Examining the Construction of the Perceived Teacher Identity of
Secondary Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers in
Career and Technical Education Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

Given the current state of public education reform and policy conversations, a
fundamental component of effective teaching is left out of the dialogue: teacher identity. At
present, few studies were found in the literature that focus specifically on the construction of the
perceived teacher identity of secondary family and consumer sciences (FCS) teachers in career
and technical education (CTE) classrooms. Thus, exploring teachers' experiences and perceptions
of how their professional identities developed is important not only for FCS teachers, but for all
educators because examining the beliefs held by teachers can improve practice by helping
teachers respond to the changes in education.

The first purpose of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the lived
experiences of secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms as they relate to their beliefs about
teaching. The second purpose was to further examine the meanings that these teachers make of
these experiences and influences as they are connected to the construction of their perceived
teaching identities.

The researcher used a qualitative research design to examine the lived experiences of 10
FCS teachers. Guided by a theoretical framework of reflective practice, data were gathered using
semi-structured participant interviews, researcher reflexive journal, and field notes. The findings
are presented in narratives, one for each participant. Themes are identified within each narrative
and common themes emerged across narratives. Among the results of the study were that beliefs
about teaching are: reflective of the teacher, responsive to students' needs, and related to the

teacher-student relationship. These beliefs were shaped by experiences in education, interactions with students, and significant life events. The reported teacher identity of the participants was described as serving as a role model, teaching FCS, caring, and being supportive.

Distinct types of support are necessary to encourage teacher longevity and job satisfaction, both of which are constructs linked to teacher identity. A better understanding of how FCS teachers construct their sense of teacher identity offers new insight into job satisfaction, retention, professional development, and the improvement of practice. Recommendations for future research are suggested as part of the conclusions of this study.

Dedication

I dedicate this accomplishment to my loving and supportive husband, Clay. Without your belief in me as a wife, a mother, an educator, and a scholar, I would not have achieved this milestone. This has been our journey, our success, and I look forward to the next chapter. I love you … more!

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Acronyms

CTE	Career and Technical Education
CTSO	Career and Technical Student Organization
ECE	Early Childhood Education
FACS, FCS	Family and Consumer Sciences
FCCLA	Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America
FEA	Future Educators Association
VATFACS	Virginia Association for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Since the 1950s, Americans have been told that their children cannot read, write, or think, nor can they keep up with the rest of the world. Likewise, they have been told that most of this failure is the result of insufficient accountability in education; teachers and administrators are often unqualified to do their jobs, and they do not work hard enough or care enough (Alsup, 2006). Essentially, this resonates the opinion that anyone can teach, with no training or experience required. To change this, stakeholders in education may take a closer look at the perceived individual identity of teachers. Knowledge gleaned from this would offer new insights into job satisfaction, retention, professional development, and the improvement of practice.

Teacher identity, "the core beliefs one has about teaching and being a teacher; beliefs that are continuously formed and reformed through experience" (Walkington, 2005, p. 54), is a key principle in education. Teacher identity is a concept construed around the social, personal, political, self, and other. This concept is often referred to as teachers "arguing" or giving accountability for themselves (Clarke, 2009) and then redefining an identity that is socially acceptable (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). Teacher identity is composed of values, beliefs, and attitudes that have evolved from the personal domains of family, culture, and life history. Frequently, teachers are constructing their professional identity in a space that is dissimilar to where their personal identity was formed. This construction is influenced and sometimes even inhibited by the philosophies of their administrators, students, communities, and teacher education programs (Hoffman-Kipp, 2008). Put another way, teacher identity is a multifarious concept that involves teachers' successes and disappointments, age, and cultural perspective (Cardelle-Elawar & Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga, 2010).

Inevitably, a teacher's personal values and interests emerge in his or her pedagogy (Uitto, 2012); a term that is frequently misunderstood as pertaining more to the *method* of teaching rather than the intellectual *nature* of teaching and is often recognized as the practice of teaching children. Although the principal focus on children is central, it ignores both a teacher's responsibility to teaching and his or her intellect reflected through practice (Duncan, 2011). Teaching is a complex profession bearing many holistic personal and social practices and processes (Olsen, 2008a). The challenges within the classroom are as diverse as the students who are being served. The importance of developing a personal and unique teacher identity echoes the same urgency as content knowledge, effective classroom management, and differentiated instruction (Cardelle-Elawar & Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga, 2010). In other words, when teachers develop a sense of professional purpose, they become more effective teachers.

Even so, teacher identity is often confined to the perception of what is good, effective teaching. A question such as "How do I know I am a teacher?" may often impel a teacher's philosophy and behavior in the classroom. It can also encourage the teacher to assume a teacher-as-performer philosophy and behavior in the classroom (Schuck, Aubusson, Buchanan, & Russell, 2012). Another way to consider teacher identity is to examine the philosophical and axiological dimensions of teachers' identities. When schools characterize teachers as service providers whose job is to promote institutional needs and values, they are omitting the personal and individual attributes of teaching (O'Connor, 2008).

Good teaching stems from the identity and integrity of the teacher. All good teachers embrace a strong sense of personal identity that emerges into their craft (Palmer, 2007). Hence, personal identity is connected to professional identity (Mimbs, 2002). Therefore, teachers should be cognizant of their own identities in order to be culturally in sync with the identities of their

students (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Understanding the challenges posed by the current corporate-style school reform justifies the emphasis of examining the teacher-self. Adjusting to these changes and mandates requires a commitment to self-regulated action (Cardelle-Elawar & Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga, 2010). The Brazilian critical educator, Paulo Freire (1998a), explicitly verbalized that teaching is a political practice in which teachers are the politicians. In order to accomplish being more scientifically competent, it is essential for teachers to know who their students are. He asserted that:

> Educators need to know what happens in the world of the children with whom they work. They need to know the universe of their dreams, the language with which they skillfully defend themselves from the aggressiveness of their world, what they know independently of the school, and how they know it. (p. 130)

Teacher identity development is on a continuum and not disconnected linear parts (Hoffman-Kipp, 2008; Olsen, 2008b). Thus, defining teacher identity is challenging because it is under continuous construction, especially for new teachers (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Berci, 2007), and reconstructed through experience (Coldron & Smith, 1999; Walkington, 2005). Arguably, career-change teachers characterize a special case. At the same time, they remind us that no teacher enters into the profession with a blank slate. Career-change teachers bestow a "look of age" that presumes experience. They are unlikely to be questioned for identity, as a younger beginning teacher would be (Schuck et al., 2012).

Much of what constitutes teacher identity has hinged on age-old assumptions about teaching. The teacher has been the authoritative figure within the classroom who delegates information to students from a textbook supported by a laundry list of skills, tasks, and competencies. The teacher has no feelings, no life outside of the classroom, and certainly no sense of fashion. Consider those who have been teachers in the career and technical education (CTE) program area of family and consumer sciences (FCS), formerly known as home

economics. The stereotypical "cooking and sewing" persona linked to this profession is well known. This image, according to Mimbs (2002), is even emphasized by some practicing teachers.

When considering this era of "stitching and stirring, the FCS practitioner's ability to foster in students the capacity to mix, collect, fold, connect, or even agitate the group's thinking might be an appropriate use of these verbs for 21st century FCS curricula" (Duncan, 2011, p. 7). The contemporary FCS classroom presents to youth, along with other CTE program areas, one of the very few places where they can acquire critical thinking skills and practical life skills training. Teachers in FCS prepare youth for their future roles as adults, parents, and employees. The modern-day issues addressed in FCS classrooms include preventing unwanted teen pregnancies, using credit wisely, building positive relationships, purchasing insurance, and avoiding eating disorders, to name a few (Bull & Cummings, 2002). Courses offered in FCS are meeting important current and projected employment needs, as evidenced by a national survey conducted by Werhan and Way (2006) of FCS program enrollments and staffing patterns during the 2002–2003 academic year. The results of their study indicated that FCS program offerings played a critical role in secondary education in the U.S. In their contextual study of home economics teacher education, Smith and de Zwart (2010) specified that FCS "makes a unique contribution to the education of young people in that it focuses on the nature and challenges of our daily lives in relationship to other peoples, social systems, and material resources" (p. 21).

Teachers' perceptions of their professional identity, the subject they teach, and the interactions they have with students and colleagues are of great significance. An understanding of their perceived identities may be useful in helping teachers respond to the changes in education (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000). Thus, teacher identity holds merit for this

research study and is a viable pedagogical tool in addressing the emotional dynamics of teaching. The implications of creating a dialogue surrounding this all-encompassing aspect would perhaps enhance both teacher education programs and professional development agendas. Realistically, before we consider any changes to individual pedagogical methods and programmatic transformations within our educational system, it is important to have a deep-rooted understanding of teachers' perspectives of their professional identity. Essentially, this awareness becomes a resource for teachers to explore their pedagogy.

The Problem Statement

Despite empirical studies of the role and influence that teacher identity plays in student learning, current educational policies intended to improve student-learning outcomes ignore this important component. Furthermore, most teacher educators discuss issues of professional demeanor, dress, and communication, not professional identity (Alsup, 2006). In a review of the literature pertaining to the current professional development for teachers in the U.S., Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos (2009) described teacher professional development as sporadic and not useful.

Given the current state of public education reform and policy conversations, a fundamental component of effective teaching is often left out of the dialogue: teacher identity. At present, few studies were found in the literature that focus specifically on the construction of the perceived individual teacher identity of secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms. Previous studies focused primarily on the experiences of teachers in core academic areas such as math (Anderson, 2011; Bjuland, Cestari, & Borgersen, 2012), science (Helms, 1998; Moore, 2008), and English (Juzwik & Ives, 2010; Reeves, 2009); teachers in elementary classrooms (Giampapa, 2010; Upadhyay, 2009); and student teachers (Alsup, 2006; Dotger & Smith, 2009;

Sexton, 2008). As such, the problem is that we do not know enough about the construction of the perceived individual teacher identities of secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms.

Background of the Problem

Our nation's leaders are faced with a plethora of economic issues that govern our health, financial, and educational well-being. The challenges within the education arena today are as diverse as the students who are being served. Driven by politicians, corporate executives, and the mainstream media, the demands for school reform and "accountability" are currently in the forefront of these challenges. The controversial No Child Left Behind Act has recently been complemented by the Race to the Top and Educate to Innovate national initiatives that place considerable precedence upon content mastery as an indicator of an improved educational system. To be sure, the benefits of accountability are worth arguing; however, a lack of accountability does not necessarily equate to a hindrance in performance and achievement.

Brooks, Brooks, and Goldstein (2012) drew attention to the dichotomy currently thriving within education. High stakes testing and the emphasis placed on accountability are mutually exclusive from focusing on the emotional and social health of students. In other words, the authors suggested that with so much weight placed upon testing along with the quantitative interpretation of the results, considerable precedence has been positioned upon content mastery as a means to gauge effective teaching and student learning. Mojkowski and Washor (2007) referred to this "fixation on requiring that all students master all standards in the same scope and sequence is a major impediment to deeply engaging a substantial majority of high school students in rigorous learning and work" (p. 35).

According to Darling-Hammond (2006), researchers have recently corroborated what parents have known for quite some time now: a teacher can make a bigger difference in a child's

educational success than other factors such as class size and configuration. Teachers become important agents of socialization and sources of support outside of the home environment for children as soon as they enter formal schooling (Darling-Hammond). Conceivably, by the time students reach high school graduation, they have expended nearly 16,000 hours in direct contact with teachers. This exchange takes place in a small space where students and teachers are merely a few yards away from each other. The interaction is more than a simple passive observation and usually involves a relationship that has consequences for the student (Lortie, 2002). These interactions either nurture or hinder developmental changes in students through engagement, meaningful challenges, and social, relational, and behavioral supports (Mihalas, Morse, Allsopp, & McHatton, 2009; Pianta & Hamre, 2009).

Not only do teachers play a leading role in the daily lives of children at school, they are also embedded in many of children's activities such as books, games, dramatic play, movies, and television shows. Before children even begin school, they have already set their eyes on countless images of teachers, classrooms, and schools (Weber & Mitchell, 1995). Research on the formation of teachers' professional identity contributes to our understanding of how it feels to be a teacher today, when the challenges are unique and rapidly changing, and how teachers adjust and adapt to these changes. From this perspective, it is essential to focus on the personal component of teachers' professional identity. In light of the current educational changes, what is found relevant to the profession may be inconsistent with what teachers would personally like. Such contradiction can lead to friction in teachers' professional identity in which the "personal" and the "professional" are polar opposites (Beijaard et al., 2004).

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

There are multiple discourses that shape teaching. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was two-fold. The first purpose was to gain an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms as they relate to their beliefs about teaching. The second purpose of this study was to further examine the meanings that these teachers make of these experiences and influences as they are connected to the construction of their personal teaching identities.

Professional teacher identity is not central to the literature on student achievement, yet it may be a key to successful school reform and policy. In understanding how FCS teachers construct their sense of professional identity, we must first begin to uncover the complexities of their work and the multiple discourses that shapes their teaching. Therefore, this study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are selected secondary FCS teachers' beliefs about teaching?

2. What are selected secondary FCS teachers' experiences that have influenced their beliefs about teaching?

3. What perceptions do selected secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms have of their individual teacher identity?

4. How do selected secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms describe the ways in which their lived experiences have shaped their perceived individual teacher identity?

Research Design Overview

A review of the literature combined with participant interviews framed this interpretative, qualitative research design. Stemming from philosophical traditions and drawing on multiple methods of inquiry, qualitative research emphasizes subjectivity in its naturalistic, interpretive

(Rossman & Rallis, 2011), and holistic understanding of human beings (Gelo, Braakmann, & Benetka, 2008). Furthermore, the participants' experiences come to light as they interact with the researcher (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) in their everyday settings (Rubin & Rubin, 2004). A phenomenological approach guided the researcher's understanding of the participants' lived experiences as they relate to their perceived individual identity (Creswell, 2007; Rossman & Rallis). Phenomenology is "a tradition in German philosophy with a focus on the essence of lived experiences" (Rossman & Rallis, p. 96).

Based on the scope of this research, independent scripted interviews with FCS teacher participants served as the primary source of data. The researcher interviewed ten teachers, a number that was determined based upon data saturation; when the researcher no longer hears or sees new information. A purposive participant selection strategy was utilized to recruit teacher participants from public school divisions located within the Commonwealth of Virginia. Specifically, participants were interviewed if they (a) were currently a licensed teacher with an endorsement in FCS, (b) had been teaching for at least five years prior to the interview, and (c) were willing to participate in a face-to-face interview.

Journal writing, another robust technique in qualitative research, was integrated into this study. Since the researcher is essentially the research instrument, the researcher maintained a reflective journal throughout the entire research study (Janesick, 1999). Ortlipp (2008) suggested that this critical self-reflection can "make the messiness of the research process visible to the researcher who can then make it visible for those who read the research and thus avoid producing, reproducing, and circulating the discourse of research as a neat and linear process" (p.704). Along with the interview transcripts and field notes, the reflective journal entries became a part of the audit trail for this research project.

This research design was first pilot tested to determine the quality of the interview protocol and to identify potential researcher biases (Chenail, 2011) not previously known to the researcher. This study is somewhat unique in that (a) FCS teachers in secondary CTE classrooms were interviewed concerning their professional teacher identities, (b) the teachers interviewed represented multiple geographic areas within the Commonwealth of Virginia, and (c) the researcher's ongoing reflective journal offered clarity and procedural documentation to the research process. Although none of these features alone distinguishes this study, taken together, the approach is more comprehensive.

Importance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons. First, it provides valuable insight into secondary FCS teachers' perceptions of how their lived experiences are connected to the construction of their personal teaching identities and the meanings these teachers make of their individual experiences. Policymakers interested in job satisfaction, retention, and professional development could benefit from such insight. During a time of high stakes testing and increased accountability, distinct types of support are necessary to encourage teacher longevity and job satisfaction, both of which are constructs linked to a teacher's personal self.

Second, teacher identity significantly impacts student identity (Hoffman-Kipp, 2008). It matters if a teacher is authoritative or facilitative, competent or incompetent, has a love of life or is angry at the world. It matters because a teacher has the ability to leave his or her mark on students (Freire, 1998b). Teachers are socially oriented professionals whose vocation influences the identities of students; therefore, the case can be made that teachers have an ethical obligation to reflect on their identities and engage in "identity work" (Clarke, 2009).

Third, the importance of studying the construction of the personal teaching identities of FCS teachers is closely related to the nature of the curriculum they teach. Since the formation of FCS, the objective has been to intellectually examine issues of the quality of life in an effort to determine how to best serve individuals, families, and communities (Duncan, 2011). The Virginia Department of Education, Division of Career and Technical Education (VDOE, 2013) presents the following matters of individual, family, work, and community life in its mission for the FCS program area.

FCS provides opportunities for students to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors needed for:

- Strengthening the well-being of individuals and families across the life span.
- Becoming responsible citizens and leaders in family, community, and work settings.
- Promoting optimal nutrition and wellness across the life span.
- Managing resources to meet the material needs of individuals and families.
- Balancing personal, home, family and work lives.
- Using critical and creative thinking skills to address problems in diverse families, communities, and work environments.
- Exemplifying successful life management, employment, and career development.
- Functioning effectively as providers and consumers of goods and services.
- Appreciating human worth and accepting responsibility for ones' actions and success in family and work life (VDOE).

Fourth, concerns about the supply of qualified FCS teachers in the U.S. have been raised since the late 1980s with recent reports of shortages in almost every state, according to the US Department of Education (Smith & de Zwart, 2010; Werhan & Way, 2006). Despite efforts to

recruit FCS teachers over the past decade, FCS programs still fall short in matching teacher supply and demand. Therefore, there is a need to understand why there is a decline in this field in order to successfully recruit FCS teachers (Rattray & Calvin, 2010). Identifying the constructs of teacher identity development will provide additional insight in teacher recruitment and retention.

Finally, researchers have supported the belief that a teacher's subject matter influences the development of their professional identity (Beijaard, 1995; Coldron & Smith, 1999). Thus, exploring teachers' experiences and perceptions of how their professional identities developed is important not only for FCS teachers, but for all educators because understanding the beliefs held by teachers is essential to improving practice. An understanding of these beliefs could ultimately influence teachers' effectiveness and longevity in the profession.

Theoretical Framework

Reflectivity is often considered to be the mainstay of qualitative research (Creswell, 2009). Through reflective practice, this study explored the perceptions that FCS teachers have of how their experiences are connected to their perceived individual teacher identities and the significance they make of these experiences. By means of reflective practice, teachers are able to develop a greater level of self-awareness about the nature and influence of their practice. To gain this new level of insight, the teachers essentially assume a dual perspective: the actor in a drama and the critic sitting in the audience watching and examining. In order to reach this perspective, they must first understand their behavior, construct an awareness of their actions and effects, and articulate the ideas or theories that shape their actions. Subsequently, this will initiate opportunities for professional growth and development (Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993).

When considering teacher development, reflection is a key tool for teachers to utilize to gain a better sense of their self and how this self plays a role in the larger context which includes

others; thus, reflection is a factor in identity formation (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). By means of reflection, teachers are able to better understand how specific events and experiences are situated within their personal career "stories" and the significance that these experiences have in their lives (Kelchtermans, 2011). Creating meaning out of experience is at the heart of what it means to be human. It empowers individuals to make sense of and credit value to events in their lives. An examination into ones practice commands courage to free what one holds dear as well as the components of one's identity (Rodgers, 2002).

O'Connor (2007) expressed that, through identity, professionals understand, negotiate, and construct knowledge as it is significant to their practice. The professional identities of researchers and teachers alike are "temporal: located within time and social space; dialogic: evolving through communication with others; subjective: individually negotiated; reflexive: shaped by reflections on experience" (p. 258). Put this way, teacher identity is perpetually negotiated by surrounding discourses; therefore, this study lends itself to an investigation of the broader social and cultural contexts of education as well as shared social and environmental influences.

Human beings are storytelling creatures who lead storied lives; they are both the storytellers and the characters within their own stories and in the stories of others (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The narratives and stories that teachers have to offer tell their individual experiences and perceptions about their identity and how these reflections inform their teaching practices. Parkes and Kajder (2010) suggested that "authentic and principled reflective thinkers know how to make meaning across their experiences and use their emerging understandings to advance their learning" (p. 218). However, as Graham and Phelps (2003) cautioned, to go down this road can be challenging. It entails a level of self-examination that questions and reshapes the

assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, and practices that may have been taken for granted. Even so, the reflective process is vital to the "continuing process of being a teacher where learning to teach and teaching to learn are inextricably linked" (p. 10).

There are multiple benefits of reflective practice for teachers: a better understanding of their individual teaching style, confirmation of their ideals, an appreciation of teaching as artistry, and respect for the application of theory to practice in the classroom (Ferraro, 2000). As such, reflective practice has been identified as a valuable tool in developing teacher identity (Parkes & Kajder, 2010). Teachers' interpretations of their personal experiences and events serve as an important medium in understanding how these experiences are connected to their professional identities.

Delimitations

The theme of this research study, teacher identity, is broad; therefore, the scope of the study was narrowed to an investigation of experienced secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms, which excluded all other content-specific teachers, elementary classroom teachers, novice FCS teachers, and student teachers.

Limitations

This research study inevitably has limitations that must be considered when interpreting the results. To begin with, exploring the nature of identity and the development of a professional identity is both personal and sensitive. Although this posed a challenge when interviewing participants who were unfamiliar with the researcher, care was exercised to establish the necessary trust and rapport to place them at ease. According to Cole and Knowles (2001), researchers can "come close" to understanding the experiences or life of others and can only travel but so far in "unraveling the complexities of the broader social conditions" (p. 23).

During the interviews, participants were prompted to reflect upon their lived experiences as they relate to the research questions. The participants may not have a precise recollection of prior events and, upon reflection, the meaning they make of an event may differ from what they felt at the time. Creswell (2009) cautioned that not all individuals are equally perceptive and that a researcher's presence may even bias the responses from participants; thus, posing a limitation.

The findings in this study may not be common among all FCS teachers. Also worth noting is that the results are only interpretable through the researcher's lens. Specifically, a qualitative phenomenological methodology with independent participant interviews were conducted to guide this study.

Qualitative research emphasizes transferability and credibility, which is unlike quantitative research in which generalizability and internal validity are the key measures (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Due to the small number of participants, the data collected within this descriptive qualitative analysis cannot be used to arrive at broad conclusions; however, the emphasis upon the participants give value to the current study which may not be likely with a larger sample. The participants' narratives deliver suggestions for educators seeking to examine their professional teacher identities and possibilities for researchers conducting similar studies.

Assumptions

For the purpose of this study, the following assumptions are made:

1. The qualitative research approach was the most efficient means to answer the research questions.

2. The phenomenological method allowed participants to seek meaning of their lived experiences to which multiple realities are socially constructed.

3. Each participant's experience is unique and significant to the study.

4. Participants fully understood the scope of the research study.

5. The participants were insightful, forthright, and honest during their interviews.

6. An examination of FCS teachers' experiences and perceptions of how their professional identities developed will tender practical implications for teacher education programs and professional development.

Definitions

There are a variety of constructs utilized within this study. For clarification purposes, the following terms are defined to assist the reader:

Belief: an abstract principle that is often associated with epistemological assumptions (Alsup, 2006).

Perception: an attitude or understanding based upon a thought during any given time, current or previous.

Teacher identity: the beliefs that an individual has about being a teacher and the professional practice of teaching which are shaped and reshaped frequently through experience (Walkington, 2005).

Summary

This first chapter of the dissertation contains: (a) the problem statement; (b) the background of the problem; (c) the purpose of the study and research questions; (d) an overview of the research design; (e) the importance of the study; (f) the delimitations, limitations, and assumptions; and (g) definitions of terminology. The second chapter will include a review of the related literature and theoretical framework, followed by an explanation of the research methodology in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 provides the findings of the research while Chapter 5

consists of a discussion of the results, to include implications and recommendations for future

research.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

For this chapter of the study, theories and literature will be critically reviewed to illustrate how secondary family and consumer sciences (FCS) teachers within career and technical education (CTE) classrooms construct their sense of professional identity. First, a brief overview of CTE and FCS and their significance in public education is discussed in order to establish the setting of this study. The focus is then directed to teacher identity, the principal interest of this research. Next, student identity will be examined together with its connection to teacher identity followed by reflective practice as the conceptual framework for this study. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a discussion of the key points made in the literature review and the need for future research.

Career and Technical Education

The educational reformer John Dewey and other progressives were confident that preparing all students for meaningful citizenship and vocations required that all schooling, especially secondary schooling, needed to be relevant to the lives of students and that school and occupation should be intermingled (Stipanovic, Lewis, & Stringfield, 2012). Formerly known as Vocational Education, CTE is an educational program of courses and learning experiences designed to prepare students for careers in various occupational fields and/or to further their education within a specific field in order to pursue a career. There are seven program areas within CTE: agricultural education, business and information technology, family and consumer sciences, health and medical sciences, marketing, technology education, and trade and industrial education.

CTE has been providing secondary students with career-based instruction and experiences essential to secure employment in an ever-changing work environment since 1917

(Davis, 2011). During those decades, CTE has progressed from the vocational education

curricula offerings of wood, metal, and auto shop to incorporate subjects such as criminal justice,

teacher education, and medical sciences (Gentry, Hu, Peters, & Rizza, 2008). In response to the

economic and social demands of our country, educators in CTE have arduously worked to both

transform and enrich the academic base of CTE programs. To illustrate, CTE underwent a

change in its name from vocational education to career and technical education in 2006 under the

Carl D. Perkins CTE Improvement Act. In many cases, the direction of program offerings also

changed, deflecting from low-skill "occupational training" to transferable skills anchored in

robust academics and relevant to many occupations (Daggett, 2002; Threeton, 2007).

CTE curricula offer students real-world experiences and the opportunity to take pride in

their work, which in turn enhances motivation, interest (Casale-Giannola, 2011), and student

engagement (Kelly & Price, 2009). The teaching methods exercised in CTE courses are effective

in facilitating student learning, retaining content material, and motivation to remain in school

(Chadd & Drage, 2006). The quality of teachers in CTE and their ability to construct rich

learning experiences for students characterizes the "front line" of the work in CTE. Teachers

shape the learning experiences that in turn produce graduates who are competent, confident, and

ready to begin their career pathways. Skilled graduates are not only advocates, but a testimony

that the field is undoubtedly living up to a new image (Sass, 2011).

Within our current public secondary educational system, Kelly and Price (2009) reported

that most students are given the opportunity to enroll in CTE courses. In over 88% of our

nation's comprehensive public schools, students are offered, at a minimum, at least one CTE

program. Typically, ten different programs are available to students either on-site or at an off-site

location. Levesque et al. (2008) reported that 96.6% of all 2005 graduates in U.S. public high

schools completed at least one course in CTE. For the past 15 years, this pattern has been consistent; partly due to efforts in school reform and policies that target curriculum integration. Plank, DeLuca, and Estacion (2008) indicated that between 90 and 96% of recent high school graduates have taken at least one CTE course during their high school career.

CTE programs are an essential part of high school curricula. Program evaluations of CTE curricula in schools indicate that CTE plays a role in increased school attendance, reduced high school dropout rates, elevated grades, and increased admission into postsecondary education (Chadd & Drage, 2006). Reese (2005) stated that the National Dropout Prevention Center has recognized the importance of CTE programs such as tech prep and career academies, in addition to initiatives that are integral to CTE such as school-to-career programs, apprenticeships, internships, school-based enterprises, cooperative education, job shadowing, and mentoring.

Later, Reese (2012) made a viable point in her response to the current educational debate, "Whenever the issue of school reform is addressed, it is important that career and technical education (CTE) is part of the discussion, because it is definitely part of the solution, as promising and exemplary programs around the country are demonstrating" (p. 17). Increasingly, CTE is identified as a chief contributor to the economic recovery of the U.S. (Kotamraju & Mettille, 2012) by training tomorrow's workforce and retraining today's workforce in the emergent labor and skill shortages (DeWitt, 2009).

Family and Consumer Sciences

Home economics, now known as FCS, originated in the late 1800s in response to world-wide change and development. Gradually, the agrarian way of life that supported generations with food, clothing, and shelter had given way to industrialization which was soon followed by migration to cities and emigration overseas. Issues of family life, health, hygiene, and women's

and children's rights also became significant (Smith & de Zwart, 2010). Congress enacted the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 to include home economics into the U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperative Extension and Land Grant University System (Jackson, 2011). The Smith-Hughes Act, also known as the Vocational Act of 1917, was the first national approval of vocational education in public schools and established vocational education in the program areas of agriculture, trades and industry, and home economics. In 1963, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act was passed and has been steadily revised to support all CTE programs, including FCS (Cross, 2011).

The story of FCS actually begins with Ellen Richards, a leading figure in the development of home economics as a profession. Resisting the conventions of her times, Ellen left the small town of Dunstable, Massachusetts to attend the newly founded Vassar College. After graduating in 1870, she went on to be the first woman to be awarded a degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Beginning in 1899, Richards organized a series of ten annual conferences that later became known as the Lake Placid Conferences. It was during the first conference that participants agreed to identify the broad scope of disciplines and scientific studies being discussed as home economics. In order to more accurately reflect the complex field, home economics-related organizations and programs decided to change the name from home economics to family and consumer sciences in 1994 (Jackson, 2011).

Since its origin, the focus of FCS has been how to best serve individuals, families, and communities. FCS practice also serves peers through collaborative reciprocal efforts intended to create a rigorous professional practice through peer critique (Duncan, 2011). Schools first introduced FCS to students during the influential progressive educational movement of learning by doing (Smith & de Zwart, 2010). Today, both middle and high school FCS programs prepare

students for the dual responsibilities of family leader and wage earner. In the past, life skill concepts were passed from one generation to another by the family. However, times have changed and American families are now facing numerous new challenges with reconfigured family structures and limitations in their resources (Bull & Cummings, 2002).

Secondary FCS Enrollment

In their widely-cited national survey of FCS program enrollments and staffing patterns during the 2002–2003 academic year, Werhan and Way (2006) found that over five million students were enrolled in secondary FCS classes throughout the United States. Results of their survey also indicated that program enrollments were somewhat balanced in terms of gender and had not significantly changed since the late 1950s as a proportion of the total secondary school population.

The Virginia Department of Education's CTE Statewide Annual Performance Report for the school year 2010-2011 reported that 262,585 students in grades 6-12 were enrolled in one or more CTE course. The data in the report is segregated according to the 16 career clusters in CTE. The six career clusters that relate to instruction in FCS are: Arts, Audio/Video Technology and Communications (10,491); Education and Training (8,877); Hospitality and Tourism (16,880); Human Services (34,094); Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security (3,621); and Marketing (18,910).

Demographics of FCS Teachers

Mimbs (2002) conducted a marketing, retention, and identity study among 94 FCS teachers attending regional curriculum workshops in a large Midwestern state. She found that all of the participants were female, the majority were married and had children, and most were teaching in comprehensive FCS high school programs. A total of 40% were FCS teachers for

over 20 years. Their education level was varied; 33% had college credits beyond a master's degree, 24% had a master's degree, 39% had college credits beyond a bachelor's degree, and less than 5% had a bachelor's degree only. For those teachers, job satisfaction was high; 59% self-reported that they were very satisfied while 31% were somewhat satisfied.

Using a 3-point scale questionnaire (extremely satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not satisfied), Bartley and Sneed (2004) surveyed 291 middle and secondary FCS public school teachers in a southern state to establish a demographic profile and to gather information concerning their satisfaction with the profession and with their way of life, health, leisure activities, and place of residence. The findings from their mailed questionnaire indicated that the typical FCS teacher self-reported to be female, 46 years of age, of European American ancestry, hold a valid professional license, and have six years of teaching experience. Moreover, she was extremely satisfied with her profession, way of life, leisure activities, and home and was somewhat-to-extremely satisfied with her health. These demographic data were consistent with a previous national profile of secondary school teachers; thus, giving credence to their findings.

FCS Teacher Shortage

For the past two decades, researchers and educators have increasingly expressed a need to address the critical shortage of FCS teachers (Miller & Meszaros, 1996; Mimbs, Stewart & Heath-Camp, 1998; Rattray & Calvin, 2010; Smith & de Zwart, 2010; Werhan & Way, 2006). Specifically, Mimbs (2002) indicated a concern for marketing the FCS profession as well as a struggle to identify a clear identity for the profession. As specializations in the field have grown and developed, the issue of maintaining the profession's identity as an integrative, holistic field has emerged, especially among new professionals. According to Rattray and Calvin (2010), there must be an understanding of why there is a decline in the field in order to successfully recruit

teachers. Smith and de Zwart (2010) reported that lower enrollments in FCS teacher preparation programs are due to the decline in the number of teacher education programs as well as the dissolution of undergraduate degree programs offered in home economics/human ecology/family and consumer sciences. As Arnett and Freeburg (2008) suggested, delivering highly skilled FCS teachers is critical to the profession's survival.

A central strategy for school reform is recruiting, preparing, and retaining good teachers. Thus, successful school improvement establishes environments in which teachers can not only teach, but teach well (Pickard, 2004). The second most common reason teachers leave the profession is concerns with classroom management. Given the shortage of FCS teachers, pre-service teachers should be provided with instruction essential to developing skills in classroom management, teaching methodologies, and confidence to support a career in teaching. Specific to FCS is planning for food and textiles laboratories, applying a critical science perspective, and understanding students' cognitive development (Arnett & Freeburg, 2008).

Lee (2011) found that, generally, young people are not motivated to pursue FCS teaching as a career. Classroom discipline and the perception that teaching FCS involves cooking and sewing exclusively are what discourages them the most. In order to increase an interest in teaching FCS, Rattray and Calvin (2010) recommended establishing a common definition of FCS so that students will view the field as encompassing many disciplines. Jensen, Rowley, Skidmore, and Hymon-Parker (2003) called for FCS teachers to facilitate a connection between the individual courses and the discipline. To increase recruitment and retention, Mimbs (2000) cited a critical need to improve the image of the profession and programs and the need to gain more support from administrators, school counselors, and school board members.

Teacher Identity

While teacher identity emerged as an area of research interest during the time period of 1988 to 2000, researchers have conceptualized professional identity differently, utilized teachers' professional identity as a framework to investigate varying topics, and pursued a variety of goals (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). A view imparted by many is that multiple identities are constructed in academia primarily due to the various communities and levels embraced by academics (Kreber, 2010). There are many cultural myths linked to teacher identity, leaving little room for atypical identities. For instance, the teacher is an expert, is highly professional, and is unemotional (Zembylas, 2003). As such, a binary exists in defining teacher identity: the teacher is illustrated as "failure or hero, villain or angel" (Alsup, 2006, p. 24). Quite frankly, much of what constitutes teacher identity seemingly hinges on age-old assumptions about teaching. The teacher has been the authoritative figure within the classroom who delegates information to students from a textbook alongside a laundry list of skills, tasks, and competencies. The teacher has no feelings, no life outside of the classroom, and certainly no sense of fashion.

Teachers are often guided by their identities when making professional and emotional decisions. While caring for and about students can be an exhausting professional demand, it can motivate teachers to continue teaching (O'Connor, 2008). Although teachers' emotional experiences are shaped by school institutional roles of what it means to be a teacher, it is problematic to take teacher identity for granted, as if teacher identity is merely the result of classroom experiences and instructional knowledge and skills. Often, emotions in education are dismissed and their political origins are discounted (Zembylas, 2003). Research has confirmed that emotions are an essential component of teaching and teacher identity; therefore, an investigation of emotions should deliver a deeper insight into the way teachers' experiences

change and the way their identity is shaped by change (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; van Veen, Sleegers, & van de Ven, 2005).

From a sociocultural perspective, teacher identity is created in relation to others, which includes other teachers and students (Reeves, 2009). Attention to the complexities of identity in itself cannot possibly be captured without consideration of the multiple and intersecting identities and the contexts within which they are created and negotiated. Identity constructions involve both the process of managing how we think others view us and how we view ourselves, which includes negotiating and making sense of how others perceive us. Understanding the lived experience of intersecting identities requires a unique interest vested in the influences of sociocultural contexts and structures of power and privilege (Jones, 2009). This is of particular interest when considering the imbalance of power that exists between teachers and students.

Hoffman-Kipp (2008) described teacher identity as "the intersection of personal, pedagogical, and political participation and reflection within a larger sociopolitical context. It is the scripts, tool usage, and participation that defines the actor in an activity setting" (p. 153). Within this context, identity can also be used to answer the recurring questions of "Who am I at this moment?" and "Who do I want to become?" (Beijaard et al., 2004). Many teachers oppose making decisions that are based upon their expertise or familiarity of their students and instead adhere to pre-determined program requirements and administrative mandates (McKinney, Lasley, & Holmes-Gull, 2008).

Even though teaching has changed over the years and teachers have been more frequently deemed to be "real people," there are still many things that are not "teacherly" (Weber & Mitchell, 1995). Undeniably, the role of the teacher has changed considerably. So too has the status of teaching as a profession and the demands and expectations placed on teachers and

schools by the community. Driven by various political agendas, these changes have been the focus of a long series of reviews and inquiries that have illuminated the declining status of teaching as well as recruiting and retaining effective teachers. While a plethora of recommendations develop from such reports, an important concern that materializes is a lack of understanding or conformity about effective approaches to the initial and continuing formation of teachers (Graham & Phelps, 2003).

Construct of Identity

The historical view of identity as internal, fixed, and consistent differs from the premise that identity is socially negotiated, dynamic, and fragmented (Reeves, 2009). Olsen (2008a) briefly summarized the many ways the word "identity" has been used over time. During the early and middle portions of the 20th century, identity was primarily a concept in psychoanalysis referring to a person's individual self-image. Identity within this model was autonomous and directed to the individual. During the latter part of the 20th century, social scientists and anthropologists were unsettled by the emphasis psychologists placed upon the individual and; therefore, situated identity within a concept of "cultural identity." In this way, identity is defined by the layers of an individual's culture such as gender, race, class, religion, beliefs, and ethnicity. Since then, social psychologists have defined identity as a more vigorous process by which individuals develop perceptions of themselves over time.

Simplified by Kreber (2010), identity through a psychological lens is reflective of the image that an individual creates of him or herself from within. This humanist perception mirrors individuation, self-actualization, and self-awareness. On the other hand, a sociological perspective denotes an individual's identification with particular groups or facets of an individual that are identified by others.

Theories of Teacher Identity

There are numerous definitions of identity that can be found in the literature; however, most educational researchers have borrowed definitions of identity from theorists such as Erik Erikson, Henry Foucault, George Mead, and Lev Vygotsky (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000; Hoffman-Kipp, 2008; Owens, Robinson, & Smith-Lovin, 2010; Zembylas, 2003). Specifically in the literature on teaching and teacher education, notions of identity span within the disciplines of philosophy, psychology, and anthropology (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). In some studies, a teacher's professional identity is examined through the lens of positioning theory and the concept of investment (Reeves, 2009) identity and self-verification theories (Wilson & Deaney, 2010), and social identity theory (Coldron & Smith, 1999; Upadhyay, 2009).

Following a framework derived from anthropology, literary studies, and social psychology, Sexton (2008) referred to teacher identity as the relationship between an individual's inherited traits and those that develop through both macro and micro social constructs. Race, class, and gender represent the macro structural categories that are intertwined within our daily micro experiences. She suggested that people act toward situations, not social class or social systems. She further explained that individuals negotiate teaching by building upon different arrangements of social positioning, experiences, and resources.

Drawing from the theory of dialogical self in psychology, Akkerman and Meijer (2011) recognized this approach toward identity to be beneficial in providing an explanation as to how teacher identity can be typified as both unitary and multiple, both continuous and discontinuous, and both individual and social. This dialogical approach identifies the mind of the self as a composition of multiple I-positions or voices. For example, an emerging I-position within a mother is to care while the artist within her wishes to express. The multiplicity-unity dimension

articulates multiple I-positions held together by a unity of self. The discontinuity-continuity dimension speaks to the ongoing shifts between I-positions maintained by past-present-future configurations. The social-individual dimension generalizes how others can inform or be the basis of I-positions (Akkerman & Meijer).

Grounded in motivational and identity theories, Cardelle-Elawar and Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga (2010) found that self-regulation, self-efficacy, and goal setting influence teacher behavior. Furthermore, the most crucial factor affecting the quality of education that students receive is teacher motivation (Cardelle-Elawar & Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga). Mindsets, the expectations we have about ourselves and others, ultimately influence our behavior. Teachers embrace mindsets about the simple elements of motivation and engagement, which in turn shape their expectations, teaching methodologies, and interactions with students (Brooks, Brooks, & Goldstein, 2012).

Based on the concept that teachers' perceptions of their professional roles are related to their self-images and their impact on student learning and achievement, Ben-Peretz, Mendelson, and Kron (2003) conducted a study to investigate the connection between the context of teachers' work and their understanding of their professional selves. Using metaphoric pictures, 60 teachers in Israeli vocational senior high schools were asked to match images of themselves as teachers with drawings of seven other occupations: shopkeeper, puppeteer, judge, animal keeper, animal trainer, entertainer, or conductor. Their findings concluded that there was a statistically significant difference in the choices made by teachers of low-achieving students and teachers of high-achieving students as well as the academic level of the teachers. Moreover, teachers of low-achieving students who chose a caring image to reflect their view of themselves as teachers emphasized their practice as impacting student learning; whereas teachers of high-

achieving students who chose a caring image highlighted their practice as influencing student personal growth (Ben-Peretz, Mendelson, & Kron). On the other hand, Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) argued that it is unclear in the literature how the concepts of "identity" and "self" are related. Although both concepts are often used to indicate the same thing, they are different concepts.

Echoed by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), the struggle to understand the connection between "identity" and the "self" is one of the many challenges in defining teacher identity. Additional issues that emerge include the role of emotion, the importance of stories and discourse, the significance of reflection, the connection between identity and agency, the contextual influences that encourage or discourage identity construction, and the task of teacher education programs to generate opportunities to investigate new and developing teacher identities.

Student Teachers and Beginning Teachers

It is essential to ask teachers why they chose to teach because having the belief that one will like what they plan to do is important (Mimbs, 2002). The call to teach is characterized by positive sentiments about a certain subject matter, students, and the act of teaching itself. When teachers declare a calling to teach, they are typically referring to teaching as a profession that is richly rewarding in ways that other vocations are not. They may even say that they "love to teach." These teachers radiate energy and enthusiasm for their profession and passionately illustrate teaching (Buskist, Benson, & Sikorski, 2005). On the other hand, teachers who do not have a positive opinion of their profession cannot convey this positive image to others (Mimbs); such construction is also the fundamental irony of "teaching as a calling" (Alsup, 2006).

Student teachers and beginning teachers are in the process of seeking their professional identity (Ben-Peretz et al., 2003). As pre-service teachers find themselves in the center of a classroom, a sense of immediacy generates the process of devising their teacher identity and professional self through dialogue with students and interactions with colleagues. Feelings of doubt and instability arise as the novice switches from student to teacher (Dotger & Smith, 2009). Furthermore, beginning teachers are expected to wear two hats simultaneously– the student who is reflective and learning and the teacher who must know and act professionally. As Akkerman and Meijer (2011) suggested in their dialogical approach to understanding teacher identity, this is reflective of two contradictory I-positions which can posit tension. Beijaard et al. (2004) cited that a student teacher's biography is important within the identity formation process. White, Zion, and Kozleski (2005) added that there is a rich learning environment when teachers understand their own cultural background and are able to connect that background to students. Likewise, teachers and students value each other.

Student teachers are challenged to investigate education in different ways. They are encouraged to question, present alternatives, and reflect; all while being exposed to the "groundwork" of teaching (Walkington, 2005). Therefore, an integral aspect of teacher education programs is the student teaching field experience, which includes the entire range of in-school experiences, structured observations, course-related field experiences, and the student teaching internship. Pre-service teachers gain first-hand experience about the public school environment and students that university courses cannot duplicate (Arnett & Freeburg, 2008). Key to forming an identity as a teaching professional is that student teachers understand their identity as a lifelong learner and subsequently, their individual attitudes, beliefs, and values as learners

(Graham & Phelps, 2003) because the process of identity negotiation continues to emerge long after student teaching.

The first few years of teaching are even more challenging than remaining in the profession as an experienced teacher (Alsup, 2006). Therefore, first year teachers in particular would be better prepared to transition into their teaching career if they were given the essential tools to anticipate the various issues of boundaries within the classroom. A greater sense of stability in their identity would exist if they were made aware of the potential vulnerability in the classroom and being inundated with student concerns (Aultman, Williams-Johnson, & Schutz, 2009). An organic research design on learning how to teach should disclose a complex set of interconnected systems within teacher education. Bringing student teachers from their understanding of teaching, which is chiefly personal, into a balanced professional role is largely the function of teacher education programs. Using teacher identity as a lens in considering how the interaction between identity and role manipulates learning would focus the attention on the personal resources that pre-service and in-service teachers bring with them (Sexton, 2008).

Professional Development

The common goal in professional development processes is improved practice (Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993). The perceptions that teachers have of their professional identity not only affects their efficacy and professional development, but their ability to cope with changes in education and to apply innovations into their own pedagogy (Beijaard et al., 2000). Similarly, autonomy and professional development opportunities unites teachers as a group of professionals (Canrinus, Helms-Lorenz, Beijaard, Buitink, & Hofman, 2011).

Teacher professional growth is best served by professional learning communities based upon the model that professional knowledge is nurtured both individually and socially.

Professional learning communities are fundamental to motivating professional growth as well as the formation of a teacher's identity (Archibald, Coggshall, Croft, & Goe, 2011). Rodgers (2002) highlighted the benefits of collaborative reflection that often materializes in professional development venues: the significance of an individual's experience; added meaning and understanding; and support to embrace self-reflection and inquiry. She suggested that "no teacher outgrows the need for others' perspectives, experiences, and support" (p. 857).

Pre-service teaching experiences are a valuable contribution to both the professional development of student teachers and the profession more broadly (Arnett & Freeburg, 2008). The Virginia Board of Education and the State Council of Higher Education established the Virginia Standards for the Professional Practice of Teachers as a resource for school divisions in implementing performance standards and evaluation criteria for teachers. The standards were constructed "to provide a conceptual model of good teaching" and "are not intended to describe the performance of beginning teachers, but rather, they are intended to guide the development of all teachers throughout their careers as they continually seek to improve their practice" (p. 1). There are six categories of standards: Knowledge of Students; Knowledge of Content; Planning, Delivery, and Assessment of Instruction; Safe, Effective Learning Environment; Communication and Collaboration; and Professionalism.

Relationship Between Teacher and Student Identity

It is no coincidence that self-identity is a fundamental professional development goal for teachers and a chief educational goal for students. As teachers understand their own identities, they are better able to support students in developing their respective identities. Thus, it is necessary to understand the formation of teachers' identities to include the ways teachers respond to, live with, and manage their shifting identities during these changing contemporary

times (Luk-Fong, 2013). Similarly, students' identities are constructed "both within and outside of school, and identity translation, like code switching, becomes a skill that informs teacher identity, constructed as it is on the job and often in interaction with youth" (Hoffman-Kipp, 2008, p. 154).

When teachers encourage critical thinking by incorporating conversation instead of traditional lecture, they become the teacher-student and students become the student-teachers. The hierarchy dissipates and the classroom becomes a community of learners (Givens, 2007). What this ultimately implies is that if students are to develop an individual identity through academia, this information must be desegregated into the larger context of who they are rather than just the information they can articulate when asked by their teachers.

In order for teachers to be culturally attuned to the identities of their students, they should be aware of their own identities, as well as how those identities may be divergent from the identities of their students (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). It is imperative for teachers to acknowledge this reciprocity and, in turn, develop strategies specifically intended to foster positive and meaningful, but yet ethical, relationships with students. As Parker Palmer (2007) expressed, "we teach who we are" (p. 2). He explained that teaching surfaces from within and, as teachers teach, they project their soul onto their students, subject matter, and manner of being together. He further challenged teachers to go beyond the traditional questions posed in education: the what (subjects), the how (methods and techniques), and even the why (purposes and ends) questions. Finally, he summarized, "Good teachers possess a capacity for connectedness. They are able to weave a complex web of connections among themselves, their subjects, and their students so that students can learn to weave a world for themselves" (p. 11). In this respect, teaching mirrors the self.

Initially, embracing a more democratic model of teaching that concedes to more student choice and responsibility can generate fear of the unknown for both the teacher and students (McKinney et al., 2008). Setting aside the "teacher persona" and revealing more of the personal creates memorable experiences in the classroom; however, engaging in meaningful dialogue with students requires a democratic classroom. When allowed to make decisions about their educational experience, students are afforded the opportunity to encounter democracy and to learn from their own lived experiences. Their vigorous involvement is analogous with the concept that learning is an active process by which ideas are constructed, not a passive process whereby rote information is memorized through the "banking" concept of education.

The "banking" concept of education limits the student's ability to develop individual opinions and eventually an individual identity (Freire, 2000). The role that students play in their education should go beyond the traditional one of customer or recipient of knowledge (Williams & Williams, 2011). If students perceive themselves as passive recipients of what they are being taught instead of active participants in the learning process, their enthusiasm and interest will fade (Brooks et al., 2012). Although teachers are committed to a standardized curriculum, when they embrace pedagogical opportunities that focus on the psychological needs of students, they in turn encourage and support students who want to learn instead of rote memorization and regurgitation (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Put another way, when one-size-fits-all standards serve as curricular objectives in which tests measure students' success, their identity is essentially reduced to test scores and they become a cipher (Garrison, 2009).

Typically, teachers have not been encouraged to consider the interactions that they have with their students beyond avoiding what is characteristically deemed inappropriate. Yet, effective teaching is far more than having expertise in content knowledge and delivery. Personal

communication outside of the formal teacher/student roles formulates an interpersonal relationship that in turn creates respect and trust (Frymier & Houser, 2000). Although it is unmistakably imperative that a teacher know science in order to teach science, for example, skillfully teaching science in a secondary school classroom also includes relating to and interacting with students in a manner that enriches their academic motivation (Allen, Pianta, Gregory, Mikami, & Lun, 2011).

Often, CTE educators are tasked with the challenge of preparing the future workforce within classrooms overflowing with cultural and language diversity (Rehm, 2008). All learners, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, are capable of learning – perhaps not at the same time or even on the same day. Some work better in small groups while others are better left alone. Some prefer the analytical while others lean towards the intuitive. Some, as Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering (2003) reported, arrive to the classroom with a confounding array of issues: homelessness, depression, suicide, eating disorders, alcoholism, incarcerated parents, poverty, and abuse are just a few.

To summarize, the perceptions that students have of themselves are quite different from those that adults have of them. Students have self-proclaimed identities such as the "rebel," or the "smart one," or the "gang banger," or the "friendly girl." These and other declarations have racial and cultural airs that can influence how they interact with each other as well as adults (Yonezawa, Jones, & Joselowsky, 2009, p. 199). Teachers face the daily challenge to have positive interactions with their students, a conundrum that can overshadow their perceived teacher identity. This mental debate questions a teacher's commitment, self-efficacy, professional identity, motivation, and even their moral responsibility to students (Day, Stobart, Sammons & Kington, 2006; Newberry, 2010). In this way, the degree to which teachers become

entangled or retreat can determine how they are able to preserve their existing teacher identity (Aultman et al., 2009).

Theoretical Framework

Reflective practice, a term used often in education, is at the heart of effective teacher education programs and plays a key role in continued professional development. As such, reflective practice shaped the theoretical framework for this study. First introduced by Schon (1996), reflective practice is a continuous process of viewing critical incidents within an individual's life experiences. For teachers, the advantage of reflective practice is a greater understanding of their individual teaching style; thus, greater effectiveness as a teacher. When teachers reflect on content, activities, and teaching strategies, they not only improve themselves as teachers but also ensure the transfer of knowledge to students. Larrivee (2008) added that reflective practice is indicative in a teacher's "on-the-job performance" which stems from daily decision making and problem solving (Larrivee). At the end of the day, a reflective teacher asks, "Where was the learning?" Undeniably, this question differs from "What did I teach?" Yet, for beginning teachers, the line between these two questions is often blurred. The ability to answer the first question is contingent upon a teacher's ability to observe (Rodgers, 2002).

Steffy and Wolfe (2001) developed a six-phase, life-cycle model of teacher growth: novice, apprentice, professional, expert, distinguished, and emeritus. The novice phase begins when pre-service students enter the field for practicum experiences as part of their teacher education program and continues through student teaching. The apprentice phase begins when teachers are responsible for the planning and delivery of instruction on their own. The professional phase materializes when teachers develop self-confidence as educators. A critical role during this process is a shared respect between students and teachers. The expert phase

signifies achievement of expectations required at the level of national certification. Teachers

reaching the distinguished phase exceed the expectations of the profession, while the final phase

of emeritus marks a lifetime of achievement in education. During all phases of this

developmental continuum, reflection is a critical component in developing the skills necessary to

be effective in the classroom.

Reflection is more than a mere thought about actions taken. Everyone thinks about

previous situations and they are either pleased with them or they wish things were done another

way. Effective teachers focus on both the consistency and inconsistency between their beliefs

and actions taken (Corcoran & Leahy, 2003). Teachers develop a subjective lens throughout their

professional career that allows them to perceive their role, give meaning to it, and then act upon

it (Kelchtermans, 2011). Through reflective practice, teachers gain a better understanding of their

individual teaching style and confirm their beliefs (Ferraro, 2000). The perpetual emphasis on

technically prescriptive interpretations of "being a teacher" are offset by reflective frameworks

and undeniably contribute to the meaning that teachers make of their individual classroom

experiences (Graham & Phelps, 2003).

As researchers engage in a reflective research process, their stories are often "restoried"

and changed; they "restory" earlier experiences as they reflect on later experiences (Connelly &

Clandinin, 1990). Reflexive research is both systematic and interpretive; it enables researchers to

construct authentic and translucent accountings of the professional practices of others as well as

their own praxis. Reflexive research also engages a conscious analysis of the role of the

researcher and a critical lens upon the way that data is collected (O'Connor, 2007). Critical self-

reflection is a method of taking into account the ethics associated with the power-knowledge

relationship researchers have with participants and allows researchers to demonstrate their investment in the research (Ortlipp, 2008).

Summary

Within this second chapter, the literature was reviewed pertaining to: (a) CTE, (b) FCS, (c) teacher identity, (d) student identity, and (e) the theoretical framework of reflective practice. It is important to first note that there is a long and proud tradition of education within every program area of CTE. Each program area is extremely diverse; hence, identifying the dynamics of teacher identity requires a specific approach to each technical area. Therefore, issues discussed in this chapter and in this study relate specifically to the CTE program area of FCS.

FCS contributes to the education of young people in a unique way in that it emphasizes "the nature and challenges of our daily lives in relationship to other peoples, social systems, and material resources" (Smith & de Zwart, 2010, p. 21). Even so, the public opinion of FCS continues to be stereotypical, especially in television advertisements that illustrate home economics (Mimbs, 2002). Every teacher's approach to teaching is unique and shaped by his or her individual teacher identity. It is for this reason that every classroom is different (Walkington, 2005). Hence, the profession intertwines with one's identity.

Teacher identity by no means characterizes an individual's total identity. Yet, it speaks for an apparent attribute of identity that persuades a teacher's pedagogy. Olsen (2008a) described teacher identity as both a process and a product. It depicts teachers engrossed in established interactions that rely on self-reflection while simultaneously recreating their professional being. It is an assuring way to offer a rich, thick, and detailed interpretation of teachers and teaching. First-year teachers often experience fundamental identity conflicts. As they uphold the

expectations of teaching while simultaneously discovering their personal self-identity, they are developing their professional identity as well.

According to van Veen et al. (2005), research has suggested that the meaning teachers make of their identity is influenced by experiences in the classroom, collegial relationships, administrative structures, and external demands. Even so, the significance of teachers' perceptions of their professional and personal identity is essentially overlooked in educational reform strategies and policies (van Veen et al.). Federal and state laws and regulations have been specific in the expectations for student performance and the consequences for schools, teachers, and students who fail to meet these expectations. Soon, researchers will experience the ripple effect of these high stakes testing requirements and the demand for evidence to support what has been both successful and unsuccessful (Klem & Connell, 2004).

To teach in these contemporary times requires a holistic approach. Framing identity emphasizing a traditional anthropology and sociology lens produces a broad overview of the micro and macro contexts of gender, race, class, religion, beliefs, and ethnicity. This approach, however, may be too unpretentious when defining identity. The outcomes of this research study will ultimately provide implications for teacher preparation programs and professional development opportunities. One of the few variables that we can control in education is how we prepare our teachers; however, Pickard (2004) reminded us that "preparing well-qualified, confident teachers for the challenges of today's classroom is the task facing teacher preparation programs" (p.14).

Chapter 3: Methodology

As indicated in the literature discussed in Chapter 2, there is a need for teachers to understand the significance of their professional teacher identity; when teachers develop a sense of professional purpose, they become more effective teachers (Cardelle-Elawar & Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga, 2010). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the construction of the perceived individual identities of secondary family and consumer sciences (FCS) teachers in career and technical education (CTE) classrooms. A better understanding of this phenomenon will add to the existing literature and offer insight to enhance both teacher education programs and professional development agendas.

Within this chapter, the research approach utilized to examine the perceived individual identity of FCS teachers is introduced followed by an explanation of the research design and the process implemented to select the participants and collect data. Next, a description of the pilot study is presented. The role of the researcher and researcher reflexivity is explained in addition to the ethical guidelines, and measures of research quality that were followed. The chapter concludes with a description of the methods that were utilized to analyze the data.

Research Approach and Research Questions

The qualitative phenomenological research approach was selected for this study for a number of reasons. First, qualitative research methods embrace an interpretivist perspective that does not test a hypothesis; the hypothesis is generated as the open-ended data emerge inductively in their natural settings. The primary goal for qualitative research rests entirely upon the view of the participants; therefore, the researcher aims to get as close to their lived experiences as possible (Rossman & Rallis, 2011) so as to provide a thick, rich, detailed interpretation of the

phenomenon (Gelo, Braakmann, & Benetka, 2008). This naturalistic approach supported an in-depth emphasis upon the lived experiences of the teacher participants.

Second, a subjectivist/constructivist ideology rests in qualitative research to which individuals continuously create their own independent and social realities (Bahari, 2010). However, when these realities are taken collectively, they contain shared meanings that can suggest a single explanation (Rubin & Rubin, 2004).

Third, a phenomenological approach emphasizes the essence of an experience and focuses upon how complex meanings are constructed out of simple units of direct experience within everyday life (Merriam, 2002). Creswell (2007) described phenomenology as "an interpretive process in which the researcher makes an interpretation of the meaning of the lived experiences" (p. 59) and presents to the reader a deep understanding of these experiences through the lens of several individuals (Creswell). This approach guided the researcher's understanding of the lived experiences of the participants as they are connected to their perceived individual teacher identity.

In order to explore the participants' experiences and perceptions of how their professional teacher identities developed, answers to the following research questions were sought:

1. What are selected secondary FCS teachers' beliefs about teaching?

2. What are selected secondary FCS teachers' experiences that have influenced their beliefs about teaching?

3. What perceptions do selected secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms have of their individual teacher identity?

4. How do selected secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms describe the ways in which their lived experiences have shaped their perceived individual teacher identity?

Chapter 2 of this dissertation included a comprehensive review of the literature that focused on several key components: career and technical education, family and consumer sciences, teacher identity, and a theoretical framework of reflective practice. This provided a report of what is known about these elements as they relate to the research questions and guided the interpretation, analysis, and synthesis of the data collected.

Research Design

In qualitative paradigms, many socially and psychologically created phenomena frame the reality in which the knower and the known are linked to each other. This enables an understanding of a small number of participants' own belief systems or presuppositions (Gelo et al., 2008). The rationale of this study was not intended to generalize the findings, but to locate as much information as possible to answer the research questions. The emphasis of an in-depth understanding points to the rationality and strength of purposeful selection in qualitative methods (Patton, 2002). According to Creswell (2007), the size of the sample is a significant consideration within this sampling strategy. Studying a few individuals is equally important to collecting extensive detail about each individual. Although rich data could be gleaned from interviewing all FCS teachers in the Commonwealth of Virginia, contact with potential participants would be time consuming and costly.

Participant Selection

The purposeful selection of participants in this study consisted of ten secondary FCS teachers from public school divisions located within the Commonwealth of Virginia in an attempt to capture the lived experiences of teachers in different contexts. The researcher interviewed ten teachers, a number determined once data saturation had been achieved. A criterion selection strategy was exercised to identify potentially information rich participants

(Patton, 2002) vital to the goals of this research study. Explicitly, the criteria for interviewing the teacher participants included that they (a) were currently a licensed teacher with an endorsement in FCS, (b) had been teaching for at least five years prior to the interview, and (c) were willing to participate in a face-to-face interview.

In order to solicit potential participants, the researcher contacted Helen Fuqua, program specialist for FCS and related clusters at the Virginia Department of Education, to request that a recruitment e-mail be sent on behalf of the researcher to the FCS teachers who subscribe to the e-mail listserv she maintains (see Appendix A). The recruitment e-mail generated 23 responses from teachers interested in participating in the study. After information was received by e-mail from teachers who wished to volunteer and confirmation was made that they met the participant criteria, a mutually agreed upon date, time, and location was arranged with each volunteer in order to conduct the interview. The interviews were conducted in person and each lasted approximately one hour in length.

Data Collection

The mainstay of qualitative research is to gather multiple sources of information instead of merely one data source (Creswell, 2007). Combining multiple data sources to strengthen the study and bring credibility to the findings triangulates the data. In triangulation, researchers make use of "different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence" (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007, p. 208). Each source of data is considered to be a piece of the "puzzle" that contributes to the understanding of the phenomenon as a whole (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Based on the scope of this research, an independent, clear, semi-structured interview was conducted with each teacher participant to gain an in-depth understanding of their lived experiences as they relate to the construction of their perceived individual teacher identity

as the primary data source. The data was triangulated using the ongoing researcher reflexive journal and researcher field notes.

To establish credibility, qualitative researchers must decide how long to remain in the field collecting data that are saturated enough to establish themes or categories (Creswell & Miller, 2000). For this study, data was collected until the point of data saturation was achieved. Data saturation occurs when the researcher no longer hears or sees new information; therefore, there is little need for further interviewing.

In compliance with the research protocol established by Virginia Tech and to protect the rights of and safeguard the safety of the participants in this study, approval from the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB) was secured prior to implementation of the research (see Appendix B). The request for this approval included submission of the application using the IRB Protocol Management system. Supplementary materials consisted of copies of recruitment e-mails, proposed informed consent documents, data collection instruments, and a bio-sketch for all investigators. Data collection began immediately following the notification of approval from the Virginia Tech IRB.

Interviews. The purpose of interviewing people, as Patton (2002) stated, is "to find out from them those things that we cannot directly observe…We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviors that took place at some previous point in time" (pp. 340-341). In order to explore the research questions, an in-depth semi-structured interview was conducted with each teacher participant. The goal of the interview was to elicit the participants' stories of their lived experiences throughout their career to include significant people, places, and events that have shaped their individual teacher identity.

To foster an atmosphere where each participant was comfortable during the interview session, the researcher made every attempt to be as organized, punctual, prepared, and considerate of each participant's circumstances and individual schedule. Interviews were clearly focused and related to the objective of the study. Prior to each interview, the researcher e-mailed to the participants the informed consent form and demographic questionnaire (see Appendices C and D). The researcher also provided participants with the interview questions, minus the probing questions (see Appendix E). On the occasions where participants did not download the documents prior to the interview, copies were provided by the researcher. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher asked each participant to complete the informed consent form and demographic questionnaire The researcher reviewed both documents with participants which reminded them of the purpose of the study, their right to withdraw from the study at any time, the confidentiality of their participation, and the option to receive a copy of the results. Also, participants were given the opportunity to ask questions about the research study and procedures. After approval from each participant, the interview was audio-taped using two voice recorders, followed by preparation of a verbatim transcription of the interview.

Creswell (2009) recommended an interview protocol for both asking and recording questions during an interview. The researcher followed the components of this protocol to include a heading (i.e., date, time, interviewee), instructions for the interview so that the same procedures were followed for each participant interview, the questions including an ice-breaker at the beginning followed by possible probes for elaboration, space between the questions to record responses, and a final thank-you statement. Following Rubin and Rubin's (2004) suggestions for qualitative interviewing, the interview included a uniform set of questions. This interview guide of main questions, probes, and follow-ups ensured that the same general

information was collected from each participant. An interview protocol of open-ended questions prompted participants to reflect about the topics of the overall research questions (see Appendix E).

It is critical that the researcher listen carefully to the participant's story and that the participant is given ample time and space to tell their story so that it too acquires authority and validity (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Probing questions were used as follow-up questions to gain in-depth knowledge concerning each participant's thoughts, feelings and lived experiences. Open-ended questions, which begin with words such as who, what, where, when, why, and how, allowed the participants to reply extensively (Chenail, 2011) and gave them an opportunity to form their answers in their own words which captured their true perceptions of their professional teaching identity. Additional probing questions regarding the reasons for and further descriptions of their responses allowed participants to expand their answers further. This was beneficial in that the questions were based on the individual responses from each participant.

The wording and sequence of the interview questions for teacher participants were first developed by the researcher and then pre-piloted with secondary teachers using an online survey tool during a questionnaire design and survey research graduate course. Feedback received from the teachers completing the survey and from the course professor was essential in drafting the preliminary interview guide. A chart that displays the alignment of the research questions to the interview questions and related literature can be found in Appendix F. The interview guide was used in the interviews with teachers during the pilot study and adapted for the main study.

Responses to open-ended questions allow the researcher to appreciate and also to encapsulate the views held by other people instead of imposing preconceived categories characteristic of survey questionnaires. Direct quotations from respondents uncover their

thoughts and depth of emotion as well as their experiences and perceptions (Patton, 2002), which will be evidenced within the findings section of Chapter 4. The words of the participants will be presented in their true, unscripted format.

During the face-to-face interviews, handwritten notes were made to track key points of particular interest or relevance as well as facial expressions and body language. This moment, as Patton (2002) described, is "critical to the rigor and validity of qualitative inquiry" (p. 383). It is during this time that details about the setting and reflections about the interview were written as field notes in order to establish a context and make sense of the interview later. Two voice-recorders were used during each interview to assist during transcribing. This quality control ensures that the data acquired are useful and reliable (Patton) and provide a safeguard should one voice-recorder equipment fail (Creswell, 2009). Each interview was saved within a digital folder on the audio-recorders and later downloaded directly to the researcher's computer. Immediately following the interviews, the researcher's thoughts, feelings, and responses were recorded in a reflexive journal.

While transcribing, all comments that could potentially identify the participants were removed from the transcription. Next, each transcript was reviewed while simultaneously listening to the audiotape to ensure transcript accuracy. In order to confirm content accuracy even further, participants were asked to review their individual transcript. The transcripts were presented to each participant as an e-mail attachment. Participants were asked to first e-mail a confirmation receipt of their interview transcript, followed by sending a second e-mail to endorse accuracy of the transcription and to add information if necessary (see Appendix G). This process of member checks enhances the trustworthiness of the study and minimizes researcher biases. A sample interview transcript is located in Appendix H. The recorded audio tape of each interview

will be destroyed after all publications and presentations are completed. The electronic copy of each transcript is stored on the researcher's personal computer with a locked username and password. The data will continue to be stored for five years or until the research is published; at that time it will be destroyed.

Researcher Journal. The ancient tradition of journaling gave the researcher an opportunity to clarify thoughts and curiosities that may have otherwise slipped through memory. In following Ortlipp (2008) and Watt (2007), a reflexive journal throughout the research process was written to connect the researcher's experiences, opinions, thoughts, and feelings toward the research design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Reflexivity is an essential component to understanding the phenomenon under study as well as the research process. Drawing on passages from the journal, the researcher was able to make links between the literature, decisions during the study, and the reflexivity process. The journal revealed both personal and professional matters during the research process while the field notes documented data collection and analysis and served as key evidence for the audit trail of this study.

Reflective research journals presents "a data set of the researcher's reflections on the research act" (Janesick, 1999, p. 505) and illuminate the "messiness" of the research process (Ortlipp, 2008). Reflective journal writing enables researchers to articulate their ideas about conceptual frameworks, particularly during analysis of the data, and to work through the implications of the selected framework. Maintaining a reflective journal allows researchers to make their "experiences, opinions, thoughts, and feelings visible and an acknowledged part of the research design, data generation, analysis, and interpretation process" (Ortlipp, p. 703), and thus, enhances self-awareness (Cole & Knowles, 2001). When researchers utilize journaling to engage in ongoing dialogue with themselves, they are able to better determine what they know

and how they feel they came to know it. Readers are also given the opportunity to appreciate how the researcher gleaned knowledge during a specific study (Watt, 2007). A sample of journal entries is located in Appendix I.

The interview transcripts, field notes, and researcher journal were brought together in order to provide a holistic portrait of the lived experiences of the secondary FCS teacher participants in CTE classrooms as they relate to their perceived individual teacher identity. This research design was first tested using a pilot study, which is described in the section hereafter.

Pilot Study Summary

A pilot study is a standard procedure utilized to identify any potential researcher biases that were unknown prior to the pilot study and to test the quality of an interview protocol. In pilot studies, researchers conduct a "trial run" of their means for collecting and analyzing data using a small sample of participants with the same or analogous inclusion criteria as those intended for the main study (Chenail, 2011). For this reason, a pilot study shaped the overall foundation of this research design in that it provided a starting point for the researcher. There were multiple objectives for conducting a pilot study. First, the pilot study confirmed any likely biases held by the researcher and allowed for adaptation to minimize the effect of these biases, particularly since the researcher is a member of the population being studied (Chenail). Second, the pilot study provided an opportunity to field test the interview protocol and obtain feedback from the teacher participants to identify any obscurities or difficult questions. Third, the pilot study verified the approximate amount of time necessary to complete the interview process. Fourth, the pilot study provided an opportunity to assess the method of data analysis. Lastly, the pilot study functioned to identify any logistical issues associated with the research design.

Pilot Study

This pilot study was conducted utilizing a qualitative phenomenological perspective in order to guide the researcher's understanding of the lived experiences of the participants as they are connected to their perceived individual teacher identity, the same methodology used in the main study. Three FCS teacher participants were selected based upon convenient geographic proximity to the researcher. All three participants met the criteria that they (a) currently were a licensed teacher with an endorsement in FCS, (b) had been teaching for at least five years prior to the pilot study, and (c) were willing to participate in a face-to-face interview. Each teacher participant first provided verbal and written consent for their participation followed by the completion of a demographic survey that included their gender, race and/or ethnicity, age, college degree, and number of years of teaching experience. The interviews were conducted after school hours so that scheduling was not at a time that constrained or distracted participants from completing the interview in a forthright manner that includes thick, rich, detailed descriptions of their lived experiences.

Data Collection. The data collection procedures for the pilot study were the same as those planned for the main study. There were three sources of data for this study: interview transcripts, researcher field notes, and researcher reflexive journal.

Data Analysis. It was important to prepare the data for analysis immediately after each interview; therefore, the researcher reviewed field notes, completed a reflective journal entry, and began transcribing. Data analysis was conducted in the same manner as planned for the main study and as previously detailed.

Discussion

Navigating the research process can be ambiguous and complex, especially for a novice researcher. While some of the information gleaned from conducting a pilot study is generally covered in research textbooks and graduate courses, finer nuances of this process were revealed and are discussed hereafter.

Interviews. The participant interviews were conducted face-to-face and lasted approximately 30 minutes. Providing participants with the interview questions in advance was an important preface to the interviews and aligned with the reflective theoretical framework of this study. While some would argue against this approach in that participants are able to prepare rehearsed polished answers to the interview questions, the researcher found that the participants in this study were given ample time to collect their memories, reflect upon their experiences, and prepare well-thought answers. Moreover, the participants were at ease during their interview; they did not appear to be anxious, nervous, or drawing a blank. This was noted in the field notes and described in a later section of this summary. As such, the researcher provided participants in the main study with the interview questions, minus the probing questions, in advance so as to collect thick, rich, descriptive data.

This pilot study also gave the researcher an opportunity to practice her interviewing skills, which in turn prompted a refined interview protocol. In all three interviews, the participants attributed their decisions to become a teacher and their beliefs about teaching to their parents and/or mentors. Collectively, these interview responses and details supported the addition of two probing questions for question number one of the interview guide: *What were the reasons you decided to become a teacher?* The probing questions added were: Did your family influence this decision? If yes, please describe how your family influenced this decision.

The participants' answers to the interview questions and additional comments at the end of the interviews suggested a need for the researcher to be prepared with supplementary probing questions. In consideration of these interview responses, additional probing questions were added to question number five of the interview guide: *Please describe in detail the experiences that have shaped your professional identity as a teacher.* These probing questions included asking if the participants have had any experiences with family, administrators, colleagues, students, or advising student organizations that have shaped their professional teacher identity.

Moreover, a review of the literature supports these probing questions. Clarke (2009) stated that the process of identity formation is closely related to the discourses and communities that people work within. According to van Veen, Sleegers, & van de Ven (2005), the meaning teachers make of their identity is influenced by experiences in the classroom, collegial relationships, administrative structures, and external demands. Juzwik and Ives (2010) explained that teachers' identities are shaped by the various interactions that compose their working lives: inside classrooms with students, among other teachers and administrators in the hallways, in meetings with parents, and at professional conferences networking with colleagues.

Also gleaned from the pilot study was a need for the researcher to probe participants' answers with more specific questions such as "That's interesting, could you explain that a little more?" or "You mentioned two things, is there anything else that you would like to add?" or "Taking everything you mentioned into consideration, what do you believe about … ?" Utilizing these types of rejoinders entice participants to elaborate upon their thoughts without bias or persuasion.

Transcribing. Upon experiencing the arduous time consuming process of transcribing data collected in the pilot study, the researcher learned that it would take more time than

anticipated to transcribe the data collected in the main study. Therefore, more time was devoted

to transcribing the main study data collected and a transcriber was hired to assist in this task. The

researcher advised the transcriber how to format the documents and conveyed the expectation

that the interviews needed to be transcribed verbatim, including all utters and slang words.

Recognizing that transcribing ones interviews places the researcher closer to the data, the

researcher carefully read each completed transcription while listening to the audiotape at the

same time. This also served to ensure accuracy and allowed the researcher to note pauses and

hesitations.

Field Notes. Field notes were especially helpful to the researcher as she proceeded from

the first interview to the second and third. Throughout the first interview, it was evident that the

participant was prepared to answer the questions; however, the participant had difficulty

understanding the question: *So when you reflect about your individual identity as a teacher, how*

would you describe what you feel is your professional teacher identity? The researcher utilized

this experience in the subsequent interviews in that careful attention was given to the interview

introduction. The researcher spoke clearly and slowly while articulating the purpose of the study

and the meaning of teacher identity.

Researcher Journal. Maintaining a reflexive researcher journal was another demanding

aspect of the research design. However, returning to the journal provided the researcher with a

vivid picture of her evolving role as a researcher and the investment of a dissertation. The

researcher also found that maintaining a journal provided a space to reflect very candidly and to

consider issues of bias.

Concluding Remarks

The aforementioned emerging issues and lessons learned were useful for the main study. Most importantly, the researcher gained a better understanding of the essence of qualitative research and was more confident to proceed with the main study.

Role of the Researcher and Researcher Reflexivity

The role of a qualitative researcher is to gather rich descriptive verbal and visual data from participants. As a researcher, one must remain professional while also creating a rapport with participants. Often, participants will only answer to what is explicitly asked of them; therefore, the researcher must be able to articulate questions in a manner so that participants have a distinct understanding of the questions and can therefore provide answers that are aligned with the purpose of the study. Moreover, these conversations are approached in a fashion that promotes trust and honesty and embraces limited bias.

As observers of humanity, researchers are inseparable from it. They cannot move away from their own experiences in order to attain an observer-independent accounting of a given experience. Therefore, it is probable to expect different but yet equally valid interpretations of a single account (Maxwell, 1992). Creswell (2007) enunciated, "the researcher comments on past experiences, biases, prejudices, and orientations have likely shaped the interpretation and approach to the study" (p. 208). The uncertainty about researcher bias in qualitative research continues to be vague. There is little consensus on both the amount and the type of researcher influence that is appropriate as well as how it is managed and accounted for, particularly in interview-based qualitative research designs. Revealing the researcher's personal history, values, and assumptions are not intended to control bias but instead to make these factors evident to the reader. For this reason, the researcher's "baggage" is vulnerable to scrutiny (Ortlipp, 2008). Even

though researchers believe they can "pack lightly" and leave a substantial part of themselves and biases aside, they cannot. However, what they can do is acknowledge the contents of their "baggage" and how likely it is to accompany them on the research journey (Cole & Knowles, 2001).

In qualitative analysis, the researcher is the main instrument or "research tool;" therefore, the researcher collects data and then proceeds to analyze the data through his or her personal lens. Being considerate of intuitive insights and reactions to them demonstrates reflexivity. This concept essentially entails a combination of self-awareness, of others, and the interaction between the two. Patton (2002) described reflexivity as "a way of emphasizing the importance of self-awareness, political/cultural consciousness, and ownership of one's perspective" (p. 64). This researcher positioned herself within this study as an educator with beliefs and assumptions that shaped the investigation of teacher identity.

In the interest of full disclosure and safeguarding against unethical or unintentional influences upon the interpretation of the lived experiences of secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms as they relate to their perceived individual teacher identity, the following discussion frames the researcher's personal experiences relevant to this study. The researcher was pursuing dissertation research in a topic that was of significant personal interest. To begin with, the researcher crafted both her teaching and coaching careers on the principle that students came first and curriculum or fundamentals of the sport were second. Her view of teaching was, and still is, that a "one size fits all" cookbook approach is not the best for her style. The researcher chose to become a teacher in the CTE program area of FCS because it is within this educational venue that students make connections with academia and life after graduation. It is for these reasons, coupled with the researcher's experiences in teacher education, that she decided to explore the

meanings that FCS teachers make of their lived experiences and influences as they are connected to the construction of their personal teaching identities. The researcher's doctoral studies in teacher education, curriculum development, and program evaluation provided her with a new lens from which to investigate teacher identity.

To facilitate this study, the following tasks were implemented: an ongoing, reflective researcher journal was authored; a research design was developed; an audit trail and field notes were maintained; interviews were conducted with teacher participants; interviews were audio-taped and transcribed; categories and themes were created based upon interview responses; the findings of the study are summarized based on the theoretical framework; and measures were taken to ensure ethical considerations and data analysis accuracy.

Ethical Guidelines

Trustworthiness, integrity, and credibility are essential to establishing the usefulness of a study; especially among researchers, policymakers, practitioners, or participants. Researchers critique the conceptual framework and methodological rigor; policymakers seek results that help them in making decisions; practitioners consider how the results affect their daily work; and participants review the ethical nature of their reported perspectives. Qualitative researchers in particular are continuously making decisions about theorizing, planning, conducting, interpreting, and reporting their findings. In this essence, complex moral reasoning and ethical considerations are paramount (Rossman & Rallis, 2011).

Patton (2002) paralleled interviews with "interventions" in that they affect people's "thoughts, feelings, knowledge, and experience" (p. 405). In view of this, there were several ethical considerations in this study. An integral aspect of the ethical conduct of all studies is the informed consent form, which is provided to all participants for the following purposes: to fully

pronounce the purpose and audience of the study; to clarify the involvement of participation; to recognize that consent to participate is voluntarily; and to indicate that withdrawing from the study at any time is without penalty or prejudice. Signed consent forms were obtained from all participants prior to conducting the interviews. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and to obtain a copy of the results at the conclusion of the study. Another ethical concern is confidentiality. All interview participants were given a pseudonym (Posavac & Carey, 2007; Rossman & Rallis, 2011) and the names of all people and institutions that they mentioned were replaced with a pseudonym during transcription.

This study was designed to follow the research protocol outlined by the Virginia Tech IRB to gain approval to initiate the study in addition to following the ethical guidelines set forth by Rossman and Rallis (2011). Upon acceptance and approval, the researcher made every effort to adhere to the ethical guidelines accepted in the field and was mindful of the potential dangers and pitfalls if professional and ethical standards are not followed.

<center>**Research Quality**</center>

Every attempt was made to sustain research quality in this study. Trustworthiness is especially important when evaluating the significance of a qualitative research study and involves establishing credibility, transferability, and dependability. The procedures for enhancing these elements entail rigorous techniques and methods for gathering and analyzing data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Strategies utilized in qualitative research to establish credibility and rigor include prolonged engagement in the field, triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checks (Rossman & Rallis, 2011). According to Creswell and Miller (2000), researchers use "member checking, triangulation, thick description, peer reviews, and external audits" (p. 124) to report their findings in qualitative studies.

To establish credibility, qualitative researchers must decide how long to remain in the field collecting data that are saturated enough to establish themes or categories (Creswell & Miller, 2000). In this way, the researcher forms an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon and can then articulate the details (Creswell, 2009). For this study, data were collected until the point of data saturation.

Triangulation is a method of credibility in which researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to find common themes or categories (Creswell & Miller, 2000), thus giving justification based upon the varied perspectives (Creswell, 2009). In this study, the method of triangulation occurred by conducting multiple interviews, using the ongoing researcher reflexive journal, researcher field notes, and peer debriefing. The method of peer debriefing enhances the accuracy of a study in order to resonate with people other than the researcher (Creswell). This researcher sought advice from doctoral colleagues to review the project and offer feedback. The aspect of triangulation in this study strengthens the findings and gives voice to the participants.

The purposeful selection of teacher participants also enhances the credibility, rigor, and trustworthiness of this study (Patton, 2002). Member checks and participant feedback are important strategies for ensuring credibility (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The participants in this study were given the opportunity to discuss and clarify the accuracy of their interview transcript with the researcher (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

The term dependability in qualitative methods closely corresponds to the concept of reliability in quantitative research. Methods for establishing dependability in qualitative research are the triangulation of data, the research process, and the creation of an audit trail. An audit trail is a transparent description of the research procedures utilized throughout the entire project

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The construction of an audit trail also enhances the credibility in this study by providing the details of the data analysis and the decisions that were made to report the findings.

In qualitative studies, instrumentation rigor and bias management are key challenges for researchers using interviewing to generate data (Chenail, 2011). In this study, the questions asked during the interviews were designed based upon an extensive review of the literature pertaining to the topic with the intention of posing unbiased questions to initiate discussions. To further support and validate the findings, appropriate scholarly literature is referenced where applicable; interview and field notes were carefully logged; and the recording and reporting of the data was carried out as accurately as possible.

It is the rich, thick descriptions crafted by words, not numbers, which convince the reader of the trustworthiness of the findings (Merriam, 2002) and provide a means to achieve transferability. In qualitative research, transferability refers to how well a researcher presents the findings and delivers sufficient detail so other researchers can translate the findings into a different context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Throughout this research process, rich, thick descriptions of the context, teacher participants, and the findings are presented to the reader to support transferability.

Data Management and Analysis

Data in qualitative research are voluminous; therefore, the data must be manageable and meaningful for the researcher. Within this section, the data management procedures are discussed followed by the data analysis process.

Data Management

As suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), all data were labeled according to the source or site of the information, which later assisted the researcher during the analysis phase. A data log was created to track and organize all data and served as the initial audit trail for this study. The data was managed and organized as follows:

Electronic files were created on the researcher's personal computer using the word processor program Microsoft Word to record each source of data (i.e., interview transcriptions, researcher reflexive journal, researcher field notes, and audit trail). Within each file, a header was inserted to identify the data source, a footer was inserted to indicate the page numbers, and line numbers were inserted in the margin. The files were organized into separate folders according to data source. Participant codes and real names were stored in separate locked files. Using the same protocol, printed copies of the data files were organized within labeled file folders. This supported the electronic and paper copy coding process of data analysis through two iterations. For the first iteration, the researcher used features of Microsoft Word to highlight text, create notes about ideas and codes, and conduct a search for common words and phrases. For the second iteration, the researcher used different colored highlighter markers on the printed copies of the data files to highlight text and create notes. Chunks of data containing meaning were cut apart and organized during further analysis.

Data Analysis

The data collection and analysis transpired in concert, as in any other qualitative study. Creswell (2009) described data analysis as a process of making sense out of data while moving into making meaning and understanding the data in order to interpret and represent the data. He compared this process to "peeling back the layers of an onion" (p. 183). The primary source of

data for this study was the individual semi-structured interviews conducted with the teacher participants. As the interview data were collected and analyzed, the process of member checking was utilized in which the initial transcription of the interviews were shared with the participants. The participants then had the opportunity to discuss and clarify the accuracy of the transcript with the researcher (Baxter & Jack, 2008), giving added credibility to the study (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Specifically, the transcripts were presented to each participant by e-mail for their review in order to confirm content accuracy even further. Participants were asked to first e-mail a confirmation receipt of their interview transcript followed by a second e-mail to endorse accuracy of the transcription, to offer clarity, and to add information if necessary. Although all interview responses were included in the data analysis, significant responses for this particular study pertained to teacher identity.

The researcher followed the six-step approach suggested by Creswell (2009) for data analysis. During step one, the data was organized and prepared for analysis as described in the aforementioned description of data management. Next, the researcher read through all the data in order to gain an overall meaning and depth. In step three, the researcher began a more detailed analysis of the data using the qualitative method of coding. The researcher then used this coding process to generate categories or themes during step four. In step five, the findings of the themes were represented in the form of a qualitative narrative. The final step entailed the researcher's interpretation or meaning of the data.

Often, qualitative researchers use the terms *concept, category*, and *theme* interchangeably (Bazeley, 2009). This researcher uses the term *codes* to represent the anchors of key points found within the data. Codes of similar content collectively formulate *concepts*, which allows the data to be grouped. Eventually, the concepts fall into broad groups of similar concepts, termed

categories, which formulate *themes*. This inductive process of data synthesis was ongoing

throughout the research and entailed much reflexivity as events and incidents were compared

against themselves. Merriam (2002) described this inductive strategy of data analysis as a

process in which a unit of data such as a meaningful word or phrase is selected and then

compared to another unit of data and so on. These patterns are assigned names (codes) and

refined and adjusted as the analysis proceeds.

An open coding strategy (Rossman & Rallis, 2011; Strauss and Corbin, 1999) was

utilized during the electronic and hard copy coding process of data analysis. Emerson, Fretz, and

Shaw (2011) explained this two-phase process of analytic coding. First, in open-coding, the data

was read line-by-line so that ideas, themes, or issues could be identified. Next, focused coding

entailed a fine-grained line-by-line analysis of the topics of particular interest. This is the point at

which new ideas and connections were made. During the cycle of coding, lists of unique words

or phrases were maintained. Each numbered line was reviewed in a paragraph to allow for

category development and to identify quotes for inclusion within the second level of analysis. A

coded transcript is located in Appendix J.

As the codes were compared to form concepts and eventually develop themes, the

researcher identified themes emerging from the data collected from each participant interview

and then linked the themes across all participant interviews. The themes identified from this

method of categorization were connected and organized according to each research question and

depicted using a system of organizational charts. The line numbers inserted within the transcripts

were used to identify quotes. The participants' responses to the research questions provided the

framework for analysis. Themes are identified within each narrative and common themes are

examined across narratives. The identified themes are connected and organized according to each research question.

The final phase of data analysis entails making meaning or interpreting the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to present the findings and interpretations, the researcher utilized writing strategies suggested by Creswell (2009) and Patton (2002). As recommended by Creswell, the researcher included the following: direct quotes from participants in a variety of length from short to long passages; expressed codes and themes from the wording used by the participants; used metaphors and analogies; intertwined the participants' quotes with the researcher's interpretations; applied indents or other special formatting to call attention to the participants' quotes; and used graphs, tables, and figures to display the data (Creswell). In order to communicate the researcher's role of self-awareness in the study, Patton advised writing in a first-person active voice. He stated that "voice is more than grammar" and explained that "a credible, authoritative, authentic, and trustworthy voice engages the reader through rich description, thoughtful sequencing, appropriate use of quotes, and contextual clarity so that the reader joins the inquirer in the search for meaning" (Patton, p. 65).

Using a narrative approach, the findings of this study are framed in a separate narrative for each teacher participant. The detailed narratives illuminate the nature of the participants' teacher identities, which emerged from their lived experiences and perceptions about their individual identities. The descriptive narratives also inform the reader of the participants' beliefs and the meanings that they have made of their lived experiences that have shaped their perceived individual identity as teachers. By using quotes in the participants' own voices, the researcher was able to illustrate diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives.

Each story follows a similar format by first providing a demographic context for each participant to include the information captured in the interviews and in the self-reported demographic survey completed by each participant. This information includes the teacher's gender, race and/or ethnicity, age, college degree, and number of years of teaching experience. Next, rich thick descriptions of the participants' lived experiences and how these experiences are connected to the construction of their teaching identity is presented as captured during their interviews. In following Patton (2002), direct quotations from participants are reported to frame their thoughts and depth of emotion as well as their experiences and perceptions. Each narrative concludes with a summary using data from the interview, researcher reflexive journal, and researcher field notes. The goal of this interpretative summary is harmonious with Connelly and Clandinin's (1990) description in that "the two narratives of participant and researcher become, in part, a shared narrative construction and reconstruction through the inquiry" (p. 5).

Summary

This third chapter of the dissertation consisted of: (a) an introduction of the qualitative research approach, (b) a description of the research design, (c) an explanation of the method of participant selection, (d) an illustration of the means of data collection, (e) a definition of the role of the researcher and researcher bias, (f) a description of the pilot study, (g) clarification of the ethical guidelines followed, (h) a discussion of the measures of data quality, and (i) an explanation of the process of data management and analysis.

Within Chapter 4, the results and analysis of data are presented. A brief narrative summary for each participant provide the reader with a description of gender, race and/or ethnicity, age, college degree, and number of years of teaching experience. The thick, rich descriptions of the lived experiences of the participants are captured through their responses to

the interview questions. The emerging categories and themes represent a better understanding of the research questions guiding this study. In following Creswell (2007), the voices of the participants, reflexivity of the researcher, and a complex description and interpretation of the problem is explained. Within Chapter 5, a discussion of the findings to include implications and recommendations for future research are presented.

Chapter 4: Results

Within this chapter, the results of an investigation of the perceived individual teacher identity of secondary family and consumer sciences (FCS) teachers in career and technical education (CTE) classrooms are reported. First, the purpose of the study and the research questions are introduced. Next, a description of the participants and a detailed narrative for each one is provided. Lastly, a presentation of the findings including the reasons participants became a teacher, answers to each research question, and the researcher reflective journal is presented.

This study was defined by two purposes. The first purpose was to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms as they relate to their beliefs about teaching. This purpose was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are selected secondary FCS teachers' beliefs about teaching?

2. What are selected secondary FCS teachers' experiences that have influenced their beliefs about teaching?

The second purpose of this study was to further examine the meanings that these teachers make of these experiences and influences as they are connected to the construction of their personal teaching identities. The following research questions guided this purpose of the study:

3. What perceptions do selected secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms have of their individual teacher identity?

4. How do selected secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms describe the ways in which their lived experiences have shaped their perceived individual teacher identity?

A qualitative design was the most appropriate methodology for this research in order to guide the researcher's examination of the lived experiences of the participants as they are connected to their perceived individual teacher identity. This naturalistic approach supported an

in-depth emphasis upon the lived experiences of the participants and provided a rich, thick, and detailed interpretation of these teachers and their teaching. A purposive selection strategy was applied to recruit ten FCS teacher participants teaching within the Commonwealth of Virginia. The criteria for interviewing these participants included that they (a) were currently a licensed teacher with an endorsement in FCS, (b) had been teaching for at least five years prior to the study, and (c) were willing to participate in a face-to-face interview.

Demographic Profile of Participants

The researcher created a demographic questionnaire to capture the following self-reported information from participants prior to each interview: gender, race and/or ethnicity, age, highest level of education, number of years of full-time teaching experience, grade level teaching, FCS course(s) teaching, advising a CTE organization, and advising or coaching a student extra-curricular activity. The researcher assigned each participant a pseudonym in order to uphold the commitment of their confidential participation in the study (Diane, Amy, Gina, Jackie, Lori, Mary, Sheila, Karen, Melissa, and Robin). The demographic profile of the participants is presented in Table 1.

All ten of the participants were females between the ages of 35 and 61; eight of the participants were white and two were black. All participants had attained at least a bachelor's degree, with four having a bachelor's degree plus 15 extra credits, two having a master's degree, two having a master's degree plus 15 extra credits, and one having a doctoral degree. The number of years of full-time teaching experience ranged between seven and 29 years. Three of the participants were teaching grades 6-8, one was teaching grades 10-12, and six were teaching grades 9-12. One teacher was teaching at an alternative school while another was teaching at a CTE center. At the time of the interviews, the three middle school level participants were

Table 1

Demographics of Teacher Participants

	Teacher	Gender	Race	Age	Highest Level of Education	Number of Years Teaching	Grade Level Teaching	FCS Courses Teaching	Advisor for CTE student organization	School Division
1	Diane	F	White	58	Masters	8	6th–8th	FACS 1 and 2 Nutrition & Wellness	FCCLA	Rural
2	Amy	F	White	57	Masters	13	9th–12th	Exploratory 3 Individual Development Teachers for Tomorrow	FEA	Town
3	Gina	F	White	58	Bachelors +15	22	9th–12th	Life Planning Nutrition & Wellness Teachers for Tomorrow	FEA	Rural
4	Jackie	F	Black	52	Doctorate	15	6th–8th	Synergistic Lab Nutrition & Wellness	FCCLA	Suburban
5	Lori	F	White	58	Bachelors	24	9th–12th	Child Dev & Parenting ECE Teachers for Tomorrow	FEA, FCCLA	Suburban
6	Mary	F	White	61	Masters +15	16	9th -12th	ECE I and II Teaching Internship	FEA, FCCLA	Suburban
7	Sheila	F	White	55	Bachelors +15	7	6th– 8th	Teen Living 6, 7, 8	No	City
8	Karen	F	White	50	Masters +15	15	10th–12th	ECE I and II	FCCLA	Town
9	Melissa	F	White	35	Bachelors +15	13	6th–8th	Exploratory	FCCLA	Rural
10	Robin[a]	F	Black	57	Bachelors +15	29	9th-12th	Life Planning	FCCLA	City

Note: All participant names are pseudonyms assigned by the researcher and are listed in the order in which they were interviewed
[a] Robin also served as the freshman class sponsor

teaching the following courses: Synergistic Lab, Nutrition and Wellness, Teen Living 6, Teen Living 7, Teen Living 8, and Exploratory. The seven high school level participants were teaching the following courses: Exploratory 3, Individual Development, Teachers for Tomorrow, FACS (Family and Consumer Sciences) 1, FACS 2, Nutrition and Wellness, Life Planning, Child Development and Parenting, Early Childhood Education (ECE) I, ECE II, and Teaching Internship. Nine of the ten participants were active advisors for CTE student organizations; four were advisors for Future Educators Association (FEA) and seven were advisors for Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). One of the nine also served as an advisor or coach for another student extra-curricular activity. There were two participants from each of town and city school divisions and three participants from each of rural and suburban school divisions.

Findings

Throughout the findings are both ideas from the participants about their experiences as they relate to their beliefs about teaching and the meanings they make of these experiences as they are connected to the construction of their personal teaching identities. The findings will be framed in ten narratives. Each narrative will consist of three sections: (a) a brief demographic profile of the participant, (b) an examination of the participant's experiences as related to their beliefs about teaching, and (c) a descriptive analysis of the participant's experiences as they are connected to their perceived individual teacher identity.

Participant Narrative: Diane

Diane is a single, white, 58-year old with a master's degree and has been teaching FCS for eight years. She teaches FACS 1, FACS 2, and Nutrition and Wellness to grades 6-8 in a middle school located within a rural school division where she is also an FCCLA advisor.

When Diane wanted a change from her career in hospitality, she entered the teaching profession after she heard Laura Bush speak on television about a shortage in teachers. She already held a degree in home economics so she approached a nearby university to inquire about the requirements to become a licensed teacher. Although her family thought she was "crazy" to go back to school because she was "too old," they supported her decision.

Beliefs about Teaching and Influential Experiences. Diane believed that teaching is a challenging interaction between the teacher and a classroom community of diverse and unique students. She considered teaching to be challenging because students typically do not respect teachers and the parents have mixed opinions. Although parents supported the FCS curriculum, they often held teachers accountable for their children's behaviors. She explained, "We get the authentic child, we get the real child, we don't have the parental influence, it's the peer influence. We get the real person in here … they have not really honed in on their social skills and they don't hold back 'cause they don't understand themselves" (Line numbers of the interview transcript [Line] 110-114). When pressed further to describe her beliefs about teaching, she conceptualized teaching to be within the confines of her current experiences in a middle school classroom. Unlike the other participants, she did not draw from any prior experiences as a student or with teachers.

As Diane connected her beliefs about teaching to her experiences, she told a plethora of stories about students using idioms and vivid descriptions. For example, she referred to middle school students as "halfers; half children, half adult" (Line 443) and "fence sitters" (Line 478) because of their struggles between peer influences and their family values. She described how peculiar it was to hear students talking about having sex while at the same time they carried

stuffed animals in their back pockets or played with superhero figurines at their desks. For her, this disequilibrium was a unique and intriguing aspect of teaching in middle school.

      Professional Identity and Experiences. Diane considered her role as a teacher to be much different from her former role as a manager in hospitality. She saw herself as an educator preparing students for the world of work using real life experiences. She proclaimed, "Children are our country's greatest natural resource" (Line 417); therefore, there is nothing more important than child development. Her part of this development underscored her professional identity as a teacher. Diane added that teaching is the only occupation that has infiltrated her life to such extent because she continuously seeks resources and ideas to bring back to the classroom.

      Undeniably, teaching FCS also underpinned Diane's perception of her teacher identity; she articulated that she is "teaching about life" (Line 496). Using metaphors, she emphasized that she provides students with a foundation, the first layer of bricks. She said she also delivers tools such as goals, life lessons, and decisions for their toolboxes. For Diane, being from a large close-knit family parallels the central focus of family in FCS. She commented, "Family is the nucleus of the whole society … once those structures are weak, then your whole society will weaken" (Lines 257-259). Often, she used her family as examples in the classroom.

      As Diane transitioned from her career in hospitality to teaching, she relied on an administrator with a commanding demeanor to learn about classroom management and how to communicate with parents. This experience played an integral role in shaping her professional identity as a teacher. She explained that being an authoritarian is not a natural part of her personality; therefore, as she enunciated, "It is disfavorable to me to have to call a parent and tell them that your child is a wreck in my classroom" (Lines 450-451). In addition to underpinning her beginning understanding of classroom management, she credited networking and learning

from other teachers during professional development opportunities to "ground that family and consumer sciences teacher mode" (Line 546).

Although there was a clear discord, it was apparent that students were instrumental in forming both Diane's beliefs about teaching and her teacher identity. Throughout the interview, students were the focus of her reflections and whimsical stories. She described them as "horrible, merciless, and they have no social skills at that age" (Lines 437-438), but she also attributed their gifts of handmade cards and home baked cookies accompanied by the sentiment that she is their favorite teacher as her salvation on frustrated days. This feedback has reinforced her sense of professional teacher identity.

Participant Narrative: Amy

Amy, a married, white, 57-year old mother, is a 13-year veteran teacher with a master's degree. She teaches Exploratory 3, Individual Development, and Teachers for Tomorrow to grades 9-12 and is an active advisor for FEA at a high school located in a town school division.

Amy played school when she was young and taught Sunday school during her high school years so her decision to be a teacher, as she described, stemmed from her desire to work with children and help people. After graduating from high school, Amy attended college with aspirations of becoming an early childhood teacher. Shortly thereafter, she entered the military. Although her goal was to be a business teacher at the time of her discharge from the military, she accepted an open position in special education. Eventually, Amy became a business teacher until her school needed a FCS teacher. She remarked, "I'm 57, so I started teaching late. So I was more mature than a younger teacher, had more life experiences to pass on and think about" (Lines 60-62).

Beliefs about Teaching and Influential Experiences. Amy stated that her beliefs about teaching are that all students can learn and that teachers should be acquainted with their students in order to determine what is best for each one. While describing her beliefs, she said that she listens and is open minded. She also had an optimistic view: "I always see the glass half-full instead of half-empty" (Line 98). She explained that students need caring teachers because teachers are with them more than their parents; therefore, teachers essentially become their role models. Amy explained her principle of setting expectations where a student can learn but recognized that placing the bar too high will ultimately set a student up for failure.

Amy has a family of teachers; three of her aunts and her sister were teachers as well as two of her cousins. Her son is also a teacher. One of her aunts and her sister were two of her teachers in high school. Her sister was an extremely impressionable role model because she had no fear of thinking outside of the box. Having family in the teaching profession and influential teachers shaped Amy's beliefs about teaching. With admiration, she recollected a high school math teacher that "held you to the fire" (Line 167) and would "crack your knuckles" (Line 169), but she conferred with this teacher often. She expressed that she aspires for her students to trust her in the same manner. Amy also recalled a memorable biology teacher from community college. She appreciated that he prepared study guides and notes to accompany his lesson plans, but she was particularly fond of the stories he told, stories that she has always shared with her students.

Professional Identity and Experiences. Amy described her individual teacher identity as "open, caring, but set expectations" (Line 191) and that colleagues would describe her as professional and approachable. She proudly credited her ability to elicit the best from students to her family roots which are embedded in warmth, openness, and care. Experiences with

administrators and colleagues were also influential. For example, a former principal mentored her through classroom management issues each morning before school while sharing a doughnut in his office. She noted that she receives a great deal of support from her current principal in her efforts to mentor younger teachers and she placed high regard for a close colleague with whom she confides in. Amy summed up that she would not enjoy teaching if she did not have this level of support.

Amy's role as an advisor for FEA has shaped and developed her perceived individual teacher identity as well, especially with setting boundaries between herself and students. Frequently, she has redirected her self-proclaimed identity of being open, outgoing, and approachable towards a stricter authoritarian in order to maintain those boundaries. Amy's military experience advising young soldiers in financial literacy translated well into teaching the FCS curriculum and prepared her to mentor high school students. When asked to summarize her teacher identity, Amy said, "I just think my teacher identity is what I am out of school and what I am in school is me, you take it, you leave it … in this day and time you have to be that mentor. And I'm a helper and a caregiver" (Lines 322-344).

Participant Narrative: Gina

Gina, a married, white, 58-year old mother has a master's degree and has been teaching FCS for 22 years. She teaches Life Planning, Nutrition and Wellness, and Teachers for Tomorrow to grades 9-12 at a high school located in a rural county school division. She also serves as an advisor for FEA and is the CTE department chair.

Gina had several family members involved in public school education and has a strong family background in 4-H and extension. Her great-grandmother was a teacher and her father served on the School Board for a number of years. Her son is also a teacher. Gina's grandmother

had a solid presence in home demonstration clubs and her mother involved her in sewing competitions which ultimately supported her decision for a career in FCS. After graduating from college with a degree in home economics, Gina married and worked in the restaurant business for several years prior to teaching FCS.

Beliefs about Teaching and Influential Experiences. When asked about her beliefs about teaching, Gina expressed that students have changed since she began teaching in the early 80's and that you have to accept them for who they are. She said that her goals are to reach all students as well as their families and to be as open as possible so that students are aware that she is a real person too. She said that she will do anything to encourage students, including travelling to see them participate in athletic events. Gina clearly stated that teaching is supported by love and care for students, a sentiment she has held ever since her first year of teaching and a reminder on days when she's at her "wit's end" (Line 87). However, as she explained, this level of love has changed over time because her classes are larger and she cannot maintain the close knit groups she once had. Regardless, she said that there is a "connected link" (Line 92) and a reciprocal relationship of respect between herself and her students. She attributed this to the types of discussions she can have with students while implementing the FCS curriculum.

Professional Identity and Experiences. Gina summed her teacher identity as "professional" (Line 105). She explained that she maintains confidentiality but shares with administration and guidance counselors what is appropriate to share. She also considered her role as the CTE department chair as part of the school leadership team. Entering the teaching profession as a 28-year old played a significant role in her identity because, as she briefly explained, "You garner a little bit more respect than they do for a 22-year old in high school" (Line 140).

Gina was the school's head cheerleading coach for several years, a role that placed her "in the spotlight in the school" (Line 193) and was important in shaping her individual teacher identity. She noticed that, while preparing for pep rallies and organizing pep buses, students gravitated to her and took ownership of her: 'Hey that's my teacher out there' (Lines 195-196). She later pointed out that some of the cheerleaders were influential in bringing about an awareness to her that sometimes the best and the brightest students are not always in CTE so she used them as role models in the classroom.

At the time of the interview, Gina had been teaching in the county she grew up in for 22 years; therefore, she has taught children of her peers as well as children of her first students. She proudly described the service learning program that she facilitates in the county. Each semester, she places 35-50 students in an elementary school with a classroom teacher, librarian, occupational therapist, or physical therapist. She said, "I was growing my own in (name of county) before Virginia even thought about going Teacher Cadet or Teachers for Tomorrow" (Lines 116-117). This connection, communication, and community involvement was an important aspect of her teaching career and her teacher identity. For Gina, having a close personal knowledge about many of her students' families and the nature of the FCS curriculum helped her accomplish things that other teachers may not be able to. She used the example of cutting during a discussion about goals. Through the discussion, she elicited their feelings, a unique position that other teachers do not share with her.

Participant Narrative: Jackie

Jackie is a single, black, 52-year old mother and 13-year veteran FCS teacher with a doctoral degree. She teaches a Synergistic Lab and Nutrition and Wellness to grades 6-8 in a large suburban middle school where she is also an advisor for FCCLA.

Education permeated Jackie's life; her mother and aunt were both teachers for over 40 years and she grew up in a community where many of the residents were teachers. Although Jackie declared several different majors in college, she always came back to education. She worked cooperative extension as a field faculty and when her youngest children were in middle school, her oldest son suggested that she find a career that would coincide with the children's school schedules. This inspired her to obtain her teaching endorsement and enter the classroom.

Beliefs about Teaching and Influential Experiences. Jackie experienced many years observing the work of teachers from the dual lens of a student and a daughter of a teacher. Her beliefs about teaching were grounded in the mantra that life in itself is teaching and every opportunity should be a teachable moment. She liked the feedback she received when students learn new things and believed that teaching should be a reflection of what the individual believes about learning. With this, she inspired her students by sharing with them her doctoral experience of graduate school and completing a dissertation. She described this as "reflecting my inner being onto them" (Line 77).

The discourse of a teacher's professional life, based on her experiences of being parented by a teacher, framed Jackie's beliefs about teaching. She vividly remembered her mother bringing papers home to grade throughout her childhood and although she never had her mother as a teacher, she was often in her classroom and had the opportunity to see her mother teach and discipline students. Jackie said that what inspired and influenced her the most was experiencing her mother's former students approaching her mother to ask if she remembered them. She believed that when you impact a person's life to the extent that they look forward to coming back to you to share that they have been a success, then you know that you have done your job.

Interestingly, Jackie's mother advised her against a career in teaching because she believed that a teacher's work is never completed. However, she said that she was adamant to offer her children the same upbringing that she had. Later in the interview, she depicted her mother as "one of the mean teachers" (Line 275) and stated that she did not want to be like her mother. This emergent dichotomy permeated the interview as Jackie reflected further about the perceptions she has of her teacher identity.

Professional Identity and Experiences. Jackie possessed a serious straightforward personality coupled with high expectations. She explained that she does not accept excuses from students because "excuses are tools of the incompetent and if you don't want to be incompetent, don't give excuses" (Lines 172-173). She further explained that she eliminates the excuses and challenges students to create something more unique. Jackie's students played a role in shaping her teacher identity; they taught her patience and tolerance. Like her mother, former students returned to share that they chose to become a teacher because of her.

Jackie revealed that when she became a mother at the age of 14, she had to quickly identify what type of parent she was going to be which shaped her identity as an adult and eventually as a teacher. She recalled wondering if she would be the same disciplinarian as her mother or something different. Jackie also attributed the subject matter she teaches to shaping her identity because it gives her versatility and flexibility to teach what she wants to teach as long as she stays within the parameters of the established competencies.

Although her students, children, and the subject matter she teaches played a role in her perceived individual teacher identity, Jackie does not allow her job to define who she is. She explained:

> I define who I am; therefore, nothing on the outside influences would precipitate me
> being a different person just because my title is that of a teacher; but, before I'm a

teacher, I am an individual, a mother, a grandmother, a friend, and those personalities take on a whole different look or aspect opposed to teaching (Lines 261-265).

Participant Narrative: Lori

Lori, a married, white, 58-year old mother, has a bachelor's degree and has been teaching FCS to grades 9-12 for 24 years in the same high school located within a large suburban school division. Lori teaches Child Development and Parenting, ECE, and Teachers for Tomorrow. She is also a co-advisor for FEA and FCCLA and is the FCS department chair.

Lori knew she wanted to have a family as well as a career that would be flexible around her family so she managed a family daycare for 11 years before completing her education to become a teacher. Her decision to teach FCS was largely due to the experience she had as an aide for her high school FCS teacher, a responsibility that gave her a sense of importance. Lori said that she subconsciously molded herself after this teacher. Moreover, teaching early childhood education seemed like a natural progression from her daycare business.

Beliefs about Teaching and Influential Experiences. Lori stated that all students can learn and that school should be a fun place for learning. She said that she loves children of all ages and referred to herself as a "grown-up child woman" (Line 23). However, this sentiment made it difficult for her to see other teachers who do not have the same passion. Her belief system, as she put it, is that teachers should care more about the students than the subject matter. For her, seeing a good teacher was energizing and it gave her hope to continue in the field. Lori also supported the notion that teaching is reflective of the teacher because she believed that she has "multiplied" herself when her students eventually go into teaching (Line 94). She added, "They become little yous all over" (Line 111).

Lori attributed her beliefs about teaching to her years of experience and to the former department chair whom she described as being a "woman of excellence" (Line 140) and a

"perfectionist" (Line 142). Although she was frustrated at times because she believed that she could not prove to be equal to her, she gleaned an invaluable mentorship. She expressed that she wished more teachers had good mentors as they entered the profession because experience is something you cannot achieve until you actually have the experience. She recollected that when she first started teaching, she noticed students navigating to the former department chair and not to her because she was the new teacher. She admitted that this made her jealous because she yearned for that same relationship with students and to be important in their lives.

Professional Identity and Experiences. Lori described her individual teacher identity as a person that students can come to when they have a problem or need someone to talk to; however, she has a clear boundary line between herself and students. She described herself as open, honest, and candid with them and models her expectations. She added that it is very rewarding for her when she receives positive feedback from former students who have careers and their own children. She referred to them as her "flowers" (Line 326).

Teaching FCS contributed to shaping Lori's teacher identity and gave her purpose and reason to continue in the field. There are a myriad of sensitive topics in child development and parenting that are not found in other academic areas. She expressed, as an FCS teacher, she is an important part of shaping values and molding lives for students. She illustrated that FCS is the "dessert on the menu" (Line 208) and "the glue that holds all the other curriculum subjects together" (Line 209). Lori's family and family daycare business also played a role in her perceived teacher identity. She explained that she was essentially a teacher and a role model while raising her children and operating a daycare. Her daughter home schools and operates a daycare and her son is an English teacher and a stay-at-home father. She proudly said that she "multiplies" herself with both her children and her students (Line 256).

When asked about other influential experiences that have shaped her individual teacher identity, Lori said that she has been fortunate to have supportive administrators over the years. Without this support, she would not have remained in the same school for 24 years. With excitement, she also recalled being part of a great trio when she first started teaching. One colleague was the "idea woman," another was the "calming influence," and she was the "energizer bunny" (Lines 292-294). Together, they accomplished many things.

For Lori, teaching has been both a challenging and rewarding profession. She said that she may be exhausted, but she is never bored. She deduced that, in teaching, if someone has had an unpleasant experience with a FCS teacher, they never forget about it. This sentiment stemmed from a negative incident that her younger sister experienced with a FCS teacher that challenged her idealized image of a good teacher. She added that 10 good teachers are required to offset the damage of one.

Participant Narrative: Mary

Mary is a married, white, 61-year old mother. She is a 16-year veteran FCS teacher with a master's degree plus 15 credits and is currently working on her doctorate. She teaches ECE I, ECE II, and Teaching Internship to grades 9-12 at a CTE center located in a midsized suburban school division where she is also an advisor for FEA and FCCLA.

Mary also comes from a family of teachers. All of her aunts were elementary and FCS teachers so she graduated from college with a degree in home economics because she thought "that was the thing to do" (Lines 22-23). She also credited this decision to a memorable FCS teacher who taught things that interested her- cooking, sewing, crafts, and childcare. Prior to teaching FCS full-time, she married, had children, and worked on her master's degree while substitute teaching.

Beliefs about Teaching and Influential Experiences. Mary stated that her beliefs about teaching are that teaching is individualized and requires differentiation so that all students are accommodated. She surmised that the mannerisms of the teacher affect the classroom and she concluded that, essentially, if the teacher is having a good day, students will have a good day and vice versa. Mary also considered herself to be a life-long learner and explained that teaching has informed her work as a student and her work as a student has informed her teaching. She said, "I do think it's a growing process. I believe, I firmly believe, it's an ever-changing process" (Lines 446-447).

Mary's beliefs about teaching were greatly influenced by the experiences she had substitute teaching while working on her master's degree. During those years, she was exposed to a plethora of different teachers, classrooms, and situations that shaped her teaching. Once in the classroom full-time, a colleague prudently mentored her during the transition. Mary also credited the comradery that existed for many years amongst FCS colleagues within the school division as part of her growing process. They convened regularly, shared ideas, and socialized together.

Professional development was a significant part of Mary's teaching career. As students, technology, and the curriculum changed, she was able to stay attuned by attending conferences and immersing herself in organizational leadership roles. It was evident during the interview that this unique experience was a positive sentiment in her evolving growth. She believed passionately that her education informs her practice and her practice informs her education. Together, professional development and lifelong learning impelled her to be a better teacher and solidified her beliefs about teaching.

Professional Identity and Experiences. Mary's perceived individual teacher identity changed over the years. When she first started teaching, she viewed herself as "Becky Home-ecky" (Line 180) because her degree read home economics and she taught cooking and sewing. She saw herself now as a professional and did not want FCS to be viewed as "Betty Homemaking" (Line 187), she wanted to see the profession deemed as a relevant career where business etiquette and workplace readiness skills are emphasized.

Mary stated that her oldest son played a significant role in shaping her individual teacher identity. When he informed her that her clothes were "teacher clothes" and that she needed to "step it up a little bit" (Line 220), she did just that. Subsequently, this was the time when she started attending professional development conferences and served in a few board positions for several professional organizations. This helped Mary see herself more as a professional FCS teacher rather than "just a teacher" (Line 316). She saw herself as a success in these leadership roles, a confidence that reflected back into the classroom. Growing closer to students through FCCLA played a role in her professional identity as an advisor. She explained that she models professionalism and when they in turn utilize what she has taught them, the experiences keep her thriving in the profession.

Returning to the comfort of her oldest son, Mary shared that he died. This life experience indubitably affected her personal identity as well as her professional identity. She said, "And just like my story about him getting me clothes, as I reflect on some of those things, there would be things that I would probably do just because I remember how he felt about that" (Lines 414-416). The support and encouragement she received from administrators, colleagues, and students during that time was instrumental in her return back to the classroom.

Participant Narrative: Sheila

Sheila, a white, 55-year old married mother, has a bachelor's degree plus 15 extra credits and 20 years of active duty experience in the military. Sheila has been teaching FCS for seven years; she teaches Teen Living 6, Teen Living 7, and Teen Living 8 to grades 6-8 in an alternative school located within a large city school division. She is also a special education team leader.

Teaching is Sheila's second career. Throughout her childhood and even during her military career, she considered teaching despite her siblings' disregard. When her husband retired from active military duty, he became a teacher so Sheila followed suit when she retired. The decision to teach FCS matched her college education and background so that she did not have to complete very many additional college courses. Sheila stated that she works harder in teaching than during 20 years in the military.

Beliefs about Teaching and Influential Experiences. Sheila believed that all children can learn and that many of them learn in different ways and at different times. She stated that she did not agree with the current emphasis in education that is placed upon data driven outcomes. She further described being distressed that our educational system is managed by corporations instead of educators. During her teacher education program, she discovered that many educational buzzwords were actually common teaching practices in the 60s and 70s, they merely lacked official terms. She explained that when she was in kindergarten in 1965, her teacher differentiated, "she just didn't have the time, or inclination, or business savvy to give it a name" (Lines 109-110).

Sheila's positive experiences and opportunities in education were influential in shaping her beliefs about teaching. She lived across the street from the elementary school she attended

with her older siblings and recalled the assistant principal because he was both a good educator and administrator, "the whole package" (Line 176). Sheila stated that she was moved by him because he saw potential in her. Likewise, her high school English and journalism teacher encouraged her to try things she had never done before. She considered herself to be one of the ground breakers of her high school when she was a part of the first group of females to attend an all-male high school. She believed that she had more opportunities than most during this time period in education because she was enrolled in auto, machine, wood, and electric shop classes. Most of which, according to her, were both enjoyable and challenging.

   Professional Identity and Experiences. When asked to describe her professional teacher identity, Sheila described herself as loyal and as a team player. She said she likes to serve and used the analogy of a wheel to which she is the hub as a team leader and all the general education, special education, and elective teachers are the spokes. She explained that she wants to be the one who is looked upon whenever there is a need to be filled. Although this flattered her, she professed that she is not a "jack of all trades" (Line 215).

   Sheila stated that she was terrified to take a position in alternative education until she interviewed with several of the administrators who were enthusiastic about the alternative school. She said that she now shares this same enthusiasm and believes that the students can have their needs met by her or another inspiring teacher. Sheila said that she will always be grateful to the principal who hired her because he "molded me without making it obvious he was molding me" (Line 286). She explained that he treated her like a grown adult working on her second career instead of a 23-year old recent college graduate. This experience was influential in shaping her individual teacher identity.

Sheila's experiences in the military and in education played an instrumental part in her role as an FCS teacher. She lived overseas for six years while serving in the military and recalled jesting with her husband about being able to quickly identify the teachers: "Teacher! Because it was like they had a big T on their forehead. So I hope that I don't have a big T on my forehead. On the other hand, I'm very proud of the big T on my forehead" (Lines 402-403). For Sheila, having a husband who taught science and now teaches social studies benefited her. However, she added that she stays current in all core curricula so that she is able to incorporate them into the FCS curriculum. As Sheila put it, "Life is a word problem" (Lines 496-497). She said that, as an FCS teacher, you need to understand how to translate what students are learning in their other classes and demonstrate to them how it applies to life.

Sheila also credited her colleagues for playing a role in her teacher identity. She explained that her team is close and each one brings a special talent so that together they are "rocking the world" (Line 307) with their collaboration. She even commented that she aspires to be like the art teacher because of the relationship she has with students. When asked about her students, Sheila said, "All of my students shape my teacher identity. I love my kids. My kids' troubles are issues that adults shouldn't have to face" (Lines 355-356). She tearfully expressed that she often wishes she could "scoop up" (Line 238) her students and take them home with her so that they can have their own bedroom, a pantry full of food, and play video games – a normal teenage life.

Participant Narrative: Karen

Karen is a married, white, 50-year old mother and a 15-year veteran teacher with a master's degree plus 15 credits. She teaches grades 10-12 at a high school located in a town school division. Karen teaches ECE and ECE II and is also an advisor for FCCLA.

Karen emulated her third grade teacher while playing school as a child. When she became exhausted working with the severely handicapped, she took advantage of the opportunity to pursue her master's degree in special education for very little cost. After a few years, she became frustrated with special education and was eager for a change so she translated her previous work experiences into a position in early childhood education FCS.

Beliefs about Teaching and Influential Experiences. When Karen was asked about her beliefs about teaching, she stated with confidence, "Don't judge" (Line 114). Throughout the interview, she reiterated her stance on the importance of being non-judgmental of students, parents, and situations. Karen explained that teaching evolves and since she did not start teaching until she was 27, she tries to remember what it was like to be 16. She said that she aspires for all of her students to be successful so she treats them as if they need accommodations and differentiates her instruction.

Karen's beliefs about teaching were shaped by her students, her childhood, and life experiences. She explained that when students share personal things with her such as cutting, alcoholism, and drug abuse, she draws from her childhood experience of having a mother with severe depression. She said that when her mother was hospitalized for depression, it was humiliating and not a matter for discussion in the 70s. Nonetheless, she still recalled having a loving and supportive family, an experience that made her resilient and non-judgmental. Her 30-year marriage, raising teenage children, and having a son with ADHD significantly influenced her beliefs about teaching. Karen explained that getting older and "finding your footing" (Line 212) has made her a better teacher.

Professional Identity and Experiences. When asked to describe her professional teacher identity, Karen first summed what her school principal had said in a recent faculty meeting. He

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encouraged staff to build relationships with their students. He said that, even if they do not

believe that their students are going to succeed, pretend and tell them that they will. Later, when

asked again to reflect about her perceived teacher identity, Karen said that she is honest and that

you have to recognize who you are, "I'm the teacher that wants everybody to hold hands, love

each other, and sing kumbaya" (Lines 339-340).

Karen's perceived individual teacher identity was shaped by the same experiences that

have shaped her beliefs about teaching. Her mother's depression during her childhood

formulated an unwavering commitment to be non-judgmental of people and situations. Another

pivotal experience for Karen was during seventh grade. Before students could leave the

classroom, they were required to tell the teacher who they thought was attractive. Karen recalled

not wanting to be the last one named and questioned why a teacher would place students through

that. This impressionable experience informed her decisions about selecting teams or groups and

student choice in the classroom. She clarified that she wants to be fair and for everyone to have

equal opportunities.

When she was asked in a follow-up question about other experiences that have shaped

her professional teacher identity, Karen named her children, students, colleagues, administrators,

subject matter, and professional development as additional layers of her identity. She said that

her children are bright and high achievers and have helped her become a better teacher by giving

her feedback. She also recalled two homebound teaching experiences with students who were

pregnant. Meeting their families and spending time in their homes solidified the importance of

her non-judgmental beliefs. Karen said that working well with colleagues was invaluable to her

because she considers herself a part of the team. She explained that the CTE Director was

positive and supportive in assuring that her pre-school program is not presumed to be a daycare

for staff. This was especially comforting to her because of the frustration in general assumptions that FCS teachers have little intellect. She said that nutrition, childhood development, and relationships are what life is about and are just as important, if not more important, than other academic areas. Finally, Karen said that she attends as much professional development as possible because she not only gains knowledge from her participation but it energizes her.

Participant Narrative: Melissa

Melissa, a married, white, 35-year old mother has a bachelor's degree plus 15 extra credits and has been teaching FCS for 13 years. She teaches Exploratory to grades 6-8 and is an FCCLA advisor at a middle school in a rural school division.

Like Amy and Karen, Melissa wanted to be a teacher and played school when she was young. Therefore, her parents encouraged and supported her decision to attend college to become a teacher. Since cooking and sewing interested Melissa, she majored in FCS but received an endorsement in elementary education. After college graduation, she worked as a teacher's assistant in second grade for one year prior to beginning her career as a FCS teacher.

Beliefs about Teaching and Influential Experiences. Melissa believed that teachers should influence and shape students by providing hands-on experiences that relate to real life situations. This belief was based upon an experience during her first year teaching when the assistant principal asked her to undertake a small group of alternative eighth grade boys for one class period each day. She recalled meeting them for the first time and described them as "big and scary" (Line 112). She was truly frightened so she asked the administrator for advice. The administrator advised her to "pick your battles," advice that Melissa has carried ever since. She cooked and sewed with the alternative class and by the end of the school year, she was awarded Teacher of the Year.

Melissa credited the same administrator for shaping her beliefs about teaching and being an influential role model. She learned from the administrator how to manage student discipline and how to handle situations in a non-judgmental manner. For Melissa, the administrator's support of students was an instant validation of her credibility. She described the administrator as "very fun, but professional and classy" (Line 155), so she wanted to prove to her that she could accept the challenge she had given her with the alternative class. She said that she often reflects about those students and has found that the experience has informed her teaching over the years.

Professional Identity and Experiences. Melissa described herself as a role model and said that she believes the actions that she takes both in and out of the classroom should be a reflection of who she is and what others in the community think of her. Although she learned over the years from both "good" and "bad" administrators and colleagues, students have been influential in shaping her individual teacher identity. She considered herself to be a very active FCCLA advisor and spends a great deal of time with students outside of the classroom. Through FCCLA, she said she becomes more familiar with their home lives and situations which is atypical for most of her colleagues outside of CTE. She expressed that they are her life and not just a student in her class. She added that there are many students who have motivated her to be a better teacher and to strive for more.

Having children also shaped Melissa into a different teacher. She explained that she now views her students and situations through the lens of a mother. For example, she said she reacts differently when students do not have lunch money. Prior to having her own children, she would assume that the school would take care of the matter. Now, she will charge their lunch to her account or offer them something from her kitchen lab in an effort to ensure that they have a better day at school.

Melissa acknowledged that if she would have remained in elementary education, she would be a different person today. She explained how she found her niche in FCS, "I think what I do is shaping who I am, because over the years I've learned a lot from the students, the profession, and I think that FCS has made me who I am" (Lines 324-326). Melissa shared the following story during her interview:

> Someone asked my husband the other day what his wife did. And he said, "She is a family and consumer science teacher." And their response was, "Is she earthy?" And, I think that someone's perception of FCS could be that, I see that, I guess. But he said, "No, she cooks, she sews, and she's girly, she's proper." I said, "You know, that does kind of describe FCS … we want to portray a profession that is prim and proper" (Lines 330-335).

Participant Narrative: Robin

Robin, a married, black 57-year old mother, has a bachelor's degree plus 15 extra credits. Robin has been teaching FCS for 29 years; she teaches Life Planning to grades 9-12 in a city high school where she is also the freshman class sponsor.

After completing a long-term substitute teaching assignment, Robin became interested in teaching and returned to college. She already had a degree in consumer education so teaching FCS seemed to be a rational choice and she liked that FCS taught life skills. Like other participants, Robin has family in education: two sisters and a few cousins.

Beliefs about Teaching and Influential Experiences. When asked to share her beliefs about teaching, Robin expressed that teaching is like a mission. She explained that it takes a compassionate and empathetic person to teach; not everyone can be a good teacher. She added that good teachers remember that they were once a student and they use their experiences to become better teachers. She stressed that she loves and cares about her students and always has their best interest at heart. Robin said that teaching is a serious matter and believes teachers should be held accountable because they are affecting other peoples' lives and the decisions that

they make. She concluded that teaching is a wonderful career and that money does not reward you in teaching, the end results do.

Robin had a very good experience in education and believed that she had good teachers from kindergarten through high school. Her beliefs about teaching were positively influenced and shaped by two educators, a fashion design teacher from high school and an education professor from college. She reminisced about visiting both of them in their homes and how they treated her like she was a daughter. She referred to the high school teacher as her "other mother" (Line 404), the same idiom she later told her step-children to call her. Robin said that she gave invaluable advice about her evolving career in teaching and opinions about her soon-to-be husband. She said, "Those are two teachers that have always influenced me and I always said, 'I wanna grow up to be just like you,'… It went beyond the classroom" (Lines 441-443).

During the interview, Robin went into great detail about her first student teaching experience, a powerfully negative experience that reinforced her beliefs about teachers and teaching. Robin possessed an understanding that the cooperating teacher harbored unfavorable feelings for her because students noticed the positive changes in the classroom that she had made. At the conclusion of the student teaching internship, the teacher assigned a "D" as her final grade. She learned a very personal lesson from this experience and became determined to be a genuine and virtuous teacher thereafter.

Professional Identity and Experiences. Robin described her perceived individual teacher identity as leading by example while being careful to mirror what she speaks with her actions. She attributed this outlook to the aforementioned influential educators, her church, and the support she received from her parents while growing up. She described her college education professor as "a great woman" (Line 453). With animated voices, one being the parent voice and

the other being a young woman, she told the story of her professor phoning her parents to express that she was dallying with her studies. She admitted that, although this expression seemed odd to her given that she was a college graduate returning for the second time, it was indicative that the professor cared for her. Several times during the interview, she reflected upon the steadfast support she received from the professor, especially during her tumultuous student teaching experience. She also mentioned that her church family is supportive of her success in the same way that her parents are. During the church's yearly Black History Month celebration, they supported her request to include a tribute to both her college professor and fashion design teacher during the celebration ceremony.

Robin considered growing up in a family of four girls to be a teachable experience in itself. Her mother was particularly supportive of their education. She attended every PTA meeting and program and she even completed their applications for college admissions and financial aid. Robin recounted a particular experience with her father that influenced the way she communicates with students. After she brought home a report card with three A's, one B, one C, and one F, she said that her father never commented about the three A's, instead, he asked about the F and then the C. He later explained to her that he always started with the negative because people are inclined to remember the negative. This experience encouraged her to begin first with the positive before mentioning the negative because students tend to become defensive or closed down if you commence with the negative.

With 29 years of experience in education, Robin spoke about the many layers of her teaching identity. Experiences with colleagues, coaching, advising, and students collectively reinforced her understanding of teaching as being a mission and good teachers as compassionate and empathetic. Colleagues have encouraged her to try new things with technology, something

that Robin admitted is not her forte. They have also mentored and supported her in pursuing a master's degree. Early in her career, she coached cheerleading for several years. This enjoyable experience was the catalyst for her later roles in advising concert choir, FCCLA, and more recently as a freshman class sponsor. This role has been especially significant to her due to the high dropout rate/low on-time graduation rate at her school. She believed that her work in advising freshman is an integral part of their progression to graduating within four years. Robin said she is equally rewarded when former students come back to her with their success stories, especially the ones who were behavior problems for her.

Reasons to Become a Teacher

In order to better understand the lived experiences of the participants as they are connected to their perceived individual teacher identity, the researcher asked participants to share the reasons why they decided to become a teacher. Each participant reflected upon how and why they became a teacher. Included in their stories were childhood and early school experiences, family relationships and influences, and professional experiences.

During data analysis, the responses revealed that the reasons they became a teacher could be classified into the following seven categories: (a) career change, (b) working with children, (c) degree in FCS, (d) family of teachers, (e) played teacher, (f) teacher role model, and (g) conducive to family life. In all 10 cases, there were overlapping reasons they became a teacher. A summary of the participants' reasons are displayed in a matrix located in Appendix K and briefly described hereafter.

Career Change

Four of the participants decided to become teachers because they wanted a career change (Diane, Amy, Sheila, and Karen). Interestingly, both Diane and Karen described being exhausted

in their careers while both Amy and Sheila had previous military experience. Sheila's response was unique:

> My husband and I were both active duty military. As I was looking to retire, I
> thought I would look into teaching and I wanted to explore adult education because
> I didn't want to teach kids. I have four kids of my own. I have wonderful children,
> I didn't want to run the risk of meeting any that weren't quite as wonderful (Lines 21-24).

Working with Children

Amy, Lori, Karen, and Robin cited working with children as reasons for becoming a teacher. It was apparent in Lori's response that her passion for teaching begins with children:

> First and foremost, I love kids of all ages. I call myself the child woman because that's
> the courses that I teach now. I do child development, parenting, I do early childhood Ed
> where we operate the pre-school, and I do Virginia Teachers for Tomorrow. So I'm like
> the grown-up child woman (Lines 20-23).

Degree in FCS

Four of the participants held degrees in home economics/FCS prior to becoming teachers (Diane, Gina, Mary, and Melissa). Diane, Gina, and Mary entered the classroom as career changers or later in life while Melissa started teaching FCS two years after her college graduation.

Family of Teachers

Family was often mentioned in participant interviews as influential factors in their decision to become a teacher. Amy, Gina, Jackie, Mary, and Robin have teachers in their immediate families. Sheila's husband entered teaching as a second career so she decided to do the same when she retired. Although there were no teachers in Karen's family, there were quite a few in her husband's family. Interestingly, Amy, Gina, and Lori had sons who were teachers.

Played Teacher

  Three of the 10 participants played teacher when they were young (Amy, Karen, and Melissa). As a small child, Melissa recalled having a desk in her room and pretended that she had a classroom. As she got older, she used one of her father's outside buildings as her school house. She invited friends over and even had desks and assignments for them.

Teacher Role Model

  All participants with the exception of Diane connected specific teachers to their reasons for becoming teachers. Gina, Lori, and Mary recalled memories of energetic home economics teachers while Robin was especially fond of her fashion design teacher. Although Melissa did not recall a specific teacher, she mentioned having many good teachers.

Conducive to Family Life

  Jackie and Lori both began their teaching careers later in life and for the same reason; they wanted a career that would be flexible for their families.

  The researcher noticed an interesting characteristic about eight of the 10 participants. With the exception of Melissa and Robin, the participants began teaching as a second career or later in life. Another remarkably similar prevalence was that half of the participants had family members who were currently teachers or had been in the past. Lastly, and worth noting is that teaching has been long considered a gendered profession. Three teachers reported that they played teacher when they were young, four had women in their immediate family who were teachers, and two decided to teach because it was conducive to their family life.

<div align="center">Question 1: Beliefs about Teaching</div>

  During the interviews, participants were asked to state their beliefs about teaching. Utilizing an open coding strategy, the researcher read each transcript data line-by-line so that key

words or phrases relating to the research question could be identified. The codes pertaining to beliefs about teaching were labeled *beliefs about teaching* as the issue and organized into a table. As the codes were compared to form categories and eventually themes, the researcher identified themes emerging from each participant interview and then linked the themes across all participant interviews. The following three themes were identified from this reiterative process: (a) reflective of the teacher, (b) responsive to students' needs, and (c) related to the teacher-student relationship.

Reflective of the Teacher

The first theme resulting from the data analysis was that teaching is reflective of the teacher. The three categories associated with this theme included: (a) reflective, (b) influential, and (c) evolving. Table 2 provides the codes and categories related to this theme. Participants are noted in the far left column to indicate a point of reference for each code. As depicted in the table, some of the codes include 'reflect' or 'reflection' in the statement made by the participant.

Table 2

Reflective of the Teacher Theme: Codes and Categories

PR[a]	Code	Category	Theme
P3	Teacher lives what they teach		
P4	Reflection of what the teacher believes about learning		
P4	Teacher reflects inner being onto students		
P7, P8	Reflection of the individual teacher	Reflective	
P6	Mannerisms of teachers affect their classroom		
P7	Classrooms are individualized by each teacher		**Reflective of the Teacher**
P2, P5	Teachers are role models for students		
P9			
P3, P4	Teachers inspire students	Influential	
P1, P2, P9, P10	Teachers impact students' lives and decisions they make		
P8	Teaching evolves		
P9, P10	Teacher utilizes experiences to improve their pedagogy	Evolving	
P10	Teaching is like a mission		

[a] Point of Reference (i.e. P3 means participant 3, P4 means participant 4, etc.)

Examples of participant comments for the theme of *reflective of the teacher* are as follows:

- Teaching should reflect how the individual feels about learning… as a teacher, I have had to inspire my students by me being in school, by me going back to school… to me, I'm reflecting my inner being onto them… I've had students who are currently in college or in graduate programs write me and say, 'I became a teacher because of you' (Jackie, Lines 72-79).

- I do believe that teachers, the mannerisms of teachers, do affect their classroom. If I'm having a good day, then my students will have a good day. If I'm cranky, they will probably be cranky right back (Mary, Lines 83-85).

- I believe it's a wonderful career but I also believe it's kinda like a mission because everybody can't just be really a good teacher (Robin, Lines 64-65); I believe that they

need to make it harder in some ways for teachers to be in the classroom because there are some negative ones out there that should not be here (Lori, Lines 104-106); I think we all know professional teachers that probably missed their calling for something else, but they're in the education field, and they feel they just need to do that (Melissa, Lines 235-237).

- It's the highest form of compliment when you see them doing what you're doing (Lori, Line 112); Going out there and cultivating somebody that wants to come back in the field and teach … the circle, and I just love that … those things are exciting … kids who have been through that program would never have been exposed to education if it hadn't been for being in that class with me (Gina, Lines 120-129).

It is evident that teaching is reflective of the teacher by the above illustrations and the variety of coded responses received from all ten participants. Teachers are role models (Amy, Lori, and Melissa) and inspiration (Gina and Jackie) for students. They also impact students' lives and decisions they make (Diane, Amy, Melissa, and Robin). The expressions from Robin, Melissa, Lori, and Gina were included to illuminate the reflective and influential nature of teaching.

Responsive to Students' Needs

A common thread in participants' responses pertaining to their beliefs about teaching was that of being *responsive to students' needs*. There were three categories related to this theme: (a) students are individuals, (b) differentiate instruction, and (c) real world application. The codes and categories are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Responsive to Students' Needs Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P1	Teachers get the authentic real child with peer influence but no parental influence	Students are Individuals	**Responsive To Students' Needs**
P2	Students are not just another person		
P3	Accept students where they are		
P3	Reach all students and their families		
P8	Know what is important to students		
P8, P10	Students are still children		
P8	Be available to students		
P9	Relate to students' personal experiences		
P2	Every student can learn	Differentiate Instruction	
P2	Set expectations high enough for students to be successful		
P2	Hold students accountable for their learning		
P6	Individualize pedagogy for the student		
P7	Understand that students learn in different ways and at different times		
P8	Provide all students with accommodations and differentiation		
P9	Reach everyone		
P10	Restructure approach to keep up with changing children		
P1	Prepare students for work through FCS/CTE	Real World Application	
P1, P5	FCS is reality and practical arts		
P1	Enable students to socially interact with others and fit into communities through FCS		
P4	Every moment in life is a teachable moment		
P9	Provide hands-on experiences that will transfer to real life situations		

Examples of participants' comments relating to the theme of *responsive to students' needs* are as follows:

- Many of the things that they are going through are things that I went through and I try to make them aware that they are not so different than the adults that are in their lives now (Gina, Lines 64-66).

- I think really hearing the students, really listening to them, helped but I'd like to think I always did do that … (Karen, Lines 221-222).

- I think that hands-on experiences and relating things back to their personal experiences is important. I know that is how I learn, from hands-on (Melissa, Lines 94-95).

It is apparent from the participants' responses that being responsive to students' needs entails acknowledging that students are individuals (Diane, Amy, Gina, Karen, Melissa, and Robin), differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students (Amy, Mary, Sheila, Karen, Melissa, and Robin), and using real world applications to create meaningful learning environments (Diane, Jackie, Lori, and Melissa). The excerpt of the following interview with Diane encapsulates the essence of using personal experiences and real world applications in the classroom:

I said, "How many y'all been to a car wash? Ok, well you've got the premium, the middle of the road, then you got the regular one. What is the difference between the three?" And they were like, "Oh, one of them has wax" and they tell me all this junk, they said, "One of 'em cost more." I said, "That's exactly right, well people are like that too. When you go to look for a job, you can either sit there with a high school education or nothing and you can be like the regular. The more education you get, the more money you're worth because you have more bells and whistles to offer people." And I said, "Because that's what you do when you look for a job and you're talking to people. Your education is up to you, what skills and stuff you get, and put it into your little toolboxes, is up to you …" (Diane, Lines 519-529).

Related to the Teacher-Student Relationship

The third theme that emerged from the data pertaining to beliefs about teaching was

related to the teacher-student relationship. The responses generated the following three

categories: (a) connection, (b) caring, and (c) boundary lines. Table 4 provides the codes and

categories related to this theme.

Table 4

Related to the Teacher-Student Relationship Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P1	Challenging interaction of different people		
P1, P3	Teacher/parent connection		
P2	Teacher/student connection		
P2, P5	Be open and get to know students	Connection	
P3, P8, P9	Teachers are real people too		
P5	Be important in students' lives		**Related to the Teacher-Student Relationship**
P2, P10	Care and compassion for students		
P3, P7, P9, P10	Love for students		
P5	School should be a fun place to be	Caring	
P8, P9	Non-judgmental of students		
P8	Fair to all students		
P2, P8	Encourage student success		
P2, P8, P10	Set boundaries with students	Boundary Lines	
P8	Do not try to take the place of parents		
P8	Too over enmeshed loses professionalism		

Examples of participants' comments relating to the theme of *related to the teacher-*

student relationship are as follows:

- There should be rules and they need to be followed, but, if you don't have that

  relationship with that student, it's not going to work, they don't care (Lori, Lines 422-

  424).

- And that's exactly what we form when we've been in the school system that long, the relationships with the siblings and the parents, and you've got that connectedness (Gina, 267-269).

The aspect of forming relationships with students draws attention to the need for teachers to go beyond their subject matter and curriculum to possess a layer of connectedness with students. Teaching involves teachers connecting with their students (Diane, Amy, Gina, Lori, Karen, and Melissa) and caring for them as individuals (Amy, Gina, Lori, Sheila, Karen, Melissa, and Robin) within the parameters of a professional boundary between the teacher and student (Amy, Karen, and Robin).

Question 2: Experiences That Have Influenced Their Beliefs

The second research question pertained to the lived experiences that have influenced the participants' beliefs about teaching. The researcher followed the same data analysis procedure to code responses, create categories, and compare categories to establish the following three themes: (a) experiences in education, (b) interactions with students, and (c) significant life events.

Experiences in Education

The overarching theme generated from participants' responses relating to the lived experiences that have influenced their beliefs about teaching was *experiences in education*. The six categories associated with this theme included: (a) experiences with teachers, (b) experiences as a student, (c) teacher prep, (d) substitute teaching, (e) experiences with colleagues, and (f) experiences with administrators. The codes and categories are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Experiences in Education Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P2	Held high standards		
P2, P5, P8, P10	Role model	Experiences with Teachers	
P4	Did not prepare students academically for college		
P5	Motivated decision to teach		
P7	Encouraged to try new things		
P9	Spoke up when no one else did		
P1	Test anxiety	Experiences as a Student	**Experiences in Education**
P5	Structure of the school		
P7, P10	Positive school experience		
P7	Modern educational buzzwords are dated instructional practices	Teacher Prep	
P10	Negative student teaching experience		
P5	Variety of classrooms, teachers, and schools	Substitute Teaching	
P10	Inspired decision to teach		
P2, P6, P7, P8	Comradery and sharing ideas	Experiences with Colleagues	
P5	Good teacher colleagues are energizing		
P5, P6	Positive mentoring		
P7	Held high expectations	Experiences with Administrators	
P9	Modeled professionalism		

Examples of participants' comments are as follows:

- I wouldn't say that I didn't have great teachers but when I graduated from high school, I

    was really not prepared academically for college. So, the teachers who I feel were in line

    with or knew what they were doing, I felt that they became a part of that population that

    just didn't care. And so I really feel like my high school did not prepare us for what was

    coming next because I thought I knew how to write an English essay until I got to college

    and realized there were three parts … So, I feel like I was ill prepared. I had nice

    teachers, I had easy teachers, but I didn't have teachers who had a realistic grasp of what's

    gonna happen when you walk across that stage (Jackie, Lines 117-126).

- When I was going through my quick-fast teacher education, the formal education, I discovered that a lot of things that had been packaged and prepared and a lot buzzwords that we use, they were being done in the 60s when I was a kid in (name of city) school system. The 40s, 50s, 60s, probably well into the 70s, (name of city) school system was phenomenal (Sheila, Lines 102-106); My school was a regular high school that decided to change it to a CTE school … and it was great… we had a major fashion show at the end of the school year… HERO, Home Economics Related Occupations, that was us, and so we loved that… they always took us to the conferences, they always wanted us to be active and involved in what was going on (Robin, Lines 122-131).

The selected responses from Jackie, Sheila, and Robin are indicative of the impact and influence that experiences in education have on students that carry with them. Jackie believed she was ill-prepared by her teachers for higher education whereas Sheila and Robin both were a part of positive CTE experiential learning experiences.

Interactions with Students

The second theme in participants' responses was *interactions with students*. Interactions with students is a stand-alone category and theme because the researcher intended to separate experiences *as* a student from interactions *with* students since the theme experiences in education places emphasis upon the teacher participant as a student. Table 6 provides the codes and category related to this theme.

Table 6

Interactions with Students Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P1, P3, P4, P10	Students successfully continuing their education		
P1, P10	Disruptive students returning to visit		
P1	Student affirmation of "my favorite teacher"		
P1, P2, P4	Disrespect from students	Interactions with Students	**Interactions with Students**
P2, P5	Students gravitating to the classroom		
P2, P3, P5	Maintaining contact with students		
P3, P5, P7, P8, P9, P10	Love and care for students		
P3	FCS leads itself to student relationships		
P3	Respect students and they will respect you		

Examples of participants' comments relating to the theme of *interactions with students* are as follows:

- When I see kids out in the community… and they're successfully out there going to school and continuing their education, we've made the impact somewhere along the line. They come back to us… and I think that's real interesting for them to come back on a middle school level, I see it from a high school level but it's really interesting when they come back to the middle school level (Diane, Lines 118-123).

- I just wish that more teachers as they are going into the profession had good mentors to help them along the way because there's no way you can get experience 'til you have experience. And, I think that it's the best profession in the world because you're molding lives, you're changing lives, and they don't even realize it until later usually, you know. They come and check in with you in the morning and you don't even have them that day. You know, there's a reason they do that (Lori, Lines 405-410).

Participants believed that student success after graduation was a tangible tool to gauge the significant influence that they have in the classroom (Diane, Amy, Gina, Jackie, Lori, and Robin). Throughout the interviews, they described how they "mold" and "change" lives (Lori); thus, making an "impact" (Diane, Amy, Jackie, Melissa, and Robin). Although participants expressed both positive and negative experiences with students, their stories of having disruptive students return to share their success ultimately illuminated the "impact." As Robin put it, "You can see in them something that they don't even envision yet" (Line 158).

Significant Life Events

The third theme that emerged from the data pertaining to the participants' lived experiences that have influenced their beliefs about teaching was *significant life events*. The responses generated the following four categories: (a) teaching experience, (b) previous career, (c) family experiences, and (d) continuing education. Table 7 provides the codes and categories related to this theme.

Table 7

Significant Life Events Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P2, P3	Entering teaching later in life		
P5, P10	Years of teaching experience	Teaching	
P6, P9	First year teaching experience	Experience	
P8	Finding your footing		
P1, P5	Prior business experience	Previous	
P2, P7	Prior military experience	Career	**Significant**
P4	Upbringing with mother as a teacher		**Life**
P4, P6	Aunt as a teacher	Family	**Events**
P5	Negative experience for sibling in FCS class	Experiences	
P5, P8, P9, P10	Having children and being a mother		
P8	Mother with severe depression		
P2, P6	Lifelong learner	Continuing	
P1, P6	Professional development opportunities	Education	

Examples of participants' comments are as follows:

- My years of experience, of what I've seen, my day-to-day experience. When you see a good teacher, it's energizing. It's like it gives you hope to keep going on and to keep doing, but when you see a teacher that basically doesn't like kids but they like their subject more than they like kids, I guess that's part of my belief system (Lori, Lines 128-132).

- I'm an older teacher… I started teaching late. So I was more mature than a younger teacher; had more life experiences to pass on and think about (Amy, Lines 59-62); Being a 28 year-old rather than a 22 year-old, you garner a little bit more respect than they do for a 22 year old in high school (Gina, Lines 138-140).

- I definitely am what you call a lifelong learner… I consider that another part of professional development. The more classes I take, the more better I am at teaching that material (Mary, Lines 158-161).

Experience is powerful when learning to teach and continuing in the profession, as evidenced by the participants' responses. Mary's comment explained the magnitude of experience: "You could come back and interview me next year and I might have completely different answers on some of these things just based on what my experiences have been through the year (Lines 447-449).

Question 3: Perceptions of Individual Teacher Identity

The third research question entailed the perceptions that participants have of their individual teacher identity. The same procedure for data analysis was followed to code responses, create categories, and compare categories to establish themes. The perceptions that

were identified in the data revealed four themes: (a) serving as a role model, (b) teaching FCS,

(c) caring, and (d) being supportive.

Serving as a Role Model

A central theme that emerged from the data analysis pertaining to the participants'

perception of their individual teacher identity was *serving as a role model*. Four categories

supported this theme: (a) professional, (b) leader, (c) model, and (d) mentor. Table 8 provides the

codes and categories related to this theme.

Table 8

Serving as a Role Model Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P2, P3, P6	Professional personification		
P3, P8	Maintaining confidentiality	Professional	
P2, P5, P8	Drawing the line between teacher and student		
P6	Emphasizing professional skills in class		
P3, P5	Serving as part of school leadership team	Leader	
P3, P7	Maintaining and keeping all teachers connected		
P7	Assuming collateral outside of expertise		
P2, P5, P9	Role model		**Serving as a Role Model**
P2, P3, P6	Training students to be teachers		
P3, P4, P5, P6	Live and model what I teach	Model	
P5	Molding lives		
P5, P8	Genuine and honest		
P5, P10	Follow through		
P10	Lead by example		
P2, P5	Provide guidance		
P5	Treat students like young adults	Mentor	
P7	Looked at to fulfill a need		
P10	Visionary for students		

Examples of participants' comments relating to the theme of *serving as a role model* are as follows:

- I do think that I'm professional, meaning that I do keep confidential the things that need to be kept confidential but I do share what needs to be shared with guidance counselors or principals (Gina, lines 105-107).

- I am very loyal, I am incredibly loyal. I am also a team player and this is how things work in alternative Ed, you work as a team. Taking on the collateral of being a special Ed team leader without being a special Ed teacher, I don't have a background… I kind of serve (Sheila, Lines 204-207).

- I think that caring, and I know they say sometimes, well, that caring can get you in trouble. I think in our society today the kids need that cause you're with them more than the parents are. And you become their role model (Amy, Lines 102-104); I think that I could be described as a role model, I think that the actions that I take in the classroom and outside the classroom should reflect on who I am and what others in the community think of me, and I think that is forgotten some times. You know when you're at Walmart, you are still a teacher. When you are at the gym, you're still a teacher (Melissa, Lines 178-182).

- What I'm teaching now, I have to model all of those, which informs my identity because I can see myself that way (Mary, Lines 191-193).

- The first thing that comes to my mind is lead by example, don't allow my mouth to say something that my actions are not mirroring (Robin, Lines 143-144).

- What cracks me up about teaching, if someone had a bad family and consumer sciences teacher, they don't ever forget it. I'll tell you why, I had a sister who had a teacher who

was not good and that makes me sad because I feel like it takes 10 good teachers to make up for what the damage one bad teacher can do (Lori, Lines 153-156).

While analyzing the data, the researcher determined that participants recognized that being a role model was an important element of their perceived teacher identity. As a role model, teachers are professional (Amy, Gina, Lori, Mary, and Karen) and leaders (Gina, Lori, and Sheila) by modeling (Amy, Gina, Jackie, Lori, Mary, Karen, Melissa, and Robin) and mentoring (Amy, Lori, Sheila, and Robin). When teachers become role models and mentors, they essentially reciprocate the guidance that was given to them from their role models.

Teaching FCS

There were two categories that emerged during data analysis that related to the theme of *teaching FCS* as a part of the participants' perceived teacher identity. The categories were FCS and teaching real world applications. The codes and categories are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Teaching FCS Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P1, P10	Teaching about life		
P3, P6, P9	Live what I teach		
P3, P5	FCS discussions differ from other classes		
P3, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9	Subject matter informs teacher identity	FCS	
P4, P7	Versatile teaching environment		**Teaching FCS**
P5, P8	FACS is practical arts		
P6	Becky Homecky persona		
P6, P7	FCS as a relevant professional career, not homemaking		
P1, P2, P5, P7	Uses real life situations to apply in the classroom	Teaching Real World Applications	
P1, P7	Prepares students for the outside world		
P1	Parents and teachers like application		

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Examples of participants' comments are as follows:

- I saw myself as the person teaching a little bit sewing … but, as I have grown, and now I think I tend to see myself more as a professional … and part of that has to do with the subject matter (Mary, Lines 182-185).

- I think what I do is shaping who I am, because over the years I've learned a lot from the students, the profession... I think that FCS has made me who I am (Melissa, Lines 324-326).

- I try to use things that are in reality that might capture their attention and apply it to the classroom, but I've never done that before in any other occupation. This is the only occupation that I have done that (Diane, Lines 201-203).

Many participants described how FCS informs their individual teacher identity. They pointed out that FCS "teaches about life" (Diane and Robin) and they live what they teach (Gina, Mary, and Melissa). Melissa's comment in particular indicated the influence of FCS in her life. Mary and Sheila recognized the age old assumptions of cooking and sewing connected to FCS.

Caring

The third theme that emerged from the data analysis pertaining to the participants' perception of their individual teacher identity was *caring*. Three categories supported this theme: (a) helpful, (b) honest, and (c) fair. Table 10 provides the codes and categories related to this theme.

Table 10

Caring Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P1, P2, P3, P8	Care for students		
P2, P3, P5, P8	Approachable	Helpful	
P3, P7, P8, P9, P10	Love of students		**Caring**
P8	Do not humiliate students		
P5, P8	Candid	Honest	
P5	Genuine		
P8	Equal opportunity for all students		
P8	Fair		
P8, P9, P10	Non-judgmental	Fair	
P8	Do not make assumptions		
P10	View students as individuals		

Examples of participants' comments relating to the theme of c*aring* are as follows:

- Now I'm the teacher that wants everybody to hold hands, love each other, and sing kumbaya. And I do believe that's probably a very good description (Karen, Lines 339-341).

- As they walk out of the room I say, 'I love ya, I'll see ya tomorrow,' and they don't speak back. I say, 'I'll be right here waiting for you tomorrow.' They may come on in, it's a whole new day but, you gotta let it go. You gotta pass on some discipline (Robin, Lines 154-157).

- All of my students shape my teacher identity. I love my kids (Sheila, Line 355).

Throughout the interviews, participants told stories of caring and harboring a love for

students coupled with being honest and fair. This entails being approachable (Amy, Gina, Lori, and Karen), candid and genuine (Lori and Karen). Sheila's statement captured the intensity of this love for students and the impact it has on teacher identity.

Being Supportive

There were two categories that emerged during data analysis that related to the theme of *being supportive* as a part of the participants' perceived teacher identity. The categories were building relationships and understanding. The codes and categories are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Being Supportive Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P2, P3, P5, P8	Build relationships with students		
P3, P8, P9, P10	FCS leads to student relationships		
P5	Treat students like young adults	Building Relationships	
P3, P5	Draw the line between teacher and student		
P10	The classroom is a family		**Being Supportive**
P10	Teacher is the absent parent		
P2, P3, P10	Supportive of students		
P8	Believe in student success		
P10	Show different perspectives to students	Understanding	
P10	See in students something they do not envision yet		

Examples of participants' comments are as follows:

- I think there's a connected link there between you and the students and they know you respect them and hopefully that in turn makes them respect you a little bit more than maybe they do some of their other teachers. And family and consumer sciences just leads itself to that. I mean, we lead discussions that no other teachers in this school can get away with. And we get to learn things about students that no other teachers ever know

(Gina, Lines 92-96); I think as a FCCLA teacher you are, the experiences you have with students are different. I think that shapes you and your relationships with them (Melissa, Lines 204-205); Going back to FCCLA, you grow close to some of those students in particular 'cause you do spend more time with those but I had one student whose mother had died the year before and I think to a certain extent she took refuge in FCCLA, something she could succeed at, some place where she could come (Mary, Lines 365-368); I have the luxuries that a lot of teachers don't have because my classes are a lot smaller. I can cover things faster and I can have more time to really sit down with a kid (Sheila, Lines 234-235).

- I want to be very available to students, I want to have a relationship with them, I wanna know what's important to them (Karen, Lines 128-130).

Significant points in the data pertaining to understanding students included building relationships with students and being supportive of them. It was reported by some participants that FCS provides the framework for building relationships with students, a unique opportunity that often situates FCS teachers apart from their colleagues (Gina, Karen, Melissa, and Robin). For those active with FCCLA, the added component of being involved with students outside of the classroom was instrumental in developing meaningful and supportive relationships with students.

Question 4: Ways Lived Experiences Shaped Their Teacher Identity

The fourth research question pertained to the lived experiences that have shaped the participants' teacher identity. The researcher followed the same data analysis procedure to code responses, create categories, and compare categories to establish themes. This process generated three themes: (a) life experiences, (b) school, and (c) FCS. The reason for categorizing

overlapping life experiences separately from life events in the previous research question was the

frequency and emphasis with which life experiences surfaced in the participants' responses.

Life Experiences

There were five categories that emerged during data analysis that related to the theme of

life experiences as a part of the ways that the participants' lived experiences have shaped their

individual teacher identity. The categories were: (a) education, (b) career experience,

(c) aging, (d) community, and (e) family. The codes and categories are presented in Table 12.

Table 12

Life Experiences Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P1, P6	Professional development		
P7, P10	Higher education	Education	
P10	Secondary education		
P2, P7	Active duty military	Career	
P6	Substitute teaching	Experience	
P3, P8	Confidence with age	Aging	
P3	Connection with community	Community	
P10	Church		**Life Experiences**
P1, P2, P9, P10	Family upbringing and support		
P4, P5, P6, P8, P10	Becoming a parent and raising children	Family	
P6	Death of a child		
P8	Mother's depression		

Examples of participants' comments are as follows:

- I think coming into teaching late in life and even going into the military. I think the military

  shaped a lot of it too because I went into the military in my twenties. So, once I made some

  rank, I was over young kids (Amy, Lines 305-309).

- I teach family and consumer sciences so I'm always, I have 13 nieces and nephews, and I

  have four siblings, and all of them, we've had a variety of everything in our family that has

shaped… I've had financial situations, I say, "Guys, we're all just a paycheck away and you've got to understand that" (Diane, Lines 244-248).

- I do think it's a growing process, I believe, I firmly believe, it's an ever-changing process. You could come back and interview me next year and I might have completely different answers on some of these things just based on what my experiences have been through the year (Mary, Lines 446-450).

As indicated by the participants' responses and stories, life experiences is a multi-faceted trait of teacher identity. During the interviews, participants reflected upon family experiences as they are connected to their identity. Salient reflections included upbringing and support (Diane, Amy, Melissa, and Robin), becoming a parent and raising children (Jackie, Lori, Mary, Karen, and Robin), death of a child (Mary), and a mother's depression (Karen).

School

The second theme that emerged from the data analysis pertaining to the ways that the participants' lived experiences have shaped their individual teacher identity was *school*. The three categories that supported this theme were: (a) administrators, (b) colleagues, and (c) students. Table 13 provides the codes and categories related to this theme.

Table 13

School Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P1, P2, P5, P6	Administrator encouragement and support		
P3	Administrator energy	Administrators	
P7	Administrator as mentor		
P9, P10	Administrator support of students		
P1, P2, P5, P8	Colleague encouragement and support		**School**
P6	Colleague values your ideas	Colleagues	
P7, P10	Colleague as mentor		
P1, P2, P10	Former student returns		
P2, P6	Student participation in FCCLA/FEA		
P4, P5	Positive feedback from students	Students	
P5, P6	Student recall/application of content		
P9	Student motivation		

Examples of participants' comments are as follows:

- The very first administrator that I had, principal who hired me, was a wonderful man. Well, is a wonderful man, and I will always be grateful to him for the way that he handled me as a new teacher, who was a grown adult working on a second career as opposed to being a 23 year old, fresh out of college. He molded me without making it obvious that he was molding me. He was very good about letting me know, okay when you get this point you have to stop, if you go further, you are over-stepping your boundaries (Sheila, Lines 282-289).

- I think that there are many students that have made me want to be a better teacher over the years and I think they motivate me to want more. So, I definitely think they motivate us and shape us as much as we shape them (Melissa, Lines 242-249).

  Participants cited examples of the elements of their daily lives as teachers in the

classroom that have shaped their perceived teacher identity. All 10 participants told stories of

interactions with administrators, colleagues, and students that have been influential. Sheila and

Melissa credited experiences with administrators early in their teaching careers as empowering

elements of their individual teacher identity. Diane and Sheila told the greatest number of stories

about students.

FCS

There were two categories that emerged during data analysis that related to the theme of

FCS as a part of the ways that the participants' lived experiences have shaped their individual

teacher identity. The categories were subject matter and advisor or coach. The codes and

categories are presented in Table 14.

Table 14

FCS Theme: Codes and Categories

PR	Code	Category	Theme
P1, P2, P8, P10	Teaching about life		
P3	Living FCS		
P4, P7	Flexible curriculum	Subject	
P5	Sensitive curriculum content	Matter	**FCS**
P6, P7, P8	More than home economics		
P9	Prim and proper image		
P2, P8, P9	FEA/FCCLA	Advisor or	
P3, P7, P10	Cheerleading coach	Coach	

Examples of participants' comments are as follows:

- I think that sometimes I think that my teacher identity is in as high esteem as maybe

  somebody that teaches physics or engineering or biomedical something because it's a

really tough job. I mean, they still call me childcare. We're really working hard to establish that (Karen, Lines 628-632).

- We were doing crazy quirky things that nobody else would have ever thought about and so certainly my role as head cheerleading coach probably helped bring that out (Gina, Lines 201-203); My first year teaching, my husband's school needed a cheerleading coach. So I took that on for two years. And it was the most awful thing and I was so thrilled when she asked me not to come back (Sheila, Lines 321-322).

All participants connected teaching the FCS subject matter to their individual teacher identity. They are teaching about life (Diane, Amy, Karen, and Robin) and frequently covering sensitive content (Lori) that is more than home economics (Mary, Sheila, and Karen) but conveys a prim and proper image (Melissa).

Researcher Journal

The researcher's journal provided a vivid picture of the researcher's evolving role and her learning and growth during the study. This reflective practice also enabled the researcher to make meaning from the participant interviews and to further understand their lived experiences as they relate to their beliefs about teaching and their perceived teacher identity.

Salient reflections included common characteristics both among the participants and with the researcher. Examples from the journal are as follows:

- I am in awe of how candid the participants have been with me. I assume there must be a level of trust and ease that they are feeling during their interviews. Many times, I have felt an instant comrade with them. They shared with me about being homeless, having a mother with severe depression, becoming a mother as a teenager, and tearfully described students. I have doubt that these emotion laden interviews would

take place if they were conducted by phone, e-mail, or paper and pencil questionnaires. This solidifies my decision to conduct face-to-face interviews (March 20, 2014).

- After drafting the demographic profile of the participants, I noticed something quite interesting and intriguing: the age of the participants (58, 57, 58, 52, 58, 61, 55, 50, 35, 57). The criteria for participating in the study did not include an age restriction or requirement. Is there something about female teachers in their 50s? They have a plethora of experiences to speak about (August 12, 2014).

- Research is complicated sometimes and today I am finding myself so emerged in the data that I feel as if I am a participant in my own study. The participants have often reminded me of myself. Many of their reflections and stories are similar to my own. Amy and Sheila had military experiences that I could understand and relate to since my husband is in the military. Gina lived and traveled overseas and was excited to bring back these experiences to her students. I did the same when I spent one Christmas in Germany visiting my brother and his family. I also shared with my students the pictures and artifacts that my husband brought home from his deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. Lori is energetic, full of life, passionate about teaching, and sincerely loves children. Throughout my career, I have been told on many occasions that I should have been a kindergarten teacher because of my love for children and passion to teach them. I can relate to Melissa's sentiments about FCS defining her and making her who she is. I cannot think of another subject or curriculum that teaches life skills in the way that FCS does. Robin's student teaching experience was quite similar to a few of my experiences going into a new school to

teach. Colleagues can be resentful of the relationships other teachers develop with students. Lori also spoke of this. Jackie defined her identity quite similar to how I define mine: To some, I am a daughter, granddaughter, and sister. To one, I am a mother and to another, a wife. To many, I am a friend or a teacher (July 25, 2014).

Summary

This fourth chapter was a presentation of the results of the study of the 10 individual FCS teacher participants of the research study. The narratives were intended to gain an in-depth understanding of their experiences as they relate to their beliefs about teaching and to further examine the meanings that they make of these experiences and influences as they are connected to the construction of their personal teaching identities. The participants told many experiential stories of their childhood, family, school, and professional experiences that connected with their beliefs about teaching and their perceived teacher identity.

Emerging from the data were reasons the participants became a teacher: (a) career change, (b) working with children, (c) degree in FCS, (d) family of teachers, (e) played teacher, (f) teacher role model, and (g) conducive to family life.

The data revealed that participants' beliefs about teaching revolved around the following themes: (a) reflective of the teacher, (b) responsive to students' needs, and (c) related to the teacher-student relationship. The data further indicated that their beliefs about teaching were influenced by the following: (a) experiences in education, (b) interactions with students, and (c) significant life events.

Four themes emerged from the data pertaining to the perceptions that participants have of their teacher identity. They included the following: (a) serving as a role model, (b) teaching FCS, (c) caring, and (d) being supportive. The participants' experiences and influences as they are

connected to the construction of their teaching identities generated three themes: (a) life experiences, (b) school, and (c) FCS.

Although the participants in this study are unique individuals, the narratives and theme analysis presented in this chapter suggest that they share common attributes and dispositions. The stories the participants told offered their individual experiences and perceptions about their identity and how these reflections inform their teaching practices. The participants' interest in participating in the study and reflecting upon the construction of their individual teacher identities indicates that they take great interest in their profession and in teaching.

Chapter 5: Discussion of the Results

In Chapter 5 a discussion of the results of the researcher's examination of the perceived individual teacher identity of secondary family and consumer sciences (FCS) teachers in career and technical education (CTE) classrooms is reported. A summary of the study is presented in a brief description of the problem statement, purpose of the study and research questions, and methodology used. A discussion of the findings is followed by conclusions, recommendations, suggestions for future research, and concluding remarks.

Summary of the Study

Problem Statement

Despite empirical studies of the role and influence that teacher identity plays in student learning, current educational policies are often designed to improve student-learning outcomes and do not include a focus on the component of teacher identity. Furthermore, most teacher educators discuss issues of professional demeanor, dress, and communication, not professional identity (Alsup, 2006). In a review of the literature pertaining to the current professional development for teachers in the U.S., Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos (2009) described teacher professional development as sporadic and not useful.

Given the current state of public education reform and policy conversations, a fundamental component of effective teaching is often left out of the dialogue: teacher identity. At present, few studies were found in the literature that focus specifically on the construction of the perceived individual teacher identity of secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms. Previous studies focused primarily on the experiences of teachers in core academic areas such as math (Anderson, 2011; Bjuland, Cestari, & Borgersen, 2012), science (Helms, 1998; Moore, 2008), and English (Juzwik & Ives, 2010; Reeves, 2009); teachers in elementary classrooms

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(Giampapa, 2010; Upadhyay, 2009); and student teachers (Alsup, 2006; Dotger & Smith, 2009; Sexton, 2008). As such, the problem addressed in this study was to examine the construction of the professional identities of secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

This study was defined by two purposes. The first purpose was to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms as they relate to their beliefs about teaching. This purpose was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are selected secondary FCS teachers' beliefs about teaching?

2. What are selected secondary FCS teachers' experiences that have influenced their beliefs about teaching?

The second purpose of this study was to further examine the meanings that these teachers make of these experiences and influences as they are connected to the construction of their personal teaching identities. The following research questions guided this purpose of the study:

3. What perceptions do selected secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms have of their individual teacher identity?

4. How do selected secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms describe the ways in which their lived experiences have shaped their perceived individual teacher identity?

Methodology

A qualitative design was selected as the methodology for this research in order to guide the researcher's examination of the lived experiences of the participants as they are connected to their perceived individual teacher identity. This naturalistic approach supported an in-depth emphasis upon the lived experiences of the participants and provided a rich, thick, and detailed interpretation of these teachers and their teaching. A purposive selection strategy was applied to

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recruit ten FCS teacher participants teaching within the Commonwealth of Virginia. The criteria

for selecting these participants included that they (a) were currently a licensed teacher with an

endorsement in FCS, (b) had been teaching for at least five years prior to the study, and (c) were

willing to participate in a face-to-face interview.

Discussion of the Findings

Reasons to Become a Teacher

It is essential to ask teachers why they chose to teach because having the belief that one

will like what they plan to do is important (Mimbs, 2002). During data analysis of the current

study, the responses revealed that the reasons participants became a teacher could be classified

into the following seven categories: (a) career change, (b) working with children, (c) degree in

FCS, (d) family of teachers, (e) played teacher, (f) teacher role model, and (g) conducive to

family life. In all 10 cases, there were overlapping reasons they became a teacher.

The call to teach is characterized by positive sentiments about a certain subject matter,

students, and the act of teaching itself. When teachers declare a calling to teach, they are

typically referring to teaching as a profession that is richly rewarding in ways that other

vocations are not. These teachers radiate energy and enthusiasm for their profession and

passionately illustrate teaching (Buskist, Benson, & Sikorski, 2005). Those who choose to be

teachers in FCS do so because they care about others, want to help young people, are nurturing,

have strong family values, and value other altruistic reasons (Mimbs, Stewart, & Heath-Camp,

1998). The participants in the current study entered the profession because they had a family of

teachers, played teacher, recalled a specific teacher role model, desired to work with children,

and/or considered teaching to be conducive to family life. During the interviews, the researcher

found all participants to be enthusiastic about telling their personal stories. For example, "It's

very challenging, it's enjoyable, I love what I do" (Lori, Line numbers of the interview transcript [Line] 98-99); "I like it, I love it" (Karen, Lines 96-97); "It's very fun, I love it" (Gina, Line 174); and "I don't want to go back, go back to the comprehensive schools at all. I don't! I love it here" (Sheila, Lines 232-233).

Question 1: Beliefs about Teaching

In this study, the participants' beliefs about teaching were reflective of the teacher, responsive to students' needs, and related to the teacher-student relationship. As Parker Palmer (2007) expressed, "we teach who we are" (p. 2). He explained that teaching surfaces from within and, as teachers teach, they project their soul onto their students, subject matter, and manner of being together. Jackie put it this way: "Teaching should reflect how the individual feels about learning … to me, I'm reflecting my inner being onto them" (Lines 72-79).

Throughout the interviews, participants explained how they are responsive to students' needs. They referred to acknowledging that students are individuals, differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students, and using real world application to create meaningful learning environments. The participants also revealed that teaching involves teachers connecting with their students and caring for them as individuals within the parameters of a professional boundary between the teacher and student. When describing teaching, Sheila said, "I love my kids who come here" (Lines 237-238); Gina said, "Because you love the kids" (Line 86); and Robin said, "Children have changed, but, they know beyond a shadow of a doubt they know that I love them, I care about them and I care about what's best for them" (Lines 73-74). The aspect of forming relationships with students drew attention to the need for the teachers in this study to go beyond their subject matter and curriculum to possess a layer of connectedness with students.

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Question 2: Experiences That Have Influenced Their Beliefs

The researcher identified three salient themes that were linked to experiences that have influenced the participants' beliefs about teaching: (a) experiences in education, (b) interactions with students, and (c) significant life events. Not only did these teachers and their teachers play a leading role in the daily lives of children at school, they were also embedded in many of children's activities such as books, games, dramatic play, movies, and television shows. Before children even begin school, they have already set their eyes on countless images of teachers, classrooms, and schools (Weber & Mitchell, 1995).

When a teacher knows science, for example, skillfully teaching science in a secondary school classroom may include relating to and interacting with students in a manner that enriches their academic motivation (Allen, Pianta, Gregory, Mikami, & Lun, 2011). Teacher preference, the level to which a teacher likes a student, both indirectly and directly influences students' perceptions of teachers and of their interactions with them (Mercer & DeRosier, 2010). Participants in the current study believed that student success after graduation was a tangible tool to gauge the significant influence that they have in the classroom. They described how they mold and change lives; thus, making an impact on their students. Although participants expressed negative experiences with students, their stories of having disruptive students return to share their success ultimately illuminated the impact.

In his study of how teachers' reasons for entry into the profession informs the development of teacher identity, Olsen (2008a) found that prior events and experiences are linked to the type of teacher one becomes. Similarly, participants in the current study illustrated the influence that their personal experiences in education have carried with them. For them, these experiences have been powerful when learning to teach and continuing in the profession.

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Question 3: Perceptions of Individual Teacher Identity

Every teacher's approach to teaching is unique and shaped by his or her individual teacher identity. It is for this reason that every classroom is different (Walkington, 2005). Teachers develop a subjective lens throughout their professional career that allows them to perceive their role, give meaning to it, and then act upon it (Kelchtermans, 2011). Although the teachers in the current study differed in terms of the perceptions they have of their professional identity, a multilayered and interweaving set of common and distinguishing characteristics were identified including: a) serving as a role model, b) teaching FCS, c) caring, and d) being supportive.

When teachers are role models, they are essentially partners in their students' learning and influential long after the school years (Beutel, 2010). Strong evidence emerged in the current study to suggest that the complex and multi-faceted nature of the participants' perceived teacher identity was that of being a role model. Participants believed that teachers are inspiration for students and they impact students' lives and decisions they make. Not surprising, participants also cited having teacher role models as factors for influencing their decision to teach and their beliefs about teaching.

The second distinctive characteristic of the perceived teacher identity of the participants was teaching FCS. Researchers have supported the belief that the subject matter a teacher teaches is influential on the development of their professional identity (Beijaard, D., 1995; Coldron & Smith, 1999). The data in this study have highlighted what it meant for the participants to be passionate about FCS and students engaging with FCS; to have a coherent sense of what FCS is about and how to bring it to life for students. The teachers' identities were described as fluid and emerging as a result of classroom interaction. As they conversed with

students, they did not simply perform or narrate who they are, their identities surfaced and responded as they interacted with others.

The third distinctive aspect of the participants' perceived teacher identity that emerged from the study was caring. When teachers were caring, students recognized them as trustworthy and competent (Tevin, 2007). Generally, students will engage in positive behaviors when teachers maintain trust and respect with them. When the teachers took the time to convey to students that they care about them, the level of emotional support within the classroom enhanced (Mihalas, Morse, Allsopp, & McHatton, 2009). A facet of teaching is the emotional labor it demands, both positive and negative. Participants in this study told stories of caring for students coupled with being honest and fair. For them, this entailed being approachable, candid, and genuine. Their emotional dialogue characterized the personal dimension of being a teacher and the view of self as a teacher. The participants used emotion laden language to describe their responses to events, personal thoughts, and beliefs. They evoked positive experiences using words such as love, exciting, and happy and described negative experiences using words such as frustrating, fear, and scum.

The final common characteristic of the perceived teacher identity of the participants was being supportive. They characterized being supportive by building relationships with students and understanding them as individuals. Some participants believed that FCS provides the framework for building relationships with students, a unique opportunity that often situates FCS teachers apart from their colleagues. For the participants active with the student organization FCCLA (Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America) and/or FEA (Future Educators of America), the added component of being involved with students outside of the classroom was instrumental in developing meaningful and supportive relationships with students.

Question 4: Ways Lived Experiences Shaped Their Teacher Identity

Developing a teacher identity for the participants in this study derived partly from their life experiences, school experiences, and FCS curriculum. The teachers were able to integrate several discourses and draw on their interactions with administrators, colleagues, and students that have been influential; hence, the identity formation process was closely related to the discourses and communities that they work within (Clarke, 2009). According to van Veen, Sleegers, & van de Ven, 2005), researchers have suggested that the meaning teachers make of their identity is influenced by experiences in the classroom, collegial relationships, administrative structures, and external demands. Juzwik and Ives (2010) added that teachers' identities are also shaped by meetings with parents and at professional conferences networking with colleagues.

The perpetual emphasis on technically prescriptive interpretations of "being a teacher" are offset by reflective frameworks and undeniably contributed to the meaning that the teachers made of their individual classroom experiences (Graham & Phelps, 2003). Given the active process of identity construction, teacher identity is a combination of values, beliefs, attitudes, interactions, and language that has progressed from personal realms of life history, family, and community of origin. Often teacher's experiences with professional identity are limited by the ideologies of their superiors, mentors, students, communities, teacher education programs, and other constituents who view teachers in a particular way (Hoffman-Kipp, 2008).

Researcher Journal

Journaling throughout the research process gave the researcher an opportunity to clarify thoughts and curiosities that may have otherwise slipped through memory. The researcher connected experiences, opinions, thoughts, and feelings toward the research design, data

collection, analysis, and interpretation. The researcher journal was brought together with the interview transcripts and field notes to provide a holistic portrait of the lived experiences of the secondary FCS teacher participants in CTE classrooms as they relate to their perceived individual teacher identity.

Conclusions

Teaching is a complex enterprise and teachers' perceptions of their individual teacher identity is multi-faceted. Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn concerning the participants' beliefs about teaching and their perceived individual teacher identity:

1. Personal beliefs about teaching and teachers are influenced and formed from years of serving the apprenticeship of observation as described by Lortie (2002). Through their own experiences as students, teachers in this study developed beliefs and assumptions about teaching.

2. Experience plays a role in a teacher's perceived individual identity. Through their teaching experiences, teachers in this study developed beliefs and assumptions about their teacher self. The participants' stories revealed that they are continuing to develop their professional identities; therefore, it can be expected that such identity development continues throughout a teacher's career.

3. A reciprocal relationship exists between the FCS curriculum and the teacher identity of teachers teaching FCS.

4. Serving as a role model and teaching FCS are significant aspects of identifying self as a teacher for FCS teachers.

5. Caring and being supportive of students are added dimensions of the perceived teacher identity of FCS teachers.

6. A strong relationship exists between how teachers perceive their individual teacher identity and their beliefs about teaching. Common threads among the participants' teacher identity and their beliefs about teaching were related to the teacher-student relationships and interactions with students. These findings suggest there are two caring teacher dimensions, pedagogy and emotional dispositions. For the participants, establishing caring teacher-student relationships was part of their pedagogical practice. The positive emotional disposition of caring defined their nurturing interactions with students.

Recommendations

Based on the voices of the participants and the researcher's analysis of the data, the following recommendations are made for administrators, teacher educators, policy makers, and FCS practitioners:

1. For decades, the focus of education reform has been vested in rigorous accountability through standardized testing and curricula. When administrators, teacher educators, and policy makers consider teachers and teacher identity as an integral part of initiatives in education reform, they can encourage teacher longevity and job satisfaction, both of which are constructs linked to a teacher's personal self.

2. Within a context of education reform, teacher identity raises significant theoretical implications for professional development and change in teaching. Teacher preparation and professional development pertain not only to issues of content and pedagogy, but also issues of identity. Students in teacher preparation programs and practicing teachers may

be able to benefit from tools and opportunities to reflect on their identity. Although there are many professional development activities that would create these opportunities, it is recommended that specific approaches utilize a reflective focus upon teachers' personal stories so that they realize their individual identity and see what that identity can offer in the classroom. These activities also present teachers a transition from writing their personal teaching philosophies to negotiating, articulating, and reflecting on how their individual teacher identities take shape.

3. Professional conferences are valuable tools for professional development, collegial relationships, and developing partnerships in the field. If the results of this study are shared and presented at conference venues such as Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), Future Educators Association (FEA), and Virginia Association for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences (VATFACS), teachers in the field could partake in the essential dialogue of teacher identity.

4. It is apparent that students draw conclusions about teaching practices from observations of teachers' actions and behaviors throughout their experiences in education. If FCS practitioners are mindful of the positive influence they have in attracting students to the teaching profession, they could play an integral role in addressing the critical shortage of FCS teachers. An example from this study is Lori's belief that she has "multiplied" herself when her students eventually go into teaching (Line 94). She described, "They become little yous all over" (Line 111).

Suggestions for Future Research

There are several research opportunities that could emerge directly from this dissertation study. Therefore, the following further studies are recommended:

1. A follow-up study could be conducted with the participants to evaluate the way these teachers develop and refine their perceived individual teacher identity. As Mary put it, "You could come back and interview me next year and I might have completely different answers on some of these things just based on what my experiences have been through the year" (Lines 446-450).

2. A replicated study could be conducted to explore the perceived individual teacher identity of male FCS teachers. This will add to the information about the perceived individual teacher identity of the female FCS teachers that was examined in this study.

3. A longitudinal study could be conducted on the developing teacher identity of FCS teachers during their first, fifth, and tenth years of teaching. This would not only add to the literature but illuminate issues related to changes and development in constructing a teacher identity.

4. Replicated studies could be conducted to explore the perceived individual teacher identity of CTE teachers in each of the different programs areas such as agricultural education, business and information technology, health and medical sciences, marketing, technology education, and trade and industrial education. This will add to the information about the perceived individual teacher identity of FCS teachers that was examined in this study.

5. A comparative study could be conducted to explore the perceived individual teacher identity of CTE teachers in all seven different program areas. This would identify similarities and differences in the individual teacher identity among CTE teachers.

6. Because developing a professional teacher identity is a factor in teacher retention, future studies could be conducted to explore teacher retention with larger groups of participants, specifically in relation to the types of identity development resources that are or are not available to teachers in their local contexts or elsewhere.

Concluding Remarks

Reflection on one's lived experiences can, in itself, influence one's own identity. Reflection has long been characterized as an essential component of teacher development (Alsup, 2006; Lortie, 2002). One aspect that was not included in the study, but is important to mention, refers to the level of reflection achieved by the teacher participants. Although the researcher is aware that not all instances of reflection were at the same level, it would be difficult to determine the level of reflection. At times, it was evident that there may have been surface reflection while during other times the participants engaged in deeper levels of reflection.

Traditionally, it has been assumed that an effective teacher is one with subject matter expertise and knowledge of teaching methods. There is more to being a teacher than guiding students toward mastery of content. In the researcher's informed opinion, lack of a consistent teacher identity may hinder a teacher's effectiveness in meeting the increasing instructional responsibilities within a changing educational environment and a teacher's desire to remain in the profession.

There has been little discussion about teacher identity in FCS; therefore, interviewing participants in this study proved to be a rewarding experience for the researcher. The interviews went beyond collecting data. The researcher gleaned insight from the conversations with participants that no graduate course or scholarly reading could offer. The participants graciously volunteered their time and invited the researcher into their classrooms, their homes, and their

professional lives. As the researcher reflects about her work with these teachers, she is moved by what they have taught her about the personal dimension of teaching and about herself as a researcher.

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Appendix A: Recruitment E-mail to Teachers

_____, 2013

Dear Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher,

My name is Windi Turner. I am a teacher in Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) and a doctoral candidate in Career and Technical Education (CTE) at Virginia Tech. I am conducting my dissertation research that investigates the construction of the professional identities of secondary FCS teachers. In short, how do individuals develop an understanding of themselves as teachers?

The main data collection method of the study involves in-depth interviews, for which I am recruiting participants. I am seeking currently licensed teachers with an endorsement in FCS, who have been teaching for at least five years prior to the interview, and are willing to participate in a face-to-face interview. **If you meet these criteria and are interested in participating in this study, please reply to me at turnerw@vt.edu so that we may schedule a time for the interview.**

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can discontinue your participation at any time. No compensation is scheduled for this study. Individuals who wish to participate will be interviewed in person for approximately one hour and they will fill out a demographic questionnaire. The interview will be audio recorded followed by transcription. After the interview has been transcribed, participants will then be asked via e-mail to review the transcript in order to confirm accuracy.

This research has been approved by the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board. Dr. David M. Moore, Associate Vice President for Research Compliance, is the IRB Chair. Dr. William Price, Associate Professor and Program Leader for CTE, is the faculty supervisor of this study.

I look forward to receiving an e-mail reply from you if you are interested in participating. My e-mail is turnerw@vt.edu. Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation.

Windi D. Turner, M.S., Ed.
Doctoral Candidate
Virginia Tech
310 War Memorial Hall
Blacksburg, VA 24061
turnerw@vt.edu

Appendix B: IRB Approval Letter

Informed Consent Form

Study Title: Construction of the professional identity of secondary family and consumer sciences teachers

Investigators: Dr. William Price, Principal Investigator, Virginia Tech
                Windi D. Turner, Ph.D. Candidate, Virginia Tech

I.   Purpose
The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine the construction of the professional identities of secondary family and consumer sciences (FCS) teachers in career and technical education (CTE) classrooms.

II.   Procedures
Your role in this study requires you to participate in a face-to-face interview which will take approximately one hour. Your participation will require you to verbally answer questions about the construction of your professional teaching identity. The interview will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes. A consent form will be provided to you and signed before the interview. You may choose whether or not to participate in this study. Once the interview has been transcribed, you will be asked by e-mail to review the transcription for accuracy.

III.   Risks, Stress or Discomfort
There are no foreseen risks or adverse effects from your participation in this study. There is only the possible inconvenience associated with answering the interview questions. You do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable and you may stop participating at any time. You may discuss with me related concerns or distress.

IV.   Benefits
You will have the opportunity to experience and understand the process involved in key informant research. The interviews can help you reflect upon the construction of your professional teaching identity. Results obtained will be shared with you and you will have the opportunity to reflect upon these experiences. It is important to mention that no promise or guarantee of benefits have been made to encourage your participation.

V.   Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality
The interview will be audio recorded. The recording will be converted to computer audio format (MP3) and downloaded to a password protected external drive. Every effort will be made to keep your identity confidential. The results of the study will be published but your name or identifiable references will not be given. Records or data obtained as a result of your participation will be reviewed by the researcher gathering and analyzing the data. The data will be kept private and confidential. This research study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

VI. Freedom to Withdraw

If you decide not to participate, please inform the researcher. If you begin to participate and then change your mind, you may stop at any time and notify the researcher. If you choose to withdraw, you will not be penalized. You are also free not to respond to any question(s) during the interview and/or survey.

VII. Participant's Permission

Do you have any questions or concerns regarding the procedures for this research study?

Subject's Statement

I have read and understand this consent form. I hereby certify that I have had all of my questions answered and voluntarily agree to participate in the interview and complete the survey. I understand this consent does not take away any of my legal rights. I further understand that nothing in this consent form is intended to replace any applicable Federal, state or local laws.

Participant's Printed Name: _____

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

I hereby certify that I will allow the interview to be audio recorded. Participant initials: _____

Interviewer's Signature: _____ Date: _____

If you have any pertinent questions about this research or its conduct, and the research subjects' rights, and whom to contact in the event of a research related injury to the subject, you may contact:

Dr. William Price   Windi Turner
Associate Professor, Virginia Tech   Ph.D. Candidate, Virginia Tech
School of Education (0303)   turnerw@vt.edu
206 War Memorial Hall
Blacksburg, VA 24061
wprice@vt.edu

Institutional Review Board Contact: If you have any questions about the protection of human research participants regarding this study, please contact:

Dr. David M. Moore
Chair, Virginia Tech Institutional Review
Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research Compliance
2000 Kraft Drive, Suite 2000 (0497)
Blacksburg, VA 24060
                        (540) 231-4991

Appendix D: Demographic Questionnaire for Teachers
Please indicate your answer to each question.

Name: _____	**Pseudonym:** _____

1.	**What is your gender?** O Male O Female	2.	**What is your age?** _____
3.	**Please specify your race.** **Select all that apply.** O American Indian or Alaska Native O Asian O Black or African American O Hispanic O Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander O White	4.	**What is the highest level of education you have completed?** O Bachelors O Bachelors plus 15 or more credits O Masters O Masters plus 15 or more credits O Doctorate
5.	**How many years have you been teaching full-time as of the end of the 2012-2013 school year?** _____ years	6.	**How many years have you been teaching full-time at this school as of the end of the 2012-2013 school year?** _____ years
7.	**What grade level(s) do you currently teach? Select all that apply.** O 9th O 10th O 11th O 12th O Post-Secondary	8.	**What FCS course(s) do you currently teach?** _____ _____ _____
9.	**Do you serve as an advisor for a CTE student organization?** **If yes, please specify the name of the student organization.** O No O Yes _____	10.	**Do you serve as an advisor or coach for a student activity or sport?** **If yes, please specify the name of the student activity or sport.** O No O Yes _____

Appendix E: Interview Guide

Introduction:

"Hello, my name is Windi Turner. I am a family and consumer sciences teacher and currently a doctoral student at Virginia Tech conducting my dissertation research study. In our discussion, I'll use FCS to refer to family and consumer sciences and CTE to refer to career and technical education. The purpose of this study is to investigate the construction of the professional identities of secondary FCS teachers. In short, how do individuals develop an understanding of themselves as teachers? The questions that I will be asking you will pertain to your individual beliefs about teaching, your individual experiences that have influenced your beliefs about teaching, the perceptions you have of your professional teacher identity in a secondary CTE classroom, and the experiences that have shaped your teacher identity.

I want to thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview today. The information you share with me will be helpful to my research. The interview will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes. Your participation is voluntary. If you begin to participate and then change your mind, you may stop at any time and notify me. You are also free not to respond to any questions during the interview. During transcribing, in the dissertation, and in any other reports of the research, your identity will be treated as confidential. Your name, your school, and any other persons you refer to will not be identified. Are you ready to begin?"

1.	*What were the reasons you decided to become a teacher?* • *Were there any particular events or person(s) that influenced this decision?* • *Why did you choose to teach FCS?*
2.	*What are your beliefs about teaching?*
3.	*I would like for you to think about your experiences that have influenced your beliefs about teaching. Please describe an experience or experiences that have significantly influenced your beliefs about teaching.*
4.	*When you reflect about your individual identity as a teacher, how would you describe what you feel is your professional teacher identity?*
5.	*Please describe in detail the experiences that have shaped your professional identity as a teacher.*
6.	*Do you think you have a separate "teacher self" and that your personality differs when you are in the classroom compared to what it is like outside of the classroom?* • *Why or why not?* • *If yes, describe how your personality differs.* • *If no, describe how your personality is similar.*

7.	*Do you think that the subject matter you teach plays a role in your professional teacher identity?* • *Why or why not?*
8.	*We have discussed several things that may have had an impact on your identity as a teacher. As you consider your professional teacher identity, what are some other life experiences that have influenced the development of your professional teacher identity?*
9.	*Do you have any other comments to add regarding teaching and teacher identity?*

Once I transcribe today's interview, I will send the transcription to you by e-mail as an attachment for you to have the opportunity to review in order to confirm the accuracy of our discussion. You will also have the opportunity to request a copy of the results of this study.

Do you have any questions about the interview today?
Again, I would like to thank you for your time.

Appendix F: Research Questions (RQ), Interview Questions (IQ), and Related Literature

RQ 1	**What are selected secondary FCS teachers' beliefs about teaching?**
	Related literature: As Parker Palmer (2007) expressed, "we teach who we are" (p. 2). He explained that teaching surfaces from within and, as teachers teach, they project their soul onto their students, subject matter, and manner of being together.
IQ 2.	*What are your beliefs about teaching?*
RQ 2	**What are selected secondary FCS teachers' experiences that have influenced their beliefs about teaching?**
	Related literature: Not only do teachers play a leading role in the daily lives of children at school, they are also embedded in many of children's activities such as books, games, dramatic play, movies, and television shows. Before children even begin school, they have already set their eyes on countless images of teachers, classrooms, and schools (Weber & Mitchell, 1995). Related literature: In his study of how reasons for entry into the profession illuminate the development of teacher identity, Olsen (2008a) found that prior events and experiences are linked to the type of teacher one becomes.
IQ 3.	*I would like for you to think about your experiences that have influenced your beliefs about teaching. Can you describe an experience or experiences that have significantly influenced your beliefs about teaching?*
IQ 1.	*What were the reasons you decided to become a teacher?* • *Were there any particular events or person(s) that influenced this decision?* • *Why did you choose to teach FCS?* Related literature: It is essential to ask teachers why they chose to teach because having the belief that one will like what they plan to do is important (Mimbs, 2002). Related literature: The call to teach is characterized by positive sentiments about a certain subject matter, students, and the act of teaching itself. When teachers declare a calling to teach, they are typically referring to teaching as a profession that is richly rewarding in ways that other vocations are not. They may even say that they "love to teach." These teachers radiate energy and enthusiasm for their profession and passionately illustrate teaching (Buskist, Benson, & Sikorski, 2005).
RQ 3	**What perceptions do selected secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms have of their individual professional teacher identity?**
	Related literature: Every teacher's approach to teaching is unique and shaped by his or her individual teacher identity. It is for this reason that every classroom is different (Walkington, 2005).
IQ 4.	*When you reflect about your individual identity as a teacher, how would you describe what you feel is your professional teacher identity?*

IQ 6.	*Do you think you have a separate "teacher self" and that your personality differs when you are in the classroom compared to what it is like outside of the classroom?*
	• *Why or why not?* • *If yes, describe how your personality differs.* • *If no, describe how your personality is similar.* Related literature: Teachers develop a subjective lens throughout their professional career that allows them to perceive their role, give meaning to it, and then act upon it (Kelchtermans, 2011).
IQ 7.	*Do you think that the subject matter you teach plays a role in your professional teacher identity?* • *Why or why not?* Related literature: Researchers have supported the belief that the subject matter a teacher teaches is influential on the development of their professional identity (Beijaard, D., 1995; Coldron & Smith, 1999).
RQ 4	**How do selected secondary FCS teachers in CTE classrooms describe the ways in which their lived experiences have shaped their perceived professional teacher identity?**
	Related literature: The processes of identity formation is closely related to the discourses and communities that we work within (Clarke, 2009). Related literature: According to van Veen, Sleegers, & van de Ven (2005), research has suggested that the meaning teachers make of their identity is influenced by experiences in the classroom, collegial relationships, administrative structures, and external demands. Related literature: The perpetual emphasis on technically prescriptive interpretations of "being a teacher" are offset by reflective frameworks and undeniably contribute to the meaning that teachers make of their individual classroom experiences (Graham & Phelps, 2003).
IQ 5.	*Please describe in detail the experiences that have shaped your professional identity as a teacher.*
	Related literature: Teachers' identities are shaped by the various interactions that compose their working lives: inside classrooms with students; among other teachers and administrators in the hallways; in meetings with parents; and at professional conferences networking with colleagues (Juzwik & Ives, 2010).

Appendix G: E-mail to Participants to Confirm Interview Transcription

_____, 2013

Dear Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher,

First, I would like to thank you again for your participation in the interview process of my dissertation research that investigates the construction of the professional identities of secondary FCS teachers.

As we discussed at the conclusion of the interview, the transcription is attached to this e-mail for your review. Please remember that your anonymity has been maintained by using the pseudonym you selected and no comments were ascribed that would potentially identify you, your students, or the school you teach in. Any data pertaining to you will be kept confidential.

Once all the data are collected and analyzed for this study, I plan on sharing this information with my dissertation committee members. If you are interested in receiving more information regarding the results of this study, or would like a summary of the results, please notify me and I will send you the information. In the meantime, if you have any further questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail or telephone as noted below.

Please first e-mail me with a quick reply to confirm that you have received this e-mail and that you were able to open the attached file containing your interview transcript by (3 days), 2013.

Once you have reviewed the transcription to confirm its accuracy, please complete the section below and return this e-mail to me by (one week), 2013.

I have reviewed the transcription of my interview and hereby confirm:

_____ the transcription is accurate as written

_____ the transcription is not accurate as written and the following changes should be made. You may mark changes on the transcription and return that file to me as an attachment if you prefer.

Sincerely,

Windi D. Turner, M.S., Ed.
Doctoral Candidate
Virginia Tech
310 War Memorial Hall
Blacksburg, VA 24061
(540) 335-1715
turnerw@vt.edu

Appendix H: Sample Interview Transcript

March 7, 2014, 10:45 am.

Participant P3, Jackie

I   Hello, my name is Windi Turner. I am a family and consumer sciences teacher and

       currently a doctoral student at Virginia Tech conducting my dissertation research study.

       In our discussion, I'll use FCS to refer to family and consumer sciences and CTE to

       refer to career and technical education. The purpose of this study is to investigate the

       construction of the professional identities of secondary FCS teachers. In short, how do

       individuals develop an understanding of themselves as teachers? The questions that I

       will be asking you will pertain to your individual beliefs about teaching, your individual

       experiences that have influenced your beliefs about teaching, the perceptions you have

       of your professional teacher identity in a secondary CTE classroom, and the experiences

       that have shaped your teacher identity. I want to thank you for taking the time to

       participate in this interview today. The information you share with me will be helpful to

       my research. The interview will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes. Your

       participation is voluntary. If you begin to participate and then change your mind, you

       may stop at any time and notify me. You are also free not to respond to any questions

       during the interview. During transcribing, in the dissertation, and in any other reports of

       the research, your identity will be treated as confidential. Your name, your school, and

       any other persons you refer to will not be identified. Are you ready to begin?

P4   I am.

I   So what were the reasons you decided to become a teacher?

P4   I was raised by teachers. I grew up in a household, my mom and my aunt were both

      teachers. One taught for 42 years, the other one taught 45-46 years. And so, um,

      education was something that just kinda stuck with me. I went to college with many

      different majors other than being a teacher. But, somehow some way, every time I

      would go into a different program, I'd take an intro into biology, sociology, psychology,

      I'd always end up coming back to education. So, the catalyst was I had two children, I

      had them back-to-back and when they got into middle school, my oldest son told me

      he said, "ma, you need a job that's gonna coincide with the kids school schedules so

      you can be home when they're home and have breaks when they have breaks." I said,

      "Ok, what do you suggest?" He said, "What do you think? You need to be a teacher."

      So that's what inspired me, I went ahead and got my transcript evaluated for

      certification purposes. I think I ended up taking maybe two or three courses and that

      did it. I started teaching while my youngest children were in middle school, elementary

      school, I'm sorry, and, by the time they got to middle school we moved to this area

      and I was teaching in the high school. I was also considered, I worked for cooperative

      extension in (state). And they considered us field faculty because we did provide

      educational programs to the people in the community so that too was considered an

      aspect of teaching, but I actually went into the classroom in early 90's.

I   So you said your mom and aunt were teachers. What did they teach?

P4   Second and third grade.

**I   So were there any particular events or persons that influenced this decision?
      I mean you've mentioned your family of teachers.**

P4   That was all I knew. Even in the community where I lived. Every house, there were

maybe 10 houses in the community, every person in those homes were teachers.

The husband, the wife, or both.

I   **And that was in (state)?**

P4   (state)

I   **Well my next question was did you have any family that influenced this decision**

       but I think we have kind of covered that.

P4   Yeah.

I   **So why did you choose to teach Family and Consumer Sciences?**

P4   Well it chose me to some extent because my degrees are in child development, human

       development, and family relations. And so, in doing so, I realized that there was so

       much more I could do with that. I went into my actual field. But, originally I was a

       family and consumer sciences agent for cooperative extension, that was the title, and

       I focused mostly on early childhood programming and from that point I went into

       high school teaching child development, life skills, family, community, living, just

       different things. Even in middle school now we have 13 different areas across the hall

       in my other class that we address such as health, food science, life skills, sewing, basic

       sewing, entrepreneurship skills, and all of those things we touch on in our program so

       family and consumer sciences allowed me to have a tad of everything. I'm able to teach

       versatility to each student.

I   **So what are your beliefs about teaching?**

P4   I think that life itself is teaching and that every opportunity, every moment taken as a

       teachable moment. I specifically prefer to be in the classroom, I like working with the

       students, I like the feedback that I get from them learning new things. And being in this

particular environment here with nutrition and wellness I am able to do, it's versatile, I

can do pretty much anything that I want to do as long as I stay within the competencies

of our county, but, um, I don't think I want to do anything else but teach, so.

I   **Do you feel teaching is a reflection of the teacher?**

P4   It should be. It should be, yes.

I   **How do you think teaching is a reflection of the teacher?**

P4   Because it, teaching should reflect how the individual feels about learning. And, if you

have a, in my opinion, as a teacher I have had to inspire my students by me being in

school, by me going back to school. And, when I'm giving assignments and I'm hearing

the ho-hums and ahhhhs, you don't have anything to complain about. And, as a teacher,

this is what I do and because I know that I am able to, you need to learn how to

prioritize. That, to me, I'm reflecting my inner being onto them. Yeah, I've had

students who are currently in college or in graduate programs write me and say, "I

became a teacher because of you."

I   **So I would like for you to think about your experiences that have influenced**

       your beliefs about teaching. Please describe an experience or experiences

       that have significantly influenced your beliefs about teaching.

P4   That's kinda tough. My beliefs alone came from just my upbringing. Seeing my mom

used to bring papers home from school, I used to go to her classroom as a child and

be a part of, even though I wasn't in third grade class, seeing her teach instruction. I

even saw her discipline at times. She was a teacher that did things that we can't do

anymore. But what I think inspired me and influenced me so much was many times

she and I would be out, we could be shopping or whatever, and someone from 10

years ago would come back to her and say, "You remember me? You taught me how

to do dah-dah-dah-dah." And my mom is standing there like, "Ahhh yeah. How you

been?" Never called a person's name because she didn't remember them. And, I

believe that when you impact a person's life so much that they look forward to

coming back to you to say "I've been a success, look at me now," this is what I'm

doing. Then that part of you knows that you have done your job.

I   **My next question is, were there any particular persons that influenced your beliefs?**

P4   My mother and my aunt.

I   **Do you have any other tid bits that you would like to add about your mother or**

        your aunt?

P4   (laughs) Um, I can tell you that my mom told me, she died when she was 95, and in

her early 90's, I'll never forget, she told me, she said, "Baby, if nothing else in life, never

become a teacher." And I said, "Why?" She said, "Because your work is never done,

you take work home, you're always doing things preparing for the next day." She said

it was an ongoing job. She said a job is something that should be fun to go to. And I

said, "Well didn't you enjoy it? Wasn't it fun for you?" … "Yeah, but I don't want you

to be a teacher." So, … not long after that, that conversation with her, umm, I was

offered a job in the public schools and of course I accepted it. I went home one day

and I said, "Ma, guess what? You're never gonna guess what I'm going to be doing next

year." She said, "Oh what, baby?" I said, "I'm gonna be a teacher." She said, "Didn't I

tell you NOT to do that?" I said, "But you seemed to have enjoyed it, it has really

benefited us, you know, as a child I was, I knew, I learned, I received, just being a

part of that environment," I said, "I want to offer that to my children but most of all,

Ma, I want to be home with my kids." She said, "Oh, ok, that's a good reason." I said,

"Ok."

I   **So were there any particular experiences as a student that influenced your**

beliefs about teaching?

P4   I can't say that there was. I wouldn't say that I didn't have great teachers but when I

graduated from high school, I was really not prepared academically for college. So, …

the teachers who I feel were in line with or knew what they were doing, I felt that they

became a part of that population that just didn't care. And so I really feel like my

high school did not prepare us for what was coming next because I thought I knew

how to write an English essay until I got to college and realized there were three

parts, you know, the introductory paragraph, the body, and a conclusion. I had no idea

where things came from. So, … I feel like I was ill prepared. I had nice teachers, I had

easy teachers, but I didn't have teachers who had a realistic grasp of what's gonna

happen when you walk across that stage.

I   **Right, right. That is interesting. So when you reflect about your individual**

identity as a teacher, how would you describe what you feel is your

professional teacher identity?

P4   (Sigh) My professional teacher identity. Ah, would be one, ah, seriousness, ah, I

think that, um, I've never really thought about it. And, I think it would be better for a

student to describe my teacher identity. But, um, I'm very avid about them

learning whatever concept we're teaching, about them doing right or by doing it. I had

a situation two weeks in which before I let my 6th graders who have really never had

any experience in the kitchen before, I let them do a lab. I always demonstrate it and

so our first lab was on measurement. I was teaching them how to bake homemade biscuits. And, um, I did a full demonstration one day and I told them, "ok, the next day, you all will get a chance to do it in a lab." I said, "Now you need to pay attention and watch closely." Everything I use, you all will use. Well low and behold the next day comes and the students are busy about getting their supplies and putting their product together and I noticed that all of the students are going to this one particular lab and I asked them, I said, "What's going on?" So they started giggling and they said, "Well their biscuits are dripping off the pan." I said, "Really?" I was like wow, what did they do for their biscuits to be dripping?' So I get up and I walk over to their oven and low and behold, they had put a plastic tray, the tray is what they use to get their supplies and take it to their lab. Instead, they took the tray, covered it with foil, put their biscuits on the tray, and stuck it in the oven. So at that point I looked at the group of boys and said, "At what point in my demonstration did you all see me stick a plastic tray in the oven?" And they all looked at each other. I said, "I'm waiting for an answer." - 'Ahhhhh' They shrugged their shoulders. I said, "Well who put the biscuits in the oven?" Again, everybody's looking at each other. No one said. I said, "I tell you what, until you all can figure out who did this, none of you will cook anymore. I walked away and all of a sudden I heard all kinds of conversation going on. So then a couple minutes later a little boy comes to me and says, "Ms. (name), I know who did it. I said, "Well, who?" - 'I did.' Ok. So, I said, "Well I tell you what, Monday when we come back to school, you'll clean it out. It's a done deal. Don't worry about it." This young man goes home and tells his mom that he was bullied into confessing and that he felt bullied by his classmates and of course his teacher because the teacher

said that 'until you all figure out who did this, you all can't cook anymore.' That was my bullying. So, um, I say all this to say this, my students realize that I am very serious about what I do and because I take it to heart, they know that I'm not gonna settle for anything short of what I've done or what I've shown them so basically my identity is what I exemplify to my students in class. I have to show them what I expect in order to get what I expect from them

I   **Right. So can you please describe the experiences that have shaped your professional identity as a teacher?**

P4   Students putting a plastic tray in the oven (laughs). That shaped it. Um, I would say just having students come back to me a year later, two years later, and said, I have one in grad school now who came back to me and said, "Because of you, I chose to be a teacher." Because I was a no-nonsense, didn't accept excuses and I always tell my students, "There are no excuses. You have a reason for this but you cannot give me any excuses because to me excuses are tools of the incompetent." I said, "And if you don't want to be incompetent, don't give excuses." So I try to nip those in the bud and I'll tell them, "Alright, we're gonna get rid of 'the computer didn't work' because I didn't tell you you had to do it on the computer; therefore, that's not gonna work, 'my printer wasn't working,' I didn't tell you you had to use a printer so therefore that's not gonna work. So let me eliminate all the excuses you can come up with so you can come up with something more unique."

I   **Do you have any family experiences that have shaped your teacher identity?**

P4   Just my children. All of them, per sey, but, my youngest is two of the ones who inspired me to go into teaching and then by watching them in their experiences with

their teachers. I've had to go toe-to-toe with some of them just because I knew what they were doing was inappropriate. I had one in kindergarten, a kindergarten teacher to bite my son. Why? Because he bit her. Oh really? Ok. So, it's things like that that makes me say 'ok, this is what I do not want to be.

I   **Do you have any experiences with administrators that have shaped your identity?**

P4   I have been fortunate to work for some very professional people. I would say by just watching them as administrators and how they deal with 80 something staff, um, I've been impressed. So, because I'm not so much interested, I would not be inspired to be like anyone in administration but, um, I do see their worth and I see the importance of them being able to multi-task and juggle with our students as well as staff.

I   **Do you have any experiences with colleagues that have shaped your identity?**

P4   I can't say that I have.

I   **Alright. How about experiences as an advisor or coach with a student organization?**

P4   Well, we do FCCLA, which is of course our family and consumer sciences organization. And, right now in the middle school level it's not as strong as it would be in high school so we introduce it to our students and if they want to start a club, we do. If they don't, we don't bother with it. So, I haven't in the past seven or eight years had a whole lot of dealing with it. So…

I   **How about experiences with students? Which, you said earlier … (laughs)**

P4   I think a little bit. I think if nothing more, all of my students have just taught me patience and tolerance. I really do.

I   **Any specific example? Well, the biscuits …**

P4   Yeah, the biscuits dripping in the oven. That, as I said, he went home and told his

parents that he was bullied so I got a nice long e-mail from a very irate mother at 10:30

on a Friday night so I had to make a phone call and I explained to her that, "I apologize

for calling so late but I just saw your e-mail to the principal and I'd like to address

this if you don't mind because I think you need resolution before Monday. So, let's

talk about it." So as I began to share with her what exactly had happened and I think

my saving grace was that I had demonstrated and shown them what it was they were

supposed to do; therefore, "Had your son been paying attention, this wouldn't have

happened." 'Well he said he didn't do it.' "Ok, and I believe what you say. If he says

he didn't do it, the one thing I do know is someone did do it. And whether he did it

or not, one, he shouldn't have admitted to it if he didn't and two, it doesn't even

matter anymore but, please understand, I'm not just responsible for your son, there are

26 other students in that class that I needed to be concerned about their safety, if that

building caught on fire, that stove started a fire, that would have all been what I had to

be responsible for. So, my resolution when we get back is I'm gonna break up his

cooking group, each student will go to a different cooking group and they will not be

allowed to cook anything else." I said, "If you have an issue with that (and of course I

e-mailed that to her) per our conversation, these are the things we discussed and I

told you." And of course I sent it to my principal so that they would know this is

what I said "And if you feel you need to come up and meet with me, by all means do

so." Well, by Monday morning I got an e-mail back from my principal, assistant

principal, saying "Thank you for being pro-active, I think you handled it very

appropriately and we will not be hearing from these parents." And to this day we

haven't. So, ah yeah, my students.

I   **So do you think you have a separate teacher self and that your personality differs when you're in the classroom compared to outside of the classroom?**

P4   I think so. I'm a lot more laid back outside. My students can't see that fun side of me. I mean, I'm not a grim faced instructor, but, um, I will not allow or tolerate a lot of different things. There are things at home, it's just a no brainer. So I'm totally different at home.

I   **Do you think the subject matter you teach plays a role in your professional teacher identity?**

P4   I do because my subject matter allows me to be versatile and pretty much teach whatever I want to, as I said, as long as it stays within the competency levels of our county. So, I like the flexibility and the ability to do whatever I want to do with my program.

I   **So we have discussed several things that have had an impact on you as a teacher, as you consider your professional teacher identity, what are some other life experiences that have influenced the development of your teacher identity?**

P4   Um, becoming a mother at 14. I had to quickly identify what type of parent I would be. Would I be the one that my mom was or would I do something totally different? At that age, I do remember thinking I will never spank my children, I will never yell at my children, I'm gonna let them do whatever they want to do because my mom was so mean, she would just punish me because I didn't wash the dishes or … So, becoming a young parent had a lot of influence on not so much my teacher identity but my identity as an individual, as an adult, and in that I had to assume a certain role because

at that point I was not only a parent, I was a teacher.

I **So do you have any other comments to add regarding teaching and teacher identity?**

P4 I would say that I don't allow my job or my situation to define who I am. I define who I am; therefore, nothing on the outside influences would precipitate me being a different person just because. My title is that of a teacher, but before I'm a teacher, I am an individual, a mother, a grandmother, a friend, and those personalities take on a whole different look or aspect opposed to teaching.

I **So, how would you describe the way that you are in the classroom compared to the way your mother was in the classroom because you said that you saw her a lot in the classroom.**

P4 I did. I don't know when you were growing up if you asked your friends about a teacher, "Is she mean?" My mom was one of the mean teachers. Oh my gosh. When I said the things that they did with students that you can't do now. If a student didn't do something, she would twist them in the ear. Yeah, like, 'you're not listening' you know, that type of thing. And they could spank them. That was no biggie. Students got spankings quite often and I would see it. So, um, I did not aspire to be just like my mom. Classroom management for her was very easy because she had the reputation already so the students knew when they got Ms. (name), you were not gonna play in her classroom period. Whereas with myself, my students know that I have a certain leniency about me but then they know that I don't tolerate a bunch of foolishness. And I don't have to wait until afterwards to address a behavior or situation especially if I have a student who is trying to be disrespectful. I point blank say, "Ok now look this

works two ways and if you disrespect me, I will disrespect you and your feelings, I don't care because you don't have any respect for my feelings; therefore, if I hurt your feelings, oh well. I say, "I'll give you a straw." … 'a straw?' … "You just suck it up." There you go. No, I didn't want to be like my mom.

I **Sounds to me like you are a little watered down version of your mom.**

P4 Yeah, I would think that I am.

I **I love your story, you should write it. Once I transcribe today's interview, I will send the transcription to you by e-mail as an attachment for you to have the opportunity to review in order to confirm the accuracy of our discussion. You will also have the opportunity to request a copy of the results of this study. Do you have any questions about the interview today?**

P4 No.

I **Again, I would like to thank you for your time.**

Appendix I: Sample Researcher Journal Entries

Date: **March 10, 2014**

Research is complicated sometimes. Just when you think you can separate yourself from the

messiness, you find that you are in deeper today than yesterday.

Date: **March 8, 2014**

My second interview was conducted in the participant's home, which was by her request. I

assume since the agreed upon date fell over the weekend, this is what suited her. This made me

feel that she was comfortable enough with me to allow me into her home. She mentioned that she

had been to one of my conference presentations last year so perhaps this played a part in her

comfort level as well. Her husband was also home at the time of the interview playing games on

X-box in the basement, which was just below the dining room that the interview was held. After

the interview, she took me to the basement to meet her husband.

I selected the pseudonym *Amy* for this participant because she looked like an Amy that I know

but have not seen for many years. Since the interview was conducted in her home, I wonder if

she would have been as candid if she were in her classroom. I wonder if she would have

recollected the same experiences so strongly, especially those pertaining to family. I was

especially excited that she informed me that she googled teacher identity the night before the

interview. She did her homework!

Date: **March 7, 2014**

Today, I interviewed two participants, *Jackie* and *Lori*. As with the four previous participants, I

assigned pseudonyms based simply upon what I felt during the interview. No particular formula,

rhyme or reason. I interviewed both participants in their respective classrooms during their

planning blocks. This made me feel rushed since both participants were eager to take care of many things.

Jackie is extremely fine-tuned and her commanding demeanor seemed to be well received by students. But, they had a captive audience: me. I arrived to the classroom just prior to the bell. I appreciated her candid and forthright attitude during the interview. She held nothing back and even shared becoming a mother at a young age. She did not have to share that, but she did. It was both comforting and humbling when she spoke about such a personal aspect of her life.

Lori is a fun and bubbly lady. She reminded me of myself in so many ways. Energy, full of life, passion for teaching, and love for children. There's so much to say about experience and Lori summed it when she said that you cannot have experience until you have experience. Simply put.

Date: **March 6, 2014**

My fourth interview was with *Gina*, the pseudonym I assigned this participant. I met her in the school office after the school's monthly faculty meeting and then we proceeded to her classroom for the interview. I prefer to see the participant's classroom; it gives me a perspective about their teaching style and personality. However, I must exercise special care to avoid getting too caught up in examining their spaces. Gina and I sat at a table in the kitchen lab. There were various old tins displayed above the cabinets and many food pyramid and nutrition posters were hung on the cabinet doors. In many ways, it was a "typical" FCS lab of clutter. I am continuously amazed at how so many FCS teachers have cluttered classrooms and kitchen labs. Although, this is perhaps a sign of learning and much going on. Gina's husband arrived to her classroom near the end of the interview and sat at her desk until we were finished. He seemed at home. Hence, her reference to community resonated with me at the conclusion of the interview.

Date: March 2, 2014

My third interview was completely exhausting, both mentally and physically. To begin with, I travelled 2½ hours to meet the participant at a restaurant just off a busy Interstate highway. A restaurant, I should mention, that is NOT one of my top 5 chain restaurants but it was where the participant wanted to meet and making her comfortable was my top priority. It was an extremely busy time directly after church so focusing on the interview was a challenge for me. I am also concerned that the noise will overpower the interview during transcribing. My trip back home was a miserable drive in a rainstorm.

I chose the pseudonym *Diane* for this participant for no particular reason. The metaphors and descriptors she used throughout the interview were quite witty. I have no idea how I will make sense of the interview during coding. She has a love/hate relationship with her students and teaching. My head is spinning just thinking about it. She also harbors much animosity towards career switchers and the amount of money she invested into going back to college so that she could teach FCS. After the interview, while walking to the parking lot, she revealed to me that she had been homeless and was living in the motel near the restaurant we were leaving. She credited this to being single and student loans that she was having a difficult time repaying. That was such a challenging situation for me because a) it caught me completely off guard and b) I was unsure what to say to her.

Date: February 21, 2014

My first interview for the main study. Much of the interview reminded me of two of the interview participants from the pilot study. She was prepared, articulate, and conscientious of giving 100% of her attention. My decision to provide participants with the interview guide in advance is on point. If I were being interviewed, I would want this same opportunity.

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I am obsessing over the recorder. During the interview I feared it wasn't recording so I checked it several times. I need to be more inconspicuous about this because I believe I distracted the participant.

While thanking her for participating, I was surprised when she asked if I thought I would have trouble securing other volunteers for the study. Although surprised, I did not ask her why she asked me that question. Perhaps I should have – I am curious now.

I am anxious to get the transcription to her for review. She seemed just as anxious. *Melissa* is the pseudonym I assigned to this participant.

Appendix J: Sample Interview Transcript with Codes and Issue

Line	I/P	Text	Code	Issue
1	I	Hello, my name is Windi Turner. I am a family and consumer sciences teacher and	None	Preliminary
2		currently a doctoral student at Virginia Tech conducting my dissertation research study.	None	Preliminary
3		In our discussion, I'll use FCS to refer to family and consumer sciences and CTE to	None	Preliminary
4		refer to career and technical education. The purpose of this study is to investigate the	None	Preliminary
5		construction of the professional identities of secondary FCS teachers. In short, how do	None	Preliminary
6		individuals develop an understanding of themselves as teachers? The questions that I	None	Preliminary
7		will be asking you will pertain to your individual beliefs about teaching, your individual	None	Preliminary
8		experiences that have influenced your beliefs about teaching, the perceptions you have	None	Preliminary
9		of your professional teacher identity in a secondary CTE classroom, and the experiences	None	Preliminary
10		that have shaped your teacher identity. I want to thank you for taking the time to	None	Preliminary
11		participate in this interview today. The information you share with me will be helpful to	None	Preliminary
12		my research. The interview will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes. Your	None	Preliminary
13		participation is voluntary. If you begin to participate and then change your mind, you	None	Preliminary
14		may stop at any time and notify me. You are also free not to respond to any questions	None	Preliminary
15		during the interview. During transcribing, in the dissertation, and in any other reports of	None	Preliminary
16		the research, your identity will be treated as confidential. Your name, your school, and	None	Preliminary
17		any other persons you refer to will not be identified. Are you ready to begin?	None	Preliminary
18	P1	Yes I am.	None	Preliminary
19	**I**	**So what were the reasons you decided to become a teacher?**	None	Reasons to become a teacher
20	P1	Well, I had a couple of reasons. I was looking for a change in careers 'cause I was in	Looking for a change in careers from hospitality	Reasons to become a teacher
21		the hospitality business. Of course we all know what happened in the hospitality	Hospitality industry not doing well	Reasons to become a teacher

22		industry. More and more people are starting to stay in their home towns, video	None	Reasons to become a teacher
23		conference, and stuff like that through the Internet. The travel industry, 'cause I was	None	Reasons to become a teacher
24		in hotels and restaurants and stuff like that so I kept looking for something 'cause I	None	Reasons to become a teacher
25		was kinda burn out on hospitality anyway so I was looking for a career and I didn't	Burn out on hospitality; looking for a new career	Reasons to become a teacher
26		know what I wanted to do. Um, part of this is spiritual too because I was praying the	Spiritual	Reasons to become a teacher
27		whole time for purpose, you know, 'what am I supposed to be doing?' So, I mean,	Praying to find purpose in career	Reasons to become a teacher
28		part of this is spiritual and Laura Bush came on and she was advertising for teachers.	Spiritual; Laura Bush advertising for teachers	Reasons to become a teacher
29		She said that we need teachers and that was one of the things that I said, 'really, I	Laura Bush advertising for teachers	Reasons to become a teacher
30		could try that because I had already majored in home economics, it was home	Majored in home economics	Reasons to become a teacher
31		economics then, I said, 'well, let me go up there,' cause I was in (state) at the time, in	None	Reasons to become a teacher
32		(city, state) at the time so I said, 'well I'm gonna go up to the university and talk to	Visited university for guidance	Reasons to become a teacher
33		them and see what they say.' Actually, I was going to go into geography or history or	Was going to go into geography or history	Reasons to become a teacher

34		something like that and they talked me into going into family and consumer sciences	University talked her into FACS	Reasons to become a teacher
35		and they said they needed teachers.	University advised that FACS needed teachers	Reasons to become a teacher
36	**I**	**And you had the degree already?**	None	Reasons to become a teacher
37	P1	I already had the degree so I was looking at a master's degree at that point so I said,	Had degree in home economics	Reasons to become a teacher
38		"what do I have to do to be a teacher?" And they said, "well, you know, you're gonna	None	Reasons to become a teacher
39		have to get your master's degree." And I said, "ok." They didn't have a master's in that,	University advised to get master's degree	Reasons to become a teacher
40		it was a master's in education. They made me take all these courses in family and	University advised to take FACS classes	Reasons to become a teacher
41		consumer sciences because I was so far behind as far as the standards to because	Was behind in FACS standards	Reasons to become a teacher
42		I hadn't been in school for years. So, I mean, I've only been teaching for eight years.	Been teaching for eight years	Reasons to become a teacher
43	**I**	**So, what did you do while you were in school?**	None	Reasons to become a teacher
44	P1	I was working with (name) in customer service.	Worked in customer service while in school	Reasons to become a teacher
45	**I**	**Ok, you did that while you were going back to school.**	None	Reasons to become a teacher

46	P1	Yeah.	None	Reasons to become a teacher
47	**I**	**So were there any particular events or persons that influenced this decision?**	None	Influences
48	P1	Laura Bush.	Laura Bush	Influences
49	**I**	**And you mentioned that you needed a change.**	None	Influences
50	P1	Yes, yes, I was changing my careers anyway and I was looking into sales and on the	Needed a change in career	Influences
51		social level of jobs 'cause I'm not one of those people who can sit there and do data	Cannot sit and do data entry	Influences
52		entry. I like people so I wanted a people person job. Teaching is one of those jobs.	Likes people; teaching is a people person job	Influences
53	**I**	**Right. So, can you tell me a little bit more about when you went back to school?**	None	Influences
54		**When they talked you into …**	None	Influences
55	P1	Family and consumer sciences. What is that you want me to tell you?	None	Influences
56	**I**	**You said you saw the advertisement with Laura Bush, so you went to the**	None	Influences
57		**university …**	None	Influences
58	P1	It's funny how it snowballs. They said, "well family and consumer sciences," well	University suggested FACS	Influences
59		number one, they changed the name of it. And I was going, 'what did they call it?'	None	Influences
60		But they emphasized family now which I think is kinda interesting. It's different from	University emphasized family	Influences
61		when I was in school so I had to catch up with their standards, newer standards.	Had to catch up on standards	Influences
62	**I**	**So how long did that take you?**	None	Influences
63	P1	Two to three years to get through that 'cause I was working full-time. In the evenings I	None	Influences
64		was having to go to school.	None	Influences
65	**I**	**Absolutely. Did your family influence that decision?**	None	Influences
66	P1	No, my family thought I was crazy going back to school. They didn't think I would	No family influence	Influences

67		ever be able to do that (laughs).	Family did not think she could do it	Influences
68	I	**So would you say they supported you?**	None	Influences
69	P1	Um, yes, because what happens in (state) is that you have to have a year internship, it's	Family supported her during masters	Influences
70		not like here. I mean, I literally had to quit my job to be able to do it because I was in	None	Influences
71		graduate school plus I was having to go to school every day. I mean, I was teaching, so I	None	Influences
72		gave up everything, my apartment. I was living with my brother and I said, "we're	Lived with brother during masters	Influences
73		gonna have to move in with my sister." She supported me basically, my brother,	Lived with sister during masters	Influences
74		my brother was working. So, yes, they were supporting me while I was going to school.	Brother and sister supported her during masters	Influences
75		Even during my internship.	Brother and sister supported her during internship	Influences
76	I	**Right, even though they thought you were crazy, right? (laughs)**	None	Influences
77	P1	They said, "you're too old to go back to school." I said, "you're never too old to go	Family said she was too old to go back to school	Influences
78		back to school, what do you mean?" I said, "no I'm not" (laughs).	None	Influences
79	I	**Well you mentioned earlier that when you went back to the university that they**	None	Decision to teach FCS
80		**said, "you have this degree in home economics so this might be the route you**	None	Decision to teach FCS
81		**want to go …"**	None	Decision to teach FCS
82	P1	They talked me into it.	University talked her into FACS	Decision to teach FCS
83	I	**"They" meaning?**	None	Decision to teach FCS

84	P1	I guess the initial people that you go talk to. They said, "why don't you go and talk to	University talked her into FACS	Decision to teach FCS
85		the lady that was the head of the department, I really liked her. So, but, the	University department head	Decision to teach FCS
86		university itself talked me into going to the school.	University talked her into FACS	Decision to teach FCS
87	**I**	**Do you have any regrets?**	None	Decision to teach FCS
88	P1	Not at all. None whatsoever. That's what I was meant to do. Sometimes I think the	Was meant to teach FACS	Decision to teach FCS
89		only thing I'm afraid of is it totally depends on our politicians on if they quit having our	FACS funding depends on politicians	Decision to teach FCS
90		classes, if they're important enough. We have our own opinions about that. Cause a	None	Decision to teach FCS
91		little bit of life is important (laughs).	None	Decision to teach FCS
92	**I**	**Right. Right. So what are your beliefs about teaching?**	None	Beliefs about teaching
93	P5	I think teaching is very challenging. Um, kids don't respect you at all. The parents do	Teaching is very challenging; kids don't respect teachers	Beliefs about teaching
94		but the kids don't. The value of you as an educator, there's two sides to that. The	Parents respect teachers; two sides to value of teachers as educator	Beliefs about teaching
95		parents think that, I don't know, sometimes they want to blame the teacher for	Parents sometimes want to blame the teacher for children's behavior	Beliefs about teaching
96		children's behavior. Which I have my own opinions about that because being in	None	Beliefs about teaching

97		career and technology, and I tell parents the same thing, we are preparing your child	CTE prepares students to go to work	Beliefs about teaching
98		to go to work. And I said, 'all this stuff they're learning in school, this is reality when	Learning in school is reality	Beliefs about teaching
99		they come into my classroom, this is the real things that they are going to do in their	FACS is the real things that they do everyday	Beliefs about teaching
100		everyday life. I mean this is what they are going to have to learn to adapt to social	FACS is what students need to adapt to social settings	Beliefs about teaching
101		settings and to be able to socially interact with others, to be able to fit out into our	FACS enables students to socially interact with others and fit into communities	Beliefs about teaching
102		communities. So, the parents a lot of times want to blame you for their kids' behavior.	Parents blame teachers for kids' behavior	Beliefs about teaching
103	**I**	**They do sometimes. So, do you feel teaching is a reflection of the teacher?**	None	Beliefs about teaching
104	P1	I think that teaching is really an interaction of all the different people, because you have	Teaching is an interaction of different people	Beliefs about teaching
105		all these different people in the classroom, you may have up to 30 people in one	None	Beliefs about teaching
106		classroom and teaching is usually an interaction between all the people involved.	Teaching is an interaction of different people	Beliefs about teaching
107	**I**	**So sometimes I think of that as a little community in itself.**	None	Beliefs about teaching
108	P1	Exactly. That is exactly what happens. It's definitely some challenges in interacting with	Challenges in interacting with middle school kids	Beliefs about teaching

109		especially children on a middle school level. It's like I just told somebody the other	None	Beliefs about teaching
110		day, we get the authentic child, we get the real child, we don't have the parental	Teachers get the authentic child/real child; no parental influence	Beliefs about teaching
111		influence, it's the peer influence, we get the real person in here. And we're having to	Peer influence; teachers get the real person	Beliefs about teaching
112		deal with 30 real people all mixed in together cause they have not really honed in on	Teachers deal with real people mixed together	Beliefs about teaching
113		their social skills and they don't hold back cause they don't understand themselves yet	Students have not honed in on social skills, do not hold back and do not understand themselves	Beliefs about teaching
114		in that middle school area. 'Cause I teach 6th, 7th, and 8th.	None	Beliefs about teaching
115	**I**	**So I would like for you to think about your experiences that have influenced**	None	Experiences
116		**your beliefs about teaching. Could you describe an experience or it can be more**	None	Experiences
117		**than one experience that has significantly influenced your beliefs about teaching?**	None	Experiences
118	P1	When I see kids out in the community, I've been teaching long enough now, and they're	None	Experiences
119		successfully out there going to school and continuing their education, we've made the	Students successfully going to school/ continuing education	Experiences
120		impact somewhere along the line. They come back to us, in other words, they come	Teachers made impact on students	Experiences
121		back to us afterwards and I think that's real interesting for them to come back on a	Students come back to middle school teachers	Experiences

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122		middle school level, I see it from a high school level but it's really interesting when	None	Experiences
123		they come back to the middle school level.	None	Experiences
124	**I**	**So they come back to visit you, or …?**	None	Experiences
125	P1	Yes, they're out in the community and stuff. Some of the worst ones that were the	Worst students come back to visit	Experiences
126		most horrible child on the earth comes back and visits you.	None	Experiences
127	**I**	**What do you think about that?**	None	Experiences
128	P1	(laughs) I tell them, "you're like a recurring nightmare, why are you coming back?"	None	Experiences
129		(laughs) 'what do you want now?' They just, I don't know, um, they made an impact	Make an impact on students	Experiences
130		on life somehow, you never know who you make an impact on.	Never know who you will make an impact on	Experiences
131	**I**	**Right. Where there any particular persons that influenced your beliefs about**	None	Influences
132		**teaching?**	None	Influences
133	P1	It's the kids. It is the kids, it's totally the kids. You know somedays I get so	Students	Influences
134		frustrated and say, "I've just had it, why, I spent all this money on this career, why	Students	Influences
135		am I doing this?" And then all of sudden one of them will walk up with home baked	Students bring in home baked cookies	Influences
136		cookies and say, "Look at what I made with my mom last night." And, I don't know	Students	Influences
137		or they'll bring in a bag of chocolates or something, 'you're my favorite teacher' and a	Students say "you're my favorite teacher"	Influences
138		handmade card for no reason, out of nowhere, just walk up to you. Can you ask for	Students bring in handmade card	Influences
139		more? I don't know. I'd like to ask some of these kids after they got out of school were	None	Influences
140		they able to use anything I taught them (laughs). You see, in the middle school level,	None	Influences
141		I believe in just the foundations. You can't really teach them anything, you know, the	None	Influences
142		same things I learned as an adult we do as an adult in the business world, I'm actually	None	Influences
143		teaching the kids but it's just on their level. In my classroom rules, I say, "now you	None	Influences

144		go home and ask your parents what rules they have at work, it's the same rules, you're	None	Influences
145		gonna have to learn to adapt to these rules.	None	Influences
146	**I**	**Right. What are some of your rules?**	None	Influences
147	P1	Keep your hands to yourself, don't throw objects, respect others, follow directions, be	None	Influences
148		prepared, be on time, um, these are the types of things, and I'm very big into, especially	None	Influences
149		at these ages, be cordial, diversity, taking responsibility. Companies are spending	None	Influences
150		millions of dollars on people because they won't take responsibility for their actions	None	Influences
151		and admit to mistakes. I say, "learn to accept your mistakes and identify 'yes I made a	None	Influences
152		mistake and let's fix it now while it's still small' before companies spend thousands	None	Influences
153		upon thousands of dollars and they change policies because of this because people	None	Influences
154		won't accept responsibility. That's a big deal with me, accepting responsibility. I try to	None	Influences
155		look at businesses and say, "ok, we are trying to develop work ethics but I said, "all I	Business experience to teach work ethics	Influences
156		can do at my level is develop character development, character education, because they	Develop character	Influences
157		haven't gotten that part of work ethic yet, they gotta learn the character part first. And	Teach character education	Influences
158		you're kinda in between. You start to develop the word ethic but you're still at character	Character development and ethic	Influences
159		development.	None	Influences
160	**I**	**So it sounds to me like you use a lot of your experience in the business and**	None	Influences
161		**industry to take back to the classroom and say, "these are the tools that you're**	None	Influences
162		**gonna need."**	None	Influences
163	P1	Yes. That is exactly what I'm doing. When I'm standing in front of them, I tell the kids,	Business experience to teach work ethics	Influences
164		I'll say, "pretend like I'm the boss and your parents are doing this right now, some of	None	Influences
165		them, they're in a meeting and if they got up in the middle of a meeting and started	None	Influences
166		walking in front of the boss, throwing away trash, talking, poking at other people,	None	Influences
167		that's not going to look real favorable on them. You've got to learn you can't do that.	None	Influences
168		You're gonna know that that's rude before you leave my classroom." That's the only	None	Influences

169		way you can do that. "There's reasons why we are telling you this stuff, it's not just	None	Influences
170		because we want peace in our classroom, we're doing this cause you're gonna need it	None	Influences
171		to go out in the workforce." Oh my, 8th graders are horrible. Some of these guys want	None	Influences
172		to work in the summer and "there's folders with hundreds of applications and they can	None	Influences
173		say, 'next.' You've got to understand that. You can't act like this around people."	None	Influences
174	**I**	**So were there any particular experiences as a student that influenced your**	None	Experiences as a student
175		**beliefs about teaching?**	None	Experiences as a student
176	P1	As a student?	None	Experiences as a student
177	**I**	**When you were a student.**	None	Experiences as a student
178	P1	I'll tell you the most irritating thing that happened to me as a student. Because I was	Experience as a student	Experiences as a student
179		paying for those courses as a student and I had some little girls in my class that kept	Paid for classes and classmates talking during class	Experiences as a student
180		talking while the teacher was up there talking. They really irritated me because I	Classmates talking during class, she couldn't hear	Experiences as a student
181		couldn't hear, I'm hard of hearing. And I couldn't hear the teacher when he was telling	None	Experiences as a student
182		us what to do. That was very very irritating. And also test taking. Oh gosh I'm a	Test taking is difficult for her	Experiences as a student
183		terrible test taker. And I tell the kids this, "I stress out, I forget stuff, I'll study for two	None	Experiences as a student
184		weeks and you put that thing in front of me and I won't remember nothing." I'm	None	Experiences as a student
185		trying to give them some relaxation techniques that I've developed in college and tried	Teaches students relaxation techniques developed in college	Experiences as a student

186		it. I tell them, "I am not a good test taker and this is why we are doing this." The first	Not a good test taker and shares techniques with students	Experiences as a student
187		person to finish the test, that doesn't mean they're making the best grade. And I use	None	Experiences as a student
188		myself as an example, when I was in college, I was the last person to turn in my test	Uses herself from college as an example	Experiences as a student
189		because I do suffer from test anxiety. I teach them breathing techniques, especially	Suffers from test anxiety; teaches breathing techniques	Experiences as a student
190		when it gets around to SOL time. You've got to just relax, let your mind float freely.	Teaches students to relax during testing	Experiences as a student
191	**I**	**So when you reflect about your individual identity as a teacher, how would you**	None	Reflect about teacher identity
192		**describe what you feel is your professional teacher identity?**	None	Reflect about teacher identity
193	P1	I think what is interesting is that one thing I do out in the community is I'm always	None	Reflect about teacher identity
194		looking for ways I can apply that to my classroom. Now, I've never done that before in	Looks for ways to apply community into classroom	Reflect about teacher identity
195		any of my professions. I went to a travel show last weekend and all I could do was	None	Reflect about teacher identity
196		think about, 'oh, I could use that in my class, I have one of those posters and I could	None	Reflect about teacher identity
197		hang it in my classroom.' I just think it's real interesting that whatever I'm doing, I	Looks for ways to apply community into classroom	Reflect about teacher identity

198		think how I could use it in my classroom. What can I do to get this knowledge to my	Looks for ways to get knowledge to students	Reflect about teacher identity
199		kids? I try to use stuff like land? and I try to tell them a little bit, "you all need to watch	None	Reflect about teacher identity
200		this because they are showcasing their country, they're showing it off to the rest of the	None	Reflect about teacher identity
201		world." I try to use things that are in reality that might capture their attention and apply	Tries to use things in reality to apply in classroom	Reflect about teacher identity
202		it to the classroom but I've never done that before in any other occupation. This is the	Only occupation that she has ever applied life to	Reflect about teacher identity
203		only occupation that I have done that.	None	Reflect about teacher identity
204	**I**	**Do you have any idea why it is like this?**	None	Reflect about teacher identity
205	P1	I'm in education now, it's different. We're educating other people, we're getting them	Education is different from other occupations	Reflect about teacher identity
206		ready for the outside world and if I can find real life experiences and attach it to them,	Education prepares students for outside world; attaches real life experiences	Reflect about teacher identity
207		you just never know, it might hit a chord with somebody. You can sometimes see their	None	Reflect about teacher identity
208		eyes light up like, 'oh yeah, I want that,' whatever that is.	None	Reflect about teacher identity

209	I	How do you think your students, or administrators, or colleagues would describe	None	Reflect about teacher identity
210		you as a teacher? Not as their neighbor, not in any other way, but a teacher.	None	Reflect about teacher identity
211	P1	They think I'm too nice.	Others think she's too nice	Reflect about teacher identity
212	I	Do you think you're too nice?	None	Reflect about teacher identity
213	P1	No, I think that is something that I have been trained to be in hotels and hospitality.	She does not think she's too nice; learned management style from hospitality industry	Reflect about teacher identity
214		I did that for 20 years with a lot of classes and a lot of ways to deal with people and I	None	Reflect about teacher identity
215		think that's totally misunderstood. I've spoken with the managers that I have had and	None	Reflect about teacher identity
216		they don't necessarily approve of my management style. Or they didn't before because	None	Reflect about teacher identity
217		they kept trying to make me be this authoritarian militant manager and that's not what I	None	Reflect about teacher identity
218		am, I can't manage a classroom like that. And now they've kinda laid off of me so my	Cannot manage a classroom using authoritarian militan style	Reflect about teacher identity

219		classroom is running a lot smoother now cause they were trying to make me use a	Classroom is running smoother since she's using a management style that is her own	Reflect about teacher identity
220		management style that's not me.	None	Reflect about teacher identity
221	**I**	**When you say "they," I just want to clarify that ...**	None	Reflect about teacher identity
222	P1	Administrators at my school. They were wanting me to use their management style	Administrators wanted her to use their management style that is not hers	Reflect about teacher identity
223		and that's not my management style, that created a lot of problems. Did that answer	Administrators created a lot of problems with classroom management	Reflect about teacher identity
224		your question? I get off on a tangent.	None	Reflect about teacher identity

Appendix K: Reasons to Become a Teacher

Career Change	Working with Children	Degree in FCS	Family of Teachers	Played Teacher	Teacher Role Model	Conducive to Family Life
P1 Looking for a change in careers	P2 Like working with children; helping people	P1 Home Economics	P2 Aunts, cousins, sister, son	P2 Played school	P3 Young first year home economics teacher in high school	P4 Job to coincide with children's schedule
P2 Trainer in the military	P5 Loves children of all ages	P3 Home Economics	P4 Mother and aunt	P8 Played teacher	P5 Young 9th grade and high school home economics teachers	P5 Career that could flex around family
P7 Came into teaching late; 2nd career	P8 Previously worked with learning disabled and severely handicapped students	P6 Home Economics	P6 Aunts	P9 Played school	P6 FCS teacher in high school	
P8 Moved to different careers	P10 Liked being with students after long term substitute assignment	P9 FCS	P7 Husband was teaching after his retirement		P9 Several teachers were role models	
			P8 Husband has family of teachers		P10 Fashion design teacher in high school	
			P10 Sisters and cousins			