

# **Making the Case for Becoming a Teacher: Closing the Parity Gap in Recruitment**

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Colleges of Education are witnessing a decline in elementary teacher preparation programs creating an urgent need to recruit students. Part of these efforts means initiating recruitment efforts in junior and high schools. Included in these recruiting efforts is work around changing the narrative around teaching as a potential career. Here we share working with junior high school students to examine their perceptions of teachers in order to work towards closing the parity gap with recruiting efforts.

## **Introduction**

The state of the teaching profession is in dire straits. While for decades, there has been a shortage of mathematics and science teachers, we are now seeing a need for a call to action to recruit elementary teachers. Colleges of Education across the country are asking for all hands-on deck from stakeholders to hit the ground to recruit potential elementary teacher candidates due to a decreasing enrollment (García & Weiss, 2019).

Popular media, as well as academics, have popularized the idea that students must be prepared for the jobs and careers of the future that do not yet exist (Elmes, 2017; Kruegar, 2017). While that is most likely accurate, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2019) showed that the profession of teaching is projected to continue adding jobs for the next ten years, if not beyond. As many students begin to contemplate future career options before they even enter high school, it is important to consider students' perceptions of the field of teaching (Akos, Konold & Niles, 2004; Association of Career and Technical Education, 2017). Those perceptions may have a potentially significant impact on educational choices

throughout high school and early undergraduate schooling (Cohen, Palumbo, Rambur & Mongeon, 2004). To illustrate this point, many middle schoolers say they wish to pursue careers such as doctor, pro athlete, veterinarian, engineer, as well as teacher. Yet, this desire does not seem to be translating to enrollment in colleges of education (Adams, 2015).

As we consider recruitment strategies, we have to consider the nature of the field of education and the perceptions around being an elementary teacher. Teacher preparation programs are experiencing a drastic drop in enrollment and continually fight for funding (Partelow, 2019). Elementary teacher preparation programs haven't evolved and are notably unchanged (Chard, 2013). The teaching profession has been fighting for better pay, benefits, and working conditions (Partelow, 2019). These facts further impact how society views teaching and teacher preparation. Many students who enter elementary teacher preparation hold beliefs about teaching and their ability to teach based on their success as students during their elementary school years (Lortie, 1975; Pajares, 1992). Most of the population believe that they could teach elementary school or that preparation to become an

elementary school teacher is not rigorous (LaMonica, 2015).—These are two variables that have to be taken into consideration when recruiting. The focus of this paper is on the second consideration: working to change perceptions of teaching in order to recruit. As teaching will continue to be a viable employment option for the foreseeable future, it is important to understand how the profession is viewed and understood by potential future teachers, specifically junior and high school students.

### **The Face of Elementary Teaching**

Elementary teachers make up one third of the entire teaching profession (Haddix, 2017; Ingersoll, Merrill, & Stuckey, 2018; Ingersoll, Merrill, Stuckey, & Collins, 2018). The elementary teaching force is predominantly white and female. This teaching demographic has remained stagnant despite the ever-increasing diverse student body. While there has been an increase in the number of teachers of color, the elementary teaching force still does not adequately represent the student demographics (Carter et al., 2019; Ingersoll, et al., 2018; Sutchter, 2016). As we consider recruitment, we must consider demographics and work to increase the number of males and teachers of color. There are numerous benefits for students of color taught by same race teachers; these include student achievement, pursuing higher education, and goal attainment (Partelow, 2019). When the teaching force is representative of the population, junior and high school students will more likely see themselves pursuing this career option (Matshabane, 2016; Sleeter, 2008)

### **Parity Gap**

When contemplating future careers, junior and high school students continue to

disregard teaching as viable career option when compared to other known options. The lack of consideration for teaching as a promising career among junior and high school students reveals a career parity showing that education is not equally considered as evidenced by the significant decline in the number of high school students interested in the teaching field (ACT, 2014). Additionally, males and students of color have less interest in pursuing teaching certification (ACT, 2014). We know that teacher candidates pursue a career in teaching based on four influences: family, teacher, peer, and experiences with teaching (Schutz, Crowder, & White, 2001). These influences are part of the problem when teaching is painted in a negative light as noted by the teacher strikes and working conditions (García & Weiss, 2019).

### **Theoretical Framework**

As we consider recruiting junior and high school students to pursue the teaching profession, we ground the work within the social cognitive framework. The mere act of being a student and going to school is a critical influence on students' perceptions of the people and structures involved (Hartup, 1979). Students are “interpreters” of the school phenomenon; they are able to draw quite adequate perceptions of the day to day happenings and the people responsible for orchestrating the experiences. For the current project, we focus on the domain of “person perception” specifically students' knowledge of teaching and teachers (Shantz, 1975). Shantz work has served as the basis for numerous studies examining schooling and student perceptions regarding to schooling and surrounding environments (Cross, Coleman, & Terhaar-Yonkers, 2014; Klein, 1988; Weinstein, 1983). Social cognitive theory remains a relevant framework as it focuses on perceptions and

structures which influence perceptual development.

### Recruiting Efforts

This article details the experience of an elementary education faculty's recruiting efforts. The elementary education teaching preparation program examined in this article was housed at a large public university in the Midwest. Like teacher preparation programs across the United States, the program has experienced decline in enrollment and was charged with creating a recruitment plan. The faculty chose to target junior and high school students with a two-part goal: 1) increase enrollment, and 2) help change the perception of teaching.

To plan their efforts, the researchers used the knowledge gained through conversations of teacher candidates (pre-service) to create an activity which could be modified and enacted with students from elementary age through college. The activity involved reflecting about a memorable teacher in their past and representing it in words or pictures. Those memorable teachers from the past may have had a negative or positive impact. Not surprisingly, many of the teacher candidates choose a teacher from their experience as an elementary student that was critical to them choosing elementary education as a major.

During one semester, the elementary program faculty visited two local high schools and one junior high school. These efforts are often contingent on the amount of time education faculty were given. For the high school visits, faculty were typically given 45 minutes. Those sessions were more of an information session and not a deep dive into examining perceptions. The junior high school visit was different and consisted of an actual teaching hour for two different groups of students within the Family and Consumer Science (FACs) classes being

offered. FACs courses are offered to provide junior high school students with an opportunity to explore possible jobs and careers. The students take an interest inventory, research interesting professions, and are expected to job shadow. The elementary program faculty reached out and coordinated an hour dedicated to the teaching profession.

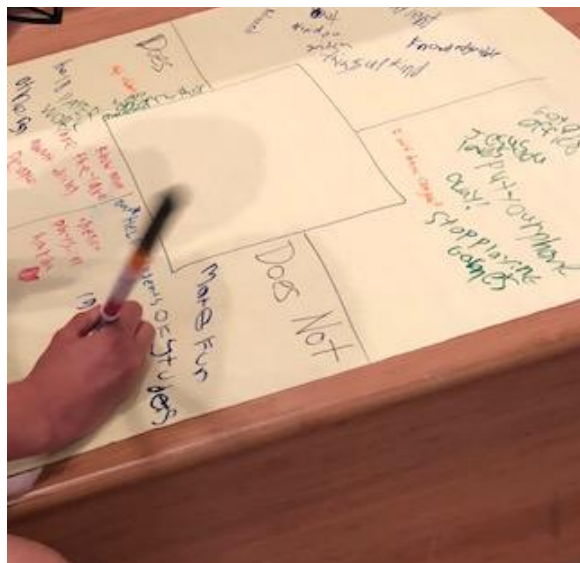
### Data Collection

The data for this project were collected over the course of one day with two groups of students at a rural midwestern junior high school. The two groups totaled approximately 100 students. The elementary program faculty began each hour with a whole group warm-up activity and introductions that included why we became a teacher and our purpose of hoping students would consider teaching as a possibility. After the introductions and warm-up activity, students were expected to work within small groups to develop a *Picture of a teacher*. This activity is congruent with the theoretical framework of person perception. We asked students to create a profile of a teacher (Figure 1) by indicating four quadrants associated with being a teacher. The headings of these four quadrants were as follows: What **IS** a teacher? What do teachers **SAY**? What **DOES** a teacher do? What a teacher **DOES NOT** do? In each of the four quadrants, the students identified and recorded the key elements of a teacher according to their group. Each group wrote out the key elements, but one group also chose to include additional hand-drawn images in their descriptive quadrants along with the text. Following the completion of the four quadrants, students were asked to draw an *Image of a Teacher*. The *Images of a Teacher* are a combination of hand-drawn images and additional text, often in

the form of labels or titles meant to improve the understanding of the drawn image.

Figure 1

### *Image of a Teacher*



### **Analyzing Images of a Teacher**

The analysis of school-age student drawings has a long history. Charles Darwin in observations of his own child incorporated drawing into his long-term observational record (Ganesh, 2011). The concept for this analysis draws on an earlier silo of image research started by Margaret Mead and Rhoda Métraux examining the idea of what constituted a scientist in their *Image of the Scientist* project (Mead & Métraux, 1957). Drawing on Mead and Métraux's work, Chambers (1983) developed a *Draw a Scientist Test* (DAST) which formalized the analysis of image evaluation and also spawned numerous iterations, including many teacher related tests (Sinclair, Szabo, Redmond-Sanogo, & Sennette, 2013; Thomas, Pedersen & Finson, 2001; Ozel, 2012). The initial test developed by Chambers focused on the images alone, but subsequent interpretations

for the DAST have incorporated the other elements found in the drawings (Kliegr, Chandramouli, Nemrava, Svatek & Izquierdo, 2008).

Kliegr et.al (2008) found that the use of additional textual data sources aid in data triangulation process when using the *Draw-a-profession* Test. The use of open-ended prompts throughout the *draw-a-teacher* activity further serves to enhance the understanding of the drawing by adding additional nuance and depth (Thomas et al, 2001). To aid in the textual analysis, the researchers categorized the student responses into four groups corresponding to the four prompts/ quadrants provided to students for the activity. The coding of the accompanying text was done using sentiment analysis. The intent of sentiment analysis is “identifying positive and negative opinions, emotions, and evaluations (Jain & Nemade, 2010, p. 12). To increase the credibility and reliability of sentiment analysis the researchers conducted independent analysis rating each of the phrases independently before comparing results. In the few cases of disagreement, the researchers discussed their position and came to a mutually agreed upon rating. It is important to note the student images and text were not rated on their quality or level of detail, merely their “opinion, emotion, evaluation, stance, speculation” (Jain & Nemade, 2010, p. 348).

### **Student Views of Beliefs about Teachers and Teaching**

Similar to the DAST, students were given very little information about what needed to be included in their descriptions and pictures of teachers. Students were asked to complete the four quadrants as well as the picture in the center. A majority of student groups worked through the four quadrants before spending their remaining

time creating an image of a teacher. For some groups, the quadrant responses supported their central image of a teacher.

### **What IS a teacher?**

There were 117 unique responses to this prompt (Table 1). A majority of those responses (n=100; 85.5%) were interpreted by the researchers as positive in connotation or intent. Examples of the most frequent responses included: *funny*, *kind*, and *patient*. Although most responses shared similar focus on personal connections, there were a number of examples that highlighted a specific skill or knowledge for example, *knowledgeable* or *helps prepare students for the future*. A number of student groups also highlighted elements that were interpreted as negative (n=9; 7.7%). Examples of negative views of teachers included phrases: *waste of time*, *annoying*, and *boring*. Finally, there were a small number of phrases interpreted as being neutral (n=8 or 6.8%) such as one group who felt a teacher is *chill*.

### **What do teachers SAY?**

There were a number of differences between what a teacher is and what a teacher says. There were 92 unique responses recorded and analyzed. Unlike the other three categories which tended to be more description based, students' responses warranted the need to create a fourth classification. Along with the usual positive, negative, and neutral sentiment classification, the researchers agreed to make a fourth category titled "tone". When considering what is said, it is also important to consider *how* it was stated. An example of this would be the phrase "get to work", it is conceivable to imagine situations where students may interpret this phrase in a negative as well as positive way. Overall, the majority of phrases that teachers say (n=36; 39.1%) were interpreted as positive. The second largest category was phrases

interpreted as negative (n=23; 25%). Phrases dependent on tone made up the next group (n=18; 19.6%). Neutral phrases made up the smallest group (n=15; 16.3%) following the analysis.

### **What DOES a teacher do?**

Students had very specific insights to what a teacher does. There were 90 recorded responses from the student groups. Of those responses, 62 (68.9%) were coded as having a positive sentiment, 11 (12.2%) were considered *negative*, and 17 (18.9%) were considered neutral.

### **What a teacher DOES NOT do?**

Finally, students were asked for things that a teacher does not do. This resulted in a number of imaginative responses, such as eat kids, but along with the silly responses there were many thoughtful responses. In total, there were 88 responses. Of those responses, 71 (80.7%) were coded as having a positive sentiment, 10 (11.4%) were considered negative, and 7 (8.0%) were considered neutral.

### **Draw a Teacher**

There were fifteen *Images of a Teacher* collected. Those images showed a range of interpretations of teachers. The images can be loosely categorized into four major groups: traditional interpretation of what constitutes a teacher, drawings of actual teachers from the host site, abstract interpretations of teachers, and simple image (stick figure, large question mark). Examining across groups, the most common representation of a teacher presented as female (Figure 2). There were also a number of teacher images that presented as male, but in those cases the image was of a male teacher the students actually knew. The images of female presenting teachers, with

Table 1  
Student Responses

What IS a teacher?	What does a teacher SAY?	What does a teacher DO?	A teacher DOES NOT....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a friend</li> <li>• a good listener</li> <li>• A Helpful person</li> <li>• a person you look up to</li> <li>• A resource</li> <li>• a student</li> <li>• active</li> <li>• an influencer</li> <li>• beautiful</li> <li>• Caring (x4)</li> <li>• chill</li> <li>• civil</li> <li>• comforting (most of the time)</li> <li>• cool</li> <li>• creative</li> <li>• dope</li> <li>• easy to talk to</li> <li>• easy-going</li> <li>• empathetic</li> <li>• Engaging (x2)</li> <li>• Entertaining (x2)</li> <li>• exciting</li> <li>• Friendly (x2)</li> <li>• fun / Funny (x8)</li> <li>• good person</li> <li>• good with kids</li> <li>• happy and loving their job</li> <li>• Helpful (x4)</li> <li>• Honest (x2)</li> <li>• Inspiring (x2)</li> <li>• interactive</li> <li>• Kind (x6)</li> <li>• knowledgeable</li> <li>• laid-back</li> <li>• learn stuff</li> <li>• loving</li> <li>• Nice (x3)</li> <li>• not afraid to switch things up</li> <li>• not crackhead energy</li> <li>• optimistic</li> <li>• organized</li> <li>• outgoing</li> <li>• passionate</li> <li>• Patient (x4)</li> <li>• perfect (sometimes)</li> <li>• relatable</li> <li>• Relaxed (x2)</li> <li>• Respectful (x2)</li> <li>• Responsible (x3)</li> <li>• Role-model</li> <li>• Safe (x2)</li> <li>• second parents</li> <li>• Smart (x3)</li> <li>• someone who helps you</li> <li>• someone who prepares children for the future</li> <li>• someone who's always there</li> <li>• someone you can trust</li> <li>• supportive</li> <li>• there for all of the students</li> <li>• thoughtful</li> <li>• trusting of kids</li> <li>• Understanding (x4)</li> <li>• xD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Don't give up"</li> <li>• "Good job" (x2)</li> <li>• "How are you"</li> <li>• "It's okay"</li> <li>• "Keep up the good work DAWG"</li> <li>• "Let's listen to music"</li> <li>• "Let's work on that"</li> <li>• "nice 100% dude"</li> <li>• "nice job _____"</li> <li>• Asks questions</li> <li>• encouraging things</li> <li>• good job (x4)</li> <li>• good morning</li> <li>• have a good day/weekend (x2)</li> <li>• helpful and nice things (x3)</li> <li>• how was today</li> <li>• I'm here to help</li> <li>• jokes</li> <li>• nice words (x2)</li> <li>• "no" when needed</li> <li>• nothing with negative intention</li> <li>• says creative things</li> <li>• Screams YES with about 300x!</li> <li>• stories</li> <li>• uplifting things</li> <li>• ur cool</li> <li>• ur smart</li> <li>• Words of encouragement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allow water</li> <li>• ask questions</li> <li>• be honest</li> <li>• care about each individual</li> <li>• care about people</li> <li>• care for students</li> <li>• connects with the students</li> <li>• encourage students to be better</li> <li>• encouraging things</li> <li>• engages in conversations</li> <li>• everything for the students</li> <li>• explain what they're doing/teaching</li> <li>• explains things well</li> <li>• explains topics</li> <li>• form relationships</li> <li>• freedom</li> <li>• fun lessons that students can learn life lessons from</li> <li>• fun projects</li> <li>• get us to listen to the lesson by making it fun</li> <li>• gets graded work in on time</li> <li>• gets to know you</li> <li>• give students support</li> <li>• give u breaks</li> <li>• give you 100% sometimes</li> <li>• give you freedom</li> <li>• good things</li> <li>• have an open mindset</li> <li>• have different/fun ways of learning</li> <li>• have good music</li> <li>• help children understand lessons</li> <li>• help kids</li> <li>• help others</li> <li>• help others w/ their problems</li> <li>• help students</li> <li>• help you when you don't get it</li> <li>• helpful</li> <li>• helps you find your hobbies</li> <li>• hold you accountable (100%)</li> <li>• interactive with students</li> <li>• keeps kids safe</li> <li>• know what they are doing</li> <li>• knows their students</li> <li>• learns new ways to educate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• abuse students</li> <li>• bad things</li> <li>• bite</li> <li>• bring their personal beliefs into the classroom</li> <li>• brings students down</li> <li>• bully</li> <li>• bully students</li> <li>• cheat</li> <li>• create a dictatorship</li> <li>• cuss (unless on accident)</li> <li>• cuss at students</li> <li>• date students</li> <li>• disrespect kids</li> <li>• do beer</li> <li>• do drugs</li> <li>• do poot</li> <li>• downgrade students</li> <li>• eat dog</li> <li>• eat kids</li> <li>• favorite certain kids</li> <li>• favors certain students</li> <li>• fight students</li> <li>• flip students off</li> <li>• get off topic (unless all work is done)</li> <li>• has little patience</li> <li>• hate training</li> <li>• have favorites</li> <li>• Hit (x2)</li> <li>• hit w/ book</li> <li>• ignore kids (x4)</li> <li>• inflict physical harm</li> <li>• judge (sometimes)</li> <li>• keep things</li> <li>• let kids hit their juul</li> <li>• Let students fail</li> <li>• let you fail</li> <li>• let you fail and lose hope</li> <li>• lie</li> <li>• make fun of students</li> <li>• Make most children cry</li> <li>• make students feel lower</li> <li>• mind you to be on phone if you get work done</li> <li>• not teach</li> <li>• pick favorites</li> <li>• put people down</li> <li>• racist!</li> <li>• ruin your day</li> <li>• say bad words</li> <li>• say mean words</li> <li>• say you can't accomplish things in life</li> <li>• scream</li> <li>• speak down</li> <li>• steal</li> <li>• sting</li> <li>• student affair</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a person</li> <li>• alive</li> <li>• chill</li> <li>• not dead</li> <li>• person</li> <li>• short</li> <li>• Someone who educates</li> <li>• structured</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Explain your answer"</li> <li>• "Rats" - Mr. McClain</li> <li>• "Send it brother"</li> <li>• "turn to page 36"</li> <li>• <math>(x^2-x^1)/(y^2-y^1)</math></li> <li>• [the actual quadratic equation]</li> <li>• An l oop</li> <li>• did you complete the homework</li> <li>• go make a copy</li> <li>• no dumb questions</li> <li>• quadratic equation</li> <li>• try again</li> <li>• who finished the assignment</li> <li>• <math>y=mx+b</math></li> <li>• <b>you need to fix this **</b></li> <li>• <b>"2 minutes, twooo minutes!" **</b></li> <li>• <b>"find another answer _____" **</b></li> <li>• <b>"You can do better" **</b></li> <li>• <b>bad teacher jokes **</b></li> <li>• <b>do your homework **</b></li> <li>• <b>get to work **</b></li> <li>• <b>Jesus loves you **</b></li> <li>• <b>keep your eyes on your own paper **</b></li> <li>• <b>look at the board **</b></li> <li>• <b>no **</b></li> <li>• <b>pay attention **</b></li> <li>• <b>put your phone away **</b></li> <li>• <b>put your phones away **</b></li> <li>• <b>raise your hand **</b></li> <li>• <b>spit out your gum **</b></li> <li>• <b>stop playing games **</b></li> <li>• <b>study **</b></li> <li>• <b>take out your airpods **</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruh</li> <li>• give homework</li> <li>• gives tests</li> <li>• lesson plans</li> <li>• makes you think/work hard</li> <li>• pApER WORK</li> <li>• plays epic jazz</li> <li>• stays after hours</li> <li>• talk a lot</li> <li>• Teach (x3)</li> <li>• teach grammar</li> <li>• teach on the board</li> <li>• teach people things</li> <li>• teaches new skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ["Teach" is crossed out]</li> <li>• allow disruptions</li> <li>• do homework</li> <li>• give answers</li> <li>• give homework</li> <li>• have a gender</li> <li>• tell us about death</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Neutral (Tone = **)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a teacher is an authoritative figure that is supposed to teach important aspects of life and significant tools for the future</li> <li>• a waste of time</li> <li>• annoying</li> <li>• boring</li> <li>• bossy</li> <li>• eh</li> <li>• gets off topic during speeches</li> <li>• obnoxious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "May you?"</li> <li>• (name removed) go out in the hall</li> <li>• bad job</li> <li>• blah</li> <li>• detention</li> <li>• don't be stupid</li> <li>• gimme ur phone (x2)</li> <li>• go to the hall</li> <li>• go to the office (x3)</li> <li>• I don't know, can you?</li> <li>• if you have a problem you could talk to (assistant principal)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banish your phone</li> <li>• discipline</li> <li>• give a lot of homework</li> <li>• give homework</li> <li>• give homework without class time to finish</li> <li>• gives you homework</li> <li>• have thick legs</li> <li>• keeps up w/ piping hot TEA SIS</li> <li>• makes students cringe internally</li> <li>• not exist</li> <li>• take your phone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allow food</li> <li>• allow phones</li> <li>• care what students say</li> <li>• care what's happening in the classroom</li> <li>• doesn't help students</li> <li>• follow their own rules</li> <li>• give you food/let you eat</li> <li>• help you</li> <li>• let you have fun</li> <li>• reassign grades</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Negative</b></p>			

one exception, were anonymous. Finally, those abstract images were insects (spider or bee) and a troll. The insects were positively identified by the students, whereas the troll was drawn in reference to what constituted a bad teacher. There were also things not observed in the student illustrations that are worth noting. Not one image specifically showed a teacher as a person of color. Many of the drawings were simple, even as simple as stick people, but the students did have a full complement of colors available to them for this project, meaning had they wanted to

represent a person of color, in an abstract or concrete way they could have done so. Also, contrary to many images commonly associated with the *Draw a Teacher Test (DAT)*, only one of the fifteen images positioned the teacher at the front of a classroom with a board at their back and students, in desks or on the floor, in front of them.

This outcome was both interesting and noteworthy, as it contradicts the notion concept developed by Lortie (1975) known as *apprenticeship of observation*. The basic

tenet of Lortie's work was that students spend nearly their entire schooling

Figure 2

*Examples of Female Teacher*



experience acculturating themselves to the dominate way to teach, namely students as audience members and teacher as performer on the proverbial stage (Smagorinsky & Barnes, 2014).

### Findings

The use of prompts was meant to allow students the opportunity to consider what constitutes a teacher at multiple conceptual levels. The most general of the prompts was the first one which asked "What IS a teacher." From the overwhelmingly positive responses it can be assumed that students have a positive view of the teaching in general. It is also possible to see that many things that make an individual a *teacher* are actually not a specific knowledge, but rather a way of relating to students. Channeling results further toward a specific vision of teaching, the questions about what a teacher

**DOES** and **DOES NOT** allowed students to draw on their own experiences with teachers. This personalization is evident in a number of responses that are specific to individual students or the teacher they were describing. For the first time, students positioned themselves closer to the teacher. Instead of more abstract traits of a teacher, such as *respectful* or *caring*, students describing what a teacher does or does not do were more specific, for example, *get us to listen to the lesson by making it fun*. It is worth noting that as the association to a specific teacher(s) become more realistic the amount of positive sentiments decreased from 85.5% down to 68.9% (DOES) and 80.7 (DOES NOT).

The final narrowing of the vision of teaching came when students were asked to describe what a teacher SAYS. By asking students to identify what teachers say, it forced students to identify specific (either real or in the media) examples associated with teachers speaking. It is at this point conceptually where the image (or language) of a teacher flips from positive to negative. Only 39.9% of the things students recorded as things teachers say were considered positive. This finding is disappointing in that more students recorded negative language of teachers. This highlights an area for further research to investigate teacher discourse and student perceptions.

The stereotypical image of a female teacher was not as prominent as expected; regardless, it was still the most common image. The inclusion of numerous male teachers in the drawn images could be attributed to the fact that teachers for the student groups from this study were all male, along with one of the researchers. The fact that male images often were labeled with specific names while female images remained anonymous points to the potential undue influence of male teachers on the final student images. Finally, the abstract



images of teachers point to students' broader view of teachers and teaching. The image of a bee is one that is commonly associated with teachers, similar but to a lesser degree, than apples are associated with teaching. The image of teacher as spider positioned took a top-down view of the classroom, with the spider being all-seeing over the students. The image of the teacher as troll is probably best understood as a direct interpretation, pointing to the type of interaction experienced with a *bad* teacher.

### Implications for Recruitment

Sharing this recruitment effort and analysis of the junior high school students' perceptions of teachers, provides insights as we move forward in recruiting and preparing future teachers. First, it is important to spend time with junior and high school students in portraying teaching as a possible field. This is essential in closing the parity gap of chosen fields that these students might pursue. Flick (1990) found that exposure to stereotype non-conforming scientists changed the post intervention drawing. Flick's study showed how merely exposing students to scientists presenting as female over the course of a month-long interaction increases the likelihood of the number of female scientists drawn. It is therefore appropriate to assume that similar exposure to a diverse assortment of teachers and teacher types would have similarly positive outcomes on student perceptions about the profession of teaching.

The population of teachers in schools is not diversifying at the same rate as student populations. With stubbornly homogeneous teacher populations, the task of illustrating the multitude of teacher identities needed in education falls to universities. Recruiting and awareness efforts undertaken by Colleges of Education could do well to highlight the potential opportunities in

education by ensuring that faculty and staff from non-dominant teaching populations are given the opportunity to work on these recruiting and awareness efforts. Students who see their identities represented in the classroom are more likely to view that career as a viable future option. In addition, an increasingly diverse student population highlights the need for an increasingly diverse teacher population.

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