

The Emergence of a Novice Teacher Educator's Identity

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ABSTRACT: *Using a paradigm that sees identity as natural, institutional, discursive, and affinity, this self-study examines the developing identity of a first-time teacher educator. This approach allowed researchers to investigate how these different strands of identity interacted in a rookie teacher educator's classroom. This research, which takes place in an elementary social studies methods classroom, shows a variety of difficulties with the institutional power that comes with being a teacher educator. The process of negotiating institutionalized and systemic power within the classroom is discussed, as well as how preservice teachers perceive a novice teacher educator, the acknowledgment of lack of experience, and the process of negotiating institutionalized and systemic power within the classroom. The consequences of self-study work and mentoring first-time teacher educators are also discussed in the discussion section since this research included a mentor professor as a key friend. This self-study shows the significance of further complicating the developing and changing identities of new teacher educators, given the role of identity in influencing the practice of new teachers.*

KEYWORD: *Educator, Identity, Institution, Novice Teacher, Teacher.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The significance of identity in teachers' professional growth has long been recognized. "Developing an identity as a teacher is an essential element of ensuring instructors' commitment to their job and adherence to professional standards of practice," according to the study. We know relatively little about the identity formation of teacher educators, despite the fact that many teacher education programmes have purposefully focused on the development of various types of teaching identities [1]. The limited research on teacher educator identities is often due to factors such as the assumption that teacher education is self-evident work, the low status of teacher education within institutions of higher education, and the generally unclear distinction between what it means to be a teacher and what it means to be a teacher educator.

We know very little about the formation of new teacher educators' identities in particular. Teacher educators' identities, like those of teachers in general, influence their dispositions and adherence to particular standards within a teacher education programme. If we believe that a teacher education program's entire experience is inextricably linked to the manner in which teacher educators perform these dispositions, then identity development should be a top priority [2].

Furthermore, since new teacher educators are often pushed into roles with minimal training or support, they have little opportunity to examine the challenges of being a teacher educator. To put it another way, a common entry point into the field of teacher education is to force students to create a new professional identity while practicing for the first time. Given the uncertainty around what it means to be a teacher educator, first-time teacher educators have a major difficulty in balancing the unfamiliarity of their role, the discomfort of reframing their identities, and the responsibilities of training effective teachers [3].

This self-study analyses the experience of a graduate student (Joe) tasked with educating prospective teachers for the first time, in order to better understand the identities of rookie teacher educators. Joe, like many other beginner teacher educators, became a teacher educator when his institution, in this instance, his mentor professor, requested him to train preservice teachers (Alex). Joe examines the development of his identity as a teacher educator in this research [4].

This self-study was driven by the following research question, which was based on the work of academic, who defines identity as being identified as a "particular type of person in a certain situation." How does a first-time teacher educator's identity emerge? Given the paucity of research on the identities of rookie teacher educators, we believe that this study will add to the discussion about how new teacher educators build their identities and how programmes may help them do so [5].

We begin by reviewing the existing research on rookie teacher educators' experiences and difficulties. After that, we'll go over some background information regarding the study's setting. We next look at how different elements of Joe's identity interacted throughout his first semester as a teacher educator, using scholars' concept of identity as an analytic lens. Finally, the ramifications of this crossroads for other first-time teacher educators are discussed. This self-study serves to highlight the significance of further complicating the developing and changing identities of new teacher educators, given the role of identity in molding the practice of new teachers [6].

1.1 The Growing Body of Knowledge:

Although the study on how to become a teacher educator is limited, it has given valuable insights into the process. Researchers have recently shed light on a series of complex and difficult tasks that must be completed in order to become a teacher educator:

1. Reexamining prior identities,
2. Navigating the institutional contexts in which teacher educators work, and
3. Constructing a new professional identity as a teacher educator. This framework is used in our review, which briefly examines these topics and their consequences [7].

1.2 Identities Entangled:

The reevaluation of one's professional identity is a frequent theme in the literature on teacher educators. Many studies highlight the propensity to see oneself as a teacher rather than a teacher educator since so many teacher educators were previously practicing teachers. As a result, many new teacher educators arrive in their new positions with strong identities as K–12 educators. These identities are likely to influence and drive their pedagogical choices as teacher educators, at least at first. Beginning teacher educators struggle to reestablish their professional identity; maybe more correctly, they battle to resituate their professional identity, relying on previous classroom experiences to guide their work in the university environment [8].

As a result, the issue arises: to what degree should K–12 teaching influence one's pedagogy in teacher education? As a result of this conflict, it seems that many new teacher educators are struggling with their self-perceived levels of competence and authority in their new positions. "Maintaining a teacher identity is extremely essential since many starting teacher educators viewed this as part of their professional credibility in the eyes of pre-service teachers and mentor teachers in schools," according to the researchers. "A starting teacher educator who has been a successful school teacher may feel an overwhelming desire to provide current and relevant teaching experiences to student teachers so that what they are doing (their teaching) would seem important and relevant," researchers say. However, academics believe that this "tips and tricks" approach to teacher education is problematic, since it may reinforce the idea that teaching is all about "tricks" and "keeping pupils amused while learning." Many new teacher educators have said that they rely on their K–12 teaching experiences as the source of their authority or credibility in their new position [9].

The question therefore becomes how to utilize classroom experiences to inform rather than dictate a developing teacher educator methodology. There are accompanying "waves of self-doubt," according to the study. With this uncertainty, many starting teacher educators seem to feel compelled to depend on their personal classroom experiences rather than forging a new professional identity in order to retain confidence and credibility. According to experts, sticking to one's identity as a K–12 teachers, on the other hand, may lead to conservatism in teacher education. While these identities are not mutually incompatible, it is essential to realize that they are distinct professional identities that need a rethinking of identity [8].

1.3 Academic Pressures:

The literature shows another conflict among the difficulties of establishing one's professional identity: academic enculturation. Many beginners in the field of teacher education express bewilderment and disappointment with the new world of academics. Beginning teacher educators, as scholar notes, "face unexpected shifts, and the rigors of their position may initially lead them to struggle with university culture's expectations."

The numerous expectations that graduate-student teacher-educators are required to fulfil, including teaching, supervising student teachers, and developing relationships with practicum schools and cooperating teachers, are revealed by researchers. Beginning teacher educators are required to position themselves inside the institutional

political and power systems, in addition to the workload. Beginning teacher educators (both graduate students and new faculty) deal with the pressure to study and publish, particularly while seeking tenure, with little or no assistance [10].

During their first years as teacher educators at competitive, research-driven universities, many new teacher educators struggle to develop their new identities as scholars. Perhaps the development of self-study literature, especially collaborative self-studies, offers a venue for the alleviation of this conflict, as has been suggested [11].

Beginning teacher educators may meet specific research demands and externalize the aforementioned change in professional identities via the self-study process, while also reconciling the emotions of loneliness and isolation that many students experience. After that, new teacher educators are given a safe place in which to identify, evaluate, and interpret their experiences in their new position. To put it another way, self-study provides a chance to make up for the absence of structured induction programmes or procedures for starting teacher educators.

1.4 Learning Context:

In part due to the fact that there is usually no direction or formal introduction, learning to educate instructors is frequently a process of trial and error. Numerous rookie teacher educators have shared their thoughts on the process of finding out how to educate teachers, the process of establishing their pedagogy as teacher educators, and the trial-and-error method that they used in their journey to become teacher educators. Learning while in practice is closely linked to the previously mentioned difficulty of creating a new professional identity as well as the difficulties individuals encounter while they are engaged in academics, all of which have been addressed before. As previously stated, many rookie teacher educators have a propensity to depend on the pedagogy they previously acquired while working as K–12 teachers [12].

Researchers have discovered the significance of a structured curriculum in the preparation of future teachers. Additionally, scholars investigate the significance of pedagogy in the context of teacher education. Having said that, it is critical for teacher educators to develop and implement a personal pedagogy; nevertheless, this process seems to take place mostly during the course of their teaching instructors, rather than before. First-year teacher educators' work reflects the tensions and difficulties they experience as they navigate their developing professional identities and disputes within academics, as well as the challenges they face when they begin their careers [13].

In many cases, the disconnects between a new teacher educator's K–12 pedagogies and the requirements of a university-based teacher education programme provide a challenging setting in which to define and develop one's professional practice. Create environments in which new teacher educators may critically assess and revise their developing pedagogy of teacher education, while also recognizing and exploring the variables that affect one's own unique pedagogy[14], [15].

Using the material reviewed above, this research is able to contextualize and position itself within the growing dialogue in the self-study community about the act of becoming a teacher educator. Overall, this self-study not only builds on previous research, but it also helps to engage people in a dialogue about their experiences. The difficulties and conflicts Joe experienced as a first-time teacher educator connected with the literature in many ways, and this research provides light on additional subtleties in the identity formation of a rookie teacher educator in other important ways as well. As a result of participating in this dialogue, this self-study contributes to the collection of information about this critical stage in the development of teachers and teacher educators.

2. DISSCUSION

In many respects, my N-identity remained unnoticed during the course of the research. The reflection diary only sometimes addressed the role that my gender identification had in the development of the course. In most cases, it was in relation to my age when it was brought up. As a result, my gendered identification seems to have been handled as if it were a non-issue when I was putting the course together. With that stated, the component of my N-identity that dominated my pre-enactment thinking was the perceived closeness of my age to the age of conventional undergraduates, which was a component of my N-identity that I found most compelling.

In the course design process, I stated, "I don't want to take myself too seriously," and that was the guiding principle. I consider myself to be a peer - someone who is both youthful and inexperienced. As a result, I don't want to come off as superior." Although there was a two-year age difference between my pupils and myself, the

gap became a cause of concern as I struggled to establish my identity as a teacher educator in the days leading up to my assignment.

When it came to the actual enactment of the N-identity that of a 23-year-old man the data showed that my male identity was seldom recognized by the participants. In the same way that my pre-enactment diaries were focused on my age rather than my maleness, my attention throughout the semester was focused on my age rather than my maleness. The fact that I was so close in age to my pupils gave me a lot of self-doubt. However, in many respects, it seems that my concern with both my D- and A-identities was a contributing factor to the emphasis on my age.

Having the impression that there was minimal relative age difference was closely linked to my desire to be laid-back, which helped me to enhance my existing personality characteristics when I interacted with "peers." Additionally, I believed I was still a preservice teacher because of my lack of teaching experience as well as my young age. While I was well aware of and somewhat uncomfortable about – my age, I stayed preoccupied with my D- and A-identities, rather than my chronological age.

Furthermore, throughout the semester, the presumption that my gender had no bearing on my performance as a course teacher was reinforced. During a lecture on gender problems in society and women in history – or, more correctly, the historic lack of women from history curriculum – any ideas about speaking for women as a man before a female-dominated class were negligible. The underlying message is that, although gendered systems may be at play, any effect on the job of a university teacher is tangential at best, at worst catastrophic.

I have an issue with the lack of information about my identity as a man what I call my N-identity. When it comes to social worth, my gender is the most important the value placed on my gender exceeds any perceived value placed on being laid-back or lacking experience, or even being 23 years old. To be clear, unearned power is often ignored since it is difficult to maintain constant awareness of the manner in which such power is being used. Elementary education, on the other hand, is heavily gendered. Women dominate the field of primary teaching, according to statistical data; males dominate the area of university instruction, according to the same data. Following this pattern, I worked as a male teacher who mostly instructed ladies.

In accordance with Gee's theory, my identity as a 23-year-old man most likely impacted how I behaved and was seen in the classroom, but I failed to recognize what it meant to be a young, male teacher educator in that environment. It was essential for me to investigate and examine the intersections of age and gender with my job as a teacher educator. Despite this, I was frequently blind to the ways in which my age and gender affected and impacted the classroom experiences. I inadvertently brought up a recent incident that one of my kids had a personal connection to while I was researching how instructors cope with sorrow in the primary classroom.

Researchers had unintentionally brought up a painful memory from her life, which she had forgotten about. As the conversation progressed, I saw her going out of the room, tears streaming down her face. I was uncertain of how to react at the moment, but I was also very embarrassed for having elicited such strong feelings. When I later discussed the class period, my conversation was dominated by my A-belief identity's that I lacked the necessary experience to teach my students how to successfully deal with tragedy, as evidenced by my own inability to successfully respond to the tragedy in my own classroom, and my D-belief identity's that this student's obvious emotions were detrimental to the desired laid-back, easygoing classroom environment that I was attempting to create. I had to leave the room at one point to locate her, and I happened to run into her in the corridor just as she was about to rejoin the classroom. I apologized to her and had a short conversation with her. As a 23-year-old man, however, I failed to see how my identity as a consequence of my gender impacted that conversation, or even how this student felt as a result of my gender identification.

3. CONCLUSION

We think that a greater focus on community should be placed on teacher education in order to expand the opportunities for future teachers. Joe was unable to properly anticipate and comprehend the event, which resulted in his losing his sense of self. While this self-study helped him to develop his critical thinking and problem-solving skills over the semester, he also felt separated from the rest of the class. However, first-time teacher educators (and, to some extent, experienced teacher educators) should be surrounded by like-minded people who can serve as both critical friends and supportive members of a community of practice. Peers who are also negotiating transitions into teacher school – and who have had similar restricted experiences – may help to

mitigate the waves of self-doubt and uncertainty that can come with this stage of their careers. The formation of one's identity should not take place in solitude, but rather via contact and cooperation with others. It is important to create a feeling of community among first-year teacher educators in order to relieve and evaluate the tensions that they experience.

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