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PERCEPTIONS OF ADEQUATE CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE
OF RECENT TEACHER GRADUATES OF WESTERN
MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY AS RELATED TO PRESERVICE
PREPARATION AND SELECTED CLASSROOM
ENVIRONMENTAL VARIABLES

by

Ione M. Wolf

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Doctor of Education

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 1977
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Ione M. Wolf

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<td>1. A Diagram of the Hypothesized Relationship of the Components Involved in the Study</td>
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The perceptions held by teachers regarding the efficacy of their professional preparation provide a valuable, but often overlooked, source of information for program development. The preparational needs of the classroom teacher have changed dramatically in response to the currently unfolding socio-economic and cultural patterns of society. It is no longer sufficient to view changes in teacher preparation as a process of simply modifying existing curricula. Program developers must consider the environmental factors impinging upon the classroom teacher and how these factors affect the perceptions teachers hold regarding the adequacy of their own teaching abilities and their professional preparation.

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of selected classroom socio-economic and cultural variables upon the perceptions of adequacy of classroom performance held by recent graduates of Western Michigan University Elementary Teacher Education program, and the subsequent effect of those perceptions upon the perceived adequacy of professional preparation.

More specifically, this research sought to analyze the pattern of relationships among six classroom environmental variables and
the teacher's perceptions of his/her own classroom adequacy. It also sought to determine the nature of the relationship between the teacher's perceptions of self-adequacy in terms of classroom performance and his/her perceptions regarding preparation received in the four elements comprising the professional education sequence at Western Michigan University. Figure 1 illustrates the hypothesized relationship of the components involved in the study.

The specific environmental variables were: (a) language (b) subcultural diversity of classroom students, (c) academic achievement, (d) geographic location, (e) socio-economic group, and (f) subcultural composition of the school.

The four elements comprising the professional education sequence were: (a) human growth, development, and learning theory; (b) role of education in society; (c) methods of instruction; and (d) directed teaching. The elements selected have been identified from Rule 390.1123 of the Michigan Teacher Certification Code (see Appendix C) which specifies that the professional education of teachers shall consist of 20 semester hours in the aforementioned areas.

The Hypotheses

The teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to selected classroom/school environmental variables.
Figure 1. A Diagram of the Hypothesized Relationship of the Components Involved in the Study.
These environmental variables include language, subcultural diversity of classroom students, academic achievement, geographic location, socio-economic group, and subcultural composition of the school. Because only active, certified teachers who have completed the same academic program were studied, teacher preparation was considered to be a constant in the relationship between environmental variables and perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

The first hypothesis was that there is a relationship between each of the six independent environmental variables and the dependent variable, the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

The teacher's satisfaction with each element of academic preparation would reflect his/her perceived adequacy of classroom performance. These elements are human growth, development, and learning theory; the role of education in society; methods of instruction; and directed teaching.

The second hypothesis, therefore, was that the independent variable, teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance, is related to the dependent variable, his/her perception of adequacy of professional preparation.

The study attempted to test the following hypotheses and corresponding subhypotheses:

1. Each of the six classroom/school environmental variables
is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

a. The environmental variable, language, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

b. The environmental variable, subcultural diversity of classroom students, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

c. The environmental variable, academic achievement, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

d. The environmental variable, geographic location, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

e. The environmental variable, socio-economic group, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

f. The environmental variable, subcultural composition of the school, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

2. Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of preparation in each of the four
elements of professional preparation.

a. Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in human growth, development, and learning theory.

b. Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in the role of education in society.

c. Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in methods of instruction.

d. Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in directed teaching.

The Delimitations

The study was limited to the 1973-1974 graduates of the Western Michigan University Elementary Teacher Education program. Only those graduates who had been employed within the state of Michigan as classroom teachers for a minimum of one year were included.

The study did not attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the graduates studied, nor did it attempt to evaluate the total program
of elementary teacher preparation provided by Western Michigan University.

The Definition of Terms

**Teacher preparation program.** A teacher preparation program was defined as a course of study offered by an approved teacher training institution leading to certification as a school teacher. A teacher preparation program was also referred to as preservice education.

**Professional education sequence.** The professional education sequence was defined as a 20-semester-hour series of courses specified by the Michigan Teacher Certification Code necessary to qualify for certification as a school teacher. The sequence is comprised of course work taken in the areas of human growth, development, and learning theory; the role of education in society; methods of instruction; and directed teaching.

**Environmental variables.** Environmental variables were defined as those aspects of society and schools that contribute to the degree of adequacy with which teachers view themselves professionally. The environmental variables include language, subcultural diversity of classroom students, academic achievement, geographic location, socio-economic group, and subcultural composition of the school.
Language. Language was defined as the language community to which a person belongs (e.g., Spanish-speaking community).

Subcultural diversity of classroom students. Subcultural diversity was defined as the affiliation with a particular socio-geographic group and distinguished by such characteristics as a common language, customs, and history.

Academic achievement. Academic achievement was defined as the attainment of cognitive skills as measured by achievement tests.

Geographic location. Geographic location was defined as the physical locale of the school, such as inner city, urban, suburban, or rural.

Socio-economic group. Socio-economic group was defined as an aggregation of community members with respect to such factors as "position, income, cost of residence, and relations" (Chaplin, 1968, p. 466).

Subcultural composition of the school. Subcultural composition of the school was defined as the ethnic similarity or dissimilarity of students within a school.

Perceived adequacy of classroom performance. Perceived adequacy of classroom performance was defined as the teacher's self-evaluation of teaching effectiveness.
The Importance of the Study

The professional preparation of teachers is the subject of much discussion and research by many educators, educational agencies, professional organizations, and the general public. Ongoing evaluations are currently being made regarding the competencies needed by teachers to meet the needs of an educational system geared to our rapidly changing, complex society. There seems to be a consensus that teacher preparation is a controversial subject; that programs of teacher preparation need to be reexamined and reorganized (Hodenfield & Stinnet, 1961; Sarason, Davidson, & Blatt, 1962; Combs, 1965; Postman & Weingartner, 1969; Smith, 1969, 1971; Silberman, 1970; Roeder, Beal, & Eller, 1973; Ryan, 1973). If this scrutiny is to bring about significant and positive changes, the perceptions of teachers toward their teacher preparation programs are critical.

The responsibility of meeting the training needs of teachers historically has fallen upon the teacher training institutions. In scrutinizing the efficacy of the preparation provided by these institutions, one important question must be asked. Does the professional training a teacher receives in teacher training institutions adequately prepare the teacher-graduate to meet the needs of students and the educational demands of society?
At one time many of our communities were fairly stable and culturally homogeneous. Teachers seeking employment in a specific locale could predict the characteristics of the professional environment with an impressive degree of accuracy. Today this is no longer possible. Our society is fluid; most of our communities are subject to rapid change; and our population is diverse. The prevailing thrust of our society has moved away from the idea of a cultural melting pot and toward the concept of cultural pluralism (Rivlin, 1975, pp. 121-22).

The effects of these societal shifts can be felt in every segment of our society. Education has not been exempt. Our contemporary schools must deal with and meet the needs of students of greatly diverse backgrounds (Spillane & Levenson, 1976).

Consequently, one of the major problems facing educators is the preparation of teachers who can effectively create positive learning environments for, and provide meaningful learning experiences to, students of diverse abilities, cultures, and socio-economic backgrounds to become productive, contributing citizens.

Before any significant solutions can be found to the problems that confront teacher education, information must be obtained regarding the relationship of environmental variables to teacher performance. One important source of information is the teachers. Therefore, the first aspect of this study sought to provide data
regarding the relationship of each of the six environmental variables and teacher-held perceptions of self-adequacy of classroom performance.

Bateman (1971) concisely summarized some of the skills, attitudes, and insights needed by teachers in today's complex society:

Essential teaching behaviors include:

a. Writing behavioral objectives

b. Describing, sequencing, and planning instructional strategies for educational tasks

c. Intervening to bring about effective learning

d. Evaluating the efficacy of instruction

e. Accepting professional responsibility and leadership.

The professional teacher was described as one who has a philosophy of education, who is willing to be an agent of change on behalf of children, who is accountable, who possesses a high degree of specific skills and knowledge related to teaching, and who "cares."

The accountable teacher is one who makes data-based educational decisions and shares data about children's performance, distinguishes between learning and teaching, and accepts full responsibility for the outcomes of teaching, and is willing to change--both to learn new behaviors and to unlearn old ones. (p. 18)

A plethora of literature exists regarding the question of what a teacher should know and be able to do. Perhaps the concept of identifying teacher competencies may prove to be extremely beneficial in terms of providing guidelines for the development of future
teacher preparation programs. However, few studies have been
concerned with the relevance of preservice education to the on-the-
job realities of the classroom task as perceived by the teacher.

The problem of relevancy of preparation was cogently dis-
cussed by Sarason, Davidson, and Blatt (1962):

What is the relevancy of the contents and proce-
dures of teacher training for the functions which a
teacher performs by virtue of being a content provider
for, stimulant to, and supporter and overseer of the
intellectual development of children? By maintaining
that this is an unstudied problem, we obviously do not
mean that teacher training has not been discussed. It
has been discussed, but, unfortunately, almost exclu-
sively in terms of what new knowledge may be given
to teachers (usually via courses) and how newly devel-
oped, instructional materials may be used. (p. 15)

Certainly the perceptions of teachers would provide a primary
source of information regarding the relevance of preservice educa-
tion. Studies conducted by Bouchard and Hull (1970), Mattson
(1972), Sanders (1972), Teague (1972) and Frankel (1974) explore
this approach and provide evaluative data based upon the percep-
tions of currently employed teachers. The findings of these studies
vary from "lacking in relevance" to "satisfactory" with regard to a
general estimate of teacher preparation adequacy. These studies
will be presented in greater detail in Chapter II.

The second aspect of this study sought to describe the rela-
tionship between adequacy of teacher's classroom performance and
adequacy of professional preparation by means of the perceptions
teachers hold regarding both of these variables.

Organization

The content of this dissertation, beyond this chapter, is divided into the following sections:

Chapter II consists of a selected review of the related literature and research.

Chapter III presents the design of the study. This section describes the population, the instrument, the data collection procedure, and the treatment of the data.

Chapter IV reports the results.

Chapter V includes a summary of the study, the conclusions and recommendations.

The list of references and the appendices containing the instrument and other pertinent material conclude the report.

Summary

Chapter I discussed the problem and presented the hypotheses. This investigation focused on the relationship of selected environmental variables and teacher held perceptions of classroom self-adequacy, and the subsequent relationship of perceptions of adequacy of teaching performance to perceived adequacy of professional preparation.
In addition, the delimitations of the study, the definition of terms, and the significance of the study were included. A brief paragraph describing the organization of the study concluded the material presented in Chapter I.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE SELECTED LITERATURE

This investigation was conducted for the purpose of discovering and describing how graduates of the Western Michigan University Teacher Education program perceived the adequacy of their classroom performance, and the relationship of those perceptions to selected classroom environmental variables and to the teachers’ perceptions of adequacy of preservice preparation.

This chapter presents a review of the literature and research related to the three major areas of this study: (a) perceptual theories, (b) selected classroom environmental variables, and (c) elements of preservice preparation.

The first section is a review of the literature regarding perceptual theory. The intent of this section is to present the work of the selected theorists in the field and the importance of perceptual theory as a cognitive background for this study.

The next two sections are organized around the two hypotheses of this investigation. The first of these two sections presents an overview of the literature focusing on the impact of the six selected classroom environmental variables upon the perceptions teachers hold regarding the adequacy of their classroom performance. This
section is divided into the following subsections: (a) language, (b) subcultural diversity, (c) academic achievement, (d) geographic location, (e) socio-economic group, and (f) subcultural composition of the school.

The fourth section presents a summary of selected literature and research regarding the perceptions of teachers toward the adequacy of the four elements that comprise the elementary preservice preparation at Western Michigan University. The four elements discussed are: (a) human growth, development and learning theory; (b) the role of education in society; (c) methods of instruction; and (d) directed teaching.

Concluding Chapter II is a brief summation of the material presented within the chapter.

A Review of Selected Perceptual Theories

Since this study was concerned with perceptions of events and the subsequent behaviors based upon those perceptions, a discussion of perceptual theories as tools which can aid in the understanding, predicting, and training of teacher behavior is warranted. Lazarus (1961) presented a statement by Asch that cogently summarized the importance of perceptions as a determinant of behavior.

To limit investigation to the observation of acting alone would be to ignore the paramount fact that the actor is constantly registering in awareness what is
happening to him and that this alters his subsequent acts. (p. 104)

The remainder of this section is devoted to reviewing the work of selected theorists in the field and to presenting various perceptual theories as a background for this study.

Combs and Snygg (1959) stated that human behavior can be studied from two different vantage points: (a) that of an outside observer, and (b) that of the behaver. The former approach offers the opportunity to explain behavior in terms of the interaction between the behaver and the situation. The latter approach attempts to explain behavior from the point of view of the behaver himself and how the situation appeared to him at the time the behavior took place.

This method of studying behavior is referred to by many names: "perceptual," "personal," "phenomenological," "existential," "interactional," and "humanistic" approach. Hamachek (1971) economically summarized the entire field by stating that "it is a point of view which seeks to understand man in terms of how he views himself" (p. 33).

Felker (1974, pp. 2-3) described the individual as receiving continuous sensory data from the environment. These sensory data not only include smells, sounds, tactile sensations and tastes, but auditory and visual feedback. No two people interpret sensory
data in the same way. Each person is a unique receptor and processes the data in an individualistic manner. The information provided by this constant input of data is the "raw stuff" from which perceptions are developed, perceptions that are unique to each individual.

Hamachek (1971) defined perception as the "process by which we select, organize, and interpret sensory stimulation into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world" (p. 33). This seems to be a definition generally agreed upon by many of the theorists in the field.

Combs and Snygg (1959) stated that "all behavior is a function of the individual's perceptions" (p. 18). In responding to a situation, the individual will behave in a manner that seems most appropriate to the situation as it is perceived at that particular time. The behavior is not in direct response to the external situation per se, but to the behaver's perception of the event. In other words, when the event occurs, the individual's perception of that event is determined by his own unique frame of reference. The behavior generated will be in keeping with the behaver's perception of the situation and repertoire of previously incurred experiences.

Combs and Snygg (1959) made use of the "field" concept to represent the individual's environment of meanings. "By the perceptual field, we mean the entire universe, including himself, as
it is experienced by the individual at the instant of action" (p. 20).

The following anecdote, cited by Combs and Snygg (1959), illustrated the relationship between an individual's perceptual field and the resulting behavior and also underscored the uniqueness of the individual's perceptual field.

Several years ago a friend of mine was driving a car at dusk along a Western road. A globular mass, about two feet in diameter, suddenly appeared directly in the path of the car. A passenger screamed and grasped the wheel attempting to steer the car around the object. The driver, however, tightened his grip on the wheel and drove directly into the object. The behavior of both the driver and the passenger was determined by his own perceptual field. The passenger, an Easterner, saw the object in the highway as a boulder and fought desperately to steer the car around it. The driver, a native Westerner, saw it as a tumbleweed and devoted his efforts to keeping his passenger from overturning the car. (p. 20)

Although, in reality, the situation was the same for both individuals in the car, each responded in a manner consistent with his own perceptual field.

How individuals react to disruptions in the consistency of their perceptions and how consistency is restored were areas of concern to Festinger (1957). He recognized that perceptions that were not in harmony with the individual's beliefs or view of himself produced discord (dissonance) and that the individual reacted in such a way as to reduce the dissonance and restore a level of inner consistency. Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance is
primarily concerned with situations in which the individual is faced with an "inconsistency between what one does and what one believes" (Hamachek, 1971, p. 88).

In Festinger's theory, "dissonance" and "consonance" referred to kinds of relationships that occur between cognitions. Cognitions were defined as "any knowledge, opinion, or belief about oneself, or about one's behavior" (p. 3). Although cognitive elements usually correspond to the reality of how the individual actually feels or behaves, or to the reality of the environment, at times cognition may correspond to the reality of information, opinions, or actions of others and experiences incurred. Festinger pointed out that not all cognitive elements correspond to reality.

Consequently, the major point to be made is that the reality which impinges on a person will exert pressures in the direction of bringing the appropriate cognitive elements into correspondence with that reality. This does not mean that the existing cognitive elements will always correspond. Indeed, one of the important consequences of the theory of dissonance is that it will help us understand some circumstances where the cognitive elements do not correspond with reality. But it does mean that if the cognitive elements do not correspond with a certain reality which impinges, certain pressures must exist. (p. 11)

Festinger discussed three ways in which dissonance could be reduced. The first method involves changing a behavior. The second method involves changing the situation. Since it is not always possible to change either the behavior or the situation, the
third method for dissonance reduction involves adding new cognitive elements that are consonant with the situation and behavior.

The causes of dissonance, the tendency to reduce dissonance and maintain consonance, and the methods by which consonance may be achieved were considered extremely relevant to the present investigation. The greater the range of the classroom variables, the greater the stress experienced by the teacher. The increase in stress results in lower self-appraisals of adequacy of classroom performance and the possible loss of self-esteem, thus producing dissonance.

According to Maslow (1954), one of the basic needs of people in our society is the need for self-esteem. Maslow discussed the consequences of a loss of self-esteem.

Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy, of being useful and necessary in the world. But thwarting these needs produces feeling of inferiority, of weakness, and of helplessness. These feelings in turn give rise to either basic discouragement or else compensatory or neurotic trends. (p. 91)

Rogers (1951) discussed a similar point of view. He saw the individual as concerned with self-survival, self-maintenance, and self-enhancement. Information that is not consistent with how the individual views himself is either rejected, distorted, or perceived as threatening.

Lower perceptions of teaching adequacy in situations where
the teacher must cope with great variability in the classroom environmental variables conflict with the need to maintain self-esteem. The dissonance produced can be reduced using the methods described by Festinger and described previously. The first method would involve a change in the behavior of the teacher. This implies an acceptance of the blame and would also conflict with the need to maintain self-esteem. The second method involves putting the blame on the condition, students, school, and other situational factors. This method implies changing the situation. Although this method would be effective in reducing dissonance, it would tend not to be utilized because of the difficulty in obtaining teaching positions. The loss of employment would tend to produce dissonance in and of itself. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the third method would be utilized. This method would involve adding a new cognitive element into the situation; an element that would be consonant with the situation and the behavior. It is logical to conclude that the added new cognition would be a lower evaluation of the professional preparation received.

The intent of the previous lengthy discussion was to clarify the position of perception in this study. This investigation was based on the perceptions of Western Michigan University graduates as reported by means of a questionnaire. The responses elicited by the questionnaire are the perceptions of the respondents and
represent their respective realities.

Environmental Variables and Teachers' Perception of Adequate Classroom Performance

The purpose of this section was to examine the implications that information regarding each of the six selected environmental variables had upon the hypothesized relationship of selected environmental variables and the teacher's perception of adequate classroom performance. The relationship of each of the environmental variables to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance comprised the six subhypotheses under the first major hypothesis of this study. The organization of the review of the literature presented in this section corresponds to the six selected environmental variables: language, subcultural diversity of classroom students, academic achievement, geographic location, socioeconomic group, and subcultural composition of the school.

Studies by Randhawa and Fu (1973), Smith (1974), and Walberg (1970) have recognized the effect of classroom environmental variables upon the academic achievement of students and the behavior of students and teachers. Walberg (1970) studied the role of environment in the learning process. He concluded that learning is primarily attributable to three major variables: Aptitudes, instruction, and learning environments (p. 199). Randhawa
and Fu (1973) also discussed the importance of environmental variables in the learning process and as predictors of behavior.

Since classroom learning environment is an interaction phenomenon, it is important that the developmental history of each member of the group, personality variables, cognitive variables, socio-economic status, sex, and other variables which would seem to interact with the behaviors of the participants of a certain environment be taken into account. (p. 318)

Smith (1974) examined the relationship of two classroom environmental variables, racial composition of the classroom and grade level, to students' perceptions of teachers. The findings indicated that although the variable, grade level, was not significant when related to students' perceptions of teachers, classroom racial composition was found to be an influencing factor upon students' perceptions of teachers.

Although the above studies are not directly related to the topic of this investigation, they did indicate a need for further research concerning classroom environmental variables.

Teague's (1972) investigation is relevant to this study in that he examined the effects of situational variables upon beginning teachers' perceptions of preservice preparation and educational attitudes. Community size, type, racial mixture, sex of the teacher, and teaching level were considered in examining teacher perceptions. The environmental approach used by Teague lends support to the consideration of environmental variables in studying
the perceptions of teachers toward their preservice preparation.

Although the following comments related to the literature did not focus on the relationship of the environmental variables and teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance, it was germane to this investigation in that it presented the importance of each of the variables as part of the total classroom environment.

**The Language Variable**

Chanan and Gilchrist (1974) stated that "language is the encompassing medium of all culture, and teachers' attitudes to what their pupils say and how they say it is perhaps the key element in determining whether the classroom encounter is to be fruitful or not" (p. 36). If the language of the child is rejected, the child will often perceive himself as inferior, thus perpetuating the "superiority" of the middle class language. Chanan and Gilchrist related this concept of the restricted code of the lower socio-economic group to school success.

At the same time the idea of the restricted code can easily become a justification for the failure of the working class child in school, and may form an unself-critical legitimation of a range of negative teaching expectations. If you "know" that working class pupils are "linguistically deprived," you are likely to find evidence of this in anything they may say that you happen to find strange or difficult to understand, including original ideas and reflections of parts of the culture with which you are not familiar. Your "sympathy" for their "linguistic ability" may simply be a sophisticated
way of not hearing what they have to say. (p. 37)

The relationship between language and school success was one of the findings in Coleman's (1969) study of the home environment and the academic success of potential dropouts. Coleman's investigation looked for commonalities in the parental attitudes and behaviors of lower and upper middle class socio-economic group families of children attaining success in school. Results of the study identified the following specific commonalities dealing with language:

1. Open channels of communication between parents and children.

2. Stimulation provided by means of conversation. (p. 97)

The Coleman report (Coleman et al., 1966) investigated two questions relevant to the association of language and scholastic disadvantage.

The first question is "Does the child from a home in which language other than English is used enter the school system at a disadvantage?" The second question follows naturally from this one, and can be phrased as follows, "If children from homes where a language other than English is spoken enter school at a disadvantage, does the disadvantage become more or less severe with increasing age?" (p. 524)

In response to the first question, members of four ethnic groups were studied: Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, American Indians, and Oriental Americans. Each ethnic group was
further divided into two subgroups: (a) students from homes where a language other than English was spoken by one or more persons a majority of the time, and (b) students from only English speaking families. In general, the findings indicated that language is a factor in determining disadvantage at the first grade level. The disadvantage is small and even smaller in cases where kindergarten experiences or exposure to home reading materials were incurred (pp. 524-25).

Answers to the second question were sought by examining a series of comparisons between subgroups of 12th grade Puerto Ricans and Oriental Americans. In general, the disadvantage of students from families which speak a language other than English decreases with age. In discussing the findings, Coleman states that "on several indicators of family background characteristics, the children from homes in which a language other than English is spoken are more often the victims of other circumstances which are generally felt to be detrimental to academic performance" (p. 527).

Coleman's conclusions were based on a comparison of the average verbal ability scores of four ethnic groups of students who came from homes in which a language other than English was spoken or homes in which only English was spoken. The study did not investigate the possibility that the relatively small effect of a foreign language in the home may be due to the fact that substandard
English was spoken by both groups nor that the disadvantage may have closer associations with substandard English than with the presence of a language other than English in the home.

The importance of adequate preservice preparation to deal with language diversity was recognized by the NCTE at their 1975 business meeting in New Orleans. The following resolution was reported in the April 1975 issue of the *English Journal* as drafted and passed.

Resolved that the NCTE strongly advocate and support the development of teacher education programs which prepare teachers to work effectively with the learning needs of students from diverse language and dialect backgrounds. (p. 26)

The Subcultural Diversity of Classroom Students Variable

In her position as Senior Mediator for the U. S. Community Relations Service, Marjorie Curet (1976) has worked with the administrators of many schools undergoing extreme racial conflicts.

This experience has taught me that there is a common thread to racial conflicts in schools. I have also learned that teachers prepared to handle multicultural classrooms can forestall confrontation in many instances, although the teacher's role is very seldom incorporated into plans for integration. (p. 2)

Curet discussed the implications of school racial dimensions upon the classroom teacher and preservice education and offers
various suggestions to help prevent or minimize racial conflict within the school. One suggestion that could be implemented at either the training level or the inservice level was the development of an introduction to the disadvantaged student program which would provide an opportunity to study the disadvantaged student and his life style.

Another suggestion offered by Curet was a schedule of regular meetings of teachers from various schools to discuss what things are important to students of various races and what their expectations are for their years in school.

Curet stated that racial stereotyping begins to dissolve once the teacher realizes that student behavioral patterns, life styles, and aspirations are determined more by socio-economic factors than by racial origin.

Sensitivity to the origin of student conflict is reflected in Curet's observation that clashes are more often caused by non-racial issues than by racial problems. She stated that the teacher must be aware of the student's sensitivities and how they affect his attitude. Curet (1976) has observed that "teachers' attitudes can cause them to find faults that do not exist" (p. 3).

Baker's (1973) study was based on the assumption that teachers' positive perceptions of racial groups would enhance the development of multicultural education teaching skills. The
findings supported the hypothesis that teachers' perceptions of ethnic groups could be altered through training.

Colleges and universities have a responsibility to provide learning experiences for teachers in training that will be consistent with the objectives of multicultural education. (p. 307)

St. John (1971) sought to discover the variables influencing the achievement of urban students of varying racial and social class mix. One aspect of her investigation examined the relationship of academic success and classroom peer group acceptance. Using a sociometric test, St. John concluded that approval by the classroom majority peer group was related to academic success and other status indicators of minority as well as majority group students. Lack of acceptance in the majority peer structure correlated with alienation from school. In discussing the implications regarding dominant racial peer group acceptance, St. John (1971) states that there is a "need for teachers to learn how to intervene effectively in support of whichever racial group is in the minority" (p. 68).

Another aspect of St. John's study involved the effect of various aspects of teacher behavior upon the performance of black and white students.

Perhaps the most important finding of the study is that dimensions of teachers' behavior affect black and white children differently. Desegregating school systems should pay greater attention to the selection
and training of teachers assigned to their classrooms. An attitude of optimism (expectancy of academic success) and human relations skills are apparently more important than subject competence in raising the achievement of children, both in the minority in particular classrooms and those in the minority in our society. (p. 68)

Brophy (1975) cogently discussed a similar point of view. He stated that the teacher behavior necessary to encourage student learning was different for high and low socio-economic status schools. In high socio-economic status schools, the more successful teachers were more curriculum oriented, have high expectations for student achievement, and critical in their assessment of student performance. Teachers effective in low socio-economic status schools were less satisfied with traditional curriculum, standardized tests and traditional methods of teaching. This group of teachers were more concerned with developing good student-teacher relationships, finding more effective methods for their class, and were generally more affectively oriented. In summation, Brophy stated that "both types of effective teachers had high expectations and firm determination to teach, but they used very different patterns which seemed optimally suited to their respective student populations" (p. 13).

Although the findings cited in the two previous studies are not directly concerned with the subcultural diversity of classroom students, they do present implications for the inclusion of this variable
in the group of environmental variables impacting upon perceived teacher effectiveness.

The Academic Achievement Variable

Entwisle and Webster (1974) investigated the relationship between academic achievement in reading and arithmetic and student expectations of their school performance during the first grade. The population studied included all the first graders in two schools: (a) an all-white school in a middle class suburban neighborhood, and (b) an integrated 60 percent black school in an urban lower class neighborhood.

An individual interview procedure was used to determine the students' expectations regarding their academic achievement. The first interview was held prior to receiving the first report card and the second interview was held at the end of the first grade. The second interview attempted to determine how the students' expectations were altered, if at all, by such occurrences as academic performance feedback on report cards.

The findings indicated that both groups of students, middle class and lower class, had grade expectations for grades that were clearly higher than the actual academic performance warranted. The discrepancy between academic performance and grade expectations was much greater for lower class students than for middle
class students. Entwisle and Webster (1974) concluded that although the student expectations were resistant to modification during the first grade, they did, in the course of subsequent schooling, change in the direction of conforming to grades received rather than in academic achievement conforming to student expectations (p. 3).

Linton (1972), in his study of the relationship of two measures of self-concept and academic achievement of 332 sixth grade Mexican American and Anglo students, found that Anglo students scored significantly higher in all areas of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Although higher reading grades were generally received by Anglo students, arithmetic and social studies grades showed little difference.

To summarize, Linton concluded that academic achievement showed a closer relationship to academic self-concept than to global self-concept for middle socio-economic level Mexican American students and high and middle socio-economic level Anglo students. No relationship between academic achievement and either global or academic self-concept was found for high socio-economic level Mexican Americans. For low socio-economic level Mexican Americans, a weak relationship was found between academic achievement and global self-concept only. Academic achievement was found to be somewhat related to both measures of
self-concept for low socio-economic Anglo students (pp. 10-11).

Linton's findings regarding the comparison of standardized test scores between Mexican American and Anglo students were consistent with findings by Coleman et al. (1966). The Coleman report cited the results of a 1965 nationwide test for 1st and 12th graders. The results were reported as a comparison of median test scores for five groups of minority students and majority students.

With some exceptions--notably Oriental Americans--the average minority pupil scores distinctly lower on these tests at every level than the average white pupil. The minority pupils' scores are as much as one standard deviation below the majority pupils' scores in the 1st grade. At the 12th grade, results of tests in the same verbal and nonverbal skills show that, in every case, the minority scores are farther below the majority than are the 1st graders. For some groups, the relative decline is negligible; for others, it is large. (p. 21)

The three previously cited studies by Entwisle and Webster (1974), Linton (1972), and Coleman et al. (1966) did not relate the academic achievement variable to teachers or teacher performance. They did, however, point out the importance of including academic achievement in the group of variables that contribute to the total classroom environment and subsequently must be considered as one of the factors impinging upon teacher performance.

Bouchard and Hull (1970) conducted a pilot study aimed at obtaining information regarding the induction problems and
practices encountered by beginning teachers. Fifty-three elementary and secondary school teachers and principals in the Cattaraugus-Chautauqua County of New York were interviewed, and of particular interest is the effect of the low academic achievement level of potential dropouts upon the teacher's perceptions of his/her performance as a motivator.

Feelings of satisfaction or disappointment seem to be weighted primarily on the basis of teachers' perceptions of their ability to motivate students to learn. It seemed evident that the first year teachers who were given groups of students who were potential dropouts tended to see themselves as being ineffective motivators for learning; thus, they tended to suffer more disappointments than did others. (p. 12)

Another study involving the relationship of academic achievement to perception was that of Davidson and Lang (1965). The perceptions studied, however, were those of students regarding their teachers' feelings toward them. The findings indicated that positive perceptions of students regarding their teachers' feelings toward them were related to better academic achievement.

The Geographic Location Variable

Pankratz (1975) explored the impact of a rural setting upon the teacher and the teaching situation. The rural school, with its limited resources and support, must grapple with the problems of providing personalized instruction, full services for children with
learning and behavioral problems, and multicultural education.

Teachers in rural school settings are also confronted with other difficult problems, such as low salaries, inadequate facilities, isolation from training institutions that could provide support and additional training, and the disadvantages of living in a small community.

Pankratz (1975) observed that, in the past, teacher training institutions have paid little attention to the needs of rural teachers. Today, however, that trend is being reversed in some institutions.

Campus-based teacher education programs have failed to recruit and adequately prepare teachers to deal with the special problems of rural youth. While professors have become isolated in ivory towers, many small rural communities have become isolated from the dominant society. It is high time that institutions of higher education and rural communities begin a process of interaction to rectify these inequalities that exist between rural and urban educational opportunities by collaborative efforts which provide training and retraining programs for teachers in that part of our nation where America has its roots. (p. 108)

The urban school is faced, as is the rural school, with myriad problems. Perhaps one of the most pressing problems is that of defining the role of the urban school with respect to the demands of our contemporary society and the nature and needs of the community it serves.

Tanner (1975) stated that the role of the urban school is to prepare the learner to deal effectively with personal and social
problems. The urban school must be committed to providing equal opportunity to all cultural groups, and to "facilitate the rise of visibility, development, and refinement of the submerged talents and abilities of the thousands of urban youths whose lives have been as confounded by the ravages of poverty and other forms of disprivilege" (p. 105).

The role of the teacher in the urban school is a difficult one. Successful teachers must not only be sensitive to and appreciate the diversity of the students, but must view this diversity as an asset. Tanner suggested that the training of urban teachers should include studies in "urban sociology, cultural anthropology, social psychology, group dynamics, communication, federal education, and social welfare and civil rights legislation" (p. 106).

Tobin (1970), in his study of the perceptions of teachers in inner city and suburban elementary schools, found some indication of a relationship between perceptions of teachers and geographic location. Inner city teachers were viewed less favorably than suburban teachers. Tobin recommended that preservice training programs emphasize the development of skills, techniques, and methods of teaching inner city students.

Teague's (1971) study of the perceptions and attitudes of first year teachers suggested some interesting findings regarding geographic location.
Suburban (and 100 percent white classes) and inner-city (and less than 50 percent white classes) teachers rated their preparation highest and lowest respectively, in response to items regarding sociological foundations.

Rural teachers and teachers with all white classes indicated higher perceptions of preservice preparation and the most subject centered educational attitudes.

Inner-city teachers and teachers with less than 50 percent white classes indicated feeling the least faculty and community acceptance, philosophic congruence, satisfaction with teaching, and adequacy of preparation for the job. (p. 14)

The impact of geographic location upon teacher perceptions of preservice preparation is certainly recognizable and bears strong implications for future planning and development of teacher preparation programs.

The Socio-economic Group Variable

Anastasi (1957) discussed a study by Milner of the relationship between socio-economic group and the reading readiness and linguistic development of first grade students. The study suggested that parent-child attitudes might provide the explanation for the relationships found.

As contrasted by his lower class age-mate, the middle class child enjoys a warmer, more positive atmosphere which is a motivational prerequisite for successful adult-controlled learning. And he has more opportunities to interact verbally with adults as illustrated by parental attitudes toward meal-time conversations. (p. 354)
The students of the TOD (Teachers of the Disadvantaged) program at Ball State University are given special preparation to qualify them to teach children of lower socio-economic groups. Sciara (1974) studied the effectiveness of the TOD program by having TOD and non-TOD teachers rate their preparation for teaching the disadvantaged. In all cases the TOD teachers outranked the non-TOD teachers in preparation to teach children of a low socio-economic environment.

In discussing the nature of the culturally disadvantaged, Johnson (1970) stated "poverty seemed to be the unifying thread in the concept of cultural disadvantage" (p. 122).

Culture is not bad housing or dirty streets or dingy clothes or a hungry stomach. Since culture is tradition, mores, values, and institutions, it is possible to be poor but not culturally disadvantaged. Conversely, it is possible to be financially secure but culturally disadvantaged. Usually, however, the culturally disadvantaged are also the economically disadvantaged. (p. 4)

Kuschman (1972) pointed out that disadvantaged children are not all products of low income areas. Middle class suburbia produces its share of disadvantaged children. The results of "keeping up with the Joneses," quarrelling parents, financial tension, and overindulgence often produces many disadvantaged children in the midst of plenty.

The definition of disadvantaged must be broadened to include all those who are blocked in any way from
fulfilling their human potential. (p. 6)

Although the Coleman report (Coleman et al., 1966) focused primarily upon subcultural membership rather than socio-economic group membership, several socio-economic indicators were studied in order to describe the home background of classmates. Aspects of home environment studied were parents' education, structural integrity of the family, number of children in the family, items in the home, reading matter in the home, parents' educational desires, and parents' interest in education. The findings indicated that the family background is an important factor in determining educational success (pp. 184-93).

Mosteller and Moynihan (1972) supported the view that the variables used in the study of the home background imply socio-economic class and must be considered a major factor in educational success.

The EEOR, conceived in the concern for racial equality of blacks, and expanded, partly as a measure to obtain wider political support, to include all persons, regardless of "race, color, religion, or national origin," did not include any analysis of educational achievement by social class. But presence of social class was implicit in the stated finding that family background, measured in social class terms--primarily education of parents, but including many other considerations such as the presence of an encyclopedia in the home--is apparently a major determinant of educational achievement. (p. 22)

A study by George and Dietz (1969) described differences in
basic skill levels between children from low income urban homes and children from higher income suburban homes. The population studied consisted of approximately 1,500 first, second, and third graders from two different school districts in Philadelphia and the surrounding area. The children were tested on eight basic skill tasks such as writing numbers in order; drawing a circle, a triangle, a square, and a rectangle in four boxes on a printed page, one figure in each box; and identifying six basic colors by filling in the indicated box with the appropriate color following oral instructions.

The findings indicated that there were significant differences in the performance of the two groups of students. On some of the tasks, the performance of the third grade urban students was similar to the performance of first grade suburban students. George and Dietz concluded that the differences in performance were related to socio-economic background. They also pointed out that these observed differences in skill levels have strong implications for effective curriculum development (pp. 232-33).

It becomes obvious that the classroom teacher must have special preparation in order to effectively deal with the problems of socio-economically disadvantaged children.
The Subcultural Composition of the School Variable

The philosophy of contemporary United States society has turned away from the "melting pot" concept toward cultural pluralism (Rivlin, 1975). America has moved away from the idea of ethnic assimilation and blending and now seeks to enrich the societal fabric of the nation by developing the assets of being a multicultural society.

Rivlin (1975) offered a definition of cultural pluralism developed by the National Coalition for Cultural Pluralism.

... a state of equal co-existence in a mutually supportive relationship within the boundaries or framework of one nation of people of diverse cultures with significantly different patterns of belief, behavior, color, and in many cases with different languages. To achieve cultural pluralism, there must be unity with diversity. Each person must be aware of and secure in his own identity, and be willing to extend to others the same respect and rights that he expects to enjoy himself. (p. 121)

The basis of cultural pluralism is respect for one's own culture coupled with respect for the culture of others. The obvious place to begin the movement toward the realization of cultural pluralism is in the schools. Rivlin (1975) stated that "schools with diverse student populations have both an obligation and a rich opportunity to utilize a multicultural approach" (p. 122).

Young (1975) discussed the concerns and issues facing educators and schools with regard to a multi-cultural approach to
The major issues which face educators today are the identification of a working definition of multicultural education, [sic] and an agreement on a program in schools and teacher training institutions to prepare teachers capable of providing equal educational opportunities for all students. (p. 127)

The implications that cultural pluralism holds for education and educators is also discussed by Rivlin (1975).

A multicultural approach to education begins with the preparation of the teacher, for so much depends upon the teacher's understanding of different ethnic cultures, his/her attitudes toward ethnic backgrounds, and his/her ability to develop teaching strategies appropriate for pupils from different ethnic groups. (p. 122)

The Coleman report (Coleman et al., 1966) studied the relationship between school composition and achievement. The findings indicated that "the composition of the student body has a strong relationship to the achievement of Negroes and other minority pupils" (p. 22).

In addition, the data indicated that most minority pupils, with the exception of Oriental Americans, perceived little control over their environment and life. In the case of Negroes, this feeling was found to be related to the racial mix of the school. Negroes in schools with a large representation of white students indicated a greater feeling of control over their life and environment than Negro students attending schools with a small representation of white students (p. 23).
The review of the literature presented in this section attempted to provide information that indicated the relevance of environmental variables for educational investigation. Although no information was found regarding the relationship of environmental variables to teachers' perceptions, the information presented did suggest implications that the six selected environmental variables may have upon teachers' perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

Professional Preparation and Teachers' Perception of Adequate Classroom Performance

The second hypothesis states that teachers' perceptions of adequacy of classroom performance are related to perceptions of adequacy of professional preparation in four areas: (a) human growth, development and learning theory; (b) the role of education in society; (c) methods of instruction; and (d) student teaching. The hypothesized relationship between teachers' perceptions of adequacy of classroom and perceptions of adequacy in each of the four areas of professional preparation comprise the four subhypotheses corresponding to the second major hypothesis of this study.

This aspect of the study was concerned with examining the relationship between two types of teacher-held perceptions: (a) perceptions of adequacy of classroom performance, and (b)
perceptions of adequacy of professional preparation in each of the
aforementioned areas. This study attempted to look at the problem
of teacher preparation from the viewpoint of the teacher. Furthermore, this investigation sought to ascertain whether perceptions of
satisfaction with professional preparation were dependent upon per-
ceptions of adequacy of performance.

The need for a re-examination and reorganization of teacher
training programs was discussed in Chapter I. Chapter I referred
to various recent studies involving the reactions of teachers toward
the various elements of their preservice preparation. The findings
of these studies will be presented in this section. Although this
investigation was also concerned with the problems confronting
teacher training, the area of focus was a departure from the more
traditional methods of evaluating teacher education programs.

In viewing teachers' perceptions of satisfaction with profes-
sional preparation as being dependent upon teacher-held perceptions
of adequate classroom performance, and perceptions of adequate
classroom performance as being dependent upon a set of environ-
mental variables, the link between perceived professional prepara-
tion and classroom environmental variables can be established.
(See Figure 1, page 3.) The establishment of this linkage would
contribute to the body of knowledge necessary to adequately answer
questions concerning the relevancy of teacher education programs.
to the needs of the students and society, and provide teacher training institutions with an additional focus in program development.

The remainder of this chapter presents a review of selected research and literature related to the four elements comprising the professional preparation sequence. Although no information was found regarding the relationship of performance to preparation, information regarding the relevance of each of the four elements of preparation to the teaching situation were of particular interest.

The following discussion reflects various current evaluations of teacher preparation programs by alumni. Each of the studies presents the respondents' ratings of their professional preparation in at least two of the four areas of professional preparation chosen for this investigation: (a) human growth, development, and learning theory; (b) role of education in society; (c) methods of instruction; and (d) directed teaching.

Tobin, in his 1970 doctoral dissertation comparing the perceptions of beginning and experienced teachers employed in inner city and suburban elementary schools, included the following recommendations based on his findings: (a) more opportunities for field experiences than a single student teaching experience; (b) additional stress on the skills and methods of teaching; and (c) preservice and inservice programs for teachers in inner city
schools which stress skills and methods that have proven to be successful in meeting the needs of inner city students.

Bouchard and Hull (1970) interviewed 53 classroom teachers and 19 principals in their pilot study of induction problems and practices in Cattaragus-Chautaugua County, New York. As one phase of the study, beginning teachers were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of their methods courses, student teaching experiences, and noneducation courses as professional preparation. A majority of the teachers interviewed rated their preservice preparation as lacking in relevance.

Hopkins (1970) conducted a follow-up study of 279 teacher graduates of the University of Missouri. The purpose of the survey was to obtain information regarding attitudes toward preservice preparation, each of 13 education courses, and teaching as a profession. In general, most of the respondents (260) expressed positive attitudes regarding their teacher training programs. However, they also expressed a need for more field experiences and for courses stressing skills necessary for actual teaching.

One aspect of Mattson's (1972) study was concerned with determining the adequacy of the professional education programs at Montana State University. Two hundred eighteen graduates of the class of 1969 were surveyed with a response rate of 73.5 percent for elementary teachers and 76.5 percent for secondary
teachers. Deficiencies were indicated in the areas of teaching strategies, student evaluation, classroom management, recognition of learning disabilities, and team teaching. However, both elementary and secondary teachers felt their professional preparation programs to be generally adequate.

Teague (1972) investigated the effects of the teaching situation upon the attitudes and perceptions of first year teachers toward their preservice preparation, teaching situation, and educational attitudes. Three hundred forty-one graduates of the University of Georgia who were employed as full time teachers responded to the survey. The results of this investigation yielded the following information regarding preservice preparation:

1. Preparation in sociological foundations of education was rated lower by inner city teachers and teachers with less than 50 percent white classes than by suburban teachers and teachers with 100 percent white classes.

2. Preservice preparation received the highest ratings from rural teachers and teachers with 100 percent white classes.

Sanders (1972) conducted a four-year evaluation of the professional preparation courses in teacher education programs. The institution or institutions involved were not identified. Six hundred fourteen graduates participated in the survey. The conclusions were in keeping with the studies previously cited.

1. Student teaching was viewed as extremely
valuable by 97 percent of the respondents.

2. Courses stressing methods were viewed as being of more value than courses stressing content.

3. More field experiences prior to student teaching were recommended as being worthwhile.

In 1974, Frankel conducted an evaluative study of the undergraduate education program at Lehman College. A six-page questionnaire was given to 800 teacher graduates employed in the New York City area, and the investigator sought to obtain ratings of the areas of pre-student-teaching field experiences, student teaching experiences, and the development of overall teaching competencies.

Respondents rated student teaching as being valuable. Suggestions for improving and/or extending the student teaching experience were made by 77.9 percent of the teachers. Courses stressing methods rather than content were rated as valuable. As in other studies, more field experiences were considered to be an important addition to a teacher preparation program. Negative reactions to foundation courses were received by a large majority of the 56.7 percent of the respondents to this section. Courses stressing child psychology and emotional and learning disabilities were recommended. Methods courses also received negative ratings by a majority of the 56.7 percent of the teachers that responded to that section.

The investigators reviewed did not present a consensus
regarding the overall adequacy of the professional preparation programs studied. Bouchard and Hull (1970) and Frankel (1974) concluded that a majority of those who responded in their respective studies considered their preservice education to be inadequate. Respondents reported their training lacking in relevance and not applicable to the realities of the classroom.

Hopkins (1970), Mattson (1972), and Sanders (1972) reported that for the most part the respective teacher preparation programs studied by them were considered adequate. However, deficiencies and/or areas of dissatisfaction were noted. Courses that stressed methods rather than content were viewed as more valuable and an expansion of field experiences was indicated.

Tobin (1970) also recommended an expansion of field experiences, an increased emphasis on skill and method courses, and preservice and inservice programs for inner city teachers.

Although the studies cited do not provide information regarding the relationship between perceptions of professional preparation and perceptions of adequacy of performance, they do present a limited overview of current perceptions and attitudes toward the effectiveness of various teacher education programs.
Summary

The purpose of Chapter II was to review the purposes of the study and to review the related research and literature. The chapter was organized into three main sections. The first section was concerned with presenting the work of selected theorists in the field of perceptual theory. Since this investigation is based upon the perceptions of teachers as reported through questionnaires, the discussion of perceptual theories was viewed as germane.

The second section was organized around the first hypothesis. This hypothesis was concerned with the relationship of perceptions of adequate classroom performance to each of six classroom environmental variables. The review of literature sought to provide information regarding relevance of each of the environmental variables for this study.

The final section of this chapter discussed selected literature related to the second hypothesis. While the research reviewed was not involved with the relationship of perception of preparation and perception of performance, it did reflect some of the current attitudes toward teacher education programs and showed the need for research such as is reported in the present study.
CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the selection and characteristics of the population studied, the data collection instrument, the collection procedure, and the methods used in the analysis of the data.

Population

The population for this investigation was comprised of the 1973-1974 academic year graduates of the Western Michigan University Elementary Teacher Education program. The reasons for selecting the 1,038 graduates of the school year 1973-1974 were threefold; namely, to utilize a group of teacher graduates: (a) who had sufficient teaching experience to enable them to draw meaningful relationships between their preservice education and their experiences in the classroom, (b) whose preservice education was current enough to minimize the effects of time upon memory clarity, and (c) whose preservice education was typical of the elementary teacher education programs offered at Western Michigan University in recent years.

The following criteria were used for the selection of graduates
comprising the population to be studied:

1. Completion of the Elementary Teacher Education program at Western Michigan University during the school year 1973-1974.
2. Receipt of a Michigan Elementary Provisional Certificate.
3. Employment as an elementary teacher within the state of Michigan.

The Michigan Department of Education supplies each teacher training institution with an annual list of Provisional Certificate holders who have been certified as recommended by that institution during that year. The list for school year 1973-1974 was obtained from the Academic Records Office at Western Michigan University and the names of those graduates recommended for Elementary Provisional Certificates were extracted. The 1,038 names on the list were checked against microfilm records compiled by the Teacher Preparation and Professional Department Service of the Michigan Department of Education in order to obtain the current teaching assignment of each person. This step eliminated those graduates who were not then employed as elementary teachers within the state of Michigan and/or who did not have at least one year of teaching experience within the state of Michigan after graduation.

The following procedure was used to select the graduates to be surveyed. The 389 graduates identified as meeting the previously described criteria for selection comprised the population to be
The Instrument

The instrument developed for this study consisted of 20 questions. A copy of the instrument can be found in Appendix A of this dissertation. Questions 1-4 were concerned with obtaining descriptive information regarding the respondent's ethnic background, years of classroom teaching experience, current teaching grade level, and number of students in present assignment.

Questions 5-10 were designed to obtain information describing the students in the respondent's current classroom. These six questions sought information directly related to the six classroom environmental factors identified for this study.

Questions 11-15 sought to elicit information regarding the perceptions held by the respondent toward the adequacy of his/her own classroom performance and toward each of the four components of the professional preparation provided by Western Michigan University Department of Elementary Education. The teacher graduates were asked to respond to each of these questions using a five interval scale ranging from a response of "very adequate" to one of "very inadequate."

Questions 16-18 were open-ended questions allowing for unstructured responses regarding aspects of professional
preparation that were found to be missing, of little value, or very helpful.

Questions 19 and 20 were designed to ascertain the presence of other Western Michigan University graduates on the faculty of the school in which the respondent is currently employed and the date of their graduation. These two questions were included at the request of Dr. Thomas Ryan, Chairman of the Department of Teacher Education, Western Michigan University. The data provided in response to these two items were not considered relevant to this investigation and are not included in the discussion of the findings.

Data Collection Procedure

A questionnaire developed for this study (see Appendix A) was mailed to the selected teacher graduates at the schools in which they were currently employed at the time of mailing. Because of the variety of the locations involved, the delivery and retrieval systems utilized the United States Postal Service.

Accompanying the questionnaire was a cover letter written on Western Michigan University Department of Educational Leadership letterhead stationery, along with a stamped return envelope. Also included in the initial mailing was a letter from Dr. Thomas Ryan, Chairman of the Teacher Education Department, endorsing the study and urging the recipient's cooperation and prompt response.
The questionnaires were coded for follow-up purposes. An individual code number was assigned to each selected teacher graduate and recorded along with the corresponding name on a master list. When a completed questionnaire was received, the name was checked off the master list. All reasonable efforts were made to protect the anonymity of each respondent. An explanation of the coding and assurances of confidentiality were included as part of the cover letter. A copy of the cover letter and a copy of the letter from Dr. Thomas Ryan are included in Appendix B.

During February, 1977, a pretest was conducted utilizing 20 teacher graduates who met the criteria for selection and were not included in the population to be surveyed. A table of random numbers was utilized to randomly select 20 teacher graduates who comprised the pretest population. The 20 names selected were then removed from the main list and were not included in the survey proper.

The intent of the pretest study was to determine whether the questionnaire directions and items were sufficiently clear and complete. The returned questionnaires did not indicate any problems in responding to the directions or items. No changes were made in the questionnaire or accompanying cover letter as a result of this pretest.

The data collection took place during the months of March and
April, 1977. Four weeks after the initial mailing, a follow-up mailing was sent to those individuals who had not returned their questionnaires. The follow-up mailing consisted of a letter soliciting participation (see Appendix B), an additional copy of the questionnaire, and another stamped return envelope. This procedure was in keeping with the methods suggested by Babbie (1973, p. 164) and Leddy (1974, p. 85).

Of the 369 graduates surveyed, 222 graduates, or 60 percent, returned completed, usable questionnaires. An additional 13 questionnaires were received. They were incomplete or otherwise unusable responses and were not included in the data used in this study.

Treatment of the Data

The two major hypotheses and corresponding subhypotheses of this study are reviewed below:

1. Each of the six classroom/school environmental variables is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.
   a. The environmental variable, language, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.
   b. The environmental variable, subcultural
diversity of classroom students, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

c. The environmental variable, academic achievement, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

d. The environmental variable, geographic location, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

e. The environmental variable, socio-economic group, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

f. The environmental variable, subcultural composition of the school, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

2. Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of preparation in each of the four elements of professional preparation.

a. Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in human growth, development, and learning theory.

b. Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance
performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in the role of education in society.

c. Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in methods of instruction.

d. Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in directed teaching.

For the six subhypotheses corresponding to hypothesis one, the independent variable was dichotomized by combining response groups to form two discrete categories. For subhypotheses la and 1b, the responses to each of questionnaire items seven and six respectively, were combined to produce categories that contained: (a) no reported instances of the variable being present in the classroom, and (b) one or more reported instances of the variable being present in the classroom.

The median was utilized as the point for dichotomizing the responses relating to the independent environmental variable in subhypotheses lc and le. In the first instance, responses to questionnaire item 10 indicating the presence of students at the identified grade level and one to two years below the grade level were combined for each grade level one through nine. The median was obtained for each of the observations and utilized to form two
categories: (a) above the median, and (b) below the median.

A similar process was followed for subhypothesis 1e. In this case, the environmental variable, socio-economic group, as identified in questionnaire item five, was dichotomized by combining the groups "lower" and "poverty," finding the median, and thus, separating the responses into those observations whose responses fell either above or below the median.

In subhypothesis 1f, the environmental variable, subcultural composition of the school, was dichotomized by grouping the responses to questionnaire item nine into those observations indicating that subcultures other than White American comprised: (a) 26 percent or more of the school population, or (b) 25 percent or less of the school population.

In subhypothesis 1d, the environmental variable, geographic location, was not dichotomized.

For hypotheses one and two and their corresponding subhypotheses, the variable, teacher's perception of adequacy of classroom performance, was dichotomized by taking those observations of "very adequate" as one category and combining all other responses to form the second category.

The four dependent variables in subhypotheses 2a through 2d were dichotomized in the same manner. The response of "neither adequate nor inadequate" was not utilized for questionnaire items
12-15. The responses "very adequate" and "somewhat adequate" were combined to form one category. The second category combined the responses "somewhat inadequate" and "very inadequate."

For hypothesis one, the six subhypotheses were tested by means of the Chi Square test or the Fisher Exact test. Since subhypotheses 1a, 1c, 1e, and 1f deal with relationships between two dichotomous variables, these subhypotheses were tested with the more powerful Fisher Exact test. Subhypothesis 1d did not utilize dichotomous categories and was therefore tested by means of the Chi Square test. In each subhypothesis, the teacher's perception of adequate classroom performance was taken to be the dependent variable and the six environmental variables were considered to be the independent variables.

For the second hypothesis, the four corresponding subhypotheses were each concerned with a relationship between two dichotomous variables and were subjected to the Fisher Exact test. In this group of subhypotheses, the perceived adequacy of professional preparation was the dependent variable while the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance was the independent variable.

The responses to the three open-ended items, questions 16-18, were summarized and reported in Chapter IV.
Summary

In Chapter III, the population, the instrument used, the data collection procedure followed, and the statistical treatment of the data has been described.

The entire population of teachers who graduated from Western Michigan University in 1973-1974 and who met the criteria for selection specified in this chapter were included in this investigation. The questionnaire used consisted of 20 items, three of which were open-ended questions. The United States Postal Service was utilized as the method by which the questionnaires were delivered to and retrieved from the respondents.
In Chapter IV, the results of this study are described and discussed. The following discussion is organized into sections. The first section describes the response rate of the population studied. The next two sections present the findings related to the two research hypotheses and their corresponding subhypotheses. The fourth section summarizes the responses to the three open-ended questionnaire items. A summation of the findings concludes each section in Chapter IV.

Response Rate

Of the 369 graduates included in the surveyed population, completed and usable questionnaires were returned by 222, or 60 percent of the respondents. In order to determine if there was any difference in the response rate of different sections of the state of Michigan, the upper peninsula was taken to be one section while the lower peninsula was divided into four sections: northwest, northeast, southwest, and southeast. There appeared to be little difference in the response rates from the five sections of the state of Michigan.
Environmental Variables

The first hypothesis stated that each of the six classroom/school environmental variables is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance. The corresponding subhypotheses examined the relationship between each of the six independent variables--language, subcultural diversity of classroom students, academic achievement, geographic location, socio-economic group, and subcultural composition of the school--and the dependent variable, teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance. The findings are reported in the form of Fisher Exact probabilities or Chi Square values.

Subhypothesis 1a

The environmental variable, language, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

The relationship specified in this subhypothesis was tested by means of the Fisher Exact test of significance. The observed frequencies are shown in Table 1.

The Fisher Exact probability of obtaining frequencies as probable or less probable than the ones in Table 1 was greater than the chosen probability of .05 for committing a Type I error, and therefore, the subhypothesis was not supported. A relationship
between language and teacher perceived adequacy of classroom performance was not found.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Group</th>
<th>Teachers' Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only English Speakers</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or More Speakers of a Language Other than English</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Fisher Exact probability = .10.

Subhypothesis 1b

The environmental variable, subcultural diversity of classroom students, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

This subhypothesis was tested using the Fisher Exact test of significance. The observed frequencies are shown in Table 2.

The Fisher Exact test for obtaining this table or one less probable did not yield a significant probability. No relationship between students' subcultural diversity and teachers' perceived adequacy of
classroom performance was found. Subhypothesis 1b was not supported by the findings of this test.

Table 2

Reported Frequencies of Teachers' Perceptions of Adequacy of Classroom Performance by Subcultural Diversity of Classroom Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcultural Diversity</th>
<th>Teachers' Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Subcultures Represented</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or More Students Representing Racial/National Subcultures</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Fisher Exact probability = .67.

Subhypothesis 1c

The environmental variable, academic achievement, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

The Fisher Exact test of significance was used to test this subhypothesis. Table 3 shows the observed frequencies of the variables and the Fisher Exact probability.
Table 3

Reported Frequencies of Teachers' Perceptions of Adequacy of Classroom Performance by Students' Academic Achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Achievement</th>
<th>Teachers' Perception</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Adequate</td>
<td>Other Than Very Adequate</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above the Median</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>178</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below the Median</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>222</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Fisher Exact probability = 1.0.

The findings did not indicate a relationship between academic achievement and teachers' perceptions of adequate classroom performance. There was no support for the hypothesized relationship between these variables. Subhypothesis 1c was not supported.

Subhypothesis 1d

The environmental variable, geographic location, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

The Chi Square test was used to test this subhypothesis. The reported frequencies are shown in Table 4.

The Chi Square value fell far short of significance. This
indicated that no relationship between the geographic location of
the school and teachers' perceived adequacy of classroom perform-
ance was found. Subhypothesis 1d was not supported.

Table 4

Reported Frequencies of Teachers' Perceptions of
Adequacy of Classroom Performance by
Geographic Location of School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Location</th>
<th>Teachers' Perception</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Adequate</td>
<td>Other Than Very Adequate</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner City</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. $X^2 = 1.82, p = .61, df = 3.$

Subhypothesis 1e

The environmental variable, socio-economic group, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of class-
room performance.

To test this hypothesis, the Fisher Exact test was used to
determine the probability of obtaining the observed data or less
probable data. Table 5 contains the observed frequencies.

Table 5

Reported Frequencies of Teacher's Perceptions of Adequacy of Classroom Performance by Students' Socio-Economic Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-Economic Group</th>
<th>Teachers' Perception</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Adequate</td>
<td>Other Than Very Adequate</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above the Median</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below the Median</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Fisher Exact probability = .68.

The data clearly suggest that the hypothesized relationship between the teachers' perceived adequacy of classroom performance and students' socio-economic group was not found. Subhypothesis I e was not supported.

Subhypothesis I f

The environmental variable, subcultural composition of the school, is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

Subhypothesis I f was not supported by the results of the Fisher Exact test. Table 6 presents the observed frequencies and
the Fisher Exact probability.

Table 6

Reported Frequencies of Teachers' Perceptions of Adequacy of Classroom Performance by Subcultural Composition of the School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcultural Composition</th>
<th>Teachers' Perception</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Adequate</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Than</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26% or More Subcultural</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25% or Less Subcultural</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Fisher Exact probability = .74.

The data reported in Table 6 indicated that there appeared to be no relationship between subcultural composition of the school and the way teachers perceived the adequacy of their professional preparation.

In summary, the findings did not suggest any relationship between any of the six environmental variables and teachers' perceptions of adequate classroom performance. None of the six sub-hypotheses was supported; and therefore, no evidence was found in support of the first hypothesis.
The second hypothesis stated that teachers' perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation. The corresponding four subhypotheses examined the relationship between the independent variable, teachers' perceptions of adequacy of classroom performance, and the dependent variables, perceived adequacy of professional preparation in human growth, development, and learning theory; the role of education in society; methods of instruction; and directed teaching.

The findings are reported below.

**Subhypothesis 2a**

Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in human growth, development, and learning theory.

The hypothesized relationship was tested using the Fisher Exact test. Table 7 reports the observed frequencies.

The probability of obtaining frequencies as probable or less probable than the ones in Table 7 was greater than the chosen probability of .05 for committing a Type I error. There appeared to be no relationship between teachers' perceived adequacy of classroom performance and perceptions of adequate preparation in human growth, development, and learning theory. Consequently,
subhypothesis 2a was not supported.

Table 7

Reported Frequencies of Teachers' Perceptions of Adequacy of Classroom Performance by Perceived Adequacy of Professional Preparation in Human Growth, Development, and Learning Theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Level of Adequate Preparation</th>
<th>Teachers' Perception</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Adequate</td>
<td>Less Than Very Adequate</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Fisher Exact probability = .36.

Subhypothesis 2b

Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in the role of education in society.

Table 8 reports the observed frequencies. As indicated in Table 8, the Fisher Exact probability of obtaining the findings in this table or less likely findings was .76. There appeared to be no relationship between the teachers' perceptions of adequate classroom performance and their perceptions of adequacy of professional preparation on the role of education in society. The findings
did not support subhypothesis 2b.

Table 8

Reported Frequencies of Teachers' Perceptions of Adequacy of Classroom Performance by Perceived Adequacy of Professional Preparation in the Role of Education in Society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Level of Adequate Preparation</th>
<th>Teachers' Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Fisher Exact probability = .76.

Subhypothesis 2c

Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in methods of instruction.

This hypothesis was also tested by means of the Fisher Exact test. The resulting probability indicated that there was no evidence of relationship and the variables were independent of each other. The results are shown in Table 9.

No relationship was found between the variables; and therefore, subhypothesis 2c was not supported.
Table 9

Reported Frequencies of Teachers' Perceptions of Adequacy of Classroom Performance by Perceived Adequacy of Professional Preparation in Methods of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Level of Adequate Preparation</th>
<th>Teachers' Perception</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Adequate</td>
<td>Less Than Very Adequate</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>195</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Fisher Exact probability = .18.

Subhypothesis 2d

Teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of professional preparation in directed teaching.

The Fisher Exact test was used to test this subhypothesis. Table 10 reports the observed frequencies and the probability of obtaining a table as probable as Table 10 or less probable.

No relationship between the variables was suggested by the findings. Subhypothesis 2d was not supported.
Table 10

Reported Frequencies of Teachers' Perceptions of Adequacy of Classroom Performance by Perceived Adequacy of Professional Preparation in Directed Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Level of Adequate Preparation</th>
<th>Teachers' Perception</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Adequate</td>
<td>Less Than Very Adequate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>81</td>
<td></td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Fisher Exact probability = .35.

In summary, no evidence was found suggesting any relationship between teachers' perceptions of adequate classroom performance and perceptions of adequate professional preparation. The four subhypotheses were not supported by the findings; and therefore, hypothesis two was not supported.

Opinions Regarding Teaching Preparation

This section will present and discuss the responses to the three open-ended questions, items 16-18, on the questionnaire. These questions solicited unstructured responses regarding areas of professional preparation that were believed by the respondents.
to be missing, of little help, or very helpful. The data were categorized and the frequencies were reported in Tables 11, 12, and 13.

**Question 16**

In light of your recent teaching experience, what areas or specific skills were missing in your teacher preparation program?

Responses to this question were grouped into 15 major areas. Table 11 shows the frequency of responses that pertain to each particular category. For example, grouped within the category, field experiences, are responses that indicated a specific lack of classroom experiences prior to directed teaching, as well as responses that indicated the lack of an adequate directed teaching experience.

The largest deficiency noted was in the area of reading. The problem, as described by many of the respondents, seemed to be one of quantity rather than quality. One required reading course was not viewed as providing sufficient development of the skills necessary to become an adequate teacher of reading. Additional required reading courses focusing on such areas as phonics, evaluation of reading programs, diagnosis and remediation, and method of teaching reading were suggested by many of the respondents.

Another major area of deficiency was behavior management.
### Table 11
Summary of Responses as to Skill Areas Missing in Teacher Preparation Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Methods</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Management</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Methods Courses</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Experiences</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with Special Needs</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent, Community, Staff Relations</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials, Programs, Texts</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson, Unit, Program Planning</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and Learning Theory</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Evaluation</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Strategies</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Politics</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Skills</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Aspects</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response or Inappropriate Response</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents Indicating No Missing Areas</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Total number of responses to this item = 222.
Respondents indicated that specific "how to" information as well as the presentation of theories or systems of behavior management were missing from their professional preparation.

In general, the graduates felt that little, if any, emphasis was placed on providing sufficient information and/or developing competencies in the named areas. When reasons for these missing areas or skills were expressed by the respondents, they tended to be in one of three categories: (1) material was not included in any course, (2) one course or experience in the specified area was not sufficient, and (3) the manner in which the course was taught.

**Question 17**

What elements of your teacher preparation program have been of little value to you as a teacher?

Responses to this question were grouped into 10 categories. Table 12 shows the results of this grouping.

The respondents indicated that, in general, courses that stressed theory or content rather than application were viewed as being of little help. In addition, many of the respondents indicated that theory and methods classes often lacked relevance to the real classroom situation. Several respondents indicated that the manner in which the courses were taught caused them to respond as they did. Classes that primarily consisted of lectures rather than participation...
Table 12

Summary of Responses as to Preservice Preparation Areas That Were of Little Professional Help

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theory Courses</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods Courses</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other than Reading, Music, Social Studies</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Elementary Education Courses</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies Methods</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Methods</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Studies</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Methods</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Experiences</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major, Minor Areas</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response or Inappropriate Response</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents Indicating All Areas Were Helpful</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Total number of responses to this item = 222.
were viewed as being of little help by 22 of the respondents. It is interesting to note, however, that 31 respondents found all areas of their preservice preparation to be professionally helpful.

**Question 18**

What elements of your teacher preparation program have been helpful to you as a teacher?

Responses to this question were grouped into 15 categories. The categories and their corresponding frequencies and percentages are reported in Table 13.

The majority of respondents indicated that courses offering classroom experiences were helpful to them as teachers. Suggestions for providing more field experiences and a longer directed teaching experience were offered by many of the respondents. Included in the field experiences category were responses from nine respondents who participated either in the Urban, Kalamazoo, or Team Projects. All nine respondents reported their experiences have been very helpful.

Twelve respondents indicated that modeling of teaching techniques and the excellent teaching skill demonstrated by their professors were helpful to them as teachers.

To summarize, field experiences were viewed as being valuable. Extension of directed teaching experiences and additional
Table 13
Summary of Responses as to Preservice Preparation Areas That Were Professionally Helpful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Experiences&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art, Creative Arts, Drama</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Classes</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Methods</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Growth, Development, and Learning</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling by Professors</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified Methods Courses</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education for Teachers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-Visual Techniques</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Methods</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Methods</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of the Courses</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response or Inappropriate Response</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents Indicating No Area Helpful</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Total number of responses to this item = 222.

<sup>a</sup>Includes nine participants in Urban, Kalamazoo, and Team Projects.
pre-directed teaching classroom experiences were suggested. Courses that stressed application rather than content were considered to be helpful. Many of the respondents indicated that theory and methods courses lacked relevance to the real classroom situation. These results regarding the value of courses were consistent with the findings in studies by Hopkins (1970), Tobin (1970), Mattson (1972), Sanders (1972), and Frankel (1974). Areas of deficiencies reported were primarily in reading, behavior management, methods, field experiences, teaching students with special needs, classroom management, and parents/community/staff relations.

A summary of the findings of this investigation and a discussion of the indicated conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapter V.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of the study, discussion of the conclusions, and recommendations for further research are presented in this chapter.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between each of the six classroom environmental variables and teachers' perceptions regarding the adequacy of their classroom performance. The six environmental variables were: (a) language, (b) subcultural diversity of classroom students, (c) academic achievement, (d) geographic location, (e) socio-economic group, and (f) subcultural composition of the school. Also investigated were the relationships between teachers' perceptions of adequate classroom performance and the perceived adequacy of their professional education sequence at Western Michigan University. The four elements comprising the professional education sequence were: (a) human growth, development, and learning theory; (b) role of education in society; (c) methods of instruction; and (d) directed teaching.

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The population consisted of 369 graduates selected from the 1973-1974 academic year graduates of the Western Michigan University Elementary Teacher Education program. Selection for inclusion in the population was determined by the following criteria:

1. Completion of the Elementary Teacher Education program at Western Michigan University during the academic year 1973-1974.
2. Receipt of a Michigan Elementary Provisional Certificate.
3. Employment as an elementary teacher within the state of Michigan.

A 20-item questionnaire was designed to obtain teachers' perceptions of the adequacy of their own classroom performance, descriptive information of each of the environmental variables, and teachers' perceptions regarding the adequacy of each of the four elements comprising their professional education sequence. Three open-ended questions sought unstructured responses pertaining to those aspects of teacher preparation that were found by the respondents to be missing, of little value, or very helpful. The questionnaires were mailed to the selected graduates during the first week of March, 1977. A follow-up mailing was sent during April, 1977. Completed, usable questionnaires were received from 222, or 60 percent, of the 369 graduates surveyed.

The Fisher Exact test or the Chi Square test was used to test each of the null hypotheses corresponding to the subhypotheses of
the two major hypotheses.

Hypothesis one stated that each of the six classroom environmental variables is related to the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance. For this hypothesis and each of the six corresponding subhypotheses, the six environmental variables were the independent variables and the teacher's perception of adequate classroom performance was the dependent variable.

The second hypothesis stated that the teacher's perceived adequacy of classroom performance is related to perceived adequacy of preparation in each of the four elements of professional preparation. For this hypothesis and the four corresponding subhypotheses, the independent variable was the teacher's perceptions of adequate classroom performance, while the perceived adequacy of professional preparation was the dependent variable.

The responses to the three open-ended questions were summarized and reported.

The findings of this study are summarized by the following statements:

1. The hypothesized relationships between each of the environmental variables and teachers' perceptions of adequacy of classroom performance were not supported. However, the relationship between the environmental variable, language, and teachers' perceptions of adequate classroom performance approached significance (p = .10).
2. With respect to the four elements of professional preparation, relationships between teachers' perceived adequacy of classroom performance and perceptions regarding each element of professional preparations were not found. The hypothesis dealing with the relationship between the perceived adequacy of professional preparation in methods of instruction and teachers' perceptions of adequate classroom performance came closest to being supported ($p = .18$).

3. Reading was viewed as a major area of deficiency by 32 percent of the respondents. Additional required courses in reading were suggested.

4. Pupil behavior management was reported to be a deficient area by 31 percent of the respondents.

5. Other deficient areas indicated by the respondents were methods, field experiences, teaching students with special needs, classroom management, and parent/community/staff relations.

6. Field experiences were reported as being professionally helpful by 58 percent of the respondents. Additional field experiences prior to directed teaching were suggested.

7. Courses stressing theory or content were generally viewed as less helpful than courses stressing application.
Conclusions

It was expected that the presence of variability within each of the classroom environmental variables would result in low perceptions of adequate classroom performance reported by the respondents. However, no evidence was found that the environmental variables influence how teachers perceive their own classroom performance. Since in the case of the environmental variable, language, the expected relationship did approach significance, the writer questions the ability of the instrument, as designed, to accurately reflect the perceptions teachers hold regarding the adequacy of their classroom performance. A single questionnaire item was used to determine the teachers' perceptions. It now seems that this was too gross a measure. Perhaps the sensitivity of the instrument could have been increased by attempting to obtain the perceptions teachers hold regarding the adequacy of their classroom performance in specific areas. For example, a teacher might have reported a less than adequate perception of teaching performance in language arts, and this perception might have been related to the classroom presence of students who speak a language other than English. This approach should be explored before assuming, on the basis of the findings of this investigation, that the specified environmental variables and teachers' perceptions of
adequacy of classroom performance are not related.

The suspected inability of the instrument to accurately measure teachers' perceptions of adequate classroom performance would also be reflected in the findings regarding the relationship between teachers' perceived adequacy of classroom performance and the perceived adequacy of professional preparation. Before rejecting the possibility that teachers' perceptions of adequate classroom performance may affect the way in which professional preparation is perceived, the relationship should be re-examined using a more sensitive measure of teachers' perceived adequacy of classroom performance.

The lack of support for the hypothesized relationships may be due to another failing of the instrument. The possibility exists that self-reporting instruments conflict with the teachers' need to maintain a satisfactory level of professional self-esteem and, in fact, may be perceived as a threatening factor. This suggests the need for emphasizing the development of self-reporting and self-evaluating skills throughout the professional preparation program. Positive experiences with these techniques might enable the teacher to assess his/her classroom performance in terms of skills needed to more effectively work with classroom environmental variability. Self-evaluation skills might contribute to increasing teaching effectiveness and maintaining professional self-esteem.
The findings regarding those areas reported by the respondents to be missing, of little help, or very helpful are consistent with the findings reported by Hopkins (1970), Tobin (1970), Mattson (1972), Sanders (1972), and Frankel (1974). In general, suggestions for the improvement of teacher training programs would include the expansion of field experiences, the inclusion of additional skill oriented reading courses, the development of method courses that stress application rather than theory or content, and the inclusion of courses designed to facilitate the daily work of the teacher, such as behavior management, classroom management, teaching students with special needs, and parent/community/staff relations.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based upon the findings of this investigation, recommendations for further research are as follows:

1. Replication of this study should be undertaken using a more sensitive instrument to measure teachers' perceptions of adequate classroom performance.

2. Replication studies should utilize a data collection procedure that would insure a 100 percent response rate. In the event this is not possible, a follow-up study of the nonrespondents should be conducted.

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3. Studies should be conducted comparing the perceptions of classroom effectiveness of teachers who have been exposed to programs consisting of several field experiences encompassing a wide range of environmental variability with teachers that have completed the more traditional single field experience program.

4. Follow-up studies should be conducted to determine the perceptions of those graduates of Western Michigan University Elementary Teacher Education program who were employed as teachers but did not continue their teaching career.
REFERENCES


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QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: Please check the appropriate space or fill in the blank, as required.

1. Are you: _____ Black American _____ White American
   _____ Latino _____ Oriental
   _____ Other

2. How many years of full time classroom teaching experience have you had since graduation?
   _____ less than 1 year
   _____ 1 year but less than 2 years
   _____ 2 years but less than 3 years
   _____ 3 years or more

3. What grade are you currently teaching?
   _____ K _____ 4th _____ 8th
   _____ 1st _____ 5th _____ Special Education
   _____ 2nd _____ 6th _____ Others
   _____ 3rd _____ 7th (Specify _____)

4. How many students in your classroom?

5. Please indicate the number of students in your classroom in each of the following socio-economic groups:
   _____ Upper _____ Middle _____ Lower
   _____ Middle _____ Poverty

6. Please indicate the number of students in your classroom whose home lives reflect the following racial/national subcultures:
   _____ Black American _____ Oriental
   _____ White American _____ Middle Eastern
   _____ Latino _____ Other (Specify _____)

7. How many of the students in your classroom speak a language other than English? ________ (Specify ____________)
8. What is the geographic location of your school?

____ Inner city  ______ Suburban
____ Urban  ______ Rural

9. What is the subcultural composition of the students in your school?

____ More than 75% Black, Latino, or cultures other than White American
____ 51%-75% Black, Latino, or cultures other than White American
____ 26%-50% Black, Latino, or cultures other than White American
____ 25% or less Black, Latino, or cultures other than White American

10. Please list the number of students in your classroom in each grade achievement level. Please make sure that the total number of students listed corresponds to the total number of students in your classroom.

____ K   ______ 5th  ______ 10th
____ 1st  ______ 6th  ______ 11th
____ 2nd  ______ 7th  ______ 12th
____ 3rd  ______ 8th
____ 4th  ______ 9th

11. How adequate do you perceive your classroom performance?

____ Very Adequate  ______ Somewhat Adequate
____ Neither Adequate nor Inadequate
____ Somewhat Inadequate  ______ Very Inadequate

12. How adequate was your undergraduate preparation in human growth, development, and learning theory?

____ Very Adequate  ______ Somewhat Adequate
____ Neither Adequate nor Inadequate
____ Somewhat Inadequate  ______ Very Inadequate

13. How adequate was your undergraduate preparation in the role of education in society?
14. How adequate was your undergraduate preparation in methods of instruction?

15. How adequate was your undergraduate preparation in directed teaching?

16. In light of your recent teaching experience, what areas or specific skills were missing in your teacher preparation program?

17. What elements of your teacher preparation program have been of little value to you as a teacher?

18. What elements of your teacher preparation program have been helpful to you as a teacher?

19. Are there any other Western Michigan University graduates employed at your school? Yes No How many?

20. If you know, list the year those people graduated.
Dear ____________:

I am currently pursuing a Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership at Western Michigan University. As a doctoral student, I am studying the perceptions held by recent graduates of Western Michigan University Elementary Teacher Education program regarding classroom performance, adequacy of training, and selected environmental factors. I hope, with your help, to explore the relationship among these variables and to examine the findings in terms of possible implications for future program planning in teacher education at Western Michigan University.

The enclosed questionnaire will take no more than ten minutes of your time to answer. For your convenience, a stamped return envelope has been included.

You may have noticed that your questionnaire has a number in the upper right corner. This number will inform me that you have returned your questionnaire. Your number will then be destroyed. Since I will be the only person to see your completed questionnaire, I assure you that your response will remain confidential.

Sincerely,

Ione Wolf

Uldis Smidchens, Ph. D.
Associate Professor
Department of Educational Leadership
Elementary Education Class  
of 1973-74

Dear Graduate:

We need your help! The faculty of the Department of Teacher Education is working on a major revision of the elementary education curriculum. Ms. Ione Wolf's research project will provide very useful information about your perceptions of the preparation you received.

Please take a few moments to complete the questionnaire and return it to us. Your thoughts will be used to help reshape our program.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Best regards,

Thomas F. Ryan, Chairman  
Department of Teacher Education

TFR:st

Enclosure
March 30, 1977

Dear Fellow Teacher:

On February 28, 1977, a letter was sent to you requesting your participation in a study of recent graduates of Western Michigan University Elementary Teacher Education program. Enclosed was a questionnaire to be completed and returned to me. Your completed questionnaire has not yet been received. In the event it has been mislaid, I am enclosing a second questionnaire and stamped return envelope.

I hope you will take the few minutes necessary to complete the questionnaire and return it to me. Your reply is needed if this study is to have any impact on future program planning in teacher preparation.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Ione Wolf

Uldis Smidchens, Ph. D.
Associate Professor
Department of Educational Leadership

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MICHIGAN TEACHER CERTIFICATION CODE

Part 2. State Provisional Certificates

R 390.1123. Professional education.

Rule 23. (1) An applicant shall present evidence that he has completed 20 semester hours of theoretical and practical knowledge in the following fields:

(a) How human beings grow and how they learn.

(b) The structure, function and purposes of educational institutions in our society.

(c) The methods and materials of instruction appropriate to the elementary or secondary level.

(2) The applicant shall present evidence that he has participated under institutional supervision for a minimum of six semester hours (of the 20) in directed teaching at the level for which the certificate is granted.
