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## Table of Contents

<u>Title, Author(s)</u>	<u>Page #</u>
The Relationship Between Cooperating Teachers' Preferred Leadership Style and Student Teachers' Satisfaction Level.....	3
<i>Gaea Hock, Mississippi State University; Todd Brashears, Texas Tech University; Scott Burris, Texas Tech University</i>	

# **The Relationship Between Cooperating Teachers' Preferred Leadership Style and Student Teachers' Satisfaction Level**

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## **Abstract**

*Improving the student teaching semester has been a topic of interest in this profession for many years. The relationship between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher is an important variable in the efforts to improve the student teaching experience. Understanding the impact that leadership style may have on that relationship is a needed area of research. The purposes of this study were to describe characteristics of the student teachers, their level of satisfaction with their cooperating teacher, the cooperating teacher's preferred leadership style and the relationship between the cooperating teacher's preferred leadership style and the student teacher's level of satisfaction. Twenty-nine cooperating teachers (63%) completed the ELSI-AG and nineteen student teachers completed an instrument designed to measure satisfaction (100%). The majority of cooperating teachers preferred the supporting leadership style ( $n = 21$ ). The student teachers were satisfied with their cooperating teacher ( $M = 5.60$ ). There was a moderate positive correlation ( $r = .33$ ) between the supporting leadership style and overall perceived satisfaction. More research is recommended to evaluate the student teachers' development level throughout the student teaching semester. Also it is recommended to train cooperating teachers how to utilize the Situational Leadership Model.*

## **Introduction/Need for Study**

In the United States, highly qualified teachers are needed in every area of education. Each year, more than 150,000 public school teachers are hired to fill the vacancies (Hussar, 1998). New teachers are needed to replace those leaving for other jobs or retiring, and to fill the additional classrooms caused by increasing student enrollment (Ingersoll, 2003).

There has been a teacher shortage in agricultural education since the late 1960s (Kantrovich, 2007). Many studies have been conducted on the issue of teacher retention and recruitment in the agricultural education field (Cole, 1984; Edwards & Briers, 2001; Flowers & Pepple, 1988; Grady, 1988; Moore & Camp, 1979; Walker, Garton, & Kitchel, 2004). Kantrovich (2007) reported previous studies have concluded the deficiency of agricultural teachers entering the profession may be due to the low percentage of graduates who actually decide to enter the profession upon finishing their degree. The persistent loss of prospective teachers will continue to create shortages in the field.

The student teaching semester has been identified as a key element in determining the success of student teachers and their decision to enter the profession (Deeds, Flowers, & Arrington, 1991; Grimmatt & Ratzlaff, 1986; Norris, Larke, & Briers, 1990; Schumacher & Johnson, 1990; Schuman, 1969). One of the key components of the student teaching semester is the relationship that exists between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. Past studies in the

agricultural education field recognize the importance of this relationship (Barnes & Camp, 2002; Deeds, 1993; Deeds, Flowers, & Arrington, 1991; Edwards & Briers, 2001; Moss & Rome, 1990; Norris, Larke, & Briers, 1990; Roberts, 2006).

One of the variables that may affect the relationship between the two parties is the leadership style of the cooperating teacher. Northouse (2010) defined leadership style as the actual behaviors leaders utilize. When discussing leadership styles, there are two main types of behaviors: task behaviors and relationship behaviors (Northouse, 2010). Hersey and Blanchard (1993) applied the two types of behaviors to develop the Situational Leadership Model. The model is tied to the situational approach, which is concerned with a leader's behavior in a variety of situations (Northouse, 2010).

While it is imperative researchers continue to determine causes of attrition in beginning teachers, it is also important to begin developing interventions designed to slow the exodus of teachers from the field. An area of focus should be on improving the student teaching experience in an effort to increase the percent of new teachers who choose to enter the profession immediately after graduation. Studying the impact of the cooperating teacher's preferred leadership style on the satisfaction of the student teacher during their intern semester is one area to investigate in an effort to enhance the student teaching experience.

### **Literature Review/Theoretical Framework**

More graduates choosing to enter the teaching profession would immediately provide some relief from the effects of the teacher shortage. One very important step to increase the number of graduates who choose to teach after graduation is to work to guarantee the student teaching semester is successful and they are satisfied with the experience (Norris, Larke & Briers, 1990). The student teaching semester allows students to improve their abilities and enhance teacher efficacy (Knobloch, 2002; Roberts, Harlin & Ricketts, 2006) which can help encourage them to enter the teaching profession after graduation. Moss and Rome (1990) reported:

First year teachers, university supervisors, and cooperating classroom teachers were generally pleased with the student teaching experiences. First year teachers agree most strongly that student teaching was a positive experience. All three groups agreed student teaching was the most valuable component of the teacher education program (p. 31).

Researchers in the profession of Agricultural Education have often noted the importance of the relationship between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher in terms of a successful experience (Harlin, Edwards, & Briers, 2002; Kitchel & Torres, 2006; Roberts, 2006; Young & Edwards, 2006). Multiple studies have researched the impact the cooperating teacher has on the student teacher's sense of satisfaction and success with the teaching intern experience (Deeds, Flowers, & Arrington, 1991; Edwards & Briers, 2001; Garton & Cano, 1996; Harlin, Edwards, & Briers, 2002; Schumacher & Johnson, 1990).

Prior research in the discipline of Agricultural Education has focused on how personality types impact the cooperating teacher/student teacher relationship. Kitchel (2005) studied the personality type of the cooperating teacher and student teacher to learn if the relationship was

impacted due to the personality type of the two parties. He used the MBTI® (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) to determine the personality type. A person can be categorized into 16 types after completing the MBTI®. Kitchel (2005) stated the personality type of the cooperating teacher had little influence on the psychosocial functions, amount of assistance needed and provided, and barriers to success. Kitchel went on to state that “personality type similarity is not influential in determining perceived similarity and satisfaction of interaction” (p.137).

Leadership styles research has been used to study the job satisfaction of teachers in reference to the leadership style of their principal (Heller, Clay, & Perkins, 1993), but little work has been published on leadership style within the Agricultural Education profession in reference to teachers. The research has focused on the personality type of the cooperating teacher as a factor for satisfaction of student teachers (Kitchel, 2005; Kitchel & Torres, 2006) which is not the same as leadership style.

Satisfaction of the student teacher-cooperating teacher relationship has been studied by Kitchel (2005). He conducted a thorough literature review and included psychosocial functions that are important in a mentoring relationship. Kitchel (2005) described each of the five psychosocial functions based on prior literature (Hall, 1986; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). The five functions are: 1) acceptance (the amount of support given to the student teacher to develop their self-confidence), 2) counseling (the rapport built between the two and the ability to work through problems), 3) friendship (caring about the other individual in ways outside of the normal work experience), 4) role modeling (the demonstration of acceptable behaviors and skills that will help the other individual develop) 5) social (the amount of interaction the two parties had outside the normal work environment) (Kitchel, 2005).

This study was structured around multiple theoretical perspectives. The initial theoretical framework for this research study was built upon the situational approach, specifically Hersey & Blanchard’s Model of Situational Leadership (see Figure 1.)



Figure 1. Modified Model of Situational Leadership Theory.

This approach to leadership requires the leader to adapt to the needs of the follower depending on the situation. The model has two main components: leadership style and follower development. The first part of the model focuses on the leader and the two types of behavior they could exhibit when working with followers. Four fundamental leadership styles are identified from the combination of the two leadership behaviors: supportive (relationship) and directive (task). (Northouse, 2010) “A person’s leadership style involves some combination of task behavior and relationship behavior” (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993, p. 129). The four leadership styles are: Directive, Coaching, Supporting, and Delegating. The relationship between the level of directive and supportive behaviors exhibited by the leader is the measurement used to identify the leadership style of the leader in the model (Northouse, 2010).

The second component of the model is the level of follower development which will vary due to the competence and commitment of the follower on any given task. Followers should move from a D1 (low development) to a D4 (high development) as their level of commitment and competence on a specific task increases. For the purposes of this study, it was assumed student teachers were in the D1 category because they are excited and committed to doing a good job, but lack the competence to perform the job without guidance from the cooperating teacher. As the follower learns more about the job, they can move through the levels until they reach the highest level possible (Northouse, 2010).

Hersey & Blanchard (1993) theorized leaders who consciously match their leadership style to the development level of the follower will produce employees who are more satisfied and competent in their job functions, resulting in more productivity, higher employee morale and lower turnover rates. The leader’s preferred leadership style does not always match the follower’s development. This is the key reason to use this model to study the relationship between the cooperating teacher’s preferred leadership style and the student teacher’s satisfaction. As follower development increases with experience and self-confidence, the leader is able to shift leadership style from left to right across the continuum. Ultimately, the goal is to increase the development level to D4, allowing the leader the ability to delegate most activities to the follower.

Another theory used to evaluate satisfaction was the expectation disconfirmation theory (EDT). EDT was developed by Oliver (1977) as a theory on consumer satisfaction after a purchasing decision. The theory focuses on the idea that individuals have expectations about a product or service and after the performance of those items they are either satisfied or dissatisfied with the decision or experience. Disconfirmation can be either positive or negative which will impact the satisfaction (“Expectation Disconfirmation Theory”, 2005).

In this research, EDT was used to determine if the needs of the student teacher were met by the cooperating teacher. The student teacher may report their needs were not met (negative disconfirmation) or their needs were met (positive disconfirmation). If there is positive disconfirmation then satisfaction was achieved, a negative disconfirmation indicates satisfaction was not achieved.

## Purpose & Objectives

There is a need to improve the student teaching semester in an effort to better prepare and encourage teacher candidates to enter the classroom after graduation. The *National Research Agenda: American Association for Agricultural Education's Research Priority Areas for 2011-2015* (Doerfert, 2011) recognized this need in Priority Area 3 “we must be able to better understand the models, strategies, and tactics needed to best prepare, promote, and retain new professionals” (p. 20). Research is needed to better understand the impact of the cooperating teacher's preferred leadership style on the student teacher's satisfaction level. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between the cooperating teacher's preferred leadership style and the satisfaction level of the student teacher. This study will enable researchers to better understand the unique impact leadership style may have on satisfaction in this setting.

The research objectives were:

1. Describe characteristics of the student teachers during the 2010 Spring Semester.
2. Quantify satisfaction level of student teachers following the student teaching experience.
3. Identify the preferred leadership style of cooperating teachers as measured by the ELSI-AG.
4. Determine relationship between cooperating teachers' preferred leadership style and student teachers satisfaction level.

## Methodology

This study was a non-experimental quantitative study using descriptive-correlation data to describe the leadership preference of cooperating teachers based on Hersey & Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model (1993), the satisfaction level of the student teacher, and the relationship between those two factors.

Two target populations existed for this study. The first consisted of the agricultural science instructors in Texas who served as cooperating teachers during the spring semester of 2010 ( $N = 46$ ) for student teachers at Texas Tech University. These teachers were purposively selected as cooperating teachers based on the characteristics of their program, their willingness to participate and the accessibility of their location. All teachers included in this study had previously served as a cooperating teacher on one or more occasions. The response rate for the ELSI-AG was 63% ( $n = 29$ ). The number of cooperating teachers who completed the instrument ( $n = 29$ ) was larger than the number of student teachers ( $N = 19$ ) due to several cooperating teachers at each school completing the online instrument.

The second target population consisted of the college students participating in the spring 2010 student teaching block at Texas Tech University ( $N = 19$ ). A census of all student teachers in this semester was conducted. The student teachers were traditional certification students who were completing the last semester of their four year program.

Two instruments were used to gather the data for this research study. The cooperating teachers completed the Educational Leadership Style Indicator – Agricultural Science Teacher Version

(ELSI-AG) developed by Wimmer, Brashears, and Burris (2010) after an extensive literature review of Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969a; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969b; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Hersey & Blanchard, 1988; Hersey & Blanchard, 1993).

Cooperating teachers were asked to complete the ELSI-AG in order to determine their preferred leadership style. The instrument includes 20 scenario items specific to the profession of agricultural education, with four possible responses, one for each style in the model. Respondents must select the response they would most likely perform in the given scenario. Responses for the 20 items are recorded and the preferred leadership style of the teacher is determined according to Hersey & Blanchard's model. Each teacher is categorized as a Director, Supporter, Coach or Delegator based on the category with the highest total.

The student teachers completed the Mentoring Relationship Questionnaire (MRQ) developed by Greiman (2002) for use with mentor teachers and beginning teachers, then further modified by Kitchel (2005). The modified MRQ was used to assess the satisfaction level of the student teacher with his or her cooperating teacher.

Section A consisted of 15 statements related to the psychosocial support the cooperating teacher provided the student teacher. Participants were asked to respond using a 7 point Likert-type scale with a range from 1 = *not at all* to 7 = *very large extent*. Section B consisted of 28 roles and responsibilities of agriculture teachers. Participants responded by rating the amount of assistance they needed on 28 items using a 5-point Likert-type scale with a range from 1 = *never* to 5 = *considerable*. They also responded in connection to their level of satisfaction with the amount of assistance they received on the same 28 items. They used a 5-point Likert-type scale with a range from 1 = *very dissatisfied* to 5 = *very satisfied*.

Section C was made up of two parts. Burris, Kitchel, Greiman, and Torres (2006) described this section of the MRQ as the similarity between the two parties in the relationship, in this case, the student teacher and cooperating teacher. The results of this part are not included in this manuscript. The second part of section C was another satisfaction component focused on the overall interaction between the two individuals. Participants provided their opinion using a 7-point Likert-type scale with a range from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

Section D asked student teachers open-ended questions about the benefits they received from working with their cooperating teacher and barriers to having a more successful student teaching experience. They also answered a question about their future plans to teach high school agriculture. These results are not provided in this manuscript. Finally, section E collected demographic information from the students in reference to their school (size, number of instructors in the Ag Ed Program, number of students enrolled in the program) and personal information (age, gender, times per week and hours per week they met with their cooperating teacher).

The reliability of the MRQ was determined by Greiman (2002) and confirmed by Kitchel (2005). Greiman (2002) calculated a Cronbach's alpha for three of the sections; psychosocial functions (.97), perceived similarity (.98) and perceived satisfaction (.99). The student teachers completed

the modified MRQ in person at the completion of the student teaching semester when they were on campus for the wrap-up meeting.

Cooperating teachers were contacted three times via email during the spring 2010 semester. The first contact was made one week prior to the release of the ELSI-AG instrument in an effort to introduce them to the research. Participants were then emailed access to the online instrument during the first week of March. Follow-up reminders were sent, via email, to teachers who had not completed the instrument by late April. In the case of multiple teacher programs, cooperating teachers were asked to identify who the primary supervisor of the student teacher was when filling out the instrument.

Data were analyzed using appropriate statistics within SPSS version 17.0. Data were summarized using measures of central tendency and variability. Cooperating teachers were categorized into one of four preferred leadership styles using the sum function within SPSS. The style receiving the largest number of responses on the ELSI-AG was determined to be the cooperating teacher's preferred leadership style. This was recorded as categorical data.

Student teacher responses to Likert-type items were recorded as numerical data in SPSS. Section A consisted of five constructs tied to the psychosocial functions. The student teachers disconfirmation scores were calculated from their scores on the amount of support needed compared to the amount of support received (section B of the instrument). Overall perceived satisfaction with the cooperating teacher relationship was calculated through mean scores from the second part of section C. Student teachers also provided demographic data.

## Findings

The first objective was to describe characteristics of the student teachers during the 2010 spring semester. The majority (63.2%,  $n = 12$ ) of the population were female. The majority of student teachers (63.2 %,  $n = 12$ ) were in a 1A or 2A size school, with two students (10.5%) at 3A, one student (5.3%) at a 4A, and four students (21.1%) at 5A size schools. The size of school is determined by the number of students enrolled Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The following are the enrollment breakdowns: 1A = 199 students and below, 2A = 200-429, 3A = 430-989, 4A = 990-2064, 5A = 2065 students and above. The average student teacher age was 22.63 ( $SD = 1.92$ ) with the majority of student teachers ( $n = 16$ ) being between 21-23 years of age.

Objective two sought to determine the satisfaction level of student teachers. Each of the 19 students completed the modified MRQ, resulting in a 100% response rate. There were three separate measures of satisfaction within the instrument. The first component sought to measure the satisfaction in terms of the degree the student teacher's psychosocial functions were met by the cooperating teacher. This consisted of five constructs with three items for each construct. Each construct was totaled to report a mean score for the population for each of the five constructs. On a scale from 1 to 7, the five psychosocial functions received the following mean scores: social ( $M = 3.37$ ), acceptance ( $M = 5.38$ ), counseling ( $M = 5.37$ ), friendship ( $M = 5.10$ ), and role model ( $M = 4.46$ ). The five constructs were totaled to yield the overall psychosocial score which ranged from 6.00 to 33.33 ( $M = 23.68$ ,  $SD = 8.19$ ). These scores can be seen on Table 1.

The second component used to measure satisfaction related to the disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1977). The disconfirmation score sought to examine the amount of support needed by the student (scale of 1-5) compared to the amount they received (scale of 1-5) on 28 specific items. Each item score was calculated by subtracting the amount of assistance needed from the amount of assistance provided. This resulting score would indicate negative values when the amount of assistance needed was more than provided. In turn, it was positive when the amount of assistance provided was more than what was needed. The scores ranged from -31.00 to 85.00 ( $M = 45.62$ ,  $SD = 33.78$ ).

The third component was the level of satisfaction the student teacher perceived they received from the relationship with their cooperating teacher(s). The range of scores for the five items on the instrument was 1.00 to 7.00 ( $M = 5.60$ ,  $SD = 1.79$ ). Scores for all measures of satisfaction can be seen on Table 1.

Table 1  
*Satisfaction Level of Student Teachers (N = 19)*

	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Psychosocial <sup>1</sup>	6.00	34.00	23.68	8.19
Social <sup>2</sup>	1.00	7.00	3.37	2.30
Acceptance <sup>2</sup>	1.00	7.00	5.38	1.64
Counseling <sup>2</sup>	1.00	7.00	5.37	1.60
Friendship <sup>2</sup>	1.00	7.00	5.10	1.66
Role Model <sup>2</sup>	1.00	7.00	4.46	1.83
Disconfirmation <sup>3</sup>	-31.00	85.00	45.62	33.78
Perceived Satisfaction <sup>4</sup>	1.00	7.00	5.60	1.79

<sup>1</sup>Sum of the five constructs below.

<sup>2</sup>Likert scale with 1 = *Not at all* and 7 = *Very Large Extent*

<sup>3</sup>Calculated index. Dual column Likert-type items. Needed assistance (1=Never and 5=Considerable) subtracted from Assistance received (1=Very Dissatisfied and 5=Very Satisfied) and summed across 28 items.

<sup>4</sup>Likert scale with 1 = Strongly Disagree and 7 = Strongly Agree

The third objective was to identify the preferred leadership style of cooperating teachers as measured by the ELSI-AG. The response rate for the cooperating teachers was 63% ( $n = 29$ ). Preferred leadership style was calculated using a summation of responses from the 20 scenario items and totaling the responses from each of the four leadership styles. The leadership style which received the most responses for each individual was used as the preferred leadership style (Table 2). The majority (72.4%,  $n = 21$ ) of cooperating teachers were classified in the supporting style.

Table 2

*Most Preferred Leadership Style of Cooperating Teacher (n = 29)*

Leadership Style	Frequency	Percent
Directing	3	10.3
Coaching	5	17.2
Supporting	21	72.4
Delegating	0	0

The fourth objective was to determine the relationship between cooperating teacher's preferred leadership style and student teacher's satisfaction level. The cooperating teacher and student teacher had to be paired in order to determine the relationship. Of the cooperating teachers ( $n = 29$ ) who completed the instrument, 17 identified themselves as the primary supervisor of the student teacher. Therefore, the total number of pairs was 17. Two student teachers' cooperating teachers did not complete the ELSI-AG and were not included in the relationship analysis.

Spearman Rank-Order Correlations were calculated using the Most Preferred Leadership Style (categorical) and the score for each of the satisfaction scales and subscales (interval) (Table 3.) The magnitude of the relationship is defined based on Davis (1971) descriptions. The correlation between the preferred leadership style and the acceptance function was positive moderate ( $r = .39$ ) as was the correlation between preferred leadership style and perceived satisfaction ( $r = .33$ ). All of the other correlations were low or negligible. All correlations were positive, with the exception of role model which was a negative low correlation.

Table 3

*Spearman Rank-Order Correlation between Satisfaction Items and Most Preferred Leadership Style (n = 17)*

	Preferred Leadership Style
Psychosocial	.23
Acceptance	.39
Counseling	.29
Friendship	.27
Social	.01
Role Model	-.16
Disconfirmation	.22
Perceived Satisfaction	.33

Each score for the four styles of cooperating teacher preferred leadership style was also correlated to the scales and subscales of student teacher satisfaction (Table 4). Correlations were

positive and moderate between the supporting leadership style and acceptance ( $r = .41$ ), counseling ( $r = .44$ ), and friendship ( $r = .37$ ) functions; disconfirmation ( $r = .42$ ) and perceived satisfaction ( $r = .42$ ). The relationship between the coaching leadership style and the same measurements yielded negative moderate correlations; acceptance ( $r = -.39$ ), counseling ( $r = -.31$ ), and friendship ( $r = -.39$ ) functions; disconfirmation ( $r = -.46$ ), and perceived satisfaction ( $r = -.40$ ). All other correlations were either positive or negative low or negligible relationships.

Table 4

*Correlations between Satisfaction Measurements and Categorical Leadership Style (n = 17)*

	Directing	Coaching	Supporting	Delegating
Psychosocial	-.17	-.29	.28	-.01
Social	-.02	-.07	-.05	.23
Acceptance	-.22	-.39	.41	-.07
Counseling	-.28	-.31	.44	-.17
Friendship	-.14	-.39	.37	-.13
Role Model	-.16	-.20	.23	-.02
Disconfirmation	-.11	-.46	.42	-.18
Perceived Satisfaction	-.18	-.40	.42	-.15

### Conclusions/Implications/Recommendations

The first objective described the characteristics of the student teacher population for the Spring 2010 semester. The population was similar in demographics of previous teaching blocks at Texas Tech University the last few years. Generally, the population is a 22 year-old female who student taught in a 1A or 2A size school. The researchers recognize the small population size in this study is a limiting factor however; several important conclusions should lead to expanded research in this area. The student teaching population was small, but representative in gender, age and intent to teach as previous teaching blocks at the same university. Kennedy, Ricketts, & Duncan (2011) said “agricultural education majors are very similar from one teacher education institution to another,” which could allow for some generalization to occur for the development of interventions.

The student teachers’ levels of satisfaction based on their responses to the MRQ were broken down into three components. The first component measured the level of satisfaction in relationship to how well the cooperating teacher met the psychosocial needs of the student teacher. The highest mean scores were on the *acceptance* ( $M = 5.38$ ), *counseling* ( $M = 5.37$ ) and *friendship* ( $M = 5.10$ ) functions. The social function ( $M = 3.37$ ) was below the mid-range score,

which could indicate that the cooperating teacher did not interact with the student teacher in any social gatherings outside of the normal activities expected during the student teaching semester.

The disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1977) was used to evaluate if the amount of support needed by the student teacher was adequately/inadequately provided by the cooperating teacher. The student teachers reported a range of disconfirmation scores of -31.00 to 85.00 ( $M = 45.62$ ,  $SD = 33.78$ ). This indicates that there was at least one student teacher who received less support than they needed on the 28 items on the instrument while one student had a very high disconfirmation score of 85.00 illustrating an abundance of support. A score of zero on this item would indicate that the exact amount of support required by the student teacher was in turn provided by the cooperating teacher. The mean score of 45.62 communicates that the majority of student teachers had an overabundance of support provided.

The third component used to evaluate satisfaction level of the student teacher was the overall perceived satisfaction they received from the relationship with their cooperating teacher(s). The mean score of 5.60 ( $SD = 1.79$ ) indicates that the student teachers were satisfied with the overall interaction.

It was determined cooperating teachers largely preferred to exhibit the supporting leadership style ( $n = 21$ ). This style utilizes high relationship and low task behaviors and is best suited when working with D3 followers who are able to perform the tasks, but need a little encouragement and guidance. (The student teachers in this study were assumed to be D1, having low competence and commitment to achieve the tasks.) The ultimate goal of situational leadership theory is to match the style to the current situation, not to operate in a preferred style in all situations. Cooperating teachers should evaluate the development level of the cooperating teacher and utilize the corresponding leadership style to best meet the needs of the student teacher.

Pairs of student teacher-cooperating teacher ( $n = 17$ ) were used to determine the relationship between of the cooperating teacher's preferred leadership style on the satisfaction level of the student teacher. The data analysis resulted in a positive moderate relationship between the preferred leadership style and overall perceived satisfaction ( $r = .33$ ) of the student teacher. This indicates that as a group the student teachers were satisfied with the level of acceptance shown by their cooperating teachers as well as overall satisfaction with their cooperating teacher.

When the specific leadership styles were correlated with the satisfaction measurements, there was a positive moderate relationship between the supporting leadership style and *acceptance* ( $r = .41$ ), *counseling* ( $r = .44$ ), and *friendship* ( $r = .37$ ) functions; disconfirmation ( $r = .42$ ); and perceived satisfaction ( $r = .42$ ). This demonstrates the student teachers were satisfied when their cooperating teacher exhibited the supporting leadership style. This is important because the majority of the cooperating teachers preferred the supporting style.

The relationship between the coaching leadership style and the same measurements yielded negative moderate correlations: *acceptance* ( $r = -.39$ ), *counseling* ( $r = -.31$ ), and *friendship* ( $r = -.39$ ) functions; disconfirmation ( $r = -.46$ ); and perceived satisfaction ( $r = -.40$ ). This illustrates that the student teachers were not satisfied when their cooperating teacher utilized the coaching leadership styles. This is an area that would benefit from more research.

The difference in satisfaction measures between supporting and coaching styles could be the result of when the student teachers completed the satisfaction instrument. Because they completed the instrument at the end of the student teaching semester, they may have progressed from a D1 level follower to a D3 level during the semester; therefore, appreciating a more supporting cooperating teacher.

Several recommendations can be made from the results of this study. One recommendation is to conduct a larger study to verify the results of this research. Also, more detailed demographic data on both the student teachers and cooperating teachers should be collected. An instrument should be created to establish student teachers' development level upon entering and leaving the student teaching experience to better gauge their growth.

In order to fill the many open positions each year, university teacher education programs need to effectively train student teachers and place them in cooperating teacher sites where they will build their confidence and hopefully make the decision to enter the teaching field. One way to facilitate this process is to ensure cooperating teachers and student teachers are compatible in leader and follower style and preference. Further research on the impact of matching student teacher development level to preferred leadership style of the cooperating teacher should be designed and implemented.

While it has often been suggested the student teaching experience has an impact on the student teacher's decision to teach (Roberts, 2006; Roberts, Harlin, & Ricketts, 2006), there has been no empirical research conducted on the direct effect the cooperating teacher has on that decision. The impact the cooperating teacher has on the student teacher's intent to teach should be considered and researched.

The cooperating teacher should be able to determine the student teacher's development level and match his or her style to the student teachers' needs. As student teachers become more competent, teachers should recognize changes and alter their leadership styles accordingly. All cooperating teachers should aspire to the delegating style by the completion of the student teacher's term. It is recommended that a workshop be developed and implemented to train cooperating teachers how to utilize the Situational Leadership Model (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993) when working with their student teachers.

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