Investigating Gender Stereotypes in Elementary Education

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Education is home to one of America’s most pervasive gender stereotypes. A disproportionately low frequency of male elementary school teachers has reinforced such stereotypes. This study was designed to investigate gender stereotypes further. Forty-three undergraduate students answered questions assessing their attitudes and views towards four different fictitious teachers. The teacher descriptions were varied by gender and competency (incompetent versus competent). Competent teachers were rated significantly higher across all measures including emotional supportiveness and subject-area competency, while teacher gender produced no significant differences on any of the measures. However, participant gender interacted with teacher competency significantly for leadership ratings. The findings do not support the bulk of previous findings on stereotypes in education. Implications and future research ideas are discussed.

Stereotypes are a common occurrence in American life. People often use stereotypes to make quick judgments, despite the fact that the stereotypes themselves and the judgments concluded from them are commonly wrong. Stereotypes pervade all avenues of life including gender, occupations, races and ethnicities, and sexual orientations. Of all the stereotypes, gender stereotypes are one of the most pervasive in American life. Throughout history, Americans have had the belief that men should be working and that women should be at home with the family. This long held belief has trickled down over the years and is evident in the types of occupations that are stereotyped for males and for females. Gender stereotypes are not limited to occupations by any means. Consider the United States government and its political system, which is predominantly run by men. While women have made gains in Congress, a woman has yet to be President of the United States. In addition to politics and occupations, education is home to many pervasive gender stereotypes.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 has lead to increased scrutiny of teachers, especially in regard to their quality, and has raised the issue of the stereotypes that may exist in the educational system and how they might affect students. An overwhelming majority of teachers, especially those in the elementary grades, are female. In the past, the social norms of the times did not take issue with a female dominated occupation. It was generally understood that males were best suited to teach the upper grades including high school, while females were more appropriate for teaching young students in the elementary grades, as revealed by Fukada, Fukada and Hicks (1992). This arrangement was thought to be sufficient because females were more motherly or caring, which is an important aspect of the elementary teacher. While this may have been acceptable in the past, educators have been scrambling to find ways to lure more males into a female dominated field. Many people believe males are not interested in teaching positions, especially with young children, because they offer relatively low wages and low status. However, others, while agreeing that wage and status are factors, maintain that the work can be very rewarding and thus outweigh any negative factors. Overall, the general stereotype that male teachers are reserved for the upper grades, while female teachers are for the elementary grades has become so ingrained in society that it has even reached the student level. Most students in today’s schools go through their elementary years without having a single male classroom teacher, except in specialty areas like physical education. Recently, there has been a push to increase the number of men in the teaching field, especially in elementary grade levels, but recent research has shown that the percentage of male teachers is at a forty-year low. Statistics from the National Education Association (2003) reveal that only approximately twenty-five percent of public school teachers are male. When looking at the percentages of males in elementary and secondary education, nine percent are in elementary grades while 35 percent are in secondary grades (National Education Association, 2003). These percentages demonstrate how pervasive the gender differences are because they show that elementary education remains female oriented while the majority of male teachers choose secondary education. This continued discrepancy may have strengthened stereotypes that male teachers belong in the upper grades.

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Research on gender stereotypes has focused on many aspects of gender stereotypes because they are pervasive in everyday life. Razumnikova (2005) found that widely held stereotypes about what professions are male dominated, like military service, construction, agriculture, politics, economics and engineering, versus those that are relatively female dominated, including home economics, cooking and teaching, have not changed very much over time. In addition, Razumnikova showed that while basic life values vary in differing occupations, most people held traditional male or female values that included family welfare in men and health in women. Furthermore, the more masculine an occupation is considered the more masculine values will be of importance to both males and females in that occupation (Razumnikova, 2005). Sczesny, Spreeeman, and Stahlberg (2006) focused their research on masculinity and how that related to gender stereotyped attributions of leadership competence. Throughout two experiments, males, and those viewed as more masculine (regardless of gender), were rated as more leadership competent overall by participants (Sczesny et al., 2006). Interestingly, feminine males were rated lowest in leadership even though males as a whole were generally thought to be more competent leaders (Sczesny et al., 2006). However, Sczesny et al. noted that while men are generally perceived as being better leaders, if participants of the study were blind to the fact that gender was being considered, females were rated as having more competent leadership ability. Juodvalkis, Grefe, Hogue, and Svyantek (2003) investigated the effects of job stereotype, applicant gender, and communication style on ratings in interviews. The two jobs used were a male English teacher at an all male preparatory school and a female English teacher at an all female preparatory school. Both job stereotypes were found to be significant as participants receiving the female job description rated applicants with a higher overall impression as compared to the male job description (Juodvalkis et al., 2003). Additionally, regardless of applicant gender, the stereotypically female position received higher competence and impression ratings than the stereotypically male position (Juodvalkis et al., 2003). Furthermore, Juodvalkis et al. found that when considering only applicant gender, male applicants were preferred to female applicants.

Simpson (1974) studied gender stereotypes in school subjects and how that influenced status gains and losses. Simpson found that most teachers believe that male teachers are most appropriate for teaching math and science courses while female teachers are most appropriate for language arts and foreign language courses. Interestingly, there were no significant differences in the appropriateness of either male or female teachers to teach social studies courses (Simpson, 1974). In addition, high status and prestige was awarded by other teachers to a teacher who taught his or her stereotypically appropriate subject, but not when a teacher taught the stereotyped inappropriate subject (Simpson, 1974).

In addition to the research on general gender stereotypes, research has focused on the gender stereotype as it relates to teachers. Fukada et al. (1992) investigated whether the typical gender stereotype about females being more appropriate for elementary school was evident in school administrators, namely principals and vice principals. They found that principals and vice principals overwhelmingly regarded the lower elementary school grades as appropriate for females and the upper elementary grades as appropriate for males (Fukada et al., 1992). This stereotypical attitude influenced the majority of respondent’s preference when asked to assign male and female teachers to the grade they believed was best suited for that teacher on the basis of gender (Fukada et al., 1992). Furthermore, when inquiring about the teacher’s preference for what grade he/she would like to teach, Fukada et al. (1992) found that most school administrators believed that men preferred the upper elementary grades and females preferred the lower elementary grades.

Paradise and Wall (1986) examined whether children held gender stereotypical views of principals and teachers. Most children were able to accurately label the principal and teacher regardless of the gender of the individuals depicted as principal and teacher (Paradise & Wall, 1986). Interestingly, participants who had female principals outside of the study were more likely to hold views that either a male or a female could be principal (Paradise & Wall, 1986). Additionally, Paradise and Wall (1986) found that female participants who had male principals outside of the study were more likely to indicate stereotypical views that males are more suited to be principals. Overall, participants, to an extent, were able to correctly identify the roles of teacher and principal regardless of gender, without being stereotypical in the gender of their identifications (Paradise & Wall, 1986).

Minner (1988) investigated the influence of experience, teacher gender, and respondent gender on student evaluations of the teacher. A gender stereotype was found with males being rated significantly more favorably than their female counterparts (Minner, 1988). Additionally, Minner revealed that experienced teachers were rated more favorably than inexperienced teachers. However, the interaction between teacher gender and experience was significant (Minner, 1988). Bennett (1982) focused her research on gender stereotypes in student evaluations as well. She found that female teachers, as a whole, were rated warmer and more encouraging than men (Bennett, 1982). Additionally, standards of reference for basing student evaluations do not vary between male and female instructors (Bennett, 1982). The standards of reference Bennett used were interpersonal style, charisma, self-assurance or amount of experience, and instructional approach or professionalism. Mancus (1992) investigated the effects of gender stereotypes on competence of the teacher, as rated by the students. Following typical gender stereotypes, males made significantly more positive attributions towards female teachers, while females did the opposite, attributing significantly more negative attributions to male teachers (Mancus, 1992). Finally, the majority of male participants in the study acknowledged they would not like to be teachers when they grew up (Mancus, 1992).

Research has certainly shown that there is a strong gender stereotype in the teaching profession, especially in elementary school. However, much of that research has become dated and the world has changed significantly since then. Therefore, it is important to investigate whether the stereotypes do exist, and this was the purpose of the present study. The independent variables investigated were teacher competency, teacher gender, and participant gender. The dependent variables studied were
competency, emotional supportiveness, leadership ability, language arts/reading teaching ability, math/science teaching ability, health issues teaching ability, ability as a department chairperson, and competence for teaching a particular grade. The hypothesis of this study was that both teacher competency and teacher gender would significantly differ across the characteristics measured with female teachers and competent teachers receiving higher ratings overall. Additionally, it was hypothesized that participant gender would not be significant across any of the characteristics investigated because participant gender was not being made salient.

Method

Participants

This research study included 43 undergraduates from a public northeastern university. Of the 43 participants, 28 were underclassmen (freshmen and sophomores) while 15 were upperclassmen (juniors and seniors). Their ages ranged from 18 to 47 with a mean of 22.40 (SD = 7.93) years. Individually, females ranged from age 18 to 44 with a mean of 22.61 (SD = 7.71) years, while males ranged from 18 to 47 years with an average age of 21.70 (SD = 9.00) years. Additionally, 33 participants were female, and 10 participants were male.

Materials

There were four different descriptions of fictitious teachers, as shown in Appendix A, which were identical except for the gender and the competency of the teacher. The two different competency levels were a competent teacher and an incompetent teacher. Overall, there were four different conditions: competent male, competent female, incompetent male, and incompetent female. The fictitious teachers were portrayed as competent or incompetent by varying their personality, flexibility and willingness to accommodate needs in the classroom, as well as their interest and commitment to their job. Participants also received a questionnaire, as shown in Appendix B, which assessed their attitudes towards these teachers on a variety of characteristics. The questionnaire also asked for participant demographic information including age, gender, and grade level.

Procedure

Upon arrival, each participant was given the informed consent and the course credit form to fill out and hand in. After the experimenter answered any questions and collected the informed consent and course credit form, the participants were randomly assigned to receive one of the four teacher descriptions. The participant was then instructed to carefully read over the description and use it to fill out the questionnaire. Once the questionnaire was completed, the participant handed in the teacher description and the questionnaire in separate envelopes. The participant was then thanked for his or her help, given a debriefing statement, and asked if he/she had any additional questions before departing. The questionnaires were subsequently scored by using the participant selected choice on the 8-point likert-type scale for each question. In addition, each question was scored individually.

Results

A 2 X 2 X 2 independent groups ANOVA was used to determine whether ratings for each characteristic differed significantly as a function of teacher competency, teacher gender, or participant gender, as well as any combination of interactions. The eight characteristics evaluated were competence, emotional supportiveness, leadership ability, math/science teaching ability, language arts/reading teaching ability, health topics teaching ability, ability as a department chair, and competence for teaching a particular grade. The results of this study supported the hypothesis that the independent variable of teacher competency would vary significantly across all characteristics. The hypothesis was also supported because participant gender did not vary across any characteristic significantly as a main effect. However, the main effect of teacher gender was not significant, which did not support the hypothesis.

The interactions among the three independent variables were analyzed to determine their significance. The possible three-way interaction of teacher competency by teacher gender by participant gender was found to be nonsignificant. For two-way interactions, teacher competency by participant gender was found significant across only the leadership ability characteristic, F (1, 35) = 6.92, p = .013. The means for teacher competence by participant gender for leadership ability are found below in Table 1. The interaction showed that competent teachers were rated similarly by both male and female participants. However, when considering incompetent teachers, female participants rated leadership ability significantly lower than male participants. In addition, female participants gave competent teachers the highest overall ratings of leadership ability. The remainder of the two-way interactions, teacher competency by teacher gender, and teacher gender by participant gender were not significant.

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations for Interaction of Teacher Competency by Participant Gender for Leadership Ability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Gender</th>
<th>Competent Teacher</th>
<th>Incompetent Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6.86 (.90)</td>
<td>5.67 (.58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7.43 (.94)</td>
<td>3.68 (1.53)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the main effect of teacher competency, there were significant differences for all characteristics except ability as a department chair. The means for all the characteristics are summarized below in Table 2. On the characteristic of overall
competence, the competent teacher received significantly higher ratings than the incompetent teacher, \( F(1, 35) = 54.56, p = .0001 \). This result also showed that the teacher descriptions were successful in making the teacher appear competent or incompetent. Competent teachers were rated as significantly more emotionally supportive than incompetent teachers, \( F(1, 35) = 130.85, p = .0001 \). Across three measures of teaching ability, math/science ability, language arts/reading ability, and health topics ability, a competent teacher was rated significantly higher than an incompetent teacher, \( F(1, 35) = 6.26, p = .017 \) for math/science, \( F(1, 35) = 21.13, p = .0001 \) for language arts/reading, and \( F(1, 35) = 12.25, p = .001 \) for health topics. Furthermore, when first allowed to assign the teacher to a particular grade, and then rate competence, competent teachers were still rated significantly higher than incompetent teachers, \( F(1, 35) = 25.90, p = .0001 \). Lastly, ability of a department chair, was rated to be nonsignificantly different among both competent and incompetent teachers, \( F(1, 35) = 4.04, p = .052 \).

### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Competent Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Incompetent Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>7.38 (.86)</td>
<td>3.73 (1.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Supportiveness</td>
<td>7.24 (1.04)</td>
<td>1.86 (1.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math/Science Teaching Ability</td>
<td>5.76 (1.64)</td>
<td>3.86 (1.88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts/Reading Teaching Ability</td>
<td>6.76 (1.58)</td>
<td>3.23 (1.80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Topics Teaching Ability</td>
<td>5.90 (1.84)</td>
<td>2.91 (1.80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Chair Ability</td>
<td>6.29 (1.82)</td>
<td>3.45 (2.48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigned Grade Level Competence</td>
<td>7.29 (1.10)</td>
<td>2.27 (2.51)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main effect of gender of the participant was also found not to be significant across each characteristic. In other words, males and females who participated in this study did not rate the teachers significantly different on any of the eight characteristics.

### Discussion

The results of this study supported the original hypothesis that the characteristics being measured would differ on the basis of the teacher’s competency. However, the results did not support teacher gender as a significant factor in the ratings across the different characteristics. In addition, while participant gender was not found to be a significant factor in the ratings of the teacher, it did interact with competency on the characteristic of leadership ability. Because teaching is generally viewed as a stereotypically female oriented job, the findings of this study are consistent with those of Juodvalkis et al. (2003). In that study, higher competence ratings were awarded to those in stereotypically female positions, which coincide with how, in the current study, competent teachers, regardless of gender, were also rated as highly competent. Furthermore, when looking at leadership ability, the findings agree with Sczesny et al.’s (2006) findings that no difference existed between males’ and females’ attributed leadership ability. One difference between the current study and Sczesny et al. could be explained by the fact that the current study did not use any visual information about the teachers, which removes any physical factors that could affect perceived leadership ability.

Interestingly, the results provide mixed support for the findings of Mancus (1992). In the current study, no differences were found between teacher gender and competence as was the case in the Mancus study. However, her study used elementary school children as her sample, whereas the current study used college students who may be more mature in their judgment of competence of people. When specifically looking at emotional supportiveness, competent teachers were rated much higher in this characteristic, and female teachers were rated nonsignificantly higher than male teachers. It made sense that competent teachers would be more highly rated for their emotional supportiveness, because most people would likely agree that a competent teacher would be more emotionally available and able to help their students. While Bennett’s (1982) study showed a significant preference for female teachers to be thought of as more emotionally supportive, the present study did not show that same significant preference. Modern 21st century attitudes and beliefs could have played a role in the findings that both male and female teachers are similar in perceived emotional supportiveness by college student raters.

While the majority of findings of teacher competence agreed with previous research, the findings of this study do not conform in the area of gender stereotypes including Simpson (1974), Minner (1988), Fukada et al. (1992), Paradise and Wall (1986), and, most recently, Razumnikova (2005). While all of the
previous studies found a gender stereotype in teaching overall, when investigated more closely, some of the findings from this current study agree with past research. Simpson (1974) found that male teachers were stereotypically associated with being better math and science teachers while female teachers stereotypically excelled at teaching language arts, reading, and foreign language courses. The current study investigated this notion, and added health-related education to see if stereotypes would appear in those courses as well. No differences were found supporting the stereotypical association of males teaching math and science more adeptly and females teaching reading and language arts courses more proficiently. Additionally, no difference in teacher gender was found in health related topics either. However, Simpson (1974) used teachers as his participants, whereas college students were used in the current study. In addition, many changed attitudes in the more than thirty years since Simpson conducted his research may also account for the difference.

Minner (1988) conducted her research using college students and found evidence for gender stereotypes, with males being rated more favorably across a variety of measures. The current findings again found no gender stereotype in the ratings across the characteristics measured here, which leads to the conclusion that modern attitudes may be a large factor in the differences between previous studies and the current one. Fukada et al. (1992) used school administrators when revealing their findings of the gender stereotype in education. Even when the current study hypothetically allowed the participants to place the fictitious teacher in any grade of the elementary level, no gender stereotype was exhibited in their subsequent rating of that teacher’s competence in his or her position. A possible explanation for the absence of the stereotype in this case could be because participants themselves were not members of a school district and were not in a true position to make similar decisions. In addition, the age difference of the participants of this study (college students) and the Fukada et al. (1992) study (school administrators) may have influenced the results as well. Conceivably, many of the participants in Fukada et al. (1992) could have been raised in the 1970s or earlier, exhibiting stereotypes more prevalent in that generation.

Paradise and Wall (1986) found that even young children were able to identify gender stereotypes in education. However, they also found that if the children were exposed to situations where the traditional stereotype was exemplified the children were more likely to exhibit stereotypical attitudes. Conversely, it would make sense then that children exposed to situations where the traditional stereotype was defied would hold less stereotypical views, which could be an alternate explanation for why no gender stereotype was shown in the current study. For example, participants familiar with male teachers would be less likely to exhibit the stereotype. Razumnikova (2005) found that widely held stereotypes about male dominated and female dominated professions are still held today, with teaching being perceived as overwhelmingly female dominated. Numbers, like those revealed in a recent NEA survey (2003) which reported that the number of male teachers is about 25% of all teachers, with the number dwindling to 9% at the elementary level continue to reinforce that finding. However, the current study’s finding of no gender stereotype does not agree with Razumnikova’s findings. The discrepancy between the current study and Razumnikova could be attributed to the fact that in the current study participants were put in a situation evaluating actual teachers, although they were fictitious, whereas in Razumnikova’s study, participants were only surveyed on their feelings about teachers. Overall, throughout the bulk of previous research, a gender stereotype has been demonstrated, but it was not apparent in the present study.

The implications of these findings could be far reaching to the educational field. While the findings did not support a gender stereotype; a gender stereotype may still be present in some form in the educational system today. If future generations become aware of this stereotype, action can be taken to minimize it until it becomes extinct. In addition, the more that is known about the gender stereotype, the more safeguards to ensure equality in this field can be enacted. Furthermore, increased understanding and awareness may lead to changed views in some people. Increased awareness about the stereotype may lessen its effects, even if it does not disappear completely. As a whole, the implications of these findings were divergent from much of previous research, particularly Simpson (1974), Minner (1988), Fukada et al. (1992), Paradise and Wall (1986), and Razumnikova (2005). More research is needed to gain a deeper understanding of this stereotype, and to find ways to reduce it.

Since the hypothesis regarding teacher gender and the gender stereotype was not supported, and the findings on the gender stereotype have been mixed, this study has some limitations. The sample size was relatively small, with only 43 participants. In addition, the population was drawn from a convenience sample of a small public northeastern university of introductory to psychology students who would not be an accurate representation of the general population. Also, this study focused on elementary school teachers, but by including grades 5 and 6 in the elementary level, may have led some participants to think of the teachers as more middle school level, where male teachers are more prevalent. In addition, participants may not have found gender to be as salient as it was intended to be. Furthermore, because the participants were college students and not adolescents, they may have had a more mature mindset as well as weaker memories of their past teachers leading to the lack of appearance of the gender stereotype.

Future research in this area is warranted because the hypothesis involving the gender stereotype was not supported, while previous research has found evidence of a gender stereotype. In addition, much of that previous research has become outdated and much has changed in the world since those original findings. Every child in this country will have experience in some form or another with the educational system in America, and the stereotypes associated with it as well, and continued study of this topic will only improve the quality of life and the quality of education in this country. More research could focus on the four major levels of education in this country: elementary school, middle school, high school, and college. An understanding of how the gender stereotype is presented in the different levels, as well as how it changes from level to level would be invaluable to those involved in the education field. Additionally, more research
should be devoted to finding the underlying causes and reasons for the lack of a male influence in teaching, especially in elementary education. Is it merely because of the stereotype and stigma or because of the low prestige of the position as well as the small salary accompanying the job which makes it hard to raise a family? Finding the answer to this question will undoubtedly prove helpful in further understanding of this gender stereotype. Furthermore, the answer to this question will help to ensure the notion that one day the American educational system may be filled with equal numbers of female and male teachers working side by side to prepare the next generation of Americans. These next generation Americans will understand that men and women are capable of doing anything they set their minds to and that their gender does not matter.

References


Appendix A

Fictitious Teacher Descriptions:

Female; Competent

Doreen is a teacher at Oxnour Elementary School, located on the border of Fairfield and New Haven Counties. She graduated from Western Connecticut State University with a degree in Elementary Education and Psychology. She has been working in the classroom for 10 years and prior to that she worked as a substitute teacher and in the childcare department of a local Y.M.C.A. in addition to completing the required classroom experience for her major. As requirements of her degree program, Doreen completed teaching method and curriculum classes for all the subjects she would be responsible for teaching. In the classroom, Doreen is kind, patient and even-tempered. She sets high expectations for her students, and is always willing to give individual attention in helping them reach their potential. Doreen sets such high expectations because she is sure her students will meet or exceed them. Doreen has a good sense of humor which aids her in creating a relaxed classroom environment. Doreen structures her well-planned lessons to be flexible and creative to meet the needs of all the students. In addition, Doreen demonstrates to her students that she respects them. Through all her work, Doreen illustrates a love for her career path which is quite evident to her students.

Female; Incompetent

Doreen is a teacher at Oxnour Elementary School, located on the border of Fairfield and New Haven Counties. She graduated from Western Connecticut State University with a degree in Elementary Education and Psychology. She has been working in the classroom for 10 years and prior to that she worked as a substitute teacher and in the childcare department of a local Y.M.C.A. in addition to completing the required classroom experience for her major. As requirements of her degree program, Doreen completed teaching method and curriculum classes for all the subjects she would be responsible for teaching. In the classroom, Doreen is generally short-tempered, unaccommodating, and rather distant. She sets low expectations for her students, and is seldom available for individual help. Doreen sets such low expectations for her students because she does not believe they will meet them. Doreen places emphasis on having an organized classroom with a rigid schedule. Doreen structures her lessons in
a “one size fits all” fashion to meet the bulk of the student needs. In addition, Doreen demonstrates to her students that she is in control and that their education should be taken seriously. Through all her work, Doreen illustrates that she takes a hit-or-miss approach with her career path which is quite evident to her students.

Male; Competent

Nick is a teacher at Oxmour Elementary School, located on the border of Fairfield and New Haven Counties. He graduated from Western Connecticut State University with a degree in Elementary Education and Psychology. He has been working in the classroom for 10 years and prior to that he worked as a substitute teacher and in the childcare department of a local Y.M.C.A. in addition to completing the required classroom experience for his major. As requirements of his degree program, Nick completed teaching method and curriculum classes for all the subjects he would be responsible for teaching. In the classroom, Nick is kind, patient and even-tempered. He sets high expectations for his students, and is always willing to give individual attention in helping them reach their potential. Nick sets such high expectations because he is sure his students will meet or exceed them. Nick has a good sense of humor which aides him in creating a relaxed classroom environment. Nick structures his well-planned lessons to be flexible and creative to meet the needs of all the students. In addition, Nick demonstrates to his students that he respects them. Through all his work, Nick illustrates a love for his career path which is quite evident to his students.

Male; Incompetent

Nick is a teacher at Oxmour Elementary School, located on the border of Fairfield and New Haven Counties. He graduated from Western Connecticut State University with a degree in Elementary Education and Psychology. He has been working in the classroom for 10 years and prior to that he worked as a substitute teacher and in the childcare department of a local Y.M.C.A. in addition to completing the required classroom experience for his major. As requirements of his degree program, Nick completed teaching method and curriculum classes for all the subjects he would be responsible for teaching. In the classroom, Nick is generally short-tempered, unaccommodating, and rather distant. He sets low expectations for his students, and is seldom available for individual help. Nick sets such low expectations for his students because he does not believe they will meet them. Nick places emphasis on having an organized classroom with a rigid schedule. Nick structures his lessons in a “one size fits all” fashion to meet the bulk of the student needs. In addition, Nick demonstrates to his students that he is in control and that their education should be taken seriously. Through all his work, Nick illustrates that he takes a hit-or-miss approach with his career path which is quite evident to his students.

Appendix B

Questionnaire:

Directions: Please answer all the questions on the following three pages. If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you for your participation.

Demographic Information

1. Gender (circle one): Male / Female

2. Age (in closest whole year): ______________________

3. Grade Level (circle one): Freshmen / Sophomore / Junior / Senior / Other

Answer the following questions on the basis of the teacher description you have just read. Circle your answer choice.

4. On a scale of 1 to 8, with one being extremely incompetent and 8 being extremely competent, how would you rate the teacher described? (Circle your choice.)

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8

5. What grade do you think the teacher described teaches? (Circle your choice.)

   Kindergarten 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th

6. On a scale of 1 to 8 with one being not emotionally supportive at all and 8 being extremely emotionally supportive, how would you rate the teacher described? (Circle your choice.)

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8

7. On a scale of 1 to 8, with one being an extremely unqualified leader and 8 being an extremely qualified leader, how would you rate the teacher described? (Circle your choice.)

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8

8. On a scale of 1 to 8, with one being extremely incompetent, and 8 being extremely competent, how do you believe the teacher described would be teaching math and science? (Circle your choice.)

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8

9. On a scale of 1 to 8, with one being extremely incompetent, and 8 being extremely competent, how do you believe the teacher described would be teaching reading and language arts? (Circle your choice.)

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8
10. On a scale of 1 to 8, with one being extremely incompetent, and 8 being extremely competent, how do you believe the teacher described would be teaching health-related topics and issues? (Circle your choice.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

11. On a scale of 1 to 8, with one being extremely incompetent, and 8 being extremely competent, how do you believe the teacher described would be as a department head or department chairperson?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

QUESTIONS FOR THE SURVEY ARE CONTINUED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE. PLEASE BE SURE TO COMPLETE THE ENTIRE SURVEY!

Use the following scenario to answer the following questions again basing your decisions on the teacher description you have read.

Imagine that you are an administrator in the Oxmour Public School District. Your district is currently in the process of redistricting the schools in order to maintain accreditation. During this process, some of the teachers will be reassigned from Oxmour Elementary School to teach different grade levels. Based on the description you have read, answer the following questions.

12. What grade would you place the teacher in to teach? (Circle your choice.)

Kindergarten 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th

6th Should Not Teach

13. On a scale of 1 to 8, with one being extremely incompetent and 8 being extremely competent, how competent do you think the teacher would be in teaching the grade you have assigned? (Circle your choice.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

14. Why? (Answer in a sentence or two. Grammar, Spelling, and overall syntax are not important).

Answer the following two questions on the basis of your own personal experience; in other words, do not use the teacher descriptions in answering these questions.

15. Have you ever had a male teacher as your classroom teacher in the elementary grades (Kindergarten through Grade 6)? (Circle your choice.)

YES NO

16. If you answered yes to the question above (#13), what specific grade did you have that teacher? (Circle your choice.)

Kindergarten 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th

Thank you for your time. This concludes your participation in this research study. Be sure to hand in your teacher description page, and all pages of this questionnaire.