

A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED  
TEACHERS' VERSUS NON-NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHERS'  
PERCEIVED RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

By

Erika L. Collins

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty  
of the College of Education  
in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Education  
in Leadership Education

Spalding University

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PREVIEW

**Spalding University**  
College of Education

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled:

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“Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph! For the Lord Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth. He will subdue the peoples under us, and nations under our feet. He will choose our inheritance for us...” (Psalm 47:1-4). First, I give honor to God who is the head of my life and center of my joy. I thank God for his grace and mercy, and for seeing this project to completion. He receives all of the glory and praise.

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## ABSTRACT

The Kentucky Supreme Court ruled that the elementary and secondary educational systems in Kentucky were unconstitutional. As a result of the task force examination of various educational systems, The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 was developed. Kentucky demonstrated its commitment to the NCLB requirement of ensuring that every student has a “highly qualified” teacher as well as National Board Certified Teacher in every public school by 2020, through legislature (Kentucky Revised Statues KRS 157.395), “Highly Qualified” teachers are able to motivate students and enhance their student achievement. Teachers who have achieved National Board Certification have demonstrated that they earned the title “Highly Qualified”. The purpose of this study is to examine whether there is a significant difference in the perceived responsibility for student achievement between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers by focusing on the areas of engagement, expectations, feedback, motivation and teaching methods. This study further examines if there is a significant difference in the teaching experience between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers.

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PREVIEW

## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization, sought to advance skills and best practices for teaching among teaching professionals. In 1987, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards developed the National Board Certification for teachers in response to NCLB's mandate for "highly qualified teachers". National Board for Professional Teaching Standards' mission statement is based on high rigorous standards for what teachers should know and be able to do. It's a voluntary system to examine teachers, and advocate for National Board Certified Teachers (NBPTS, 2008). National Board for Professional Teaching Standards offers 25 certifications ranging from early childhood to young adulthood. Teachers who are nationally certified have demonstrated that they are accomplished teachers, which is equivalent to a licensed doctor, practicing lawyer, or Certified Public Accountant. According to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, there are currently 74,000 certified teachers helping students achieve at higher levels (NBPTS, 2008).

Teaching is much more than the presentation of facts and the expectation that students obtain a deeper understanding of the topic presented; it is rather an awakening of the students' minds which allow them to venture and seek answers. In order to engage all students, the topics must be presented in a variety of ways that will meet the needs of all students (Gardner, 2000). The process one takes to obtain an education can vary throughout the state and school systems. The funding inequity of Kentucky's K – 12

public schools caused the Kentucky Supreme Court to rule that the state's elementary and secondary school system was unlawful. Kentucky overhauled its educational system in 1990 as a result of the Supreme Court's ruling. Kentucky made changes in its curriculum, governance and finance as a result of that ruling. The new educational system resulted in the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 (KERA), which was created to make sure that every student would have the opportunity to receive a quality education from highly qualified teachers (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009a).

Almost two decades later, the Kentucky Department of Education has sought to overhaul the state's assessment system. Kentucky's students entering into college were found to be unprepared to succeed in colleges and universities' general education courses (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009b). These students were forced to take college remedial courses, which are not part of their college degree programs. Senate Bill 1 measured individual student achievement over a period of time. According to the Senate Bill 1 sponsors, Senator Ken Winters and Senate President David L. Williams, 54% of Kentucky's students were not prepared for college classes (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009b).

The passing of Senate Bill 1 in Kentucky in 2009, required revisions in the assessment and accountability processes of educational programs in Kentucky. During the interim periods of 2008-2011, the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT) will continue to be administered. However, schools and institutions of higher education must now collaborate to find strategies to eliminate the need for students to enroll in college remedial courses.

Students in grades three through eight and 10-12 completed the 2009 KCCT, which consisted of five content areas: reading, mathematics, science, social studies and writing-on-demand (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009b). During the three-year interim period, the NCLB Report will remain unchanged. However, the Kentucky Performance Report will have a different look while complying with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Students will continue to receive a performance report of novice, apprentice, proficient, and distinguished while Arts & Humanities and Practical Living/ Vocational were previously a part of KCCT. They will no longer be administered statewide. The number of testing days has been reduced from seven days to six days. The school board in each district set the expectations for staff during the interim period.

#### Statement of the Problem

NCLB required all states to ensure that all students receive a quality education by teachers who are “highly qualified”. Students who receive instruction from “highly qualified” teachers are expected to achieve proficiency by 2014, thus eliminating or closing the achievement gap. The deadline for states to ensure that all of their teachers are “highly qualified” expired in 2005. North Dakota was the only state that met the goal of having all of their teachers classified as “highly qualified”. Thirty-five states reported that 95% of their core academic classes were taught by “highly qualified” teachers (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). The achievement gap between minority students and white students has continued to increase in the majority of schools in Kentucky (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009c). According to Kentucky’s 2009 NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Report, the performance of the African-American

subpopulation, 103 out of 1,233 schools did not make AYP in reading and 89 schools did not make AYP in mathematics (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009c). The performance of the subpopulation of students receiving free/reduced lunch showed that in 194 Kentucky schools, these students did not make AYP in reading and 189 Kentucky schools, did not make AYP in mathematics (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009c). The performance of the subpopulation of students with disabilities showed that 252 Kentucky schools did not make AYP in reading and 195 Kentucky schools did not make AYP in mathematics (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009c). Only 75 school districts in Kentucky out of 174 met all of their NCLB AYP goals (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009c). These “at risk” students are being left behind with the increased emphasis placed on meeting Adequate Yearly Progress through the use of standardized testing (Jennings & Renter, 2006). NCLB’s intention was for all students to reach proficiency in reading and math by the year 2014. However, the achievement gap continues to increase, especially in the subgroup of African American males, free/reduced lunch, and disabled subpopulations (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009c). At this rate, the goal of all students becoming proficient by 2014 is not likely to be achieved. It is imperative that the needs of all students are met.

The lack of student academic achievement is a crucial problem among schools in Kentucky (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009c). KERA developed six goals and academic expectations that were to ensure that all students would achieve at high levels. The six goals and academic expectations require that teachers meet the needs of all students through a variety of methods. According to the six goals and expectations, students would acquire knowledge through various media services; thus there is a need

for using different teaching methods to meet the different learning styles of low performing students.

National Board Certified teachers in successful inner city, high poverty elementary schools, use a variety of services that enhance reading levels of novice students, and use these methods to move the novice readers to proficient readers (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2004). Meeting the needs of all students is the top priority of National Board Certified Teachers in moving novice students to proficiency (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2004). In order to shorten the achievement gap, Tomlinson (2003), suggested looking at each student as an individual. She further suggests promoting their strengths instead of their weaknesses. NBCTs are trained to look at students as individuals. They also develop lessons based on their students' needs, in order to enhance their students' achievement levels (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2004). Marzano (2003) and Tomlinson (2003) insisted that making each student work to their highest level would narrow the achievement gap over time. A clear understanding of student progress is essential in moving students from novice to proficient while decreasing the achievement gap. NBCTs reflect on their lessons to see how they impacted student achievement and what they can do differently the next time the lesson sequence is taught to foster student achievement. They further examine the process of each student ensuring that all students are striving to meet or exceed their educational goals (Goldhaber & Anthony, 2004).

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine whether there is a significant difference in the perceived responsibility for student achievement between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers

by focusing on the areas of engagement, expectations, feedback, motivation and teaching methods. This study further examines if there is a significant difference in the teaching experience between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers.

### Rationale

Goldhaber and Anthony (2004) conducted the first large scale study of National Board Certified Teacher and elementary-level student achievement. They examined National Board Certified Teachers and their counterparts. According to Goldhaber and Anthony (2004), National Board Certified Teachers' students achieved higher gains than Non-National Board Certified Teachers. Goldhaber's and Anthony's (2004) findings suggested that National Board Certified Teachers seemed to be more effective in enhancing student achievement. They found that NBCTs reflected on their lessons to see how they impacted student achievement. NBCTS also communicated with their students' families in order to develop a partnership of caring individuals with the common goals of enhancing student achievement. Goldhaber and Anthony (2004) found that NBCTs develop a caring classroom community, to ensure that their student feel that they are an important member of the classroom. As a result of their reflective practice, caring community and desire to enhance student achievement, their students achieved higher gains than their counterparts.

Since Kentucky has set a goal of having at least one nationally certified teacher in every public school by 2020, it is imperative that the perceived responsibility for student achievement among Kentucky's National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers be examined (Bolich, 2001). Students, who are taught by

“highly qualified” teachers, are expected to perform at higher levels and reach proficiency by 2014 (Bolich, 2001; KERA, 2001).

### Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

NCLB required all states to ensure that all students receive a quality education from teachers who are “highly qualified”. Students who receive instruction from “highly qualified” teachers are expected to achieve proficiency by 2014, thus eliminating or closing the achievement gap. The achievement gap between minority students and white students has continued to increase in the majority of schools in Kentucky. The intent of this quantitative study was to compare two groups of teachers’ perceived responsibility for student achievement. One group of teachers had National Board Certification; the other group of teachers was teachers without National Board Certification. The following five independent variables were considered: engagement, expectations, feedback, motivation, and teaching methods. The dependent variables are the mean scores from the five constructs. This study also examined whether there was a significant difference in teaching experience between the two groups. Two research questions and six null hypotheses were developed to guide this research.

The research questions for this study were:

1. Is there a significant difference of perceived responsibility for student achievement in the areas of engagement, expectations, feedback, motivation, and teaching methods between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers?

2. Is there a significant difference in teaching experience between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers?

In addressing the two questions, six null hypotheses were developed. The first five null hypotheses for this study were developed to determine if there was a significant difference between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers' perceived responsibility for student achievement by focusing on the areas of engagement, expectations, feedback, motivation, and teaching methods. The last null hypothesis was developed to determine if there was a significant difference in the teaching experience between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers. The alpha level was set at  $\alpha = .05$ .

The null hypotheses for this study were:

1. There is no significant difference of perceived responsibility for student achievement in the area of engagement between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers.
2. There is no significant difference of perceived responsibility for student achievement in the area of expectations between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers.
3. There is no significant difference of perceived responsibility for student achievement in the area of feedback between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers.

4. There is no significant difference of perceived responsibility for student achievement in the area of motivation between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers.
5. There is no significant difference of perceived responsibility for student achievement in the area of teaching methods between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers.
6. There is no significant difference in teaching experience between Kentucky National Board Certified Teachers and Non-National Board Certified Teachers.

#### Assumptions and Limitations

The primary limitations of this study were the sample size and years of teaching experience. The research is limited to the two school districts in Kentucky that have the highest number of National Board Certified Teachers, so the number of participants is limited to the total of National Board Certified Teachers in those districts. The researcher sought a representative number of Kentucky Non-National Board Certified Teachers and National Board Certified Teachers. The research is limited to Kentucky Non-National Board Certified Teachers and National Board Certified Teachers who have taught at least three years, because the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards requires that teachers have three years of teaching experience. The results were based on the teacher's self-reported responses.

#### Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined to enhance one's understanding and clarity of various terminology used throughout this study.

*Achievement gap* – exist when groups of students do not achieve at the same levels (Prichard Committee, 2009).

*Apprentice* –student work is approaching expectations of state/grade level standards by showing some evidence of understanding the content material (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009a; Prichard Committee, 2009).

*Distinguished*- student work exceeds expectations of state/grade level standards by showing a deeper evidence of understanding the content material (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009a; Prichard Committee, 2009).

*Engagement* – the ability to get students involved in their educational process (Marzano, 2003).

*Expectations* - a clear understanding of what is expected of students (Marzano, 2008).

*Feedback* – timely, clear, and valid communication about the academic progress of students (Marzano, 2003; Brookhart, 2007-2008).

*Highly Qualified* – According to the Kentucky Education Board of Professional Standards, a teacher must have the following:

- a bachelor’s degree
- full state certification
- demonstration of subject matter competency, including one or more of the following:
  - i. a college major in the subject taught
  - ii. credits equivalent to a major
  - iii. a passing grade on a Praxis test in the content area
  - iv. demonstration that he/she knows the subject through a High, Objective, Uniform State
  - v. Standard Evaluation (HOUSSE) developed by the state
  - vi. an advanced certificate from the state
  - vii. an advanced degree (master's or doctorate in the subject).

(Education Board of Professional Standards, 2006-2008).

*Kentucky National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT)* A teacher who has met the requirements set by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. The teacher is certified in the area in which she/he is teaching and has taught for a minimum of three years. The teacher has demonstrated high and rigorous National Board Teaching Standards through an advanced level of skill and knowledge as evidenced by their four portfolio entries and six assessments exercises (Falaney, 2006; NBPTS, 2009; Silver, 2007; Smikle, 2004; Vitale, 2008).

*Kentucky Non-National Board Certified Teacher* A state certified teacher who has met the requirements set by the Education Board of Professional Standards. The teacher is certified in the area in which she/he is teaching and has taught for a minimum of three years (Education Board of Professional Standards, 2006-2008).

*KERA – Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990* - The Kentucky Supreme Court stated that the elementary and secondary educational systems in Kentucky were unconstitutional. A task force was formed to examine various educational systems and present their findings to the General Assembly. The recommendations from those findings were used to develop the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990. KERA totally revamped Kentucky's entire educational system. The areas of change included finance, governance, and curriculum. KERA was designed to provide equal opportunities for all students, regardless of the financial resources of the district in which they reside (Kentucky Education Reform Act of 2001).

*Motivation* – external factors that make a student want to learn (Marzano, 2003).

*National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)* - A non-profit educational policy organization established in 1987. NBPTS is overseen by its board of

classroom teachers. NBPTS was created as an independent, nonpartisan, and nongovernmental organization with the purpose of creating national professional standards that were high and rigorous. These standards were designed for early childhood teachers, elementary and secondary teachers. There are currently 25 certificate areas (NBPTS, 2009).

*Novice* – student work struggles to meet expectations of state/grade level standards by showing limited evidence of understanding the content material (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009a; Prichard Committee, 2009).

*Proficient* – student work meets expectations of state/grade level standards by showing acceptable evidence of understanding the content material (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009a; Prichard Committee, 2009).

*Responsibility* - accepting credit or blame for student achievement (Marzano, Pickering & Pollock, 2001).

*Student Achievement* – demonstrating the amount of knowledge a student has gained through instruction (Prichard Committee, 2009).

*Sufficient size for Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO)* – at least 10 students in the subpopulation in each grade where NCLB assessments are administered and at least 60 students in the subpopulation in these combined grades or the number of students in the subpopulation is at least 15% of all students in these combined grades (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009a).

*Sufficient size for Participation* – at least 10 students in the subpopulation in each grade where NCLB assessments are administered and at least 60 students in the subpopulation in these combined grades (Kentucky Department of Education, 2009a).