TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACT OF SELF-EFFICACY ON

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STYLE: A CASE STUDY

by

Patty Jo McCain

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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2017

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to develop an understanding of how current and former middle school teachers in a suburban school district in northeast Georgia perceive low self-efficacy impacts their classroom management style. The theory guiding this study was Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory as it supported the idea that self-efficacy can determine how one approaches a task, goals, or challenges. Data were collected using a survey, interviews, questionnaires, direct observations, and a focus group. A collective case study approach was used to conduct a holistic analysis to provide detailed descriptions of the themes and patterns that exist across the cases. Four themes emerged from the data analysis process: build relationships, be flexible, convey expectations, and make a difference. The themes were consistent with the relevant literature regarding teacher self-efficacy and classroom management and provided answers to the three research questions proposed in the study.

Keywords: classroom management, classroom management style, self-efficacy

Acknowledgments

"Search for the Lord & for His strength; seek His face always" – 1 Chronicles 16:11

First, I would like to praise and thank God for the guidance, strength, and perseverance to complete my doctoral dissertation.

Second, I would like to thank my friends and family. In particular, I want to thank my husband, Todd, who always encouraged me through the tears and frustrations and celebrated the small milestones with me during this process. Also I want to thank both of my children, Ryan and Rachel, who allowed me to focus on my dissertation, as well as supported me and told me how proud they were of me. I appreciate my parents' love and encouragement by telling me that "I could do it" all along the way. I would like to thank my sister, Debbie, as well, who always listened when I needed an ear to share ideas or to express my concerns.

I would like to thank my committee members who assisted me through the process. I would like to express appreciation for my chair, Dr. Judy Shoemaker, for "talking me off the ledge" many times during the writing process and when I had to wait for feedback. Dr. Barnett and Dr. Preuss provided their expertise and feedback, encouragement during my work and defenses, as well as their prayers. Also, I would like to thank Dr. Tierce for always challenging me and trying to push me to make me a better writer. Finally, I would like to thank my editor, Dr. Patti Stoudt for always making time to fit me in her schedule and encouraging me throughout the process.

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List of Abbreviations

Classroom Management Self-Efficacy (CMSE)

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS)

Research and Development Organization (RAND)

Response to Intervention (RTI)

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS)

Social Learning Theory (SLT)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The role of the teacher has changed dramatically over the years from being an authoritative figure to being a facilitator of learning. Current educational theory maintains that for one to be an effective facilitator of learning, self-efficacy is important (Bandura, 1997). There is a gap in the literature regarding the impact self-efficacy has on current and former middle school teachers' classroom management styles. This qualitative case study helps bridge the gap in the literature and investigated how current and former middle school teachers in the Walton County School District (pseudonym) perceived the impact of self-efficacy on their classroom management style. Chapter One includes the background of the problem, problem statement, purpose of the study, significance, and nature of the study. In addition, the research questions, framework, definitions, assumptions, scope, definitions, and a summary are included.

Background

Historical

Since 1977, Bandura's self-efficacy theory has been applied to K-12 classrooms and referenced to determine how self-efficacy influences student success. In addition, over twenty years ago, researchers from the RAND (Research and Development) organization began to investigate the self-efficacy theory and its impact on teachers' beliefs and behaviors when handling situations encountered in the classroom (Armor et al., 1976; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Teacher self-efficacy is higher if a teacher believes his work is successful and this belief will contribute to future success. Teacher self-efficacy is lower when a teacher believes his work to be less than successful and this will contribute to his future actions (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Bandura (1997) identified four main influences on teacher self-efficacy

including mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and psychological arousal.

From Bandura's theory (1997), teacher self-efficacy was identified as a type of self-efficacy that influenced "how much effort people put forth, how long they will persist in the face of obstacles, how resilient they are in dealing with failures, and how much stress or depression they experience in coping with demanding situations" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 203). According to Dibapile (2012), the two parts of the self-efficacy model are the biological and the environmental factors. Thus, the self-efficacy model provides an avenue to assist researchers' understanding of how one's behavior can be affected by biological or environmental factors (Dibapile, 2012). The biological or personal factors of the model contain the skills that one gains from parents (Dibapile, 2012). Certain skills are obtained from one's genetic makeup and can contribute to behaviors and how well or poorly one does on a task. On the other hand, environmental factors are more generally associated with the culture that surrounds a person. However, the environment can also contribute to one's behavior and how a situation is handled (Dibapile, 2012).

Bandura (1997) suggested that perceived self-efficacy is one's belief in oneself to be able to do something well and achieve a future goal. Perceived self-efficacy theory was based not only on one's effort toward a challenge, but also on one's ability and knowledge regarding the task (Bandura, 1986). According to Bandura (1993), a teacher's perceived self-efficacy influences teaching, the learning environment, and the way in which student learning occurs.

Social

High levels of teacher self-efficacy have been linked to effective teaching (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). According to Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998), there was a positive direct

relationship between high self-efficacy and setting higher goals, fear of failure, and persistence on a task. In addition, teacher's self-efficacy beliefs influence classroom management, teaching, motivating, learning, and communication decisions when dealing with students. When teacher self-efficacy levels are higher, students and teachers are more successful in the classroom. "The self-efficacy belief is an important concept in the understanding of teachers' thoughts, decisions, feelings, behaviors, performance, and attitude towards their students" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 576).

According to Manning and Bucher (2005), classroom management, particularly in middle and secondary education, continues to present challenges and is a major concern for educators. Manning and Bucher (2005) emphasized that classroom management problems have forced some teachers to leave the field. Understanding how teachers perceive the impact of self-efficacy and their classroom management styles, particularly in the middle school environment, could prove important in helping other teachers address the challenges presented in middle school classrooms. While middle school teachers will be able to benefit from research results in this area, educators at all levels will benefit by relating the outcomes to challenges with classroom management in the educational settings in which they work.

Theoretical

Self-efficacy theory originated as part of Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977). According to Bandura (1977), social learning theory defined self-efficacy as the goals a person sets for himself and his ability to accomplish this outcome. Bandura's self-efficacy theory stated that people have to believe in themselves in order to accomplish a goal or task and to persevere through difficulties or challenges that they encounter during the experience. Bandura (1993) suggested that what a person believes results in four processes, cognitive, motivational, affective,

and selective activity. According to Bandura (1993), the higher one's self-efficacy, the more

challenges a person is willing to attempt and endure while maintaining a commitment to

accomplishing the goals. Individuals with high self-efficacy believe goals are more achievable

and exhibit confidence in their ability to reach their goals (Bandura, 1993).

Teacher self-efficacy was identified from Bandura's (1997) theory as a type of self-

efficacy that influenced "how much effort people put forth, how long they will persist in the

face of obstacles, how resilient they are in dealing with failures, and how much stress or

depression they experience in coping with demanding situations" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998,

p. 203). According to Bandura (1993), teacher's perceived self-efficacy influenced teaching,

the learning environment, and the way in which student learning occurred. Bandura (1997) also

suggested that a shared belief and working with others contributes positively to a teacher's self-

efficacy. Researchers have investigated how self-efficacy is associated with teacher outcomes

in the classroom (Aloe, Amo, & Shanahan, 2014; Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008). One area of

investigation has been pre-service teachers who have experienced low levels of self-efficacy in

dealing with negative student behaviors (Fives & Buehl, 2009; Jamil, Downer, & Pianta, 2012;

Shook, 2012). Another area that has been researched is teacher burnout and stress, which have

been found to have a direct impact on self-efficacy (Aloe et al., 2014; Betoret & Artiga, 2010;

Brown, 2012).

Bandura's self-efficacy theory has evolved from a student learner perspective to the

impact which self-efficacy has on a teacher's success, motivation, and behaviors. With the

teacher having such impact on student success, it is important to understand how teacher

perceptions of self-efficacy impact a teacher's classroom management style. The research

questions investigated in this qualitative study provided information about how current and

former middle school teachers perceive the relationship between low self-efficacy and classroom management style.

Situation to Self

My motivation to research teacher self-efficacy and classroom management style is both personal and professional. I am a former middle school teacher who has allowed my perceptions of the impact of self-efficacy to affect my classroom management style. I am concerned about how teacher success is influenced by the impact of self-efficacy level. I am passionate about targeting successful ways for teachers to become confident when handling challenges that affect classroom management style.

My philosophical assumption is ontological in nature because I reported on the different perspectives and experiences of middle school teachers and how their perceptions of the impact of self-efficacy influences classroom management style (Creswell, 2013). The constructivist approach allowed me to gather information by interacting with the participants through the use of open-ended questions. This approach provided the participants in this study the opportunity to become key contributors who provided meanings and interpretations of the middle school teachers' perceptions of the impact of self-efficacy on their classroom management styles (Creswell, 2013). The participants were asked to describe strategies and key components that exist to deal with the impact of self-efficacy on classroom management styles in the middle school classroom.

Problem Statement

The challenge faced is that teachers with low self-efficacy experience greater problems with classroom management (Dicke et al., 2014; Englehart, 2013; Klassen & Tze, 2014). Teachers are reporting increasingly low levels of self-efficacy due to feeling unprepared in

classroom management strategies (Melnick & Meister, 2008). Teachers who are experiencing low self-efficacy will most likely not have the confidence to manage classroom disruptions (Dicke et al., 2014). Teachers frequently become frustrated with students when handling classroom management issues and the teachers' beliefs about their ability to handle classroom management can become destructive during the process (Englehart, 2013).

Teachers develop ways to deal with classroom management issues from previous personal experiences (Englehart, 2012). Teacher perceptions and beliefs have a major impact on building ideas about classroom management and the best way to handle situations. When a classroom management issue occurs, there is a disconnection between reality and perception. Therefore, it is important that teachers should base their decisions about classroom management on a framework of beliefs and values to promote consistency (Englehart, 2012).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate how current and former middle school teachers in the Walton County School District (a pseudonym) perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on their classroom management style. Self-efficacy is defined as the belief in one's ability to successfully accomplish a goal or task (Bandura, 1977). Bandura's self-efficacy theory guided the study as it supports the idea that self-efficacy can determine how one approaches a task, goals, or challenges (Bandura, 1977).

Significance of the Study

This collective case study contributed to the literature on current and former middle school teachers' perceptions of the impact of low self-efficacy on classroom management style. Much of the research reported in the current literature has been conducted on pre-service teachers who have experienced low levels of self-efficacy and challenges managing negative

student behavior (Fives & Buehl, 2009; Jamil et al., 2012; Shook, 2012). Past research has also

shown that low teacher self-efficacy results in teacher burnout and stress (Aloe et al., 2014;

Betoret & Artiga, 2010; Brown, 2012). The empirical significance of this research was that it

could address the gaps in the literature by providing qualitative data on how current and former

middle school teachers perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on classroom management style.

 This collective case study provides important information to school administrators and

district personnel, which they can use to influence middle school teachers' abilities to prepare

for situations that impact their self-efficacy and effect their classroom management style. The

qualitative data provides essential characteristics and information to assist the district when

determing the types of professional learning and support needed for teachers, particularly for the

middle schools. The theoretical significance of the study is validation of Bandura's (1977) self-

efficacy theory in a specific context. The results of this study contribute to identifying how

middle school teachers perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on their classroom management

style.

This collective case study could impact the middle school teachers in the Walton County

School District, as well as other middle school teachers. The findings of this study may be

helpful to middle school teachers by identifying how to improve low self-efficacy, which would

enhance classroom management styles (Moustakas, 1994). This is especially important as

researchers have expressed concerns that many teachers are experiencing burnout, stress, and

anxiety (Aloe et al., 2014; Betoret & Artiga, 2010; Dibapile, 2012).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

RQ1: In the Walton County School District, how do current, persistent middle school

teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school perceive their level of self-efficacy?

Teacher self-efficacy influences student success in the classroom, as well as teacher success and the number of years teachers teach (Shaukat & Iqbal, 2012). Research indicates that teachers with high self-efficacy are more effective and have greater student success (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004; Ross, 1998; Ross & Bruce, 2007, Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Teachers who have higher self-efficacy have higher expectations and goals for themselves and their students, work harder to meet challenges, promote student autonomy, are more persistent, and are able to meet the needs of student groups with diversified learning abilities (Ross & Bruce, 2007). Teachers who have low self-efficacy tend not to set high goals or expectations for themselves or for their students due to their fear of failure (Ross & Bruce, 2007).

RQ2: In the Walton County School District, how do current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school perceive their classroom management style?

Dunbar (2004) recommended that teachers be aware of their classroom management style and how they interact with students. Four classroom management styles have been identified that are modeled after parenting styles. The classroom management styles are authoritative, authoritarian, indifferent, and laissez- faire. In the authoritative style the teacher provides the students with boundaries, but encourages them to take charge of their learning. The indifferent style involves little direction and distinction from the teacher. The teacher does not enact key classroom management procedures, and little structure exists in the environment exists. The laissez-faire management style allows students with too much flexibility and ownership of the classroom. Discipline is inconsistent, and students are permitted to do whatever they would like

(Dunbar, 2004). Teachers who know their classroom management style and the way they are comfortable handling classroom management issues will have higher perceptions of self-efficacy (Dunbar, 2004).

RQ3: In the Walton County School District, how do current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school perceive the impact of self-efficacy on their classroom management style?

Classroom management issues have an impact on teacher burnout, but can also cause teachers stress and anxiety (Aloe et al., 2014). According to Aloe et al. (2014), there is a direct correlation between teachers who have low self-efficacy and who have feelings that they are less accomplished, experience burnout, and stress. According to Mee and Haverback (2014), middle school teachers are committed to teaching young adolescents; however, they become concerned about classroom management and organizational issues. Some teachers have considered leaving the profession because of their lack of good classroom management (Mee & Haverback, 2014). In Mee and Haverback's study, 100% of the teachers mentioned that they had daily frustrations and concerns as middle school teachers about classroom management issues.

Classroom management is an important factor in the success of the learning environment for both teachers and students (Brophy, 2010; Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Wong, Wong, Rogers, & Brooks, 2012). Classroom management has been an issue for veteran teachers, as well as teachers who are new to the field (Manning & Bucher, 2005). Teacher perceptions and beliefs have a major impact on ideas about classroom management and the best way to handle situations. When a classroom management issue occurs, there is a disconnection between reality and perception. Therefore, it is important that teachers base their decisions about classroom management on a framework of beliefs and values to promote consistency (Englehart,

2012).

Definitions

The following terms are pertinent to the study:

1. *Classroom Management* - all the things that a teacher does to organize students, space, time, and materials so that student learning can take place. "It comprises a plan, a set of procedures that structure the classroom, so the students know what to do, how to do it, and when to do it in a classroom" (Wong et al., 2012, p. 61).

2. *Classroom Management Self-Efficacy (CMSE)* - the ability of a teacher to deal with and feel empowered to handle disruptions, classroom behavior issues, and getting and keeping the students' attention (Emmer, 1990).

3. *Collective Teacher Efficacy (CTE)* - the shared belief of the group of teachers that work together to reach the desired goal (Bandura, 1997).

4. *Highly Qualified* - holding a bachelor's degree from a Georgia Professional Standards approved institution, holding a valid Georgia teaching certificate, and demonstrating competence in subject matter via a degree or by passing a state-approved content test (Georgia's Department of Education, 2010).

5. *Middle School Student* - a young adolescent who ranges in age between 10 and 15 years of age and typically enrolled in grades six through eight (Juvonen, Le, Kaganoff, Augustine, & Constant, 2004).

6. *Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS)* - a multi-tiered approach to supporting acceptable behaviors in the classroom (Cramer & Bennett, 2015).

7. *Self-Efficacy* - an individual's belief that one can complete or achieving a goal (Bandura, 1997).

8. *Student Empowerment* - when students become self-regulated in the classroom by the teacher providing the framework for what is expected (Alderman & McDonald, 2015).

Summary

The challenge faced is that teachers with low self-efficacy experience greater problems with classroom management. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate how current and former middle school teachers in the Walton County School District perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on their classroom management style. Understanding how middle school teachers perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on classroom management style provided the Walton County School District's administration necessary information. The Walton County School District could improve the support middle school teachers need to succeed in their classrooms and reduce the impact low self-efficacy has on classroom management style.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of how current and former

middle school teachers perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on classroom management style.

The theory guiding this study was Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory as it suggested that self-

efficacy can determine how one approaches a task, goals, or challenges. In this qualitative study,

the goal was to develop information that could improve classroom behavior management.

Classroom behavior management has been defined as creating "an environment in which

teaching and learning can flourish" (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003, p. 1). The literature

review includes discussions of self-efficacy, classroom management theory, the influence of self-

efficacy on classroom management, influences on classroom management of pre-service

teachers, and the topics of teacher attrition, stress and burnout, and ways teachers cope with

classroom management issues.

Theoretical Framework

Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory

The theoretical framework for this study was Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory,

which stated that people must believe in themselves to accomplish a goal or task and to persevere

through difficulties or challenges that they encounter during an experience. Bandura (1993)

suggested that what a person believes results in four processes, (a) cognitive, (b) motivational,

(c) affective, and (d) selective activity. The first area affected by self-efficacy is one's cognitive

process. Individuals with high self-efficacy create thoughts that visualize success prior to

attempting a challenging situation. A person with low self-efficacy might visualize failure prior

to attempting a challenging situation, which causes negative and self-defeating thoughts in one's

mind. Even when mental abilities and knowledge are similar, low self-efficacy is a cognitive

factor that will have a negative influence over goal attainment (Bandura, 1993). An individual's

emotional state also has a direct influence on one's success or failure when trying to accomplish

a goal. The higher one's self-efficacy, the more challenges a person is willing to attempt and

endure while maintaining a commitment to accomplishing the goals. Those individuals with

high self-efficacy believe goals are more reachable and exhibit confidence in their ability to

achieve goals (Bandura, 1993).

Self-efficacy and motivation. Not only is self-efficacy affected cognitively, but also

through (a) causal attributions, (b) outcome expectancies, and (c) cognized goals (Bandura,

1993). As a result, one's self-efficacy beliefs, motivation, performance, and reactions to a

situation is through causal attributions. Individuals who believe that they can accomplish a goal

are more motivated and willing to believe that they can accomplish the goal. When one expects

to produce results or outcomes, results are higher, and goals are accomplished (Bandura, 1993).

In addition, motivation is affected by one's belief that a goal can be accomplished, but

emotional behaviors, such as stress and depression, are influenced. When one encounters a

challenging situation, self-efficacy can either contribute to anxiety, stress, and depression or have

the opposite effect by strengthening one's belief in oneself to persevere through difficult tasks

(Bandura, 1993). People are more willing to take on or select activities or goals that they are

capable of accomplishing, which will contribute to future challenges or situations (Bandura,

1993). Self-efficacy can influence choices that people make in their life. Someone with low

self-efficacy may avoid activities that he believes he cannot handle.

Biological and environmental connection. Understanding the self-efficacy model

provides an avenue to assist researchers understanding of how one's behavior can be affected by

biological or environmental factors (Dibapile, 2012). According to Dibapile (2012), there are two parts to the self-efficacy model that include the biological and environmental factors. The biological or personal factors of the model contain the skills that one gains from the parents (Dibapile, 2012). Certain skills are obtained from one's genetic makeup and can contribute to behaviors and how well or poorly the results of this task are caused by this reason. On the other hand, environmental factors are more generally associated with a culture that surrounds a person. However, the environment can also contribute to one's behavior and how one handles challenges (Dibapile, 2012).

Teacher self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy was identified from Bandura's (1997) theory as a type of self-efficacy that influenced "how much [effort] people put forth, how long they will persist in the face of obstacles, how resilient they are in dealing with failures, and how much stress or depression they experience in coping with demanding situations" (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998, p. 203). Originally Bandura's self-efficacy theory was applied to K-12 students and classrooms in respect to the influence of self-efficacy on student's success in learning. However, research began to be conducted to investigate the self-efficacy theory and its impact on teachers' beliefs and behaviors in handling situations encountered in the classroom (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Teachers are less willing to make preparations for and place effort into teaching students that they do not believe can be successful. There are four main influences on teacher self-efficacy including (a) mastery experiences, (b) verbal persuasion, (c) vicarious experiences, and (d) psychological arousal (Bandura, 1997). Teacher self-efficacy is higher if a teacher believes his/her work is successful and this belief will contribute to future success. Teacher self-efficacy is lower when a teacher believes his/her work to be a failure contributing to future failure (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Perceived self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) suggests that perceived self-efficacy is one's belief in oneself to be able to achieve a future goal and do it well. Perceived self-efficacy theory was based on not only on one's effort toward a challenge, but also on one's ability and knowledge regarding the task (Bandura, 1986). According to Bandura (1993), teachers perceive self-efficacy influences teaching, the learning environment, and the way in which student learning occurred.

Bandura (1993) identified four areas of collective self-efficacy that influence an individual's self-efficacy: mastery experience, vicarious experience, social persuasion, and affective states (Bandura, 1993). Mastery experiences are important to the success of a school. When teachers share a common belief of attaining success over challenges, collective and individual self-efficacy increases (Dibapile, 2012). Through mastery experiences, teachers increase confidence in teaching and classroom management situations (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). In addition to mastery experiences, Bandura (1995) suggested that vicarious experiences enhance self-efficacy by social models. When an individual observes successful experiences, the individual's self-efficacy increases. Additionally, social persuasion enhances collective efficacy within organizations. Feedback and support of peers encourages others to take a risk and work harder when faced with a challenge or goal. Finally, the attitude or mood of peers can affect self-efficacy (Bandura, 1995).

High levels of teacher self-efficacy have been linked as a successful counterpart to effective teaching (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). According to Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998), there is a positive direct relationship between high self-efficacy and setting higher goals, fear of failure, and persistence on a task. In addition, teacher's self-efficacy beliefs influence classroom management, decisions regarding teaching, motivating, learning, and communication

when dealing with students. "The self-efficacy belief is an important concept in the understanding of teachers' thoughts, decisions, feelings, behaviors, performance, and attitude towards their students" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 576).

From Past to Present

Teaching is a career that challenges an individual in many ways. The role of the teacher has changed dramatically over the years from that of the authoritative figure to a facilitator. Teachers are held accountable and forced to meet expectations mandated by local, state, and federal governments. These standards are determined by government agencies as guidelines to provide an academically challenging environment. However, teachers are pressured to meet these high expectations and often leave the field of teaching (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) emphasized that some teachers leave the field of teaching because they begin to believe that they are incapable of handling the stress and expectations put upon them. These stressful expectations can cause a teacher to lose confidence in handling a particular task or goal causing the belief in oneself to be challenged and often diminished (Brown, 2012). However, Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) emphasized the importance of a teacher having a high level of self-efficacy because it is a necessary component in a successful learning environment.

The concept of self-efficacy has been researched and compared to numerous constructs from the perspective of which factors contribute to a person demonstrating high or low self-efficacy in a situation. Self-efficacy relates to one's ability to achieve a particular task or goal when faced with difficulties or challenges (Bandura, 1997). More specifically, teacher self-efficacy affects the belief of teachers about their success or failure in educational situations (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). Teacher self-efficacy has an impact on not only student learning, but also it can have a positive effect on a teacher's success and longevity in the classroom (Chacón,

2005).

A teacher's self-efficacy plays a vital role when handling classroom management issues. Classroom management issues often create challenges, disruptions, and barriers for teachers when trying to maintain a positive learning environment (Englehart, 2013). Teachers frequently become frustrated with students when handling classroom management issues and the teacher's beliefs about how they feel about their ability to handle classroom management becomes destructive during the process (Englehart, 2013).

Few qualitative studies have been done that compare teachers who display high levels of self-efficacy versus low levels of self-efficacy in relation to classroom management, particularly in the middle school classroom (Tao, 2012; Usher, 2009). This study adds to the literature by enabling teachers with high levels of self-efficacy to share ways in which they are successfully able to handle classroom management issues in a positive and productive manner. Middle school teachers' ideas that are identified from the study may assist teachers who are struggling with classroom management in discovering new or helpful strategies to address these challenging issues.

Related Literature

Teacher Self-Efficacy

A teacher's self-efficacy can be impacted at different stages within his/her career. Teacher self-efficacy is often categorized as two areas including general teaching self-efficacy and personal teaching self-efficacy. General teaching self-efficacy is the teacher's ability to teach the students while overcoming their students' external behavior. Personal teaching self-efficacy is the teacher's belief in himself/herself to be able to transfer the information and impact students learning (Shaukat & Iqbal, 2012). Teacher self-efficacy influences the students' success

in the classroom, as well as the success and longevity of the teacher (Shaukat & Iqbal, 2012).

Research indicates that teachers with high self-efficacy are more effective and have greater student success (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004; Ross, 1998; Ross & Bruce, 2007, Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Teachers who had higher self-efficacy have higher expectations and goals for themselves and their students, work harder to meet challenges, promote student autonomy, are more persistent, and can meet the needs of diversified learning abilities (Ross & Bruce, 2007). Teachers who had a low self-efficacy level tend not to set high goals or expectations for themselves or their students due to their fear of failure (Ross & Bruce, 2007).

Pre-Service Teachers

According to Bandura (1997), past successful experience contributes to self-efficacy because a connection can be made between the experience and future situations. Many teacher outcomes have been linked to teacher self-efficacy including job satisfaction, teacher commitment, resilience, and retention (Jamil, Downer, & Pianta , 2012). It is important for new teachers to have a high level of self-efficacy because as challenges arise in their career, they will be more likely to persist (Jamil et al., 2012). Research has reported repeatedly that teacher self-efficacy is affected in situations where teachers are new to the field and in the learning phases of their career; however, it is important for new teachers to have many opportunities to get feedback during their education internships in which they build mastery experiences for their first years in the field (Jamil et al., 2012).

Many researchers have conducted studies on pre-service teachers and the impact of self-efficacy (Jamil et al., 2012; Shook, 2012; Sivri, & Balcı, 2015; Topkaya, 2010). Shook (2012) studied pre-service teachers' dispositions to identify strategies that assist in handling classroom management issues in the general education elementary classroom. New and novice teachers

encounter and are challenged by classroom behaviors issues. Many teachers do not believe that their schooling has provided them with enough training to deal with challenging behaviors that occur in the classroom (Jamil et al., 2012; Shook, 2012; Topkaya, 2010). Researchers have demonstrated that pre-service teachers who were more outgoing and less anxious had higher levels of self-efficacy (Jamil et al., 2012). Similarly, Topkaya (2010) researched pre-service teachers' self-efficacy levels, but focused on instructional content in relation to the teachers' self-efficacy versus dealing with discipline or classroom issues. Sivri and Balcı (2015) found that pre-service teachers believed that they were prepared to handle classroom management issues that would arise in the classroom. In particular, female teachers had a higher level of self-efficacy regarding handling classroom management issues that could arise then that of male teachers (Sivri, & Balcı, 2015).

Veteran Teachers

Veteran teachers encounter challenges that affect teacher self-efficacy within their career. Even though veteran teachers have more experience, they still encounter issues with classroom management (Caples & McNeese, 2010). According to Caples and McNeese (2010), as student misbehaviors decreases in the classroom, teacher persistence increases. Factors vary and affect individuals on many different levels in relation to efficacy. Some factors identified by researchers include administrator support, successful peers, parents, and students can influence the efficacy of teacher self-efficacy. In addition, teacher self-efficacy levels change over time depending on the situation that the teacher is experiencing (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

Collective Teacher Efficacy

Collective teacher efficacy (CTE) is the shared belief of the group of teachers that work together about reaching a desired goal (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura (1997), CTE has

a positive influence on student achievement just as teacher self-efficacy and is formed by two components, which are an analysis of teaching tasks and assessment of teaching competence. Teachers use times of reflection and collaboration to share with each other the benefits and any challenges they foresee as they approach instruction in their schools (Goddard et al., 2000). The second component that contributes to CTE is an assessment of teacher competence.

During CTE development, teachers reflect on the entire staff's ability to accomplish the goals and assess their ability to achieve the goals they want to incorporate in their teaching (Goddard et al., 2000). CTE can shape the behavior of the individual teacher and the overall culture of the school. Administrators can apply the model of CTE to raise the collective efficacy of the staff to promote positive changes for individual teachers within their schools (Goddard et al., 2000). By using vicarious experiences and social persuasion, school administration can use examples and experiences of positive and effective teaching as ways to role model expectations to raise CTE (Goddard et al., 2000).

Classroom Management Self-Efficacy (CMSE)

Classroom Management Self-Efficacy (CMSE) has been acknowledged by researchers as the ability of a teacher to deal with and feel empowered to handle disruptions, classroom behavior issues, and getting and keeping the students' attention (Emmer 1990). CMSE has been measured using the Generalized Self-Efficacy scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995) to identify generally perceived self-efficacy when dealing with challenging situations in life. Not only do classroom management issues have an impact on teacher burnout, they can also cause teachers' stress and anxiety (Aloe, Amo, & Shanahan, 2014). According to Aloe et al. (2014), there is a direct correlation between teachers who have low self-efficacy and feelings that they are less accomplished, experience burnout, and stress.

Klassen and Chiu (2010) conducted a study that found teachers' gender, years of teaching experience, grade taught, school type, and sources of stress had a direct relationship to their CMSE. Male teachers had a higher CSME by 5% and elementary school teachers had a 7% higher CSME. Female teachers demonstrated higher levels of classroom and workload stress (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

Teacher Attrition

Approximately 3.12 million people are employed as educators in the nation, but in 2008 7,000 teachers in Georgia had left the field. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2014), the number of teachers leaving the field is higher than ever. Approximately, half a million teachers leave the field each year. This number has doubled in the last five years (Alliance for Education, 2014). With teachers leaving the field, and fewer college students enrolling in teacher education programs, school districts in Georgia are having a difficult time staffing schools, especially in rural and urban districts (PAGE, 2016). Since 2008 in the State of Georgia, teacher turnover in the first year of teaching has been between 12% and 16%. According to the Georgia Department of Education, by their fifth year, this number increases to 44% (PAGE, 2016). As a result of teachers becoming burned out and leaving the field, turnover is costly. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, the national cost of teacher attrition was a range of approximately 1-2.2 billion dollars a year. In Georgia, the attrition cost range was between 37-81 million dollars (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014). The Ingersoll (2008) Schools Statistics and Staff Survey data revealed that teacher turnover costs Georgia about $37,000 to $81,000 per teacher (PAGE, 2016).

According to Mee and Haverback (2014), middle school teachers were committed to teaching young adolescents; however, were concerned about classroom management and

organizational issues. Some teachers in the study expressed concerns about classroom management issues and had considered leaving the field due to these issues (Mee & Haverback, 2014).). One hundred percent of the middle school teachers in the study mentioned that every day they had frustrations with and concerns about classroom management issues (Mee & Haverback, 2014).

Because so many teachers leave the field, teacher effectiveness is compromised (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014). In addition, teachers who work in high-poverty schools have a 30% higher turnover rate than those in affluent settings, which is costly to the districts (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014). According to Alliance for Excellent Education (2014), teacher attrition is so high due to a variety of reasons including lack of administrative support, feelings of isolation, low pay, inadequate student discipline, and lack of teacher influence over decisions.

Not only is teacher turnover detrimental to the field, but also results in students suffering from a lack of quality instruction. According to PAGE (2016), during the first decade of a teacher's career, student achievement increases and teacher experience matters. A study was conducted at Brown University in which 200,000 students' test scores were linked to 3500 teachers in an urban school district. The data demonstrated that the teachers' ability to increase student achievement was greater after they had three to five years of experience in the field. Improvements in reading and mathematics were evident from the study, but the strongest results were in mathematics (PAGE, 2016).

Teacher Burnout

An important factor that influences teacher attrition is burnout (Aloe et al., 2014; Betoret & Artiga, 2010; Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Schwarzer & Schmitz, 2000; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Burnout can commonly occur in service organizations and when the employee is exposed

to stressful situations over long periods of time (Brown, 2012). According to Brouwers and

Tomic (2000), burnout occurs when one works with people and experiences issues such as

emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, or failure to achieve goals. According to Brouwers and

Tomic, emotional exhaustion is when one is pushed to feeling overextended emotionally and

physically. Brouwers and Tomic defined depersonalization as an isolation or negative feeling

towards others, in this case, the student. Burnout has a significant impact on teachers due to the

demands put upon them (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000). Brouwers and Tomic emphasized that 63%

of the teachers in a study of 5000 reported that student discipline and classroom disruptions

caused emotional stress and burnout in their profession. Betoret and Artiga (2010) studied the

relationship between self-efficacy and burnout in Spain. The teachers indicated that a major

contributor to burnout was emotional exhaustion followed by depersonalization and low personal

accomplishment (Betoret & Artiga, 2010). Betoret and Artiga found a direct relationship

between low perceived self-efficacy and these factors.

Schwarzer and Schmitz (2000) found similar results in their study. Low self-efficacy

results in negative thoughts about accomplishment and personal development; therefore, leading

to burnout. Teachers who demonstrated a high level of self-efficacy were more willing to take

on challenges and felt more empowered to deal with demands of the profession versus teachers

with low levels of self-efficacy (Schwarzer & Schmitz, 2000).

Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) studied the relationship between teacher burnout and self-

efficacy. In addition, they tested the relationship between teacher burnout and how it was related

to teachers' perception of the school context and their job satisfaction. Even though most

teachers handle the relationship between teacher stress and burnout effectively, the research

supported the idea that long term and constant exposure to stress leads to teacher burnout

(Skaalvik & Skaalivk, 2010). In the area of school context, five factors were considered: discipline issues, parent relations, time pressures, autonomy, and supervisor support (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). The strongest relationship was between teacher self-efficacy and parent support from the classroom parents. In addition, when the parent-teacher relationship is positive, students' behavior and motivation are higher. Discipline problems were strongly related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization for teachers (Skaalvik & Skaalivk, 2010). Time pressures demonstrated a concern and impact on emotional exhaustion. More paperwork, administration, and parent expectations all contributed to the time pressures that teachers are facing resulting in teacher burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalivk, 2010).

Teacher Stress

Geving (2007) emphasized the idea that teaching causes stress. According to multiple schools across the country, about one-third of the teaching professionals agree that their job is stressful. In addition, classroom student behavior was one of the most common reasons teachers are stressed (Geving, 2007; Kipps-Vaughn, 2013; Lewis, Roache, & Romi, 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). According to Kipps-Vaughn (2013), approximately 25% of teachers encountered stress on the job, which was defined as "the experience by a teacher of negative, unpleasant emotions, such as tension, anger, or depression as a result of some aspect of their work" (p. 44). Stress can have a direct impact on student outcomes and contributes to teachers being absent, negative school climate, and turnover (Kipps-Vaughn, 2013).

According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015), teacher stress is caused by six things: workload and time pressure, adapting to teaching student's needs, disruptive student behavior, value conflicts and lack of autonomy, teamwork, and lack of status. Teachers expressed concern with hectic workdays, not having enough time to get the job done, too many meetings,

documentation, parent contact requirements, and planning as stressful in the areas of workload and time pressures. Meeting and addressing the needs of students with disabilities caused teachers stress as well. The teachers did not feel competent nor did they feel that they have enough time to meet the needs of diversified learners in the classroom. Twenty-five percent of the teachers responded that classroom disruptions were a concern and stressful (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Some teachers thought that classroom disruptive behavior was the most serious problem in schools. In addition, teachers believed that the values of the school and their personal values conflicted. Teachers shared the concern about working on teams caused stress because teachers did not agree on solutions to educational issues (Skaalvik & Skaalvik 2015). Stress was also caused by a lack of status because of negative attention from the media.

Due to the stress associated with the teaching profession, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015), identified three categories of consequences: exhaustion and psychosomatic symptoms, reduced accomplishment, loss of self-efficacy, negative effects, and loss of self-esteem. Exhaustion and psychosomatic symptoms included teachers not being able to sleep at night, lack of energy, and physical health issues (Skaalvik & Skaalvik 2015). Teachers that experienced reduced accomplishment and loss of self-efficacy reported feeling a loss of control and lack of inspiration. The teachers that reported negative effects experienced loss of self-esteem, anger, frustration, and feelings of failure (Skaalvik & Skaalvik 2015).

Teachers with higher stress levels, due to classroom management issues, report lower levels of self-efficacy (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). In particular, female teachers reported having higher levels of stress due to classroom management issues. The researchers suggested teachers who experienced higher levels of stress when dealing with classroom management issues could have had unsuccessful past experiences when handling a situation that involved a classroom

behavior issue (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

Middle School Students

The middle school student is a young adolescent who ranges in age between 10 and 15 years and is typically enrolled in grades six through eight (Juvonen, Le, Kaganoff, Augustine, & Constant, 2004). The middle school student is going through a period in his life that involves rapid developmental, emotional, and physical change. Middle school students encounter challenges with social and parental relationships, and some develop potentially problematic behaviors (Véronneau & Dishion, 2010). Véronneau and Dishion (2010) discussed how peer relationships can lead to situations of acceptance and rejection, as well as positive and negative experiences with peer groups. Often, middle school students can become unmotivated and disinterested in school.

Parents play a crucial role in the life of a middle school student. Parental involvement is necessary at the middle school level. Knowing who and what the student spends time with is essential during this developmental period (Véronneau & Dishion, 2010). When teachers and parents have a shared vision for the student regarding discipline and expectations, teacher self-efficacy levels are higher (Stipek, 2012). Teachers feel more successful when parents participate in their children's education and share values that contribute to positive behaviors in the classroom (Stipek, 2012).

The transition to middle school can be stressful and challenging for students (Wang & Dishion, 2012). As middle school students struggle with peer and parental relationships, as well as physical and emotional changes, classroom behaviors can be affected. Middle school students start to look to peers, teachers, and mentors for support and advice (Cramer & Bennett, 2015). Challenging behaviors can begin to evolve in the classroom in a variety of ways such as lack of

motivation towards school and disruption the learning process. Appropriate responses and willingness to participate, as well as the rules, are challenged. Authority is questioned and for most students' academic achievement is not of more importance than social relationships. According to Cramer and Bennett (2015), middle school students are beginning to form their identity, and the classroom needs to provide an environment to instill and teach positive behaviors.

During adolescent years, there are many changes in peer and family relationships (Veronneau & Dishion, 2010). When an adolescent experiences rejection by his peers, problem behaviors can evolve at home in addition to in the classroom. Furthermore, adolescents who have parents who are not involved in monitoring with whom their child spends time have been shown to be more likely to develop problematic behaviors (Veronneau & Dishion, 2010).

Motivating Middle School Students

Motivating middle school students can be challenging (Davis & Forbes, 2016; Mora, 2011; Strobel, & Borsato, 2012). Middle school students can quickly become bored and disinterested, which can lead to disruptive behaviors (Mora, 2011). According to Davis and Forbes (2016), it is important to create a classroom culture that supports student connections and relationships. Creating a classroom culture that promotes mutual respect, taking a risk, and encouraging one another is desirable (Davis & Forbes, 2016). In addition, Strobel and Borsato (2012) suggested students are motivated by four 'caring' practices: providing instructional strategies to enhance learning, genuine communication, concern for students' well-being, mutual respect, and expectations clearly communicated for success (p. 3). Similarly, Barker and Herrington (2011) studied sixth-grade middle school students who were struggling readers to find what motivation impacted the students. Barker and Herrington found that relationships,

caring conversations, and mutual respect between peers and the teacher fostered that motivation.

Mora (2011) studied a group of middle school Latino students being prepared for a standardized test. Mora found that middle school students were more engaged and motivated to learn, as well as less disruptive, when given opportunities to interact while doing projects, labs, and other hands-on activities. When students were given the opportunity to talk and share, they were more willing to participate and engage in review for a standardized test (Mora, 2011).

Student Empowerment

Often there is confusion between the two terms classroom management and classroom discipline. Classroom discipline differs from classroom management because classroom discipline is the student's role and how one handles his behavior (Marshall, 2005). With higher expectations in the classroom, students must become responsible and empowered to meet the behavioral expectations needed to operate in those learning environments (Alderman & McDonald, 2015; Brophy, 2010). Alderman and McDonald (2015) suggested an approach to student empowerment that involves students becoming self-regulated learners. Students become self-regulated in the classroom, when the teacher providing the framework for what is expected (Alderman & McDonald, 2015; Zimmerman, 2008). The process of self-regulation begins with the student setting a goal, monitoring the goal, repetition, and reflection of the goal, which in turn empowers the student (Zimmerman, 2008).

Classroom Management Theory

B. F. Skinner. Several theorists laid the foundation for classroom management in the middle school setting. Skinner used his research on operant conditioning to influence behavior. He suggested that behavior modification strategies could mold behaviors in the classroom setting (Bucher & Manning, 2002). Middle school teachers have used Skinner's research and applied it

to the classroom. One idea that translates to the middle school classroom is that when students are behaving in a disruptive or inappropriate manner, the teacher should ignore the behavior (Bucher & Manning, 2002). By ignoring the inappropriate behavior, the teacher can focus on praising appropriate behaviors in the classroom. The student will then acknowledge that the attention is only being drawn towards positive behaviors. In addition, Bucher and Manning (2002) applied Skinner's research to recommend that teachers use only positive comments towards students to enforce appropriate behaviors in the classroom. They believed that by using only positive comments, the teacher reinforces the behaviors one is trying to attain in the classroom.

Jacob Kounin. According to Wong, Wong, Rogers, and Brooks (2012), in addition to Skinner providing a basic framework for classroom management, a foundational researcher, Jacob Kounin proposed a framework for effective classroom management. Kounin's research suggested, "Good classroom management is based on the behavior of the teachers, not the behavior of the students" (Wong et al., 2012, p. 61). Kounin believed that effective teachers demonstrated two behaviors, "with-it-ness" and "momentum" (Wong et al., 2012, p. 61). With-it-ness is when both teachers and students were so familiar with the classroom expectations that there were seamless flows and momentum about the lesson (Wong et al., 2012). Momentum occurs when challenges or disruptions arise during the lesson, the teacher can be flexible and adapt the lesson while moving on (Wong et al., 2012).

Fritz Redi and William Wattenberg. Fritz Redi and William Wattenberg provided additional foundational research for middle school teachers when dealing with challenging behaviors (Bucher & Manning, 2002). Redi and Wattenburg's research supported the use of group work, self-control, the pleasure-pain principle, and understanding reality. Redi and

Wattenburg suggested that the behavior of one student could influence a whole classroom. Middle school students in particular, want to fit in and will often imitate their peers (Bucher & Manning, 2002). Middle school teachers can provide support in the classroom when disruptive behaviors occur by assisting the student with regaining the necessary self-control to regulate the behavior desired in the classroom. In addition, the middle school teacher should emphasize to the middle school student the reality that is associated with misbehavior. The middle school teacher should associate the consequences of misbehavior for the students, as well as the connection between the negative feelings of the unwanted behaviors (Bucher & Manning, 2002).

William Glasser. According to Bucher and Manning (2002), William Glasser provided middle school teachers with ideas related to classroom management. Glasser believed that students want to do the right thing, but need the teacher to be the one to set and enforce classroom expectations. In addition, Glasser's research supports what has come to be known as a caring environment where students feel a connection with the teacher to promote their psychological well-being (Bucher & Manning, 2002). While this positive environment is created, the desired behavior can be more easily achieved.

Thomas Gordon. Thomas Gordon also is a key theorist. Gordon emphasized the importance of middle school teachers being properly trained with skills that allow them to understand what students' problems and needs are so they can be effective classroom and instructional managers (Bucher & Manning, 2002). Middle school teachers' use of empathetic understanding and active listening create an environment of assistance and problem solving that function as a support system for students. This environment allows for problems and challenges in the classroom to be approached in a manner that students accept and resolve problems on their own (Bucher & Manning, 2002). Gordon suggested that the middle school teacher promotes

self-discipline with students and allows them to take ownership of their behaviors.

Classroom Management

> Classroom management is all the things that a teacher does to organize students, space,
> time, and materials so that student learning can take place. It comprises a plan - a set of
> procedures that structure the classroom, so the students know what to do, how to do it,
> and when to do it in a classroom. (Wong et al., 2012, p. 61)

Good classroom management is not just getting students to adhere to behavioral expectations, but having students engaged and learning during the school day (Brophy, 2010). Teachers develop ways to deal with classroom management issues from previous personal experiences (Englehart, 2012). Teacher perceptions and beliefs have a major impact on building ideas about classroom management and the best way to handle situations. When a classroom management issue occurs, there is a disconnection between reality and perception. The reality is an unexpected or unwelcome behavior or challenge while the perception is what the teacher expectation is of those behaviors or situations. For example, Englehart (2012) shared one scenario of half-truths with classroom management that references managing student behavior is really clear and consistent rules and communication. For some students, clear consistent rules and communication work (perception), but for the most disruptive students something more is needed such as behavior interventions (reality). Therefore, it is important that teachers should base their decisions about classroom management on a framework of beliefs and values to promote consistency (Englehart, 2012).

Classroom management plays a vital role in the success or failure of the learning environment for both teachers and students (Brophy, 2010; Marzano et al., 2003; Wong et al., 2012). Classroom management affects student learning and everything that occurs in the

classroom (Brophy, 2010; Casas, 2010). Classroom management has been a problem for veteran teachers, as well as teachers that are new to the field (Manning & Bucher, 2005). Classroom management has always been a challenge for teachers and has even forced some teachers to leave the field (Manning & Bucher, 2005). If a teacher can maintain control of the classroom when behavior is disruptive, instruction is affected (Brophy, 2010; Brouwers & Tomic, 2000).

Classroom management is essential for student and teacher success. William Glasser (1986) believed that students act out or misbehave to gain control, protect their self-esteem, and avoid peer teasing. Teachers need to implement an effective Classroom Management Plan (CMP) from the first day of school (Casas, 2010; Wong et al., 2012) to avoid student disruptions and misbehavior. By establishing rules and routines at the beginning and implementing consequences, students will learn accountability for their actions, which will help them learn self-respect (Casas, 2010). According to Davis and Forbes (2016), it is important to create a classroom culture that supports student connections and relationships. Creating a classroom that promotes mutual respect, taking a risk, and encouraging one another supports classroom culture of this type (Davis & Forbes, 2016).

There has been minimal research conducted on teachers at the middle school level who have high levels of self-efficacy and their classroom management. Classroom management is essential for middle school learning environments due to the challenging behaviors that are present during adolescence. These challenging behaviors occur mainly at the middle school level because of the adolescents' lack of self-esteem. Marzano et al. (2003) suggested that one of the most critical pieces of classroom management is the relationship that is developed between the students and the teacher.

Research that has been conducted relates to teachers' who experience low levels of self-

efficacy and the impact that it has on issues with behavior in the classroom (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984). This work confirms/suggests/has been interpreted to show teachers tend to develop ideas about classroom management because of their personal experiences and perceptions (Englehart, 2012).

Middle School Teachers

Teaching middle school requires a special person to reach the adolescent who is "skeptical in nature and loath [es] phoniness in others" (Scott, para. 7, 2014). Middle school teachers should possess certain qualities to be successful. Scott (2014) suggested middle school teachers are authentic. Authentic teachers share experiences and their background with students to develop trust and establish a relationship with their students (Scott, 2014).

Scott (2014) recommended middle school teachers provide validation to students and a diplomatic learning environment. She suggested that by getting to know students and allowing students to contribute their perspectives, validation could be achieved. Student diplomacy allows for middle school teachers to avoid conflict within the classroom. Scott encouraged teachers to self-reflect and find out how to exhibit self-control when challenging situations in the middle school classroom occur.

Effective middle school teachers create a welcoming and supportive environment (Deering, Zuercher, & Apisa, 2010). The best middle school teachers create connections with students and show them they care about the student academically and personally. Loundsbury (2010) suggested that middle school teachers must be confident in what they believe and be able to clearly articulate those beliefs to others which aligns with Goddard et al.'s (2000) inclusion of reflection in CTE as does Loundsbury's assertion that middle school teachers need to be prepared and use multiple approaches to teaching.

Middle School Classroom Management Strategies

Marzano et al. (2003) emphasized the importance of relationships when dealing with classroom management at the middle school level. Teachers knowing and understanding their students can assist them in handling classroom behaviors (Marzano et al., 2003). Teachers who get to know their students individually can better adapt when challenges arise during a lesson. However, difficult and challenging students can disturb even the most effective teacher.

A strategy that assists in building the relationship with middle school students is that of building empathy. Empathy is a form of communication that can assist middle school teachers with their classroom management (Brown, 2005). When middle school teachers build empathy in the classroom, a trust between teacher and student is developed, which creates a respectful relationship (Brown, 2005). A middle school teacher can build empathy by being an active listener and creating an atmosphere that exhibits care for one another (Brown, 2005).

Often, students portray negative behaviors in the middle school classroom as a means of getting attention from their peers. Teachers can react to this and create a power struggle with a student, which usually does not have a positive result (O'Ferrall, Green, & Hanna, 2010). Teachers can reduce negative student behaviors by avoiding confrontation, and acknowledging their leadership skills.

Not only are teacher-student relationships important for the student, but these relationships also contribute to the well-being of the teacher (Spilt, Koomen, & Thijs, 2011). When teachers and students building relationships, teachers feel like their work has meaning and importance. When teachers feel connected to the students in their classroom, both parties benefit in respect to student behavior and goal achievement (Spilt et al., 2011).

Classroom Management Styles

A teacher's classroom management style can determine the effectiveness of the classroom management plan in place. Dunbar (2004) recommends that teachers be aware of their style and how they interact with students. Dunbar suggested four classroom management styles that are modeled after parenting styles. The classroom management styles are authoritative, authoritarian, indifferent and laissez-faire. The authoritative style involves providing the students with boundaries, but encouraging them to take charge of their learning. The teacher still provides clear rules and expectations, but the student has little to no flexibility or leadership in the classroom. The students follow the teacher's rules and are to be quiet and do as told. The indifferent style is one of little direction and no clear distinction exists between preferred and undesirable actions on the part of the teacher. The teacher lacks key classroom management procedures, and there is little structure to the environment. The laissez-faire management style provides students with extensive flexibility in and ownership of the classroom. Discipline is inconsistent, and students can be allowed to do whatever they would like (Dunbar, 2004).

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Many schools have implemented PBIS to assist teachers in the classroom. PBIS is a multi-tiered approach to supporting acceptable behaviors in the classroom (Cramer & Bennett, 2015). Tier one consists of research-based interventions that can be implemented with all students in the school. Typically, 80% of the student population will respond to the tier one interventions. Those who do not respond are offered tier two interventions that are more intense. Approximately 15% will respond to tier two interventions. The remainder of the behavior challenges will be addressed by tier three interventions that are offered on an individual level. If

students do not respond at tier three individualized interventions, a referral for special education will most likely occur (Cramer & Bennett, 2015). Overall, PBIS has proven effective; however, some educators do not think that PBIS is as effective as it could be for some students. Kelm and McIntosh (2012) conducted a study in regards to teacher self-efficacy and School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) used as a method to address classroom management issues. There was a direct and positive relationship between teachers who were employed at SWPBS schools who had a higher level of self-efficacy and better student behavior in the classroom.

Ways Teachers Cope

According to Lewis et al. (2011), coping is the "cognitive and affective responses used by an individual to deal with problems encountered in everyday life" (p. 55). If a teacher does not have good coping skills, one can become cynical, emotionally exhausted, and stressed (Lewis et al., 2011). Teachers in particular, are in need of coping strategies to reduce stress when dealing with classroom management issues and behaviors. Coping methods include suggestions such as problem solving, personality traits, and a sense of moral purpose (Lewis et al., 2011). Most coping strategies depend on the particular classroom management issue being addressed.

According to Lewis et al. (2011), three coping strategies, Social Problem Solving, Passive-Avoidant Coping, and Relaxation were most effective for teachers when dealing with classroom management issues. The most common form of coping used by teachers is Social Problem Solving. In Social Problem Solving, teachers use the network of their peers to share ideas and gain advice as a way to reduce stress and burnout (Lewis et al., 2011). Teachers who use problem-solving techniques in the classroom are more productive when dealing with classroom management issues (Lewis et al., 2011).

Professional Development

According to Bandura (1997), a major contributor to teacher self-efficacy is successful past experience because the connection can be made with experiences in future situations. Teacher self-efficacy can be enhanced, regarding classroom management, through provision of professional development opportunities to influence those skills (Pace, Boykins, & Davis, 2014; Ross & Bruce, 2007; Tsouloupas, Carson, & MacGregor, 2014). Ross and Bruce (2007) found that teachers who were provided professional development opportunities improved teacher self-efficacy by improving teacher confidence in managing students.

When teachers do not have methods to proactively deal with classroom management issues, an increase in behavior issues can occur (Pace et al., 2014). When teachers take time to address disruptive behavior, students' learning is affected, teacher self-efficacy is affected, and control is weakened (Pace et al., 2014). In particular at the middle school level, the research found that teachers do not feel prepared to deal with student behaviors, which in turn negatively affects the teachers' self-efficacy negatively (Pace et al., 2014). As a result of middle school teachers feeling unprepared to deal with disruptive classroom management issues, they make seek to remove the student from the classroom. With this strategy, teachers experience a loss of control and teacher self-efficacy decreases (Pace et al., 2014). Pace et al.'s (2014) research supported the development of proactive professional learning for teachers regarding understanding behaviors, as well as a means of proactively addressing student behaviors to avoid disruption and de-escalate behaviors.

Professional development can occur in many forms. Tsouloupas et al. (2014) conducted a study regarding Teacher's Efficacy in Handling Student Misbehavior (TEHSM). High school teachers shared their opinion of the best practices for learning how to handle student behavior

issues in the classroom. According to Tsouloupas et al., three themes emerged: the need for regular professional learning, learning from personal experiences, and a support team. Almost 80% of the teachers mentioned the need for on-going and regular professional training on current, practical, and relevant behavior management (Tsouloupas et al., 2014). Sixty-seven percent of the teachers emphasized the importance of sharing personal experiences with classroom behavior issues and how they have been handled. Other teachers recommended support from peers and administration as a key to handling classroom issues (Tsouloupas et al., 2014).

Administrative Support

There is a balance between teacher empowerment and support teachers need from an administrator. Administrative support is necessary to provide encouragement and opportunities for teachers to express concerns and issues (Stipek, 2012). According to Marzano (2006), teachers consistently report that lack of administrative support and inconsistent practices related to classroom management issues, are a main and regular concern. Teachers hold the main responsibility for handling classroom management issues; however, the administration provides the groundwork for the shared responsibility (Marzano, 2011). Administrative support has been correlated to teacher self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). When the administration provided support, inspiration, allowed for flexibility and input on decisions and minimized disruptions, teacher self-efficacy levels were higher (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Teachers want to know that the administrators care about their success or failure. By involving teachers in making decisions and recognizing them for accomplishment, administrators can provide the balance that is needed and increase teacher self-efficacy (Marzano, 2011; Prichard & Moore, 2016; Stipek, 2012). Administrative support has been correlated to teacher self-efficacy.

Teachers want to know that the administrators care about their success or failure (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Administrators can enhance the involvement of parents and make the connection between teachers and parents more effective by providing opportunities for parents to be involved in the school (Stipek, 2012). Administrators can provide the outlets for increasing parental involvement in schools, as well as the necessary tools needed to communicate with parents. Administrators can provide opportunities for conferencing with parents and means to effectively communicate with parents such as translators (Stipek, 2012). These types of practices are why administrative support has been correlated to teacher self-efficacy ((Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Teacher Empowerment and Autonomy

When teachers have been provided professional development for handling classroom management issues, they become more empowered. Handling classroom issues without administrative assistance allows teacher empowerment and autonomy to be gained and recognized by the students. One way teachers are empowered and empowering is by teaching students' self-regulation strategies (Alderman & MacDonald, 2015). Teachers take on the role of a facilitator in the learning process, and the students take on the primary responsibility of self-control and academic success. Creating an environment of social independence and accountability for students empowers students and teachers (Alderman & MacDonald, 2015). Self-regulation strategies prepare students for real-life scenarios learning from interacting with other students, they and increase student autonomy. Self-regulation supports social, personal/cognitive, and behavioral processes that are important components of classroom management (Alderman & MacDonald, 2015). This is how creating an environment of social

independence and accountability for students empowers students and teachers (Alderman &

MacDonald, 2015).

Taylor (2013) suggested empowering teachers to develop resilience by evaluating six

contributing factors: purpose and expectations, nurture and support, positive connections,

meaningful participation, life guiding skills, and clear and consistent boundaries. Bobek (2002)

emphasized that when teachers are resilient, they are better able to handle situations and cope.

Bobek (2002) recommended teachers strengthen characteristics to develop resilience including

significant adult relationships, a sense of personal responsibility, social and problem-solving

skills, a sense of competence, expectations, goals, confidence, and a sense of humor, and a sense

of accomplishment. Teacher autonomy promotes teacher professionalism and enhances teacher

self-efficacy (Prichard & Moore, 2016). When teachers have power and influence on classroom

decisions they feel empowered to handle classroom situations as they feel fit (Prichard & Moore,

2016).

Summary

Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory provided a framework for this study. Bandura's

self-efficacy theory stated that people must believe in themselves to accomplish a goal or task

and to persevere through difficulties or challenges that they encounter during an experience. A

person with low self-efficacy might visualize failure prior to attempting a challenging situation,

which causes negative and self-defeating thoughts in one's mind. Individuals with high self-

efficacy believe goals are more reachable and exhibit confidence in their ability to achieve goals

(Bandura, 1993).

A review of the literature provided an overview of self-efficacy and how it has been

applied to various constructs. Teacher self-efficacy was identified from Bandura's (1997) theory

as a type of self-efficacy that influenced "how much [effort] people put forth, how long they will persist in the face of obstacles, how resilient they are in dealing with failures, and how much stress or depression they experience in coping with demanding situations" (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998, p. 203). Originally Bandura's self-efficacy theory was applied to K-12 students and classrooms and how self-efficacy influenced student's success in areas of learning. However, research began to be conducted to investigate the self-efficacy theory and its impact on teachers' beliefs and behaviors in handling situations encountered in the classroom. This qualitative collective case study adds to the body of literature as it attempted to understand how current and former middle school teachers perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on classroom management style.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of the study was to investigate current and former middle school teachers' perceptions of the impact of low self-efficacy on their classroom management style. The theory guiding the study was Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory, which stated that self-efficacy can determine how one approaches a task, goals, or challenges. A collective case study was used to provide an opportunity for the teachers to share how they believe low self-efficacy impacts classroom management style. Data was collected through a survey, interviews, questionnaires, observations, and a focus group. Within this chapter are details on the setting, participants, procedures, and data analysis of the study. Furthermore, this chapter contains information on the trustworthiness of the process and the ethical considerations that were taken.

Design

A qualitative, collective case study design was used for the study. The qualitative, collective case study design is used when a researcher is trying to determine the *how* or *why* of a particular phenomenon (Yin, 2009). The qualitative, collective case study design made it possible to interpret and share the perceptions current and former middle school teachers have about the impact of low self-efficacy on classroom management style. Teacher self-efficacy has been researched repeatedly from a quantitative perspective to study the relationship between self-efficacy and classroom management. However, there are a limited number of studies of teacher self-efficacy that have been conducted from a qualitative perspective (Fives & Buehl, 2009; İpek & Camadan, 2012; Klassen, 2010; Klassen, Tze, Betts, & Gordon, 2011). A qualitative collective case study was appropriate and necessary because it enabled the exploration of different perspectives of teachers about the impact of low self-efficacy on current and former

middle school teacher classroom management style (Creswell, 2013). The qualitative design also allowed study of multiple middle school sites to explore the issue (Creswell, 2013).

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study were developed from gaps that were identified from the literature and are as follows:

RQ1: In the Walton County School District (pseudonym), how do current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school perceive their level of self-efficacy?

RQ2: In the Walton County School District, how do current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school perceive their classroom management style?

RQ3: In the Walton County School District, how do current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school perceive the impact of self-efficacy on their classroom management style?

Setting

The setting for this qualitative collective case study was the Walton County School District. This site was selected due to convenience sampling because I work and reside in the community. This site allowed time and fiscal efficiency when conducting the research without sacrificing the ability to collect credible information from the participants (Creswell, 2013).

According to the Georgia Department of Education (2011), the population of the Walton County School District was approximately 70,000 with an unemployment rate of 10.3%. The school district was the fourth largest charter system in the State of Georgia. There were 12 schools in the district, with eight elementary schools, four middle schools, and three high

schools. The 12 schools housed over 13,000 students with 58% of the student population being economically disadvantaged and eligible for free and reduced lunch. The school district employed 1,700 faculty and staff within the 12 schools and district office.

The district office housed the Superintendent, 5 Assistant Superintendents, Business Services, Human Resources, Support Services, System Operations, and Teaching and Learning. The two high schools each had one principal and three assistant principals. Each of the four middle schools had one principal and one assistant principal to handle discipline issues and daily administrative responsibilities. In addition, the elementary schools had a principal, assistant principal and instructional coach. Each school had a leadership team and a school council committee to assist in making local school decisions.

Approximately five years before this study, the Walton County School District in Northeast Georgia implemented a behavior management plan countywide, Positive Behavior Intervention (PBIS). PBIS was introduced to the schools to decrease negative classroom behaviors. PBIS has been effective in the elementary schools in the school district. Middle and high schools in the district have a more difficult time implementing and getting student agreement from PBIS. In addition, new teachers employed in the Walton County School District are provided a teacher mentor to make the first-year teaching transition smoother and to assist new teachers with challenges they may experience while adjusting to the new position (Walton County School District, personal communication, 2016).

Participants

The sample for this study consisted of teachers who had been teaching for a minimum of five years in one of the four middle schools in the Walton County School District. The Walton County School District consists of eight elementary schools, four middle schools, two high

schools, one alternative school, and one academy of innovation and technology (Walton County School District, personal communication, 2016). The Walton County School District employed approximately 50% of its certified teaching staff, for more than 10 years (Georgia Department of Education, 2011). There were approximately 863 full- time certified teachers, 82% female and 18% male, employed in the Walton County School District. Of those teachers, 43% held Master's degrees, 22% held Specialist degrees, and 2% held Doctoral degrees (Walton County School District, personal communication, 2016). Ninety-eight percent of the teachers were Caucasian, 3% were African American, and less than 2% were either Asian or Hispanic (Walton County School District, personal communication, 2016).

Participants for the study were 12 certified teachers in the Walton County School District. Purposeful sampling was used in selecting participants for the study. According to Creswell (2013), purposeful sampling assists in determining the sites to be studied, the sampling strategy, and the sample size. Purposeful sampling is often used in qualitative research because it assists in improving the chances that the findings will provide a thorough view of the different perspectives. Teachers were screened to ensure that they met the study criteria by administering a survey to all four of the middle schools in the Walton County School District. The survey was taken by teachers electronically via SurveyMonkey. The selection of participants was determined by purposeful sampling to ensure the participants meet the study criteria. The length of service criteria for teachers, who had been teaching or taught grades six through eight for a minimum of five years, was determined by the first question on the survey. The sample size was four cases, including 12 participants. Eight of the participants were current middle school teachers and four were former middle school teachers who voluntarily moved to another level.

Procedures

To conduct this study, I followed several procedures to obtain the required approvals for the collective case study. Local permission was obtained by completing the district's request to conduct research request form. Two copies of my proposal, and two copies of my data collection instruments were submitted to the superintendent's office. After approval from the Research Screening Committee of the Walton County School District, I contacted the four middle school principals to request final approval to conduct research at each of their school sites. I provided details of the procedure and the significance of the collective case study to the four middle school principals. Permission was requested from the four middle school administrators to identify the participants for the study. The requirements for participation was communicated to the principals so that they could provide the names of qualified potential participants who met the criteria of teaching grades six through eight for a minimum of five years, as well as former teachers who had voluntarily moved to another level. Following a successful proposal defense, an application to conduct the study was submitted to the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Once the permission was granted by Liberty University's IRB (Appendix A), a pilot study was conducted with a sample of middle school teachers not employed in the Walton County School District. The pilot study was done to allow me to ensure the quality and clarity of my interview questions. Once the pilot study was completed, a brief survey via Survey Monkey was conducted with teachers from the four middle schools to identify those who met the specific criteria for the study. These were middle school teachers who have been teaching or taught grades six through eight a minimum of five years and those teachers who identify themselves as having a low level of self-efficacy with classroom management, as well as former teachers who

had voluntarily moved to another level. The Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (Appendix B) was included in the survey as a means of determining which teachers considered themselves to have low self-efficacy (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). Determining the teacher's self-efficacy level by using the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale was only used as an identifier for my sample of participants. Once all of the participants were secured, the data collection process began.

Data were collected using individual interviews, questionnaires, observations, and a focus group. The data collection process had the following steps. Step 1: I recorded the individual interviews using standardized open-ended interview questions (See Appendix C) using an audio memos app on my iPad. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes to one hour. Step 2: I provided the interviewees a classroom management style questionnaire (See Appendix D) to complete in regard to their classroom management style. Step 3: I conducted classroom observations with the sample of teachers. The classroom observations lasted 30 minutes each and utilized the Classroom Management Rubric (See Appendix E). Step 4: A focus group interview (Appendix F) was conducted with only the former middle school teachers who had on their own account moved to elementary or high school. The focus group interview lasted 30 to 60 minutes.

After the data collection was complete, the interviews and focus group interview were transcribed (Appendix G) and the analysis of the data began. During the data analysis process, I made notes in identifying themes. I analyzed and synthesized information from each interview to gain a detailed description of each case and theme. The researcher completed the transcription to assist in identifying and grouping the themes that were relevant from the interviews, observations, and focus group. Using an Excel table, I tabulated patterns and specific examples to group all the cases findings of how teachers perceived the impact of low self-efficacy on their

classroom management style. Then, I began to develop an explanation of the case.

The Researcher's Role

I am currently employed in the Walton County School District at one of the high schools as a Special Education teacher. In addition, I am responsible for Response to Intervention (RTI), am the assistant testing coordinator and the Title I Coordinator for my school. I have been employed by the school district for 15 years and taught grades four through twelve. During my 15 years in the Walton County School District, I have taught mathematics and social studies. I have served on the leadership team, curriculum team and PBIS. I believe that classroom management is critical to the success of the learning environment. My relationship with the participants is that of a former co-worker. Previously, I was employed at one of the four middle schools as a sixth grade math teacher.

As the role of the human instrument in this collective case study, I interpreted and personally analyzed the findings of the study (Patton, 2002). I needed to be knowledgeable of research methodology, work with integrity, and conduct the study with fidelity. I am qualified to interpret and to analyze the findings of the study because I have been a middle school teacher who has dealt with the impact of low self-efficacy in my classroom management style over the last fifteen years. When I started teaching, I had a lower level of teacher self-efficacy; however, over the years I have developed a higher level of teacher self-efficacy, which I believe has contributed to my success when handling challenging behavioral issues in the classroom.

I used Yin's (2009) collective approach for conducting a case study research. When I conducted the study, I distanced myself as much as possible from the context to be sure to fully describe how the participants viewed the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). I conducted the interviews, observations and focus group, as well as administered the surveys. To provide

interpretations of the data, I used open questions that allowed me to develop clusters of meaning and themes. From this information, I identified patterns of the phenomena (Yin, 2009).

Data Collection

According to Yin (2009), data collection for a case study design is usually derived from multiple sources, includes triangulation, and is extensive. This process strengthens the construct validity. For this qualitative case study, data was collected in a variety of forms including (a) surveys, (b) interviews, (c) questionnaires, (d) direct observations, and (e) a focus group. The multiple forms of data collection were chosen to be collected in this order to achieve saturation and to be able to understand a full description of the cases (Creswell, 2013).

After obtaining IRB approval, I contacted the principals of the four middle schools in the Walton County School District via email to request permission to send the Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey to faculty members. The principals gave me a list of those teachers who had voluntarily left the middle school to teach at an elementary or high school. I distributed the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990) electronically to the faculty of the four middle schools and those names provided to me by the principals of the former middle school teachers. Using Survey Monkey, I identified the possible sample participants who were qualified for the study. Once the participants were selected, I notified them via email and provided an invitation for them to participate in the study beginning with the interviews and observations, then the focus group. I obtained written and informed consent from each interviewee (Appendix H). Participants were informed of the time required for the study. There was no monetary compensation for participating in the study. I conducted 12 semi-structured interviews with the participants to focus on personal experiences and perceptions. I conducted direct observations of participants to assist in identifying common themes to make conclusions or develop explanations (Yin, 2009).

Finally, I conducted a focus group interview to gain an understanding of why former middle school teachers moved to either elementary or high school voluntarily.

Pilot Study

As suggested by Creswell (2013), I piloted the interview questions with a small group of middle school teachers who were known to me, were not part of the sample and have been teaching middle school for five years or more. The pilot group was comprised of middle school teachers with a similar demographic background as those in the Walton County School District. I tested all the recording equipment prior to interviewing the participants to address any potential issues or problems. I then refined my questions to ensure relevancy (Creswell, 2013).

Survey

I provided written invitations to the teachers who were currently and formerly employed in the four middles schools to participate in the survey. I sent an electronic survey, via Survey Monkey, using the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (Appendix B). Informed consent was obtained electronically, through the survey. The Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990) was used to assist in the selection of the sample participants in the study. Questions one, six, seven, and eight demonstrate efficacy in classroom management. I followed up at two-week intervals to obtain maximum participation. Using this survey information, I was able to group the participants based on teachers who have been teaching five years or more and had the lowest self-efficacy levels. I obtained 134 initial survey responses. Of those initial responses on the survey, 12 teachers met the study criteria.

Interviews

The primary source of data collection in this study was individual interviews with participants. I selected the interview participants from the group of teachers that qualified from

the survey. Standardized interviews were conducted with participants through semi-structured,

open-ended questions (Appendix C) that focused on how middle school teachers perceive the

impact of low self-efficacy on classroom management style. I used scripted questions during the

interviews but allowed opportunities for dialogue and collaboration (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

As recommended by Yin (2009), the interviews began with following my line of inquiry and

then asked conversational questions containing level one and level two questions regarding the

participants' experience with ways the teachers handle classroom management situations and

how the perceive their self-efficacy (Yin, 2009). Level one and two questions were used to build

rapport and make the participants feel comfortable. The interviews were recorded and

transcribed (Creswell, 2013). The IRB approval for the study included approval to audio record

the interviews. Interviewees were asked to review my transcriptions and certify that the

transcription were correct and accurate. They were given the chance to amend them if necessary.

The purpose of the questions pertaining to teacher self-efficacy and classroom

management was to gather information about the participants' perception of the impact of their

self-efficacy has on their classroom management style. Since the interviews were the primary

method of data collection, I had open-ended questions allowing participant to elaborate. The

following open-ended questions were used for the interviews:

1. Please introduce yourself to me including your name, what grade you teach, and how
   many years you have been teaching.

2. Please walk me through a typical day for you at school.

3. Why did you choose to become a middle school teacher?

4. What do you enjoy least about teaching middle school?

5. What did you feel most prepared for in the classroom?

6. What did you feel least prepared for in the classroom?

7. Think about your first few weeks as a new teacher. How did you feel after those first few weeks?

8. What is your personal philosophy of classroom management?

9. How do you build rapport with your students?

10. How do you communicate expectations to your students?

11. How do you feel students should communicate/approach the teacher?

12. What is your classroom arrangement?

13. What are the classroom strategies you use when students exhibit unacceptable behaviors?

14. How do you handle disruptions in your classroom?

15. Please describe an experience when you had to deal with a challenging student and how did you handle the situation?

16. What challenges do you face when trying to deal with a challenging student?

17. What contributes to your classroom management style?

18. What does self-efficacy mean to you?

19. What personality characteristics do you believe impact a teacher's self-efficacy?

20. How does your self-efficacy specifically impact your ability to handle classroom management challenges?

21. How do you think your self-efficacy impacts your classroom management style?

22. Why do you think your self-efficacy has an impact on your classroom management style?

23. I appreciate your time and feedback. What else do you think would be important for

me to know about your classroom management style?

Questions one through seven were developed to gain a general understanding of the teacher's background and to build rapport (Yin, 2009). Questions eight through 13 were designed to gain a specific understanding of the teacher's preparedness to become a teacher, personality traits and expectations (Pace, Boykins, & Davis, 2014; Ross & Bruce, 2007; Tsouloupas, Carson, & MacGregor, 2014). Questions 12 through 18 were developed to account for the past experiences middle school teachers have with classroom management styles (Dunbar, 2004). Questions 19 to 23 attempts to gain an understanding of how self-efficacy plays a role in classroom management style (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004; Ross, 1998; Ross & Bruce, 2007, Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998).

Questionnaire

A questionnaire provided another method of data collection for the collective case study. A questionnaire was given to 12 teachers who had been previously interviewed. After obtaining permission from the publisher (Appendix I), the questionnaire Classroom Management Profile was used via the Internet and distributed to teachers to complete. The Classroom Management Profile (Appendix D) was used to determine each of the 12 teacher's classroom management styles. The data from the Classroom Management Profile allowed me to determine which teaching style, if any, contributes to a high self-efficacy level.

Direct Observation

The final data collection method was direct observation. The observations were unscheduled, and I was a non-participant observer. I conducted three 15-minute observations per teacher within a four-week period. Direct observations allowed me to view firsthand the classroom management styles of the 12 former and current middle school teachers (Creswell,

2013). The direct observations facilitated analysis of how the teachers' perception of their self-efficacy impacts their classroom management style. I used the Classroom Management Rubric when completing the observations to assist in determining the teachers' classroom management styles (Appendix E).

Reflective and descriptive field notes were completed as an observational protocol. I made the field notes during and immediately following the observations. The observations and field notes were focused on the research questions (Creswell, 2013). The reflective field notes included my experiences and what was learned during the observations. The descriptive field notes also included details such as the physical surroundings, date and time the observation were conducted, and the general information observed. I used an observational protocol to document information collected. In addition, I included a visual sketch of the setting being observed.

Focus Group

The focus group interviews provided former middle school teachers who voluntarily have moved to elementary or high school to openly share why they decided to move to a different level of teaching. Participation in the focus group was voluntary. The questions asked in the focus group were open-ended to allow for conversation and discussion (Appendix F). The interview was recorded on an app on my iPad. The focus group interview lasted 45 minutes and the material was transcribed following the focus group.

Question one allowed rapport to be established with the focus group participants. Questions two and three allowed former middle school teachers to share why they chose to teach middle school originally and why they liked teaching middle school. Questions four and five allowed former middle school teachers to share challenges they experienced when teaching middle school. Question six allowed the former middle school teachers to tell why they left

middle school and moved to a different level.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the most challenging part of a case study (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009)

emphasizes the importance of having a data analysis protocol established prior to data collection.

The data analysis protocol for this study was guided by Stake's (1995) method of categorical

aggregation for case studies to assist in decreasing the risk of misconceptions of the data. In

categorical aggregation, I attempted to find "a collection of instances from the data, hoping that

issue-relevant meanings will emerge" (Creswell, 2013, p. 199). I began my analysis by making a

detailed description of the case and its setting (Creswell, 2013). Then I reviewed my data

collection documents including survey results, interview transcriptions, questionnaire

transcriptions, and observation notes. I listened to the interview recordings and read the

transcriptions and results of the data collection multiple times. I made notes on important ideas

or concepts as I reviewed the data (Creswell, 2013) and began to develop broad categories to

organize the data collected known as categorical aggregation (Stake, 1995). Creswell (2013)

believes forming the codes and categories is the "heart of qualitative data analysis" (p. 184).

Using patterns, I used a word matrix to determine if there are any relationships between two or

more categories (Stake, 1995).

I analyzed and synthesized the instance to gain meaning of the data and to ensure I am

answering the *how* and *why* of the research questions. As I was the interpreter conducting the

data analysis, I was immersed in the data that were collected from the participants. I completed

the transcribing to assist in identifying and grouping the themes that were relevant from the

interviews, questionnaires, observations, and focus group. Next, I began tabulating patterns and

specific examples of how teachers perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on the participants'

classroom management style.

As patterns of how teachers perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on classroom management style developed, I began to develop "naturalistic generalizations" about the cases (Creswell, 2013, p. 161). Creswell (2013) defined natural generalizations as generalizations that will help other middle school teachers learn from the research. I developed a thorough explanation of the cases by using narratives, tables, and figures (Creswell, 2013).

Trustworthiness

In this study, trustworthiness was addressed by incorporating Lincoln and Guba's (1985) suggested four criteria to establish trustworthiness. These four criteria are (a) credibility (internal validity), (b) dependability (reliability), (c) transferability (generalizability), and (d) confirmability (objectivity). I maintained credibility through triangulation, member checks, and peer reviews. A peer review was conducted by an outside source by one that holds a doctorate degree in the field of education and has expertise in classroom management. Transferability and dependability provided rich, thick descriptions of the participants and findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition, an audit trail provided a manner to ensure conformability of the findings.

Credibility

Creswell (2013) suggested the use of member checks as an essential to ensure the credibility of a qualitative study. I did member checks and then made changes to clarify meaning and intent (Yin, 2009). Credibility was gained through triangulation, which was used to confirm and validate my findings. Triangulation of the data included (a) interviews, (b) questionnaire (c) direct observations, and a (d) focus group. I used triangulation to identify themes and perspectives to thoroughly portray and corroborate the experiences of the participants. Triangulation allowed me to use multiple sources to collect and analyze my data,

which strengthened the construct validity of the case (Yin, 2009). A peer review provided

another check from an outside source by one that holds a doctorate in the field of education and

has expertise in classroom management (Creswell, 2013).

Dependability and Confirmability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described dependability as confirmation of external validity. I

used thick and rich details when describing my phenomenon. Dependability was achieved using

an audit trail to examine the study and assess accuracy of the process and the product (Lincoln &

Guba, 1985). In addition, I kept a chronological account of the research that included detailed

information, while accounting for emerging themes and memoing as the research was conducted

and analyzed (Creswell, 2013).

Conformability ensures that the results of the study are from the participants and not the

biases of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I set aside any motivations or perspectives

regarding the research to ensure conformability. In addition, the audit trail provided a manner to

ensure conformability of the findings. The audit trail included accurate steps taken from the

beginning of my research to the findings, kept in a locked computer database.

Transferability

Developing rich, thick descriptions of the participants and findings increased

transferability of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I reviewed the participants' experiences, as

well as acknowledged and examined pauses or silences, areas that did not make sense, and

interpreted multiple meanings that were revealed. Maximum variations increased transferability

by allowing different perspectives to be shared (Creswell, 2013).

Ethical Considerations

According to Creswell (2013), any approach to qualitative research requires

acknowledging the chance of ethical issues occurring during data collection and analysis. Therefore, it was important that I was aware of ethical issues that could occur at any point in the research and that I was thorough when approaching the data collection and analysis so I was aware of possible implications. First, I obtained IRB approval prior to conducting research. In addition, I obtained approval from the middle school principals and the superintendent of the Walton County School District, who were involved in planning prior to the study. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study by keeping all data and results under password protection on my personal computer and hard copy documents locked in a file cabinet and then shredded after the study. I was sure to inform participants of the purpose of the study and how the data would be used.

In addition, locked filing cabinets and password protection were used for any files to maintain privacy and confidentiality. Site and participant pseudonyms were used for those involved in the study. I reported honest findings of the study. In addition, debriefings were conducted at the end of the study in order to provide the participants the information learned in the study. Furthermore, I debriefed the participants to ensure the participants knew our work together in the study was complete. There was a clear division between work and research since I am no longer employed at a middle school in the Walton County School District. Currently, I am a teacher at a high school in the Walton County School District and hold no influence over any of the participants involved in the study.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to investigate how current and former middle school teachers perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on their classroom management. This study utilized a qualitative, collective case study design to interpret and share the perceptions of middle

school teachers regarding the impact low self-efficacy has on classroom management style. I used surveys, interviews, questionnaires, observations, and a focus group to collect data on how current and former middle school teachers perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on classroom management style. The results will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Overview

This study sought to investigate how current and former middle school teachers perceive that self-efficacy impacts their classroom management style. Four middle schools in the Walton County School district in Georgia were used for the collective case study. Data were collected from (a) surveys, (b) interviews, (c) questionnaires, (d) direct observations, and (e) a focus group. Data analysis was completed using categorical aggregation to determine patterns that developed regarding how teachers perceive low self-efficacy impacts their classroom management style. This chapter includes a detailed description of each individual participant and the findings from the data collection process that emerged as themes and patterns. In addition, theme development is shared, including the research question responses of the participants for each of the data collection methods and a summary is provided.

Participants

Each of the participants involved in the study was assigned a pseudonym to protect their identities. The sample size of the study was 12 participants that included two teachers from each of the four middle schools in the Walton County School District and four former middle school teachers that have voluntarily moved to the elementary or high school level. Four of the participants in the study were part of the focus group. The focus group consisted of four former middle school teachers who voluntarily moved to elementary or high school. One of the focus group participants had moved to elementary from middle school and three of the participants had moved from middle to high school. The focus group responded to five open-ended questions. The number of years of teaching experience ranged, in the group, from nine to eighteen years. One of the participants was male and all were Caucasian. The participants in the focus group are

described in detail in the following narratives. Each of the participants that was involved in the survey, interviews, questionnaire, direct observations, and a focus group is described in more detail in the following narratives.

Jan

Jan is a Caucasian female who has been teaching 17 years. She currently teaches Georgia Studies to eighth graders. Jan teaches a variety of different levels within her day, including special education and gifted students. Originally, she did not plan to become a middle school teacher but wanted to teach high school History. Initially, Jan was hired as a physical education teacher for three months in another Georgia county. Jan enjoys teaching middle school because she enjoys teaching the content of Georgia Studies. She likes getting to know her students' personalities and watching them mature and grow into young adults.

John

John is a Caucasian male who teaches eighth grade Physical Science. He has been teaching in the state of Georgia for 13 years. John attempts to appeal to all learning styles in the classroom. He did not plan on teaching middle school, but originally wanted to teach high school Social Studies and be a baseball coach. John believes his personal life helped him develop his teaching style. He enjoys teaching middle school because he identifies with the students in a lot of ways, because he is often misunderstood. John enjoys attempting to connect and have conversations with middle school students.

Haley

Haley is a Caucasian female who has been teaching Music for seven years. She decided to become a middle school teacher because most of her student teaching was done at the middle school level. Haley likes that the middle school students are still impressionable and the energy

they bring to class. She does not care for middle school student's attitudes because they can be "so fickle" (Haley, personal communication, April 2017). Haley believes that student behavior in her classroom can affect her teaching and she thinks that when she started teaching she was least prepared to handle classroom management issues.

Sally

Sally is a Caucasian female who has been teaching for 11 years at the same school in the Walton County School District. She teaches sixth grade and all four academic subjects to the same group of students within the school day. Sally decided to become a middle school teacher because when she was in middle school she was very frustrated and she wanted to make school fun for students. She tries to be a project-based teacher who allows students to explore and discover. Sally enjoys teaching middle school students because they are still eager to please and receptive to different ideas in the classroom.

Alice

Alice is an eighth-grade, gifted Language Arts, Social Studies, and high school honors Physical Science teacher. She is a Caucasian female who has been teaching for 16 years. Alice holds a bachelor's degree in History, master's degree in secondary education, and a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction. She planned on becoming a high school social studies teacher but could not find a job in the high school. Alice found a position in middle school and loved teaching eighth graders. Her favorite part of teaching middle school is challenging and inspiring middle school students. Alice believes she has a "good connection with her students which allows her to not only teach content, but impact physical, emotional, social and developmental aspects of her students" (Alice, personal communication, April 2017).

Crystal

Crystal is a seventh-grade, Mathematics teacher, gifted coordinator, and grade level chair at her middle school. She is a Caucasian female who has been teaching for 20 years. Crystal is part of her school governance team and school improvement team. She believes the reason she became a middle school teacher is because she enjoys working with adolescents. Crystal thinks it "takes a weird and quirky" person to teach middle school students because of "their quirky, and yes, sometimes irritating personalities." She believes that middle school students are "the most unique and challenging" age group to teach (Crystal, personal communication, April 2017).

Sandra

Sandra is a Caucasian female who has been teaching sixth grade for 25 years. She chose to become a middle school teacher because her dad was a middle school principal. While, growing up, Sandra was always around the middle school and it was something she was accustomed to. She likes how each day is very different when teaching middle school students and "you never have the same day twice" (Sandra, personal communication, March 2017).

Shelley

Shelley is a Caucasian female who has been teaching for 13 years. She teaches sixth grade gifted Language Arts and Social Studies on a two-person team. Shelley is certified in Georgia to teach Pre-K-5th, 4th-8th grade, Language Arts, Social Studies, ESOL, and gifted children. Shelley decided to teach middle school because she enjoyed working with the middle school aged students when she was subbing prior to her certification. She likes that she can focus on one or two content areas and having longer planning periods in the middle school compared to the elementary school. Shelley does not care for the many duties and responsibilities that middle school teachers have such as PTO meetings, athletic events, and art

nights that do not involve her own students. She felt that she was prepared to teach her content area, but she had difficulty early on with classroom management "with those students that can change the dynamics of the class" (Shelley, personal communication, April 2017).

Linda

Linda is a Caucasian female who has been teaching for 18 years with only one of those being in the middle school. When Linda first began in education, she was a paraprofessional. She was a middle school Georgia Studies teacher for one year and chose to move to elementary school for her last 17 years. Linda is now a Media Specialist in an elementary school, after many years of being a fifth-grade teacher at the elementary level. Originally, Linda chose to teach middle school because a mentor told her not to so she took on the challenge. She was determined to motivate students at the middle school level. However, very quickly Linda realized that she needed to make a change due to the disrespect she encountered with her eighth-grade students, lack of support, and feelings of failure she needed to make a change.

Danielle

Danielle is a Caucasian female who has a master's degree in middle school Mathematics and a Specialist degree in Curriculum and Instruction. She is the department head in the mathematics department in the high school where she is currently employed. She has been teaching for 16 years and is a former middle school teacher that voluntarily moved to high school after 11 years. Danielle initially taught middle school because she "loved the students and the differences amongst them during these trying times of their lives" (Danielle, personal communication, April, 2017). She wanted the opportunity to make a difference in their lives while teaching them to love math.

Rachel

Rachel is a Caucasian female who is a former middle school teacher who has moved to high school voluntarily. Rachel has been teaching in the Walton County School District for 10 years and only one of those years being in high school. Rachel currently teaches ninth and tenth grade Literature. She enjoyed teaching the content and only having one preparation at the middle school level. However, she prefers the autonomy that high school students have compared to the middle school student.

Adam

Adam is a Caucasian male who is a former middle school teacher who decided to move to high school voluntarily. Adam is a mathematics teacher with nine years of teaching experience, with six of that being in the middle school. Prior to teaching, Adam was in the finance industry for eight years. When deciding to teach, he completed his teacher preparation program through a one-year practicum and found a middle school that fit his needs since he did not have a teaching certificate. Adam enjoyed teaching middle school students because "they were sweet and accustomed to having teachers that were caring almost like parental figures" (Adam, personal communication, April 2017). However, he emphasized "the biggest challenge that plagues middle school is the need to control students." Adam believes that middle school students need "appropriate control"; however, they need "more personal freedom to prepare them to be successful in high school" (Adam, personal communication, April 2017).

Results

The collective case study results included an analysis of the interviews, questionnaire, direct observations, and a focus group session. Stake's (1995) method of categorical aggregation for case studies was used to assist in decreasing the risk of misconceptions of the data.

Theme Development

The purpose of the study was to investigate how current and former middle school teachers perceive low self-efficacy impacts their classroom management style in the Walton County School District (a pseudonym). Data analysis of the interview questions transcriptions, questionnaire results, direct observations, and a focus group session was used to identify patterns and codes to develop broad categories. Assigning a word or phrase to each category completed coding. From reading and listening to the data, four themes emerged. The codes with frequency of occurrence for the interview questions' transcriptions, questionnaire results, direct observations, and a focus group session are found in Table 1.

When I finished collecting the data from the interview questions, questionnaire results, direct observations, and focus group session, I read them multiple times to identify regular patterns and to be sure not to overlook any data. Once individual and focus group interviews were transcribed, I began my first phase of coding to organize phrases and key words. During the first phase of coding, I placed phrases and words in categories for each of the three research questions. I documented these codes in Excel to organize the data and 93 codes emerged. I continued to categorize similar phrases and key words that were similar.

From the initial list created, the patterns and codes were narrowed down to refine codes that answered each of the three research questions of the study. Initially, the list was organized in 93 codes; however, that list was too broad and had to be narrowed down by combining patterns that were similar. After reviewing and analyzing the data again, using an Excel spreadsheet, the results listed in Table 1 were reached. With the Excel document, I could easily maneuver the phrases and key words to identify patterns and categorize into groups by each research question.

Table 1

Code Frequency Chart

Codes	Frequency from Interviews	Frequency from Focus Groups	Frequency from Observations	Frequency from Questionnaire	Frequency Total
Caring	12	5	10	7	34
Forgiving	2	0	1	0	3
Personable	5	3	8	1	17
Listens	9	4	9	2	24
Trust	7	2	4	5	18
Understanding	7	3	2	3	15
Gives Chances	10	6	5	2	23
Relatable	14	4	10	5	33
Positive	3	2	8	0	13
Passionate	4	3	2	0	9
Confident	8	3	8	2	21
Engaging	8	5	10	3	26
Inspires	5	3	2	1	11
Self-evaluates	5	0	3	0	8
Takes Risk	5	1	1	0	7
Adaptive	5	5	8	2	20
Admits Mistakes	8	5	3	2	18
Uses Common Sense	5	5	8	2	20
Willing to Change	5	2	8	0	15
Reflective	10	6	3	2	21
Structure	15	7	8	5	35
Procedures	12	6	8	6	32
Prevention	5	0	2	3	10
Consequences	22	8	5	0	35
Accountable	8	6	8	5	27
Consistent	8	5	10	8	31

The six consistent themes that emerged throughout the data analysis included the following: be reflective, convey expectations, make a difference, be consistent, build relationships, and be flexible. Each of the codes was assigned to one of the six themes. I used a peer to review my data analysis that provided another check from an outside source. The peer review was conducted by someone who holds a doctorate in the field of education and has

expertise in classroom management (Creswell, 2013).

As I further reviewed the data and used the feedback from peer review, there was evidence of similarities between a couple of the themes, and the six themes were further narrowed down to four. The four final themes were: convey expectations, make a difference, build relationships, and be flexible. Table 2 demonstrates how each code was assigned to the four final themes.

Recurring Themes

Four final themes emerged from the data analysis process that demonstrated similarities between current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of current and former middle school regarding how they perceive the impact of self-efficacy on their classroom management style. The four themes were building relationships, be flexible, convey expectations, and make a difference (See Table 2). The themes were consistent with the relevant literature regarding teacher self-efficacy and classroom management and to provide answers to the three research questions proposed in the study.

Research Question Responses

Each of the research questions was answered by an analysis of interview questions, questionnaire results, a focus group interview and direct observation data. Research question one asked how the participants perceive their level of self-efficacy. Question two asked participants how they perceive their classroom management style. Research question three asked participants how they perceive the impact of self-efficacy on their classroom management style.

RQ1: In the Walton County School District, how do current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school perceive their level of self-efficacy?

From the initial survey, the middle school teachers were selected based upon how they rated themselves on the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale. When conducting my analysis, I only used the questions on the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale that pertained to classroom management. Questions four, five, nine, and eleven related to classroom management. The teachers who rated themselves on the survey as, "disagreed slightly more than agreed," "moderately disagreed," and "strongly disagreed," to these four questions were sent invitations to participate in the study. This research question and data were only used to select the participants who were going to be involved in the study.

During the individual and focus group interviews, teachers were asked, "What does self-efficacy mean to you?" Most of the teachers did not know or could not recall what the term *self-efficacy* meant. They were provided the definition of self-efficacy, which then triggered the response for the teachers to be able to answer the question. Many of the teachers, once knowing what the term *self-efficacy* meant, responded that self-efficacy was meeting goals, accomplishing what you have set out to do, and believing that they had a skill.

The middle school teachers in the study related self-efficacy to "confidence." Crystal stated, "Because I am confident in my ability to manage my classroom, my students see my confidence and know that I mean business" (Crystal, personal communication, April 2017). Also, Crystal suggested a relationship between teacher confidence and that students can sense whether a teacher can handle their classroom management or is "being strict." She believes in her abilities to utilize skills or accomplish a task, but also recognizes that she "messes up" at times and must be reflective, as well as know when to apologize when she is wrong (Crystal, personal communication, April 2017).

Similarly, Shelley believed she was confident in accomplishing her goals and tasks she

Table 2

Code Classification Chart

Theme	Codes	Code Frequency Total
Builds Relationships	Caring	34
	Forgiving	3
	Personable	17
	Listens	24
	Trust	18
	Understanding	15
	Gives Chances	23
	Relatable	33
	Positive	13
Make a Difference	Passionate	9
	Confident	21
	Engaging	26
	Inspires	11
	Self-evaluates	8
	Takes Risk	7
Flexible	Adaptive	20
	Admits Mistakes	18
	Uses Common Sense	20
	Willing to Change	15
	Reflective	21
Conveys Expectations	Structure	35
	Procedures	32
	Reminds	10
	Consequences	35
	Accountable	27
	Consistent	31

set forth in her classroom. However, she emphasized that she "has to be willing to learn from

mistakes…to move forward to be better" (Shelley, personal communication, March 2017).

Shelley shared that self-efficacy requires a teacher to be open-minded, willing to learn, and

flexible to be successful at what you attempt. Also, Alice felt confident in her abilities at work and in understanding the needs of her students, as well as how to meet those needs, even if it meant asking for help from her peers. Alice believes that a teacher must be driven, motivated, and want to learn, especially seeking new theories and practices to become more confident in the profession.

On the contrary, Linda did not have confidence or high self-efficacy when she taught middle school students. Shortly after she started teaching middle school, she asked herself, "What have I done?" because she faced so many challenges (Linda, personal communication, April 2017). Students in her eighth-grade Georgia Studies class were disrespectful and she felt like she could not control them. Danielle originally thought teaching middle school was her ideal level to teach because she thought this was an age where she could make an impact in the lives of her students. However, she realized that due to the students having "a different personality on day-to-day basis reflecting their surroundings and hormones" she had trouble making that happen (Danielle, personal communication, April 2017). Also, Danielle felt overwhelmed with the middle school model because there was a lack of respect for her time; however, she did not feel like she was trusted to do what "was right by her students and given the time to do so" (Danielle, personal communication, April 2017).

RQ2: In the Walton County School District, how do current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school perceive their classroom management style?

Build relationships. Throughout the study, middle school teachers reiterated how important building relationships was to their classroom management style. The participants discussed building rapport with their students and having conversations with them that they

could relate to during the school day, in particular, during non-instructional times such as lunch, recess, and transitions.

Sally tries to really get to know her students by finding out about what they like to do when they are not in school such as the sports and hobbies her students are interested in. At the beginning of each school year, Sally requests that students fill out an index card providing information about themselves so she can get to know them better. Throughout the school year, Sally refers to the index cards to have conversation starters with her students. By trying to get to know her students personally, she feels she can have positive interactions with them that help her develop relationships with them. Haley spends a lot of time developing relationships and building rapport with her students. She attempts to be relatable and gain an understanding of who her students are by getting to know them personally. Haley tries to identify triggers and engage with her students. She is open with her students and shares personal connections with them to develop relationships throughout the school year, which helps build trust with them.

John has a similar belief about his classroom management style. He feels that it is important to "get to know your students" and find connections and then learning can take place (John, personal communication, March 2017). Part of John's classroom management style is derived from his ability to relate to his students. He mentioned that "oftentimes middle school students are misunderstood and he often feels like that at times" (John, personal communication, March 2017). John likes to be funny and a little sarcastic at times with his students because he thinks this helps "break down barriers" (John, personal communication, March 2017). Jan reiterated the idea that building relationships was crucial to her classroom management style because it lets students know you care about them. Also, she suggested being a good listener was important in building relationships because often students are not listened to at home. Jan

thinks middle school teachers have an opportunity to be positive role models for some students who may never have one.

Alice really tries to create a connection with her students. One of the ways she attempts to do this is by watching the same shows and movies that they do, as well as read the same books. She believes that mutual respect both ways is essential to her classroom management style. When a difficult situation arises in the classroom, Alice believes it is important to give a reminder of the rule and explain the why the consequence is being given. She believes "this helps keep the heightened emotions out of it and prevents the arguments" (Alice, personal communication, April 2017).

Be flexible. The middle school teachers repeatedly emphasized the need to be flexible when teaching adolescents. Haley said it was important to "let them know you're human." If something is not working, scratch it and move on to something else. Also, if you make a mistake, the teachers emphasized how important it was to admit that you were wrong and then move on. Another way to be flexible was to use humor and making learning fun. Allowing for joking, to a certain extent, and light sarcasm was acceptable, according to the middle school teachers, as long as you know when to draw the line and which students that could be upset or offended easily.

Classroom arrangements varied and could vary weekly to monthly. Most teachers shared that group and partner work was encouraged when possible. Some classrooms had big, fuzzy chairs, tables, and quiet dedicated reading areas to allow for group discussions or autonomy. Also, allowing students to teach other students was highly recommended, as well as letting them lead small groups. Shelley said that she changes the desks around every three to four weeks. In the beginning of the year, she has rows to get to know her students' names and faces, but quickly

changes that when she becomes familiar with them.

Several of the middle school teachers repeatedly emphasized the importance of being flexible as a key component to their classroom management style. Crystal stated, "You have to be yourself" and be "Willing to change to meet the students where they are rather than where you want them to be" (Crystal, personal communication, April 2017). Haley mentioned that it is okay to admit when you are wrong and suggested "Let them know you are human" (Haley, personal communication, March 2017). Haley suggested making adjustments where needed and being aware that they are needed. Also, she emphasized the need to take risk and make mistakes. Sally agreed and suggested to "look at everyday as a new day." She believes you must be willing to not hold grudges, to forgive and to move forward as a middle school teacher. Sally believes each day can get a little bit better as a classroom manager if you are reflective about the day's challenges.

Convey expectations. Middle school teachers repeatedly suggested that clear, high expectations were necessary for adolescents in the classroom. Students needed to be held accountable and if a problem presented itself in the classroom, it should always be addressed. The middle school teachers suggested making priorities in the classroom and letting students know this is what is expected and must be done. Routines were evident in the classroom observations from assigned student seats to designated locker breaks. Consistency was necessary according to the interviewed participants, and teachers should be firm in decisions that are made. All of the teachers emphasized the importance of regular review of the classroom rules and expectations. In addition, reminders and talking about what those expectations mean and look like in the classroom was an important component to the classroom management.

Sandra suggested not giving middle school students a lot of chances. If a problem

occurs, it needs to be addressed, handled, and have a consequence. When observing Sandra's class, I noticed there was a lot of structure to the procedures. There was a certain way papers were disseminated to students, students raised their hands to speak or ask questions and did not speak out of turn. Even though Haley's class was a chorus classroom, which might appear to have less structure, procedures were still in place and rules were followed and expectations were high. Haley clapped her hands three times and all students quieted down, turned their attention to her, and waited for the next set of instructions. Sally likes to promote consistency and hold students accountable. Observations made in her classroom included her promoting a lot of independence, but with regular reminders and review of expectations. Crystal stated, "An ounce of prevention goes a long way" (Crystal, personal communication, April 2017).

Make a difference. The middle school teachers relayed how important they felt the middle school years were for their students. Many of the teachers themselves remembered the impact their own middle school teachers had on their lives. Even though many of the participants did not originally plan on teaching middle school and most even ended up teaching middle school due to what they originally believed were unfortunate or temporary circumstances, the majority of them were very happy they ended up where they were.

The participants shared, as teachers of adolescents, they had an opportunity to inspire students. They enjoyed the fact that adolescents were still impressionable and wanted to please adults, for the most part. The teachers were passionate about the roles they played in the lives of middle school students and the impact they could have on their lives. Many teachers spoke of pursuing professional learning, as well as higher education degrees, to become better teachers. Many of the participants spoke of the middle school classroom as the "family." They believed the culture that was created by their classroom management style mirrored that of a family's

dynamic.

Confidence was a key ingredient for the successful middle school teacher in the classroom and the way classroom management was handled. All of the middle school teachers observed were prepared and knew their content well. When dealing with a classroom situation, the teacher was in control and was looked up to by the students. The interactions were positive and problems did not escalate.

RQ3: In the Walton County School District, how do current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school perceive the impact of self-efficacy on their classroom management style?

Build relationships. The middle school teachers suggested that by believing in their abilities to handle classroom management, they could focus their efforts on more important areas of the student. They emphasized the opportunity they have to be caring, loving, supportive adult figures for their students. They felt that by believing in their ability handle classroom management they could focus on personal goal setting for the students. Being personable, listening, understanding, and positive were perceived as the impact self-efficacy had on their classroom management style.

John stated that he knew he was "the most consistent thing and person in each of his student's lives" (John, personal communication, March 2017). He is willing to give his students chances and they are willing to take risk because of his confidence. Trust is evident in John's classroom and students look up to him. Alice made it clear that she is able to "seek the best way to help each individual student." She doesn't get frustrated because she talks to her students rather than getting into a battle over who is right and who is wrong. Alice believes this enables her to have a "three to five- minute chat session" with her students and work things out (Alice,

personal communication, April, 2017).

Haley believes her self-efficacy allows her to not get overwhelmed with the daily task at hand, but to be able to build rapport and be understanding to what her students need. She thinks it allows her to be non-threatening because she knows what to do in a situation when it arises. Many times, she thinks teachers embarrass students when they have low self-efficacy because they are not sure how to handle the situation in the classroom. Shelley shared that if she was unsure of her abilities to handle her classroom management, she could "easily be run over by a tween" (Shelley, personal communication, March 2017). She believes it is necessary to lead and learn with one another and then the students will help manage the classroom with you.

Sally suggested that adolescents are very forgiving and this helps her self-efficacy and impacts her classroom management style. Each day she gets a chance to be better. She is not going to "retaliate" against a student for something that happened the day before (Sally, personal communication, March 2017). Sally is more relatable and understanding because of her self-efficacy. She listens more carefully and is personable. Crystal said that because of her self-efficacy her students "know she means business." She thinks her students refer to that as "being strict", but she thinks her confidence allows her to manage her classroom effectively (Crystal, personal communication, April 2017).

Be flexible. Because all of the middle school teachers in the study had been teaching a minimum of five years, many of them believed that their experience influenced their perception of the impact of self-efficacy on their classroom management style. Many middle school teachers and former middle school teachers shared the longer you do something, usually the better you get at it and you believe that about yourself. Along with the experience comes the willingness to be more flexible in the classroom.

Repeatedly middle school teachers shared that the longer they teacher, the more they become self-reflective. Sandra suggested, "Just be you" and handle situations as you normally would. She thinks you should be willing to change if necessary. Sandra thinks the longer someone teaches the more willing she would be with saying "this isn't working, let's try something else" (Sandra, personal communication, March 2017). John said it is important to be transparent and admit when you are wrong. By being transparent and admitting you made a mistake, you can gain a lot of trust from a middle school student.

Convey expectations. The middle school teachers believed they were more comfortable with the expectations they should have of adolescents and that influenced the perception the impact of self-efficacy had on their classroom management style. Since they were experienced with the age group, they were more confident in conveying expectations to their students. The participants knew they had to be firm and structured. They regularly held students accountable and provided reasonable consequences for poor choices. All of the teachers interviewed shared that they went over classroom expectations at the beginning of the school year and continuously reinforced them throughout the year with reminders.

All of the four middle schools in the district are PBIS schools. Crystal shared as part of PBIS; there are a matrix of expectations that the schools use. These expectations and matrices are displayed around the middle schools. When observing the four middle schools, I observed the PBIS matrices posted all around the schools including hallways, cafeteria, and classrooms. Shelley shared that she posted the five expectations on her classroom walls and has other students remind their peers if she feels expectations need to be repeated. Often she will have one-on-one conversations with those who are not meeting those expectations, which she believes is something she has changed as she has gotten more confident. In the past, Shelley said, "I may

yell or call a student out in front of others" (Shelley, personal communication, March 2017).

Make a difference. When I was interviewing and observing the middle school teachers, it was evident that they wanted to make a difference in their students' lives. The inspiring classrooms and conversations were clear and memorable. Confidence and passion resonated through the lessons and students were engaged. The middle school teachers were able to make a difference with their students because they were not as focused on what was going to happen next behaviorally.

Adam said one of the things he enjoyed when he did teach middle school was that "he felt like a parental figure." He enjoyed helping students prepare to transition into being more independent learners and get ready for the "freedom of high school" (Adam, personal communication, April 2017). Danielle, a former middle school teacher, agreed that she felt like she could inspire and "make a difference" in the students "during this trying time in their lives" (Danielle, personal communication, April 2017).

Summary

Chapter Four included a detailed description of each individual participant and the findings from the data collection process that emerged as themes and patterns. In addition, theme development was shared including the research question responses of the participants for each of the data collection methods, and the data analysis process, which used categorical aggregation, was described. Data analysis of the interview questions' transcriptions, questionnaire results, direct observations, and a focus group session were used to identify patterns and codes to develop broad categories.

Four final themes emerged from the data analysis process that demonstrated how current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school

perceive self-efficacy impacted their classroom management style. The four themes included: build relationships, be flexible, convey expectations, and make a difference. The themes were consistent with the relevant literature regarding teacher self-efficacy and classroom management and provided answers to the three research questions proposed in the study. The final part of the chapter included responses for the three research questions. The included narrative responses and quotes from the participants in relation to each of the four themes that recurred in the study were included.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate how current and former middle school teachers perceive low self-efficacy impacts their classroom management style. The study was conducted in one school district, the Walton County School District (a pseudonym). Chapter Five presents a summary of findings, discussion of findings, and the implications in light of relevant literature and theory, plus the delimitations and limitations and recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

To answer the research questions, I conducted a collective case study of the four middle schools in the Walton County School District. The data sources included (a) surveys, (b) interviews, (c) questionnaires, (d) direct observations, and (e) a focus group. Having multiple streams of data facilitated triangulation. A peer review provided another check from an outside source by one that holds a doctorate in the field of education and has expertise in classroom management (Creswell, 2013). The initial surveys were only used to determine which teachers, in the four middle schools, met the study criteria of teaching grades sixth through eight for a minimum of five years. The interviews, questionnaires, and direct observations were conducted with the top eight middle school teachers from the survey that scored themselves the lowest in teacher self-efficacy in classroom management during March and April of 2017. The focus group questions were conducted with the four former middle school teachers who voluntarily left middle school to teach in elementary or high school.

The first research question attempted to understand how current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school in the Walton County

School District (pseudonym) perceived their level of self-efficacy. Analysis of the data revealed four emergent themes that included: build relationships, be flexible, convey expectations, and make a difference. The middle school teachers in the study perceived themselves as confident when describing their self-efficacy. In particular, the participants spoke of their confidence in classroom management in building relationships with students, being flexible and not controlling, conveying classroom expectations, and trying to make a difference in the middle school students' lives.

Research question two asked current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school in the Walton County School District how they perceived their classroom management style. Analysis of the data revealed four emergent themes that included: build relationships, be flexible, convey expectations, and make a difference. The current and former middle school teachers elaborated on their confidence and self-efficacy related to classroom management by emphasizing the importance building relationships with their students. By having regular, personal conversations with their students, the current and former middle school teachers built rapport with their students and got to know about their hobbies and interests. The participants' sensed that their students felt cared for by them listening and understanding. The current and former middle school teachers shared parts of their personal lives with their students in an attempt to make connections with them. The teachers believed that building trusting relationships contributed to their classroom management style.

In addition, the current and former middle school teachers believed in being flexible and willing to make adjustments as necessary in the classroom. They felt it was important to admit when they were wrong and appear "human" to the students (Haley, personal communication,

March 2017). Current and former middle school teachers also demonstrated flexibility by allowing for frequent classroom arrangement changes and allowing for student involvement in the lessons. Additionally, the participants felt that having a sense of humor and having fun when appropriate was another means to be flexible.

While the current and former middle school teachers agreed they wanted to allow for flexibility, they wanted to be sure to always convey expectations on a regular basis. The participants believed in routines and structure as part of their classroom management. Consistency is key and if a problem occurs it is important to address it and provide an appropriate consequence. Finally, making a difference in the middle school students' lives emerged. Inspiring middle school students to do their best, set and reach goals were apparent. Demonstrating passion for teaching middle school students, as well as regular self-evaluation, was a component of the middle school teachers' classroom management style.

Research question three attempted to find out how current, persistent middle school teachers and teachers who purposely transferred out of middle school in the Walton County School District perceived the impact of self-efficacy on their classroom management style. The four emergent themes that included building relationships, be flexible, convey expectations, and make a difference were still clearly evident. The current and former middle school teachers suggested that by believing and being confident in their abilities to handle the management of the classroom, they could focus their efforts on more important areas of the student such as being caring, loving, supportive adult role models for their students. Being personable, listening, understanding, and positive were perceived as an impact self-efficacy had on their classroom management style.

The participants shared that their experience as a teacher, all had taught a minimum of

five years in middle school, influenced their perception of the impact of self-efficacy on their classroom management style. Many middle school teachers and former middle school teachers shared a belief that the longer people do something, the better they get at it while also becoming more flexible and easy going in the classroom. In addition, they were more comfortable with the expectations they should have with middle school students and that influenced their perception the impact of self-efficacy had on their classroom management style. Since they were experienced with the age group, they were more confident in the way to convey expectations to their students.

Finally, the current and former middle school teachers believed that they were able to make a difference in the lives of their students due to their self-efficacy in classroom management. The participants were more focused on their students' needs than the day-to-day challenges. More opportunities were available to assist the students in personal goals and opportunities.

Discussion

Theoretical Literature

The theory creating a framework for this study was that of self-efficacy. Bandura's (1993) self-efficacy theory related to this study's findings in several ways. According to Bandura (1993), the higher one's self-efficacy, the more challenges a person is willing to attempt and endure while maintaining a commitment to accomplishing the goals.

Self-efficacy and motivation. Individuals who believe that they can accomplish a goal are more motivated and willing to believe that they can accomplish the goal. When one expects to produce results or outcomes, results are higher, and goals are accomplished (Bandura, 1993). Individuals with high self-efficacy believe goals are more reachable and exhibit confidence in

their ability to achieve the goals (Bandura, 1993). The findings from this study support the notion that the higher one's self-efficacy when teaching middle school students, the more capable and confident the teacher is of dealing with classroom management issues. The interview participants confirmed that when they began teaching middle school, they did believe they were confident in their ability to handle classroom management issues and often struggled in this area. However, as middle school teachers gain experience, the perception of self-efficacy is higher and teachers are more confident in their abilities in classroom management.

Teacher self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy is higher if a teacher believes their work has been and continues to be successful and this belief will contribute to future success. Teacher self-efficacy is lower when the teacher believes his work to be a failure and it contributes to future failure (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). The current study supports the notion that the higher one's self-efficacy when teaching middle school students, the more capable and confident the teacher is of dealing with classroom management issues. As middle school teachers gained experience in field and reached a minimum of five years teaching grades six through eight, they became more comfortable in the classroom. Many of the teachers shared when they first started teaching they did not believe in their abilities and were not as successful with classroom management.

Perceived self-efficacy. Perceived self-efficacy theory was based not only on one's effort toward a challenge, but also on one's ability and knowledge regarding the task (Bandura, 1986). According to Bandura (1993), teachers perceive self-efficacy influences teaching, the learning environment, and the way in which student learning occurs. The current study supports perceived self-efficacy theory by supporting the idea that when the middle school teachers became more knowledgeable and comfortable with classroom management their perception

impacted the self-efficacy positively.

Empirical Literature

Middle school teachers. According to Scott (2014) middle school teachers should possess certain qualities in order to be successful. Scott (2014) suggested that good middle school teachers are authentic. Authentic teachers share experiences and their background with students to develop trust and establish a relationship with their students (Scott, 2014). Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering (2003) emphasized the importance of relationships when dealing with classroom management at the middle school level. Teachers knowing and understanding their students can assist in handling misbehavior in the classroom behaviors (Marzano et al., 2003). The current study confirms that building relationships with middle school students is a key component to being a successful middle school teacher. Having regular conversations and getting to know students personally allows for middle school teachers to build relationships, trust, and positive connections with students.

Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (**PBIS).** Kelm and McIntosh (2012) conducted a study of teacher self-efficacy and School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) as a method to address classroom management issues. There was a direct and positive relationship between teachers who were employed at SWPBS schools, who had a higher level of self-efficacy and better student behavior in the classroom. This study confirms that PBIS and teacher self-efficacy support classroom management and convey expectations regularly and consistently. Each of the four middle schools in the Walton County School District are PBIS schools. PBIS matrices are displayed with the expectations around the middle schools. When observing the four middle schools, I found the PBIS matrices posted all around the schools including hallways, cafeteria, and classrooms.

Teacher empowerment. Programs have been implemented within middle schools to assist teachers in attaining empowerment and autonomy. One way teachers are empowered is by teaching students self-regulation strategies (Alderman & MacDonald, 2015). Teachers take on the role of a facilitator in the learning process, and the students take on the primary responsibility of self-control and academic success. Creating an environment of social independence and accountability for students empowers students and teachers (Alderman & MacDonald, 2015). The current study supports teacher and student empowerment. The current and former middle school teachers who participated believed in being flexible and willing to make adjustments as necessary in the classroom. Middle school teachers have flexibility in both planning their lessons and arranging their classroom setup. Most teachers shared that group and partner work was encouraged when possible.

Middle school classroom management strategies. According to Davis and Forbes (2016), it is important to create a classroom culture that supports student connections and relationships. Creating a classroom that promotes mutual respect, taking a risk, and encouraging one another supports this classroom culture (Davis & Forbes, 2016). By teachers and students building relationships, teachers feel like their work has meaning and importance. These relationships provide teachers internal rewards by providing importance and meaning to their work. When teachers feel connected to the students in their classroom, both parties benefit in the respect to student behavior, and goals are more easily achieved (Spilt, Koomen, & Thijs, 2011). The current study confirms that creating a culture of respect and encouragement with middle school students is an essential classroom management strategy for a middle school teacher. Providing a caring, trusting environment is important for the student, as well as the teacher.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of this study are that the impact of high perceived self-efficacy on a middle school teacher's classroom management style is important for building positive relationships, being flexible and willing to make changes, conveying high expectations, firm expectations, and making a difference in students' lives. According to Bandura (1993), teachers' perceived self-efficacy influences teaching, the learning environment, and the way in which student learning occurred. John stated that he knew he was "the most consistent thing and person in each of his student's lives" (John, personal communication, March 2017). He is willing to give his students chances and they are willing to take risks because of his confidence. Trust is evident in John's classroom and students look up to him.

Empirical Implications

Findings in this study have important implications for administrators in the Walton County School District. The current study suggests that current and former middle school teachers who have been teaching a minimum of five years in grades six through eight are confident about classroom management. These middle school teachers are able to build relationship with students, be flexible and not controlling, convey classroom expectations, and make a difference in the lives of middle school students. Haley believes her self-efficacy allows her to not get overwhelmed with the daily task at hand, but to be able to build rapport and be understanding to what her students need. She thinks it allows her to be non-threatening because she knows what to do in a situation when it arises. Many times she thinks teachers embarrass students when they have low self-efficacy because they are not sure how to handle the situation in the classroom. Shelley shared that if she was unsure of her abilities to handle her classroom

management, she could "easily be run over by a tween" (Shelley, personal communication, March 2017). Therefore, when hiring teachers for the middle schools it would be beneficial to look at middle school teachers with these backgrounds and qualities.

Practical Implications

Practical implications resulted from the current study. Middle school teachers were able to self-evaluate and share how a middle school teacher's classroom management style is important. Areas that demonstrated importance for the middle school teachers were building positive relationships, being flexible and willing to make changes, conveying high expectations, firm expectations, and making a difference in students' lives. For many of the middle school teachers, confirmation was obtained that they believed the manner they related to students provided an effective classroom management style.

<div align="center">

Delimitations and Limitations

</div>

The study was delimited to current and former middle school teachers who had been teaching a minimum of five years in grades six through eight. The rationale behind the decision to delimit participation to middle school teachers who had been teaching in grades six through eight was because previous research studies focused only on novice teachers. By allowing teachers, no matter the number of years they had taught, to participate in the study, a more thorough perspective was shared and teachers had a lower perception of their self-efficacy. Most of the teachers who had middle grades for a minimum of five years felt fairly confident in their abilities in classroom management.

The first limitation of this study is that participants from this study were from one Georgia school district. Inclusion of participants from other school districts from similar regions could have increased the validity of the study. In addition, participants from other school

districts from regions that were different from that of the Walton County School District could have resulted in variable outcomes.

Another limitation of this study is that the sample size of 12 participants only included a small representation from each of the four middle schools. The majority of the participants were Caucasian females. Even though the sample size was acceptable for the collective case study, the sample size may have only provided a limited view of how current and former middle school teachers perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on their classroom management style in the Walton County School District.

Recommendations for Future Research

For future study of this topic, completing a collective case study including three or four different school districts is recommended. By including more school districts, the researcher could obtain a larger sample population. Since the school district in my study only had four middle schools, expanding future studies to three or four different school districts would open up the possibility of obtaining current and former middle school teachers with a lower self-efficacy. Middle school teachers in other school districts may provide different perspectives than middle school teachers in one school district. These differences could contribute to different conclusions on how middle school teachers perceive low self-efficacy impacts their classroom management style.

Because my study focused only on middle school teachers who voluntarily left middle school to work in elementary or high school, a second recommendation would be to include teachers who left elementary or high school voluntarily to teach middle school. These teachers in future studies could elaborate more and provide a diverse viewpoint on how middle school teachers perceived low self-efficacy impacts their classroom management versus the perception

of the teachers in my study who believed their self-efficacy was not significantly low.

Third, future research should include perceptions of teachers who left other professions to become a middle school teacher. These professionals could have different backgrounds and experiences when entering teaching and provide differing perspectives of how middle school teachers perceive low self-efficacy impacts their classroom management.

Finally, future research should study specific departments of middle schools such as special education, gifted populations, and the English language learners. My study did not segregate different populations of students and their behaviors could have influenced the self-efficacy of the middle school teacher and their classroom management style. Hearing from these middle school teachers could provide different dimensions in future studies.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate how current and former middle school teachers' perception of the impact of low self-efficacy on their classroom management style in the Walton County School District (a pseudonym). The data sources included (a) surveys, (b) interviews, (c) questionnaires, (d) direct observations, and (e) a focus group. Having multiple streams of data facilitated triangulation. A peer review provided another check from an outside source by one that holds a doctorate in the field of education and has expertise in classroom management (Creswell, 2013). The four themes that emerged were confidence in classroom management in building relationships with students, being flexible and not controlling, conveying classroom expectations, and trying to make a difference in the middle school students' lives.

The literature reviewed in this study was Bandura's (1993) self-efficacy theory. His theory stated the higher one's self-efficacy, the more challenges a person is willing to attempt

and endure while maintaining a commitment to accomplishing the goals. According to Bandura (1993), teachers perceive self-efficacy influences teaching, the learning environment, and the way in which student learning occurred.

In this chapter, the results of the study were discussed from both the empirical and theoretical literature, and implications of the study were shared. Limitations of the study and future recommendations for future research were provided. My research demonstrated that current and former middle school teachers who perceive the impact of their self-efficacy to be higher have confidence in classroom management and believe it is impacted by building relationships with students, being flexible and not controlling, conveying classroom expectations, and trying to make a difference in the middle school students' lives.

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APPENDIX A

IRB Approval Letter

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

March 7, 2017

Patty Jo McCain
IRB Approval 2775.030717: Teacher Perceptions of the Impact of Self-Efficacy on Classroom Management Style: A Case Study

Dear Patty Jo McCain,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty University IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year from the date provided above with your protocol number. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, M.A., CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
The Graduate School

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APPENDIX B

Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (Short Form)

APPENDIX C

Standardized Open-Ended Interview Questions

1. Please introduce yourself to me including your name, what grade you teach, and how many years you have been teaching.

2. Please walk me through a typical day for you at school.

3. Why did you choose to become a middle school teacher?

4. What do you enjoy least about teaching middle school?

5. What did you feel most prepared for in the classroom?

6. What did you feel least prepared for in the classroom?

7. Think about your first few weeks as a new teacher. How did you feel after those first few weeks?

8. What is your personal philosophy of classroom management?

9. How do you build rapport with your students?

10. How do you communicate expectations to your students?

11. How do you feel students should communicate/approach the teacher?

12. What is your classroom arrangement?

13. What are the classroom strategies you use when students exhibit unacceptable behaviors?

14. How do you handle disruptions in your classroom?

15. Please describe an experience when you had to deal with a challenging student and how did you handle the situation?

16. What challenges do you face when trying to deal with a challenging student?

17. What contributes to your classroom management style?

18. What does self-efficacy mean to you?

19. What personality characteristics do you believe impact a teacher's self-efficacy?

20. How does your self-efficacy specifically impact your ability to handle classroom management challenges?

21. How do you think your self-efficacy impacts your classroom management style?

22. Why do you think that your self-efficacy has an impact on your classroom management style?

23. I appreciate your time and feedback. What else do you think would be important for me to know about your classroom management style?

APPENDIX D

What is your classroom management profile?

http://www.cbv.ns.ca/sstudies/gen3.html

APPENDIX E

Classroom Management Scoring Rubric

APPENDIX F

Focus Group Interview

1. Please share with the group a little about yourself and your current position.

2. Why did you originally choose to teach middle school students?

3. What was your favorite part about teaching middle school students?

4. What challenges did you face when teaching middle school students?

5. What was your least favorite part about teaching middle school students?

6. Why did you leave middle school and move too elementary or high school?

APPENDIX G

Sample Teacher Interview Transcription

Question 13

Interviewer: What are the classroom strategies you use when students exhibit unacceptable behaviors?

Interviewee: I first try non-verbal cues…looks, stop talking and stare at them, tap on their desk to grab their attention and stuff like that.

Interviewer: Okay, what else do you do?

Interviewee: Um, let's see…I may use proximity by moving closer to the student or quietly whisper (leans over with hand to mouth demonstrates) to the student that their behavior is unacceptable and state my expectations. Or…sometimes a conversation in the hallway outside the door is more effective. It really depends on the temperament and personality of the student.

Interviewer: Anything else?

Interviewee: I've also try token reinforcement (Husky Bucks) to encourage positive behaviors from students who are meeting my expectations. This helps me focus on students who are doing right and not wrong. It also improves the number of positive interactions I have with students.

Question 14

Interviewer: So, how do you handle disruptions in your classroom?

Interviewee: As low-key as possible!! (pause) I try to keep the situation from escalating whenever possible cause you know! Oh yeah, I use our schools flow-chart to and assign steps for classroom managed behaviors and only send the office managed behaviors to the office for punishment. When a student is disrupting class to the point that instruction cannot continue effectively, I will try removing them from the room and sending them to a teammate for

isolation.

Question 15

Interviewer: Okay, please describe a, I mean, an experience when you had to deal with a challenging or disruptive student in your classroom? And how did you handle the situation?

Interviewee: Well, I've had many challenging students over the years (giggle). Let's see…my most challenging/hard to deal with situation was with a student who threatened to punch me in my face if I didn't move out of his way.

Interviewer: Oh my!

Interviewee: Yeah (pause) this student was angry because I had taken away a reward from him.

Interviewer: Why was the reward taken away?

Interviewee: Because of the way he behaved that day and he was not allowed to go with his friends to a dance. Soooo, instead of doing what he was supposed to do, he tried to slip by me and not report to my room as I had instructed.

Interviewer: Okay, um, can you tell me a little bit more?

Interviewee: Let me think, it's been a while. I think he went into my room when I repeated my instructions, which just got him even angrier. I was standing in the threshold of my doorway and he was trying to leave. I told him repeatedly to go sit down and that is when he made a threat.

Interviewer: How you handled that situation?

Interviewee: Well, obviously, this student had anger management issues that were bigger than my years of experience. Honestly at that point, I had to call an administrator and report the incident. There was nothing I could do.

APPENDIX H

Consent Form

Consent Form

Teacher Perceptions and Their Influence of Self-Efficacy on Classroom Management Style: A
Case Study
Patty Jo McCain
School of Education, Liberty University

You are invited to be in a research study of teacher self-efficacy and classroom management
style. You were selected as a possible participant because you are employed in 1 of the 4 middle
schools in Walton County School District and have been teaching grades 6-8 for a minimum of 5
years. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the
study.

Patty Jo McCain, a doctoral student in the School of Education at Liberty University, is
conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to investigate how middle school
teachers perceive the impact of low self-efficacy on their classroom management style.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:
1. Take a survey that will take approximately five minutes.
2. Participate in a confidential interview that will be audio recorded with Patty Jo McCain
   before or after school for approximately 30 minutes.
3. Fill out a questionnaire that has 12 questions. This should take approximately five
   minutes.
4. Allow Patty Jo McCain to observe one of your classes for 15 minutes.
5. Take part in a focus group that will be audio recorded with Patty Jo McCain. This should
   take approximately 30-60 minutes.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which
means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. This
study seeks to provide insight into changes that can be made to improve experiences for other
teachers.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might
publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject.
Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.
I may share the data I collect from you for use in future research studies or with other
researchers; if I share the data that I collect about you, I will remove any information that could
identify you, if applicable, before I share the data.
- I will conduct the interviews in a location where others will not easily overhear the
  conversation.

- Data will be locked in my file cabinet and electronic data will be password secured. After three years, data will be shredded. I do not anticipate using the data in the future.
- Confidentiality of the focus groups will be limited, as the researcher cannot assure that other group members will not share what was discussed.
- Recordings from the interviews will be secured by a password on Patty Jo McCain's iPad. Only Patty Jo McCain will have access to the recordings. The recordings will be deleted after three years.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Patty Jo McCain. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at pmccain@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty advisor, Dr. Judy Shoemaker, at jshoemaker@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 1887, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____
Signature of Participant   Date

_____
Signature of Investigator   Date

APPENDIX I

Classroom Management Survey Use Permission Correspondence

From: Santrock, John <santrock@utdallas.edu>
Sent: Saturday, November 26, 2016 10:34 AM
To: McCain, Patty Jo
Subject: RE: Classroom Management Style Profile Quiz

Hi,

I just created the self-assessment myself for the purpose of including it in my ed psych text, so there were no statistical assessments of it. Hope your research goes well.

Dr. Santrock

From: McCain, Patty Jo [mailto:pmccain@liberty.edu]
Sent: Friday, November 25, 2016 3:27 PM
To: Santrock, John
Subject: Re: Classroom Management Style Profile Quiz

Dr. Santrock,

Thank you very much! Is there anywhere I can find information on the reliability and validity of the quiz?

Thank you!

Patty Jo McCain

From: Santrock, John <santrock@utdallas.edu>
Sent: Friday, November 25, 2016 11:19:48 AM
To: McCain, Patty Jo
Subject: Re: Classroom Management Style Profile Quiz

Hi Patty,

Okay with me if you us the classroom management style profile quiz for your research.

Best regards,

Dr. Santrock

From: McCain, Patty Jo <pmccain@liberty.edu>
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2016 9:00 AM
To: Santrock, John
Subject: Classroom Management Style Profile Quiz

Good morning! I am a doctoral student at Liberty University and am trying to obtain permission to use the Classroom Management Style profile quiz for my research. Do you have rights to this quiz and if so, may I have your permission to use it for research purposes? Thank you! Patty Jo McCain