2018

edTPA as a Tool to Measure Teacher Readiness: A Case Study on First Year Teachers

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Abstract
Reference MS#1124

The case study intends to study edTPA as a measure for teacher readiness. The case study examined four first year teachers' edTPA experience, performance, and their perspectives on edTPA as a tool to measure teacher readiness in light of their first year teaching experiences and TKES assessment results. Three research questions were used to guide the study: What were first year teachers' edTPA experience and performance? What were first year teachers' TKES assessment results? What were first year teachers' perspectives on edTPA as a tool to measure teacher readiness? Four first year teachers in north GA participated in the study. These participants passed edTPA assessment prior to employment as full time teachers. The participants were interviewed individually. Six interview questions were used. Interviews were structured for about 45 min each. Data were recorded, transcribed, and coded for analysis to see trends, patterns, and themes. The results of the study indicated that edTPA did not measure all aspects of teacher readiness. Factors such as diversity, relationship building, collaboration were valued by participants as important for teacher readiness in the classroom. edTPA as an effectiveness tool to measure teacher readiness was uncertain. Discussion and future implications of the research results on edTPA to teacher preparation, teacher quality, and policy making were offered.

Introduction

The Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) released a national teacher readiness assessment, i.e. edTPA, after rounds of field tests recently. As of 2016, edTPA was available nationally in 27 content areas (edTPA, n.d.). With increased adoption of edTPA in higher education teacher preparation programs, questions exist such as assessment validity, assessment of teaching and learning, and policy making. More empirical research is needed on edTPA and its impact as a high-stakes assessment to measure teacher readiness during teacher candidates' transition from preservice teacher preparation to inservice teaching (Sawchuck, 2016). The study intends to examine edTPA as a tool to measure teacher readiness and to further provide empirical research-based discussion on teacher readiness and teacher quality.

Literature Review

What is edTPA?

edTPA is a teacher performance assessment. It is a recent focus of change for teacher education programs in higher education. edTPA is a portfolio created by preservice teachers usually during their student teaching semester before they exit out the teacher education program. The portfolio describes and documents authentic practices, which consists of a 3-5 lesson unit taught by the preservice teacher and a 20-minute video segment on the teaching of the unit. The portfolio addresses planning, instruction, assessment, analysis of teaching, and academic language to reveal preservice teachers' impact on student learning (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity, n.d.; Greenblatt, 2016). The edTPA portfolio usually takes about 4-6 weeks to complete.

The completed edTPA portfolio is then submitted to Pearson for official scoring. The submission process could be time consuming and technologically challenging (Garland, 2016). It requires focused attention from preservice teachers to complete all required tasks. Although preservice teachers own the portfolio they create for scoring, SCALE (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity) has copyrights for edTPA handbooks, rubrics, and other training/scoring materials. Preservice teachers pay $300 for each portfolio to be officially scored. They may retake a part or parts of the portfolio for partial price if they fail a part or parts of the assessment.
Preservice teachers may not be eligible for teacher certification if they fail the edTPA portfolio completely or partially.

In that regard, edTPA is not only an expense for preservice teachers, but also a high-stakes assessment used to evaluate a future teacher's readiness for effective teaching in five dimensions: planning, instruction, assessment, analysis of teaching, and academic language (Greenblatt & O'Hara, n.d; Navickas, 2016). The assessment is different from conventional ones such as multiple-choice testing; it contains information on teaching practices not captured by basic skills tests (Goldhaber, Cowan, & Theobald, 2016; Sawchuk, 2016). In building their edTPA portfolio, preservice teachers typically teach 3-5 lessons and video tape a learning segment of their teaching for 20 minutes. In the portfolio, they follow commentary prompts in a structured and page-limited manner to document their explanation and reflection on their teaching.

Although the edTPA portfolio focuses on each preservice teacher as an individual and

their own teaching practices, it has its underlying conception of teaching that is not only for individual preservice teachers but also the field of teacher education (Sato, 2014). It requires preservice teachers to go beyond simple mimic of teaching practices to think deeper and contextually on those practices. The type of teaching that is solely based on teacher demonstration, narrative, or lecture will not meet the edTPA expectation (Sato, 2014). edTPA measures student learning and is consistent with the state college and career readiness standards and InTASC Standards.

The status of edTPA.

The adoption and implementation of edTPA by teacher education programs in higher education is increasing. As an authentic assessment available nationally, edTPA has been used by about 700 educator preparation programs (more than 70% of teacher education programs in the country) across 38 states and the District of Columbia; in 2014 alone, about 18,000 preservice teachers took the edTPA assessment (edTPA, n.d.; edTPA Participation Map, n.d.; Greenblatt & O'Hara, n.d.; Sawchuck, 2016). Thirteen states have used or planned to use edTPA for licensing or to gauge program quality such as national and state program accreditation, program approval, and job placement (Made, 2016; Sawchuck, 2016).

Increased adoption also means more input from the field on the instrument and policy making. edTPA continues to be updated each year. Each state sets its own cut off score. For example, Illinois had a cut score of 35 in 2015-2016 year while Georgia had a score of 42 for the same year for Early Childhood Education assessment. Those scores will increase in a couple of years to be 41 and 45 respectively (Georgia Department of Education, 2013; Made, 2016). More states continue to roll out "consequential decisions" about edTPA and teacher education programs, such as TN and PA (edTPA Participation Map, n.d.).

Despite increased adoption and related policy making in teacher education, questions continue to be asked on edTPA with regard to its validity, policy making, data tracking, and whether it helps to better the teaching profession (Made, 2016; Mitchel,2016; Greenblatt & O'Hara, n.d.; Sawchuk, 2016). Concerns continue to be raised on cheating, narrowed the curriculum, and reduced interests and engagement in non edTPA tested areas (Au, 2013; Madeloni & Gorlewski, 2013; Sohyun, 2016). Content area specific edTPAs such as edTPAs for bilingual teacher education and art teacher education were challenged for failure to address emergent and contextual needs (Kleyn, López, & Makar, 2015; Parke & Powell, 2015).

Dilemma on edTPA.

Mixed results from available research continue to pose dilemmas on edTPA and compound how edTPA is going to move forward (Holland, 2014). Sohyun (2016) discussed the resistance to the change due to its overemphasis on reading and math; the researcher urged teacher educators to be more open minded because pure resistance could lead to detrimental effect in teacher preparation in the form of loss of interest and lack of engagement in the preservice teacher training. However, program interventions for edTPA during implementation could improve tensions between teacher education beliefs and practices (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013; Lachuk & Koellner, 2015; Peck, Singer-Gabella, Sloan, & Lin, 2014).

While, higher edTPA scores seem to predict higher student reading performance on standardized testing (Goldhaber, Cowan, & Theobald, 2016), Mitchel (2016) concluded that in measuring first year teacher readiness, edTPA weighed heavily on data analysis skills and de-emphasized skills such as adaptability, relating to students' interests, and fostering a cooperative environment. Moreover, the lengthy and tightly structured edTPA requirements and process have changed the focus of student teaching and seminar from preparing for the first year teaching to

preparing to pass an unauthentic test creating lessons under constraints (Greenblatt & O'Hara, n.d.). Goldhaber, Cowan, and Theobald (2016) shared concern on using edTPA to benchmark teacher readiness "if the edTPA really were used as a one-time, high-stakes test for employment eligibility, screening these candidates who would become ineffective teachers comes at the cost of screening out some candidates who would become effective teachers" (p. 23).

Research Questions

Three research questions were used to guide the study:
1. What were first year teachers' edTPA experience and performance?
2. What were first year teachers' TKES assessment results?
3. What were first year teachers' perspectives on edTPA as a tool to measure teacher readiness?

Methodology

Setting and participants.

The study setting was in north GA. The setting has a small educator preparation provider (EPP) with about 350 preservice teachers. edTPA became consequential for teacher licensure in 2015-2016 academic year in GA. Across the state, all preservice teachers who graduated in Fall 2015 were required to take and pass edTPA for licensing for the first time. In Fall 2015, the Early Childhood Education (ECE) major cohort of 22 preservice teachers in the EPP took edTPA and 20 passed (91%) with their first attempt. With the two preservice teachers who did not pass the first time, one retook and passed (95% of pass rate) and the other one never retook edTPA but graduated. The state passing score was 42 and the cohort had the highest score of 72 and the lowest score of 32. The cohort edTPA average was slightly above national average 45 (Education Week, 2017).

In the EPP areas K-12 schools, Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) was used at the time of the study for teacher evaluation. The TKES assessment is the on the job performance assessment conducted usually by principals and assistant principals. A full year TKES assessment includes four 15-minute walk-troughs and two 30- minute observations, mid-year formative conference, and final summative conference. In Georgia, TKES was piloted in 2012, with partial implementation in 2013-2014, and statewide implementation in 2014-2015 and beyond (Georgia Department of Education, 2013).

In this case study, four first year teachers graduated from the EPP in Fall 2015 were the participants. They passed edTPA for licensing prior to full time employment. Among the four participants, two were male and two were female teachers. All four new teachers were Caucasian in their 20s. These four teachers were employed in three districts and four elementary schools right after graduation. At the time of the study, all four teachers had completed five months of teaching in an elementary school setting. All four teachers were qualified for on the job assessment using Georgia TKES Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) (Georgia's Teacher Keys Effectiveness System, 2016; See Appendix A). Since the four new teachers were in the school system for only half of the 2015-2016 academic year, they had only half of the academic year's assessment including two 15-minute walk-throughs, a 30-minute observation, and a summative conference in May 2016.

Research Instrument, Data Collection, and Data Analysis

In the case study, four first year teachers were interviewed. A total of six questions were used during each interview with the last question being open-ended (see Appendix B). All four teachers were interviewed individually for about 45 minutes, two onsite interviews at their

respective elementary schools and two phone interviews when they were at school after school responsibilities for the day were completed. All interviews were structured and recorded. Collected data were transcribed and entered into the computer for analysis on merged trends, themes, and patterns. Electronica data were coded so no names of individual participants, schools, and locations were identifiable (see Table 1).

Table 1
Participants and Employment Schools

Teacher	Assignment(s)
KT	First grade teacher in inner city WW Elementary School in D City School System
JH	Second grade teacher in inner city CP Elementary School in D City School System
KK	K-5 ESOL teacher in CW Elementary School in CW County School System
TR	K-5 teacher in BT Elementary School in CT County School System

Results and Findings

The transition from a college student and a preservice teacher to a full time employee and teacher was smooth for the four participants in the case study. These participants were hired to teach in January right after graduation in December. The four new teachers were employed in different settings with full time responsibilities in four different elementary schools. KT was hired as a first grade teacher at WW Elementary. Her school was a city school with 570 students. Over 60% of the students population was Hispanic; the free reduced lunch rate was at 52.2% (School Wide Title I Plan, 2015). JH was employed in the inner city school CP Elementary in D city after graduation as a second grade teacher. The school had a diverse student body of 836 students, 78% Hispanic students, and a 90% free reduced lunch rate (GRAPHIQ, n.d). KK was employed as an ESOL K-5 teacher at CW Elementary School in CW County, a school with 813 students, an 88% of free reduced lunch rate, and 66% Caucasian students (GARAPHIQ, n.d.). She was in a co-teaching setting working with several other senior teachers. The school had 17% ELL students, more than twice of the state average 7% (Great Schools, n.d.). TR started teaching in BT Elementary School in a co-teaching setting working with three other K-5 teachers in CT County. The school had about 530 students, 90% Caucasian students, and a 32% free reduced lunch rate (GRAPHIQ, n.d.).

Research Question 1: What were first year teachers' edTPA experience and performance?

All teachers passed edTPA successfully with scores between 60-70 on their first attempt based on the 15- rubic 90-possible point Early Childhood Education edTPA portfolio. Rich information was shared by the study participants on their edTPA experience. Study participants voiced they learned from completing their edTPA portfolio such as planning, reflection, instructional strategies, and research skills.

In the area of planning, three teachers expressed edTPA planning was thorough. They took a lot of what they learned to the classroom during their first five months' full time teaching. KT was female Caucasian in her 20s. She said that she could appreciate more about edTPA after graduation. To her, the part that stood out the most in edTPA was the planning task:

What I learned through the program on edTPA is definitely a strength for me to think

ahead and understand what my students need during my planning at work…edTPA is thorough with lesson planning. My score on planning from edTPA definitely showed that.

KK, was an easy going Caucasian ESOL teacher in her 20s. She stated that edTPA was thorough with planning, which got her ready for on the job planning in the classroom:

> In edTPA, we had to take a standard and broke it into 3 days' teaching. It is very important for me to take the skills gained from edTPA experience to my classroom…Now, I can focus on a Kindergarten standard and teach to that standard for several days. Sometimes, it took 2-3 days; sometimes it took a week to teach one standard. edTPA taught me well on that. Even though I had to do it only one time when in college, but because I had to do that one time, I did not have to struggle that much in planning. That was something I had not focused on until edTPA.

In the area of reflection, three teachers mentioned edTPA reinforced their ability to reflect, and two teachers emphasized that the use of videotaping further strengthened their reflection on teaching practices. To KK, videotaping her lessons in edTPA helped her reflect on her teaching and opened her eyes on what being a reflective teacher was about:

> To me, the most important part of edTPA was videotaping ourselves teaching. It is like giving ourselves praise and critique for our teaching. I say that because I got to sit back and reflect. I had never watched myself teaching before edTPA. It was hard to watch through…Being a reflective teacher is super, super, important, and edTPA opened my eyes on that.

TR, a male Caucasian teacher in his 20s, was grateful that edTPA made him a better reflective teacher in the classroom:

> You reflect on everything you do in edTPA, which, as a teacher, is really your job. Now, when you are done with your teaching, you reflect, and you change things…During my edTPA, I found myself thinking: I could do this better; I could do that better. edTPA really makes me reflect on everything I do, and it makes me think and reflect about methods and strategies like a teacher.

Reflection leads to new knowledge. To KK, edTPA had strengthened her teaching strategies through videotaping, reflection, and researching. During her edTPA process, she mentioned she had to constantly discuss instructional strategies; she had to quote on the reasons of those choices from the video segment to back up her use of instructional strategies as well. Through the process, she learned new methods that she did not know before. That was an eye opener for her. TR scored 60 on edTPA, well above the cut off score of 42. He started teaching in a co- teaching setting working with three other K-5 teachers in BT elementary in CT County. Thinking back on edTPA, TR stated that he learned a lot from researching instructional strategies and methods:

> edTPA experience helped me learn what I need to do at my job now. Task IV is about reteaching a math lesson. That task is very beneficial to me. I now have a lot of special needs students and a lot of IEPs in the classroom, so a lot of what I do at my job is reteaching. edTPA helped me research different methods and strategies in order to design reteaching.

Similar to TR, after the edTPA experience, KK felt she was better prepared to on instructional strategies and one of

such is to provide feedback to impact students' learning after completing Task IV on reteaching a math lesson:

In Task IV, you have to create, assess, and then reteach a math lesson…edTPA was the first time I had to give any feedback to students. That taught me in my real job that I need to provide feedback to students to impact their learning.

In addition to reflection, videotaping, and instructional strategies, other areas of what these teachers learned during edTPA are also experienced in their work place, such as strong work ethics, research, and reasoning. KT could now see now the reason as to why she had to complete edTPA when she was in college. In order to prepare for the high-stakes assessment, she had put in hours of work to complete her edTPA portfolio:

I passed [edTPA] pretty well. I was very confident about it. I put in hours, hours, hours, of work into it. I earned what I got… Speaking of the effort level, being in college, edTPA was the hardest project I did out of my entire academic career.

The edTPA success continued to inspire her to work hard in her first year teaching at WW Elementary:

That [strong work ethic] has transferred here [at WW Elementary]. I had to put in hours and hours of work being a new teacher, as I do not have a lot of resources…I had to put hours of hard work into my teaching to fully reach my students.

JH was a Caucasian male in his 20s. He had passed edTPA successfully with a score of 63. Although he was the one who had the least positive experience on edTPA, he concluded that edTPA taught him to think, reason, and explain when working with parents and administrators in his five months' teaching:

Well, I guess edTPA helped me to be ready to explain…it helped more on the administrative side because I
need to explain my choices and reasoning to my principal and parents.

With edTPA usually being adopted in the last semester of student teaching, a lot of learning also means a lot of stress. Participants voiced unfavorable aspects of the assessment such as the rigid structure, narrowed focus on teaching and content, intensive labor and time-consuming process. To KK, edTPA experience was an overwhelming and a frequent self-doubt process in that successful passing edTPA was required for licensing in the same semester when she was required to complete 550 field hours, a 2-week Take Over, and 3 observed lessons, not to mention the uncertain job hunting. In TR's words, "with edTPA, once you are done, you are glad you are over with it."

Beside the stress from edTPA, JH did not feel edTPA was a helpful learning experience. In his words, edTPA was the first thing that made him feel he was stupid. Five months after edTPA in the classroom, he was still questioning the usefulness of edTPA. He questioned the authenticity of teaching during edTPA. He experienced the disconnection between student teaching and edTPA demands. To him, there was a battle between trying to complete the edTPA portfolio successfully and focusing on successfully meeting all students' needs in a large classroom:

It was very stressful…During my student teaching, I had to teach myself so unnaturally to satisfy the requirements set by edTPA with what may not be right for my students…It is very difficult to make sure that you achieve your goal while satisfying edTPA requirements.

Research Question 2: What were first year teachers' TKES assessment results?

In the study, all four teachers were qualified for on the job assessment using Georgia

Teacher Keys Effective System (TKES) Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) (Georgia's Teacher Keys Effectiveness System, 2016; See Appendix A). Under TEKS TAPS domain, there are 10 standards each teacher will be assessed against. For each standard, a level III performance is considered as "proficient" or "meeting the standard." Although not every standard is required to be assessed at each observation or walk-through, all standards should be assessed before the summative conference. In the study, the four new teachers were in the school system for only half of the 2015-2016 academic year, they had only half of the academic year's assessment including two 15-minute walk-throughs, a 30-minute observation, and a summative conference.

In the study, participants were asked about their TKES TAPS assessment results. Among all four teachers: two teachers had all Level III ratings on all 10 standards from the first walkthrough till the last observation before summative conference. One teacher had one Level I rating and two Level II ratings during the first walk through, but was able to improve over the course of two months, and gained all Level III ratings during the second walkthrough before the summative conference at the end of the Academic Year. One teacher had made mostly Level III ratings and a Level I rating in the planning area after all the observation and walkthroughs.

KT was the first star teacher with all Level III ratings on her TKES TAPS assessment. In reviewing her first-year TKES TAPS teaching evaluation, KT was very pleased that she scored all Level IIIs on all the teacher performance standards although she was nervous about it:

The results were all very positive. I was incredibly nervous. Obviously during my first TKES walkthrough, the principal came and the assistant principal came. The first time, they stood 10 min for the observation. My second time, I had the full lesson plan and full 30-min observation…I am definitely well prepared for TKES assessment.

KK was the second star teacher with all Level III ratings on her walkthroughs and observation. Her experience for on the job assessment TKES TAPS results were all positive. Although she had only been in the classroom for five months, KK had been observed and evaluated by the administrator throughout the five months. She had two walkthroughs, one observation, and one summative and she got all Level III ratings on both walk throughs and the observation. Her first year TKES assessment ended with a satisfactory conference with the principal and an exciting contract for the next year.

For TR, his midterm walkthrough showed areas that needed improvement. He had one Level I rating and two Level II ratings. With continued mentoring, he made it to all Level III ratings on the observation on all 10 standards. He had all Level III ratings for his TKES assessment at the summative conference. He felt the support from the administrator and the new district wide training had helped him improve and finally earned all Level III ratings at the summative conference. He was very pleased with the support and mentoring provided by the school.

JH was the teacher with mostly Level III ratings and one Level I rating from his walk throughs and observation. At the time of the study, he was falling apart. He was so glad that participating in the study had provided him an opportunity to channel his emotions and feelings. He was disappointed about his performance in the classroom:

I was put into a setting where the principal was new to the school. There were supposed to be two informal and one formal observations and then the summative…All of my formative observations were in the same month at the end of the year as well as my summative conference. I was not able to receive feedback for growth at times when I needed it. I got mostly Level III ratings on my TKES results…I did receive a Level I rating on one of my rubrics. My summative conference basically is to go there and click

on a check box.

JH was unsatisfied and disappointed about the TKES assessment results. Although he was offered the contract for the next year with expectations for improvement, he was not sure what the future held for him.

Research Question 3: What were first year teachers' perspectives on edTPA as a tool to measure teacher readiness?

In this study, participants' levels of success in the classroom varied during their first year teaching, despite the fact that they all passed edTPA with scores between 60-70 when the cut off score was 42 in GA based on a 15- rubric 90-point Early Childhood edTPA assessment. When asked about edTPA as a measure for teacher readiness, all four new teachers indicated that an edTPA score was not everything about a teacher's readiness. One participant particularly stressed that "edTPA scores could be misleading. I cannot see a bit connection between my edTPA performance and TKES assessment results." edTPA performance was somewhat reflective of their readiness such as planning and reflection. Qualities like relationship building, diversity, professional collaboration, and continued support at schools were valued greatly as what teacher readiness entails as well.

KT felt edTPA experience gave her the brush stroke on lesson planning and reflection before she exited the program. Those were the skills that were hit hard in her first year teaching. She could see the reason as to why she had to complete edTPA in college. She could appreciate more on what she had to go through in edTPA after being in the classroom for five months. In looking at edTPA and her first year teaching, KT expressed edTPA may not measure everything about a teacher's readiness for teaching. In her own words "I would not say one score tells all of who you are as a teacher because edTPA is just one assignment-one big project."

To JH, the complexity of teacher readiness such as student diversity was not captured enough in edTPA. In addition, teacher readiness means more than reading and math:

> Teaching is much more complicated than reading and math instruction. edTPA is so focused and driven by specific literacy and math prompts. There is no way to measure cultural diversity on edTPA beyond just indicating the demographic information. The school I am at has an 88% free reduced lunch rate. You got to come to my classroom to understand students' needs. There are probably 6 students in my room who do not have parents at home…I found out today somebody's dad did not get out of jail…another student said he could not do the math test because he did not know where he was going to stay tonight…edTPA does not measure all that.

JH pointed out that factors critical for first year teacher readiness such as professional responsibilities, human factors, and collaboration were not captured in edTPA. According to JH:

> If only we lived in a world in which we were only judged by our ability to teach with no other responsibilities involved officially and unofficially, such as Big Brother Big Sister type of stuff. In my school, we are teaching kids how to interact with each other, things that are not necessarily in state standards, federal standards, test, or other standards. Teaching is so intrinsically human. I think and work like a human. You cannot boil all the experiences and emotions to a score. In my five months of teaching, I struggled a lot with paper work. I am on my back foot about to fall down after the entire five months. You cannot device a test that will take into account of all the factors of teaching and depend on that to make a judgement on whether one is an effective teacher or not, or to use that to predict whether or not one is going to succeed in teaching.

JH did not think edTPA was an effective tool of measuring teacher readiness in his own experience:

> I do not feel I am effective in my own classroom as I was a student teacher. The realities of teaching are such that trying to predict one's abilities of teaching based on a test, or

any test is almost impossible…This is not a criticism of edTPA specifically, but I do not think that you can really measure that…I felt overwhelmed over my head in my classroom. I made more mistakes in my first five months in the classroom than my two years' field experiences and student teaching at D Institution. It is one thing that the edTPA score looks good on paper, but another thing when you get into the reality of teaching. I think it is hard to use edTPA to measure teacher readiness. Specifically, I do not think edTPA measures what the reality is going to be if you become a teacher in an inner city school…I do not think edTPA scores connect to on the job performance.

In the study, both JH and TR saw relationship building as a critical indicator of teacher readiness, which was not facilitated or measured in edTPA. JH said that edTPA video-taping took authentic teaching out of the context and was disruptive to the essence of teacher-student relationship building:

Being aware that I am watched by a camera makes me paranoid. It makes me take a step back from being natural to my students…For whoever is viewing the video, he or she may take that out of the context: the teacher-students relationship-something that is respectful between me and my students.

The importance of relationship building in teacher readiness was also echoed in TR's view of teacher readiness. To him, relationship building was the essence of teacher readiness in that "teaching is basically a parent to the kids. There is a lot that goes into teaching other than teaching math and reading." To TR, the hours spent in the classroom during his student teaching with other interns and mentors helped him a lot on his readiness for his first teaching job. He realized that it was even more so after being in the classroom for five months. However, that was beyond what edTPA intended to measure. To him the relationship building factor was so critical to his students' and ultimately his success during his first year teaching. In a concise sentence, TR summarized his take on edTPA as a tool to measure teacher readiness: edTPA did not indicate someone's teaching readiness completely and a score was not what teaching was all about or what one was potentially as a teacher. TR did not feel his edTPA performance truly reflected his readiness for teaching. He felt strongly there was a lot that went into teaching while edTPA was mostly about writing and reflecting.

Although TR had all level III ratings for his TKES assessment during the summative conference, he had also learned a lot from his new job since day one, which was not indicated by his edTPA performance score.
Diversity factors continued to shape and reshape his perspective on teacher readiness in the classroom after graduation. He was shocked by students who had behavioral issues. He had to come out of his shell from being shy to being loud and firm to his students. To him, to reset his mindset from being a student teacher to a classroom teacher was not something measured by an edTPA score either. Being in a K-5 classroom with EIPs, RTIs, and students with ADD and other issues, he did not realize how much planning he needed until he had his students. In that regard, he was grateful that he had other seasoned teachers and system program training such as MindSet from day one in the classroom. He stated that those got him to be so much more ready for his students.

Discussion

edTPA has been adopted by higher education institutions and teacher education programs in recent years. From the time of piloting to implementation at the D Institution, there was a huge turn from being overtly resistant to being more adjusted after the official consequential timeline was announced by GA Department of Education in 2015. Focusing on edTPA as a tool to measure teacher readiness, the case study included results from four first year teachers who had passed edTPA successfully prior to their first year classroom teaching.

The success of these teachers in the classroom varied with different degrees of learning, mentoring, and improvement. The results of the study made it hard to conclude that teacher candidates with passing edTPA scores were ready to teach effectively and successfully. Although two of the four teachers were fairly successful with consistent feedback and monitoring from the administration, one new teacher with a 63 score on edTPA struggled much during his first five months in the classroom. One new teacher with a passing score of 60 was mentored and supported well to eventually earned all Level III ratings based on the TEKS TAPS assessment. In other words, continued support and mentoring are critical to the definition of teacher readiness in the classroom. Professional qualities such as relationship building, diversity, and collaboration continue to be valued as part of the definition for teacher readiness by teachers in the study but those are beyond what edTPA intends to measure and what an edTPA performance score can entail.

To further the teacher readiness discussion, the four first year teachers' experience revealed different levels of support and mentoring during their first five months' teaching, such as new program trainings and collaboration with veteran teachers. It could conclude that one of the four new teachers could be much more ready for his students if mentoring and support were provided in a timely manner. With that being that, a high edTPA score does not always translate into a high level of teacher readiness. Darling-Hamond (2014) clarified teaching effectiveness and the assessment of that in two factors: teacher quality and teaching quality. In this study, it could be concluded that a little more support contextualized in the school setting could make a difference on one teacher's readiness and effective teaching in the classroom. To facilitate teacher readiness, research on support for new teachers vary by state and by district. According to Mader (2016), only 29 states require schools to provide support for new teachers, and only 15 states require teachers be supported during both their first and second years.

The results of the study also indicated the complexity of measuring teacher readiness. All four teachers in the study voiced that edTPA could not measure everything about teacher readiness. One teacher's take on edTPA and teacher readiness, specifically, led to a profound question on teacher readiness: how to measure teacher readiness or is it even possible to measure teacher readiness? (Mitchel, 2016). The on the job performance of results as indicated by TKES TAPS results in the study showed participants experienced learning and growth to be ready in the first five months' teaching. How to measure all that? Moreover, in the case of the two star teachers, how effective they were to their students is still unknown due to no student performance data were not available at the time of the study.

In addition, teacher readiness as indicated in the TKES assessment results may be biased. TKES TAPS assessment relies on teachers' supervisors and their observations. Although TKES assessment was piloted in 2012, it did not become a statewide assessment until 2014-2015 academic year. The TKES assessment has been continuously changing since then. Many school administrators were still learning and adapting to new changes to the instrument at the time of the study. Continued changes make a high interrater reliability indicator a challenging task to accomplish. Not to mention there are still debates at the time of the study on TKES as a

performance assessment, such as how many walk throughs and conferences should be used for teachers? how much percentage of standardized testing scores should be factored into the overall job performance score? and how to differentiate new teachers and veteran teachers when using the assessment?

Lastly, a point worthy of further discussion is that in the case study all four participants were Caucasian teachers. Their experiences and performance may have only shared the story and their experiences and understanding of edTPA from the "white" perspective. In a 2016 study on edTPA, the results suggested large disparities in edTPA performance by teacher race (Goldhaber, Cowan, & Theobald, 2016). To further our understanding on edTPA as a tool to measure teacher readiness, and what edTPA may mean to future teacher work force and teacher quality, it is important to study edTPA on preservice teachers of diverse backgrounds as well.

Conclusion

To conclude, the question on edTPA as an effective tool to measure teacher readiness was still uncertain in the study. Although some research indicates the rigor and potential of edTPA for improved teacher quality (Adkins, 2016), researchers Goldhaber, Cowan, and Theobald (2016) hesitated to draw broad conclusions about the extent to which edTPA implementation would improve the quality of the teacher workforce. The study results revealed that edTPA did not measure all aspects of teacher readiness as perceived by the four first year teachers. While edTPA is rapidly getting into higher education teacher education programs, it is important to continue to examine the impact of high stakes assessments such as edTPA and its impact on teacher preparation, teacher quality, student learning, and teacher work force. What potential could edTPA promise and what consequences could result due to policy making such as program improvement and accreditation requirements? Research on edTPA as a tool to measure teacher readiness can be examined further with quantitative and qualitative empirical research efforts that focus on edTPA performance and teacher evaluation and student performance to add to the professional discourse on teacher preparation, teacher quality, and policy making.

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Appendix A: Georgia TKES TAPS Standards and Rubric

Performance Standard 1: Professional Knowledge
The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and the needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually demonstrates extensive content and pedagogical knowledge, enriches the curriculum, and guides others in enriching the curriculum. (Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.	The teacher consistently demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and the needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.	The teacher inconsistently demonstrates understanding of curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge, and student needs, or lacks fluidity in using the knowledge in practice.	The teacher inadequately demonstrates understanding of curriculum, subject content, pedagogical knowledge and student needs, or does not use the knowledge in practice.

Performance Standard 2: Instructional Planning
The teacher plans using state and local school district curricula and standards, effective strategies, resources, and data to address the differentiated needs of all students.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually seeks and uses multiple data and real world resources to plan differentiated instruction to meet the individual student needs and interests in order to promote student accountability and engagement. (Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)	The teacher consistently plans using state and local school district curricula and standards, effective strategies, resources, and data to address the differentiated needs of all students.	The teacher inconsistently uses state and local school district curricula and standards, or inconsistently uses effective strategies, resources, or data in planning to meet the needs of all students.	The teacher does not plan, or plans without adequately using state and local school district curricula and standards, or without using effective strategies, resources, or data to meet the needs of all students.

Performance Standard 3: Instructional Strategies
The teacher promotes student learning by using research-based instructional strategies relevant to the content to engage students in active learning and to facilitate the students' acquisition of key knowledge and skills.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually facilitates students' engagement in metacognitive learning, higher-order thinking skills, and application of learning in current and relevant ways. (Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.	The teacher consistently promotes student learning by using research-based instructional strategies relevant to the content to engage students in active learning, and to facilitate the students' acquisition of key skills.	The teacher inconsistently; Uses research-based instructional strategies. The strategies used are sometimes not appropriate for the content area or for engaging students in active learning or for the acquisition of key skills.	The teacher does not use research-based instructional strategies, nor are the instructional strategies relevant to the content area. The strategies do not engage students in active learning or acquisition of key skills.

Performance Standard 4: Differentiated Instruction

The teacher challenges and supports each student's learning by providing appropriate content and developing skills which address individual learning differences.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually facilitates each student's opportunities to learn by engaging him/her in critical and creative thinking and challenging activities tailored to address individual learning needs and interests. (Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)	The teacher consistently challenges and supports each student's learning by providing appropriate content and developing skills which address individual learning differences.	The teacher inconsistently challenges students by providing appropriate content or by developing skills which address individual learning differences.	The teacher does not challenge students by providing appropriate content or by developing skills which address individual learning differences.

Performance Standard 5: Assessment Strategies
The teacher systematically chooses a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate for the content and student population.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually demonstrates expertise and leads others to determine and develop a variety of strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate for the content and student population and guides students to monitor and reflect on their own academic progress. (Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)	The teacher systematically and consistently chooses a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate for the content and student population.	The teacher inconsistently chooses a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies or the instruments are sometimes not appropriate for the content or student population	The teacher chooses an Inadequate variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies or the instruments are not appropriate for the content or student population.

Performance Standard 6: Assessment Uses
The teacher systematically gathers, analyzes, and uses relevant data to measure student progress, to inform instructional content and delivery methods, and to provide timely and constructive feedback to both students and parents.

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually demonstrates expertise in using data to measure student progress and leads others in the effective use of data to inform instructional decisions. (Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)	The teacher systematically and consistently gathers, analyzes, and uses relevant data to measure student progress, to inform instructional content and delivery methods, and to provide timely and constructive feedback to both students and parents.	The teacher inconsistently gathers, analyzes, or uses relevant data to measure student progress, inconsistently uses data to inform instructional content and delivery methods, or inconsistently provides timely or constructive feedback.	The teacher does not gather, analyze, or use relevant data to measure student progress, to inform instructional content and delivery methods, or to provide feedback in a constructive or timely manner.

Performance Standard 7: Positive Learning Environment **The teacher provides a well-managed, safe, and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and encourages respect for all.**			
Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level	**Level III** Level III is the expected level of performance	**Level II**	**Level I**
The teacher continually engages students in a collaborative and self-directed learning environment where students are encouraged to take risks and ownership of their own learning behavior. (Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)	The teacher consistently provides a well-managed, safe, and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and encourages respect for all.	The teacher inconsistently provides a well-managed, safe, and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and encourages respect for all.	he teacher inadequately addresses student behavior, displays a negative attitude toward students, ignores safety standards, or does not otherwise provide an orderly environment that is conducive to learning or encourages respect for all.
Performance Standard 8: Academically Challenging Environment **The teacher creates a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels and students are self-directed learners.**			
Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level	**Level III** Level III is the expected level of performance	**Level II**	**Level I**
The teacher continually creates an academic learning environment where students are encouraged to set challenging learning goals and tackle challenging materials. (Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.	The teacher consistently creates a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels and students are self-directed learners.	The teacher inconsistently provides a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels or where students are self-directed learners.	The teacher does not provide a student-centered, academic environment in which teaching and learning occur at high levels, or where students are self-directed learners.
Performance Standard 9: Professionalism **The teacher exhibits a commitment to professional ethics and the school's mission, participates in professional growth opportunities to support student learning, and contributes to the profession.**			
Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level	**Level III** Level III is the expected level of performance	**Level II**	**Level I**
The teacher continually engages in a high level of professional growth and application of skills and contributes to the development of others and the well-being of the school and community. (Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.)	The teacher consistently exhibits a commitment to professional ethics and the school's mission, participates in professional growth opportunities to support student learning, and contributes to the profession.	The teacher inconsistently supports the school's mission or seldom participates in professional growth opportunities.	The teacher shows a disregard toward professional ethics or the school's mission or rarely takes advantage of professional growth opportunities
Performance Standard 10: Communication			

Level IV In addition to meeting the requirements for Level	Level III Level III is the expected level of performance	Level II	Level I
The teacher continually uses communication techniques in a variety of situations to proactively inform, network, and collaborate with stakeholders to enhance student learning. (Teachers rated as Level IV continually seek ways to serve as role models or teacher leaders.	The teacher communicates effectively and consistently with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel, and other stakeholders in ways that enhance student learning.	The teacher inconsistently communicates with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel or other stakeholders or communicates in ways that only partially enhance student learning.	The teacher inadequately communicates with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel, or other stakeholders by poorly acknowledging concerns, responding to inquiries, or encouraging involvement.

The teacher communicates effectively with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel, and other stakeholders in ways that enhance student learning.

Source: Georgia's Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (2016).

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

1. In which ways has edTPA impacted you and your first year classroom teaching?

2. Describe methods you use to teach your students.

3. How have your edTPA assessment results reflected your knowledge and ability about teaching?

4. What were your first year TKES assessment results like?

5. How have your edTPA performance results reflected your teaching readiness as indicated by your edTPA assessment results?

6. Any other thoughts you would like to share with me?