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Strategies to cope with emotionally challenging situations in teacher education

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ABSTRACT
Learning to teach is an emotional endeavour and student teachers challenging emotions are recurrently created in teacher education. The aim of this study was to investigate student teachers’ coping with emotionally challenging situations in teacher education. In the study, 22 student teachers studying their last year of teacher education participated through semi-structured interviews. The data were analysed using constructivist grounded theory methodology. The findings revealed that coping with emotionally challenging situations was connected to student teachers’ main concern of the discrepancies between idealistic conceptions and experiences. This included wanting to have an extensive impact on future pupils as a student teacher and experiencing the ambition as potentially exhausting. In coping with this discrepancy, three strategies were used: change advocacy, collective sharing and responsibility reduction. The coping strategies are discussed in the light of existing literature and potential implications are addressed.

KEYWORDS
Student teachers; coping strategies; teacher education

Introduction
Teaching is an emotional line of work (Hargreaves 2000; Isenbarger and Zembylas 2006; Reio 2005; Ria et al. 2003) and emotional aspects of teacher education have been given some attention in research. Student teachers expressed emotions such as fear, insecurity, disappointment, and hopelessness during teacher education and these challenging emotions contribute to an uncertainty of ultimately working as a teacher (Timoštšuk and Ugaste 2012). Emotions influence how student teachers view themselves and their first teaching experiences are full of challenging emotions (Yuan and Lee 2016). According to Caires, Almeida, and Vieira (2012), beginning teachers’ intense emotions can result in ‘changes in eating and sleeping patterns, perception of a diminished self-esteem, and higher levels of vulnerability’ (25). Hobson et al. (2008) stated that being a student teacher is a personal experience that requires commitment, engagement and contains risks that could create emotionally charged responses. Learning to use proactive, as opposed to reactive, strategies in classroom interaction with pupils during school placements have been shown to create more positive experiences for student teachers (Heikonen et al. 2017).

In the current study, the participants described emotionally challenging episodes they perceived caused challenging emotions. These emotions needed to be coped with.
Coping is defined as efforts to master a problem in the person–environment relationship. Mastering this problem would mean to tolerate, amend, or alter the problem (Admiraal, Korthagen, and Wubbels 2000). Paquette and Rieg (2016) found that student teachers used relationships, physical exercise, time management, and ‘down time’ as coping strategies. In another study, Lindqvist et al. (2017) described postponing and acceptance as coping strategies used by student teachers. Student teachers had to accept not being able to have an impact over challenging situations or postponed learning from challenging situations until starting to teach. Coping with emotionally challenging situations as perceived by student teachers studying to teach in primary schools has only been given limited research attention. Even so, research of in-service and beginning teachers shows that there is a need to use coping strategies to deal with emotions and issues that cause stress in day-to-day work (Admiraal, Korthagen, and Wubbels 2000). Coping with perceived stress is therefore relevant in teacher education.

The aim of this study was to investigate student teachers’ coping with emotionally challenging situations in teacher education. This work contributes to a student teacher perspective of coping. To the researcher’s knowledge, studies about coping with emotionally challenging situations from the perspective of Swedish student teachers studying to teach the prevalent age group is scarce.

**Strategies of coping**

In this study, emotions were assumed to be socially produced. Emotions of student teachers were seen as interactive and negotiated within the contextual framework of teacher education. Coping strategies emerge from emotions in interplay between the individual and the environment (Admiraal, Korthagen, and Wubbels 2000; Folkman & Lazarus 1991). Coping is defined as ‘constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person’ (Lazarus and Folkman 1984, 141). Coping strategies refer to actions to amend, alter, tolerate or reduce the imbalance (Folkman & Lazarus 1991; Lazarus 1985, 1991). Student teachers are not viewed as being passive in their interactions with their environment, but as ‘active, searching, manipulating and evaluating beings’ (Lazarus 1985, 400) in coping with day-to-day stressors. Coping is commonly described as problem-focused and/or emotion-focused. Problem-focused coping involves trying to change the situation that creates the experienced problem. In contrast, emotion-focused coping refers to strategies used to regulate emotions caused by an experienced problem (Lazarus and Folkman 1984).

Coping with emotionally challenging situations is influenced and determined not only by individual characteristics, but also by social contexts and relationships (Zembylas 2007). In this paper coping is seen as socially produced and constructed in social contexts and relationships in teacher education.

**Method**

Because of my interest in student teachers’ perspectives and coping with perceived emotionally challenging situations, a qualitative research design was chosen. Grounded theory methods guided data collection and offered an open and sensitive approach to studying social processes, meanings, and interactions based on participants’ perspectives.
and main concern. Grounded theory is a suitable method when studying social processes and actions of the participants (Charmaz 2014). Among the different versions of grounded theory the constructivist version was used (Charmaz 2014), which assumes a multiple, processual, and constructed social reality. The theoretical foundation of symbolic interactionism was used in this study. According to symbolic interactionism (Blumer 1969; Charmaz 2014; Charon 2007), subjective meanings emerge from co-constructing, interpreting, and engaging with social interaction, communication, and practice. Constructivist grounded theory acknowledges researchers’ previous knowledge as an inevitable part of the research process and embraces the use of previous concepts and theories as starting points as long as the researcher remains open and sensitive to the data (Charmaz 2014; Thornberg 2012).

**Participants**

Twenty two student teachers participated in the study. They were studying to become primary school teachers in Swedish compulsory schools for children aged six to 12, which includes kindergarten/preschool class (K) to grade six. Nine of the participants studied to become K–3 teachers, and 13 studied to teach grades 4–6. The participants were 22--39 years old; 15 were women and seven were men (see Table 1). The student teachers volunteered after being asked to participate through e-mail, and every student teacher who volunteered was interviewed. The researcher and participants had no prior contact, and were not familiar to each other.

Swedish teacher education for elementary teachers consists of seven (K-3) or eight semesters (4–6), and all participants in the current study were studying in their last semester at the time of the data collection. The teacher education programme in Sweden is divided into studies of subjects (including Mathematics Education, Swedish Education, English Education, Science Education, and Social Science Education) and courses in Educational Sciences (e.g. Educational Psychology, Curriculum Theory, Educational Assessment, and Classroom Management). When studying to teach grade K–3 student teachers study both a social science orientation and a science orientation. In the 4–6 teacher education programme, student teachers choose to focus either social science, science orientation or physical education. All K–6 student teachers study English, Swedish and mathematics. Swedish student teachers complete 20 weeks of work placement education distributed throughout the teacher education programme, with the longest placement of ten weeks during the final semester. The student teachers had not yet completed this period when doing the interviews. At the work placement, student teachers shadow and assist a supervising teacher and the student teachers’ teaching responsibilities progress over the course of the programme.

| Table 1. Participants. | Female | Male | Total |
|------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Age: 22–39 years old   | 15     | 7    | 22    |
| **Educational programme** |       |      |       |
| K-3                    | 4      | 6    | 10    |
| 4–6                    | 9      | 13   | 22    |
| Social science: 8      |        |      |       |
| Science: 4             |        |      |       |
| Physical education: 1  |        |      |       |
**Data collection**

The study received ethical approval from the Regional Ethical Review Board in Stockholm (Dnr 2014/1088-31/5). Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants of the study. The participants were informed that they would be treated with full confidentiality and had the right to decline their participation at any point in the research process. The interviewer aimed at achieving a non-judgemental approach and an open climate of conversation during the interviews by being attentive to the participants’ tones and facial expressions. Strategies such as follow-up questions and returning to previous statements were used so that the participants could feel open in discussing matters and in elaborating their narratives with the interviewer (Hiller and Diluzio 2004).

The interview questions centred around (a) reasons to work as a teacher, (b) perceived distressing/stressful situations in teacher education, and (c) worries about working as a teacher in the future. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Pseudonyms have been used in transcriptions and findings to ensure confidentiality. Excerpts quoted in the findings section below use pseudonyms and provide the teaching range of the student teachers’ educational programme. The length of the interviews varied from 31 to 68 minutes.

**Data analysis**

Grounded theory methods of coding, constant comparison, memo writing and sorting were used to analyse the data (Charmaz 2014; Glaser 1978; Glaser and Strauss 1967). The phases of coding included initial, focused, and theoretical coding, but the coding was not performed in a strictly linear way. The phases of coding were intertwined and flexible in order to remain open and sensitive to the data. *Initial coding* was done word-by-word, sentence-by-sentence, and segment-by-segment, which enabled the analysis to be performed close to the data, which produced a large number of codes (Charmaz 2014). During this process analytical questions were used such as ‘What do the data suggest? What happens in the data? What category does this specific piece of the data indicate?’ (Charmaz 2014).

The initial codes were further examined through *focused coding* (Charmaz 2014). These focused codes were constructed by clustering of codes (see Table 2). The focused codes were modified throughout the data analysis. This is an interpretative process, and the focused codes elaborated the analytical work and guided further analyses. When working with constructivist grounded theory the analysis is seen as an interpretative portrayal, rather than an exact picture (Charmaz 2014). The initial codes were further conceptualised through clusters of codes that were created as focused codes. The findings and coping strategies presented were constructed during this coding process. As such, the coping strategies presented were grounded in the data through the coding procedure (see examples in Table 2).

In parallel with focused coding *theoretical coding* was a part of the analysis. Here theoretical coding refers to using ‘underlying logics that can be found in other theories’ (Thornberg and Charmaz 2014, 159), and illustrate the relationship among codes. In this case, the theoretical code utilised was Strategies. The code family of strategies was useful in the analysis since it could include actions such as tactics, manipulation and positioning. Theoretical coding is a process that can be used in constructivist grounded theory in order
further to develop the analyses (Thornberg and Charmaz 2014). Moreover, pre-existing theoretical concept of coping (previously discussed) was used as a sensitising concept (Blumer 1969). Both the code family of strategies, and the extant theory of coping earned their way into the analysis because of the fit with the data and codes.

Constant comparison and memo writing were used throughout the study. Memo writing of analytical thoughts, intuitions and trying out different relations among codes enabled continuous comparisons to be made between different ideas and categories. Memo-writing provided a theoretical playfulness in the process of analysis (Charmaz 2014). For example, in a memo the idea of trying to analyse the primary and secondary coping strategies among the participants was tried. This idea was later rejected because of inconsistencies discovered when constantly comparing codes and data. This created active engagement with the data and codes and also made it possible to reject and revise several ideas in the process. In accordance with a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz 2014; Thornberg 2012; Thornberg and Charmaz 2014), the idea of analysing without preconception (i.e. the ideal of being ‘a blank sheet’; cf., Glaser 1978) was rejected, and instead a theoretical agnostic and pluralistic approach to pre-existing theories, concepts, and research was used (Thornberg 2012).

### Findings

Emotionally challenging situations reported by the student teachers from work placement included lack of classroom control, violence and harassment among pupils, pupils with special needs, some teachers’ negative attitudes towards pupils, the way some teachers talked about their pupils and their families, and some pupils’ poor living situations. In addition, emotionally challenging situations such as conflicts with supervising teachers and university teachers, as well as perceived irrelevant content of courses in the teacher education were discussed. The participants expressed worries about their future teacher duties such as responsibility for student achievement, meeting parents, and stress and/or lack of time in the teaching profession.

According to the analysis, the student teachers’ main concern was coping with discrepancies between their ideal conceptions of teachers’ work and the experiences they had as student teachers. The coping strategies used were in relation to resolving their main concern. The most common discrepancies included:

| Grade | Pseudonym | Focused code         | Selection of initial codes                                      |
|-------|-----------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| K-3   | Eva       | Change advocacy      | Flexibility, cooperation, mutual influence, adjusting of teaching method |
|       | Jenny     | Collective sharing   | Getting help, talking to supervisors, getting help from colleagues, taking preventive methods, sucking it up |
|       | Sean      | Responsibility reduction | Staying away, burying it, digesting with time passing, nothing that could be influenced |
| 4 to 6| Helen     | Collective sharing   | Not worrying beforehand, doing what others want, people are as they are |
|       | Karin     | Responsibility reduction | Resisting to have parental contact, walking away, distancing, feeling alone in criticism |
|       | Åsa       | Change advocacy      | Directing, relationship-making, having my way, evaluate methods, choosing to be a leader, working independently |

Table 2. Example of codes.
(a) teaching practice being taught to be performed a certain way and then not practiced accordingly at the university or in work placement schools;
(b) supervising teachers and university teachers acting in ways towards student teachers or pupils in a way that the student teachers described as being unprofessional (not caring, racist, sexist etc.);
(c) engagement in social issues of pupils. Student teachers described having altruistic motives for choosing a teaching career. Acting for better conditions for disadvantaged pupils was seen as being potentially exhaustive. The discrepancy focused on student teachers’ wanting to help pupils generally and more specifically their experiences of change as impossible with regard to disadvantaged pupils.

Strategies to cope with perceived discrepancies

In coping with perceived discrepancies, the student teachers used coping strategies of (a) change advocacy (b) collective sharing, and/or (c) responsibility reduction. These coping strategies were used to amend, alter, reduce or tolerate the discrepancies between student teachers’ ideals and experiences.

Change advocacy

The definition of using change advocacy was engaging to change what caused the emotionally challenging situations. For example, getting the university to adjust their courses or supervising teachers to change the way they teach. Carl engaged in changing a course. He did not personally benefit from changing the course but described reasons to act for change:

Well, someone has to do it. Someone has to engage. It fell upon us to put in the hours to change something that would not benefit us, but it benefits your friends that will read the course the year after, and teacher education (Carl, 4-6 student teacher).

Change advocacy involved believing that teaching practice in schools could be influenced and improved. When something was experienced as emotionally challenging, student teachers envisioned driving change in order to change practice to better fit their ideals. Some of the student teachers voiced worry about being too driven in change advocacy. Richard illustrated this concern:

Yeah, exactly, if they worked there 30 years, for example, and then when I arrive as the new guy and it’s ‘there’s that guy, this worked for 30 years for us and it is just annoying that he comes here with his new ideas’. Something like that could happen (Richard, K–3 student teacher).

The ‘new ideas’ Richard talked of were seen as parts of the content of his teacher education programme. Change advocacy was thought of as possible, but not without having concerns about the position. Melvin talked about how the position of being a student teacher might also influence practice at schools because:

‘there are things you do that they [supervising teachers/author’s note] might start thinking about, I think, most certainly’(Melvin, 4-6 student teacher).
Melvin assumed to make an impact at the work placement school, even as a student teacher. Janet also tried influencing a supervising teacher who was described as avoiding a problematic situation at work placement:

‘I talked to her and tried to get her to talk with the other [pupils/author’s note]’ (Janet, 4-6 student teacher)

When she failed to get the teacher to deal with the problem, Janet acted herself. In contrast to acting as an individual sometimes the collectives of teachers or student teachers were seen as helpful when establishing coping strategies.

**Collective sharing**

Collective sharing was defined as student teachers coping from intentional and unintentional sharing within collectives of student teachers and teachers. Student teachers coped by observing or engaging in conversation with other members of the collective. Through this interaction, they found ways to manage their thoughts concerning the mismatch of ideals and experiences.

When using the strategy of collective sharing the student teachers identified themselves with the collective and perceived the emotionally challenging situations as something shared with other teachers and student teachers. Alice discussed coping as

‘talking a lot with friends, family, sat together with students and studied together, that is what we did’ (Alice, 4-6 teacher).

Helen talked about her experiences of work placement education. Her experiences added to worries about time constraints and stress in the teacher occupation and the potentially exhaustive role of caring for all students. Helen said that:

‘I can see now through meeting my supervising teacher and colleagues, it’s not necessary, you do not have to work yourself to death’ (Helen, 4–6 student teacher).

Helen received this unintentional support when witnessing a collective of teachers working and saw positive examples of how to handle stress. Ella reported having observed teachers struggling to maintain classroom order. Ella used this observation to consider the problem as collective rather than personal. This way Ella could cope with the situation through being a part of the teacher collective:

…and then there are some who, well, fight and shout and don’t listen whatsoever and don’t care to be there. Very hopeless. It doesn’t matter what you do. And I witness the other teachers in class also having problems with the same thing, so it’s not really me that is bad. I should not really take it personally because many [teachers] have problems (Ella, K–3 student teacher).

Another example of collective sharing was experienced at work placement and alleviated the stress Ingrid felt:

They understood the feelings and they explained how they had handled the situation, like, “you can’t save the world. Because new children like her show up all the time. Every day, so she is not the only one. It is just that you have noticed her”. (Ingrid, K-3 student teacher).

Ingrid’s supervisor and colleagues at work placement exemplified how the collective can help with intentional support to alleviate the concerns of student teachers in meeting
children in difficult situations. Getting help from collective sharing was exemplified when Maja talked about hoping to receive help starting to work:

‘you can get help at the school, I hope that colleagues will help you’ (Maja, K-3 student teacher).

The collective strategy asserted reassurance, lowered demands and used role modelling when coping with emotionally challenging situations.

**Responsibility reduction**

Even though the student teachers used their peer group and expected to use their future collegial groups when coping, they sometimes talked of emotionally challenging situations as impossible to influence. Hanna said:

‘there is absolutely no time, and you have to skip things you have to do according to the syllabus’ (Hanna, 4-6 student teacher)

Hanna reduced her responsibility of teacher duties to cope with perceived stress in the occupation. In the process, the teacher’s professional role is reduced and student teachers accepted having limited influence over what created the challenging emotions. The ability to handle emotions was connected to acting reactively. Håkan talked about not being able to prepare for situations and that:

‘you might not have time to reference your credits in courses in a situation like that. You handle things spontaneous’ (Håkan, 4-6 student teacher).

Håkan described that getting credits in courses did not change what you did as a teacher. Thus, the spontaneous reaction was not affected by teacher education.

Sean experienced a situation and felt it was far from his ideal conception of wanting to help pupils when meeting a child during his work placement who was being deported. In dealing with this issue, Sean conceded the need to stop thinking about it and:

‘you bury it. There was nothing to do about it’ (Sean, K–3 student teacher).

Karin exemplified another aspect of reducing responsibility.

Interviewer: What exactly are you thinking about?

Karin: In the staff room, they often complain or they talk about pupils at the pupils’ expense in a way that I don’t think is okay.

Interviewer: Like how?

Karin: That they make fun of the pupils, and simply talk badly about them, and I don’t think that’s okay.

Interviewer: No, what do you do then?

Karin: I don’t know, I react, but I don’t feel I have the authority to put my foot down, so I avoid being a part of the discussion and maybe just walk away, go and get water or coffee or something.

(Karin, 4-6 student teacher)
Karin did not want to engage in the collective sharing of the staff room. When Karin chose not to be a part and separated herself from the other teachers Karin still wrestled with her perception of this talk as inappropriate. In reducing her professional influence, Karin accepted that she could not influence the school’s climate. In dealing with these issues, Karin told about how the situation was hard to handle and how she felt alone in criticising the school’s way of blaming the pupils. Consequently, Karin talked about feeling insecure about starting to work as a teacher in the future.

A grounded theory of student teachers’ coping with emotionally challenging situations

The analysis resulted in a grounded theory of student teachers’ coping with emotionally challenging situations during initial teacher education, consisting of three strategies used. The emotionally challenging situations were formulated from both the student teachers’ experiences during their teacher education and from work placement education. The situations were also influenced by the fact that the student teachers were about to start their teaching careers within a year. When being close to starting to work, the student teachers described a need to cope with their main concern. The main concern was connected to the discrepancies between student teachers’ experiences and ideals.

In adopting a strategy of change advocacy, the student teachers wanted to influence the emotionally challenging situation. Using change advocacy meant acting to alter the situation that involved confrontations with pupils, student teachers, teachers or supervising teachers. For example, student teachers used change advocacy when they tried to influence their university teachers to make better connections between the ideals of teaching included in teacher education and their teaching practice.

Collective sharing was a strategy that could offer alleviation through witnessing, discussing, or observing as a part of the collective. Being a member of a collective also conferred the privilege of having the support that the collective offered. Within the student teacher group and in connection with meeting teachers in work placement, support was given both tacitly and explicitly. The student teachers experienced collective sharing as both a negative and positive influence. For example, complaining allowed being part of the group, but after a while those who found this to be counterproductive separated themselves from the student teachers who they thought only focused on complaining.

The third coping strategy among the student teachers, responsibility reduction, included no clash between the person and the origin of the emotionally challenging situation. There was no intention to change the situation. Responsibility reduction included letting go in order to alleviate educational or work-related thoughts. This strategy included the need to clarify the role of a teacher and reduce the responsibility of a teacher to what was experienced as realistic levels.

Coping using change advocacy, with collective sharing, or through responsibility reduction were not strategies exclusive of each other. The strategies influenced each other and were intertwined, with students moving back and forth between the strategies in their discussions. Tom exemplified this when using change advocacy but assessed it as unproductive and discussed using another strategy as better, since:
it only led to me being even more annoyed’ (Tom, 4–6 student teacher).

Using the strategy of change advocacy included focusing on the origin of the distress, using a collective sharing coping strategy included focusing on emotions from the situation but without any intention to change the source of the distress. Responsibility reduction focused thoughts and emotions about the impossibility of changing the situation, which justified withdrawing.

**Discussion**

This study analysed the perspectives of Swedish elementary student teachers’ coping mechanisms in challenging situations. Based on qualitative interviews and a grounded theory methodology this study adds to previous knowledge of coping with challenging situations during initial teacher education. The findings describe strategies used to cope with ideal conceptions of a teacher’s work and experiences made in teacher education.

Schatz-Oppenheimer and Dvir (2014) discussed tensions presented in newly qualified teachers’ stories as valuable material in understanding the pressure of being a new teacher. Conflicts that needed to be coped with, apparent in student teachers’ narratives, included a gap between fantasy and professional reality. This is similar to the participants’ main concern of discrepancies between ideals and experiences. There is a difference, however, in displaying ideals as fantasies and not as valid for initiating change. Having ideals about teaching was of importance in the strategy of change advocacy.

Newly qualified teachers might have problems with meeting pupils’ needs for learning (Flores and Day 2006). Even so, newly qualified teachers are called upon to act as change agents in schools (Fullan 1993). If student teachers use change advocacy, there have to be demarcations of better and worse practice, something not always easily captured in the complex context of working in a school. Lee (2013) described a similar scenario being an innovator among practicing teachers. The teachers were inhibited by school policies and curriculum that needed to be followed and therefore the innovative practices were not pursued. The naïve, ideal position of being an advocate of change, and innovation, might be harder to put into practice than student teachers have come to realise.

Dahlgren and Chiriac (2009) found that student teachers at the end of their teacher education did not self-evidently view the concepts of learning, responsibility, and collaboration present in teacher education to be connected to future work as a teacher. This is understood as either the student teachers reflecting upon the concepts as students, not as teachers, or as a lack of reference to the coming profession. Conversely, the student teachers who used change advocacy viewed the content of the teacher education as problematic because of the lack of relevance to working as a teacher and/or to be used when changing school practice. Using change advocacy as a strategy meant viewing themselves also as future teachers and not only as student teachers.

Another result of this study showed that the student teachers used collective sharing as a coping strategy. The structure and social support that a school can offer to student teachers on placement has been shown to be important and the lack of such support is seen as burdening among student teachers (Väisänen et al. 2017). Collective sharing relied on both unspoken and spoken acts of collegiality. There are, however, issues with relying on collegiality as a way of coping. Schools might be quick to uphold the school-specific...
value system when meeting new colleagues (cf. Löfgren and Karlsson 2016). Having little experience and teaching competence might compromise student teachers’ ability to take part in engaged collective sharing when working as a novice teacher since the experience has been shown to be lonely and without much support (Le Maistre and Paré 2010).

Limitations

Some limitations to the grounded theory and conclusions should be noted. First, interview data were used to create the grounded theory, and the small sample limits the transferability of the findings. It should further be noted that this sample of Swedish student teachers may or may not differ from other groups of student teachers and the sample is limited in number and in intended teaching grades of preschool class to grade six (K-6). Second, the interview data only consisted of the reported events, and no observational or performative data were included. The analysis relied only on the narratives of the participants and analysed how the student teachers talked about emotionally challenging situations and their ways of coping.

When discussing coping with emotionally challenging situations there is a risk that participants portrayed an idealised narrative of how they portray themselves. Although this might be true, the participants also discussed their weaknesses, worries, doubts about themselves, and their future in teaching. The reader of the paper is urged to value the generalisability of the findings by considering what Larsson (2009) calls the recognition of patterns and context similarity as a source for generalisation. The findings could be considered to be useful when suggesting a few practical implications in teacher education.

Practical implications

In recognising emotions and coping as central Jokikokko (2016) challenges the idea of leaving emotions out of the classroom. This study emphasises the importance of having emotions connected to teaching as integrated parts of the educational programme. Within teacher education, there might be a tendency to avoid talking about the emotions of teaching. It seems to be especially important, according to this study, to strengthen the ties between the university and work placement in schools, in order for socialisation into the teacher occupation to include professional development (cf., Korthagen 2010). This could include using practice-generated issues and bringing the perspectives of the student teachers into teaching at the university that addresses ways of coping, as shown in this study. A problem that might inhibit this process is that teachers involved in teacher education have a varied set of ideas of what teacher professionalism is (Davies and Ferguson 1998). This study could be used to discuss what are seen as professional coping strategies and how these might be taught in initial teacher education.

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