering, nursing, or academia (NCES, 2011; Walsh, Abi-Nader & Good, 2005; Feistritzer & Chester, 1996; NCES, 2011; Sweitzer, 2009). As an outcome, these programs intend to prepare qualified graduates to join their elected professions in their respective fields (Eckhardt, 2002; Hathorn, Machtmes, & Tillman, 2009; Keltikangas & Martinuso, 2009; McKenna, Wray, & McCall, 2009).

In each of the respective fields previously cited, there are challenges in preparing qualified graduates (Eckhardt, 2002; Keltikangas & Martinuso, 2009; McKenna, Wray, & McCall, 2009; Nespolitan, 1996). Particularly, in teacher education, in traditional programs (bachelor-degree-granting programs as opposed to alternative certification programs) there are segments of adult learners who enter programs and experience difficulties with learning or adopting the values, attitudes, and behaviors expected of the teaching profession (Cohen, 1983; Bendixen-Noe, 1995; Walsh, Abi-Nader, & Poutiatine, 2005). As a result of these difficulties, these adult learners risk dropping out of these programs, being dismissed from these programs, or not reaching their potential to become qualified and effective teachers. The purpose of this research is to gain an understanding of how adult pre-service teachers negotiate the process of teacher identity formation in the context of student teaching while attending a career college.

Socialization provides a framework for understanding why adult learners experience difficulties with professionalization (Eckhardt, 2002; Hathorn, Machtmes, & Tillman, 2009; Keltikangas & Martinuso, 2009; McKenna, Wray, & McCall, 2009; Sweitzer, 2009; Merton, 1957; Merton, Reader & Kendall, 1957). More specifically, studies of professionalization have drawn on socialization as one theoretical lens through which to understand how individuals learn the values, attitudes, and behaviors necessary for their elected professions (Becker, Geer,

Hughes, & Strauss, 1961; Merton, Reader & Kendall, 1957). Fields such as engineering, nursing, and academia (Eckhardt, 2002; Hathorn, Machtmes, & Tillman, 2009; Keltikangas & Martinuso, 2009; McKenna, Wray, & McCall, 2009; Sweitzer, 2009) have gained research attention for using socialization theory to understand how students in these professional programs learn the norms (values, attitudes, and behaviors) of their respective professions (Merton et al., 1957). For example, in engineering Keltikangas and Martinsuo's (2006) findings show that a student's satisfaction with his or her engineering education, particularly in technology adoption and scientific thinking, explains part of his or her professional socialization. In the clinical health professions, McKenna, Wray, and McCall (2009) find that providing continuous placements in the same clinical setting offers greater potential for early professional socialization attributed largely to familiarity and continuity. In academia, Sweitzer (2009) proposed preliminary models for doctoral student professional identity development, citing connections between social network theory and professional identity development. Her conclusions spotlight the significance of relationships in and out of the academic community on professional identity development.

Statement of the Problem

Similar to other fields (Du, 2006; Sweitzer, 2009), professional socialization in teacher education is frequently understood in terms of one's professional identity (Beijaard et al., 2004; Van den Berg, 2002; Zembylas, 2003; Young, 2011). Professional identity can be defined as an outcome of the process of professional socialization (Bragg, 1976). Further making this connection between the broader theoretical construct of socialization and the concept of professional identity, Ann Keiffer Bragg (1976) offers this definition of socialization:

> Socialization is a process by which individuals acquire the values, norms, knowledge, and skills needed to perform their roles acceptably in the group or groups in which they

> are, or seek to be, members. In short, it is the process by which an individual achieves his identity within the group. The end product of socialization is the incorporation of group values and norms into the individual's self-image. By extension, professional socialization is socialization to a particular role in society, the role of the professional. It is the acquisition of the specialized knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, norms and interests of the profession that the individual wishes to practice. The end product of successful professional socialization is professional identity (p.6).

The concept of professional identity, or teacher identity, is one dimension of professional socialization that has gained consideration within the teacher education discourse (Beijaard & Verloop, 2003; Zembylas, 2003). Although various definitions of professional identity exist, a share of educational research reflects the influence from seminal theorists such as George H. Mead, Herbert Blumer, Erik Erikson, and Lev Vyotsky (Beijaard et al., 2004; Bullough et al., 1992; Nias, 1989). In teacher education, teacher identity is not viewed as something that one has, not merely ontologically, but something that is developed over time; it is organic (Beijaard et al., 2004; Bullough, 1997; Coldron & Smith, 1999; Gee, 2001; Volkman & Anderson, 1998). Developing and acknowledging one's teacher identity is critical as one's personal beliefs, attitudes, and emotions influence what teaching looks and feels like for the students (Coldron & Smith, 1999; Nias, 1989).

Given the unique characteristics associated with adult learners, this process of developing a professional identity has the potential for complication. More specifically, Manos and Kasambira (1998) list distinct characteristics of non-traditional (adult learners) teacher education students: relational maturity, higher levels of self-confidence and motivation, workplace experience, family responsibilities, time constraints, financial challenges, and disinterest in

college social life. These characteristics, experiences, and constraints reflect their evolving sense of identity (Boud & Miller, 1996b; Britzman, 2003). The identity of adult learners reflects deeply rooted values, beliefs, assumptions, and norms that provide a unique lens through which they function within various situations (Becker, Kennedy & Hundersmarck, 2003; Kasworm, 2010; Lortie, 1975; Pajares, 1992).

Typically, returning adult learners have a more consolidated sense of identity, a deeper and firmer sense of who they are compared to their younger, traditional counterparts (Erikson, 1968; Magolda, 2001; Piaget, 1932). This consolidated sense of identity evolves from their roles, experiences within increasingly adult roles, and the assumption of adult responsibilities compared to traditional-aged students who maintain a sense of exploration and fluidness as they are still in the process of developing their identities (Magolda, 2001).

The influence of experiences prior to entering a teacher education program has long gained special attention in teacher education. In fact, research suggests that this relationship between prior experiences and personal identities continues to persist throughout teacher education and beyond into the classroom (Britzman, 2003; Crowe, 1988; Lortie, 1975; Pajares, 1992, Schoonmaker, 2002). These findings highlight the importance of life histories, experiences, and identities prior to one's formal education in a teacher education program. Considering the characteristics of adult learners in teacher education (Manos and Kasambira, 1998), professional identity development has the potential to be problematic for adult learners as they reconcile and negotiate their existing identities with conceptions of new identities as teachers (Britzman, 2003). This negotiation between one's existing identity and future identity as a teacher is the point of tension that provides the landscape for this research. More specifically, the purpose of this research is to gain an understanding of how adult pre-service teachers

negotiate the process of teacher identity formation in the context of student teaching while attending a career college.

Background to the Study

Teacher preparation programs are increasingly under pressure to improve K-12 schools and student achievement (National Commission of Excellence in Education, 1983; Craig & Zumalt, 2005). In 1996, The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future made specific recommendations to encourage the recruitment, support, and preparation of effective teachers. More recently, the federal legislation, No Child Left Behind (2001), called for a greater degree of rigor and quality from all teacher preparation institutions. As a result, the improvements of teacher preparation programs are being viewed as critical to the national agenda (Commission on No Child Left Behind, 2007a, 2007b; Darling-Hammond, 2000). In general, further understanding of how teachers are prepared for their profession continues as a national concern.

The American Educational Research Association (AERA) published a special report titled *Studying Teacher Education: The Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education* (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). In summary, this report offered an extensive look at what we know about preparing teachers, what we do not know, and where the areas of opportunity for future research exist (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). One notable area of research that surfaced as a promising line of study encompassed knowing more about the demographics (gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and age) of pre-service teachers and how these variables play a role in the preparation of teachers (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). More information is necessary to understand how demographics impact teacher

preparation and quality-teaching outcomes (AACTE, 1999). Adult learners are acknowledged as a population in need of future research, but not in terms of sense making and quality.

Research Question

The purpose of this research is to gain an understanding of how adult pre-service teachers make sense of their experiences in the context of student teaching while attending a career college. The following research questions will guide this exploration: How do returning adult learners, who are enrolled in a teacher preparation program within a career college, understand and make sense of their experiences in this program? While the purpose of this research is to understand how these students make sense of their experiences in teacher preparation, I am also interested in knowing to what extent these experiences evoke a reconstruction of identity.

Significance of the Study

The intention of this study is to gain an understanding of how adult pre-service teachers make sense of their experiences in the context of student teaching while attending a career college. The research indicates the need for teacher education to make concerted efforts to accommodate the adult pre-service teacher (Kasworm, 2010; Munby, Russell, & Martin, 2001). More specifically, teacher education has recognized the role that teacher identity development has in fostering quality in teachers (Beijaard et al., 2004; Van den Berg, 2002; Zembylas, 2003). Continuing this discussion offers opportunities to further understand the experiences that adult learners have in teacher education relative to the development of quality teachers. In a broader context, outcomes from this study have the potential to contribute to the greater body of research of professional socialization (Eckhardt, 2002; Hathorn, Machtmes, & Tillman, 2009; Keltikangas & Martinuso, 2009; McKenna, Wray, & McCall, 2009; Sweitzer, 2009).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, I discuss the nature of the returning adult learner and the challenges they often face in higher education. I also explore the theoretical lens that I use to help understand these experiences of returning adult learners.

Returning Adult Learners

The returning adult learner is frequently referred to as a "non-traditional" student. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) details seven characteristics of the non-traditional student (2007):

1. Have delayed enrollment into postsecondary education
2. Attend part-time
3. Are financially independent of parents
4. Work full-time while enrolled
5. Have dependents other than a spouse
6. Are a single parent
7. Lack a standard high school diploma

An individual is identified as a non-traditional student with one or a combination of these seven characteristics. This approach to identifying the non-traditional student, coupled with the added filter of age, is a commonly used denominator in defining the adult learner. In higher education, the number of non-traditional students has increased in all fields of study (Walsh, Abi-Nader, & Poutiatine, 2005). Just over 40 percent of all undergraduate college students are considered non-traditional (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). Depending on one's perspective, the adult learner can be distinguished by age, life experiences, intellectual functioning, psychosocial

development, or by laws. For the purpose of this study, the adult learner is defined as anyone who is 25 years or older and who meets one or more of the seven characteristics specified by NCES.

Over the past 30 years, higher education has witnessed an increased enrollment of adult learners (NCES, 2009). From 1980 to 2000, the population of students who were 25 years old or older grew from 4 million to 6 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). This phenomenon still continues; as of 2007, there was a 13 percent increase in enrollment into college for adult students, and this number is projected to continue to rise over the next decade (NCES, 2009). This phenomenon continues to gain national political and research attention (Jones, Mortimer, & Sathre, 2007; Chao & Good, 2004; Kasworm, 2010; Walsh, Abi-Nader, & Poutiatine, 2005).

While many reasons can be identified for adults participating in learning projects, adults return to higher education largely for occupationally-related reasons. The current national recession is one factor that contributes to the number of adult learners who are enrolling in various professional programs (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). For these returning adult learners, motivation frequently stems from dislocation from their current employment (Dirkx & Dang, 2009), the desire to obtain a better job (Feistritzer, 1996), or to finalize the completion of a degree (Feistritzer, 1996) they may have begun years earlier. Other reasons adult learners return to college include career changes, older students seeking degrees and certifications, and early retirement from the military and other fields (Fiestritzer, 1996). Reflecting the national trend, there is substantial evidence of increased enrollment of this population across diverse educational institutions and programs (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001; Walsh, Abi-Nader, & Poutiatine, 2005). Specifically, there is a significant population who enter professional programs such as engineering (Keltikangas & Martinuso, 2009), teacher education (NCES, 2011), nursing

(Hathorn, Machtmes, & Tillman, 2009), or academia (Sweitzer, 2009). As an outcome, these programs intend to prepare qualified graduates to join their elected professions in their respective fields (Eckhardt, 2002; Hathorn, Machtmes, & Tillman, 2009; Keltikangas & Martinuso, 2009; McKenna, Wray, & McCall, 2009).

In each of the fields previously cited, there are challenges in preparing qualified graduates of all ages but especially for returning adult learners (Chao & Good, 2004; Eckhardt, 2002; Keltikangas & Martinuso, 2009; McKenna, Wray, & McCall, 2009; Nespolitan, 1996). While students of all ages are at risk of dropping out of these programs, adult learners are at an elevated risk for dismissal from these programs or for not reaching their full potential prior to entering their chosen professions (Ely, 1997; Kasworm, 2010). Adult education researchers have investigated various challenges to adult learners in higher education. Kasworm, Sandmann, and Sissel (2000) examined the relationship between the university environment and the adult learner, pointing to the lack of policies, procedures, and services to support the success of this population. Younger traditional-aged students are more likely to persist, where adult learners may not, in part due to the increased personal and financial responsibilities in the lives of adult learners (Ely, 1997; Brawer, 1996; Gustafson & Sorgman, 1983). Other challenges include academic preparation (Isserlis, 2008), emotional readiness (Dirkx, 2008), and motivation (Knowles, 2011). In Kasworm's (2010) recent examination of undergraduate adult learners, she focuses on understanding how student identity is negotiated for adult learners. She posits that adult learner undergraduate identity is multi-dimensional and, at times, paradoxical in beliefs regarding self, position, relationships, and learning context. Further, she describes student identity as a "dynamic process of meaning making through students' experiences both within a social interface of the dominant youth-oriented, academically competitive ethos of the research

institution and through complex life biography and current competing life roles" (Kasworm, 2010, p. 156). She positions her study as a way to further reveal how institutions of higher education can further support the success of this growing population. On the other hand, from the limited research that has been done, we do know that the academic performance of adult learners is comparable to traditional-aged students (Kasworm, 1994). Scholars have also focused on the climate of acceptance for adult learners within inter-generational classrooms, finding that adult learners were generally accepted and supported by both the faculty and their traditional-aged classmates (DeBlois, 1993; Faust & Courtenay, 2002). Despite the research attention that this student population has received, there remains an unclear picture as to how to adequately support these students (Chao & Good, 2004).

Currently, we know that the undergraduate experience is reflective of an environment that mostly supports and was designed for the traditional-aged student from the admissions process to more programmatic structures (Kasworm, 2010). For returning adult learners, direct involvement in extra-curricular or college social life is limited due to other competing factors such as family and employment (McCormick, 1995). The college experience, for returning adult learners can be seen as a time of stress and anxiety due to the previously mentioned competing factors of family and employment (MacDonald & Stratta, 1998). As returning adult learners juggle the demands of school along with their personal commitments, change becomes more difficult for them. The educational experience for returning adult learners is distinctly different from traditional-aged learners in terms of expectations, participation, and motivation. As a result, some of them seem to be experiencing difficulties beyond what we might expect for traditional students entering a course of study. Prior research suggests (Kasworm, 2010; Kasworm, Polson,

& Fishback, 2002) that understanding more about how adult learners' identity is negotiated may respond, in part, to these difficulties.

Adult Learners in Teacher Preparation

Teacher education can be used as a specific context for the greater problem of returning adult learners who experience difficulties in undergraduate education. Parallel to the national trend, teacher preparation has also been witness to an increased enrollment of returning adult learners (NCES, 2011). Programs such as Troops to Teachers (Owings, Kaplan, & Nunnery, 2009), Teach for America (Henry & Thompson, 2010), and the continued attention that alternative teacher licensure programs receive (Walsh & Jacobs, 2007) have all contributed to the increased enrollment of returning adult learners in teacher education. Other motivational factors specific to returning adult learners that have been cited include career changes, older students seeking degrees and certifications, and early retirement from the military and other fields (Fiestritzer, 1996).

In a special report titled *Studying Teacher Education: The Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education* (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005), the American Educational Research Association (AERA) has acknowledged the need to pay attention to the influence of age in the preparation of teachers. In summary, this report offered an extensive look at what we know about preparing teachers, what we do not know, and where the areas of opportunity for future research exist (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). One notable area that surfaced as a promising line of research encompasses knowing more about how age plays a role in the preparation of teachers (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). Particularly, in traditional teacher education (bachelor degree granting programs as opposed to alternative certification programs), segments of returning adult learners enter teacher education programs and experience difficulties

with learning or adopting the values, attitudes, and behaviors expected of the teaching profession (Cohen, 1983; Bendixen-Noe, 1995; Walsh, Abi-Nader, & Poutiatine, 2005). Adult learners in teacher preparation may find it challenging to be novices at a point in their lives when they may have already experienced successful careers or raising families, resulting in attitudes or behaviors that do not align with the profession (Dill, 1990). While life experiences of adult learners can be positive, they may also generate problems. More specifically, Dill (1990) suggested that adult students, especially those that had children, felt that their way of managing students was the only feasible way. MacDonald, Manning, and Gable (1994) found that adult interns were not always amenable to learning new methods of motivation and discipline.

How can we begin to understand these issues? Further exploration of what we currently know about these adult learners in teacher preparation may offer some insight. Adult learners in teacher preparation have a realistic approach in their expectations about the workplace conditions, compared to a more romanticized perspective of traditional-aged students (DeBlois, 1993). Adult learners' relationships with faculty and fellow students are different from traditional-aged students; faculty report having a more collegial relationship with adult students (DeBlois, 1993). Melichar (1994) reports that college instructors were more positive toward returning adult learners in every regard, citing their ability to focus, listen, display initiative, and manage time. We also know that adult learners are managing family, full-time employment, and commuting schedules (AACTE, 1997). Finally, research has revealed that the personal dimensions of adult learners, such as marriage and family, demand a large portion of their time (Feistritzer & Chester, 1996). Despite these studies, relatively little is known about how returning adult learners perceive and make sense of their experiences in teacher preparation programs (Bendixon-Noe & Redick, 1995; Kasambira & Manos, 1998; Eifler & Potthoff, 1998).

We know, based on prior studies (Britzman, 1992; Kasworm, 2010; Kasworm, Polson, & Fishback, 2002; Volkman & Anderson, 1992), adult learners who return to school re-negotiate their sense of identity, but what does this re-negotiation involve? The purpose of this study is to further understand how adult pre-service teachers make sense of their experiences in the context of student teaching while attending a career college.

Developing a Professional Identity

Contemporary understanding of what constitutes a professional identity and how it develops has been heavily influenced by the study of human development and our evolving sense of who we are and how we come to see ourselves. Historically, the origins of identity in the western world can be traced to the ancient Greeks such as philosopher Socrates and his conceptualization of identity (Luce, 1992). Specifically, in his quest for understanding knowledge, Socrates sought out such epistemological ideas as how knowledge is acquired and how an individual comes to understand what he or she knows. Different conceptualizations of identity have surfaced, specifically in the disciplines of psychology and sociology (Erikson, 1959; Kegan, 1982; Mead 1934; Sider 2001; Stryker & Burke, 2000). Several notable scholars, Erik Erikson, George Mead, Robert Kegan, and Lev Vygotsky have addressed the concept of self, identity, and identity formation through theories of human development and social interaction. Within the mid-twentieth century, symbolic interactionist, George Mead, related the concept of identity to self. He argues that one's sense of self is developed through transactions with the environment (Mead, 1934). This idea of identity arising out of an interaction between the person and his or her social context proved to be a central characteristic of later approaches to the study of identity. Erikson proposes that identity is developed over the course of a lifetime, as the self of the person matures within specific social contexts. His Eight-Stage Developmental

Model has been foundational as a psychosocial lens of understanding identity formation in a social context at each passing stage (Erikson, 1968). Further, over 30 years ago Robert Kegan (1982) described a theory of human development that has now come to be known as constructive developmentalism. In this theory, he details five stages or "orders of mind" through which people may develop. His theory of adult development is based on his concept of transformation from one stage of meaning making to the next. He distinguishes between transformation and learning in that when an individual learns something, it adds to what he/she knows, but when transformation occurs it changes the way that he/she knows those things. This process, too, reflects the claim that identity formation occurs as a result of a complex relationship between the person and his or her social environment.

The question of identity has also been studied from a socio-cultural point of view; Lev Vyogtosky (1978), a major proponent of this perspective, believed that social interaction preceded development. Further, he argued that individuals play an active role in their learning and that the socio-cultural context in which people interact is a contributing factor to their learning and development. According to this perspective, there is an interdependence between the social and individual processes. Essential to these perspectives of Erikson, Kegan, and Vygotskyis the role of one's self, an increasing sense of differentiation and complexity reflected in one's sense of identity, and one's interaction of self in a social context.

More recently, scholars such as Marcia Baxter Magdola (2001) and John Paul Gee (2001) have continued these conversations on identity and identity formation. In her longitudinal study of undergraduates, Magdola (2001) outlines four stages of development. In her findings, she reveals that undergraduate students rarely operate within the final phase of development prior to the age of 30 (Magdola, 2001). John Paul Gee (2001) suggests that there are four

perspectives to conceptualize identity. These perspectives provide a window to observe or to identify an individual "as a certain kind of person" at any given time (Gee, 2001, p. 100). In this light, individuals operate and are viewed as having multiple identities, depending on the specific context of the situation (Hacking, 1998). The work of both of these scholars, Magdola and Gee, acknowledges the role of self and one's sense of self and the identity negotiation that occurs through social interaction and social context.

For purposes of this study, identity may be considered in terms of two broad categories. The former are examples of ways to conceptualize personal identity, which are associated with concepts such as "self" and "self-identity" (Erikson, 1968; Gee, 2001; Kegan, 1982; Magdola, 2001; Mead, 1934; Vygotsky, 1978). We know from studies on personal identity development that identity development results from an interaction of self with the environment. These studies also point to periods of tension or conflict between old conceptions of self and new conceptions which are emerging, both within, as well as from, the influence from social context, and that an increasing sense of differentiation and complexity reflect one's sense of identity (Erikson, 1968; Gee, 2001; Kegan, 1982; Magdola, 2001; Mead, 1934; Vygotsky, 1978).

On the other hand, professional identity, which is also frequently referred to as occupational identity, can be defined in terms of one's attachment to or identification with a title, or task commitment in an organization or profession as well as one's position within the profession or organization (Becker & Carper, 1956). Professional identity can be further understood through Lave and Wenger's (1998) communities of practice. Identity formation can be understood in terms of meaning making - that is, how people interact to develop individual identities that reflect the social world and the specific norms of the communities of which they are a member. Communities of practice can be defined as a group of individuals who come

together and continue to interact due to common goals, issues, or concerns (Wenger, 1998). Both concepts of personal and professional identity and the relationship between the two may offer a way of understanding the experiences of returning adult learners in teacher preparation.

To begin, scholars from various disciplines have drawn the theoretical framework of socialization as a way to understand the professional identity of adult learners. (Eckhardt, 2002; Hathorn, Machtmes, & Tillman, 2009; Keltikangas & Martinuso, 2009; McKenna, Wray, & McCall, 2009; Sweitzer, 2009; Merton, 1957; Merton, Reader & Kendall, 1957). This theoretical lens focuses on understanding how individuals learn the values, attitudes, and behaviors necessary for their elected professions (Becker, Geer, Hughes, & Strauss, 1961; Merton, Reader & Kendall, 1957). Fields such as engineering (Keltikangas & Martinuso, 2009), nursing (Hathorn, Machtmes, & Tillman, 2009), and academia (Sweitzer, 2009) reveal how socialization theory has been used to understand how students in these professional programs learn the norms (values, attitudes, and behaviors) of their respective professions (Merton et al., 1957). For example, in engineering, Keltikangas and Martinsuo's (2006) findings show that a student's satisfaction with his or her engineering education, particularly in technology adoption and scientific thinking, explains part of his or her professional socialization. In the clinical health professions, McKenna, Wray, and McCall (2009) found that providing continuous placements in the same clinical setting offers greater potential for early professional socialization attributed largely to familiarity and continuity. In academia, Sweitzer (2009) proposed preliminary models for doctoral student professional identity development, citing connections between social network theory and professional identity development. Her conclusions spotlight the significance of relationships in and out of the academic community on professional identity development.

What does this literature tell us about the process of forming a professional identity? Teacher education scholars cite professional identity formation as critical to developing prepared teachers (Beijaard et al., 2004; Britzman, 2003; Bullough & Stokes, 1994). As in previously cited research (Du, 2006; Sweitzer, 2009), professional socialization in teacher education is frequently understood in terms of one's professional identity (Beijaard et al., 2004; Van den Berg, 2002; Zembylas, 2003; Young, 2011). Professional identity can be defined as an outcome of the process of professional socialization (Bragg, 1976). To further this connection between the broader theoretical construct of socialization and the concept of professional identity, Ann Keiffer Bragg (1976) offers this definition of socialization:

> Socialization is a process by which individuals acquire the values, norms, knowledge, and skills needed to perform their roles acceptably in the group or groups in which they are, or seek to be, members. In short, it is the process by which an individual achieves his identity within the group. The end product of socialization is the incorporation of group values and norms into the individual's self-image. By extension, professional socialization is socialization to a particular role in society, the role of the professional. It is the acquisition of the specialized knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, norms and interests of the profession that the individual wishes to practice. The end product of successful professional socialization is professional identity (p.6).

While socialization theory is frequently called upon across various disciplines of study, it may not provide enough structure to adequately get at the core of this study, which is to understand how adult pre-service teachers negotiate the process of teacher identity formation in the context of student teaching while attending a career college.

Discussion on Teacher Identity Formation

The scholarly discussions focused on identity continue to broaden and increase in complexity and sophistication (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2002; Burke, 2006; Gee, 2001; Hogg et.al., 1995; Magdola, 2001). In an examination of the literature, it is evident that the long-standing historical depth of the intricacies that linger around how identity is understood, how it is defined, and finally, how it is developed remains relevant and divergent in contemporary conversations (Foddy & Kashima, 2002; Sider, 2001; Wallerstein & Goldberger, 1998).

Despite this long-standing existence of the scholarly investigation that identity has received, educational research that seeks to understand identity development of teachers has only gained momentum over the last two decades (Beijaard et al., 2004). The focus on returning adult learners in teacher education provides the opportunity to learn more about adult learners and their experiences in teacher preparation (Bendixen-Noe & Redick, 1995; Volkman & Anderson, 1997). A look at the history and development of teacher identity research may provide insight as to how the past and current conversations may be relevant to the focus of this study.

Beijaard et al. (2004) points to the significance of teacher identity as it relates to teaching and teacher education. While the development of one's teacher identity is commonly related to concepts of self, it is widely recognized as an evolving process that has a wide range of influences (Knowles, 1992). Knowles, for example, details four sources of influence on pre-service teacher identity: (1) role models; (2) previous teaching experiences; (3) positive or negative education courses; and (4) images of childhood experiences. These sources fit into the broader themes that surface from the literature including the influence from experiences prior to teacher education, those experiences in teacher preparation, and the professional experiences as a

teacher (Berliner, 1994; Britzman, 2003; Goodson & Cole, 1994; Lortie, 1975). The literature suggests that these three themes shape a pre-service teacher's sense of identity.

Research focused on experiences prior to student teaching illustrates the personal histories and existing images of teachers and teaching and highlights their influence on pre-service teacher's identity formation (Bullough & Stokes, 1994; Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Cole & Knowles, 1993; Lortie, 1975; Sugrue, 1997; Zeichner, 1992). From their previous experiences as students, pre-service teachers come to college with preconceptions of what teaching is and who teachers are; these images are well engrained in students by the time they reach college (Britzman, 2003; Lortie, 1975). These preconceptions provide the foundation as pre-service teachers begin to develop their own lay theories of what it means to teach and to be a teacher (Cole and Knowles, 1993).

The process of developing a teacher identity is complicated; it involves an acknowledgement of one's personal identity, values, beliefs, and preconceptions of what it means to be a teacher (Danielwicz, 2001; Lortie, 1975). Illuminating this process, Britzman's study (2003) of pre-service teachers describes how individuals develop and manage their roles as teachers. She reveals the personal conflicts that exist between the personal values and expectations of teaching and the realities and demands of teaching. As a result of a mismatch between pre-service teacher expectations and the realities of what it means to be a teacher, the transition can be challenging. Britzman (2003) suggests that teacher preparation programs need to provide the structure that makes way for personal identity, values, and beliefs to be integrated. This mismatch between pre-service teacher expectations and the realities of teaching is further documented by Cole and Knowles (1993), adding more weight to the influence of preconceived notions about teaching.

Increasingly, scholars have pointed to the need to focus on identity development during teacher preparation (Bullough & Stokes, 1994). Using reflective dialogue regarding one's personal and professional identity, Schoonmaker researched how one teacher developed her teaching knowledge (2002). While only one teacher was studied, it was for seven years. At the end of this study, the analysis revealed the need for teachers to integrate their own personal identities and knowledge to become effective quality teachers in the classroom.

Research on teacher identity formation of practicing teachers reveals that this is an ongoing process that is open to variable influences (Beijaard et al., 2000; Coldron & Smith, 1999; Goodson & Cole, 1994). Several studies have also concluded that professional identity development progresses through the intersection of one's personal and professional teaching experiences (Bullough & Baughman, 1997; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, Nias, 1989).

In summary, educational researchers have found personal identity to be a critical component for individuals as they come to develop their teacher identity (Britzman, 2003). Scholars argue that there should be an intentional recognition and integration of the fundamentals related to these identities such as values, dispositions, and beliefs (Britzman, 2003; Korthagen, 2004; Schoonmaker, 2002). For both pre-service and in-service teachers, personal life experiences are acknowledged as significant in influencing their identities and therefore their teaching. Given what we know about teacher identity, a more detailed understanding of its relationship to quality warrants discussion.

Teacher Identity and Quality

While teacher quality has been defined in various ways, John Dewey (1902) noted that the "intellectual equipment" of the teacher was fundamental to the success of the teacher (p. 397). In this reference, he was not only alluding to what the teacher knew but also to how the

teacher came into knowing. In more contemporary terms, teacher quality can be generally divided into two categories. Educational researchers and policymakers have labeled the first category as general academic and verbal ability (Darling-Hammond, 2000; US DEPT of ED, 2002) and the second category can be referred to as the dispositions (values and beliefs) of teaching (Katz, 1993; Katz & Raths, 1985; Pajares, 1992).

This latter category of dispositions continues to gain attention. Even though there is substantial evidence that measurable proficiencies, such as academic and verbal ability, are central indicators of teacher quality, these indicators fail to acknowledge other important attributes. Specifically, these concepts are related to dispositions that are directed by an individual's beliefs, values, and attitudes (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Kennedy, 1998; Stronge, 2002). Mary Kennedy (1998) suggests that the conversation should be more about teacher qualities rather than "teacher quality" (p. 60). On this note, she compiled a taxonomy of teacher qualities in which she elucidated how teacher "qualities are related to one another and how they complement, contradict, or influence one another" (p. 60). In her taxonomy, she put together three categories that include: (1) "qualities teachers bring with them to their jobs," which she calls personal resources, (2) "those related to day to day work-performance," and (3) "those that refer to teacher's impact on students," which she calls effectiveness (p. 60). Under each of these three broad categories, she fits specific qualities.

To elaborate, Kennedy (1998) defines personal resources in more detail as "the qualities that teachers have before they have ever been employed as a teacher and that are often assumed to contribute to the quality of their teaching practice" (p. 60). These qualities include the following:

- Beliefs, attitudes, and values

- Personality traits
- Knowledge, skills, and expertise
- Credentials

Others (Breese & Nawrocki-Chabin, 2002; Collinson, Killeavy, & Stephenson, 1999; Johnson, 1997) have strongly agreed with these "other qualities" that Darling-Hammond (2000) and Kennedy (1998) refer to, namely attributes including such qualities as beliefs, attitudes, and values, all of which have been demonstrated as critical in terms of teacher quality. Some educational researchers (Katz & Raths, 1985) refer to these attributes as dispositions and have further validated their significance in defining what it means to be a quality teacher.

Schoonmaker (2002) notes that values, dispositions, and beliefs are fundamental to teacher identities, which are categorically reflective of the other attributes or qualities of effective teachers that have been examined (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Kennedy, 1998; Stronge, 2002). Further, it is assumed that beliefs, attitudes, and values influence how one approaches the act of teaching (Katz, 1985). Becker, Kennedy, and Hundersmarck (2003) identify the educational-values hypothesis which suggests that teachers' effectiveness is based on their beliefs and attitudes, which are for the most part integrated into an individual's personal identity.

According to previous research, an instrumental piece of preparing pre-service teachers is developing one's identity (Borich, 1999; Britzman, 2003; Danielewicz, 2001; Lortie, 1975). In fact, this is understood to be one of the most significant factors in the process of learning to become a teacher. The argument has been made that learning to be a quality teacher is an ongoing process and that good teachers are cognizant of their identities. Danielwicz (2001) states, "becoming a teacher involves the construction of a person's identity…this involves the transformation of their (pre-service teachers') identities over time" (p. 9). Like others, she

contends that teacher preparation programs must provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to develop their identities as teachers (Britzman, 2003; Samuel & Stephens, 2000; Volkmann & Anderson; 1998; Roberts, 2000).

The learning experiences that develop and shape pre-service teachers' dispositions, knowledge, and skills about effective teaching are instrumental in developing teacher identity (Danielewicz, 2001; Lortie, 1975 & Zeichner, 1990; NCATE, 2002). With this, all teacher candidates are challenged to examine, and many times readjust, their personal and professional beliefs, attitudes, and values about teaching and learning in their journey to understand what it means to be a quality teacher.

In light of this and other research, teacher identity can be best understood in terms of a marriage between one's personal and professional identity that is shaped over time (Borich, 1999; Britzman, 1991 & 1994; Danielewicz, 2001; Gee, 2001; Lortie, 1975). One's personal identity, which reflects one's beliefs, attitudes, and values, serves as a filter for assimilating other experiences into one's conception of teacher identity.

The literature emphasizes several critical areas that reflect the significant role that identity and identity formation have in developing quality pre-service teachers. Teachers make decisions in the classroom regarding curriculum, pedagogical practice, and classroom management based on "who they are," which is manifested from their values and beliefs that are core to their identities as teachers (Bulloughs, 1997; Stronge, 2002). Moreover, teacher identity provides a "framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of 'how to be,' 'how to act' and 'how to understand' their work and their place in society" (Sachs, 2005, p. 15). Consequently, understanding the developmental process of one's teacher identity may offer insight to those preparing future teachers (Stronge, 2002, Cochran-Smith, 2005).

Teacher Identity Formation in Adult Learners

If returning adult learners are re-negotiating their sense of identity, and teacher preparation programs understand the role that professional identity plays in terms of quality, why then do adults seem to struggle? In college, students are challenged to question their identities, to redefine who they are, and to learn to operate within a new milieu. There are many variables that contribute to what this process might look like. Specifically, in teacher preparation, the program structure, expectations, policies, curricular, and extra-curricular activities all play a vital role in the variety of experiences that have the potential to contribute to shaping one's teacher identity (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Stronge, 2002).

The experiences that shape one's personal identity as well as one's beliefs, attitudes, and values play distinct roles for the adult learner as compared to the traditional-aged learner. Previous research that has compared these two experiences reveals that adult learners compared to traditional-aged learners bring more complex and varied backgrounds of life experiences and prior knowledge and skills; complex educational histories; wide-ranging maturity levels, motivations and attitudes; and limited time, resources, and access for collegiate engagement (Cross, 1981; Feistritzer & Chester, 1996; Kasworm, 2008; Kasworm, 2010). These distinctions all contribute to one's personal identity, and if we understand teacher identity in terms of a fusion of both the personal and professional identity, these attributes that are attached to the adult learner signify the potential for even greater complexities with the adult learner experience as compared to the traditional-aged student experience.

The educational research that has examined identity formation in pre-service teachers has been mostly small-scale and in-depth case studies, focusing on various groups classified by gender, race, and content expertise; there has been limited work that specifically isolates the

adult learner in the pre-service context (Antonek, McCormick, & Donato, 1997; Bendixen-Noe, 1995; Ronspies, 2011; Volkman & Anderson, 1997; Walsh et al., 2000). The available research that is specifically grounded in identity formation characterizes the students as pre-service teachers but does not focus on returning adult learners (Antonek et al., 1997; Surgrue, 1997, Volkmann & Anderson, 1998). A brief overview of these studies will provide a clearer window into the scope of this research.

Antonek et al. (1997) focused on two foreign language pre-service teachers in their study to examine the use of portfolios in facilitating the formation of teacher identity. They found that portfolios are an adequate tool for constructing a teacher identity and that the process of developing a teacher identity is unique and complex. Further validating the complexities of developing a teacher identity, Volkman and Anderson (1998) set out to describe the development of a science teacher, in which they found that after an analysis of a year-long teaching journal, identity formation was shaped by various personal and professional conflicts. It has been pointed out that these conflicts are largely generated from lay theories and the individual's personal identities held by pre-service teachers (Sugrue, 1997). The themes of self-reflection and the individual role of self (personal identity) surfaced from these studies. While these studies were small in scale, based on individuals rather than groups, the findings reflected the works of other researchers (Danielwicz, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Korthagen, 2004; Stronge, 2002).

Considering the limited number of studies that have been done on pre-service teacher identity and identity formation with respect to adult learners, it is difficult to draw a sharp line of distinction between the experiences of traditional-aged learners and adult learners in the specific context of this exploration. However, in more general characteristics, we do know a good deal about the development of adult learners and even more about traditional-aged learners.

We know that adult learners conceptualize their identity largely through life experiences from various roles that they may play such as parents, workers, community members, and faith fellowship participants (Boud and Miller, 1996b). These identities reflect deeply-rooted values, beliefs, assumptions, and norms that provide a unique lens through which they function within various situations (Pajares, 1992). Through these experiences, adult learners develop knowledge and skills that serve as a baseline or a schema to which new learning experiences are attached (Piaget, 1965).

Motivation is another distinction that may exist between the adult learners and traditional-aged learners. There are a variety of adult development theories; many of these theories (cognitive, psychosocial, moral, and intellectual) include specific stages or continuums through which an individual may graduate (Erikson, 1968, Kegan, 1982, Kohlberg, 1971). These theories substantiate the varying approaches as to the process by which adults learn and also get at the heart of motivation which deals with why people behave as they do (Knowles, 1992; Wlodowski, 1999).

Challenges to the Adult Learner

Given the nature of the adult learner, including life experiences, maturation, motivation, and learning preferences, why do some adult learners in teacher preparation experience challenges? As previously noted, the literature suggests that teacher identity is not viewed as something that one has, but as something that is developed over time; it is not merely ontological, but organic (Bullough, 1997; Coldron & Smith, 1999; Volkman & Anderson, 1998). As an ongoing process, teacher identity is a fusion of both personal and professional identity and reflects what an individual believes about teaching (Goodson & Cole, 1994). For adult learners, this has the potential to be problematic in that teacher beliefs have been identified as

significantly influencing how one teaches (Lortie, 1975, Pajares, 1992), and teacher beliefs have been found difficult to change (Easter, Shultz, Neyhart, & Reck, 1999; Gregoire, 2003; Lortie, 1975; Munby et al., 2001).

It has been argued that changing an individual's identity is challenging at best. Korthhagen (2004) described the onion model of levels of change. This model describes the qualities of mission, identity, and beliefs as the core of a person's self (personal identity) and contends that those qualities are difficult to change. The outer core qualities of a person's self, made up of a person's behavior and environment, are changeable but still challenging due to their connectedness to the inner core. Korthagen (2004) suggests that this needs to be recognized in the development of pre-service teachers so that one's self (personal identity) can be integrated into one's teacher identity (professional identity).

The reality is that adult learners come to college identifying themselves by other roles that they play including that of parents, spouses, workers, volunteers, and so on (Knowles, 1980). These experiences contribute, in varying degrees, to shaping their existing and sometimes ossified identities. These experiences can act as barriers to re-conceptualizing their new roles as teachers, which may ultimately bring to the surface other challenges. This reconceptualization may be met with uncertainty or resistance (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Research suggests that, in general, pre-service teachers are conflicted in reconciling and integrating their personal identities into their professional identities; this may be further exacerbated for adult learners given the nature of their population.

Conclusion

In reviewing the current and past research on the adult learner and teacher identity, it is clear that developing a sense of teacher identity is inclusive of one's personal identity and is

central to becoming a quality teacher (Britzman, 2003; Schoonmaker, 2002). The existing research fails to address the growing population of adult learners in teacher preparation. It is evident that we do not know enough about teacher identity formation in regard to the growing population of adult learners. Continued studies that aim at revealing the experiences of teacher identity development for all pre-service teachers, especially for adult learners, should prove useful for educational researchers because of the importance of the impact of quality teachers in the classroom (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2000; NCLB, 2001).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

The content of this chapter includes a layout of the method and process of the study design, research methodology, data collection and analysis, role of the researcher, context of the study and its participants, and the trustworthiness of the study.

Research Design

The purpose of this research was to gain an understanding of how adult pre-service teachers make sense of their experiences in the context of student teaching while attending a career college. Additionally, this research sought to understand the extent that these adult learners engaged in a reconstruction of their identity as part of their sense making process.

Capturing one's perceptions and self-understanding is an involved undertaking that depends on reflection and interpretation on behalf of the participant and the researcher. For this reason, I chose a qualitative inquiry as my research design. One common assumption associated with qualitative research is that people's reality is shaped through their interactions with the world in which they exist (Merriam, 1998). A qualitative research design provided an opportunity to gain a deeper sense of the interpretations of adult learners who were earning their teaching credentials.

This study was influenced by an interpretive paradigmatic framework (Moustakas, 1994). Interpretative approaches seek to explain "within the realm of individual consciousness and subjectivity, within a frame of reference of the participant as opposed to the observer of action" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 28). This study methodology was influenced from a phenomenological perspective. Through this perspective, the focus was placed on the participant experiences, including their perceptions and interpretations of those experiences.

Phenomenologists espouse the belief that there is commonality in the human experience, and the researcher's goal is to reveal these experiences and commonalities (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002). The claim has been made that humans can only know what they experience through acknowledgement of the interpretations and meaning making that they assign to those experiences (Patton, 2002). Therefore, drawing on influence from a phenomenological perspective provided a method that focused on reflection, interpretation, and understanding experiences.

The following question guided the research: How do returning adult learners, who are enrolled in a teacher preparation program within a career college, understand and make sense of their experiences in the program?

Context of Research Sites

This study was positioned in a large, private, nonprofit career college in the Midwest region of the United States. The college is comprised of multiple campus sites, which vary in enrollment size, student populations served, and programs offered. This college is characterized as a career college that offers certificates, associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. A significant hallmark of this college is that it has an open enrollment policy. An open enrollment policy attracts a more diverse student population in terms of students' prior educational backgrounds, age, and purpose in attending college. The mission of the college "is to provide quality higher education and training which enables graduates to be successful throughout challenging and rewarding careers" (College Student Teaching Handbook, 2011, p.7).

This study took place at two campus sites specifically within the Teacher Preparation Program. A purposeful sample of interview participants was taken from both Campus A and

Campus B. One focus group was selected from Campus A and a second focus group was selected from Campus B. The instruments and process of data collection are discussed later in the data collection section. Campus A resides in a rural community, offers student housing, and is largely homogenous in its racial/ethnic composition with 90% of its student population identifying as Caucasian. Fall 2012 student enrollment for Campus A is 700 students; 54% of these students are female and 46% are male. As defined by age (25 or older), 12% of the student population is considered adult learners. The total enrollment for Fall 2012 at Campus A in the Teacher Preparation Program is 118, and 22% of this population is considered adult learners.

Campus B resides in an urban community, does not offer student housing, and is comprised of a diverse racial/ethnic student population. Specifically, 36% of the student population identifies with a racial/ethnic group other than Caucasian. Fall 2012 student enrollment for Campus B is nearly 500 students; 76% of these students are female and 24% are male. Solely defined by age, 39% of the entire student population is considered adult learners, and the larger population of adult learners on Campus B, compared to Campus A, may be attributed to the lack of student housing on Campus B. Campus A and other campuses within the system attract a higher number of traditional-aged students because of the student housing. The total enrollment for Fall 2012 in the teacher education program at Campus B is 160, and 37% of this population is considered adult learners.

With multiple campus sites, students have the flexibility to take courses at any campus within the system that offers their selected program. However, students generally maintain consistent enrollment at the campus in which they initially enrolled. The Teacher Preparation courses are exclusively offered through a face-to-face delivery, with an average course

enrollment size of 15 students. The college operates on a quarter calendar academic year; therefore, the duration of a course is 10 weeks.

Although the college has multiple campus sites, all of which are led and managed by different administrators, the curriculum and student learning assessments are consistent across all campus sites. Instructors who teach and oversee the field experiences (field supervisors) are hired based on their professional experiences as K-12 teachers and/or administrators. Most of the instructors are hired as adjunct faculty. The faculty are largely characterized as field practitioners who rely a great deal on their experiential knowledge. This is especially true as a majority of the instructors and field supervisors are retired K-12 teachers and/or administrators. Most teacher education faculty hold a master's degree, with a small population who have earned a doctoral degree in an education-related field.

One of the primary metrics for the institution includes work or related work placement of its graduates; therefore, the college places great value in fully preparing graduates. There are several facets to preparing graduates for employment that include: (1) knowledge and skills, (2) dispositions or soft skills, and (3) professionalism including dress. In order to support the students' readiness for employment in their chosen career paths, faculty support a conservative environment where students' soft skills, professionalism, and dress are monitored, mentored, and modeled. For example, the faculty, administrators, and support staff all wear business attire and depending on the selected programs, students are expected to dress and demonstrate behavior that aligns with the norms of their selected career field.

The college's Teacher Preparation Program supports the mission and conservative culture of the institution through practicing all of the examples cited above, in addition to others. The mission of the college Teacher Preparation Program is to "produce contextually-based reflective

practitioners in their professional careers" (College Student Teaching Handbook, 2011, p. 7). As a career college, the college takes pride in providing its graduates with all of the tools needed for success in the workplace. The focus of the Teacher Preparation Program is to provide its graduates with the extensive education and training necessary for successful careers in education.

More specifically, the program is designed to emphasize real-world experience and training. Another focus of the program's mission is to produce "reflective practitioners." This idea mirrors the College's purpose "to provide general education which expands students' horizons, develops strong communication skills, and encourages critical thinking." Throughout the program, students build a portfolio that exhibits their growth as teachers, encourages them to reflect on their practice, and highlights their ability to implement changes in their practices that improve teaching and learning.

The Teacher Education Program is a five-year program, which includes student teaching. The program requires considerable field experience, with 110 hours of fieldwork in five different courses prior to a 26-week student teaching experience. The goal is to provide students with frequent and extensive field experiences so that they will be prepared for their first job as a teacher. Fieldwork is an integral part of the Teacher Preparation Program. Prospective teachers must complete field experiences in diverse settings assigned by the campus site coordinator. See Appendix A for an overview of the required fieldwork for bachelor's degree and post-baccalaureate initial certification programs.

Students generally apply to the Teacher Education Program at the end of their second year as a full-time student. Application requirements include: (1) application, (2) philosophy statement, (3) minimum GPA of 2.75, (4) two letters of reference, (5) and passing scores on

MTTC Basic Skills (standardized required state test) and the Praxis Basic Skills (optional standardized test).

In their senior year, students are placed in a capstone course that focuses on the theory and techniques of teaching. A critical portion of this course is their field placement. This placement, in a K-12 classroom(s), is also the same placement that the student will have for his or her 26-week student teaching experience. The intention behind the same placement site is to provide further opportunity for students to develop a relationship with their Cooperating Teacher (CT - lead teacher who is employed by the school district and mentors the student through student teaching).

The student teaching experience is the culminating authentic assessment of this program. As previously stated, the student teachers engage in a 26-week experience. During this experience, student teachers are provided an opportunity for continuous contact with the same group of students and school personnel in various phases of the total school program over a relatively long period of time. Full-time student teaching placements provide an opportunity for prospective teachers to acquire an understanding of the background and skills necessary to be successful in their chosen field; gain a continuity of experience in the development of the complex skills required to be teachers; and gain confidence in their professional competency. See Appendix B for an elaboration of the expected duties of students while student teaching.

During the student teaching experience, each student teacher is also assigned a mentor from the college, and these individuals are known as Student Teaching Supervisors. Over the course of the 26-week student teaching experience, the Student Teaching Supervisor focuses on establishing goals, developing skill sets, and providing support and coaching through weekly check-ins and bi-weekly observations of the student teacher. The 26-week period is divided into

five different phases: (1) acclamation phase, typically the first 4-6 weeks in which the student teacher has the opportunity to observe and become familiar with the norms of the classroom; (2) shared responsibility phase, which occurs between weeks 7-9, characterized by the lead cooperating teacher relinquishing some of the instructional planning and instruction to the student teacher; (3) primary responsibility phase, which takes place from weeks 10-20 when the student teacher assumes full preparation and instructional responsibility; (4) phase out, which takes place from weeks 20-22 when the student teacher slowly turns the planning and instructional responsibilities back the lead cooperating teacher; and (5) the observation and reflection phase, which takes place during the final days of student teaching. It is at this point that the student teacher again returns to observation, and he or she may have opportunities to observe in other classrooms within the building or district. Prior to student teaching, students are required to pass their MTTC state standardized credential and endorsement tests. This is required so that upon successful completion of their student teaching, students will be immediately employable. See Appendix C for a detailed list of the student teaching outcomes.

The objectives of the student teaching experience are categorized according to the program's conceptual framework of knowledge, practice, and reflection. This conceptual framework reflects the program's theory of action in that if the students are knowledgeable about teaching and learning, have the opportunity to practice their knowledge, and are encouraged to reflect on their practice, they will be competent teacher graduates who will gain employment as teachers and have rewarding careers.

Role of the Researcher

From a phenomenological research perspective, the researcher cannot detach himself/herself from his/her own presuppositions (Hammersley, 2000; Moustakas, 1994). As a

qualitative researcher, I was the primary data collector. Therefore, I made calculated efforts to distinguish my own presuppositions about the participants and their responses (Merriam, 1998; Moustakas, 1994).

The origin of my personal research interest in this topic was anchored in my experiences as a field supervisor of student teachers. Over the course of three years, mentoring 30 different student teachers, I observed what I thought, at that time, were dispositional (attitudes, values, and behaviors) anomalies. I began to notice certain inappropriate behaviors that were more frequently demonstrated by adult students than traditional-aged students. To illustrate, one of my student teachers decided on his own that his particular placement was not a "good fit" so he took the responsibility to find a new placement even though he was aware that this was not the process for determining field placements. My observations were further validated as problematic in conversations with colleagues from across the state that represented other teacher education programs at different institutions and conversations with colleagues from within my own institution. My original experience with dispositions led me to understanding more about identity, professional identity, teacher identity, and the formation of teacher identity.

Confidentiality was a concern, especially because I asked participants to reveal personal details about themselves, their thinking, or their experiences. In order to ensure confidentiality, I distributed a consent form to the participants (see Appendix C). This consent form detailed the objectives of the research and how the data would be used. The participants were given the opportunity to review the interview transcriptions prior to the completion of the study. To further address the concern of confidentiality, which had the capacity to skew the findings of the study, I assigned each participant a pseudonym.

Participant Selection and Recruitment

Adult learners, who were in their 26-week student teaching experience, were identified participants for this study. Participants were purposefully selected based on multiple criteria: (1) demographic variables (age and gender), (2) academic performance (2.75 GPA or higher), (3) student teaching, (4) and program official recommendations. This selection process gave me the opportunity to select and engage with the most promising and engaging participants. "Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (Merriam, 1998, p.61).

Each campus site has a Program Coordinator, who has a full-time faculty member who assisted in identifying the most viable participants based on the established criteria. Each campus coordinator was asked to identify eight total participants. Criteria for selection included students who are 25 years of age or older; four men and four women, and are at the time of data collection, in the midst of their student teaching.

I initiated contact with the campus Program Coordinators in order to provide a brief summary of the study and the intended goals of the study. In doing so, I provided the Program Coordinators with the identified participant criteria and ask them to identify four male and four female students from each of their respective sites based on the selection criteria. With an intended goal to secure six total interview participants and six total focus group participants for the study, I requested a larger number (eight participants from each campus site) than necessary in order to plan for any drop outs or unusable data (Merriam, 1998).

Upon identification of the potential interview and focus group participants at each campus site, I contacted each participant via telephone in order to introduce myself, provide a

brief overview of the study, describe the expectations for participation, and finally to invite the individual to participate in the study. If the participant demonstrated interest in participating, I sent the participant an electronic copy of the study consent form (see Appendix D). I ask the participants to read, sign, and return this consent form in a pre-addressed postage-paid envelope that I provided. After I received the consent forms from the participants, I responded to each of the participants with an electronic demographic survey. Upon completion and receipt of the survey, I followed up with each participant to secure a date to engage in the interview. I sent an electronic communication to the identified focus group participants with potential dates for the focus group. After the interviews were conducted, transcribed, and analyzed, I established and communicated a focus group date with identified participants.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred in late fall of 2012. All data gathered from participant resources were collected with permission from the participants and in compliance with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines.

In the tradition of qualitative research (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003), multiple data sources were collected. Initially, a demographic survey was sent to each participant to complete electronically. The primary source of data was secured through a semi-structured interview protocol. A third source of data collection included a focus group that provided an opportunity to corroborate my emerging analysis. Finally, my own researcher journal served as an additional source to supplement the interviews and the focus group.

The six pre-service adult learners who were in their student teaching experience served as the primary data sources. Each participant was asked to complete a brief electronic demographic survey (see appendix E). The purpose of this survey was to provide the researcher an opportunity

to create a more diverse participant sample and to better understand the background of the participants. Upon completion and receipt of the survey, I conducted the interviews face-to-face with each participant. The interview protocol (see Appendix F) consisted of a series of open-ended questions that were intended to stimulate participant reflection. Semi-structured interviews provide a degree of consistency while at the same time the opportunity for flexibility to engage in a natural conversation. This structure "allows him or her to express personal feelings, and therefore presents a more realistic picture than can be uncovered using traditional interview methods" (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 371). More specifically, traditional interview methods fail to highlight a true participant perspective as they only "get reactions to the investigator's preconceived notions of the world" (Merriam, 1998, p. 74).

Interviewing provided an opportunity for participants to describe their experiences, relay their perspectives, and convey their own interpretations of their experiences that they understand to have influenced their identity formation. I regarded the protocol as a guide. However, not every question was always asked and new probing questions were formulated in the midst of the interviews. All interviews were audio recorded for data analysis purposes.

A visual depiction was rendered by each participant. I asked each participant to draw an adapted version of the Kawa Model (2006); this provided a visual representation of the participant's life timeline. Briefly, the Kawa Model draws on a metaphor called The River of Life. In this model, a drawing of a river symbolizes an individual's current life circumstances or a particular incident which he or she would like to reflect on; rocks symbolize obstacles; riverwalls are representative of social and physical supports; and driftwood reflects personal resources, traits, assets, and liabilities (Iwama, 2006). This model fosters reflection and allows both the participant and the researcher visual talking points and further points for understanding.

While the exact metaphor that defines the Kawa Model does not support the exact phenomena that I aim to understand in this study, many of the underlying concepts do. For this study, I prompted each participant to draw a river, which was defined as a timeline of his or her life. The beginning of the river represented the beginning of the participant's life; the end of the river represented the day of the interview. I provided a description of other potential renderings that could include people, events, experiences, decisions, and realizations. These prompts took place as examples only when I felt that the participant needed further prompting.

All interviews took place on the participants' respective college campuses and were conducted at the convenience of the participants. These interviews were conducted face-to-face and took as little as 45 minutes up to 100 minutes. Each participant was informed that he or she may be contacted to engage in a follow-up interview.

As a second source of data, following the same procedure used to identify the eight interview participants, eight focus group participants were identified. Focus groups provide concentrations of rich data and the opportunity to clarify and explore participants' knowledge and experience (Morgan, 1988). While the functions of focus groups vary, this study design employed a focus group for the purpose of corroborating emergent themes developed from the interview analyses. The facilitation of these groups were face-to-face and due to the purpose (to corroborate the emerging analysis from interviews) of the focus group, the structure was semi-formal. The researcher was prepared with questions and discussion topics related to the emergent themes derived from the interview analyses. There were four participants that participated in the focus group from Campus A, and it lasted nearly 60 minutes. There were seven participants that participated in the focus group from Campus B, and it lasted 45 minutes. Participants in the focus groups were selected from both Campus A and Campus B based on the participant requirements

detailed for the interviews, and the selection process was the same as it was for the interview participants. The two focus groups were facilitated independently of each other relative to the campus from which the participants were selected. The focus groups were recorded and transcribed.

A reflective journal served as the final source of data (Creswell, 1998). The purpose of this reflective journal was to bring greater awareness to my own thoughts, feelings, and questions. According to Morrow and Smith (2000), the use of a reflective journal adds rigor to qualitative research. While I initially thought that I would enter my thoughts into this journal during the interviews, I was never able to do this as I was solely focused on the interviewee. Rather, I spent time after the interview recording my reflections. During the post reflection, I focused on what went well and what could have been improved in terms of interviewing. I focused on making sense of what I thought the interview revealed or failed to reveal. These entries provided an additional source of data and assisted in the analysis of the data.

Data Analysis

Qualitative case study research yields large amounts of data; therefore, it was critical to maintain this data in an organized and timely fashion (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1994; Yin, 2003). As a way to organize and manage this data, I conducted the analysis throughout the entire study. According to Merriam (1998), the "right way" to do qualitative research is to simultaneously collect and conduct preliminary analysis of data (p.162).

Phenomenological research is assembled from first-person reports of life experiences. The reports are only validated when the "knowledge sought is arrived at through descriptions that make possible an understanding of the meanings and essences of (the) experiences" (Moustakas, 1994). In order to establish a point of understanding, the researcher must make

attempts to be free of suppositions. In preparation for hearing and eventually understanding the true essence of a phenomenon, the researcher must articulate all presuppositions and set these aside, which is known as bracketing (Moustakas, 1994). As a precursor to the interviews, as a way to make my own presuppositions transparent, I recorded my beliefs, understandings, and experiences related to this phenomenon in my field journal.

Each interview was recorded and transcribed. The transcriptions of the interviews provided the first formal opportunity in which I began the process of analysis. This immersion in the data assisted in my arriving at initial interpretations about each interview.

The interview transcriptions were carefully read and re-read. During this re-reading, I developed a coding system in an effort to bring to the surface salient aspects of experiences of the participants. From these codes, I was able to identify themes and categories to characterize each unique interview; these codes served as an opportunity to connect potential themes across several participants.

The data collection and analysis was based on the following steps:

1. Recorded all beliefs, understandings, and experiences related to the phenomenon of developing a teacher identity in the adult learner (the researcher's presuppositions).
2. Facilitated face-to-face interviews. The interview protocol was categorized into four areas of focus: (1) background, (2) life/work/education experiences after secondary education prior to teacher education, (3) experience in teacher education program, and (4) reflection.
3. All interviews were transcribed from audio recordings.
4. Line-by-line coding was completed from the transcriptions. Common code names were identified.

5. Categories were placed together in order to recognize underlying themes that may account for the emergence of the phenomenon.
6. Focus groups were brought together to engage in discussion regarding questions that were developed from the preliminary analysis of the interviews.
7. The focus group discussions were transcribed and coded. Code names were identified.
8. Categories were created from codes in order to recognize underlying themes that may account for the emergence of the phenomenon.
9. Themes from the interviews were contrasted with the themes that emerged from the focus groups.
10. Exemplars were identified that could provide illustration to the phenomenon.

Trustworthiness

In this study, understanding an individual's developmental process was largely gleaned from dialogue that was based on the participants' reflection of experiences and their interpretations. Given this context, the data analysis was based on inference and researcher interpretation (Merriam, 1998). As a result, the research design included measures to ensure trustworthiness of the research results.

Prior to initiating the interviews, I piloted my interview protocol with two colleagues who are teachers. This provided an opportunity to seek feedback on improving my skill set as an interviewer in addition to strengthening the interview protocol and process. Essentially, the pilot added further trustworthiness to the interview process (Merriam, 1998).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The purpose of this research was to gain an understanding of how adult pre-service teachers perceive the process of becoming a teacher in the context of student teaching while attending a career college. To gain insight into this process, interview participants were asked to remember, or reflect on, and discuss their experiences prior to returning to college to become a teacher, their experiences within the teacher education program, as well as, their experiences in student teaching.

This chapter presents the findings in two sections. The first section summarizes the stories of the individuals who participated in this study. The narratives provide a brief description of aspects of the lives of each participant that seem relevant to understanding how he or she makes sense of the experiences in the teacher education program. The second part of the chapter provides a discussion of the common themes that emerged across the participants' stories.

Stories of the Participants

The summaries that are detailed here begin with a snapshot of the individual followed by an illustration of the individual's memories of previous experiences in K-12. Most of the participants reflected on both positive and negative experiences with teachers, in addition to detailing how they remembered themselves as K-12 students. Each story is further developed as each participant reviewed critical life roles and work experiences. All of the participants told a story of how they came to choose teaching as a career. Finally, the participants' stories are concluded with their discussion of their student teaching experiences and their relationships with their cooperating teachers (CT).

Tina

Tina is a 36-year-old female who is married and is a mother of four. Throughout my interview with Tina, she detailed critical events that occurred in her life. Tina talked at length about her K-12 educational experiences, characterizing these experiences as "interesting" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). Due to frequent moves by her family, she attended twelve different schools. Tina admitted that she didn't necessarily connect with her peers socially in school, which she attributed to the frequent moves, but she did well in mathematics. However, it wasn't until she was in the 6th grade that she and her teachers realized that she had a propensity for math. With the frequent moves, and perhaps as a way to avoid the external social pressures of "always being the new girl," she invested all of her energy into doing well academically. In her senior year, she was set to graduate early and continue on to college, but her parents divorced, and she had to attend a high school in a different state which had different graduation requirements. The difference in requirements would have caused Tina to prolong her graduation and to take courses that she saw as irrelevant. She and her mother made the decision for her to drop out of high school and to take the GED Test. This decision was devastating for Tina.

Independent from her family at the age of 17, Tina got married and had her first two children. She felt like she "had to grow up faster than all of her friends" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). She ran an in-home daycare until her marriage failed. She then worked in the retail industry; this was challenging to her as a single parent due to the hours that retail demands (nights and weekends). Most recently, Tina worked in the mortgage industry until the mortgage crisis. As the downfall was approaching, she also found herself facing ethical dilemmas in her role with mortgages, which ultimately forced her to leave. Upon leaving the mortgage industry, she was encouraged by her new and current husband to go back to school.

She, unlike many other aspiring teachers, did not grow up dreaming to be a teacher. In fact, she never considered becoming a teacher as she was always very shy in school. As a financial opportunity to offset some of the financial burden that college brings, Tina decided to tutor her peers in math. It was through this tutoring experience that the idea of becoming a teacher revealed itself. Tina's husband observed her in this role as tutor and the enjoyment that she was gaining from teaching others. Coming from a family of teachers, her husband remarked about what a good teacher she would be. At the time, it seemed logical that Tina would pursue a degree in accounting due to her penchant for math. Near the completion of her online associate's degree in accounting, she decided to pursue a teaching degree.

The greatest challenge that Tina has faced in pursuing her teaching degree has been the financial burden it has placed on her family. Her husband is a truck driver and is frequently on the road, which forces Tina to place all of her energy on school, her children, and maintaining their home. Tina considers herself a perfectionist and has invested all of her energy into being a successful college student. Although her husband supported her in her academic efforts, he frequently misunderstood her dedication to her schoolwork. He did not understand why she put her schoolwork and attendance as the top priority, frequently putting a strain on their relationship.

Since she has been in college, she has forged positive relationships with many of her instructors and still maintains these relationships as friends and mentors. She also has made good friends with some of her classmates. She shared that she felt that some of her peers seemed very young to her, and at times she felt like she did not fit in with her classmates. She explained that she had a couple of classmates that she considered good friends, yet when they came to her, it

was more for "motherly advice" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). Her closest relationship was with a cohort member who is similar in age and also has children.

At the beginning of Tina's student teaching placement, she was placed in a classroom in which she would provide support to a teacher that had not taught math in 15 years. Once the principal and Tina's college supervisor realized the inappropriate match, Tina was moved back to her original placement with two seasoned cooperating teachers (CT). At the time of this interview, she was doing well and had a positive relationship with her math CT, who is of a similar age. She felt that she and her math CT could relate due to their age similarity. She described her math CT as an incredible teacher who is "dynamic" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). Tina was surprised to learn that he was actually younger than she was. She described this as "a little strange" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). She felt that she could relate to his teaching style as he approached teaching through a hands-on approach, rather than a sit and lecture approach. She appreciates his mentoring and has been learning a lot from him. On the other hand, Tina described her English CT as challenging. Her CT was struggling to give up some control of the class. She stated that, "she'll just kind of take over in the middle of my lesson and things like that. It's tough. That part is tough" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012).

When asked what she has liked the most and the least about her student teaching, Tina said that she "really, really, likes seeing when they (the students) have been successful" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). She continued with, "I had a couple of students who were both failing and did not have confidence in themselves at all, and I worked really hard with them, and one of my students just got 100% on the geometry test- it's just amazing how they change" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). Tina described classroom management as the facet of teaching that she has struggled with the most in her student teaching. In detail, Tina described a particular challenge

that she was having with one student who continually derailed her authority and instruction in the classroom.

Tina expressed that when she first started student teaching she felt underprepared to teach in her content areas, specifically in math. “Going into it (student teaching) I was scared to death. I honestly did not feel that I was equipped to teach math and now I have much more confidence. That is the biggest thing: the confidence” (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). She feels that her role as a parent has allowed her to be successful with her high school students. In fact, she said that she doesn’t think that she would have the confidence to teach high school students without having her own children. Tina stated that she felt that she could more easily relate to the students because she has two teenagers at home and understands how they think, as well as, how a teacher should or should not talk to them.

In summary, Tina’s story revealed a great deal of uncertainty at many junctures in her life. Moving twelve times in twelve years helped change her focus on the importance of her academics; she saw academics as a release from social pressures, and this became her safe haven. Early on, Tina found that she had a penchant for school and specifically for math. Her dedication and success in math was her saving grace in her world that was constantly changing. Later in life, she enthusiastically dedicated herself to earning her teaching degree. Despite having a household to manage, children to care for, and a husband who was frequently away, she prioritized her college work above everything else.

Tiffany

Tiffany is a single mother of one, who revealed her age as 40 plus. Throughout Tiffany’s K-12 education, she was labeled as a special education student, and therefore she participated in special education most of her K-12 career. “I spent most of my life in special education; through

hard work and determination I succeeded. I went to junior college with special help and accommodations, but I made it and now here I am" (T. Miller, interview, 2012).

She said she feels as if she has been pursuing a career in teaching all of her life. Early in the interview, Tiffany proudly proclaimed that teaching is "what I do; it's what I am" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). Tiffany shared stories about her teacher role in Sunday school from when she was a child. "When I was younger, the teacher put me in there (the class) with the bad students (to) sit in there with the bad students (like I was the teacher)" (T. Miller, interview, 2012).

Tiffany's memories of teachers who were positive included those who made her feel special through treats and special privileges. She described these teachers as teachers that showed her that they cared and that they possessed the ability to look past the negative and to see the positive. She was particularly enthusiastic about a teacher that she said, "…thought enough of her to bring her to church with her" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). Tiffany continued to describe her memories of a teacher who wore lipstick and later inspired her to wear make-up. She went on to detail how this teacher would have the janitor watch the students while the teacher went to the store to get the students snacks. She said it was her teacher's way of making them feel "special" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). She also experienced a lot of negative teachers that verbally degraded her. Tiffany conveyed her appreciation to God for the positive teachers that compensated for the many bad teachers that she encountered in high school. She described a counselor in high school that would call her racist names, tell her that she would never be financially independent, and said that she had little value (T. Miller, interview, 2012).

Professionally, Tiffany did things she loved; she loved clothes, so she sold women's clothing, and she loved food, so she sold pizzas. She said that she could "sell ice to Eskimos" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). Her other professional experiences included her other passions: her

love for the elderly and children. She attributes her successes and her choices to God and the love and support of her family. In a visual depiction of a timeline of her life, Tiffany said, "I started with love because that's God's love that brought me where I am at. I know that I wouldn't be here without him and the love and support of my family, and I was blessed to have wonderful parents" (T. Miller, interview, 2012).

When Tiffany set out to get a degree, she aspired to be a mortician. When she was unable to pass chemistry, she explained to me how she prayed, and as a result, God ordained her to be a teacher and ever since then has been very successful academically. Throughout the pursuit of her degree, she was faced with many challenges including a personal illness, the unexpected death of her mother, and an unexpected pregnancy, which lead to the birth of her daughter. Tina prides herself on her ability to maintain a positive outlook and disposition throughout the many tribulations she has encountered.

Tiffany hasn't really made any substantial relationships throughout the program. As an adult, she sees a contrast between herself and the other students in that she sees her education as something very exclusive that has to be taken care of as opposed to students who were sent "there by their mothers." Tiffany cites parenting, paying for child care, being away from her daughter, and her age as challenges that she has faced.

Her student teaching experience also has been challenging. She and her cooperating teacher (CT) do not have a positive relationship. When I asked her to describe her relationship with her CT, she responded with, "I don't know about the cooperatin' part. Seems like she does everything in her might to mess things up for me" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). Tiffany went on to describe an example of the type of challenges that she sees her CT creating. She described how her CT would ask her to do specific lesson plans that were different from the lesson plans

that were required by her college supervisor and that her CT would never review her lesson plans. She went on to say that she felt that her CT did everything in her power to create obstacles for her. Tiffany said that on a daily basis her CT would ask her if she still wanted to be a teacher. In her student teaching placement, Tiffany feels as if God put her there for a reason and that she will survive this experience and be better for it (T. Miller, interview, 2012).

When discussing other specific examples of challenges that her CT presented, Tiffany ended each story with an attitude and energy of "I will prevail." She said, "I am not going to let her break me. I am too strong. I have come too far to throw it in. Then it makes me go, 'the nerve of you!' That's just how people are; it's just how people behave. She is just like some people. You know some people you can just take or leave" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). Tiffany believes that "God took her to this CT for a reason" and that she continues to do good because she is impacting the students in her class (T. Miller, interview, 2012).

Tiffany's story was all about survival. She detailed story after story regarding her experiences in K-12 where teachers and counselors deplored her and explicitly forecasted her future as penurious. While Tiffany exposed a timeline of challenges that she faced as an adult, she enthusiastically discussed how she was able to overcome the roadblocks. Tiffany was able to persist through many challenges and frequently attributes her abilities and choices to God.

Keith

Keith is a 42-year-old single male. Upon reflection of his past K-12 experiences, Keith shared positive details about a specific elementary teacher that impacted his approach and interaction with his students whom he teaches in his student teaching placement. He described this special teacher as having changed his life. He said that he was unattractive and unpopular, but this special teacher made him feel like he had something to offer. This teacher made him

want to “pay it forward” to other children who might feel like he did (K. Beck, interview, 2012). He also shared an example of a teacher of whom he had negative memories and how that teacher has impacted his own direction as a teacher.

Professionally, Keith pursued a career in fashion merchandising, which led him to interior design. He eventually returned to school to earn a degree in interior design. Keith worked in interior design for nearly ten years. During his time, he had much success as he moved into management and lead design roles. As a way to continue his success in interior design leadership, Keith made the decision to return to school again to earn a degree in business administration; however, Keith’s growth within the interior design field was disrupted with an unexpected lay-off.

Keith’s lay-off prompted his decision to return to school. This lay-off was emotionally challenging for Keith as he envisioned himself working in this industry indefinitely. He questioned what he would do with the rest of his life (K. Beck, interview, 2012). His decision to go into teaching was not immediate. He contemplated pursuing a career in the medical field due to his understanding of great opportunities for employment, but he said he had an “awakening” after considering what was important to him and what would make him the happiest. He decided that while he might make more money and have an easier time obtaining a job in the medical field, he was compelled to do something that he felt would “really make a difference” (K. Beck, interview, 2012).

As a returning student at the age of 39, he was nervous about school. He indicated that he loved being a student but was fearful that he would not have the attention span or be able to get into the learning mode. While completing the requirements of the teacher education program, he stated that the most enjoyable facet was being in his fieldwork experiences.

Keith described his student teaching experience as positive. He was placed in an elementary classroom with two cooperating teachers (CT). The teachers job share so he works with one teacher at a time, depending on the day of the week. He described his CTs as awesome. He further stated that his CTs share the same teaching philosophy and management style (K. Beck, interview, 2012). He described his classroom as well controlled, supportive, and organized. Keith was particularly enthusiastic to share that he is learning to use time wisely in making the students feel special and honored. He went on to reflect on the learning that he has engaged in since the start of his student teaching. He indicated that he has developed a sense of "diplomacy" about teaching and schools. Keith was also surprised with how easily a fourth grader could hurt his feelings. All in all, Keith is very thankful for his student teaching placement and for the cooperating teachers with whom he is working and learning.

In Keith's K-12 experience he was socially awkward and therefore alienated from his peers and even some teachers, yet he was able to maintain a positive attitude through the support from a few influential and caring teachers. Keith's story revealed an individual whose pragmatic sense supported him through several life milestone decisions including various degrees, career choices, and finally his choice to return to school to earn his teaching credential.

Tonya

Tonya is a 42-year-old mother of four. Tonya struggled to fit in socially in her K-12 education and continues to struggle with confidence. She described most of her K-12 experience as horrible. She talked about one teacher who reached out to her because he knew that she was struggling with her self-confidence (T. Johnson, interview, 2012).

She worked as a baker for the same employer for twenty years. Over the course of her twenty years in baking, Tonya filled various roles. She started as a counter person, moved into

baking, and eventually into cake decorating. She had the opportunity to begin working on a salaried basis, but she turned this down because she did not want to be in a supervisory role, and she earned more money as an hourly employee. As Tonya further reflected on this time in her life, she cited having to work evenings as one reason that she decided she needed a change.

She got married and was pregnant shortly after high school. Her personal life has been filled with struggles in her relationships, marriage, divorce, and providing for her children as a single parent. Tonya remarried and had two more children with her current husband who has encouraged her to return to school and to eventually pursue a degree in education. As a first generation college student in her family, she has gained a sense of accomplishment and pride for her achievements in college. Tonya talked about her passion for reading and writing and how when she started college she did not intend to become a teacher. Originally, she was going to go into early childhood education, but with influence and support from her husband, she decided that she would apply to the teacher education program.

At the onset, she was very nervous and fearful that she would not be successful, yet she surprised herself when she did well academically. She described herself as meticulous; she went on to say that her husband calls her an "apple polisher." She said that her academic performance has not come easily and that she has worked really hard (T. Johnson, interview, 2012).

Managing the children, house, a relationship with her husband, and financial situations has been a challenge for Tonya. She said that her house is a mess; she feels like she is never there, and she feels like she is "constantly moving" (T. Johnson, interview, 2012). Tonya went on to say that when she is home, she is always working on something for school and that she frequently is plagued with guilt as she recognizes that her children need her help, too.

Tonya's first student teaching placement was a negative experience and personally trying; she felt like she was starting at the bottom again after she had already proven herself in other facets of her life. She further emphasized her struggles with the statement that she felt like she was "starting all over." She said that "after being in a job for twenty years, she knew what she was supposed to do" and now she does not. The constant scrutiny she was under as a student teacher was very stressful for her. With a discomfort for being in front of people, she felt like she was under a microscope and that this was particularly stressful for someone who is so shy. She is fearful of failing and admitted that she was close to quitting until she regained a sense of hope when she received a new placement (T. Johnson, interview, 2012).

In her current placement, she is feeling more confident, but she is still uncomfortable calling herself a teacher. She is hopeful that she will be able to do this after student teaching. Even when she has moments of confidence, doubt quickly pervades. In the words that she used to describe herself, it was evident that she is still lacking self-esteem: "…there are moments when I am confident and positive, but I still have moments where I still have a tendency to think I don't know if I can do this." Tonya is overwhelmed and surprised by the amount of work and the variation of work that is demanded of teachers. She described lesson planning, as a duty she was aware of, but went on to talk about many aspects of teaching that she was unaware of such as the data collection process that takes place in a classroom regarding student learning, diagnosing student reading levels, tracking students achievement levels in various subjects, committee meetings, and the demands from the parents. From her statements, it seemed this was all very overwhelming to her (T. Johnson, interview, 2012). She left me with this statement, "It's weird being 42 and still learning; you might think you would have it all figured out, but nope" (T. Johnson, interview, 2012).

Tonya highlighted, and discussed in detail, her own traumatic experiences as a K-12 student. Upon graduating from high school, she was without knowledge or the social resources to even begin to understand how to go to college. She and her family had no expectations of her earning a college degree. She also talked at length about her own personal relationship challenges that included deceit, financial burdens, and a lack of life experiences. Tonya's story was riddled with challenges that included lack of human capital, and social resources though she still is continuing to take positive steps forward.

Becky

Becky is a married mother of one. She attended private school through second grade, and her memories of her best teachers are from her experiences in first and second grade. She described these teachers as kind and loving. She remembers wanting the other children to love her like she loved her teachers. She remembers her third grade teacher as "batty and grumpy."

Becky has a degree in interpreting and has been a practicing interpreter for seven years. She has done both freelance and staffwork as an interpreter. She went on to say that as a freelancer, she could get a call at "3:00 AM to go the ER. [She said it was] exciting because you have no idea what's about to happen, so then you get in your car and you facilitate the gap between two cultures and I love it" (B. Sears, interview, 2012). Becky continued to say how much she loved the role of being able to give everyone what they need in order to be helped. She further described the rewards that she gains from "filling that gap in understanding their differences between two individuals from two different cultures" (B. Sears, interview, 2012).

Becky expressed that she always wanted to be a teacher, so when she learned that she needed a bachelor's degree to get her national interpreting certification, she had no hesitation in deciding to pursue her teacher degree. Upon completion of her degree, however, she plans to go

back to interpreting rather than pursue a teaching position. Currently, her primary goal is to be a mother. She cites her passion and the flexibility of interpreting as reasons for not pursuing teaching. Becky enthusiastically stated that she loved interpreting. She went on to say that unlike teaching, interpreting does not come with politics. In further elaboration of this, she indicated that with interpreting she can go in and do her job and then leave. This was in contrast to her view of teaching, which she described as having more boundaries and higher degrees of complication (B. Sears, interview, 2012).

Becky's greatest challenges have been navigating the program requirements of the teacher education program. She believes that prayer, her husband, and her mother have been instrumental in her persistence. Throughout the seven years in completing her degree, her marriage "was on the rocks," and she and her husband have faced financial challenges. Becky's acclimation to her new role as a mother was also challenging. She thinks that if she decides to split her time between substituting and interpreting she would tell people, "I am a substitute teacher and an interpreter." She is currently engaging in a positive student teaching experience. She has a new understanding of all that goes into teaching beyond the lesson plans. She is still happy with the decision that she made to pursue her degree in education, and she stated that "in my heart, I did always want to teach since I was five." She continued that "it is not completely off the table, just not now" (B. Sears, interview, 2012).

When asked about her student teaching experience, Becky stated that "it is going good" (B. Sears, interview, 2012). She went on to say that her cooperating teacher was having a "hard time relinquishing control" and that she is learning both the good and the bad of teaching (B. Sears, interview, 2012). Becky detailed what she called the politics of teaching as the many demands placed on teachers including being held accountable to various stakeholders including

parents, the principal, and state achievement exams. Becky went on to say that her CT does not "sugar coat" things. Becky said that her CT would tell her when certain meetings had no value and that a teacher's time is better placed in the classroom preparing for instruction (B. Sears, interview, 2012). Becky shared that she thought her CT was a great person and that she "loved" what she was being taught. She ended this portion of conversation through characterizing herself and her CT as a "married couple." She said, "we literally finish each other's sentences; if we get frustrated we just move on" (B. Sears, interview, 2012).

By and large, Becky's story highlighted her spiritual faith, her life-long desire to be a teacher, her role as a mother, and her passion for interpreting. On the surface, Becky's story raised conflicting professional goals. She established that she always wanted to be a teacher, yet she was very passionate about her wish to continue to interpret and, in fact, would not pursue a teaching position. Her primary reasons for continuing with interpreting as opposed to pursuing a teaching position included her ability to avoid the politics and the overall demands of teaching. She relished the idea that in interpreting she could take a job or leave it, depending on her personal availability and desire. Becky discussed how she loved being able to be the person who could bridge the cultural gap between the deaf and the hearing.

Cassie

Cassie is a 29-year-old, married, mother of one. Cassie easily resurrected images of a favorite individual from when she was a K-12 student. Her image was not of a teacher but of a paraprofessional whom she remembered as patient, sweet, and kind. These characteristics were just the opposite of the teacher that she had that same year. Cassie discussed how she aspires to emulate the calmness and the effect that this paraprofessional had on her to her own students.

Cassie has been a constant student. When she graduated high school, she attended a community college for two years prior to transferring colleges so that she could earn her teaching credentials. She cited the loss of credit during her transfer and her challenge in passing the state credentialing exam as reasons for the extended length of time that it has taken her to complete her degree. After ten years of undergraduate work, Cassie is now preparing to graduate in the spring 2013.

While discussing her personal life, Cassie talked about the various types of employment that she had over the last ten years. Her work history included retail, clothing and jewelry sales, working as a bridal consultant, and a stint with selling high-end basement repair systems. With enthusiasm, Cassie described her favorite job as the beverage girl at a local country club. She worked there for four and half years. She described how much she enjoyed the club members, the relationships that she established with them, and the excellent money that she earned from doing such an easy job. For a while, Cassie owned her own residential cleaning business, which she enjoyed due to the flexibility and financial return. She cited the downfall of the economy as to why she stopped cleaning homes.

Cassie knew that she wanted to be a teacher since she was in the seventh grade. She began her interview by describing how she volunteered to work in her little sister's elementary classroom. She said that she would go to the classroom after she got out of school and would assist the teacher with tasks like grading student work and setting up bulletin boards. Cassie quickly fell in love with working with the children and engaging in the tasks that the teacher requested. She continued to do this for several years. It was during these years, as a young teen, that she decided that she wanted to be a teacher. Throughout high school, Cassie continued to solidify her decision to be a teacher. She participated in a teaching program through her high

school. In this program, Cassie spent two periods of the day teaching science lessons to surrounding elementary school students.

While Cassie and her husband had been dating since they were teenagers, they were recently married last year. Cassie talked about the wonderful support system that her and her husband's families have been throughout going to school, having their child, and in their marriage. Cassie's parents and in-laws frequently provide care for their child while she is away at school or doing school work. She also shared how both sets of parents assist with things that they might need with their home.

Cassie has found school to be engaging and seems to have, in part, defined herself as a student. She said she felt lost after finishing her classes because she could not go out to begin student teaching due to her inability to pass the state licensure exam. She felt lost and idle in the year between completing her coursework and finally being able to pass the licensure exam. During this time period, Cassie worked with program officials and faculty to prepare for the exam in addition to enrolling into courses that would eventually add an additional endorsement to her degree.

When I asked Cassie if she saw herself as a teacher, without hesitation, she responded with an enthusiastic "yes!" Cassie went on to detail her idea of what it meant to be a teacher. She felt that she had a sense of authority and respect in the classroom. Her CT treated her as an equal and her first grade students did not demonstrate any signs of discrimination between Cassie and her CT. Cassie also conveyed that being a teacher meant that she would have to have the ability to function in many roles in order for the students to be successful. Some of the roles that she cited included being a parent, a role model, and a teacher. Cassie feels confident about her ability

as a teacher and told me that she has never wavered from her decision to become a teacher. She stated she knows that she will never do anything but teach for the rest of her life.

Cassie's long-term vision of herself as a teacher, coupled with her early life experiences in which she was placed in a teacher role, led to her desire to become a teacher, and she has never wavered from this decision. She has been a perpetual student, of some fashion, since she graduated from high school.

Making Sense of the Students' Experiences

In this section, I discuss the common themes among the participants interviewed. I looked at the participants' stories and examined the ways in which they engaged in making sense about who they were, who they were becoming, and who they aspired to be. I found that there were critical experiences that informed this process. Central to understanding the crux of their collective experiences and the connection to teacher identity was gaining access into how the participants were conceptualizing what it meant to teach and what it meant to be a teacher.

Despite nuances, the participants' stories reflected several common themes: (1) disorienting experiences, (2) the importance of remembered individuals, (3) the influence of cooperating teachers (CTs), and (4) an emerging sense of identity as a teacher. These shared themes offer a way to collectively understand the participants' stories and to provide deeper understanding to this study's research question: How do returning adult learners, who are enrolled in a teacher preparation program within a career college, understand and make sense of their experiences in this program?

Disorienting Experiences

One way to understand the experiences of the participants in this study is through the concept of disorienting dilemmas or experiences. The literature on transformative learning theory

discusses the concept of *disorienting dilemmas;* Mezirow (1999) states that "perspective transformation occurs in response to an externally imposed disorienting dilemma" (p.3). The participants in this study faced disorienting experiences that encouraged evaluation of their lives and their identities. There were two primary types of disorienting experiences that surfaced in this study. I grouped them as externally-driven and internally-driven experiences. These disorienting experiences ultimately led to each participant's decision to choose teaching as a future career path.

Externally-Driven Experiences. Externally-driven experiences are disorienting experiences that take place in which the participant has little to no control over the occurrence. An example of this would include the participants in this study who were laid-off from their jobs. In describing his response to his layoff from his career in interior design, Keith said, "Frankly I was planning on working in that field for the rest of my life [yeah] because I was tired of moving around I was ready to go with it- but the economy went south and I ended up getting laid-off because I was the low man on the totem pole, and so I said to myself what am I going to do with myself for the rest of my life?" (K. Beck, interview, 2012). During the first focus group I facilitated, Paul, one of the participants, reported that his primary reason for going back to school was because he was laid-off from his full-time job as a K-12 school janitor. Paul said, "I was working as a janitor. I was in elementary, middle, high schools, and alternative schools. I would see the interactions, I would see the work up on the walls, and I thought to myself, I can get on the other end of this; that's what I want to do; I could do this." He went on to say, "I should add that part of the reason I got pushed into my decision was that I was laid-off from the custodial position that I was working in" (P. Tom, focus group, 2013).

Through the lens of transformative learning, Keith's and Paul's workplace dislocations could have disrupted their world views, their purpose, and roles in society, causing a disorienting experience for both. While the external experience of a job loss may have motivated a decision to return to school, it also encouraged Keith and Paul to question their own identities, their own purposes, and their futures.

Internally-Driven Experiences. Another source of disorienting experience presents itself as internally-driven. This experience manifests itself from within the life context of the individual. Many of the participants revealed this type of experience. For example, Tina was working in the mortgage industry when it bottomed out; she experienced an ethical conflict between her own beliefs and the demands that were being placed on her from her employer. This conflict eventually led her to question her role and personal reward from her career choice. Tonya and others in the focus group were faced with phase changes in their personal lives such as children at different stages of need, personal desires to do something for themselves and reaching a level of dissatisfaction with their lives, and a desire for something more. Tonya was at a point of unhappiness and dissatisfaction with her life, and it eventually led her to question her identity and her purpose. Lori, who was a participant in the second focus group, said, "I started a family and was home for quite a few years but was ready for something more" (L. Dillard, focus group, 2013).

While participants such as Tonya and Lori did not have a dilemma imposed on them rather their personal experiences caused disorientation and re-examination similar to the participants who were faced with externally-driven experiences. Tonya's and Lori's internally-driven experiences also caused them to question their purposes and roles in society, which in the end led them to the decision of returning to school and choosing teaching as a future career path.

Remembered Individuals

The influence of the images that the participants held of their prior former K-12 teachers (and others in teaching roles) surfaced as a common theme that provided a source of influence as the participants made sense of their teacher preparation experiences. For all of the participants, these remembered individuals coupled with their images and memories of themselves as students in K-12 were influential as the participants constructed a social understanding of what it meant to be a teacher and to teach.

Early on, each participant developed images of what it meant to teach and be a teacher. These images were grounded in memories of their interactions and relationships that they held with their former K-12 teachers. The participants revealed how the images of these remembered individuals influenced their own evolving conceptualizations of themselves as teachers. These memories were emotionally-laden and developed a foundation for each participant in creating their way of knowing and acting out their conceptualization of what they believed a teacher is and what a teacher does.

Emotionally-Laden Memories. Overwhelmingly, the participants used emotion-laden terminology to describe their remembered individuals. In describing positive experiences with their remembered individuals, participants used words such as "love" and "kind." For example, Becky characterized her first and second grade teachers as "amazing." She remembered thinking that she "wanted the kids to love [me] her one day when [I] she was a big girl" (B. Sears, interview, 2012). She characterized these teachers as "sweet, kind, and loving." She felt like they constantly gave positive feedback and encouragement (B. Sears, interview, 2012). Keith described several teachers as "special" and that they made him feel like he "was something special and that I had things to offer." He continued to describe a specific teacher as "kind" (K.

Beck, interview, 2012). In describing one of her former K-12 teachers, Tiffany said that this teacher "looked past all of the negative, and she looked past throwing me to the side" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). She went on to describe this female teacher as a positive and religious teacher; this teacher "thought enough of her (me) to take her to church with her" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). She ended her description of this teacher with, "she showed me that she cared" (T. Miller, interview, 2012).

On the other hand, in describing negative memories of their remembered individuals, the participants used words like "frustrated," "embarrassed," and "stereotype." For example, Cassie described one of her former K-12 teachers as "evil"; she said that the students were not allowed "to talk all day" (C. Worth, interview, 2012).

Ways of Knowing and Being. The participants shared both positive and negative memories of their former K-12 experiences as students. As each participant resurrected these distant memories, they recalled the emotions that they felt as a result of the interactions. These memories and the emotions that they associated with the memories seemed to strike a chord with the type of teacher that each participant was aspiring to be, or in some cases, not to be. For each participant, the descriptions reflected an image of a teacher. These images laid the foundation for each participant as he or she developed their own ways of knowing and being related to what it meant to teach and to be a teacher. For instance, in describing the influence that her first and second grade teachers had on her, Becky stated that "she attempts to demonstrate patience towards all of her children and that she wants each child to believe that she adores them" (B. Sears, interview, 2012).

As the participants shared memories of themselves as former K-12 students, it was clear that their memories were attached to specific images of themselves and their relationships as well

as interactions with specific former K-12 teachers. For example, Keith said, "I go to those fat, little, greasy, dorky kids (as he previously described himself) who don't know how special they are and maybe who haven't had anyone else to find that special thing in them, find it, and bring it out (K. Beck, interview, 2012). His behavior and approach towards his students reflects the feelings that he had about his favorite teachers as he was a struggling and socially-awkward student. Keith went on to describe the connection between his own K-12 experiences as a student and the action that he takes in the classroom with his students:

> I know that there are certain things that were told to me or taught to me when I was young that I might not remember the exact wordage or I might not remember the exact details, but I remember the feeling that it gave me …so when I can tell a student is struggling that just needs to slow down …[I say] you are great, you are smart, you're creative, you're funny… I hope that if she doesn't remember me she'll at least remember that someone along the way recognized that she was good. (K. Beck, interview, 2012)

Similarly to Keith, Tonya painted an image of herself, her interactions with her former K-12 teachers, and then described how these memories influenced her actions with her students. Tonya said, "I was shy. I was picked on. So, it was really hard; I did not like school" (T. Johnson, interview, 2012). She characterized fifth through ninth grades as "horrible" (T. Johnson, interview, 2012). "I had one teacher who would always talk to me; he knew that I could do a lot better; he knew that I was struggling with trying to fit in, and how I was feeling with self-confidence and stuff like that" (T. Johnson, interview, 2012). Now, as a student teacher, Tonya finds herself making concerted efforts to be sensitive to students that are shy. "If there is someone who is really shy…I take care not to…well, I try to encourage them but not in a way that would make them the center of attention" (T. Johnson, interview, 2012).

Tina described teachers that were ineffective for various reasons. Tina specifically felt that she was ignored because she got good grades and that she would go days without ever talking to a teacher (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). Tina went on to say that she could "now see how easy (it would be) to ignore the kids who don't need your attention." She went on to say, "so I try to make it a focus to talk to every single kid in my class, which is difficult when you have 150 students" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). Cassie indicated that she has tried to practice the same patience that she remembers her paraprofessional having. She went on to say, "I think that I can still hear her (the paraprofessional's) sweetness and calmness." She finished with, "That is what the kids need" (C. Worth, interview, 2012).

The participants' conceptualizations of what it meant to be a teacher were influenced by their own K-12 experiences as learners and the emotions that they associated with their interactions with their former K-12 teachers. To varying degrees, consciously or subconsciously, all of the participants drew on their previously formed images of former K-12 teachers and their own experiences as K-12 students to define and enact their own ways of knowing and being as it related to being a teacher and teaching. The actions and interactions of the participants also appeared to bring a form of closure or rectification to some of their own negative K-12 experiences.

Influence of Cooperating Teacher

The characterization of the relationship between the student teacher (ST) and the cooperating teacher (CT) proved to be influential in each participant's ability to make strides in understanding what it means to be a teacher and to teach. The light through which each individual cast their relationships with their CT, whether positive or negative, depended on the degree to which the participants' teaching behaviors were validated by their CT. Keith, Becky,

Tina, and Cassie all characterized their relationships with their CTs as positive. On the other hand, Tiffany and Tonya characterized their relationships with their CTs as negative.

Positive Relationships. As the participants in this study tried out their conceptualizations of what it meant to teach and what they thought it meant to be a teacher, their CT had an influential role in validating their ideas and behaviors. For example, Keith provided glowing reviews of the style and synchronicity through which his two CTs worked together. In further describing his CTs he said, "They are not of the mindset that I am there to give them time to get things done like cleaning the room; they (are) great teachers… I appreciate their process…and someday I will have a student teacher and will probably be the same way" (K. Beck, interview, 2012). Keith's comment, "I will probably be the same way," suggests that he is learning how to act as a teacher from his CTs in addition to projecting how he sees himself acting in the future with his own student teacher. Keith went on to say that his CTs are "very supportive, very much about being organized, staying on task" (K. Beck, interview, 2012). This comment reflects the alignment between Keith's conceptualization of what it meant to teach and what it meant to be a teacher and his CTs actions of teaching in the classroom.

As previously mentioned, Keith, Becky, Tina, and Cassie all characterized their relationships with their CTs as positive. These participants used phrases like "really awesome" (K. Beck, interview, 2012) and "great person" (C. Worth, interview, 2012) in describing their CTs. Becky went on to say that she and her CT "finish each other's sentences… (she continued), we are like a married couple, we might get frustrated with each other but we move on" (B. Sears, interview, 2012). Tina described her math CT as "incredible; he is a great teacher… he is really dynamic; the kids respond well to him" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). While these positive descriptions may reflect some elements of the relationships that exist between the participants'

and their respective CTs, they are also suggestive of the degree to which the participants' conceptualization of teaching was aligned with their CTs.

Negative Relationships. In contrast, Tiffany's and Tonya's relationships with their CTs were less than fruitful. Similar to the other participants, Tiffany and Tonya tried out their ways of knowing and being related to teaching however their actions were met discouragement. While all of the participants were engaged in a great deal of sense making during this time of student teaching it became clear that if the relationship between the CT and the ST was strained or dysfunctional, the process of sense making for the participant was stifled.

When Tiffany described her CT, she said, "I don't know about the cooperatin' part" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). She went on to describe the daily challenges that her CT presented her with, including requiring that she do tasks like handwriting class lists. From Tiffany's perspective the task of handwriting a class list was pointless and inefficient. Tiffany also included that her CT verbally antagonized her with daily questions like, "So do you still want to be a teacher?" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). Tiffany's relationship with her CT only further reinforced the negative images and ideas that she held of some of her former K-12 teachers.

Tonya indicated that her struggle in her first student teaching placement was largely a result of her inability to develop a functional relationship with her CT. Tonya said, "She wanted me to be like her," and that she (Tonya) felt like she could still do a good job but in her own way (T. Johnson, interview, 2012). Tonya went on to say that she felt like that her CT did not want her there nor did she demonstrate that she had the time for her. Tonya's feelings of being unwanted and her inability to be like her CT were further exacerbated by the fact that her CT just expected her to know what to do, how to teach, how to discipline. Tonya responded to these expectations with confusion as she thought student teaching was about being mentored, having

models to follow, and learning what it meant to teach (T. Johnson, interview, 2012). As a result of this mismatch between Tonya and her CT, she felt invalidated and reported that she regularly went home at night crying, saying that she did not have the strength to return. Ultimately, Tonya was removed from this placement and was placed into a different classroom. In her first experience, Tonya was searching for affirmation of how she was conceptualizing her role as teacher yet she was unable to meet the expectations of her CT, so she was left without validation for her actions. Tonya's conceptualization of what a teacher is and what a teacher does did not match with her CTs image of what a student teacher should be and what a student teacher should be able to do. This experience hindered Tonya's developing conceptualization of herself as a teacher.

For Keith, Tina, Cassie, and Becky, their conceptualizations of what it meant to be a teacher were affirmed through validation from their respective CTs. This affirmation stemmed from the alignment between the student teacher's own conceptualization for what it meant to be a teacher and that of their CTs. On the other hand, Tiffany and Tonya's conceptualizations went without validation from their CTs. For each pathway, there were different consequences for the participants that encouraged or discouraged their sense of selves as teachers.

Emerging Sense of Identity

Each participant reflected an emerging sense of what it meant to be a teacher. This emerging sense of identity as a teacher reflected the participant's reconciliation between whom he or she was becoming and who he or she once was. The cooperating teachers were influential as each participant came to understand what it meant to be a teacher and what it meant to teach. For some participants, their CTs legitimized their former images and understanding of what it meant to be a teacher and what it meant to teach. Others were left with an incongruence or

conflict between their own former images and the realities as presented by their CTs. For Keith, Tina, Cassie, and Becky, their former images of what a teacher is and what a teacher does were affirmed through their relationships and interactions with their CTs. Conversely, Tiffany and Tonya were left with a disconnection between their conceptualization of what they thought it meant to teach and the former images that they held of what it meant to be a teacher. This disconnection left Tonya and Tiffany in a state of disorientation that stifled their identity development as teachers.

This disorientation was evidenced through each participant's emerging sense of identity as teachers. Of all of the participants, Tonya demonstrated the most doubt in terms of her ability to identify herself as a teacher. When asked when she thought she might be able to say, with confidence, that she is a teacher she responded with, "I hope so; I hope soon. I don't know. I have never had that self-confidence. I am trying to say that I can do this; this is what I am; I am a teacher. I am hoping by the end of student teaching" (T. Johnson, interview, 2012).

As she talked about her decision to pursue her teaching degree, she demonstrated polarity of doubt and hope within the same phrase, "…I was like, I am probably never going to get there anyway (completing her degree), but I was like, I am going to do this" (T. Johnson, interview, 2012). She went on to describe her fear of failing and that she was unsure of how she would do academically (T. Johnson, interview, 2012). Her inability to see herself as a teacher was reflected as she discussed her student teaching:

> …there are good days and bad days, like I said. I struggle with being in front of the crowd. Even though they are kids... I am getting much better. Going through school there were times when I was like I am never going to be able to do this because of all of the times that I had to get up in front of the class. It was helpful to see others get nervous; I

> pushed through it, so I am really proud of myself for that. It helped to see others have that fear. I don't know. I have seen grown men cry. If I give up, then what else am I going to do? (T. Johnson, interview, 2012)

Tina, Tiffany, Becky, Keith, and Cassie all reflected a more evolved sense of identity as teachers in comparison to Tonya. Tina responded to my questions about returning to school with, "I loved it!" "Growing up, I loved school…so I really, really enjoyed it. Coming to school (college) was never hard for me, I always loved it" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). Very early on in the interview with Tiffany, she proudly told me that teaching is what she does and what she is (T. Miller, interview, 2012). Similarly, in sharing his perception of himself as a teacher Keith stated:

> Even being a complete newbie that I did not have after working a decade in interior design and management. So, umm I always felt in sales and management that the judgments that would come towards me were not fair because there were things that were out of my control like making the sale. Have a rainy day and miss your Saturday bonus or whatever. And that it was, they never really got the big picture. I suppose some of those things are going to be true in education; there is going to be an unfair amount of pressure. I am a bad teacher because my kids have bad home lives. All that stuff that is in the news. I don't feel it looming over my head like I did in the other profession. I know that I am there doing a good job, making a difference, and that is what sticks out to me, not all of the pressure and the stress and the unfairness. (K. Beck, interview, 2012)

Similar to Tina, Becky exuded a certain level of confidence throughout the interview. She stated that she had always wanted to be a teacher, and while she initially followed a different passion, interpreting, she always knew that she would go back for her teaching degree (B. Sears, interview, 2012).

Understanding how the participants were making sense of their experiences allows us the opportunity to gain insight into each participant's emerging sense of identity. In response to the question of "what does it mean to be a teacher?" two subthemes surfaced.

Core-Identity. The first theme was exemplified by Keith, Tiffany, Tonya, and Cassie. For these individuals, their sense of identity as a teacher was deeply situated within their sense of self. Tiffany believed that we are all teachers and that it doesn't take a credential to be a teacher. Tiffany said, " [she] was a teacher before (coming to college)" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). She further added her belief that we are all teachers of life. With God as central to Tiffany's sense of self, she expressed that she was ordained by God to be a teacher, and therefore she was a teacher. Tiffany already saw herself as a teacher. The examples that she cited suggested that her definition of teacher was one which extends praise and physical gifts or rewards to her students.

As Keith processed the question of "what does it mean to be a teacher?" he reflected on some of his life experiences in which case he recast many of his roles as teaching roles. "When I was little, we never played house in my neighborhood; we played school, and I was always the teacher. As I got older, I coached marching band and Winter Guard, and I taught our pom pon squad" (K. Beck, interview, 2012). It was clear that Keith was drawing on his prior experiences, which could be characterized with some elements of acts of teaching, to define what it means to be a teacher.

While Tonya demonstrated a different degree of ability to see herself as a teacher, it was evident that she did not see being a teacher as a mere act but as something that became part of her nature or part of her own identity. This was evidenced when she talked about her own internal conversations. She stated that she would say things like, "This is what I am; I am a teacher," in order to provide encouragement to herself (T. Johnson, interview, 2012). Cassie,

conversely, felt like she was a teacher because she was engaging in the act of teaching, and the students perceived her to be a teacher.

Acquisition- Identity. On the other hand, Becky and Tina felt that they could only call themselves teachers when they had possession over their own classroom with students that they could call their own. Their line of thinking was further supported by seven of the eleven focus group participants. When Becky heard this question, she understood it to mean being a teacher occurs when you look for a teaching position. When I restated the question differently, "If someone asks you, 'what do you do professionally,' how do you respond," she said, "I am an interpreter…I would say that I am a student teacher, but I work as an interpreter" (B. Sears, interview, 2012). While Becky seemed to define herself based on her profession, Tina defined herself based on what she was doing and what she had perceived ownership over. She told me that she knew she was a teacher when, "I took over my first class when I was student teaching, and I was on my own. My CT was gone. I was doing the lesson plans, and everything was up to me and the students' education was in my hands and my hands alone. That's when I first felt like 'wow I really am a teacher.' I wasn't practicing anymore" (B. Sears, interview, 2012). For Tina, it was the act of teaching and not necessarily the full ownership of having a class that was all her own.

Summary

As previous literature has revealed, these student teachers' experiences were varied, full of challenges and obstacles. The life paths, demands, and resources were different for each individual, which served as a critical role in shaping their world view and abilities to evolve and to see themselves as teachers.

The participants' construction and reconstruction of their identities were guided by their conceptualizations of what it meant to be a teacher and what it meant to teach. These ideas of knowing and being regarding teaching and being a teacher developed through their own experiences as K-12 students, and the images that they held of their former K-12 teachers were further affirmed by their cooperating teachers during their student teaching experiences. Further, who they were becoming, and who they aspired to be, largely reflected influence from the common themes that surfaced among all of the participants and their stories. Ultimately, the early memories of remembered individuals, the role of their cooperating teachers, and experienced events contributed to their emerging sense of identity as teacher. The participants' memories of their K-12 experiences, their teachers, and experienced events influenced their emerging sense of identities as teachers.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to gain an understanding of how returning adult learners, who were enrolled in a teacher preparation program within a career college, understood and made sense of their experiences in the program. Additionally, this research sought to understand the extent that these adult learners engaged in a reconstruction of their identity as part of their sense making process.

The participant's stories reflect their particular experiences within the teacher preparation program. A brief summary of their individual and collectives stories is presented here, followed by a discussion of how these stories reflect the process of developing an emerging teacher identity.

Tina is a 36-year-old female who is married and is a mother of four. As a student, Tina had a diverse K-12 educational experience but performed well academically. Tina's husband encouraged her to pursue a career as a teacher. Tiffany who is a single mother of one, revealed her age as 40 plus. Tiffany had a socially challenging K-12 experience and spent most of her academic time in academic remediation. Tiffany is guided by her faith and felt that she was ordained by God to pursue a career in teaching. Keith is a 42-year-old single male. While Keith faced social barriers as part of his own K-12 experiences, he had adequate academic performance. Keith decided to pursue teaching as a result of a job loss and personal reflection. Tonya is a 42-year-old mother of four. Tonya struggled socially as a K-12 student but performed well academically. Becky is a married mother of one. In her K-12 experiences, she did well, both socially and academically. Becky has always wanted to be a teacher. Cassie is a 29-year-old, married, mother of one. Like Becky, Cassie did well, both socially and academically, as a K-12 student. Cassie, also always wanted to be a teacher.

Four major themes characterized the collective experiences of these adult learner pre-service teachers: (1) disorienting experiences, (2) the importance of remembered individuals, (3) the influence of cooperating teachers (CTs), and (4) an emerging sense of identity as a teacher. The remainder of this chapter includes the discussion of my findings, implications, future research opportunities, and my own personal reflections.

Discussion of the Findings

These findings suggest that adult learners perceived their experiences within the teacher education program as ones in which they developed a preliminary sense of identity as a teacher. Even though there have been a limited number of studies that have placed a central focus on pre-service teacher identity and identity formation with respect to adult learners, the findings are illustrative of the broader research on teacher identity development (Danielwicz, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Korthagen, 2004; Stronge, 2002). Collectively, the research suggests teachers make decisions in the classroom regarding curriculum, pedagogical practice, and classroom management based on "who they are," which is manifested from their values and beliefs that are core to their identities as teachers (Bulloughs, 1997; Stronge, 2002). While Bulloughs (1997) and Stronge (2002) refer to teachers as opposed to pre-service teachers, the findings of this study further endorse the previous research in that the participant's sense of self in large part reflects "who they are." Other research offers similar conclusions in that teacher identity can be viewed as a "framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of 'how to be,' 'how to act' and 'how to understand' their work and their place in society" (Sachs, 2005, p. 15).

According to prior research (Danielwicz, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Korthagen, 2004; Magdola, 2001; Stronge, 2002) and the findings of this study, the process of developing a teacher identity takes influence from life roles and experiences (Bullough & Stokes, 1994;

Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Cole & Knowles, 1993; Lortie, 1975; Sugrue, 1997; Zeichner, 1992). These life roles and experiences influence one's schemata, or worldview, through which meaning making is established (Piaget, 1965). This study further recognized this framework of 'how to be,' 'how to act,' and 'how to understand' as the participants' internal scripts for teaching.

In the teacher education literature, it is widely recognized that the development of one's teacher identity is open to influences from a wide range of sources (Knowles, 1992). Knowles, for example, detailed four sources of influence on pre-service teacher identity: (1) role models; (2) previous teaching experience; (3) positive or negative education courses; and (4) images of childhood experiences. These ideas are similar to what the findings from this study suggest: life disruptions and transitions, existing schemata, relationships with program faculty and cooperating teachers, and current life roles.

Life Transition as a Stimulus for Enrolling in the Program

The results of this study revealed the complexities that characterized the participants' decisions to return to college and to pursue a career in teaching. Previously, in chapter four, I presented this decision process as internally-driven or externally-driven disorienting dilemmas. As a result of these dilemmas, participants found themselves questioning their former sense of self or at least reaching a level of recognition that they needed to reconstruct their sense of self. Ultimately, the participants found themselves in a state of uncertainty.

One way of understanding this uncertainty or ambivalence is through the theory of life transition. This theory of life transition is a core facet of Levinson's (1977) theory of adult development. While this is most notable for the notion that development continues through adulthood, it is also known for the concept of transitional periods. A transitional period is

characterized as the end of one period or stage of one's life and the beginning of another. A transition has the potential to be challenging or smooth.

From the perspective of life transitions, the participants' stories revealed examples of both smooth and challenging transitions. As each participant solidified his or her decision to return to college and pursue a career in teaching, he or she faced disorienting dilemmas that, perhaps, marked a time of transition. This transition caused the participants to question their former sense of self. For example, Keith was unexpectedly laid-off, and this caused him to question what he would do as a career. He said, "What am I going to do with myself for the rest of my life?" (K. Beck, interview, 2012). Tonya's husband helped her to recognize a time of discontentment that she was experiencing in her life. Her husband said, "You need to do something because you are not happy," and she acknowledged this dissatisfaction, which led her to return to college (T. Johnson, interview, 2012).

Tonya's story illustrated a transition that could be characterized as challenging. Prior to making the decision to return to school, Tonya's work life was relatively static, as she worked as a baker for twenty years. Tonya's transition from leaving her life as a baker to becoming a teacher presented underlying challenges. In her student teaching experience, she found herself in situations where she was facing her own personal performance fears of being in the spotlight. During Tonya's transition, a conglomeration of underlying tensions surfaced that included her own personal anxieties and fears. During the interview, she was in her second student teaching experience, and though she indicated that she was doing all right, she struggled to meet the expectations of her first cooperating teacher and was removed from the placement. During Tonya's transition from one phase of her life, as a baker, to the new phase as a teacher, she struggled to truly gain a new sense of herself as a teacher. Tonya stated, "This is what I am; I am

a teacher," yet she did not have the confidence to share this with others. She said that she was hopeful that, at the end of student teaching, she would be able to tell others that she was a teacher (T. Johnson, interview, 2012). This statement reflected Tonya's developmental journey of working to gain a new sense of self as a teacher. On the other hand, Keith appeared to embrace this transition from his former sense of self as a designer to his desired sense of self as a teacher. Throughout the interview, Keith called himself a teacher, "I am a good teacher; I can take what I've learned in this activity and apply it in the classroom…" (K. Beck, interview, 2012). His confidence and sense of self as a teacher reflected a smooth transition.

These dilemmas, whether externally-driven or internally-driven led the participants to a decision to return to school and pursue teaching. Understanding the participants' dilemmas through the theory of life transitions offers an understanding of the developmental process that each participant engaged in as he or she transitioned from one phase of life to the next. Throughout this time of transition, whether smooth or challenging, the participants had varying levels of recognition that they were in a process of gaining a new sense of self.

The Role of Remembered Lives

The participants' memories of their own K-12 experiences as learners and former significant K-12 teachers proved to be influential in helping to shape their emerging sense of identity as a teacher. These early memories of their K-12 experiences and teachers played a direct role in how the participants came to conceptualize what teaching and being a teacher was about. For example, Tina stated she, "…would go days and days without a teacher ever talking to her and she felt like she was missing something" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). Tina's memories of being marginalized, or nearly invisible to her teachers, influenced her conceptualization of

how she felt a teacher should not behave. Tina's conceptualization of how a teacher should not behave was manifested in her goals to talk to each student every day.

These pre-existing conceptualizations became more apparent as the participants engaged in their roles as student teachers. The participants drew on these prior notions and conceptualizations as they made decisions and interacted with both their cooperating teachers and their respective students.

The teacher education literature has highlighted the role that personal histories and images of prior teachers play in influencing the formation of one's teacher identity (Bullough & Stokes, 1994; Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Cole & Knowles, 1993; Sugrue, 1994). However, this literature has not focused directly on the adult learner as it relates to the process of sense making and understanding.

The influence of remembered lives on the reconstruction of the participants' identities as teachers is illuminated through the idea of schemas and scripts. Schemas "represent categorical knowledge…, [that is] concepts of terms of supersets, parts, and other attribute value pairs" (Anderson, 1996, p. 155-156). Scripts are formed when people develop a schema related to a specific event. Schemas can stand alone or can be embedded within other schemas. Schemas are active in that they facilitate the storage and use of knowledge; an individual's schemata reflects his or her experiences and worldview. Schemas also play a role in reconstructing memories (Anderson, 1996).

The participants in this study viewed and made sense of their teacher preparation and student teaching through the lens of their established sense of self; through the concept of schema, and through one's self as reflective of one's worldview, which evolves from life experiences and roles. Within one's set of schemata is a singular schema or set of schemas that

are held about what it means to be a teacher and what it means to teach. For each participant, this schema was drawn on and enacted through what is known as a script or internal script (Berne, 1964). These internal scripts provide a way of acting based on one's prior knowledge and conceptualizations of the individual's notions regarding teaching and being a teacher.

For example, Cassie discussed her memories of a former K-12 teacher who was very patient and kind. She later indicated that she aimed to demonstrate these same characteristics with the students that she was working with in her student teaching experience. The memory of this teacher provided a facet of her own internal script for how she should act as a teacher. While in her student teaching experience, Cassie earned affirmation from her CT as she acted out these characteristics of what she understood to be a good teacher. Even though Cassie never directly stated that her CT affirmed her actions in the classroom, she made statements that were reflective of her CTs affirmation. She said that her CT made her feel like a teacher, and that the students came to her instead of the CT when they needed help (C. Worth, interview, 2012).

Similar to Cassie, Tiffany recalled positive memories of her K-12 experiences and her former K-12 teachers. These memories reflected how she was made to feel special and important through specific experiences and the teachers that she connected to those experiences. These memories laid the foundation for her internal script for teaching.

Through this cognitive framework for understanding of how participants made sense of their experiences, we know that one way the student teachers made sense of their experiences was through enacting their internal scripts about teaching and being a teacher. The origin for these internal scripts largely stemmed from their own K-12 memories of former teachers and their own experiences as learners.

These internal scripts were manifested through observable behaviors as each participant interacted within the context of his or her student teaching experience. As the participants tried out their internal scripts, they were not only making sense of what it meant to teach, but also they were negotiating their sense of selves as teachers.

Relationships with Program Faculty and Cooperating Teachers

Relationships with program faculty and cooperating teachers also contributed to the students' growing sense of what it meant to be a teacher. Faculty members and cooperating teacher(s) played an important role in fostering the sense-making process for the participants throughout their preparation and into their student teaching.

Adult learners' relationships with faculty and fellow students are different from traditional-aged students; faculty report having a more collegial relationship with adult students (DeBlois, 1993). Melichar (1994) reports that college instructors were more positive toward returning adult learners in every regard, citing their ability to focus, listen, display initiative, and manage time. The participants in this study cited having friendships and mentor-type relationships with faculty members. Participants reported that these relationships were sustained throughout their programs into their student teaching experiences. For example, Tina stated, "Some of the professors I had at the beginning I still talk to now; they are almost friends, definitely mentors (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). Tina's example illustrates her journey to see herself as a teacher as she maintained what could be characterized as collegial relationships with her own teachers. In describing her relationships with some of her faculty members, Becky stated "they have your best interest at heart, it's not like we exchange phone numbers and hang out, it was like, you are struggling with this, you need help, let me give you my cell, call me anytime"

(B. Sears, interview, 2012). Overall, the participants characterized the relationships with their faculty members as supportive.

The participants' cooperating teachers were characterized in both positive and negative ways. Throughout the student teaching experience, the cooperating teachers were in positions to encourage, or discourage, the participants' conceptualization of what it meant to teach and to be a teacher. The cooperating teachers did this through extending, or failing to extend, validation of the participants' internal scripts for teaching. For example, in Cassie's first grade classroom, she expressed to her CT that wanted to implement a behavior chart for the students as a way to exercise a behavior management tool. Cassie's CT positively responded to her idea and insisted that they "try it together" (C. Worth, interview, 2012).

To further understand the impact of the cooperating teacher, it may be helpful to view the cooperating teacher as a role model. This study suggests that CTs may serve as role models for the adult learners but that their influence may further or hinder the development of one's teacher identity. Previous research (Britzman, 2003; Lortie, 1975) suggests that pre-service teachers come to college with preconceptions of what teaching is and who teachers are and that these images are well engrained by the time they reach college. With this in mind, the reality is that the participants came to their student teaching with lay-theories concerning teaching in addition to a sense of whom they were or who they wanted to be as teachers.

For example, as I previously discussed, all of the participants came to college, and specifically, into student teaching with distinct memories of their former K-12 experiences and former K-12 teachers. These memories established their sense of what teaching was about, which evolved into their internal scripts for teaching. The CT played a critical role in furthering, or

hindering, each participant's sense of self as a teacher through endorsement or dismissal of actions as he or she acted out internal working models.

For example, when Tiffany attempted to enact her internal script for teaching, she frequently felt discouraged by the lack of support that she received from her CT. To illustrate this lack of support, Tiffany stated, "She makes things super hard when they don't have to be…she does everything she can to discourage me" (T. Miller, interview, 2012). Ultimately, through Tiffany's cooperating teacher's actions and statements, Tiffany felt disaffirmed in her teaching capabilities.

The findings of my study further extend our understanding of the role that the cooperating teacher plays in the developmental process of one's teacher identity. Throughout the student teaching experience, the CT played an influential role; the CT wielded the authority, to further endorse the student teachers conceptualization of what it meant to teach and to be a teacher. The CT did this through affirming, or disaffirming, the student teacher's interactions and behavior. When the student teachers were affirmed by their cooperating teachers, they moved towards a more consolidated sense of self as a teacher; however, when they were not affirmed, they were left in a state of disorientation.

Life Experiences and Roles

The participants in this study also made use of their experiences within particular social roles to help define what it meant to become a teacher. The participants' life experiences represented a collection of rich understandings that shaped their sense making process in a way that may not be applicable to a traditionally-aged student. From the existing literature on adult learners in teacher preparation, we know that they have a realistic approach in their expectations

about the workplace conditions, compared to a more romanticized perspective of traditionally-aged students (DeBlois, 1993).

Participants revealed how they attempted to gain a sense of themselves as teachers through their life roles and existing identities. For Tina and others, their experiences as parents influenced their behavior as teachers. Tina stated, "I can't imagine teaching high school in my early twenties, but going into it now and I have kids, my oldest daughter is fifteen, so she's in high school. I can relate to the kids much more easily" (T. Meyer, interview, 2012). Tina's statement suggests that her knowledge source for relating to her students and her sense of "how to act" was less dependent on what she learned throughout teacher preparation and more connected to her own role and experiences as a parent.

Established research has indicated that adult learners conceptualize their identities largely through life experiences from various roles that they may play such as parents, workers, community members, and faith fellowship participants (Boud and Miller, 1996b). These identities reflect deeply-rooted values, beliefs, assumptions, and norms that provide a unique lens through which they function within various situations (Pajares, 1992). Through these experiences, adult learners develop knowledge and skills that serve as a baseline or a schema to which new learning experiences are attached (Piaget, 1965). The findings of this study acknowledge these complexities and highlight the critical nature that these complexities play in how adult learners draw on these experiences as they make sense of their experiences.

The data presented underlying tensions and challenges associated with identity formation. The process of identity formation and reformation manifested itself in the participants' stories as they sought to transition from one stage of their lives to the next. Their former K-12 memories served an important role as they established the foundation for their internal script for teaching.

As I previously detailed, the cooperating teacher played a critical role in how the participants made sense out of their student teaching experiences. The participants' stories also revealed how they drew on their prior roles and life experiences as they made sense of their experiences while preparing to be a teacher. Ultimately, the experiences of learning to be a teacher challenged and changed the participants' sense of self.

Contributions to the Literature on Teacher Identity Formation

The events, experiences, and relationships described were influential in the way the participants made sense of their experiences as they were preparing to be teachers. Collectively, these events, experiences, and relationships contributed to the participants' emerging sense of identities as teachers.

Similar to this study, other educational research that has previously examined the experiences of pre-service teachers has documented these experiences as a process of identity formation (Borich, 1999; Britzman, 1994; Danielwicz, 2001; Lortie, 1975). However, the educational research that previously examined identity formation in pre-service teachers has been mostly small-scale and in-depth case studies, focusing on groups or individuals classified by gender, race, or content expertise (Antonek, McCormick, & Donato, 1997; Bendixen-Noe, 1995; Ronspies, 2011; Volkman & Anderson, 1997; Walsh et al., 2000). Further, prior research that has aimed to better understand the experiences of pre-service teachers has not focused on returning adult learners (Antonek et al., 1997; Surgrue, 1997, Volkmann & Anderson, 1998). The findings of this research advance this broader discussion through the examination of the experiences of six adult learners in the context of student teaching while attending a career college.

Previous research that focused on experiences prior to student teaching illustrates the personal histories and existing images of teachers and teaching and highlights their influence on pre-service teacher's identity formation (Bullough & Stokes, 1994; Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Cole & Knowles, 1993; Lortie, 1975; Sugrue, 1997; Zeichner, 1992). The findings of this study pointed to the significant role that memories of former K-12 teachers and learning experiences had in influencing the sense making process for the participants.

Further, earlier research suggests that these prior experiences as K-12 students lays the foundation for pre-service teachers in conceptualizing what teaching is and who teachers are (Britzman, 2003; Lortie, 1975). This research also indicates that these images are well engrained in students by the time they reach college (Britzman, 2003; Lortie, 1975). These preconceptions or lay theories for teaching were evidenced in this study through the participants' internal scripts for teaching.

As this study and others have revealed, the process of developing a teacher identity is complicated; it involves an acknowledgement of one's personal identity, values, beliefs, and preconceptions of what it means to be a teacher (Danielwicz, 2001; Lortie, 1975). Illuminating this process, Britzman's study (2003) of pre-service teachers describes how individuals develop and manage their roles as teachers. She reveals the personal conflicts that exist between the personal values and expectations of teaching and the realities and demands of teaching.

The findings of this study further extend Britzman's findings. While she points to the conflicts that exist, this study suggests reveals sources of the potential conflicts. More specifically, the life roles and experiences of adult learners influence their values and their expectations and realities of what they believe is essential to teaching.

The findings of the this study further acknowledge existing research on teacher identity formation that suggests this process is ongoing and open to a variety of influences (Beijaard et al., 2000; Coldron & Smith, 1999; Goodson & Cole, 1994). Specifically, this study demonstrated that the process of developing an identity as a teacher, included life disruptions and transitions, existing schemata, relationships with program faculty and cooperating teachers, and current life roles. These findings support other studies that have established that professional identity development progresses through the intersection of one's personal and professional teaching experiences (Bullough & Baughman, 1997; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, Nias, 1989).

Implications

The findings of this study further support the realities and consequences of the conflict that can emerge when the pre-service teacher's expectations, or in the case of this study, internal scripts, fail to coincide with the expectation of the cooperating teacher (Britzman, 2003). The role of the cooperating teacher surfaced as salient in how the participants' make sense of their own emerging sense of themselves as teachers.

The participants' memories of their K-12 experiences and their life roles and experiences largely informed their conceptualizations of what they believed being a teacher was and what teachers do. As they enacted their internal scripts for teaching, their CTs played a critical role in furthering their sense of self as teachers. Regardless of the level of affirmation that they received from their CTs, the participants were in a state in which they questioned whose knowledge and experience counts.

For those who are in role model positions, specifically cooperating teachers, it is important to recognize that adult learners are facing philosophical positions and are in a state of questioning; they are confronting their own beliefs about what it means to teach and to be a

teacher (Britzman, 2003). A purposeful acknowledgement through planned discussion and reflection may further support this time of transition.

The argument has been made that learning to be a quality teacher is an ongoing process and that good teachers are cognizant of their identities. Danielwicz (2001) states, "Becoming a teacher involves the construction of a person's identity…this involves the transformation of their (pre-service teachers') identities over time" (p. 9). The findings of this study reveal that the participants were not always conscious of their own sense of self or their existing identities prior to coming into the teacher preparation program (Erikson, 1968; Gee, 2001; Kegan, 1982; Magdola, 2001; Mead, 1934; Vygotsky, 1978).

For those who are in faculty roles and are preparing aspiring teachers to gain the knowledge and skills to teach, it is important to recognize that adult learners manifest existing identities as a result of their life experiences connected to the learning environment (Danielwicz, 2001; Lortie, 1975). As this study and previous studies (Beijaard et al., 2000; Coldron & Smith, 1999; Goodson & Cole, 1994; Lortie, 1975) have illustrated, these life experiences provide the foundation for their lay-theories of what it means to teach and to be a teacher. It has been suggested that these lay-theories have the potential to persist throughout the preparation phase (Lortie, 1975). In light of this reality, if our intention as teacher educators is to prepare quality teachers, and one's teacher identity is central to this, it is important to create spaces and opportunities throughout the preparation experience for adult learners to explore their existing identities in a way that provides opportunities to acknowledge and integrate one's evolving identity as a teacher (Britzman, 2003; Korthagen, 2004; Schoonmaker, 2002).

To further support this, scholars argue that there should be an intentional recognition and integration of the fundamentals related to these identities such as values, dispositions, and beliefs

(Britzman, 2003; Korthagen, 2004; Schoonmaker, 2002). For both pre-service and in-service, teachers personal life experiences are acknowledged as significant in influencing their identity and therefore their teaching (Britzman, 2003; Schoonmaker, 2002).

From prior research, we know that adult learners come to college identifying themselves under other roles that they have or do play including, that of parents, spouses, workers, volunteers and so on (Knowles, 1980). These experiences contribute at varying degrees to shape their existing identities. These can act as barriers to reconceptualizing their new role as a teacher, which may ultimately bring to surface other challenges. This reconceptualization can be met with uncertainty or ambivalence (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). The educational experience for returning adult learners is distinctly different from traditional-aged learners in terms of expectations, participation, and motivation.

Given the characteristics of adult learners, faculty, cooperating teachers, and field supervisors, can support these students and their transitions through providing intentional opportunities for these students to further explore their own sense of self as it relates to their identities. Prior research suggests (Kasworm, 2010; Kasworm, Polson, & Fishback, 2002) that understanding more about how adult learners' identity is negotiated may respond, in part, to these difficulties.

The learning experiences that develop and shape pre-service teachers' dispositions, knowledge, and skills about effective teaching are instrumental in developing teacher identity (Danielewicz, 2001; Lortie, 1975 & Zeichner, 1990; NCATE, 2002). With this, all teacher candidates are challenged to examine, and many times readjust, their personal and professional beliefs, attitudes, and values about teaching and learning in their journey to understand what it means to be a quality teacher.

The argument has been made that learning to be a quality teacher is an ongoing process and that good teachers are cognizant of their identities (Danielwicz, 2001). However, there are times when this developmental process is not fully realized and this has the potential to impact the quality of instruction and interactions that occur between the teacher and his or her students.

For faculty, cooperating teachers, and field supervisors it is important to acknowledge the critical role that identity development has as it relates to developing quality teachers. Prior research that has bridged these two concepts suggests that teacher effectiveness, or quality, is reflected on the teacher's impact on students (Kennedy, 1998).

Areas of Future Research

As I think about how I have changed or evolved over the course of this study, I am left wondering how this study may have encouraged change within the participants that engaged in this study. After facilitating the interviews and the focus groups, I have had two email responses, thanking me for the opportunity to participate and to share their experiences. I had one participant who requested permission to blog about the experience of interviewing. All of the interview participants demonstrated a sense of importance and appreciation for having their voices heard. One of the participants thanked me profusely for the opportunity to share her story, and she went on to talk with me for nearly an hour after the interview was complete. She said that the time felt therapeutic. With all of this, I am left wondering if the conversations encouraged a deeper level of reflection about their lives, about who they were, and who they wanted to be. Would they have thought about the concept of identity and teacher identity if our conversation never existed? If I were to revisit these teachers in a year to two years, would they remember the interviews? Would they say the interviews and the opportunity to self-reflect had any impact on them?

Teacher education programs are charged with the responsibility of preparing pre-service teachers, but as this study and others have revealed, the critical nature of the student teaching experience and the role the cooperating teacher serves is crucial. While most of the participants in the study characterized their student teaching experiences and their relationships with their CT as positive, there were two that were characterized as negative. I question if all of the experiences could have been improved if the CTs had adequate support, understanding, and skills to provide mentoring to their respective student teachers. Britzman (2003) suggests that teacher preparation programs need to provide the structure that integrates personal identity, values, and beliefs. This mismatch between pre-service teacher expectations and the realities of teaching is further documented by Cole and Knowles (1993), adding more weight to the influence of preconceived notions about teaching. Further study into understanding the role of cooperating teachers has the potential to reveal the nature, and perhaps significant role, of further supporting growth of pre-service teachers in understanding what it means to be a teacher and what it means to teach.

The participants in this study were adult learners who were in the midst of their student teaching while attending a career college. The participants had varied educational backgrounds and had engaged in wide-ranging and complex life experiences. It would be helpful to have a comparative study that focused on traditional-aged learners within the same institutional context. I would not expect the themes to change, but I would expect those internal working models to be less solidified or perhaps more malleable due to the sheer lack of time to engage in more and varied life experiences on the part of younger participants.

In discussions regarding quality teachers, educational researchers and policymakers have categorized quality in two categories, general academic and verbal ability (Darling-Hammond,

2000; US DEPT of ED, 2002) and dispositions of teaching (Katz, 1993; Katz & Raths, 1985; Pajares, 1992). While the findings of this study further the discussions related to this latter category of dispositions, very little surfaced regarding general academic and verbal ability. Currently, general academic and verbal ability are used as central indicators of teacher quality as it relates to content mastery and intellectual capacity. There is an opportunity to further explore this student population' sense-making process and identity development as it relates to one's intellectual development as a teacher.

The intention of this study was to gain an understanding of how returning adult learners, who were enrolled in a teacher preparation program within a career college, understood and made sense of their experiences in the program. Additionally, this research sought to understand the extent that these adult learners engaged in a reconstruction of their identity as part of their sense-making process.

Based on previous research, and the results of this study, teacher education needs to make concerted efforts to accommodate the adult pre-service teacher (Kasworm, 2010; Munby, Russell, & Martin, 2001). More specifically, teacher education has recognized the role that teacher identity development has in fostering quality in teachers (Beijaard et al., 2004; Van den Berg, 2002; Zembylas, 2003). Continuing this discussion offers opportunities to further understand the experiences that adult learners have in teacher education relative to the development of quality teachers.

In conclusion, I return to the student, Cathy, whom I wrote about in chapter one. Cathy was the 52-year-old white female who returned to college to pursue a career in teaching after fulfilling her role as a stay-at-home mother. Cathy was recognized and acknowledged for her behaviors that distinguished her from other classmates. In her senior seminar, Cathy struck her

classmate on the back of the head. This action reflects an example of other behaviors that, in the context of a professional preparation program in teaching, seem somewhat anomalous. I have observed the display of these kinds of behaviors numerous times by students who were returning adult learners. In chapter one, I led with the question: how might we understand and make sense of such behaviors demonstrated by some returning adult students? What do these behaviors suggest about how these students are negotiating the transition from who they were to who they are trying to become?

I am not sure that the findings of this study provide a comprehensive understanding of such behaviors like that of Cathy's. I do, however, believe that the results of this study have highlighted the concept of life transitions in that Cathy's journey in teacher preparation was one in which she was leaving her old sense of self as a stay-at-home mother and attempting to gain a new sense of herself as a teacher. Based on the literature of life transition, we might characterize Cathy's transition from mother to teacher as challenging. From the perspective of life roles, we might understand Cathy's behavior as an action that perhaps she would have taken in her role as a mother. Even the results of the study did not produce direct clarification of behaviors like Cathy's, it did illuminate the complex nature of the sense making process that adult learners engage in as they pursue a new sense of themselves as teachers.

Personal Reflection

As I engaged in the process of data collection and analysis, I found myself in a constant state of comparison. While I was a traditional student during my undergraduate degree, my memories of my own experiences of preparing to be a teacher continued to surface. Throughout analysis and organization of the data, I found myself wanting to confirm my findings based on my own experiences. I would ask myself questions such as the following: Does this make sense?

Was this true of my experience? How and when did I know I was a teacher? How did this evolve? How did my own life experiences shape my being a teacher? What influence did my own K-12 experiences and images of my former teachers have on me as I came to understand myself as a teacher? As I draw nearer to the end of this particular journey, I have a different sense of myself, not only as a researcher but as a teacher. At the end of my own personal life transition, I recalled one of my own former K-12 teachers.

Mrs. Virginia Burns, who has long since passed away, was my third grade teacher and the author of *William Beaumont, the Frontier Doctor*. I know this because she gave me a copy and wrote on the inside, "To my beautiful flower; may you continue to bloom." This book was far beyond my reading level as an eight-year-old, but I read it and reread it in fifth grade, and at some later point, I reread it for a third time. Today, this book still finds a home in my personal library. Without closing my eyes, I have a vivid picture of Mrs. Burns with her white hair, her pale wrinkled skin, and her very professional dress.

This research has prompted my own reflection as to why I have maintained such vivid memories of Mrs. Burns and to question the role that these memories played in my development as a teacher. Did the warmth and kindness that Mrs. Burns exuded have some influence on the type of teacher that I became or that I aspired to be? Our reflections of past events and people become our own unique realities. Herein lies the unique challenge and promise of qualitative research. As we remember, we reconstruct events, feelings, relationships, and the meanings of these based on our own distinct experiences. The memory may be purposeful in that it provides impetus for action. Our memories may lay foundations for future ways of knowing and being; they may authenticate decisions, or they may serve no obvious purpose.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Table 1: Teacher Preparation Required Fieldwork

COURSES REQUIRING FIELDWORK			X = Course is required for		
Course Number	Course Name	Fieldwork Time	Elementary	Elementary w/ ZS	Secondary
ECE231	Guidance and Discipline	20 hours		X	
ECE271B	Early Childhood Education	90 hours		X	
ECE481	Senior Practicum in Early Childhood Education	13 weeks*		X	
EDU200	Introduction To Professional Education Experience	20 hours	X	X	X
EDU312	Educational Psychology	20 hours	X	X	X
EDU330	The Exceptional Learner	20 hours	X	X	X
EDU421	Reading in the Content	20 hours	X	X	
EDU425	Literacy Education in the Secondary	20 hours			X
EDU451	Theory and Techniques of Instruction: Elementary (K-	30 hours	X	X	
EDU461 or EDU462 or EDU463	Theory and Techniques of Instruction: Mathematics (7–12) Theory and Techniques of Instruction: English (7–12) Theory and Techniques of Instruction: Computer Science (7–12) Theory and Techniques of Instruction: Social Studies (7–12)	30 hours			X
EDU481	Directed Teaching I	13 weeks*	X		X
EDU482	Directed Teaching II	13 weeks*	X	X	X

Appendix B: Student Teaching Duties

A guiding principle for student teaching placement is that student teachers become immersed in the total life of the school. Student teachers are expected to:

- Use their time in the school to visit other teachers and observe classrooms, both in and out of their academic discipline and at varying grade levels.
- Become familiar with the functions of school administrators and staff and with the special services available at the school.
- Participate in non-instructional activities such as lunchroom, study hall, and bus duty.
- Attend faculty meetings, in-service workshops, parent–teacher association (PTA) meetings, parent conferences, and other important school activities.

Appendix C: Student Teaching Outcomes

The mission of the College Teacher Preparation Program is to support emerging teachers in developing their professional identities as they integrate knowledge, practice, and reflection. The student teaching outcomes below are a subset of the Teacher Preparation Program outcomes, which are based on the program's conceptual framework and the Entry-Level Standards for Michigan Teachers.

Knowledge (learner, pedagogy, curriculum)

1. Each student will develop an understanding of the community through interaction with community members and organizations.
2. Each student will demonstrate knowledge of subject-area content appropriate to his/her intended state certification.
3. Each student will articulate knowledge of human growth, development, and learning theory as it applies to the needs of diverse learners.
4. Each student will discuss an educator's legal and ethical responsibilities at the school, district, state, and national levels.
5. Each student will identify research-based strategies and technologies for K–12 curriculum planning, implementation, and assessment.
6. Each student will differentiate between assessment and evaluation procedures.

Practice (differentiation, instruction, real-world application, assessment)

1. Each student will demonstrate organizational skills in planning and in managing time and resources to maximize instructional time.

2. Each student will exhibit an ethic of caring for and commitment to children and their learning.
3. Each student will participate in learning communities where he/she will demonstrate professionalism, critical thinking, reflection, enthusiasm, and respect for diversity.
4. Each student will effectively use a range of research-based strategies and technologies in planning, implementation, and assessment.

Reflection (professionalism, learning communities, professional growth)

1. Each student will reflect on his/her own teacher identity and articulate a plan for continued professional growth and lifelong learning.
2. Each student will assess his/her role and effectiveness in collaboration. Each student will engage in meaningful self-evaluation and reflection with colleagues on his/her professional practice.
3. Each student will analyze data from a variety of appropriate assessments and evaluations to inform curriculum, instruction, and school improvement.
4. Each student will reflect on the effectiveness of his/her organizational skills in planning and in managing time and resources in order to maximize instructional time.
5. Each student will display professional dispositions appropriate for effective teaching.

Appendix D: Consent Form

Dear Teacher Preparation Student:

My name is Lesa N.Louch, and I am currently a doctoral candidate at Michigan State Unviversity, in the Department of K-12 Educational Administration. I am inviting you to take part in a research project focusing on teacher identity development in adult learners.

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of how adult learners make sense of their experiences in preparing to become teachers. The research for this study will occur in two stages, you are being asked to participate in only one stage which is highlighted below:

(1) During this first stage you will participate in a face-to-face interview (approximately 60 minutes). The interview will be audio recorded.

(2) During the second stage you will participate with several other individuals in a focus group (approximately 60 minutes). In the focus group, you and the other participants will be engaged in discussion around different prompts that I will provide. The focus group will be audio recorded.

The data collected from the first stage, the face-to-face interviews, will be compiled into a report and a pseudonym will be assigned to insure your confidentiality. The audio files and the transcriptions of these files will be coded with your assigned pseudonym and will be kept in a secure location. The interviews will only be used for the purposes outlined in this study.

The data collected from the second stage, the focus group, will be compiled into a report and a pseudonym will be assigned to each participant in order to ensure individual confidentiality. The audio files and the transcriptions of these files will be coded with assigned pseudonyms and will be kept in a secure location. Confidentiality will be encouraged among all participants; however, the researcher can't guarantee that participants in the focus group will not repeat comments outside of the group. The information from the focus group will only be used for the purposes outlined in this study.

Participation is voluntary, you may choose not to participate at all, or you may refuse to participate in certain procedures or answer certain questions or discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit.

If you have any questions about this study you can contact me by e-mail, lesa.louch@baker.edu or by telephone at 810-766-4183. This research report will be submitted as my final project for my dissertation study at Michigan State University. My advising professor for this study is John Dirkx, Ph.D. and he can be reached at 517-353-8927, by e-mail at john.dirkx@msu.edu. A copy of this consent form will be sent to your e-mail address to confirm your participation in this study.

Your signature indicates that you have read the information in this letter and have decided to participate. You may withdraw from this study at any time. Please notify me verbally or in writing if you decide to withdraw. Making a decision not to participate will not affect your relationship with your campus or program officials. If you are willing to participate please type your name and date in the space provided, save the document on your computer, and send the saved document as an attachment in an e-mail to me and keep a copy for your records.

I agree to participate in the study.

Name of Participate: _____

Date: _____

Appendix E: Demographic Survey

The following questions will be provided to each participant through an electronic survey. The purpose of these questions is to provide the researcher an opportunity to create a more diverse participant sample and to better understand the background of the participants.

Demographic Interview Questions:

1. Name
2. What is your ethnicity?
3. How old are you?
4. Are you financially independent of your parents?
5. What is your marital status?
6. Do you have children? If so, how many?
7. What is your employment status?
8. How long have you worked?
9. What type of work do you do?
10. Do you have a standard high school diploma?
11. From the time you graduated high school to the time you started college (in this program) how much time lapsed?

Appendix F: Interview Guide

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Interview Questions:

1. Tell me about yourself.
    a. Potential probe:
        i. T*ell me more about…*
        ii. How would you describe yourself to others?
2. Tell me about your work/education.
    a. Potential probe:
        i. *Can you describe the nature of the experience?*
        ii. *Were there aspects that you particularly liked/disliked or positive/negative or satisfying/dissatisfying?*
3. Something that might help you as we move forward with additional interview questions is a visual representation.
    a. Interviewer will provide a description of the visual representation- draw a river; this reflects the timeline of your life. Include people, events, experiences, encounters, and realizations that you believe have contributed to who you are today as a teacher candidate.

4. How did you come to be interested in teaching?
    a. Describe the decision-making process that you underwent.
        i. Potential probes:
            1. *Were there any relationships or individuals who were key in your decision?*
            2. *What other factors influenced your decision?*
            3. *Why did you want to be a teacher?*
            4. *How do you feel about your decision to be a teacher?*
            5. *When did you first know you wanted to be a teacher?*
            6. *How did you know that you wanted to be a teacher?*

5. Did you have favorite teacher?
    a. *Tell me about this person.*
    b. *Tell me about the influence that this person had or did not have on you.*
6. Did you have a teacher that you felt was not very effective?
    a. *What made this teacher ineffective to you?*
    b. *Tell me about the influence that this person had or did not have on you.*
    c. *Tell me about the influence that this person had or did not have on you.*
7. At this moment, do you see yourself as a teacher?
    a. Potential probes:
        i. *If they do- tell me about when this evolved for you?*
        ii. *If they don't- tell me about why you don't.*
        iii. *If they don't- at what time do you expect that this will happen? Why?*
8. Tell me what it's been like being a student in the teacher education program.
    a. Potential probes:
        i. *What have your relationships been like with classmates, faculty, and program officials?*
        ii. *Describe your sense of belonging.*
        iii. *Describe any challenges that you have experienced i.e. competition of time, managing personal obligations and duties with college work.*
        iv. *What has it been like being a learner again?*
        v. *Can you share some experiences that have been particularly helpful or challenging since you have been in the teacher education program?*
9. Tell me about your student teaching experience.
    a. Potential probes:
        i. *Your specific assignment(s).*
        ii. *What have you liked most? Least?*
        iii. *Describe any challenges that you have had.*
        iv. *What effect has the student teaching had on you?*
        v. *Tell me about your relationship to other teachers.*
            1. *Tell me about your relationship with your Cooperating Teacher and your Supervisor.*

vi. *Tell me about your relationship to other student teachers.*

10. Throughout your experiences preparing to be a teacher, has there been a time when you did something but later felt that you should have done something else?
    a. Potential Probe:
        i. *Tell me more about…*
11. You've told me a great deal about your experiences leading up to entering your program including your student teaching experience. Looking back on your decision to become a teacher, how do you feel about that now? Why?
    a. Potential probe:
        i. *Have you changed?*
        ii. *In what ways have you changed?*
12. Reviewing your River of Life drawing, is there anything or anyone that you did not talk about that you would like to.

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

AACTE. (1999). *Teacher education pipeline IV: Schools and departments of education enrollments by race, ethnicity, and gender.* Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education.

Antonek, J.L., McCormick, D.E., & Donato, R. (1997). The student portfolio as autobiography: Developing a professional identity. *Modern Language Journal*, 81(1), 15-27.

Beauchamp, C. & Thomas, L. (2009). Understanding teacher identity: An overview of issues in the literature and implications for teacher education. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 39(2), 175-189.

Becker, B.J., Kennedy, M.M., & Hundersmarck, S. (2003). *Communities of scholars, research, and debates about teacher quality.* Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Chicago, April.

Becker, H.S. & Carper, J.W. (1956). The development of identification with an occupation. *The American Journal of Sociology.* LXI(4), 289-298.

Becker, H.S., Greer, B., Hughes, E.C. and Strauss, A. (1961). *Boys in white: Student culture in medical school*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Beijaard,D., Meijer, P.C., & Verloop, N. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20, 107-128.

Bendixon-Noe, M., & Redick, S. (1995). Developmental theory: A comparison between traditional-aged and non-traditional aged beginning secondary teachers. *Action in Teacher Education 17(3),* 52-9.

Berliner, D.C. (1994). Expertise: The wonder of exemplary performances. In J.N. Mangieri & C.C. Block (Eds.). *Creating powerful thinking in teachers and students: Diverse perspectives* (pp. 161-196). New York: Hartcourt Brace.

Berne, Eric. (1964). *Games people play: The psychology of human relationship*. New York: Random House.

Blair, J. (2000). ETS study links effective teaching methods to test-score gains. *Education Week,* 20 (8), 24.

Borich, G. (1999). Dimensions of self that influence teaching. In R. Lipka & T. Brinthaupt (Eds), *The role of self in teacher development*, pp.92-117. New York: State University of New York Press.

Bragg, A.K. (1976). *The socialization process in higher education*. ERIC/AAHE Research

Report NO.7. Washington DC: The George Washington University, School of Education and Human Development.

Breese, L., & Nawrocki-Chabin, R. (2002, October). Nurturing dispositions through reflective practice. Paper presented at the meeting of The Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education, San Diego, CA.

Brawer, F.B. (1996). Retention-attrition in the nineties. U.S. California. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 3939510).

Britzman, D.P. (2003). *Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Brookhart, S.M., & Freeman, D.J. (1992). Characteristics of entering teacher candidates. *Review of Educational Research,* 62(1), 37-60.

Bullough, R.V.(1997). Practicing theory and theorizing practice. In J. Loughran, & T. Russell (Eds.), *Purpose, passion and pedagogy in teacher education* (pp.13-31). London: Falmer Press.

Bullough, R.V., & Baughman, K. (1997). *"First-year teacher" eight years later: An inquiry into teacher development.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Bullough, R.V., & Stokes, D. (1994). Analyzing personal teaching metaphors in preservice teacher education as a means for encouraging professional development. *American Educational Research Journal, 31(1), 197-224.*

Burke, P.J. (2006). Identity change. *Social Psychology Quarterly,* 69(1), 81-96.

Bullough, R.V., Knowles, G., & Crow, N.A. (1992). *Emerging as a teacher.* London, New York: Routledge.

Burrell, G., and Morgan, G. (1979). *Sociological paradigms and organizational analysis.* London: Heinemann.

Chao, R., & Good, G.E. (2004). Nontraditional students' perspectives on college education: A qualitative study. *Journal of College Counseling,* 7, 5-12.

Clandinin, D.J., & Connelly, F.M. (1996). Teachers' professional knowledge landscapes: Teacher stories- stories of teachers- school stories- stories of schools. *Educational Researcher, 25(3), 24-30.*

Cochran-Smith, M., & Zeichner, K.M. (Eds.). (2005). *Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA panel on research and teacher education.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Coldron, J., & Smith, R. (1999). Active location in teachers' construction of their professional identities. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 31(6), 711- 726.

Cole, A.L., & Knowles, J.G. (1993). Teacher development partnership research: A focus of methods and issues. *American Educational Journal, 30(3) 473-495.*

Collinson, V., Killeavy, M., & Stephenson, H.J. (1999). Exemplary teachers: Practicing an ethic of care in the England, Ireland, and the United States. *Journal for a Just and Caring Education*, 5(4), 349-366.

Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Cross, K.P. (1981). Adults as learners. San Francisco,CA: Jossey-Bass.

Danielwicz, J. (2001). Teaching selves: Identity, pedagogy, and teacher education. Albany, NY. State University of New York Press.

Darling-Hammond, L. (Ed.). (2000). *Studies of excellence in teacher education: Preparation in the undergraduate years.* New York, NY: National Commission on Teaching and America's Future.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). Teacher quality and student achievement: A review of state policy evidence. *Education Analysis Archives,* 8(1), 1-29. Retrieved January 22, 2009, from http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa.v8n1

Darling-Hammond, L. (2005). *Preparing teachers for a changing world.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). How teacher education matters. *Journal of Teacher Education,51*(3), 166-173.

Debois, C. (1993). Developmental difference between traditional and non-traditional education students: Implications for teacher educators. *Contemporary Education*, 64(3), 154-156.

Dewey, J. (1902). The educational situation: As concerns the elementary school. Reprinted in *Journal of Curriculum Studies* (Electronic Version), 34(3), 387-403.

Dill, V.S. (1994). Teacher education in Texas: A new paradigm. *Educational Forum,58*(2), 36-40.

Dirkx, J.M., & Dang, N.L.T. (2009). *Betwixt and between: The role of liminality in fostering among dislocated workers in developmental education.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA, April 16.

Du, X.Y.(2006). Gendered practices of constructing an engineering identity in a problem-based

learning environment. *European Journal of Engineering Education*, 31 (1), 35-42.

Easter, L.M., Schultz, E.L., Neyhart, T.K., & Reck, U.M. (1999). Weighty perceptions: A study of the attitudes and beliefs of preservice teacher education students regarding diversity and urban education. *The Urban Review,* 31(2), 205-220.

Elder, G.H., Jr. (1980). Adolescence in historical perspective. In J. Adelson (Ed.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology,* pp. 3-46. New York, NY: Wiley.

Ely, E.E. (1997). The non-traditional student. Paper presented at the American Association of \ Community Colleges Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA, April 12-15. (JC970516).

Erikson, E.H. (1968). *Identity: Youth in crisis*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co.

Erlandson, D., Harris, E., Skipper, B., Allen, S. (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry: A guide to methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Evans, N.J., Forney, D.S. & Guido-DiBrito, F. *Student Development in College: Theory, Research and Practice.* San Francisco,CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998.

Feistritzer, C. (1996). *Profiles of teachers in the United States.* Washington, DC: National Center For Education Information.

Feistritzer C., & Chester, D. (1996). *Alternative teacher certification: A state by state analysis.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Information.

Foddy, M., & Kashima, y. (2002). Self and identity: What is the conception of the person assumend in the current literature? In Y. Kashima, M. Foddy, and M. Platow (Eds.). *Self and identity: Personal, social and symbolic (pp. 3-25).* New York, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Fontana, A., & Frey, J.H. (1994). Interviewing: The art of science. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 361-376). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Gee, J.P. (2001). Identity as an analytic lens for research in education. In W.G. Secada (Ed.), *Review of research in education*, Vol. 25 (pp. 99-125). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

Goodson, I.F., & Cole, A.L. (1994). Exploring the teacher's professional knowledge: Constructing identity and community. *Teacher Education Quarterly,* 21(1), 85-105.

Gregoire, M. (2003). Is it a challenge or a threat? A dual-process model o teacher's cognition and appraisal processes during conceptual change. *Educational Psychology Review*, 15(2), 147-179.

Grice, H.P. (1941). Personal identity. *Mind,* 50, 330-350.

Gustafson, M., & Sorgman, M. (1983). *The degree of satisfaction with institutional climate as perceived by female students in teacher education: An exploratory study*. Washington D.C.: Office of Educational Research and Improvement. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 241 484.

Hammersley, M. (2000). *Taking sides in social research.* London, England: Routledge.

Hathorn, D., Machtmes, K., & Tillman, K. (2009). The lived experience of nurses working with student nurses in the clinical environment. *The Qualitative Report*. 14(2), 227-244.

Henry, G.T. & Thompson, C. (2010). *Impacts of Teacher Preparation Test Scores in North Carolina.*

Houles, C.O. (1961). *The Inquiring Mind.* Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Houston, W.R., Haberman, M., & Sikula, J. (Eds.). (1990). *Handbook of research on teacher education* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Macmillan.

Iwama, M. (2006). *The kawa model: Culturally relevant occupational therapy*. Philadelphia, PN: Livingstone-Elsevier Press.

Jones, D., & Mortimer, K., & Sathre, C.O. (2007, November). *Increasing productivity: Is higher education up to the task?* Paper presented to the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Louisville, KY. Retrieved November 10, 2007, from http://www.nationalcommissiononadultliteracy.org/content/nchemspresnetation.pdf

Kasworm, C.E. (2003). Adult meaning making in the undergraduate classroom. *Adult Education Quarterly,* 53(1), 81-98.

Kasworm, C.E. (2010). Adult learners in a research university: Negotiating undergraduate student identity. *Adult Education Quarterly, 60*(2), 143-160.

Kasworm, C., Polson, C., & Fishback, S. (2002) *Responding to adult learners in higher education.* Malabar, FL: Krieger.

Kasworm, C., & Sandmann, L., & Sissel, P. (2000). Adult learners in higher education. In A.L. Wilson & E.R. Hayes (Eds), *Handbook of adult and continuing education* (pp. 449-463). San Francisco, CA: Jossey- Bass.

Katz, L. G. (1993). *Dispositions: Definitions and implications for early childhood practices*. Perspectives from ERIC/EECE: A Monograph Series, No. 4.

Katz, L.G., & Raths, J.D. (1985). Dispositions as goals for teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 1(4), 301-307.*

Kegan, R. (1982). *The evolving self: Problem and process in human development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kegan, R. (1984). *In over our heads: The mental demands of modern life: A constructivist view.* In B. Kellerman (Ed.), Leadership: Multidisciplinary perspectives (pp. 199-230). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Keltikangas, K., & Martinsuo, M. (2009). Professional socialization of electrical engineers in university education. *European Journal of Engineering Education 43(1), 87-95.*

Kennedy, M. (1998). Sorting out teacher quality. *Phi Delta Kappan.* 90(1). 59-63.

Knowles, M.S. (1980). *The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to andragogy.* (2nd ed.) New York,NY: Cambridge Books.

Knowles, C.J. (1992). Models for understanding pre-service and beginning teachers' biographies: Illustrations from case studies. In I.F. Goodson (Ed.), *Studying teachers' lives* (pp. 99-152). London, England: Routledge.

Kohlberg, L., & Turiel, E. (1971). Moral development and moral education. (TPofT p. 99) 6 stages of moral development. Extended work of Piaget.

Kompf, M., Bond, W. R., Dworet, D., & Boak, T. (Eds). (1996). *Changing research and practice: Teachers' professionalism, identities and knowledge.* London, England: Falmer Press.

Korthagen, F., Kessels, J., Koster, B., Lagerwerf, B.,& Webbels, T.(2001). *Linking practice and theory: The pedagogy of realistic teacher education.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Elrbaum.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Levinson, D. J. (1977). The mid-life transition: A period in adult psychosocial development. *Psychiatry*, 40(5), 99-112.

Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.

Luce, J.V. (1992). *Introduction to Greek philosophy*. New York, NY: Thames & Hudson, MacDonald, C., & Stratta, E. (1998). Academic work, gender and subjectivity: Mature non-standard entrants in higher education. *Studies in the Education of Adults, 30, 67-79.*

Magolda, M.M. (2001). *Making their own way: Narratives for transforming higher education to promote self- development.* Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Manos, M.A., & Kasambira, K.P. (1998). Teacher preparation programs and non-traditional

students. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 49(3), 206-211.

McCormick, C. (1995). *Focus groups: An active learning approach to identifying nontraditional student's needs.* Paper presented at the meeting of the American Psychology Society Institute on the Teaching of Psychology, New York. (ERIC No. 392 907).

Mezirow, J. *Transformative dimensions of adult learning.* (1991). San Francisco,CA: Jossey-Bass.

MacDonald, M., Manning, M.L., & Gable, R. (1994). An alternative certification program: Career transition. *Action in Teacher Education,* 16(2), 19-27.

Mead, G.H. (1934). *Mind, self and society.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey –Bass.

Merriam, S. B. & Caffarella, R. S. (1999). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide (2nd Ed.).* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Merton, R. K.; Reader, George, G. & Kendall, P.L. (1957). *The student physician: Introductory studies in sociology of medical education.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mid-West Private College. (2011). *College Student Teaching Handbook,* p.7.

Morgan, D. *Focus groups as qualitative research.* London, England: Sage, 1988.

Morrow, S.L. & Smith, M.L. (2000). Qualitative research methods in counseling psychology. In S.D. Brown & R.W. Lent (Eds.), *Handbook of Counseling Psychology* (3rf ed.) (pp.199-230). NY:Wiley.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Chapters 6-7.

Munby, R.J., Russell, T., & Martin, A.K. (2001). Teachers' knowledge and how it develops. In V. Richardson (Ed), *Handbook of Research on Teaching (*4th ed., pp. 877-904). Washington, DC: American Educational Researcher.

Murnane, R.J., Schwinden, M. (1989). Race, gender and opportunity: Supply and demand for new teachers in North Carolina, 1975-1985. *Educational Education and Policy Analysis,* 11(2), 93-108.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2007). US Department of Education.

National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative*

educational reform. A report to the secretary of education. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Nespolitan, J. (1996). *Developing a conceptual framework toward change: A cross-sectional analysis of six career changes*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Eastern Education Research Association, Cambridge, MA. (ERIC Document Production Service No. ED 395 993).

Nias, J. (1989). *Primary teachers talking: A study of teaching as work*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Nias, J. (1989). Teaching and the self. In M.L. Holly, & C.S. McLoughlin (Eds.). *Perspective on teacher professional development* (pp. 151-171). London, England: Falmer Press.

Olsen, B., (2008). *Teaching what they learn, learning what they live.* Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Owings, W.A., Kaplan, L. & Nunnery, J. (2009) *The effects of troops-to-teachers on student achievement: Innovative practice with positive results.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the UCEA Annual Convention, Anaheim Marriott, Anaheim, CA Online. 2011-01-11 from http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p378402_index.html

Pajares, F. (1992). Teacher's beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research,* 62, 307-332.

Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods (*3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Piaget, J. (1929). *The child's conception of the world* (J. Tomlinson & A. Tomlinson, Trans.). New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World.

Piaget, J. (1965). *The moral judgment of the child.* New York, NY: Free Press.

Roberts, L. (2000). Shifting identities: An investigation into student and novice teachers' evolving professional identity. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 26(1), 185-186.

Ronspies, Scott. (2011). Who wants to be a physical education teacher? A case study of a non-traditional undergraduate student in physical education teacher education program. *The Qualitative Report*, 16(6), 1669-1687.

Sachs, J. (2005). Teacher education and the development of professional identity: Learning to be a teacher. In P. Denicolo & M. Kompf (Eds.), *Connecting policy and practice: Challenges for teaching and learning in schools and universities (pp. 5-21).* Oxford, England: Routledge.

Samuel, M., & Stephens, D. (2000). Critical dialogues with self: Developing teacher identities

and roles- a case study of South African students. *International Journal of Educational Research, 33, 475-491.*

Schoonmaker, F. (2002). *"Growing up" teaching: From personal knowledge to professional knowledge.* New York, Y: Teachers College Press.

Sider, T. (2001). Criteria of personal identity and the limits of conceptual analysis. *Philosophical Perspectives,* 15, 189-209.

Stake, R.E. (1994). Case studies. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 236-247). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Stronge, J.H. (2002). Qualities of effective teachers. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision of Curriculum and Development.

Stryker, S., & Burke, P.J. (2000). The past, present and future identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 63(4), 284-297.*

Sugrue, C. (1997). Student teachers' lay theories and teaching identities: Their implications for professional development. *European Journal of Teacher Education,* 20(3), 213-225.

Sweitzer, V. (2009). Towards a theory of doctoral student professional identity development: a development networks approach. *Journal of Higher Education,*80(1), 1-33.

U.S.Bureau of Labor Statistics "Back to College" Spotlight, retrieved from http://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2010/college/home.htm

U.S. Census Bureau. (2001). *Age distribution of college students 14 years old and over, by sex: October 1947 to 2000.* Washington, D.C.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2011). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2010* (NCES 2010-015), Chapter 3.

Van den Berg, R. (2002). Teachers' meanings regarding educational practices. *Review of Educational Research,* 72(4), 577-625.

Volkmann, M.J., & Anderson, M.A. (1998). Creating professional identity: Dilemmas and metaphors of a first-year chemistry teacher. *Science Education,* 82(3), 293-310.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wallerstein, R.S., & Goldberger, L. (Eds.). (1998). *Ideas and identities: The life and work of Erik Erikson.* Madison, CT: International Universities.

Walsh, F., Abi-Nader, J., & Poutiatine, M. (2005). What do adult learners experience in a teacher

certification program? *Journal of Adult Education*, 34(1),6-21.

Walsh, K., & Jacobs, S. (2007). Alternative certification isn't alternative. Washington: Thomas B. Fordham Institute, National Council on Teacher Quality, Sept. 2007.

Weidman, J.C., Twale, D.J., & Stein, E.L. (2001). Socialization of graduate and professional students in higher education: A perilous passage? ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report, 28. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning and meaning in school.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Wlodkowski, Raymond J. (1999). *Enhancing adult motivation to learn.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Wonacott, M. *Adult students: Recruitment and retention*. Practice Application Brief, no. 18.

Yin, R.K. (2003). *Case Study Research Design Methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Zembylas, Michalinos (2003). Interrogating "teacher identity": Emotion, resistance, and self-formation. *Educational Theory*, 53(1), 107-127.