The Effect of Faculty Professional Beliefs About the edTPA on Program Change and Student Performance

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Abstract

The edTPA Teacher Performance Assessment was recently implemented at a regional public university to replace the previous paper-and-pencil evaluation of candidates' teaching effectiveness. To determine the teacher educators' professional beliefs toward using the edTPA as an assessment of readiness to teach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 17 full-time teacher educators from 11 content areas after 2 full implementations of the edTPA. Qualitative findings consisted of themes related to both positive and negative professional beliefs toward the edTPA as an assessment instrument, as well as positive professional beliefs resulting in curriculum and program revisions. Quantitative findings regarding faculty professional beliefs affecting candidate scores on the edTPA showed no significant association. The most significant finding of this study was that faculty had more positive than negative professional beliefs toward the edTPA implementation.

Keywords: edTPA, teacher performance assessment, faculty beliefs, education policy

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Introduction

As the country looks to educator preparation programs (EPPs) to improve the nation's teaching force, teacher educators must be able to objectively document candidates' teaching effectiveness and how these candidates impact PK-12 student learning. While EPPs continue to create innovative programs to teach future teachers "state of the art" methods of delivering content to students, the concern for teacher performance has followed the national standards movement to hold educators and schools accountable for student achievement (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016). Providing extensive assessment of teacher performance and success is a natural "next step" in the process (Rink, 2013). In the past, assessments for the certification of teachers have mostly been valid and reliable paper-and-pencil tests, but they are not good indicators of practical, "hands-on" teaching performance with students (Stecher, 2010). "Advocates of performance assessment argue that the fixed set of responses in multiple-choice tests (and their cousins, true-false tests and matching texts) are inauthentic" (Stecher, 2010, pg. 2). Performance-based teaching assessments, such as the education Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA), provide extensive video analysis of teaching and self-reflection. As EPPs move toward an accountability-based model of preparing teachers, many programs are turning to performance-based assessments to evaluate their candidates. Although shifting the paradigm within EPPs to a performance-based measure is a slow response to the call by the National Research Council back in 2001 in their publication, *Knowing What Students Know: The Science and Design of Educational Assessment*, it is evident with 41 states consisting of 906 EPPs now implementing the edTPA that the pendulum has shifted (AACTE, 2019).

Our study is located in South Carolina, which does not currently mandate the edTPA as the licensure assessment of candidates (it is currently one of three options). The voluntary shift to the edTPA by our college is somewhat of a reaction to policy

implementation in our neighboring states of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Georgia, all of which have adopted some level of edTPA implementation. Many of our graduates become teachers in those three states. Our college faculty made the decision to use the edTPA for candidate assessment in 2013, and to gradually implement it through: 1) a piloting phase with the middle level and physical education programs, 2) a local evaluation scoring phase in which mentor teachers and teacher educators scored their own students' folios, and then 3) the "higher stakes" national scoring phase through the Pearson online portal system.

In this study, we concentrated on teacher educators at our university and their initial perceptions of, and experience with, the implementation of the edTPA assessment, both during local and national scoring. The specific research questions that guided the researchers were:

1. What were the faculty's positive and/or negative perceptions of implementing the edTPA as a tool for assessing candidate teaching effectiveness in their specific programs?
2. How did the edTPA implementation at our university affect curriculum revision and instruction for preparing candidates within each program?
3. Was there a statistically significant association between faculty professional beliefs toward the edTPA and candidate scores on the edTPA assessment within each program?

Background

Successful teachers are those who know the pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) of their specific content area, or the methods of teaching that are necessary to teach a particular subject area (Park & Oliver, 2008). The edTPA is a content-specific teaching assessment that was created by teacher educators and PK–12 teachers through the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE). The edTPA is currently the most frequently used instrument for assessing candidates' teaching effectiveness, with participating sites in 41 states and the District of Columbia (American Association of Colleges for Teacher

Education, 2019). The instrument is based, in part, on the teacher work sample methodology, which has been a commonly used approach to assess teacher performance for many years (Cooner, Stevenson, & Frederiksen, 2011). The edTPA focuses candidates' attention on these critical skills for beginning teachers: (a) planning for student needs, (b) engaging in purposeful reflection on teaching and on instructional data, and (c) evaluating student learning to inform the next steps of instruction. It is designed to ensure that new teachers are ready to teach on day one (Ressler, King, & Nelson, 2017, p. 119).

Benefits of Using the edTPA. The requirements of the edTPA are based on teaching practices that all teacher candidates should develop. SCALE (2013) cites the following advantages in using the edTPA for the assessment of beginning teachers: (a) it aligns with InTASC, Common Core, and the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards; (b) it was created by teachers and teacher educators from across the country; (c) it is modeled after the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification of veteran teachers; (d) it is subject-specific for 27 different teaching fields; (e) it is scored by the profession; and (f) it has been shown to be a valid and reliable assessment of teaching. The edTPA has also been endorsed by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), the nation's premier professional association for educator preparation (DeMoss, 2017).

One of the major benefits of the edTPA for teacher education programs is found in the resulting candidate data, which may be used to revise program curricula. The edTPA assessment has the potential to provide educator preparation programs with rich and useful data about areas of strength and weakness in preparing future teachers, possibly leading to program improvement (Darling-Hammond, Newton, & Wei, 2013). The format of the edTPA itself, by using video analysis of teaching and structured reflection, provides a model for candidates to use in their beginning years of teaching. Teacher educators in previous research have described the edTPA as a helpful formative assessment of program curriculum that is also very educative for the candidates (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016). DeMoss (2017) affirmed that

video-based reflection on real teaching experiences, planning with student needs in mind, assessment of students' thinking and learning, and engaging students to promote deep thinking are also positive aspects of using the edTPA for assessing candidates. Others have acknowledged that the edTPA clearly assesses good teaching and has the potential to be a quality educative assessment (Ressler et al., 2017).

Concerns About Using the edTPA. As with all types of standardized assessments required for granting teacher licensure, there are concerns about the use of the edTPA in evaluating future teachers. Some critics cite that the teacher education curriculum will become too narrow, focusing on teaching to the test (An, 2017). Others say the cost of implementing this type of assessment with limited budgets will be prohibitive. Another concern is whether the shift toward compliance through high-stakes assessment of new teachers will inhibit creativity, higher-order thinking skills, and culturally relevant pedagogy (Sandholtz & Shea, 2012). Uneasy about the time edTPA takes away from practice teaching, faculty often feel that more time is spent on completing the edTPA versus allowing candidates more reflective teaching time (Bacon & Blachman, 2017). Finally, many teacher educators have expressed dismay over their increased workloads in terms of course time allocations and curriculum changes (Ressler et al., 2017). Even though many positive opportunities have been documented in regard to the use of the edTPA assessment of candidates in all content areas, there are also many challenges documented in the literature that have been experienced by teacher educators that need to be explored.

Methodology

Theoretical Framework

The authors implemented the "inquiry as stance" approach as a framework for the study. This study is similar in design to the Columbia Teacher's College edTPA study a few years ago, in which they also utilized an "inquiry as stance" framework to explore the implementation of the edTPA at their university (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016). This framework—inquiry as stance—was coined in the late 1990s by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999)

and encompasses the practice that "inquiry is more than the sum of its parts" (Dana, 2015, pg. 164), capturing "the ways we stand, the ways we see, and lenses we see through" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, pp. 288-289). As teacher educators, we are involved with the day-to-day applications of curriculum, course content, school placements, and supervision of candidates. Despite the researchers being participants in the setting, the data generated represent practice-based knowledge that is deeply contextualized and meaningful (Ravitch, 2014).

Teacher efficacy is a teacher educator's confidence in his/her ability to help candidates learn how to teach effectively. Previous research has shown that teacher efficacy has an effect on performance (Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012). This prior research would lead one to believe that a teacher educator's negative beliefs about the edTPA assessment would affect their own self-efficacy and the candidates' motivation to perform well on the edTPA assessment. However, it is also possible that there is no association between teacher self-efficacy levels and student academic performance (Ervin Wash, & Mecca, 2010). It may be possible that teacher educators' negative professional beliefs about implementing the edTPA could be overridden by candidates' strong motivation to pass the edTPA as a high-stakes assessment for their licensure. A candidate who is extrinsically motivated looks at the edTPA as something they are required to do in order to receive the reward of licensure, and therefore, their motivation to learn is determined or affected by the modeled behavior of their teacher educators. Did teacher educators' positive or negative professional beliefs have an effect on candidates' performance on the edTPA? This study analyzes practitioner experience and knowledge from our setting to answer this question.

Participants and Data Collection

This study involved a multiple case study approach with both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis to better understand the EPP faculty's professional beliefs toward the edTPA after an initial local scoring implementation, and a subsequent national scoring implementation. Qualitative data were collected over a one-year period (two consecutive spring

semesters), and then compared quantitatively with program mean scores on the edTPA. The authors developed initial research questions about teacher educators' professional beliefs concerning the edTPA, but two other research questions emerged as data collection proceeded. These questions explored how program curricula changed and how EPP faculty beliefs affected candidate performance on the edTPA. The continuing process of changing research questions during the research process is an essential part of exploring the professional beliefs of others (Agee, 2009).

Prospective participants at our university were full-time teacher educators who were required to meet one of three criteria: 1) teaching a methods course or other program course that implements the edTPA, 2) supervising interns who went through the edTPA process in either Internship I (fall only) or Internship II (mostly spring) of the year-long internship, or 3) serving as a program director for one of the teacher education program areas. The participants who were interviewed after the first phase of local evaluation scoring totaled 17 teacher educators (N = 15 females, 2 males; 14 European American, 3 African American) in 11 program areas (art, dance, early childhood, elementary, math, middle level, music, physical education, secondary science, secondary social studies, and special education) within our university. The participants who were interviewed after the second phase of national scoring totaled 14 teacher educators from 11 programs (N = 14 females, 0 males; 11 European Americans, 3 African American); one participant was no longer involved with the edTPA and two participants left the university.

The primary method of data collection was the face-to-face semi-structured interview. The interviews were conducted with programs, but some programs consisted of only one faculty member due to program size.. The interview questions included a combination of 2 demographic questions and 11 questions about curriculum and internships (see Appendix A). Each interviewer was given the charge to use follow-up questions to further explore and probe the participants' responses to ensure depth and clarification. The interviews ranged from 20–60 minutes in length, and were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim by a paid transcriber.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the qualitative data (transcribed interviews) proceeded in several rounds, as follows: 1) reading and rereading of interview transcripts to consider emerging themes and patterns; 2) coding of data according to key themes/patterns found, and 3) data analysis by looking at the frequencies in responses to the interview questions and their variations between participants. To answer the first two research questions, the researchers began with "topical coding," or categorizing common ideas among participants about the edTPA, and then proceeded to "analytic coding," based on whether the teacher educators had positive or negative comments about the implementation of the edTPA (Richards & Morse, 2013). Positive and negative codes were used for analysis because previous research studies revealed that most teacher educators using the edTPA had more negative impressions than positive impressions about its implementation (An, 2017; Bacon & Blachman, 2017; DeMoss, 2017; Ressler et al., 2017).

Quantitative analysis was used to support the interpretation of the associations between professional beliefs to determine if they influence candidates' scores on the edTPA. To answer the third research question, a Pearson product-moment r correlation was computed to assess the association between teacher educators' positive and/or negative professional beliefs and their candidates' mean scores on the edTPA. Given that all variables are continuous and the research questions seek to determine associations between two variables, bivariate correlations using the Pearson r correlation are appropriate (Bertani et al., 2018). Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the value of the correlation coefficient, in which 0.10 to 0.29 represents a weak association, 0.30 to 0.49 represents a moderate association, and 0.50 or larger represents a strong association (Statistics Solutions, 2013).

Findings

In this section, the qualitative findings are included to answer the first two research questions about: 1) teacher educators' positive and negative professional beliefs about the effectiveness of the edTPA implementation in their content-specific programs, and 2) their impressions about how the edTPA has specifically

affected their programs' instruction and curriculum revisions. The qualitative findings may be categorized into these conceptual themes: 1) the overall edTPA effectiveness, 2) the positive edTPA components of video and reflection, academic language, and improved faculty teaching practice, and 3) the negative edTPA aspects such as a lack of focus on class management, no required pre-post testing, and faculty workload and stress. An integrated theme also emerged from the interview data about the teacher educators' positive impressions of how the edTPA had affected their curriculum and instruction.

The quantitative findings are also summarized in this section to answer the last research question about whether there is an association between the teacher educators' positive and/or negative professional beliefs and their candidates' edTPA scores in their content-specific programs. This research question emerged from the interview data, as some of the participants had the assumption that they may have negatively affected their candidates' scores by their own negative professional beliefs. Therefore, the authors have attempted to verify the assumptions of these participants. The main quantitative findings for this research question were: (a) there was little to no association between teacher educators' beliefs and their candidates' scores on the edTPA after both local and national scoring, and (b) the teacher educators had more positive than negative professional beliefs about the edTPA as a performance assessment.

Overall edTPA Effectiveness

Ten of the 11 programs interviewed (91%) after the local scoring phase, and 11 of 11 (100%) after the national scoring phase stated specific positive professional beliefs about the edTPA as an assessment of good teaching practices. The program-level impact was expressed in terms of preparedness, good teaching principles, and high expectations of teaching performance. One teacher educator stated, "The bottom line is: the edTPA is more student-centered than intern-centered, and they are better prepared now than four years ago." Others made statements about the higher order practice that edTPA requires: "I do feel like it is accomplishing 'raising the bar.' It is forcing them to bring together all

of the best practices we have been talking about, and it's making them really try and do their best teaching." Many of the participants stated they thought the edTPA would help their candidates become better teachers when they entered the field because it would help them see a bigger picture of their practice: "We have to remember this isn't just about edTPA, it's also to get them to be good teachers. I do try to stress to my candidates that this is just a tool and we are helping [them] through the logistics."

Positive Professional Beliefs Toward the edTPA

The participants who were supportive of the edTPA as an educative instrument viewed it as: (a) having strong aspects that are not found in paper-and-pencil assessments of teacher effectiveness, (b) providing meaningful data to improve their curricula and programs, and (c) assisting teacher education faculty to improve their own teaching. All of the participants cited at least one component (planning, instruction, assessment, teaching analysis, video, reflection, academic language, content-specific nature) of the edTPA instrument as being a strong aspect of developing teaching effectiveness. However, the teacher educators were the most vocal about viewing these teaching aspects as three strengths of the edTPA instrument: (a) the authentic video documentation of teaching, (b) the constant reflection that leads to an analysis of teaching, and (c) the inclusion and definition of academic language.

Video and reflection components. Regarding the filming of teaching, 7 of 11 programs (64%) after local scoring, and 8 of 11 (73%) after national scoring, mentioned that the video component was the most authentic and valuable aspect of the edTPA process. As noted by one participant, "Because some of our [candidates] will watch a video and they will see all those things they missed and because they have to go back to that video over and over again, they notice some of the [other teaching aspects]." In regard to teaching reflection, 9 of the 11 programs (82%) after both scoring phases indicated the value of their candidates' edTPA reflections. An especially helpful aspect was the candidate's ability to use reflective data to improve their teaching: "They are more reflective because they have stronger data to talk about. I

can say that has helped them be more reflective, be more intentional about their reflections" (Davis & Armstrong, 2018).

Academic language component. Academic language is the verbal and written language used in specific content areas to engage students in learning the content (SCALE, 2018). Academic language is the thread that connects the planning, instruction, and assessment tasks of the edTPA. Eight of the 11 programs (73%) after local scoring, and 7 of 11 programs (64%) after national scoring, specifically cited the importance of their candidates learning about and teaching academic language in their lessons. One teacher educator spoke about the content-specific nature of academic language, and the need to have candidates exposed to the concept of academic language early in their programs: "We added academic language to the introductory and [other] classes to make sure academic language was reviewed in every year of the program. The [candidates] discovered that the cognitive content of physical education IS the academic language of physical education."

Faculty teaching practice. Nine of the 11 programs (82%) after local scoring and 10 of 11 (91%) after national scoring mentioned that the edTPA had improved their own teaching practice in some manner. It was a professional goal for these faculty members to model the best practices of the edTPA for their own candidates. Two of the teacher educators interviewed pointed out, "The edTPA has been helpful to me because it has helped me to improve my own teaching. I have to model edTPA principles – contextual factors to know my students better and using data to inform my own teaching..." and, "I do think that because we have moved to edTPA, I have done a better job of teaching [my candidates] and recognizing that they did not know how to analyze data and make assessment driven instruction." There seems to be considerable evidence from the teacher educators at our university that participating in a performance assessment process results in positive changes in the teacher educators' own practice.

Negative Professional Beliefs Toward the edTPA

Even though the teacher educators in our EPP were supportive of the edTPA as a positive tool for assessing our candidates'

teaching, there were also those who were critical of the edTPA as an instrument, and the additional faculty workload that resulted from its implementation. All of the participants cited at least one component of the edTPA instrument as a weakness, and they felt these weaknesses need to be improved to make the instrument an even more valid measure of teaching effectiveness. There were also reservations expressed about the edTPA's ability to fairly measure some of the attributes. This section will elaborate on our findings about our teacher educators' negative impressions of the edTPA as a candidate culminating assessment.

Class management component. Overall, 7 of the 11 programs (64%) after the local scoring phase, and 4 of the 11 programs (36%) after the national scoring phase, expressed some concern over a lack of emphasis on class management within the edTPA. All of these programs were in the PK–12 content areas (physical education, dance, music, theater, art, etc.), likely because the teaching context in these areas is different from a general education classroom. Even though there is an edTPA rubric focusing on a positive learning environment, one critical aspect of a new teacher's practice is being able to handle class management and student behavior issues. One teacher educator noted, "I don't know that [the edTPA] really addresses the classroom environment so much. The overall environment, and teaching that part of it. Some of that comes from experience." Another teacher educator stated, "It also misses classroom management, which includes both the organization of the [learning] tasks as well as student behavior management." Another PK–12 teacher educator remarked,

> One of the hardest things for them is classroom management initially, so they have to manage those 40 students. It's like, "Oh, I don't know if I could do that," and we are asking them to do that and they are just learning.

These three teacher educators went on to discuss the value of making classes safe physically and emotionally, as the edTPA requires. However, they were perplexed that explicit accountability for class management is assumed, and not required, by the edTPA instrument.

Pre-post testing component. In regard to the important

practice of pre-testing to determine students' prior knowledge and experience with the content, 9 of 11 (82%) programs after local scoring, and 6 of the 11 programs (55%) after national scoring, noted the lack of a required pre-post test in the edTPA portfolio was an important omission from the assessment. Candidates are asked to analyze student learning as individuals and as part of a class, but Task 3 does not specifically state to use a pre-post test. In some content areas, the analysis of student learning must be done in more than just the cognitive domain. One teacher educator noted,

> I think one thing that it overlooks is the pre and post assessment idea, providing data about where your students are before and plan instruction to teach where they are and then showing growth at the end from the pre to post. It doesn't do that.

Faculty workload. Six of 11 programs (55%) after local scoring, and 7 of 11 programs (64%) after national scoring, reported that the impact of the edTPA implementation on faculty workloads and class time allocations was substantial, and for the most part, not compensated. One teacher educator remarked about the increased workload, "My two sections of [methods] took three times the amount of work and workload and grading and prep and everything else." In regard to the initial attempts at edTPA implementation, a participant noted, "We were all in shock. Basically, we didn't know what truck had hit us. We just said 'alright, we don't have a choice in this, we've got to get it done.' I was just totally freaked out by it." Teacher educators at our institution attended edTPA conferences and workshops, and they trained to be local scorers, which all took professional time outside of the work place to accomplish. In addition, teacher educators were asked to become local scorers to familiarize themselves with the edTPA; several mentor teachers in all content areas, and all teacher educators and administrators were trained by the edTPA pilot faculty to be local scorers.

Faculty stress. Eight of the 11 programs (73%) after local scoring, and 9 of the 11 programs (82%) after national scoring, specifically stated that the edTPA implementation had caused professional and personal stress. The stress was a result

of experiencing change and wanting their candidates and their programs to do well on the edTPA assessment, even though it was not yet consequential by state requirements. One participant expressed frustration with not having time to have a personal life, "I think decisions are made without a lot of considerations for what faculty are actually experiencing and the stress it creates in faculty. Seriously, I have no life. So many times, literally that's what I do all weekend every weekend." The weaknesses of the edTPA as an instrument, as well as increased faculty workloads, have all contributed to a negative impression of the edTPA as an assessment by the study's participants.

Curriculum and Program Change

To answer the second research question about how the edTPA implementation affected curriculum revision and instruction within each program, all 11 EPP programs (100%) after both local and national scoring, mentioned the value of the curriculum changes they made in the areas of: (a) adding or changing a seminar course with the internship, (b) revising the lesson plan format for their programs, or (c) revising their content-specific methods courses. All EPP programs backward-mapped their curricula specifically to address the edTPA implementation, which improved communication between faculty in programs: "It has forced the issue of talking about some curricular alignment… and getting deeper on some curriculum matters. We were better able to talk about the steps to get there." Not only was it important for faculty to talk about the program changes, but it was important to them to base those decisions on their candidate data from the edTPA, which also modeled one of edTPA's best practices: "I would say that the [curriculum] changes came from looking at the interns' edTPA data. We scored very low on Task 3 for most semesters, so our faculty decided to infuse more about assessment in all of the program courses." Another teacher educator emphasized the practice of backward-mapping the principles and processes of the edTPA into her program's curriculum, "We've definitely done program mapping, kind of backwards from senior year. We've redeveloped all of our methods courses. Our assignments now have the [academic] language embedded. We actually added two

new courses solely based on edTPA." The extensive program change done by the faculty as a result of program assessment data represented one of the effective teaching practices within the edTPA assessment instrument. The interpretation of edTPA results to inform our program revisions was also a crucial step for program accreditation.

Professional Beliefs and Candidate Scores

To address the third research question, the quantitative data in Tables 1 and 2 were used to determine if there was an association between the teacher educators' professional beliefs and the candidate scores on the edTPA. Having reviewed the raw comment data garnered from the interviews with faculty using a simple correlation, there was no association found between positive beliefs and program mean scores after the local evaluation scoring phase ($r = -.323$, $n = 11$, $p = .333$) and after the national evaluation scoring phase ($r = -.073$, $n = 10$, $p = .841$); these results are not significant at $p < .05$. Therefore, neither faculty positive or negative professional beliefs toward the edTPA appear to directly impact the student outcomes on this key performance assessment.

Table 1
Relation of Teacher Educators' Positive Beliefs and Candidates' Local edTPA Scores

Program Area	Program edTPA (Mean Score)	Sample (N)	Positive Beliefs (Raw Score)	Negative Beliefs (Raw Score)
ARTE	53.20	N=10	28	14
SPED	53.18	N=24	13	5
ELEM	53.08	N=34	20	18
SCIE	52.38	N=4	24	7
MATH	52.00	N=4	24	14
DANC	50.50	N=6	15	16
SCST	48.80	N=5	16	11
ECED	48.46	N=41	20	24
MUSC	46.30	N=10	17	10
MLED	45.71	N=14	54	21
PETE	43.78	N=9	23	8
All Programs	49.44	N=161	254	148

Table 2
Relation of Teacher Educators' Positive Beliefs and Candidates' National edTPA Scores

Program Area	Program edTPA (Mean Score)	Sample (N)	Positive Beliefs (Raw Score)	Negative Beliefs (Raw Score)
SPED	48.21	N=24	23	13
ELEM	48.21	N=28	50	45
MUSC	47.00	N=10	32	28
DANC	47.00	N=1	16	21
ARTE	46.78	N=9	22	19
SCST	45.40	N=5	26	17
ECED	45.21	N=38	18	27
MLED	43.50	N=16	48	21
PETE	42.86	N=9	36	17
MATH	42.20	N=5	23	21
SCIE	------	N=0	34	13
All Programs	45.64	N=145	328	242

Note. The SCIE program had no graduating candidates during this semester of national scoring.

To illustrate this lack of association between teacher educators' professional beliefs and the candidate scores on edTPA, in national scoring, the elementary (ELEM) program had the highest positive (50) and negative comments (45), but also had the highest national score mean (48.21). Therefore, the negative beliefs of ELEM faculty did not appear to impact student outcomes. The dance (DANC) program had the least amount of positive comments (16), but had the third highest overall national score mean (47) out of the 10 programs. This, too, appears to uphold the absence of a correlation between both positive and negative professional beliefs toward the edTPA impacting student performance.

In reviewing local scoring, there are similar results as found in the national scoring. The art (ARTE) program had the highest overall local mean score (53.2), but only the third highest number of positive comments (28) out of 11 programs. In contrast, the special education (SPED) program has the least amount of both positive (13) and negative (5) comments, but had the second

highest overall local mean out of 11 programs. Local scoring results appear to yield the same null hypothesis as the national scoring data.

Some of the interviews revealed that the faculty, particularly those in the two largest programs, were concerned about how their negative beliefs about the edTPA implementation might affect their students' scores. One program faculty member expressed it like this:

> [Our faculty] asked each other how much of the edTPA stress is because we stress? So we made a conscientious effort to be calm about edTPA. It did not make a difference. The [candidates] were still highly stressed. Whether they were stressed or not, our language was much more focused on bringing that anxiety level down.

In summary, even though the teacher education faculty were very aware of the possibility that their negative beliefs toward the edTPA might affect their students, in this particular study, neither positive or negative perceptions of program faculty toward the edTPA appeared to impede or directly influence overall candidate scores on the edTPA.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to share with others what our teacher education programs learned from the implementation of the edTPA as an assessment for teacher preparedness. The three research questions that guided the researchers were about: 1) teacher educators' initial positive or negative professional beliefs, 2) how the edTPA implementation at our university affected curriculum revision and instruction, and 3) whether there was an association found between faculty professional beliefs toward the edTPA and candidate edTPA scores. Our study reveals substantial answers to the research questions, but these findings also create some additional questions for further research. Percentage ranges provided in this section reflect response percentages over two different interview periods, one interview period following local scoring and the other interview period after national scoring.

In answer to the first research question, the participants in this study had many positive professional beliefs about the edTPA as

an assessment instrument overall. In addition, they were specifically positive about the use of video, the extensive reflection, the teaching of academic language, and the helpful effect on faculty teaching practice. In this study, 64%-73% of the teacher educators mentioned the positive contribution that the video analysis made to analyzing candidates' teaching effectiveness. Previous edTPA research has also found that both faculty and candidates see the video recording of teaching as the most authentic piece of the edTPA (Darling-Hammond et al., 2013; Sato, 2014). The reflection aspect was seen by 82% (both interview periods) of the participants as a positive experience. Consistent with results reported by Meuwissen and Choppin (2015), the teacher educators affirmed that candidates writing reflectively and analytically about their teaching helped them to connect their pedagogy to student learning outcomes, and to discuss the implications of their teaching for different kinds of learners. In regard to academic language, 64%-73% of the participants believed that the teaching of academic language was particularly beneficial. They thought candidates should learn how to plan and teach the content-specific academic language within their lessons. (Darling-Hammond et al., 2013). An unexpected finding from this study was that 72%-91% of the teacher educators admitted that going through the process of implementing the edTPA resulted in an improvement in their own teaching. The ability to learn from one's own practice is considered an essential part of effective teaching (An, 2017; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012).

To additionally answer the first research question, the participants in this study discussed their negative professional beliefs about implementing the edTPA. This finding is similar to the edTPA research from the past decade in which most teacher educators have been against the use of the edTPA. Approximately 36%-64% of the teacher educators interviewed for this study had specific negative professional beliefs in regard to a lack of focus on class management. In a study of candidates' impressions of the edTPA in New York, Ressler et al. (2017) discussed the absence of a focus on classroom management in the edTPA: "Another example of the arbitrary defining of good teaching evident in the edTPA is its exclusion of any evaluation of classroom

management" (p. 125). In this study, 55%-82% of the faculty interviewed felt that the lack of a pre-post-test requirement for Task 3 was an oversight of the developers of the edTPA. The EPP faculty perceived the lack of pre-post testing as problematic, particularly because of the need to determine student prior knowledge. "The benefits of exploring the impact on student learning of a pre-study and post-study analysis is no longer possible given the attention that must be devoted to the [other] required edTPA components" (Ressler et al., 2017, p. 131). Also, 55%-64% of the participants referred to an increased faculty workload as a negative aspect of the edTPA. The faculty cited additional workload hours, extra courses taught, and revisions to methods and seminar courses as contributing to the increased faculty workload. In regard to faculty stress, 73%-82% of the teacher educators stated that the logistics of implementing the edTPA were extremely stressful for them. A comment by a social studies researcher parallels these concerns about faculty stress: "Implementing the edTPA has created an environment of stress and confusion in which faculty were stressed, helpless, unhappy" (An, 2017, p. 29).

Data for the second research question on how the edTPA implementation at our university affected curriculum revision and instruction indicated that all 11 programs engaged in collaborative backward-mapping of the curriculum to determine where various edTPA teaching principles would be introduced, as well as redesigning capstone seminar courses. In addition, all programs revised their lesson plan templates to include more sections related to the edTPA (e.g., academic language, student prior knowledge, etc.) and they introduced academic language at earlier stages of the programs. Many teacher educators stated that the edTPA implementation forced programs to discuss alignment of their curricula and courses to better serve the candidates in preparing them to be better teachers as well as navigating the edTPA process. The framework of the edTPA promotes cross-program conversations about curriculum alignment and collaboration (An, 2017). All of the curriculum and program changes were viewed as positive changes to make the programs better in preparing candidates to be able to teach on "Day One."

In regard to the third research question about whether the professional beliefs of the teacher educators affected the edTPA performance of their candidates, there was no significant association found (see Tables 1 and 2). Because previous edTPA research has referred to teacher educators' negative attitudes and resistance toward implementing the edTPA (An, 2017; Bacon & Blachman, 2017; DeMoss, 2017; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012; Sato, 2014), the idea of teacher educators' negative beliefs toward the edTPA adversely affecting their candidates' edTPA performance was a valid theory. We propose that the insignificant results found in regard to teacher educators' beliefs affecting edTPA performance is based on the expectancy theory of motivation. Even though some of the faculty had negative professional beliefs about the edTPA communicated subconsciously to their candidates, the candidates' motivation was to pass the edTPA assessment to achieve licensure. The candidates' motivation to succeed and get the reward of licensure could have overridden the lack of self-efficacy of their program faculty.

The essential finding of our study indicated the teacher educators at our university had more positive than negative professional beliefs of the edTPA as a culminating assessment of readiness to teach (see Tables 1 and 2). This is an important finding because it contradicts most prior research on the edTPA. Previous research confirms the existence of this dichotomy in various forms, but usually with the opposite impressions – more negative impressions than positive impressions (An, 2017; Bacon & Blachman, 2017; DeMoss, 2017; Ressler et al., 2017). One possible explanation for these opposite impressions may be related to the formative context in which the edTPA was implemented in our setting versus the high-stakes, stressful environment created at universities where the edTPA was required by states for licensure. Because our university was voluntarily engaged in implementing the edTPA over a six-year period, it is likely the context played a role in the positive impressions by the faculty. As found during a study about the edTPA implementation at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016), a high-stakes testing environment and a quick timeline motivated curriculum change in their programs, but

it prompted mostly negative faculty impressions of the edTPA (Bacon & Blachman, 2017).

Limitations and Further Research

The limitations of this study should be acknowledged, as the context is one of a regional public university which may not represent other university populations. Our process of studying faculty reactions to the edTPA was narrow, but many of our findings could be transferrable to other institutions who are also trying to navigate the implementation of the edTPA. Also, because the edTPA was phased in over time at our institution voluntarily, and it was not a "high-stakes" assessment at the time of the interviews, our findings and their implications may not be the same as in institutions where the edTPA is extremely "high stakes" and state-mandated.

This study sought to determine and define teacher educators' professional beliefs about implementing the edTPA, and how curriculum and program changes are made as a result. Interview data also led us to explore the relationship of teacher educators' professional beliefs and candidate performance on the edTPA assessment. Future research is needed to clarify candidates' impressions of going through the edTPA process, particularly comparing high-stakes contexts to more formative contexts. Because the present study was done during the initial two years of implementation, longitudinal research over time would provide a more complete understanding of the edTPA's effect on programs and candidates. Finally, questions also arise about how edTPA scores correlate with broader measures of teacher performance, particularly observational ratings by supervisors and mentors. Given the conflicting viewpoints and data from previous research and the current study, it is evident that there is a crucial need for more systematic research on the effectiveness of the edTPA in predicting readiness to teach.

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Appendix A
Interview Protocol and Primary Interview Questions

PROTOCOL: Our research team is working to find out how each teacher education program at [our university] is modifying their curricula to implement the mandated edTPA Teacher Performance Assessment. We are seeking to find the connections between what programs value and what the edTPA seems to value. We would also like to hear your thoughts on the pros and cons of both the edTPA and program-level methods of implementing it into the curriculum.

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1. Can you tell me a little bit about your role at our university as a teacher educator? (Probes: Do you supervise interns in the field? How? What types of courses do you teach here?)
2. What kind of work have you done with the edTPA in the past?
3. Has the edTPA helped to improve your candidates' internship teaching experience? If so, how? If not, why not?
4. Has the edTPA helped to improve your students' professionalism? If so, how? If not, why not?
5. How has the edTPA been helpful to teacher education faculty in your program area?

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6. What does the edTPA do a good job of assessing? What does it miss?
7. What, in your opinion, are the limitations of using the edTPA as an assessment tool? (Probe: Is there anything important about teaching that does not seem to be captured by the edTPA?)
8. What coursework changes have been made in your program as a result of your edTPA implementation?
9. What other curriculum-related changes (e.g., scheduling, faculty workload, teaching assignments, supervision procedures, etc.) have been made as a result of the implementation of the edTPA?
10. Were these coursework changes, or other curriculum changes, designed to help interns pass the edTPA, or were they made in response to intern performance on the edTPA?)
11. What did you see interns learning in the process of doing the edTPA? (Probes: Did interns make any discoveries or develop understandings that you felt were productive for them? Did interns make any discoveries or develop understandings that you felt were counterproductive?)
12. We are really interested in how interns' performance on the edTPA compares with their performance on other program-level measures of teacher readiness. Looking at your interns' performance on the edTPA, what jumps out at you? Were there surprises? What confirmations were there? What have you learned? (Probes: Were there any interns who struggled with academics, internships, or professionalism but did well on the edTPA? Were there interns who struggled in one of these areas and also struggled with a section of the edTPA?)
13. Is there anything you want to talk about, related to the implementation of the edTPA in your program, you haven't had a chance to discuss?

Note. Modified from Columbia Teacher's College edTPA study (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016).