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Susan M. Brookhart
Duquesne University

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A Field-Based Introduction to Urban Education at the Middle School

Susan M. Brookhart
School of Education, Duquesne University

Abstract

Middle school teachers developed objectives and suggested activities for a pilot early field experience to introduce freshman teacher candidates to urban education at the middle school level. This paper presents these objectives and activities plus data about the effects of their use by 15 teachers and 22 freshmen; an additional 30 freshmen placed in a traditional (tutoring) early field experience formed a comparison group. Project freshmen demonstrated higher sense of personal teaching efficacy and flexibility among people in a multicultural setting. In their journals, project freshmen reported more awareness of the urban environment; however, comparison group freshmen were more likely to report a sense of accomplishment. The project experience seems to have provided a "big picture" introduction to urban education, while the traditional experience gave students a taste of success at one small teaching task.

The needs of urban schools have made headlines, prompted national and state funding initiatives, and caused changes in teacher education requirements, especially in the area of multicultural education (Houston & Newman, 1982). School-university collaboration can be a powerful strategy for educational renewal (Sirotnik & Goodlad, 1988). Because of the high priority of both collaboration and urban education in the field at the present time, there is a sizeable descriptive literature on these topics. However, educators are just beginning to develop a research base in these areas. This study contributes to that research base.

Changes in current field experiences are necessary in order to better prepare teachers for urban settings (Meade, 1991). This project had practicing teachers at an urban middle school design objectives and activities to help freshmen at an urban university learn about "understanding what it means to be committed to education," as the principal remarked. The rationale behind this collaborative project was that the teachers' collective expertise was an excellent source for an answer to the question, "What should entering teacher candidates see, do, and learn in an early field experience?" Desired student outcomes included professed willingness or desire to teach in an urban setting, understanding of culturally diverse pupil populations, and appreciation of methods and teaching skills appropriate for urban middle school pupils.

This paper reports on the project's effects. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What objectives and activities did the urban middle school teachers design for the early field experience?
2. What were the (a) level of commitment to teaching, (b) willingness to work in an urban setting, (c) sense of teaching efficacy, and (d) flexibility in a multicultural setting among freshmen who participated in the collaborative program? Did these levels differ from freshmen who participated in the regular field experience, a tutoring assignment in the same district?
3. What learnings/benefits and difficulties/problems did the collaborating teachers report, after the early field experience project, for (a) the participating freshmen, (b) the middle

school pupils, and (c) the teachers themselves? What did the freshmen describe as their learnings and difficulties?

Until the mid-1970s, early field experiences were not very common (Houston & Newman, 1982). Students were not placed in the field until student teaching. Early field experiences are now quite common, both for the professional training they offer and for their usefulness in career guidance. In many places, they are required for licensing the teacher education program. In principle, students can decide whether they really do want to be teachers and can begin to develop professional skills.

But early field experiences differ considerably (Applegate & Lasley, 1983), and the substance of field experience is more important than the length of time spent in the field (McIntyre, Byrd, & Foxx, 1996). School-university collaboration is not as common at the early field experience level as at the student teaching level (Sirotnik & Goodlad, 1988). Therefore, the first research question called for a simple description. It was instructive to find out what successful urban middle school teachers defined as the important "first points" to introduce to freshmen and how they proposed to proceed.

The effects of early field experiences on general attitudes are positive (Samson, Borger, Weinstein, & Walberg, 1984). Preservice teachers expect to gain practical insights and enjoy student contact during early field experiences (Applegate & Lasley, 1983). It is not clear what effects, if any, early field experience has on career choice (Anderson, 1987; Willems, Brown, & Arth, 1982). There is evidence that multicultural content courses effectively change both knowledge about diversity and attitudes toward persons who represent various racial or ethnic groups (Bennett, Niggle, & Stage, 1990).

Two studies reported the effects of school-university collaborative urban teacher training programs at the student teaching level on willingness to teach in an urban setting. McCormick (1990) reported 47% of graduates of one midwestern university who had participated in the Cooperative Urban Teacher Education Program in Kansas City were currently teaching, and 46% of those were teaching in cities of more than 50,000 people. Stallings and Martin (1988) reported that urban Teaching Academy graduates were more likely than comparable graduates of

the regular teacher education program to want to teach in an urban setting. This variable, willingness to teach in an urban setting, is also important at the career choice level and is appropriate to examine in the early field experience.

Sense of teaching efficacy has been included as a variable in this study. There is evidence that teachers who expect their teaching to make a difference in student learning are those who are, in fact, effective teachers (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Teachers who do not believe they can make a difference are not likely to trust students or support student problem-solving, but they are likely to believe that external rewards are necessary to control student behavior (Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990). These beliefs are antithetical to a classroom environment where all students can maintain dignity and develop self-esteem. One reason urban teaching may be difficult is that it is hard to develop a sense of teaching efficacy in the face of urban poverty and alienation. One of the goals of this early field experience was to expose students to committed urban teachers, to help develop commitment and a sense of efficacy among the teacher candidates.

Method

Sample

The urban middle school chosen for this study was selected because it had an enthusiastic teaching staff and principal and a diverse student body, and it was located in an inner-city neighborhood near the university. The school served about 860 students, approximately 60% African-American and 40% white, with a staff of 64 teachers and over 40 administrators and support staff. The investigator secured the commitment of the school principal before beginning the study.

In February, nine teachers and the investigator met for a two-hour workshop. The teachers volunteered to participate in the project and were compensated for their work. All had at least two years of experience at the school. The teachers did brainstorming, then prioritizing, and finally summarizing activities; the results were 3 objectives and 7 suggested activities for 22 freshmen Introduction to Education students who would make 10 2-hour visits (in March and April) to the middle school as part of their assigned course work. These freshmen constituted the project group.

The comparison group consisted of 30 freshmen enrolled in the same Introduction to Education course, who made 10 2-hour visits to other schools in the same urban district, Pittsburgh Public Schools. These students were placed mostly in fourth or fifth grades at elementary schools; the logistics of placement made it impossible to confine the entire cohort of freshmen to middle schools. All of the elementary schools in which the comparison group freshmen were placed had diverse student populations. For their early field experience, comparison group freshmen were assigned to work as tutors at the discretion of the host teacher or principal. Typically, freshmen would be assigned one or two students at a time and given a place in a hallway or empty room. The teacher would provide materials on which the pupils required remediation: stories or text chap-

ters the pupils had difficulty reading, homework or worksheets the pupils could not complete, and the like. The purpose of most of the comparison group's tutoring assignments was to help the pupils keep up or catch up with the class, or at least to make progress in that direction.

This study thus had two samples: (a) 15 middle school teachers, 9 of whom designed the project field experience (8 white and 7 minority, 11 female and 4 male), and (b) 52 freshmen enrolled in Introduction to Education who were assigned a field experience in a large urban school district (51 white and 1 minority, 44 female and 8 male).

Data Sources and Analysis

Data to answer the first research question consisted of the newsprint brainstorm sheets used in the teacher workshop and the summary objectives and activities on which the teachers agreed. The brainstorm session was driven by the questions: "What should entering teacher candidates learn in an early field experience in an urban middle school?" and "What activities and experiences should help them accomplish these objectives?"

Data to answer the second research question included quantitative indicators of (a) level of commitment to teaching, (b) willingness to work in an urban setting, (c) sense of teaching efficacy, and (d) flexibility in a multicultural setting. The freshmen responded to paper-and-pencil surveys before and after their field experience; 50 provided complete enough data for analysis. The commitment and willingness indicators were single items on the Entering Teacher Candidates Survey (Freeman, 1983; West & Brousseau, 1987). The efficacy measures used were two scaled items, measuring general and personal teaching efficacy, respectively, developed by the RAND corporation (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Berman & McLaughlin, 1977; Woolfolk et al., 1990). The measures of flexibility in a multicultural setting were two five-item scales (Flexibility in Instruction and Flexibility with People) developed for this study from the Edwards Personal Preference Scale (Edwards, 1953). Reliability (alpha) for the Flexibility in Instruction scale was .80 for the pretest and .82 for the posttest. Reliability for the Flexibility with People scale was .72 for the pretest and .87 for the posttest. Each of the scaled indicator variables was analyzed with a two-factor, mixed design ANOVA: factors were time (pretest/posttest) and site (project site/other site). Multiple choice indicators were analyzed with chi-square tests of homogeneity by site.

Data to answer the third research question came from verbatim transcripts of audiotaped exit interviews of the 15 middle school teachers and from written field site logs the freshmen were assigned to keep. Content analysis was done by category of comment (learning/benefit or difficulty/problem) and category of reference (teacher, freshman, or middle school pupil), thus forming six cells for analysis. Within these categories, subcategories were developed using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Two researchers, the author and a graduate assistant, coded the data and discussed discrepancies to achieve consensus.

Results

Objectives and Activities

Table 1 shows the objectives and activities the teachers planned. These objectives are notably broad and comprehensive. The teachers were concerned that students experience interpersonal relations with a diverse group of pupils, and they listed this as the first and most important objective. Additionally, they wanted students to be introduced to some instructional, practical, and management concepts. These teacher-written objectives are remarkably similar to the recommendations of Meade (1991) for reshaping the clinical portion of teacher education to better prepare teachers for urban settings.

Table 1

Objectives and Activities Planned by Nine Teachers for introducing Early Field Experience Students to an Urban Middle School

Objectives:

1. The early field experience candidate will recognize the importance of genuine concern for each student as a person and participate in interactions with students.
2. The early field experience candidate will observe the organizational aspects of the school and teaching and the relationship of organization to content area proficiency.
3. The early field experience candidate will have some "hands-on" experience in the classroom, including an orientation to the concept of discipline with dignity.

Suggested Activities (a partial list of things the early field experience candidates might do to achieve these objectives):

1. observe different classes and students in different groups, make anecdotal notes
2. make notes on teacher-student interactions
3. observe an academic class, noting the objective on the board, classroom activities, and student reactions
4. make a list of possible ways to handle discipline in a positive way
5. keep a journal of observations of positive discipline
6. tutor an individual student or a small group
7. assist in the classroom, then get feedback from the teacher and an opportunity to ask questions

What the teachers meant by "organizational" matters were the practical, daily, operational routines: taking attendance, grading, completing paperwork, scheduling, collecting and duplicating materials, etc. What they meant by "hands-on" experience was that the freshmen were to perform some of these functions, not just observe the teacher doing them. These clarifications came from the workshop session.

Outcome Variables

Level of commitment to teaching was high both before and after the field experience for both project and comparison group freshmen (Table 2). No differences were found for site, time, or their interaction.

Table 2

Level of Commitment to Teaching, Project and Comparison Group Students Combined

Item: Which of the following best describes where teaching fits into your current career plans?

Choice	Pretest	Posttest
1. Classroom teaching is the only career I'm considering	19 (40%)	19 (38%)
2. First choice of careers I'm considering	25 (53%)	25 (50%)
3. Has some appeal but not first choice	3 (6%)	3 (6%)
4. I do not intend to become a classroom teacher	0 (0%)	3 (6%)
Total	47	50

Willingness to work in an urban setting was low both before and after field experience for both project and comparison group freshmen (Table 3). There were no differences between project and comparison group responses for either pretest or posttest measures.

Table 3

Willingness to Work in an Urban Setting, Project and Comparison Group Students Combined

Item: Which of the following best describes the school setting in which you would prefer to work?

Choice	Pretest	Posttest
1. Inner city/Urban	4 (9%)	6 (13%)
2. Suburban	27 (60%)	24 (53%)
3. Rural	2 (4%)	2 (4%)
4. No preference	12 (27%)	13 (29%)
Total	45	45

Sense of teaching efficacy was measured with two items (Table 4). Sense of general teaching efficacy was measured by responses to "When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment;" the scale for this item was 1=strongly agree through 5=strongly disagree. Sense of general teaching efficacy was moderately high for both groups and unchanged after the field experience. Sense of personal teaching efficacy was measured by responses to "If I try really hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students;" the scale for this item was 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Sense of personal teaching efficacy was high for both groups. This variable was higher after the field experience for the project group and unchanged for the comparison group, although the statistical significance of this interaction was marginal.

Table 4
Means (Standard Deviations) and ANOVA Results for Sense of Teaching Efficacy

Site	Pre	Post	n
General Teaching Efficacy			
Other	3.89 (.8)	3.89 (1.1)	26
Project	3.74 (.8)	3.79 (1.4)	19
Effect for Site:	F(1,43) = .29		
Effect for Time:	F(1,43) = .02		
Site X Time	F(1,43) = .02		
Personal Teaching Efficacy			
Other	3.96 (.7)	3.89 (1.1)	26
Project	3.74 (.9)	4.16 (1.0)	19
Effect for Site:	F(1,43) = .92		
Effect for Time:	F(1,43) = 1.62		
Site X Time:	F(1,43) = 3.40, p=.07		

Note: Scale: 1=low, 5=high

Flexibility in a multicultural setting was measured with two different summated rating scales (1=never true of me to 7=always true of me) of five items each (Table 5). Flexibility in Instruction items included "I like to try new and different instructional methods," "I like to present the same classroom topics several different ways," and the like. Flexibility with People items included "I like to meet new people in school," "I feel comfortable in classes with people from different ethnic groups," and the like. Flexibility of both kinds was moderate for both groups of freshmen. Flexibility in Instruction rose slightly after field experience, in the same manner for both groups, although this main effect did not reach statistical significance. Flexibility with People rose slightly for project freshmen and dropped slightly for comparison group freshmen. This interaction effect also did not reach statistical significance. Since these effects were in expected and explainable directions and statistical power was low, they will be discussed. Conclusions should be avoided until results can be replicated.

Table 5
Means (Standard Deviations) and ANOVA Results for Flexibility in a Multicultural Setting

Site	Pre	Post	n
Flexibility in Instruction			
Other	25.54 (4.9)	26.81 (5.0)	26
Project	26.11 (4.9)	26.95 (4.4)	19
Effect for Site:	F(1,43) = .08		
Effect for Time:	F(1,43) = 2.11, p=.15		
Site X Time	F(1,43) = .09		
Flexibility with People			
Other	29.69 (4.0)	28.85 (5.8)	26
Project	29.74 (3.9)	30.95 (3.0)	19
Effect for Site:	F(1,43) = .85		
Effect for Time:	F(1,43) = .08		
Site X Time:	F(1,43) = 2.53, p=.12		

Note: Scale: 5=low, 35=high

Reports on the Process and Content of the Project

Teacher interviews. Comments from exit interviews with project teachers are summarized in Table 6. A category is reported if at least three out of 14 teachers made remarks to that effect. One teacher was dropped from the analysis because his interview transcript indicated he was a negative case. He had not implemented the objectives and activities for the program but rather had his students observe his classes. Only two of the remaining 14 teachers did not state directly that the project had merit, and all of the teachers made at least one favorable comment about the freshmen.

Table 6
Teachers (n=14) Report of Benefits and Difficulties of the Urban Middle School Early Field Experience Summary of Categories (and number of teachers reporting)

Learning/Benefits	Difficulties/Problems
For Teachers	
general "good" comments enjoyed helping freshmen begin a career(5)	scheduling (3)
help in class, get more accomplished, e.g. more cooperative learning, more time for other students (5)	one student per teacher (3)
no extra work (4)	more structure (3)
	better match of students to subjects (3)
For Freshmen	
overall "good" experience (12)	overwhelmed by student behavior (5)
conversations with cooperating teacher (6)	too young/ should be junior project (4)
opportunity to grow from "shy" to "comfortable" with setting (6)	too short a time (3)
exposed to "real" situation and variety of experience (4)	
opportunity to show enthusiasm/work (3)	
For Pupils	
achievement up (9)	(none reported)
displaying enthusiasm, asking questions, feeling special (8)	
motivated to turn in work (4)	

The benefits that the project teachers reported for freshmen were related to opportunities to interact with both the teacher and pupils. After a general "good experience" report, the most cited benefits for freshmen were the opportunities to converse with the teacher and opportunities to become comfortable in the setting. The opportunities for interaction with students were so great that five teachers reported their freshmen were overwhelmed at first.

Student logs. Freshman site logs were coded twice, once for what activities students reported doing and once for reflective comments. All of the 30 comparison group freshmen did observation and individual tutoring. Activities reported by project freshmen were more varied and reflected the range of activities listed above. Reflective comments were coded as

learnings/benefits or difficulties/problems for the freshmen; within these categories, particular learnings or difficulties arose as themes in the freshman logs. Table 7 presents a summary of the reflective comments.

Table 7
Students' Reflections on Their Early Field Experience Benefits and Difficulties, by Site

Theme	Project Group (n=22)	Comparison Group (n=30)
Learnings/Benefits		
observe pupil/teacher interactions	21 (95%)	6 (20%)
pupils respond positively,		
respectfully to freshmen	18 (82%)	15 (50%)
confidence/ease in new situation	13 (59%)	25 (83%)
teacher a positive, directive force	9 (41%)	13 (43%)
understand city environs, city pupils,		
and cultural differences better		
as a result of the experience	8 (36%)	0 (0%)
interest in teaching	8 (36%)	23 (77%)
learn that teacher sets tone,		
directly affects learning	8 (36%)	8 (27%)
helped pupils learn	7 (32%)	22 (73%)
nurturing/understanding pupils	7 (32%)	13 (43%)
sense of accomplishment	4 (18%)	25 (83%)
observe pupils atypical of what		
freshmen expected in that grade	3 (14%)	3 (10%)
opportunity to observe "real world"		
situation	2 (9%)	4 (13%)
appreciate the need for patience	1 (5%)	4 (13%)
exercise authority	1 (5%)	2 (7%)
Difficulties/Problems		
disliked physical plant,		
esp. open classrooms	7 (32%)	1 (3%)
teacher not interested in freshmen,		
uncooperative	6 (27%)	0 (0%)
general uncertainty or nervousness	4 (18%)	11 (37%)
pupils disrespectful of freshmen	3 (13%)	2 (7%)
pupils nervous, uncertain about		
freshmen	0 (0%)	2 (7%)
freshmen unreceptive to		
teacher style/personality	0 (0%)	8 (27%)
No reflections	1 (5%)	5 (17%)

The differences in reported benefits between project and comparison freshmen fell into two general categories. Project freshmen wrote much more often than did comparison group freshmen about observing pupil/teacher interactions, receiving positive responses from pupils, and understanding the urban setting. This cluster of reflections is related to the observations of teachers (see Table 6), lending strength to the claim that one of the project's biggest contributions was the opportunity it gave freshmen to have positive interactions with pupils and teachers in an urban setting.

Comparison group freshmen wrote much more often than project group freshmen about a sense of accomplishment, helping pupils learn, or an interest in teaching. This cluster of reflections contrasts with the results for the personal teaching efficacy measure, which was marginally higher for the project group (see Table 4). The only group

difference in reported difficulties was about the physical plant. The middle school had open classroom architecture. Seven freshmen, used to walled classrooms, did not like the open design.

Some comments from the project group's site logs illustrate how the project's objectives were addressed. The freshmen did have opportunities to recognize the importance of genuine concern for each middle school pupil and to participate in interactions with them.

- I had a talk with one girl about her grades -- she wasn't doing well and I gave her some "uplifting" words.
- I just kept telling him he could do it if he tries and that I was there to help him out.
- (from a science class) The kids seem to like to ask me questions...They wanted to hear what I have dissected in high school. They seemed fascinated that I dissected cats, sharks, and pigs.
- (from an English class) Today, I got up in front of the class, for the first time, to teach simple and complete sentences. I was really nervous at first, but began to feel more comfortable after a while. The kids weren't very responsive at first, they were hardly listening to me. I asked them to treat me with the same respect they would give Mrs. W.
- I went around the circle and listened to each one's opinion. I enjoyed hearing their comments and I think they did too. It made them feel important.
- Today was "Self Esteem Day" in the homeroom periods. I found this to be quite interesting...The students were more honest and less embarrassed than what I would have been at that age.
- (from a math class) The last day. It seems silly, but I feel kind of sad. I'd like to think I made a difference, not only in their math class, but in their lives as well...None of the students know it's my last day. I just hope they remember that mode is the number that occurs most often -- for some reason, they had trouble with that.

There were, of course, a few problems and difficulties reported. One particular teacher from the school had some difficulties with her own pupils as did the freshmen teacher candidates. But the log entries reflected that the freshmen saw the difficulties in the larger context of the whole school atmosphere, in which pupils and their development were important.

The freshmen also observed the organizational aspects of classroom work. The most frequent paperwork activity was grading papers, as might be expected.

- Mrs. C. gave me a pile of papers to correct...I was greatly horrified to see most of the students got D's and E's. There were a few C's, fewer B's, and no A's. I realize how different students are in inner cities [from where I went to school] and how much the teachers have to deal with.

-
- I think I graded too easy; I gave everyone A's. Mr. S. asked me why and I thought that being that all the drawings [diagrams of the circulatory system] were neat and all the labels were in the right places, it was only right to give them an A.

The paperwork assignments came in the context of ongoing classroom work in which the students had participated. In class on campus, students discussed pupil differences and the importance of not stereotyping pupils.

The concepts of discipline with dignity, respect, and classroom management in general were the topics of some of the most interesting freshmen log entries. Many of the freshmen were seeing new things; their own high schools, with contrasting climates, were fresh in their memories.

- Each student read aloud and I purposely called on those students falling asleep...it annoyed me to see students falling asleep [while I was teaching].
- The teachers I observed had control over the students because they were friends with them. One teacher I observed had a hard time with her students because she didn't treat them as friends. Most of the teachers work their control by establishing mutual respect.
- (during a period when a class was moved to accommodate testing) One boy slipped out a side door to leave before the bell. I went after him and brought him back.
- Two girls came to class arguing. Ms. Y. put them on opposite sides of the classroom to keep them from fighting. Ms. Y. taught the lesson for the day, then gave them the ditto sheets to work on. Just when Ms. Y. turned her back, the two girls started to physically fight. Immediately we broke them up. Three other teachers came over to help. After class, Ms. Y. said that she thought the fight (verbally) was over when she split them up, obviously it wasn't...Ms. Y. definitely has control over her class, even when a fight broke out between two girls. The students listened when she spoke, and they showed respect to her.

In this pilot project, the freshmen learned to see episodes of classroom management as opportunities to contribute to pupil development. The freshmen did not focus on "discipline" for its own sake, as do some early field experience students. Their logs showed the project freshmen thought misbehavior needed to be curtailed so that the pupils were respectful and respectable and so that classroom lessons could continue effectively.

Discussion

The field-based introduction to urban education at the middle school served to introduce freshmen to the urban setting and to the complexities of the urban classroom. The comparison group tutoring experiences, in contrast, served to introduce freshmen to one dimension of teaching. The project freshmen were more likely than the comparison group

to report learning from observing pupil/teacher interactions and reported a better understanding of the urban setting. The quantitative results suggest the project experience had a positive effect on the freshmen's flexibility in instruction, flexibility with people, and sense of personal efficacy; these effects will lay helpful foundations for developing confidence and abilities in future situations. The comparison group freshmen, however, were more likely to report an interest in teaching, a sense of having accomplished some teaching, and an interest in helping students learn. This difference is probably attributable to the fact that the comparison group students were tutors, and teaching individual students formed the bulk of their experience.

There is an interesting contrast between sense of personal efficacy ("I can make a difference"), which was higher for the project group, and sense of accomplishment ("I did make a difference"), which was reported more often in the comparison group tutors' logs than in the project group's logs. Why was the broad exposure of the project experience more related to differences in the efficacy scores than the feelings of actually having accomplished something reported by the tutors? One possible explanation is that project objectives specified a broad range of exposure and immersion in the urban middle school classrooms. Teachers reported in their interviews that some students were overwhelmed at first. But the broader exposure may have given project students the perception of being introduced to the big picture and some sense of life and work in the urban classroom. In contrast, the smaller scope of the comparison group's tutoring experiences may have left these students with a sense of having helped one or two pupils but without a coherent vision of the enterprise of urban education.

The benefits reported for this project are those one might hear from teachers and teacher educators in most settings: developing positive relationships with students; learning about the practical, daily matters involved in teaching; and respecting individuals. The difference lies in the diversity of students with whom one must form relationships. The instructional methods the teachers had the freshmen use to accomplish the objectives included observation with written reflection, observation with verbal feedback, interactions with one or a few students, and interactions with a group of students. The teachers saw opportunity to reflect, especially in writing, as important to development for the freshmen. These methods are also ones many teacher educators would use.

The difference between introducing freshmen to education in general and to urban education, in this project, was a difference in context. Diversity of pupil backgrounds made interactions with students, presentation of lesson content, class organization, grading, and classroom management more multidimensional activities than they would be if the pupil population were more homogeneous. This pilot field experience illustrated one way to structure an introduction to this

multidimensionality. The freshmen teacher candidates did learn and grow from their experiences.

An important limitation of these results is that the project school was a middle school, and most of the comparison group freshmen tutored in the fourth or fifth grades at elementary schools. Replication of the study with both project and comparison groups at the middle school level would be helpful. A further suggestion for refining the introduction to urban education at the middle school project would be to increase the amount of time allotted, although this poses the practical problem of removing something else from the already crowded teacher preparation curriculum. An interested future research question is which effects are more beneficial for developing and sustaining teacher interest and abilities in urban teaching: the feelings of accomplishment associated with a tutoring experience or the feelings of broad exposure to and beginning understanding of complex, multicultural classrooms associated with the project objectives and activities.

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