

PEDAGOGY

edTPA During Student Teaching: PETE Teacher Candidates' Experiences and Future Support

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Abstract

Many physical education teacher education programs require teacher candidates to successfully complete edTPA during student teaching. Considering that research remains sparse regarding best practices in edTPA, the purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of teacher candidates completing edTPA during student teaching and of university supervisors supervising teacher candidates during the process. Twenty-four teacher candidates and 11 university supervisors participated in a focus group discussion for approximately 1 hr. Data were analyzed and categorized as (1) negative experiences, (2) positive experiences, and (3) future support. Overall, the teacher candidates felt that completing edTPA diminished their student teaching experience, as it was tedious and time-consuming pertaining to technological difficulties in videotaping, video processing, and video uploading. Nonetheless, the participants felt that completing edTPA was valuable in providing teacher candidates with detailed feedback to improve on their pedagogical skills. Future support for teacher candidates includes integrating edTPA early in their curriculum of study to better prepare them to successfully complete edTPA during student teaching. The university supervisors felt that with more in-depth

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training in edTPA and experience supervising teacher candidates on edTPA, they would be more competent in the future.

Teacher education programs across the United States face the challenge of evolving their practice at institutions that are adopting and implementing edTPA as part of the program (Lys et al., 2014). Through the partnership of the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), a teacher performance assessment known as edTPA was created and began to be used operationally in 2013 with a goal to deliver an assessment program for teacher candidates (TCs; SCALE, 2019). The edTPA, which is designed to measure a TC's readiness to teach, is available nationally in 27 content areas including physical education. Currently, 41 states have participated in edTPA, either having a policy in place to use edTPA for state licensure and/or state program accreditation/review, taking steps toward implementation, or exploring/trying out edTPA (SCALE, 2019). Linda Darling-Hammond, a leader in teacher education, advocated for the development of a standardized performance assessment that uses authentic tasks to measure TC performance (Darling-Hammond & Hylar, 2013).

The edTPA is considered a fairly valid assessment for evaluating TCs' teaching through teacher performance assessments (Goldhaber et al., 2017; Sato, 2014). During student teaching, TCs prepare a portfolio of materials for edTPA and submit it to Pearson for scoring. The portfolio demonstrates TCs' readiness to teach through lesson plans, engage their students in standard-based learning, and analyze whether their students are learning and adjust their instruction to become more effective. The TCs submit unedited video recordings of themselves at work in a real classroom/gymnasium as part of their edTPA portfolio. Specific to the field of physical education, the edTPA portfolio is scored based on three tasks: planning, instruction, and assessment. Each task is scored using five rubrics on a 5-point scale and TCs can score a maximum of 25 points/task, totaling 75 points. Some states set a "cut score," which is used in concert with other state requirements to determine whether TCs are eligible for state teaching licensure.

Many physical education teacher education (PETE) programs in the United States are implementing accountability measures, such

as the completion of edTPA during student teaching; incorporating mandatory passing scores on the Praxis II Physical Education Content Knowledge test before student teaching; and requiring minimal test scores and procedures for entry and continuation in the program (Heidorn, 2014). Importantly, current physical education teachers are being held accountable to the same criteria as teachers in other content areas, and the criteria and the policies that support them are different from those in the 20th century (Ward, 2013). The content-specific nature of edTPA has given PETE programs equal responsibility and importance as other teacher education programs, and the teaching methods of physical education are similar to many of the best practices and procedures of the edTPA (Davis & Wash, 2019). Furthermore, the goals of edTPA are closely aligned with the SHAPE America National Standards for Initial Physical Education Teacher Education in that physical education candidates apply content and foundational knowledge to plan and implement developmentally appropriate learning experiences (Standard 3), engage students in meaningful learning experiences through effective use of pedagogical skills (Standard 4), and select and implement appropriate assessments to monitor students' progress and guide decision making related to instruction and learning (Standard 5; SHAPE America, 2017).

At a time when new policies on initial teacher certification appear to be taken out of the hands of researchers, teachers, and teacher educators and transferred to educational agencies (Metzler, 2014), research remains sparse regarding best practices in edTPA in PETE programs in universities. Furthermore, there has been a considerable implementation toll of edTPA on teacher preparation programs around the country (Carter Andrews et al., 2019). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of TCs and university supervisors (USs) from a PETE program, participating in and completing the edTPA process. Specifically, the study sought to answer these questions: (1) What are TCs' and USs' negative experiences participating in and completing edTPA? (2) What are TCs' and USs' positive experiences participating in and completing edTPA? and (3) What changes should be made to enhance the experience of edTPA? Through the study, TCs' experiences in completing and submitting the edTPA portfolio and USs' experiences in supervising the

TCs during student teaching were examined. Through the perspectives of the TCs and USs involved in edTPA, this study contributes to the knowledge on effective strategies to prepare TCs to successfully complete edTPA during student teaching.

Method

Participants and Setting

Data were collected during the 2017–2018 academic year. Twenty-four TCs (10 in the fall: 4 females, 6 males; 14 in the spring: 4 females, 10 males) majoring in physical education from a university in the Northeastern United States participated in the study. Additionally, 11 USs (10 females, 1 male) who supervised the TCs during student teaching in the 2017–2018 academic year participated in the study. Four of the 11 USs were full-time university faculty, while seven additional USs were hired by the university as part-time instructors to supervise TCs during student teaching.

Physical Education Teacher Certification Program

Students admitted into the university's Physical Education Teacher Certification program were required to complete a student teaching experience in the final semester before graduation. The TCs practiced completing edTPA through two university courses (elementary and secondary physical education methods courses) prior to student teaching. The student teaching experience spans 16 weeks in two placements (8 weeks in an elementary school and 8 weeks in a middle or high school) with different cooperating teachers. During the 16-week student teaching, the TCs were also supervised by a US. As part of a project examining effective strategies in supporting TCs, the TCs in this study were required by the university to complete the edTPA assessment during their first placement in the initial 8 weeks of student teaching and submit it to Pearson for scoring. The purpose of scheduling TCs' edTPA completion within the first placement was to allow for resubmission (in the case of nonpassing scores) during the TCs' second placement in the subsequent 8 weeks. Where there were cases of nonpassing, TCs' edTPA portfolios were evaluated within the university by the USs. All the TCs in this study successfully passed their edTPA before the end of their student teaching.

Data Collection and Study Procedures

Informed consent forms were obtained in accordance with the University Human Studies Council. Data collection methods included focus group discussions with the TCs and USs. Each person participated in one focus group discussion for approximately 1 hr. TCs were organized in separate focus group discussions of three to seven participants per group. A separate focus group discussion was conducted for the USs. The focus group discussions were conducted at the end of student teaching in fall 2017 and spring 2018 in meeting rooms located within the university. All the focus group discussions were facilitated and moderated by Tan Leng Goh, Jan Bishop, and Carol Ciotto, using a discussion guide. A sample question from the TCs' guide was "What was your overall experience on the submission and completion of edTPA?" A question on the USs' guide was "What was your overall experience on supervising edTPA?" We used a semistructured focus group discussion format to facilitate any follow-up questions (Fontana & Frey, 2005). The focus group discussions were digitally audio recorded and transcribed verbatim after data collection.

Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

We analyzed data from the focus group discussions to examine the perspectives of TCs who completed the edTPA assessments and of the USs who supported them in the completion of edTPA. We conducted a preliminary analysis by reading the data individually to identify codes that occur frequently within quotes in the focus group discussion transcripts (Aronson, 1994). Then, we discussed and agreed on themes generated from the most frequent or significant codes that best represented the perspectives of the participants.

Trustworthiness and credibility were established in the study through peer debriefing where we (1) discussed the protocols prior to the study and (2) analyzed the data individually, then confirmed and agreed on the emerged themes (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Furthermore, when discussing the themes, we ensured that the generated themes were supported by a significant amount of quotes to represent the participants' perspectives.

Results

The main themes of the study were (1) negative experiences, (2) positive experiences, and (3) future support. Subthemes are organized under each main theme and discussed in detail through quotations gathered from the focus group discussions.

Negative Experiences

The subthemes for negative experiences were (1) edTPA (re)defined student teaching, (2) edTPA consumed TCs' time, (3) difficulty deciphering edTPA language, and (4) difficulty with technology and the submission process. Overall, the TCs felt that completing edTPA diminished their student teaching experience, as it was tedious and time-consuming especially pertaining to technological difficulties in processing the videos. The TCs also felt that the submission process was complicated, sharing difficulties they encountered when they were submitting their edTPA portfolios.

edTPA (Re)Defined Student Teaching

In support of this theme, one TC commented, "It's pretty much you have to become a fake teacher . . . it's how do I make this look well for edTPA?" Another TC concurred, "We keep saying the word it's fake teaching because you're asking us to format our teaching just to fit this assessment." Furthermore, a TC shared, "You're asking me to tailor-make my lessons to fit the edTPA standard, when that's just not 100% realistic to me." Likewise, another TC stated, "I feel like I was teaching to edTPA and not to my lesson plan." One TC felt that teaching to edTPA was "unreal," saying, "That was the hardest part when you were providing feedback to your specific focus students. You had to provide it all [at] once to that one student before you could move on to another student, which is unreal." Another TC shared his perspective,

I had my three focus students next to each other dribbling, so that I can get them in the video. The video was on them and the other kids were getting jealous. Now, you have kids on the other side of the gym throwing balls into your focused student kids, because they are not getting attention. Especially, in that inner city setting where the kids want your

attention, they want you to care . . . Now I'm ignoring them, and they're revolting on me now.

edTPA Consumed TCs' Time

The TCs also felt that having to complete edTPA on top of student teaching was unenjoyable. For example, one TC mentioned, "It was hard to enjoy our first placement when we were doing edTPA . . . I feel like I was lesson planning on top of doing edTPA." The USs commented that edTPA "consumed" all of the TCs' time during student teaching. One US commented, "[The TCs] weren't focusing on what we felt was important to focus on in teaching. They were putting heavier emphasis on things that we didn't feel that they should have been putting it on." She continued,

My student teacher last semester said that he spent every single planning period cooped up in his men's locker room office getting his edTPA done when his cooperating teacher was urging him to go into the faculty room, talk with other colleagues, go sit in on another class, and his answer always was, "I can't. I have to get my edTPA done."

One TC shared the same feeling: "I'd be so focused on trying to get something [done] on one of the rubrics that it would take away from some of the things that I would like to do like connecting with the students." Another TC shared her discontent: "I had so much to learn from [my cooperating] teacher. She was awesome, but a lot of things that I would have liked to try out, I couldn't, because I had to stick strictly to my edTPA lessons."

Difficulty Deciphering edTPA Language

The TCs felt that edTPA uses its own "academic language" that is different from the terms they learned in the PETE curriculum. One TC commented,

[What] I noticed was edTPA has its own language. When you go through the directions, there's terminology they have in there that . . . it was very tedious to get that really big packet, read the directions, and then have to flip to the glossary to highlight those key terms.

Furthermore, a TC said, “There were some things on there where I had no idea what it was. Some academic language, I had trouble with.” Another TC added, “When they asked me the questions, I’m like, ‘What are they really asking here?’ Because the language changed. It changed from unit, to the learning segment and central focus, and academic language.” Similarly, a TC concurred, “I think it’s just the language that blurs everything. I have a hard time understanding how the questions are worded, how the feedback is worded, how answers are supposed to . . . It’s just I don’t understand [the] language.”

The USs also commented that the edTPA language was new to them. For instance, one US commented, “I’m definitely a little bit more well versed now, but a barrier for me was just being comfortable with the terminology, the language used.” Another US concurred, “Sometimes I don’t understand what the rubric means. Again, it’s language. What did they mean by that?”

Difficulty With Technology and the Submission Process

For the preparation of the videos for edTPA, the TCs shared their anxiety in filming their videos correctly with the help of their cooperating teachers. One TC shared,

There was one [video] that was stationary, but when he was filming it, I was going to use it, he didn’t have my [focus] students in it. You could hardly see them, so it did not work . . . As I was teaching, I was more worried about him videoing and getting it because I couldn’t redo the lesson.

Another TC voiced his frustration with the videotaping, saying, “My camera didn’t cover the whole gym. You had to worry about making sure that my focus students did his work right here . . . you have to fit everything in 20 minutes.” He continued, “One of the tapes no audio came through. It was just static. One of the tapes, it just didn’t show enough of the focus students.” Another issue that the TCs pointed out was that the gym where physical education lessons were conducted is a noisy environment and hence not conducive for video filming. One TC said, “I can’t really hear myself. There’s music playing, there’s another class going on the other side of the curtain. The kids are loud. There’s balls bouncing all around, so I think the video portion is really tough and difficult.” One TC shared

another issue he encountered with the videos: “If the students don’t all have their permission slip signed to record them, then we have to go in and blur faces.” Another TC voiced an interesting issue: “I did a fourth-, fifth-grade class combined and they were dropping F-bombs in the middle of the video on multiple occasions . . . I lost the section [of video] and it was a mess.”

Processing the videos for edTPA also created anxiety among the TCs. One TC commented, “I’m just not really tech-savvy in that way . . . it was a lot to compress into one project.” Uploading the videos for edTPA submission was very time-consuming and tedious for the TCs. For example, one TC shared,

One of my videos took over 45 minutes to upload. Then when you go to submit it and it says error on a certain section, for me, I would go back to that section and look over everything and it was exactly what needed to be done. I just had to do it like 10 times without changing it, the error goes away and I had no idea why. It was super stressful.

Another TC reflected on his experience on the submission process: “I was done with everything at 8:00. I was like, ‘I’m done, submit.’ It was like, error, error. I had like seven errors. I was freaking out . . . It was like 11:00. I’m not submitting this tonight.” The TCs also pointed out the tight timeline to resubmit their edTPA if they did not pass the first time. One TC shared,

I personally felt the wait time to get your grade back was a little bit much. Especially because if you didn’t pass it, you are now in the high school placement, you are down a week already because of winter break . . . You got about two weeks to really look at what they told you to fix and then try and fix it.

Positive Experiences

Despite encountering negative experiences, the TCs shared positive experiences on edTPA. These were categorized as (1) edTPA providing ‘another’ perspective, (2) support throughout student teaching, and (3) good organization skills facilitate process. During the focus group discussions, the participants shared that edTPA

provided a new perspective for evaluating TCs. The TCs also discussed the support they received throughout edTPA during student teaching and that possessing good organization skills facilitates the edTPA process.

edTPA Providing “Another” Perspective

Completing edTPA offered an opportunity for the TCs to reflect on and analyze their teaching. For example, a TC mentioned,

I think [edTPA] made me look at different aspects that I didn't normally look at, like when I reflected on my teaching, I reflected on the basics like feedback. But edTPA made me really look deeper into it, and be like, “Oh, well, I get this feedback, what can I do better?” and I think watching myself definitely helped a lot. If we didn't have to have a video, I don't think I would record myself.

Some TCs mentioned that their cooperating teachers likened edTPA to TEAM (Teacher Education and Mentoring) program, which teachers will complete later in their teaching career, so early exposure to the program is an advantage. One TC said, “I was talking to my cooperating teacher about TEAM training compared to this and she said this was TEAM training on steroids.” Another TC added, “Once we go out and we do TEAM training, we will be prepared for that.”

Support Throughout Student Teaching

The TCs shared the support they received during student teaching. Pertaining to their cooperating teacher, one TC shared,

My cooperating teacher helped me out a lot. She didn't know edTPA, but just reassuring me, “That's something you should think about” or “You should probably just do this instead of this.” I just asked for her advice how I should handle things or what I should consider.

Another TC concurred, “What definitely facilitated me completing was my [cooperating] teacher was really good; she wasn't pressuring me to finish it, but she did a really good job with helping me stay on track with it.”

The USs also shared the support they provided for the TCs during student teaching. For instance, one US said,

Every email, every contact I made with the student, every visit I made I always come back to edTPA. “How are you doing on it? Do you want me to look at it?” Pretty much they said no except for one of the student teachers did have me look at task three. I gave him some advice.

Another US discussed how she was always prepared to answer TCs’ questions on edTPA every time she visited her TC. She said, “When I go to see my student teacher, I bring [the edTPA Handbook] with me just assuming that there’s going to be a question . . . I’ve got so much highlighted in that thing.”

Support for the TCs also came from their peers. One TC shared,

There was me and [friend]. She lives close to me. We already had each other’s number and we talked. Questions I had, I asked her. Questions she had, she asked me. When submission came, the last two weeks I was at her house two, three days a week just to make sure we are all aligned in the same thing. Then, when we both submitted it, we both submitted at the exact same time which really helped.

Good Organization Skills Facilitate Process

Through student teaching, the TCs felt that having good time management skills facilitated the process of completing edTPA. For instance, a TC said, “You don’t want to wait until the last second to do it. But definitely space it out over time, start as soon as you can.” Another TC concurred, “edTPA was a lot of work. It was something that shouldn’t have been handled lightly. Like I tell everybody, you should do edTPA and not save it for, obviously, last minute.” Likewise, a TC advised, “A little bit at a time, read the handbook, and just try to focus as much on your actual teaching as you can, and don’t let it take over you.”

Another TC added, “I think making a false date, what I did is I put the date a week and a half, about two weeks ahead . . . and that helped me get through it, so that the last two weeks was just cleanup work, prepping or editing.” Similarly, a TC commented,

First week, I had at least a template out. Then once I knew what I was [teaching]—the unit and the class—then I can start filling stuff in. Over the eight weeks I worked on it piece by piece.

Another TC concurred, “Because of just the nature of [edTPA] being a lot of work in different parts and pieces and having to film some of it, you really had to plan and manage, which is part of being a teacher.” The USs also suggested that the TCs complete their edTPA as early as possible so that they can receive feedback from their supervisors. One US said, “When you finish task one, let your supervisor look at it so that any questions that come up could be answered, and you could have some feedback.”

Future Support

The subthemes for future support were (1) early integration of edTPA in PETE curriculum and (2) more edTPA training for USs. During the focus group discussions, the participants shared strategies and suggestions for TCs to successfully complete edTPA during student teaching in the future.

Early Integration of edTPA in PETE Curriculum

The participants commented that they would like edTPA to be integrated earlier in the PETE curriculum so that TCs would get more exposure and experience in completing edTPA. For instance, one TC mentioned, “Starting it earlier in our [physical education teacher education program] so it’s not just our last two classes. There’s a familiarity with it all the way through.” Another TC commented, “If edTPA is implemented earlier in the collegiate career, then students will excel at it more because like I said, they’d be comfortable with it.” Similarly, a TC concurred, “The biggest thing I think it should be . . . from the beginning, obviously, freshman year, all the way through.”

Furthermore, the TCs shared that exemplars of “good edTPA” portfolio would help them in their preparation of their edTPA. For instance, one TC commented,

Find a good example . . . watch a video that was good and then try and make it, don’t copy it, don’t use the same words, don’t use the same unit, but structure it the same way. To

me, that's what this test is and that's why really I like it, it's standardized.

Another TC concurred, "What helped me the most was at the very beginning of the semester when we got the exemplar. The exemplar helped me a lot. I would use that if I think I'm missing something." The USs also suggested that providing a variety of exemplars would be useful. One US said, "[The TCs] have an exemplar that I gave them . . . one's score like in the 60s, one is 47, and then we have a 37, we could look at all three." Additionally, the USs suggested that TCs be trained on the edTPA rubrics during the courses they take before student teaching. One US commented, "Having them have a better understanding of what exactly does this score point look like in the rubric."

More edTPA Training for USs

The USs had some initial training to prepare them for their role to supervise their TCs but felt that the training was insufficient. One US mentioned, "I think the training was helpful somewhat, but again, there was even still a gap until we actually scored them." Another US concurred, "I personally felt I needed more training on the scoring. It was a half day, and I felt it really warranted a full day for me personally." Likewise, a US shared,

I felt like I was learning along with my student teacher and certainly could answer questions about good instruction and answer things that related back to anything that we had experienced in the past, but when it came down to nitty-gritty stuff that only came from edTPA, I'm not there yet.

The USs discussed the specific areas in which they needed training. For instance, one US commented, "I need more clarification and training on what we need in the video and how you use that video segment to answer certain questions. That's my biggest weakness right now." Another US added, "I have trouble aligning the rubric with reading what they write. They can give us the specific examples of this in the rubric and this is how they should answer a question and score a three on the rubric." The USs commented that they also needed more training on the edTPA submission process because their TCs often sought their help on the process. One US said, "I had

not been trained on how they have to go through the submission part, and the submission part, isn't that the tech part?"

The USs shared that they will become more competent in supervising TCs on their edTPA with more experience. For instance, one US commented, "The more I teach it, the more I learn and I become more proficient with being able to explain it to students and/or understanding what they're looking for." They also shared similar stories from cooperating teachers. One US mentioned,

A cooperating teacher that my student teacher was working with during edTPA had just had a student teacher over the semester before doing edTPA. This was a repeat for that individual, so the cooperating teacher was starting to have a little better understanding, also because [the cooperating teacher had] two experiences with it, two opportunities to talk with me both times about it. You learn as you go along.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to understand the experiences of TCs and USs in a PETE program, participating in and completing the edTPA process. Through focus group discussions, the participants shared their negative and positive experiences while completing edTPA, as well as future support needed to complete the edTPA successfully.

Overall, the TCs felt that the edTPA (re)defined what quality teaching needed to look like during their first placement (first 8 of 16 weeks), many sharing that they designed their lessons to fit the criteria for the edTPA, that they were teaching to the edTPA. Likewise, Ledwell and Oyler (2016) reported in their study that the TCs were limited to teach in a particular way prescribed by the edTPA, not necessarily the way they have learned to teach in their program. Many teacher educators also felt that the edTPA had initiated a top-down method to evaluating TCs' teaching performance and they were also being stifled in their contribution to meaningful quality conversations about teacher education as academics and professional teacher educators (Cohen et al., 2018). Dover and Schultz (2016) asserted that edTPA prevented authentic and longitudinal evaluations of TCs' readiness in teacher education, thereby compromising the

accountability they promised. The TCs in our study also perceived that edTPA was “unreal” and because of the need to provide feedback to the three focus students (as required by edTPA), they could not provide equal attention to the other students in the class. Metzler (2014) asserted that best practices in P–12 programs will be driven in the future by policies such as edTPA, rather than research on teacher effectiveness. Nonetheless, PETE faculty and P–12 teachers should continue to pursue evidence-based best practice for instruction in physical education (Metzler, 2014). Results from the study also indicated that edTPA “consumed” a lot of the TCs’ time during the first placement (8 weeks) of their student teaching. The TCs’ time was occupied with preparing for edTPA lessons, videotaping, and writing commentaries for submission. Consequently, the TCs felt that they did not have an enjoyable student teaching experience in their first placement, which led to missed opportunities to connect with their students. Completing edTPA during student teaching could pose external restrictions on TCs and restrain the educational nature of the student teaching experience (Hébert, 2019).

Another negative experience mentioned by the TCs was the “new” edTPA academic language that was foreign to them because they have learned other physical education terminologies throughout the PETE program. The TCs felt minimally prepared to integrate academic language in their lessons and hence found it challenging to write the edTPA commentaries while learning the “new” academic language. Indeed, how academic language is “incorporated into lessons is often presented as some sort of obscure code that one must decipher in order to become an effective teacher” in physical education (Martin et al., 2018, p. 34). Oftentimes, syntax complexity in academic language is more challenging for English-language learners because of the way they structure sentences in their own language (Constantinou, 2015). Similarly, Liu and Milman (2013) found that while edTPA allowed TCs to teach academic language and connect curriculum to student background, it impeded critical, in-depth reflection that is important to preparing TCs to teach diverse populations. A possible solution is to integrate academic language into each and every physical education lesson plan by providing opportunities for students to practice academic language (Constantinou, 2015; Treadwell et al., 2017).

Results from the study also reflected that the TCs experienced technological difficulties using videotaping equipment during edTPA lessons and submitting their portfolio. They found submission of their edTPA to be a complicated process during which they encountered confusing error codes. In another study, TCs reported difficulty in fully addressing the competencies assessed by the edTPA in the written commentaries and representing their teaching practices from their video analysis (Choppin & Meuwissen, 2017). Elsewhere, Carter Andrews et al. (2019) asserted that the challenges of standardized licensure exams and teacher performance exams such as edTPA present another challenge in regard to increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of the teacher profession, perhaps because of the high cost to students to complete edTPA. Goldhaber et al. (2017) also found that Hispanic TCs were 3 times more likely to fail the edTPA assessment than non-Hispanic White TCs after it became consequential in Washington state.

Nonetheless, the participants discussed positive experiences they encountered during the study. For instance, some TCs felt that edTPA provided another perspective for them to evaluate and analyze themselves in detail, such as how they provided feedback to their students, which subsequently helped them to become better educators. Likewise, Huston (2017) reported that the process of completing edTPA strengthened TCs' understanding of their educational experience, thus suggesting a broader awareness and appreciation of the complexities of learning to become a better educator. The TCs also commented that completing edTPA during student teaching gave them the opportunity to practice and better prepare themselves for the TEAM program, for which successful completion is required for eligibility to advance from an Initial Educator Certificate to a Provisional Educator Certificate in the state. The participants mutually agreed that support from the cooperating teachers and USs was key to the success of TCs' edTPA completion. The TCs also mentioned that they received support from their peers in terms of clarifying any questions they had regarding the edTPA. Furthermore, the TCs mentioned that having good organizational and time management skills was important to facilitate the edTPA process. Olson et al. (2019) suggested that breaking edTPA into smaller, more manageable tasks makes it less overwhelming for TCs.

Additionally, starting the edTPA process early with the planning task as soon as TCs have a placement for student teaching will reduce anxiety in completing edTPA (Olson et al., 2019). Other effective strategies mentioned by the participants included being well versed with the rubrics for grading edTPA, providing specific video recording instructions to the cooperating teachers, and being part of a peer support system (Treadwell et al., 2017). Furthermore, constant communication between the USs, cooperating teachers, and TCs on the clear procedures of edTPA, as well as administrators allowing video recording and giving permission for any necessary paperwork in the schools, would provide the TCs with further support in edTPA (Treadwell et al., 2017).

During the focus group discussions, the TCs mentioned that university courses that integrated edTPA helped orient them to edTPA, but they would like edTPA to be incorporated into courses earlier in the program curriculum. Treadwell et al. (2017) suggested that it is important for PETE faculty to identify the similarities between the PETE curriculum and the edTPA, then evaluate where gaps need to be filled to better prepare TCs for edTPA. In an action research project, Burns et al. (2015) reported using an approach that successfully supported TCs on their edTPA in a New York State college, which consisted of four initiatives: placements, partnerships, practice, and practical support. Specifically, TCs were placed in student teaching at the same schools as their pre-student teaching experiences, college faculty partnered with cooperating teachers to engage in constant conversation on edTPA, TCs practiced edTPA extensively during pre-student teaching experiences, and full-time faculty gave weekly practical support on edTPA to TCs during student teaching (Burns et al., 2015). More specific to a PETE program, a Northeastern university reported that the use of a clinically rich model, in which TCs participated in an additional 15-week practicum the semester before student teaching, produced favorable ratings among TCs and cooperating teachers in edTPA (Seymour et al., 2018). Finally, the participants suggested that having exemplars of edTPA portfolios of varying scores would help them understand the rubrics used for scoring edTPA. Although the USs in this study felt minimally prepared in supporting the TCs in edTPA, with more in-depth training

and experience, they would feel more competent in supporting their TCs in edTPA in the future.

Limitation and Future Directions

Although the results of this study expand our knowledge on the experiences of TCs and USs in completing edTPA during student teaching, the study is limited to experiences of a small number of participants from a university in the Northeastern United States. Therefore, the experiences shared by the participants may be relevant to members of a PETE program that is guided by certain existing policies and norms. Future research may explore the experiences of TCs and USs within other university PETE programs from other parts of the United States, to gather information of best practices in implementing edTPA in PETE curricula.

Implications for Teacher Education

From the perspective of the university, it is important to incorporate components of edTPA into PETE programs early in the curriculum and provide opportunities for TCs to gain practical knowledge and skills to complete edTPA. Based upon the results of this study, these are our suggestions for consideration to be implemented in PETE programs:

- Implement Tasks 1, 2, and 3 of the edTPA sequentially in three separate courses during TCs' sophomore and junior years.
- Implement all three tasks of the edTPA in a senior-level course before the TCs student teach so that TCs will gain the practical knowledge and skills to complete the entire portfolio during student teaching.
- Incorporate academic language and research connections into courses throughout the PETE program. Specifically, provide opportunities for TCs to understand and apply academic language and research connections into physical education lessons on campus and/or in the field.
- Provide a technology workshop for the TCs within or outside a course to teach the TCs how to use video equipment (including where to position the video camera and how to use a wireless microphone), as well as skills for video processing.

- Provide an edTPA submission workshop to help the TCs on the submission process.
- Teach TCs essential organizational and time management skills to help them structure a timeline/goal plan while working on their edTPA during student teaching.
- Communicate with the CTs on effective strategies to supervise and support TCs to complete edTPA during student teaching.

Conclusion

In view of the increasing need for TCs to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to complete edTPA, PETE programs around the country are devising best practices to prepare their TCs in edTPA. Though TCs felt that the completion of edTPA diminished their student teaching experience, they shared that edTPA allowed them to analyze themselves in detail, which subsequently helped them to improve their pedagogical skills in planning, instruction, and assessment. PETE programs should consider incorporating edTPA early and throughout the program to prepare TCs to successfully complete edTPA before and during student teaching. Additionally, having USs, course instructors, and cooperating teachers trained and be well versed in edTPA would facilitate TCs' success in edTPA completion.

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