

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL EMOTIONAL BELIEFS ON TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY: A
CORRELATIVE STUDY

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Liberty University

Lynchburg, VA

2024

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative, correlative study was to determine if Social Emotional Learning (SEL) beliefs had an impact on teacher self-efficacy amongst teachers within a suburban school district population. Social Emotional Learning programs aim to address students' negative social and emotional concerns. These negative social and emotional concerns amongst students also have a negative impact on teachers. This study served to educate and provide school level administration data on whether SEL beliefs impact educator self-efficacy. This investigation can guide school districts on developing appropriate and targeted professional development for specific subgroups of teachers. For this study, a sample of 70 educators were surveyed within the elementary, middle, and high schools in a suburban school district within Georgia. The participants completed two instruments: the Belief in SEL Scale and Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale-short (TSES). The Belief in SEL scale was used to assess teachers' comfort in SEL implementation, commitment to the SEL lessons, and cultural beliefs amongst educators. The TSES was used to evaluate teachers' sense of self-efficacy for classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement. A bivariate linear regression analysis was conducted to determine if there was a predictive relationship between SEL beliefs and teachers' self-efficacy. The implications of the surveys will be discussed. The analysis demonstrated that teachers' beliefs in SEL correlate positively with their self-efficacy. Future research to expand upon the current research could include comparing the SEL beliefs amongst educators of different subject areas, including participants from different geographical regions of the United States, as well as increasing the variables to include SEL comfort, commitment, and culture.

Keywords: Social Emotional Learning, self-efficacy, mental health, beliefs, teacher

Dedication

This doctoral dissertation is dedicated to my family. First, I could never have accomplished this achievement without the support of my husband, Ricky. His support and willingness to do what was needed for me to complete the dissertation was pivotal for me to complete the program. I also could not have done this without the support and love of my children. They were always there to encourage me along the way. Lasty, I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Chris and Sandy Hobson. They set a strong expectation of the importance of education throughout my life. Thank you for always supporting me in endeavors to seek higher education.

Acknowledgments

First, I would like to acknowledge Jesus for always sustaining me throughout my life. My Lord is my rock and anchor as I have worked through many challenges.

Secondly, I would like to thank my Dissertation Chair, Dr. David Lee. Thank you for all the support you have provided me throughout the process. I appreciate your feedback, guidance, and contributions along the way. Dr. Lee took the time to understand my perspectives and lead me through the process of my dissertation.

Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Treg Hopkins. I appreciate all of the feedback that was provided throughout the process. Dr. Hopkins asked thought provoking questions regarding my research. This led to more in-depth and effective research.

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List of Abbreviations

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Affordable Care Act (ACA)

Mental Health America (MHA)

United States of America (USA)

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

Speaking to the Potential, Ability, and Resilience inside every Kid (SPARK)

Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)

Social-Emotional Learning Assessment (SELA)

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Social Emotional Engagement – Knowledge and Skills (SEE-KS)

Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)

Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)

Standardized Root Mean Residuals (SRMR)

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)

Teacher Self-Efficacy (TSE)

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Comparative Fit Index (CFI)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The purpose of this quantitative, causal-comparative study was to determine if teachers' beliefs about Social Emotional Learning (SEL) predict the self-efficacy of kindergarten through 12th grade public educators in a southern, suburban school district. The Introduction provides an overview of the need for SEL and the importance of teacher belief in the SEL program to maximize its positive impact on teacher self-efficacy. This includes a review of the literature regarding self-efficacy amongst teachers and the importance of those perceptions. Included in the background is an overview of the theoretical framework of social cognitive theory. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether teachers' belief in SEL is correlated with their self-efficacy. Afterward, the significance of the study will also be discussed. The chapter will be concluded by addressing the research questions and providing definition of terms that are relevant to the study.

Background

In a nationwide survey for the 2021–2022 school year, teachers reported their top three stressors when supporting students during the COVID-19 pandemic (Doan et al., 2022). After loss of instructional time and the support of students' mental health and well-being, the third largest stressor that negatively impacted educators were managing student behavior (Doan et al., 2022). With the rise in mental health concerns and teacher retention issues following the pandemic, students' and educators' social and emotional well-being has become a priority amongst educational leaders (Will, 2022). Social Emotional Learning was created in an effort to address social and emotional skills of students, such as following directions, being attentive, and managing their emotions (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2022).

SEL was developed to be provided throughout the school, with inclusion of the community as well (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2022; McClelland et al., 2017). Social Emotional Learning has been found to have positive impacts on educators (Garner et al., 2018; Xia et al., 2022) as well as students (Green et al., 2021; Nickerson et al., 2019; Taylor, 2017). Similarly, teacher self-efficacy has been found to have a positive impact on student outcomes (Wang, 2022; Zee et al., 2017; Zee et al., 2018), as well as increased job satisfaction for teachers themselves (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Yoon & Kim, 2022).

Nationwide educational systems have been struggling with teacher retention (National Education Association, 2022), which may be impacted by student behavior and teacher self-efficacy.

Therefore, school districts have made efforts to focus on supporting teachers personally and professionally.

Social emotional learning (SEL) has been implemented within school districts around the nation (Durlack et al., 2011). The SEL curriculum aims to reduce mental health concerns, substance abuse, and interpersonal violence (Coelho et al., 2015). Studies have been conducted to determine the effects of SEL on middle school students when comparing genders (Coelho et al., 2015), in the context of the effects of bullying (Yang et al., 2020), and to determine the difference in effects amongst elementary and secondary school students (Coelho et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2020). Yang et al. (2020) found that when SEL strategies were implemented, female students reported less bullying victimization than their male peers and there was no variance between students in elementary and middle schools. Regarding students who receive special education services and the implementation of SEL, research has shown a reduction of receipt of services when SEL was implemented at the elementary level (McCormick et al., 2019). The research demonstrated that when SEL was implemented at the early elementary level, the

number of students receiving special education services after experiencing five years of the SEL curriculum was reduced (McCormick et al., 2019).

Teacher self-efficacy is described as the control an individual has over different actions that impact their lives (Zee & Koomen, 2016). Teacher self-efficacy is an important aspect of education. Positive teacher self-efficacy has been correlated with increased job satisfaction, overall well-being, and commitment, as well as decreased burnout and stress (Aloe Amo, et al., 2014; Collie et al., 2012; Klassen & Chiu, 2011). Along with positive outcomes for teachers, it has been found that students benefit from teachers maintaining positive self-efficacy (Guo et al., 2012; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Teacher self-efficacy and SEL strategies are designed to have positive impacts on the educational system.

Historical Overview

Social Emotional Learning

Social-emotional learning is an instructional method designed to educate and allow adolescents and adults to manage their emotions, set goals, show empathy, maintain relationships, and develop healthy identities (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2018). Several different curricula have been designed to provide social-emotional instruction within the classroom (Gershon & Pellitteri, 2018; Humphrey et al., 2018; Jackman et al., 2019; Rojas & Abenavoli, 2021; Stalker et al., 2018). Teachers have reported that the implementation of SEL has a profound impact on behavior management in their classrooms when utilizing positive behavior intervention strategies (Blewitt et al., 2020). Additionally, SEL curricula have also been found to increase positive relationships amongst teachers and students, while reducing negative behaviors within the classroom, which helps increase the commitment of the educator to their profession (Collie et al., 2011). These positive teacher-student

relationships reinforce the social and emotional development of students and foster a constructive learning environment (Schonert-Reichl, 2017).

Social-emotional learning addresses an instructional framework for increasing the social-emotional competencies of individuals (West et al., 2020). The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework consists of five interrelated domains: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and social awareness. Self-awareness has been defined as a person's capability to know one's own values, thoughts, and emotions, while self-management aims to address student capacity to manage their own behaviors, emotions, and thoughts. The domain of responsible decision-making addresses one's abilities to make decisions in social interactions and personal behavior, while supportive relationships indicate one's abilities to maintain supportive and healthy relationships (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2022). Lastly, social awareness addresses one's tendency to empathize with others who have different cultures and backgrounds (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2022). The CASEL framework has been implemented into SEL curriculum. Teacher belief in the culture, commitment, and comfort regarding the implementation of SEL can be assessed through the SEL belief scale (Brackett et al., 2012).

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy amongst educators has been studied since the 1970s by the Rand Corporation, which is a non-profit organization designed to research and analyze government and private companies (Armor et al., 1976). Bandura (1977) stated that self-efficacy is an individual's beliefs about oneself that will predict their ability to complete a task, which affects the self-regulatory process in cognition (Bandura, 1989). Overall, self-efficacy is a measure of a

person's belief in themselves (Marsh et al., 2019). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) stated that teacher self-efficacy is, "judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated" (p. 783). Bandura (2006) clarified that self-efficacy entails beliefs that are domain specific, content specific, or task specific. Teacher self-efficacy can be assessed through the domains of classroom management, instructional practices, and child engagement (Kunemund et al., 2020). When an individual possesses high self-efficacy, they tend to display greater levels of persistence, effort, and personal goal setting (Bandura, 1977; Bandura, 2012; Bandura & Locke, 2003).

When teachers demonstrate greater self-efficacy, they are more likely to foster an increase in student achievement and positive relationships, while decreasing their perceived stress as a teacher (Putwain & von der Embse, 2019; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Teachers with low self-efficacy lack the motivation, perseverance, or initiative to obtain an individual goal (Bandura et al., 1999). Furthermore, research has found that teacher self-efficacy can impact students in various ways, ranging from achievement (Dicke et al., 2020) to behavior (Zee et al., 2017). Because of these positive effects, further research into teacher self-efficacy is warranted. With the national teacher shortage, school districts could potentially improve teacher retention by determining factors that can increase teacher self-efficacy.

Society-at-Large

As of 2021, approximately 47 million Americans were diagnosed with a mental illness (Mental Health America, 2022). Mental illness is not limited to adults; it is a growing problem among adolescent children. As of 2019, 166 million adolescents experienced mental illness worldwide (UNICEF, 2022). When adolescents experience untreated depression throughout their

youth, they are at increased risk of continuing to experience depression into adulthood (MHA, 2022). Furthermore, these adults are at an increased risk of experiencing substance abuse, increased medical expenses, death at an earlier age, and loss of productivity (Parodi et al., 2022). As students within our society continue to struggle with mental health, it can negatively impact multiple areas of their lives, including their school experience. Mental health concerns can cause students to have behavioral issues, lower academic achievement, and increased difficulty with social interaction (Lawrence et al., 2019). Consequently, this indicates the need for providing a curriculum in the public-school setting that adequately addresses youth mental illness, particularly for students in impoverished areas.

The negative attributes related to student mental illness can also have an adverse impact in the educational setting (Joshi et al., 2019; Lawrence et al., 2019; Rahman et al., 2018). When a student exhibits undesirable behaviors at the beginning of the school year, teachers are likely to develop negative perceptions and expectations of the student (Henricsson & Rydell, 2004; Murray & Zvoch, 2011). These negative behaviors and perceptions can therefore have an adverse impact on a student's educational success. Some students may display adverse emotions by showing external behaviors, such as screaming and hitting (Pollastri et al., 2013), while others may display internalized behaviors such as depression or suicide (Kramer et al., 2014). Teacher self-efficacy can be impacted if a student's behavior becomes difficult to manage (Landers et al., 2011). As a way to combat these negative outcomes, SEL programs are implemented to provide social-emotional lessons to students, so they can identify their feelings and express them in an appropriate manner (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2022). If students are equipped to understand and identify the emotions they are experiencing, they can work towards reducing the negative behaviors, whether external or internal.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is designed to promote positive mental health outcomes through its implementation in a manner that can benefit all students within a school (Merrell & Gueldner, 2010). Social-emotional learning was designed to teach self-awareness, relationship skills, social awareness, self-management skills, and responsible decision-making skills (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2022; Khazanchi et al., 2021). Social Emotional Learning is a multiyear and multicomponent process that is most effective when implemented from pre-school through high school (Greenberg et al., 2003). The program was designed from Water & Sroufe's (1983) description of competent people as possessing the ability "to generate and coordinate flexible, adaptive responses to demands and to generate and capitalize on opportunities in the environment" (p. 80). Throughout the United States, SEL has been integrated into pre-school curriculum in all 50 states (Khazanchi et al., 2021) and continues to be implemented across all grade levels (Divecha & Brackett, 2019; Khazanchi et al., 2021). It has even been implemented internationally (Berg et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2019). This increased implementation of SEL demonstrates the importance school districts are placing on the social and emotional needs of students in an effort to address student mental health concerns. These implementations also provide proactive strategies to assist with behaviors that can occur within schools.

Along with challenges to student learning presented by student mental health issues, these issues can also impact the educators themselves. Teacher retention has come to the forefront of education across the United States, as the teacher shortage is increasing (Aragon, 2016; Cross, 2016; Sutchter et al., 2019). With increasing concerns about teacher retention, school level administrators are investing in the well-being of educators within the building. If a teacher has high self-efficacy, they will likely be more content in their job (Aldridge & Fraser,

2016). Therefore, research into self-efficacy and SEL beliefs will inform administrators' efforts in professional development and implementation of SEL programs. Increasing targeted professional development can improve SEL beliefs among the faculty by providing them with training on how to implement SEL curriculum.

Theoretical Background

Self-efficacy is a psychological construct that has been studied and discussed since Plato and Socrates (Hattie, 1992). Self-efficacy is embedded within social emotional cognitive theory (Bandura, 1989, 1991, 2012). Social cognitive theory was developed through health science and involves self-reflection, self-organization, and self-regulation (Bandura, 1991; Otaye-Ebede et al., 2020). Social cognitive theory posits that one can measure an individual's ability to obtain a target behavior based on interrelationships (Bandura, 1991; Otaye-Ebede et al., 2020). Overall, social cognitive theory purports that an individual's behavior is a result of their introspective beliefs, contextual resources, and internal motivation (Lin et al., 2020). Teacher self-efficacy is also based on social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1987; Bandura, 1977).

Social cognitive theory uses a psychological approach to assist individuals in interacting with others in their environments (Caprara et al., 2013). Introspective skills and ideals that are developed through the social cognitive theory are the foundation for the creation of the SEL principles. Social Emotional Learning practices aim to teach children and adults to expand and cultivate introspective skills within themselves (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2022) and social cognitive theory purports that individuals learn through introspective practices. Through SEL practices, the introspective skills that are taught include self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, and social awareness (Wong et al., 2014). These internalized skills are targeted to increase within an individual in an effort to

decrease the internalized symptoms of mental illnesses, such as anxiety or depression (Wong et al., 2014).

Problem Statement

Teacher self-efficacy and SEL beliefs do not occur interdependently but have been found to have an impact on teacher well-being (Yang, 2021). Social Emotional Learning instruction has been investigated through the use of the Belief in SEL scale (Brackett et al., 2012; Collie et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2019; Lee & Zuilkowski, 2022; Poulou, 2016, 2017). Studies have explored the impact of teacher self-efficacy on student achievement (Hajovsky et al., 2020; Ma, 2022; Okoro et al., 2022; Wang, 2022; Zee et al., 2018) and job satisfaction (Abun et al., 2021; Mokhtar et al., 2021; Shaukat et al., 2019). Research has been conducted on teachers' SEL beliefs, self-efficacy, and student-teacher interactions with students with behavioral disorders (Poulou, 2017). One study was conducted to explore whether SEL beliefs impacted online education, teachers educating students through virtual learning, and teacher self-efficacy in that context (Yang, 2021). Another study investigated teacher self-efficacy in providing instruction on SEL concepts (White et al., 2022). However, there is lack of research to determine whether teacher belief in SEL can predict their self-efficacy within a southern suburban school district when the educators are providing face-to-face instruction. The problem is more research is needed to determine if teachers' SEL beliefs predicts their self-efficacy (Yang, 2021).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative, predictive correlation study was to examine the effects of SEL beliefs on teachers' self-efficacy. The predictor variable was the participants' SEL beliefs, which were measured using the SEL Belief Scale (Brackett et al., 2012). This instrument was used to assesses teachers' SEL beliefs in three areas: comfort, content, and culture. In

particular, this instrument measures comfort as a teacher's sense of self-assurance in providing instruction in SEL, commitment as a teacher's ambition to become a participant in SEL teaching and training opportunities, and culture as the support for SEL instruction and techniques throughout the school. The criterion variable was teacher self-efficacy, which was defined as one's ability to organize and create a course of action to obtain the desired outcome (Ruan et al., 2015). The Teacher Sense of Self Efficacy Scale (TSES) has subscales within the instrument that measure efficacy in terms of student engagement, efficacy in classroom management, and efficacy of instructional strategies (Ruan et al., 2015). The study participants included 66 teachers who worked in suburban elementary, middle, and high schools in northern Georgia.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the knowledge regarding the outcomes and benefits of teacher belief in SEL curriculum. The findings could be correlated with the positive effects of SEL on educators. There is also the potential to corroborate the findings of Yang (2021), who found that online, or virtual, educators had increased self-efficacy when they had a high level of belief in SEL. Additionally, the outcomes of this study could inform educational practices within local public school districts. Teacher beliefs can manifest in the decisions made and impressions given by educators as they perform their roles in the classroom; those beliefs may also directly affect their instructional practices (Pajares, 1992). This indicates that teachers' commitment to be trained in SEL can influence their decision to model the practices and programs. In fact, Brackett et al. (2012) inferred that teacher commitment, their opinion regarding the importance of SEL, and their perceptions of importance impact the effectiveness of SEL programming. Teachers who reported higher levels of SEL competencies reported experiencing higher levels of self-efficacy in online teaching (Yang, 2021). More specifically, educators with higher SEL competencies

appeared to maintain higher levels of awareness and empowerment, which could allow them to combat negative attitudes that might impact self-efficacy (Yang, 2021).

This study will assist administrators in customizing professional development to improve teacher self-efficacy. Teachers with positive self-efficacy have been found to increase beneficial outcomes for students and teachers (Woodcock et al., 2022). These high levels of teacher self-efficacy positively impact student achievement and motivation (Zee & Koomen, 2016). Another positive outcome has been found in that student engagement and motivation has emerged as being predicted by effective instructional practice as a student support (Praetorius et al., 2018), as well as by supportive teaching behaviors (Aelterman et al., 2019; Holzberger et al., 2013). Teachers have reported higher levels of self-efficacy regarding behavior and emotional needs of students, rather than in instructional practices (Zee et al., 2016). If there is a correlation between SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy, then increased development of SEL practices could potentially increase teacher self-efficacy.

This study assists in determining whether teacher SEL beliefs impact self-efficacy amongst suburban teachers in the South. Limited research has been conducted regarding SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy. Non-white teachers have reported lower self-efficacy relative to SEL when they were not provided with sufficient training or had limited resources (White et al., 2022). Educators need to be supported to build their self-efficacy (White et al., 2022). Yang (2021) found that greater SEL competency resulted in greater teacher self-efficacy when providing instruction online. Collie et al. (2012) found that positive teacher beliefs in SEL and school climate were associated with positive teacher self-efficacy. School administrators can use this information to assist educators with additional training in SEL in an effort to increase their positive SEL belief scores, which could have a positive impact on their teaching self-efficacy.

Additional effects may then be increased job satisfaction among teachers and improved teacher retention.

Research Question

RQ1: Does the degree of SEL beliefs predict teachers' self-efficacy?

Definitions

1. *Anxiety* – Anxiety can be characterized by overwhelming feelings, worrying, and persistent fears (Lau & Waters, 2017).
2. *Comfort* – A teachers' sense of self-assurance in providing instruction for SEL (Brackett et al., 2012).
3. *Commitment* – The teachers' ambition to become a participant in SEL teachings and training opportunities (Brackett et al., 2012).
4. *Culture* – The support for use of SEL instruction and techniques throughout the school (Brackett et al., 2012).
5. *Depression* – Depression can be described as disturbances in one's mood with various physical or cognitive functions (Lau & Waters, 2017).
6. *Mental Illness* – "Health conditions involving changes in emotion, thinking or behavior (or a combination of these). Mental illnesses are associated with distress and/or problems functioning in social, work or family activities" (American Psychiatric Association, 2022).
7. *Social Emotional Learning (SEL)* – School interventions that are embedded into the curriculum to improve student social emotional concerns and behavioral health (McCormick et al., 2019).

8. *Self-efficacy* – One's belief in their ability to attain goals or succeed in performance (Bandura, 1977).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The purpose of the literature review is to provide information regarding teachers' belief in SEL, focusing on comfort, commitment, and culture, and the impact it has on teacher self-efficacy. The chapter begins with the theoretical framework. The framework of SEL and self-efficacy is grounded in social cognitive theory that postulates that behavioral changes can be obtained when one works on their relational skills (Otaye-Ebede et al., 2020). Social Emotional Learning is grounded in this theory by teaching interpersonal skills to address the social and emotional concerns that have become evident among youth in the United States. A thorough review of research on the effects of SEL on students and teachers, as well as on teacher self-efficacy, the impact of mental health concerns in the school, student-teacher relationships, and teacher stress was conducted. The review indicated a lack of research designed to determine whether teacher SEL beliefs impacted their self-efficacy.

Theoretical Framework

Behaviorism

John B. Watson was the founder of behaviorism, which purports that behavior is a part of psychology and therefore a natural science that can be studied (Watson & Kimble, 1998;). In 1913, John B. Watson purported that behavior is part of psychology and that it is a natural science that could be studied (Moore, 2005; Watson & Kimble, 1998). Behaviorism is rooted in observation of others but purports that self-observation cannot be conducted at a deep level (Watson & Kimble, 1998). Through behaviorism, it is theorized that human behavior is regulated and conditioned by environmental stimuli (Bandura, 1999; Watson & Kimble, 1998). Also, behaviorism aims to predict and manipulate human behavior through the study of conditioning

(Watson & Kimble, 1998). Watson even proposed, and it was agreed upon by other behaviorists, that the natural science of behavior was psychology (Baum, 2017). Suppes (1975) indicated that there is a stimulus-response that occurs through research being conducted. There were various theories that were developed resulting from behaviorism. Some behaviorist theories, tested through operant conditioning and other restrictive scientific methodology, suggested that humans were not able to control their behavior (Bandura, 2001).

Behaviorism aims to collect data on the human response to different stimuli (Watson & Kimble, 1998). This stimuli and response progression is what builds relationships throughout an individual's life (Baum, 2017). When discussing relationships, one may contemplate the idea of responsibility. Baum (2017) stated that responsibility is frequently determined by societal norms, which are typically fostered through reinforcement and consequences. This ideology purports that within relationships, even with oneself, consequences and reinforcement must be implemented. Behaviorism also purports that to understand the behavior of an adult, the childhood of that individual should be studied to determine the internalized effects of past experiences (Baum, 2017). This concept is the basis of formulating SEL programs and can lead to improved self-efficacy. SEL was founded in behaviorism because the theory relies on one's experiences and aims to increase one's understanding of the personal experiences of others. Self-efficacy is one's belief in success, which is evident through their personal experiences (Bandura, 2001).

Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory, which is grounded in behaviorism, was developed by Albert Bandura in 1986 (Allen, 2017). Social cognitive theory closes the gap between behaviorism and cognition. Behaviorism theorizes that an individual's reactions are in response to a stimulus.

Cognition theorizes that the brain processes information that enables us to learn new information (Allen, 2017). Bandura claims that, through social cognitive theory, humans have the ability to self-regulate their behavior and, in turn, behaviors are learned through observation, modeling, or imitation (Allen, 2017; Koo et al., 2019; Locke & Locke, 1987). Bandura (2001) stated that if humans were only able to gain knowledge through experience, they would be limited to the knowledge and concepts available through their own experiences. Instances such as culture would not be transferrable to others if humans could only learn through personal experiences. The human brain has the ability to construct thoughts and plans in ever-changing circumstances, which can be translated into an individual's behavior (Bandura, 1999). Bandura purports that if a behavior is reinforced in a child, they will continue to display that behavior; in contrast, if a child is punished for a behavior, they will reduce the number of instances of the behavior (Allen, 2017). This indicates that experiences and the consequences of those experiences impact individuals.

Self-efficacy is embedded in social-cognitive theory concepts (Zee et al., 2017). When examining self-efficacy, Bandura (1989) stated, "efficacy beliefs are the product of a complex process of self-persuasion that relies on cognitive processing of diverse sources of efficacy information" (p. 1179). Teacher self-efficacy is the educator's perception of their ability to ensure that students understand content, behaviors, and values (Yang, 2021). Bandura purports that reinforcement is done with the assumption that self-efficacy regarding the task at hand is already present; meaning the individual believes that they can achieve the desired result that is being reinforced (Locke & Locke, 1987). This indicates that self-efficacy can impact decisions made by an individual. When an individual perceives a situation is too risky, they will not

engage in the situation due to their discernment that they will be unable to handle the situation (Bandura, 1989).

It has been shown that SEL programs were designed to increase self-efficacy amongst teachers and students (Yang, 2021). Self-efficacy is a contributing aspect of the domains within the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) SEL framework (West et al., 2020). Within the CASEL SEL framework, there are five domains. These domains are self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2022). Within these domains, the concept of self-efficacy is addressed. An increase in one's self-efficacy has been shown to have a positive impact on academic and SEL outcomes (Fairless et al., 2021). Yang (2021) stated that SEL is supported by social cognitive theory through the belief that an individual believes in themselves and their ability to cope with a situation. Examining the SEL beliefs of educators and the impact those beliefs have on their self-efficacy will extend the theory by diving deep into the differences between educators in their intrapersonal skills in the context of SEL.

Related Literature

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) promotes the ability to solve problems in social situations, set and accomplish goals, and embody empathy (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2022), which can be transferred into the academic arena (Hennessey & Humphrey, 2020; Khazanchi et al., 2021). Self-efficacy can be positively impacted by SEL through the intentional promotion of positive student-teacher relationships, which creates a setting that is conducive to student engagement and academic readiness (Hennessey & Humphrey, 2020; Khazanchi et al., 2021). Fourteen different SEL curricula have been identified

as being evidence-based and implemented within schools in the United States (Lawson et al., 2019). The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (2022) provides a framework and foundation to allow SEL strategies and curricula to be implemented as an evidence-based practice. When classroom teachers were provided with extensive training through SEL and equipped with effective classroom management skills, it led to a reduction of disruptive behaviors that impede the learning of other students (Hennessey & Humphrey, 2020). The SEL curriculum that was implemented was found to have small, yet positive effects on the academic performance of the students (Corcoran et al., 2018; Goldberg et al., 2018; Hennessey & Humphrey, 2020; Wigelsworth et al., 2016). Teachers who reported high self-efficacy were more likely to implement effective strategies in the classroom (Reinke et al., 2013).

Mental Health Effects Amongst Youth

Mental illnesses are affecting American adolescents and can impact the educational environment. Anxiety and depression are the most diagnosed mental illnesses amongst youth (Egorova et al., 2018; Jonstone et al., 2018). According to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2020), 20% of adolescents between the ages of three and seventeen years old have been diagnosed with depression and behavioral problems. Upon more investigation, it was also found that children from the ages of two to six are at a one-in-six (17.4%) risk of being diagnosed with a behavioral, developmental, or mental disorder (CDC, 2020). Also, 49.9% of children diagnosed with a mental health disorder during adolescence will maintain that diagnosis for their lifetime (National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 2022). Currently, only one quarter of youth who exhibit anxiety and depression symptoms receive mental health care (Jonstone et al., 2018). These youth who experience mental illness have been found to have maladaptive coping behaviors (Farris et al., 2021). Furthermore, it has been stated that depression and anxiety

are often found as comorbidities due to similar symptoms such as fatigue, concentration problems, and sleep disturbances (Jonstone et al., 2018). Mental illness has been found to increase amongst individuals as they transition to adulthood (Martel & Fuchs, 2017).

Previous research has shown a correlation between youth suicide and mental illness (Farris et al., 2021). Along with that, suicide amongst youth is on the rise within the United States (Posamentier et al., 2022), which indicates a need for school districts and communities to prioritize the mental health needs of young people. Research has found that youth within our country have continuously displayed an increase in depression and suicide, although depression is not necessary an antecedent to youth suicide (Keyes et al., 2019). However, a steady decline in academic outcomes is an indicator that a student is at an increased rate of having mental health episodes (Rahman et al., 2018), which can lead to suicide. This negative impact on education could be due to the symptoms associated with depression, such as poor memory, lethargy, or reduced attention span (Lundy et al., 2010). While depression is not always an antecedent to suicide, schools could potentially use low academic outcomes to monitor student mental health status. These indicators show the need for SEL programs to address social and emotional concerns amongst the youth in our society, as these concerns can have a negative impact upon teachers within the school.

Impacts of COVID-19 on Mental Health

With the COVID-19 pandemic, schools across the country were forced to transition to digital learning for extended periods of time. This interruption to traditional schooling had a negative impact on students' social-emotional development (Santibanez & Guarino, 2021). Since the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health concerns, including suicide, have increased amongst the youth population (Hawke et al., 2021; Knopf, 2021). With the increase in distance between peers

due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on their relationships, adolescents have experienced an increased rate of anxiety, depression, and panic attacks (Brooks et al., 2020; Jiao et al., 2020; Loades et al., 2020). Through the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, youth within the United States experienced increased rates of suicidal ideation and attempt (Posamentier et al., 2022), which is alarming. These increases in mental illnesses appear to be due to stress, boredom, fear, lack of information, and lack of social interaction with peers (Brooks et al., 2020). In addition to the mental health concerns that have increased throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, there has also been increased substance use amongst adolescents and young adults (Cowie & Myers, 2021; Volkow, 2020). Community and school interventions will be beneficial to mitigate the increased frequency of mental illness due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Asif et al., 2021; Villianti et al., 2022).

Youth were not the only ones negatively impacted by the pandemic. The family unit experienced increased stress during the pandemic due to pressures associated with job loss, financial concerns, and an inability to visit loved ones (Asif et al., 2021). During the lockdowns that occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic, increased rates of domestic violence were reported (Bean, 2021; Cowie & Myers, 2021; Rahman, 2021). Additionally, minority families experienced domestic violence at a higher rate than other groups during the COVID-19 pandemic (Bean, 2021; Rahman, 2021). On average, minority families also experienced greater barriers to accessing therapy for mental illness when compared to non-minority families (Rinfrette, 2021). When family violence occurs within the home, students are at increased risk of displaying delinquent behavior (Rahman, 2021). Consequently, youth who have experienced maltreatment within the home were more likely to suffer from one or more mental health

diagnoses (Negriff et al., 2020). These negative experiences in the home due to the pandemic are likely to have residual effects within in the school system.

Teacher Stress

In addition to student mental health, teacher stress can negatively affect outcomes as well. Teachers have indicated that they frequently experience high levels of stress (Gonzalez et al., 2017; Hindman & Bustamante, 2019; Jeon et al., 2019), an increasingly heavy workload, and secondary traumatic risk factors (McCarthy, 2019). Teachers have attributed this stress to high stakes testing and environmental impacts (Saeki et al., 2018). A subgroup of pre-school teachers reported that their work-related stress and exhaustion was associated with perceived student anger and aggression, lack of social competencies, and anxiety and withdrawal (Jeon et al., 2019). Along with student related stress, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic created additional demands on educators that have been associated with exacerbated stress among teachers (Bassok et al., 2020; Chen, 2022; Chen et al., 2022; Randall et al., 2021; Tarrant & Nagasawa, 2020). These perceived stressors among educators could be mitigated through the implementation and adoption of SEL supports in the classroom (Zinsser et al., 2019).

When a group of educators were taught and implemented short mindfulness techniques through an SEL-based program, that could be used throughout the school day, they reported a reduction in teacher stress (Seo & Yuh, 2022; Song et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2021; Uslu & Uslu, 2021). Along with SEL techniques, teacher-student relationships can have a substantial effect on the perceived level of teacher stress (Seo & Yuh, 2022). Educators have also reported that student misbehavior led to increased teacher stress, which was directly correlated with teachers expressing lower work satisfaction and increased work exhaustion (Aldrup et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2021). Educators have reported that teacher stress and low self-efficacy can be related to

student behavior and discipline (Collier et al., 2012). Overall, educators who report high levels of stress also report poor self-efficacy (Love et al., 2020). This correlation suggests that teacher stress can impact the self-efficacy of educators.

Emotional Intelligence

“Emotional intelligence (EI) refers broadly to skills and/or abilities that enable awareness of the emotional states of oneself and others and the capacity to regulate or use emotions to positively affect role performance” (Mattingly & Kraiger, 2019, p. 140). Optimism, self-esteem, happiness, and social support are associated with an individual who embodies EI (Chamizo-Nieto et al., 2021). It was found that educators who demonstrate higher levels of self-efficacy tend to exhibit high levels of EI (Anwar et al., 2021; Alrajhi et al., 2017). Along with that, social-emotional learning is grounded in EI (Clark et al., 2021; Elia, 2019). Education is an emotional profession where educators utilize emotional response to guide and ensure that their practices were successful (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). This was shown through surveys that indicated that teachers with an increased perception of EI experienced greater closeness with their students who exhibited behavioral concerns (Poulou, 2017). Teachers with more years of experience were likely to demonstrate a lower EI, while teachers with a higher literacy rate were likely to demonstrate an increased EI (Valente et al., 2018). Educators’ interpretation or misinterpretation of students’ EI influences their SEL work with students (Wood, 2020). Educators in more influential areas perceived students who lived in a low socio-economic area to have low EI, which was perceived as a hindrance to effective SEL implementation (Wood, 2020).

Teacher EI also impacts students’ educational outcomes. Positive student-teacher relationships were more likely to form in positive school environments. Higher levels of EI among teachers also correlated with increased job satisfaction (Shaukat et al., 2019; Singh &

Ryhal, 2021) and job performance amongst educators (Efendi et al., 2021). Individuals who maintained higher levels of EI experienced positive benefits within their own personal experience (MacCann et al., 2020), such as in managing behaviors, adjusting to the perspectives of others, and displaying their ability to utilize enhanced communication (Miao et al., 2017).

While educators with high EI have demonstrated positive characteristics that make them valuable employees, Dewaele et al. (2018) found that educators with low EI were not as employable within the field of education. Along with the positive impacts on educators themselves, there was a positive impact of high teacher EI upon students. Students tended to have enhanced academic achievement when their teachers demonstrate a higher level of EI (Alam & Ahmad, 2018; MacCann et al., 2020; Schonert-Reichl, 2017; Wang, 2022). It appears that high self-efficacy among teachers has a positive personal impact, which correlates with positive academic outcomes for students.

Negative Student Mental Health Effects on Educators

It has been shown that mental illness has a negative impact on students and their educational outcomes, but it affects educators as well. The internalizing or externalizing behaviors that students display have a negative impact on their learning opportunities, whether structured or unstructured (Williford et al., 2017). Students who exhibit these challenging behaviors often display the behaviors due to school culture, power struggles, socio-economic factors, or in an effort to seek attention (Rubbi Nunan & Ntombela, 2018). When students repeatedly demonstrated disruptive behaviors within the classroom, teachers reported increased stress levels and decreased self-efficacy (Kuronja et al., 2019), which negatively impacted educators (Rubbi Nunan & Ntombela, 2022). With increasing display of these behaviors by students in the classroom, it raises concerns regarding the behavior that students may be

observing within the home and in society more broadly (Rubbi Nunan & Ntombela, 2022). While behaviors can negatively impact educators' perceptions of a student, it has also been reported that students exhibit less negative externalized behaviors when teachers are made aware when students have been diagnosed with autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD; Nah & Tan, 2021). Externalized behaviors occur when an individual demonstrates difficulty regulating their behaviors, emotions, or impulses, and struggles with self-control (Kretschmer et al., 2022). This study indicates that educators' perceptions of student behaviors can be influenced by knowledge of the struggles experienced by the student.

Students in high conflict relationships with their teachers were reported by their parents to exhibit more externalized behaviors (Ly & Zhou, 2016). Pakarinen et al. (2018) found that when students displayed elevated levels of externalized behaviors, increased conflict between the educator and student occurred. Students who exhibited externalized behaviors struggled to maintain positive student-teacher relationships (Ly & Zhou, 2016). In contrast, Harding et al. (2019) reported that positive teacher-student relationships were correlated with lower student psychological distress. Similarly, positive student well-being has been associated with improved teacher well-being (Harding et al., 2019), indicating that the emotional states of students impact the emotional states of educators.

Impact of Emotional Exhaustion on Teachers

Ilaja and Reyes (2016) defined emotional exhaustion as the association to the mental and physical fatigue that one endures throughout their career. Emotional exhaustion can be found within multiple among people in a wide range of careers but has become a focus of educators due to high rates of teacher burnout. Teacher emotional exhaustion has been associated with lower student achievement (Arens & Morin, 2016) and motivation (Klusmann et al., 2022). It has also

been found that teacher exhaustion can negatively influence the ability of students to meet educational standards (Arens & Morin, 2016). Along with effects on academic achievement, teacher emotional exhaustion has been associated with negative effects on student-teacher relationships, which are characterized by closeness and cooperation with students (Klusmann et al., 2022; Taxer et al., 2019). Emotional exhaustion could make planning for the future difficult for educators (Taylor et al., 2019). The stress caused by working outside of contract hours, increased workload, and lack of leisure activities, such as physical activity, has been linked to emotional exhaustion (Portilla et al., 2022). Van Eycken et al. (2022) found that perceived high work demands have led to emotional exhaustion amongst teachers, which is correlated with educators leaving the profession. Surprisingly, educators who experience emotional exhaustion, an element of burnout, have been found to have a moderately positive effect on management of the disruptive behaviors of their students (Aloe, Amo, et al., 2014).

Teachers who engaged in mindfulness, the concept of mediating and focusing on self-awareness, were reported to have decreased emotional exhaustion compared with their peers who did not engage in mindfulness practices (Bi & Ye, 2021). These practices could be an effective intervention to reduce emotional exhaustion, which has been shown to increase when a teacher's sense of perceived competence is reduced (Aldrup et al., 2017). The effects of perceived lack of competency were confirmed by Kuok et al. (2022) who found a close relationship between teachers experiencing emotional exhaustion and lower self-efficacy in collaboration, dealing with difficult behaviors in students, and providing inclusive instruction. Regarding relationships, it has been found that teachers who display higher levels of social-emotional competencies tend to perceive their needs as being met and experience less emotional exhaustion (Maior et al., 2020).

Teacher Burnout

Burnout has been defined as a psychological condition that includes intrapersonal stressors within the field that correlates to negative outcomes for an individual (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). These negative outcomes can consist of educators viewing their profession as unfulfilling, unpleasant, and unrewarding (Saloviita & Pakarinen, 2021). Educational policymakers and recent research have focused more attention on teacher burnout (Donker et al., 2020). This was likely due to the positive correlation between teacher burnout and intent of educators to leave the profession (Madigan & Kim, 2021). This correlation was concerning because the National Association of Secondary School Principals (2022) reported that approximately 8% of teachers leave the profession each year, while student enrollment continues to increase year after year. This trend indicates a potential future in which the educational system will not have enough teachers to educate the growing number of students enrolling in public school systems.

Another reason for nationwide attention was likely due to the correlation between teachers exiting the field of education and reduced student achievement (Van Eycken et al., 2022). When educators experience burnout, they have a tendency to reverse their attitudes from positive to more negative thinking, even within the first year of teaching (Manju, 2018). Also, teachers who have exhibited symptoms of burnout have also demonstrated associated outcomes, including lower instructional quality and lower academic achievement among their students (Bottiani et al., 2019; Braun et al., 2019). Interestingly, the number of content area teachers who reported burnout increased linearly with the number of students within the class who received special education services (Saloviita & Pakarinen, 2021), suggesting increased stress associated with teaching students with special education needs. Educators who have reported experiencing

higher instances of anxiety displayed a stronger correlation to a negative impact of overall teacher well-being when compared to quality of teaching (Frenzel et al., 2016). These negative attributes and intrapersonal emotions could be combated through SEL practices within the school (Oberle et al., 2020).

SEL Effects on Students

A well-developed SEL program can positively influence both teachers and students by promoting success with daily tasks and challenges that can occur in school or in life (Mahoney et al., 2018; Todd et al., 2022). Students who participated in SEL concepts and who were taught about mental illness showed less likelihood of perpetuating the negative stigma of a person with a mental illness and viewing them in a negative light (Hollis et al., 2017). Different mental illnesses, like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety, were correlated with low academic achievement (Larson et al., 2017). This has an immediate negative effect on students, while a long-term effect on school-aged youth who experienced depression was increased likelihood of experiencing homelessness as an adult compared to youth who experienced another mental illness (Iwudu et al., 2020). Social Emotional Learning is most impactful and successful when it is implemented school-wide, which provides inclusivity of all environments found within the school (Jones et al., 2020). School districts can implement evidence-based practices of SEL in the school through the creation a foundational plan and related supports, increasing and supporting adult competencies in SEL, promoting the program to students, and aiming to improve the program to best support the students in the demographic area (Jones et al., 2020).

Students who engage in challenging behaviors participate in externalizing and internalizing behaviors, which can often be correlated with interpersonal and intrapersonal

outcomes, as well as negative academic outcomes (Barnes & McCallops, 2019), which indicates a need to address these behaviors. Studies have indicated that students showed improved social skills through extended exposure to SEL programs (Gresham et al., 2018; Hunter et al., 2021). When an SEL curriculum was implemented over a two-year period from first to second grade, there were small positive effects on responsibility, assertion, and social skills (Hunter et al., 2021). This study found that there was no statistically significant change in academic skills or problem behaviors over the course of a two-year exposure to SEL curriculum, which may be a result of the SEL curriculum targeting proactive skills when these behaviors were already being displayed (Hunter et al., 2021). While other studies have found that SEL had a positive impact on school engagement, promoted test and grade improvement, and resulted in students having fewer conduct related problems (Greenberg et al., 2017). A meta-analysis of SEL outcomes found that students engaged in SEL programs had increased interpersonal and intrapersonal skills (Kim et al., 2022; Taylor et al., 2017). Increased social-emotional competencies have been linked to increased perseverance of effort and adaptability within situations (Datu & Restubog, 2020). Whereas decreased social-emotional competencies have been linked to an inconsistency within an individual's interests, ability to set goals, and action behavior, and these individuals have also displayed increased negative emotions (Datu & Restubog, 2020). Teachers were able to implement SEL programs in any academic class, which reduced the stigma of mental illness within the schools (Greenberg et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2022). The stigma has negative implications for individuals who struggle with different mental health concerns, such as depression or anxiety. The classroom is the main setting for SEL programs to be implemented because the relationship between the student and teacher is primarily facilitated within the classroom (Mahoney et al., 2021). For a warm, positive, and inviting environment to be created

in a classroom, teachers must maintain strong cultural competencies and SEL skill sets (Mahoney et al., 2021). Students' ability to participate in deep learning within the classroom depends on the teacher having a deep understanding of their students (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019).

Self-Efficacy

When discussing self-efficacy, research has identified three components that directly impact students: academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and self-regulatory self-efficacy (Jederlund & Rosen, 2022). Academic self-efficacy refers to one's expectation to perform well in school, while social self-efficacy refers to a student's belief in their ability to handle relationships and maintain a sense of belonging. Lastly, self-regulatory self-efficacy is the student's ability to maintain their learning strategies (Jederlund & Rosen, 2022). Social self-efficacy is grounded in SEL beliefs, which can have a positive impact in multiple areas in the educational setting (Won et al., 2023). Self-efficacy amongst youth is imperative because emotional self-efficacy leads to a decrease in suicide risk (Wu et al., 2022). This indicates the importance of ensuring SEL effects upon student self-efficacy.

Social Emotional Learning activities and strategies have been perceived as conceptual promotion of self-efficacy embedded within the strategies (Fairless et al., 2021). This supports the repeated finding that the implementation of SEL strategies correlated with increased self-efficacy among students (Coelho & Sousa, 2017; McLeod & Boyes, 2021; Rosen et al., 2022). Similarly, in a long-term study, Pannebakker et al. (2019) found that when SEL strategies were implemented, the mental health and self-efficacy of students increased in some of the most vulnerable populations, such as minorities and students with disabilities, within the local school districts. Despite this trend, other studies have found that students' self-efficacy began to

decrease during the middle school years when SEL was implemented, compared to elementary school (Pannebakker et al., 2019; West et al., 2020; Loeb et al., 2019). The greatest decrease was found amongst female students compared to male students (Fahle et al., 2019; West et al., 2020).

Academic Impact

Positive mental health among students has been correlated with more classroom attentiveness and higher academic achievement (O'Conner et al., 2019). Social Emotional Learning strategies and programs assist in increasing the mental health of individuals. Multiple studies of SEL programming have demonstrated positive effects on students' academic performance (Greenberg et al., 2017; Lemberger-Truelove et al., 2021; Mahoney et al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2017). For instance, Xia et al. (2022) found that when SEL instruction was provided, students achieved higher grades in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Cognitive regulation is closely related to executive functioning skills, which include memory, attention, and inhibition (Jones et al., 2017). Executive functioning directly impacts a students' ability to be successful and retain information taught in classes. A common goal in use of SEL is to increase executive functioning skills through increasing the ability amongst students to problem-solve and make decisions (Jones et al., 2017).

The ability of students to identify and regulate their own empathy and emotions increases their ability to maintain focus and attention (Jones et al., 2017), which could lead to increased academic achievement. Social Emotional Learning program implementation has been shown to reduce reports of mental health issues amongst students, which also led to improved academic performance (Panayiotou et al., 2019). Although students' academic performance may not improve as a direct effect of the content of the SEL program, improved academic achievement may result from reduction of mental health concerns amongst students (Panayiotou et al., 2019).

Tan et al. (2018) found that overall failing grades in class amongst eighth grade students was associated with high behavioral needs and reduced level of social skills, with these students also displaying greater need in all areas. The state of a student's mental health has been shown to be an effective measure in determining their academic outcomes. After a year with the SEL program in place, there were increased attendance and decreased discipline referrals (Tan et al., 2018), which are outcomes that can lead to increased academic achievement.

Behavioral Impacts

Research has found that when students who were exposed to SEL lessons at a younger age have demonstrated decreased behavioral concerns due to classroom management expectations being established at the beginning of their educational career (Blewitt et al., 2020; Hunter et al., 2021). Through use of the SEL curriculum, increased display of positive behaviors and decreased display of negative externalized behaviors have been observed among students within the school setting (Blewitt et al., 2020; Wigelsworth et al., 2021), which have been correlated with decreased frequency of office referrals (Haymovitz et al., 2018). Middle school students engaged in SEL curriculum demonstrated improved problem solving and decision-making skills, as well as improved communication (Green et al., 2021). Studies have indicated a reduction in bullying incidents upon implementation of SEL curriculum (Nickerson et al., 2019), thereby having positive effects upon bullying victims (Moore et al., 2017). DePaoli et al. (2017) reported that parental complaints were reduced after the implementation of SEL within the school. This suggests that the implementation of SEL led to a decrease in negative behaviors within the school.

Positive long-term effects of SEL have been established (McCormick et al., 2021). Social Emotional Learning curriculum has been shown to reduce risky behaviors, such as drug

affiliation behaviors (Taylor et al., 2107). With the implementation of SEL, there has been evidence of decreased suicide attempts amongst youth (Posamentier et al., 2022). This is due to the effects of SEL in mitigating the risk factors associated with youth suicide (Muela et al., 2021; Posamentier et al., 2022) and self-harm behaviors (Muela et al., 2021). Implementation of school-based programs are needed, as local schools have ample opportunities to address self-harm concerns and educators have numerous opportunities to identify warning signs (Nakhid-Chatoor, 2020; Singer et al., 2019).

Absenteeism

Absenteeism has a negative impact on academic achievement for students, particularly in middle school (Santibanez & Guarino, 2021). When students engage in absenteeism, they display a decline in SEL skills, such as self-efficacy, social awareness, and self-management skills (Santibanez & Guarino, 2021; Tan et al., 2018). Panayiotou et al. (2019) found that the more social-emotional competency students obtained, the more they reported feeling connected to school (Panayiotou et al., 2019). If a student begins to display increased absence from school, educators should analyze the situation and determine whether additional SEL support is needed (Tan et al., 2018). Once implemented into the curriculum, SEL has been associated with increased student attendance rates (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Richerme, 2021; Xia et al., 2022).

SEL Effects on Teachers

While SEL has impacts on students, the strategies have been found to have benefits for educators as well. Increases in perceived teacher stress have been correlated with increased workloads that must be completed during the school day (Sandilos et al., 2018). Beginning teachers reported that they experienced an increase in psychologically demanding tasks throughout their career, which led to increased discontentment in the profession (Harmsen et al.,

2019). The emotional needs of teachers have become evident, emphasizing the need to focus on SEL to benefit teachers (Ashraf et al., 2017; Eadie et al., 2021; Kaur & Sharma, 2022). To that point, teachers who have taught ten years or longer reported increased perceived levels of stress than teachers who had taught five years or fewer (Schiepe-Tiska et al., 2021). In a meta-analysis of the impact of SEL on teacher burnout, Oliveira et al. (2021) found that teachers demonstrated an increase in personal accomplishment and a decrease in psychological distress. As student behaviors were reported to increase within the classroom and a reduction of family support was evident, teacher stress increased (Jeon & Ardeleanu, 2020). To assist in these challenges, SEL programs had a medium positive effect that led to increased personal accomplishment and decreased emotional exhaustion amongst teachers (Iancu et al., 2018; Oliveira et al., 2021). Social Emotional Learning has also been found to increase teacher morale and their ability to manage their emotions (Martinez, 2016). One strategy of SEL is mindfulness, which refers to one's ability to be aware of internal and external stimuli within the environment, without judgement, while learning something (Glomb et al., 2011). Kim et al. (2021) found that when mindfulness practices were implemented by educators, their confidence and perspective towards student behaviors were positively impacted, their stress was reduced, and there was decreased likelihood of teacher burnout (Guidetti et al., 2019). Another SEL curriculum is Faith and Wellness Resources, which were created as a way for teachers to provide SEL instruction to address the mental health and well-being of all students (Al-Jbouri et al., 2022). These resources have been found to increase teacher confidence and knowledge in the concepts of SEL (Al-Jbouri et al., 2022). Overall, when school-wide behavioral support systems were implemented, teacher stress was reduced (von der Embse et al., 2019).

The social-emotional stability of educators is imperative when establishing the climate within the classroom (Garner et al., 2018). The teacher has a direct effect on the social and emotional development of the students (Blewitt et al., 2021; Khazanchi et al., 2021; Ladd & Sorensen, 2017; Liu & Loeb, 2021). When looking toward the future of education, Garner et al. (2018) found that when preservice teachers were provided with SEL training, it provided these future educators with increased comprehension of emotional perceptions and emotional understanding. It is important to review teacher perspectives of SEL regarding teacher competences in social-emotional skills because this could influence the implementation and context in which the SEL program is implemented in the classroom (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). When assessing rural teachers, the teachers who were confident in their ability to teach SEL components and work in a positive school climate were more likely to implement SEL within their instructional practices (Zolkoski et al., 2020). Teachers perceived that integrating SEL lessons into classroom activities was the most effective way through which to teach social and emotional skills (Blewitt et al., 2021). When SEL programs were implemented, students and teachers displayed increased social-emotional competencies (Oliveira et al., 2021).

Teachers who educate students with emotional and behavioral disorders within the United States reported greater confidence in the areas of comfort and commitment when providing SEL instruction (Poulou et al., 2018). Teachers in the United States have been implementing SEL curriculum longer, which may explain why the US educators scored higher than comparable teachers in Greece (Poulou et al., 2018). When assessing teachers' stress levels based on their SEL belief scores, it was found that teachers who reported high levels of commitment (Schiepe-Tiska et al., 2021), comfort, and culture also reported low levels of stress (Collie et al., 2015). This is a direct indication of the positive effects SEL strategies have on

educators. Male teachers indicated that they were less likely to feel comfortable implementing SEL than their female counterparts (Collie et al., 2015), which could be due to a greater awareness among females of the mental health concerns of others (Molina et al., 2022). This could indicate a need for increased professional development for male educators regarding SEL instruction and implementation.

Professional Development

As with any curriculum, training is needed to provide an effective intervention. Teachers indicated that when provided with training, modeling opportunities, and constructive feedback, they were able to implement SEL more effectively in the classroom and had increased confidence during instruction (Blewitt et al., 2020). Teachers reported increased self-efficacy when they were trained in SEL programs to be implemented within the classroom (Kim et al., 2021). However, teachers reported that there were inconsistencies in strategies and training for the social and emotional development of students (Blewitt et al., 2021). For a new program such as SEL to be effectively implemented, professional development and school-wide supports are needed (Blewitt et al., 2021; Collie et al., 2015). Teachers reported increased SEL-related knowledge after attending trainings on the practices (Blewitt et al., 2020). Teachers also reported that they perceived an increase in comfort with SEL when professional development was provided in a steady and slow manner (Barnes & McCallops, 2019; Lee et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Lee et al. (2019) found that teachers reported a higher level of comfort due to the culture of the school, as well as the level of professional development that was provided. The intent of the SEL program is to increase educators' abilities to foster and increase students' social and emotional skills through a variety of techniques (Blewitt et al., 2020).

Social-emotional learning can improve the relationship between students and teachers, which may decrease the stress level felt amongst teachers (Iancu et al., 2018). However, teachers reported uncertainties regarding teaching SEL due to the lack of materials and training (Schiepe-Tiska et al., 2021). Furthermore, teachers were more likely to reduce the SEL lessons being implemented within the classroom when they were tasked with providing SEL and content instruction within a limited time frame (Hunter et al., 2022). A case study determined that when teachers experienced stress or increased frustration, the implementation of SEL lessons decreased (Mahmad, 2022). Teachers reported that when the administration did not emphasize SEL instruction and provide sufficient training, the SEL culture within the school was not perceived as strong regarding self-awareness and self-management (Schiepe-Tiska et al., 2021). Whereas preschool teachers who had been trained and implemented SEL programs within the classroom reported less feelings of teacher burnout, which had not been previously reported in research (Sandilos et al., 2020). Social Emotional Engagement – Knowledge and Skills (SEE-KS) is SEL professional development that aims to maximize student engagement to improve student outcomes (Morgan et al., 2021). After completing SEE-KS, teachers reported increased understanding of student engagement and ease of implementation, as well as increased job satisfaction, motivation, and social emotional engagement with co-workers and students (Morgan et al., 2021).

Impact of COVID-19 on SEL

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, educational entities and teachers were forced to adopt new educational pedagogy that pushed virtual learning to the forefront (Kupers et al., 2022; Lizana & Lera, 2022; Pressley et al., 2021; Wu et al., 2020). Teachers were required to quickly transition to new job expectations, new instructional techniques, and classroom

environments (Pressley et al., 2021). Overall, teachers reported increased stress and emotional exhaustion nationwide while working through the pandemic (Chan et al., 2021; Klapproth et al., 2020; Kupers et al., 2022; Lizana & Lera, 2022; Pressley & Ha, 2022; Rabaglietti et al., 2021). However, teachers who demonstrated higher levels of SEL competencies indicated a positive association with self-efficacy and compassion fatigue (Yang, 2021). Teachers who maintained higher levels of self-confidence also maintained higher levels of SEL competencies. This confidence may have allowed them to have a more positive outlook on digital learning. When compared to other formats, it was reported that SEL instruction was more effective when implemented during face-to-face instruction, which allowed natural social interaction to occur (Chen & Adams, 2022). While it was found that the face-to-face instructional format for SEL was most effective, teachers reported a perceived increase in SEL comfort, which led to an increase in SEL lessons being implemented through remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (Mahmud, 2022).

Challenges of SEL

There is finite time within a school day to provide students with academic instruction, which can lead to a reduction of time available for SEL instruction (Hart et al., 2020; Todd et al., 2022). Some studies have found that when time limitations exist, the SEL curriculum does not produce meaningful academic effects amongst the participants (Hart et al., 2020); these results may have been impacted by time constraints. In particular, there was little effect on state-mandated tests scores in math, reading, and across grade levels (Hart et al., 2020). Yeager (2017) found that high school students who were unengaged and often failed courses were less affected by SEL curriculum. Teachers have reported that there was a lack of clarity on the components of SEL and how to teach the skills within SEL (Main, 2018) due to a lack of proper training

(Peterson-Ahmad et al., 2018). Thierry et al. (2022) interviewed administrators, teachers, and community members regarding challenges implementing SEL in the school system; the overall theme indicated barriers due to teacher burnout, teacher turnover, and the amount of teacher training needed. It was also reported that teacher buy-in for SEL can be difficult due to the current politicization of diversity, inclusion, and equity priorities (Vera, 2022).

Future Possibilities

The Collaboration for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has worked to initiate and foster the Collaborating States Initiative (Mahoney et al., 2021). Through the Collaborating States Initiative, the group aims to provide district level staff and educational organizations to advance equity-focused, integrated, educational, and social and emotional learning (Collaborating States Initiative, 2018). Some states have begun establishing SEL standards and websites, along with the majority of states providing guidance to support the implementation of SEL within schools (Yoder et al., 2020). The culturally responsive pedagogy that is included in SEL programs should be researched to determine if it is implemented more effectively with proper professional development (Barnes & McCallops, 2019). Educators also reported a desire to have training regarding the identification and understanding of mental health concerns that can occur with students, as well as on strategies to assist students who display externalizing behaviors (Trach et al., 2018). Overall, teachers would benefit from increased training in SEL techniques and in working with students who have emotional and behavioral problems (Trach et al., 2018). One study revealed that teacher readiness to implement SEL lessons was dependent on the race of the teacher and the teacher's experience (Thierry et al., 2022). Hispanic teachers were less likely than white teachers to implement SEL lessons within the pacing guide expectation, which was likely due to the amount of time required to translate

the lesson materials (Thierry et al., 2022). While SEL practices within schools have become increasingly popular, some critics have indicated the need to further address the lack of attention to racial issues and cultural sensitivity (Simmons, 2020; Simmons, 2021; Vera, 2022).

Student-Teacher Relationships

While parents have a positive impact on student achievement in school, teachers have been seen to have greater impact on student achievement when those educators display high expectations (Benner et al., 2021). Student engagement increased when strong student-teacher relationships were present, providing a strong prediction of increased student achievement (Benner et al., 2021; Engels et al., 2021; Goetz et al., 2021; Olsen & Huang, 2019); specifically, increased achievement related to critical thinking and problem-solving skills have been observed (Li et al., 2022). Students' perceptions of their own academic and behavioral abilities can be improved when their teacher has high expectations of them (Jonstone et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2018). When students perceived high expectations from their teacher, they also perceived increased levels of teacher support (Greier, 2022; Rubie-Davies et al., 2020). While research suggests that high teacher self-efficacy positively impacts student academic outcomes, Prewett and Whitney (2021) found that low self-efficacy among teachers was correlated with lower student achievement.

Studies have shown that student attendance increased when teachers demonstrated positive relationships with students (Jackson, 2018; Liu & Loeb, 2021). Students who exhibited negative externalizing behaviors were at an increased risk of experiencing difficulty in establishing relationships within a school setting (Demirtaş-Zorbaz & Ergene, 2019; Rucinski et al., 2019). For students who exhibited externalizing behaviors, there were challenges creating student-teacher closeness (Aldrup et al., 2018; Nurmi et al., 2018) and increased conflict

between the student and the teacher (Roorda & Koomen, 2021). Once a moderately positive relationship with a teacher had been established, the student was less likely to experience peer victimization (Sulkowski & Simmons, 2017). Overall, it has been purported that positive teacher-student relationships correlate with increased positive experiences for the student and perception of teacher support (Longobardi et al., 2019).

Conversely, negative teacher-student relationships have been shown to have negative effects on student performance (Tandler & Dalbert, 2020) and student behaviors (Kuril et al., 2021). When a student perceives a teacher as having a negative perception towards them, this will likely decrease student motivation (Tandler & Dalbert, 2020). Along with that, studies have found that students who experienced negative teacher-student relationships also engaged in more bullying and pro-bullying behaviors (Longobardi et al., 2018). There is a clear need for strong, positive teacher-student relationships among students displaying negative behaviors. Problem behaviors among students have been shown to lead to teacher burnout and stress (Geving, 2007).

Effects of Expectations on Implementation

The educators who maintained higher expectations for their students generally provided a higher quality education (Miller & Wang, 2019). These educators with high student expectations have also been perceived as providing increased teacher support (Rubie-Davies et al., 2020). The belief of an educator is so powerful that even if an instructional strategy is not highly effective statistically, but the educator believes the strategy is effective, the strategy can continue to be used and demonstrate positive educational effects (Double et al., 2020). Increased student achievement and better student outcomes, which can be positive outcomes outside of academics, have been found when high teacher expectations of specific interventions were in place (de Boer et al., 2018; Muntoni & Retelsdorf, 2018; Rubie-Davies et al., 2020; Timmermans et al., 2018).

Students whose teachers exhibited high expectations of them demonstrated high-level competencies, regardless of whether they were a high or low performer in class (de Boer et al., 2018; Timmermans & Rubie-Davies, 2018). Similarly, when educators exhibited autonomous motivation, students tended to exhibit increased achievement (Van Houtte, 2021).

While overall positive effects have been associated with teachers who maintained high expectations, there are smaller subpopulations of students that need to be impacted as well. Teachers who worked with a specialized subpopulation of students within a school demonstrated improved understanding towards that group of students when compared to teachers who did not specialize in the field (Denessen et al., 2022). In addition, previous research has demonstrated that teachers historically exhibit different behaviors with different students, which impacts student engagement and motivation (Rubie-Davies, 2018). There are also gender differences amongst students. Teachers tend to maintain higher expectations of female students than male students, which may be due to the higher reading levels typically demonstrated by female students (Muntoni & Retelsdorf, 2018). Teachers who demonstrated a negative and conflict-inducing attitude tended to have an adverse effect upon student educational outcomes (Tandler & Dalbert, 2020) and psychological health (Ali et al., 2019). Similarly, Wang et al. (2018) found that student self-perceptions could be influenced by their teacher's expectations. Overall, current research indicates that teachers have different expectations of different students (Denessen et al., 2022; Rubie-Davies, 2018), which is a situation that needs to be monitored to ensure all students receive the benefits associated with their teacher's high expectations of them.

Teacher Beliefs in SEL

Despite the demonstrated benefits of SEL implementation, with many teachers considering the strategies beneficial, proper training is still needed to ensure proper

implementation. Lee et al. (2019) used the SEL Belief Scale to determine differences in responses between teachers of different genders and years of experience, which indicated that female teachers experience an increased rate of perceived low instructional support. When several studies were reviewed, it was found that, within each study, teachers reported at least one SEL instructional domain that needed improvement. This same study also reported that teachers effectively increased their classroom management skills and positive behavioral discipline practices through the use of SEL programs (Blewitt et al., 2020). When research was conducted on perceived SEL competencies amongst teachers, parents, and students, they all reported similar scores (Gresham et al., 2018). This indicates that all pertinent parties have an equal understanding of SEL competencies.

Overall, educators believed that school districts should address the social and emotional, as well as the cognitive competencies, of all students (Ferreira et al., 2020). Regarding importance of SEL instruction, female educators reported instruction as extremely important, while their male counterparts did not find it as important (Molina et al., 2022). Furthermore, positive teacher perceptions of SEL correlated with the implementation of restorative practices (Lund et al., 2021). Meanwhile, high school teachers perceived an increased need to receive SEL professional development to effectively implement the curriculum (Barnes & McCallops, 2019). Teachers within a primary educational setting in a private school perceived cultural responsiveness training as foundational to SEL and imperative (Barnes & McCallops, 2019). While training is needed, rural teachers who implemented SEL in the classroom sooner reported a greater ability to educate a more diverse class and promote a positive climate within the school, as well as increased proficiency in teaching students' self-management skills (Zolkoski et al., 2020).

How SEL Impacts Teacher Self-Efficacy

To understand the impact of SEL practices on teacher self-efficacy, the root causes must be considered. In a meta-analysis, de Oliveria et al. (2021) found that teacher burnout, which is an indicator of negative teacher self-efficacy, was reduced when SEL strategies were implemented. Aspects of SEL interventions, such as providing students with self-regulation strategies to reduce problem behaviors, increase self-regulation of emotions, and promote communication of feelings, were associated with reduction of teacher burnout (de Oliveria et al., 2021). When educators engaged in mindfulness, an SEL strategy, they were likely to reduce negative stress, thereby reducing the rate of teacher burnout (Guidetti et al., 2019). Kim et al. (2021) also found that educators reported increased belief that SEL would benefit students and improved confidence in teaching the material when mindfulness practices were implemented. Additionally, educators reported that they perceived meaningful changes in their thoughts regarding student behaviors and their personal responses to those behaviors (Kim et al., 2021). Guidetti et al., 2019 found that teachers who implemented the Faith and Wellness Resources within the classroom also reported that they perceived increased confidence in their own SEL and in the teaching of SEL concepts (Al-Jbouri et al., 2022).

Equitable SEL programs are culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate, and conscientious of school climate (Gregory & Fergus, 2017; Melnick et al., 2017; Osher et al., 2016). In a study on teacher SEL training, White et al. (2022) found that teachers need to be nurtured by their counterparts to increase their self-efficacy. Educators reported weak self-efficacy beliefs due to limited resources, staff, and training, as well as when exclusionary discipline was used (White et al., 2022). Kim et al. (2021) reported that when educators taught and modeled SEL practices, specifically mindfulness practices, they experienced increased job

satisfaction and support when handling disruptive student behaviors, which could improve their self-efficacy. While research has evaluated the effectiveness of SEL and teacher self-efficacy separately, only one study has looked comparatively at the effects of SEL programs on teacher self-efficacy (Yang, 2021). However, other studies have explored the underlying causes of the negative attributes that lead to low teacher self-efficacy (Malo-Juvera et al., 2018; Wang, 2022) and the areas that SEL is intended to impact (Granziera & Perera, 2019; Kunemund et al., 2020); this research confirmed the previous study, which indicated that SEL has a positive impact on teacher self-efficacy (Yang, 2021).

Summary

The theoretical framework of this study is founded in social cognitive theory. Social cognitive theory purports that an individual has the ability to learn through experiences and can self-regulate (Allen, 2017; Koo et al., 2019; Locke & Locke, 1987). Social cognitive theory is founded in behaviorism, which states that behavior can be managed or changed through stimulus. Social Emotional Learning was designed to increase an understanding of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills within individuals (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2022; Taylor et al., 2017). Through the use of SEL in schools, students have shown increased positive outcomes overall (Jones & Bouffard, 2012; Richerme, 2021; Xia et al., 2022). In addition to positive outcomes for students, teachers have reported that overall SEL is important content to teach within the public school system (Ferreira et al., 2020; Lund et al., 2021; Molina et al., 2022). Additionally, there have been numerous studies that have found SEL practices to have positive effects on teachers themselves. However, only few studies have been conducted to assess the implementation of SEL practices and its impact on teacher self-efficacy. One study was completed using mindfulness techniques (Kim et al., 2021), while another study

did not specify the SEL practices used within the school district at the time of the research (Yang, 2021). Overall, there is limited research that has explored whether SEL practices have a positive impact on teacher self-efficacy.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this quantitative, predictive correlational study was to investigate the effects of SEL beliefs on teachers' self-efficacy. This chapter begins by introducing the design of the study, including full definitions of all variables. The research questions and null hypotheses follow. Next, the participants and setting are described and demographic data are reported. Finally, the chapter includes a description of the instrumentation and the proposed procedures for data collection and analysis.

Design

The purpose of this quantitative, predictive correlational study was to explore the relationship between SEL beliefs and self-efficacy amongst teachers. The correlational design was selected due to the non-experimental nature of the design and based on its function of examining the relationships between two variables (Abbott & McKinney, 2012; Gall et al., 2007). Correlation research examines associations between variables, which warrants it is the appropriate research to be conducted. The design can also be used to explore the predictive relationship between two variables (Gall et al., 2007). By using the correlation methodology, the researcher aims to determine whether the predictor variable has a direct relationship or influence on the criterion variable (Gall et al., 2007).

The predictive variable of this correlational study is SEL belief, while the criterion variable is teacher self-efficacy. The SEL Belief scale measures comfort as a teacher's sense of self-assurance in providing instruction in SEL, commitment as the teacher's ambition to become a participant in SEL teaching and training opportunities, and culture as the support for SEL instruction and techniques throughout the school. Self-efficacy is described as one's beliefs

regarding their own capabilities to organize and create a course of action to obtain a desired outcome (Bandura, 1987). Correlation designs have an established history of use in educational research related to online teacher self-efficacy, SEL, and compassion fatigue among educators during the COVID-19 pandemic (Yang, 2021). Studies of SEL beliefs, in particular, have relied on correlation designs (Xu et al., 2023). Through the investigation of the variables, it was determined whether SEL beliefs predict teacher self-efficacy. This methodology was appropriate, as it allowed for data to be collected to determine whether SEL beliefs predict educator self-efficacy.

Research Question

RQ1: Does the degree of SEL beliefs predict teachers' self-efficacy?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between teachers' SEL beliefs and their self-efficacy.

Participants and Setting

For the purpose of this study, public education teachers within a suburban school district located in North Georgia participated in the study. Elementary, middle, and high school general education and special education teachers were included. The participants were identified through a convenience sampling and 71 were included. The demographics of the school district will be discussed.

Population

The participants for this study were drawn from a convenience sample of public school educators of all levels in a school district in northern Georgia during the 2023–2024 school year. The school district covers a large suburb of Atlanta, Georgia and has a predominately middle-

class population. The participants of the study taught multiple disciplines and maintained differing levels of teaching certification. General education teachers and special education teachers participated in the study, which allowed collection of data that represented teacher perspectives across environments within the school setting. Within the school district, there were approximately 880 general education teachers and 1780 special education teachers in elementary schools. In the middle schools, there were approximately 360 general education teachers and 90 special education teachers. Lastly, in the high schools, there were approximately 420 general education teachers and 125 special education teachers. District-wide there were approximately 1,660 general education and 390 special education teachers.

Participants

All study participants were educators within one suburban school district located in the northern region of Georgia. The participants were educators at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. A convenience sampling was conducted, because the researcher currently work within the same school district as the participants. This allowed for the population to provide a representation of all educators within the school district. It is imperative that the sample within a study represents the population accurately (Dattalo, 2008; Lawson et al., 2019). With the permission of the school district, the participants could choose to participate in the study by opting in. The participants received a flyer that explained the purpose of the study and contained a QR code by which they could access the survey questions online.

The study included 71 participants, which exceeded the required minimum number of participants when assuming a medium effect size. According to Gall et al. (2007), a minimum of 66 participants was needed to conduct a linear regression study when assuming a medium effect size of .07 and an alpha level of .05. Of the participants, 17 (23.9%) were male and 54 (76.1%)

were female. None of the participants (0%) selected “other” in response to the survey question regarding gender. Age demographics showed that 17 (23.9%) of the participants were 22–30 years of age, 9 (12.7%) of the participants were 31–40 years of age, 31 (43.7%) of the participants were 41–50 years of age, and 14 (19.7%) of the participants were age 51 or older. Ethnicity data indicated that 63 (88.7%) of the participants were Caucasian/European American, 3 (4.2%) were African/African American, 1 (1.4%) was Hispanic, and 4 (5.6%) identified as “other.”

Setting

The setting for the study included public elementary, middle, and high schools in a suburban school district in northern Georgia. Only 29.4% of students within the district were eligible for free or reduced lunch. There were 23 elementary schools within the district, which served students from kindergarten through fifth grade. Within the school district, there were seven middle schools that served students in grades six through eight. There were six high schools that served students in grades ninth through 12th grade. The only schools within the district that did not participate were the online school and alternative schools within the school system. These schools had not yet incorporated SEL curriculum. Additionally, educators who taught students with significant cognitive delays were not included in the study. At the time of the study, the school district had not begun to implement an adapted SEL curriculum for specialized programs.

Instrumentation

Two instruments were used to collect the data for this study. Data for the predictor variable was collected using the SEL Belief Scale (Brackett et al., 2012). This scale was used to measure the teacher’s sense of comfort teaching the materials, their desire to participate in

training, and the schoolwide culture (Brackett et al., 2012). Data for the criterion variable was collected using the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale–short (TSES; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The TSES is used to measure efficacy in student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

SEL Belief Scale

The SEL Belief Scale is an instrument that was used to assess the participants' beliefs regarding SEL (Brackett et al., 2012). The purpose of the SEL Belief Scale is to measure the different areas of teacher beliefs in SEL, which could impact the delivery model and outcomes of the curriculum (Brackett et al., 2012). Within the SEL Belief Scale, three subscales were used to determine the teachers' comfort (sense of self-assurance in implementing SEL), commitment (desire to participate in training and implement SEL), and culture (schoolwide foundation) regarding SEL curriculum (Brackett et al., 2012). These can be contributing factors to the success of SEL implementation in schools (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). The SEL belief scale was created in an effort to assess teacher beliefs about SEL that could directly affect the program delivery and outcomes (Brackett et al., 2012). Numerous peer reviewed studies have utilized this survey to assess the different components of teacher beliefs in SEL programs (Collie et al., 2011; Collie et al., 2015; Lynch, 2020; Poulou et al., 2018; Seery, 2019).

Validity refers to an instrument's capacity to measure what it is purported to measure (Wagemaker, 2020). The SEL belief scale was tested for validity through exploratory and confirmatory analyses on the factors of SEL comfort, SEL culture, and SEL commitment (Brackett et al., 2012). Model of fit analyses were conducted and demonstrated that the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .06, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .94, Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) = .93, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = .06, and *p*

< .001 (Brackett et al., 2012). The RMSEA index was below the .08 threshold, indicating a good fit. The CFI exceeded the .90 threshold, indicating good fit of the targeted model to an independent model. The TLI exceeded .90, indicating good fit for the model, and the (SRMR) was below the .08 threshold (Laerd Statistics, 2018). The chi-squared test was also conducted to determine the overall fit and $p > .05$. Brackett et al. (2012) also tested for concurrent validity between each SEL belief factor and burnout and derived significant correlations between factors that ranged from $r = -.23$ and $r = .69$ (Brackett et al., 2012).

The reliability of this instrument was established with an overall Cronbach's alpha level of .75 (Brackett et al., 2012). The SEL Belief Scale was found to be reliable for measuring its three subscales of comfort, commitment, and culture (Brackett et al., 2012). It was found that the teacher's belief in students' ability to learn the SEL curriculum and their ability to implement the techniques was not a reliable instrument and the questions were removed from the scale (Brackett et al., 2012). The assessment showed that educators who reported higher levels of comfort and commitment relative to the SEL program also reported decreased likelihood of experiencing depersonalization and a higher level of self-efficacy (Brackett et al., 2012). The comfort subscale has been demonstrated to be reliable, with Cronbach's alpha values of .86 (Brackett et al., 2012), .85 (Collie et al., 2011), and .68 (Lee & Zuilkowski, 2022). The commitment subscale demonstrated reliability with Cronbach's alpha values of .86 (Brackett et al., 2012; Collie et al., 2011) and .77 (Lee & Zuilkowski, 2022). For the current study, the instrument demonstrated a cumulative Cronbach's alpha of .001.

The questions included in the instrument asked participants to rate their level of agreement with 12 statements using a 5-point Likert scale (Brackett et al., 2012). The Likert scale ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Responses were as follows: Strongly

Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 1. The combined possible score ranged from 5 to 60 points. A score of 5 points being the lowest possible score, indicating that the participant strongly disagreed with all statements. A score of 60 points was the highest possible, indicating that the participant strongly agreed with all statements. Participants received the survey through an email that contained a Microsoft Form. Participants were able to complete the survey at their leisure and answer all questions electronically. It took each participant approximately 4 minutes to complete the scale. All scales were scored by the researcher and tracked the scores using an excel spreadsheet; no training was required. Permission to use the instrument was provided (see Appendix A for permission to use the instrument).

Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale

The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale–short (TSES) was used to assess educators’ self-efficacy. “A teacher’s efficacy belief is a judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001, p. 783). The purpose of the TSES–short is to measure the efficacy of instructional practices, efficacy of student engagement, and classroom management efficacy of an educator (Pressley, 2021). Participants were asked to evaluate their perceptions of their capability to complete tasks (Scherer et al., 2016). The TSES–short was previously referred to as the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (Heneman III et al., 2006; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The original scale was 52 items and has been revised into the current long and short formats (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The scale was first created in 24-question (long) and 12-question (short) formats (Monteiro & Forlin, 2020; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Within the scale, questions were asked to determine the

teacher's efficacy and judgements of three different domains (Heneman III, 2006). The scale has been used in peer-reviewed studies and has been validated in correlated studies with job satisfaction and work experience (Ho & Hau, 2004; Klassen et al., 2009; Pfitzner-Eden et al., 2014).

Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale validity was tested through exploratory and confirmatory analyses using the factors model fit analyses and the results showed that $\chi(53) = 109.45$, $RMSEA = .10$, $CFI = .90$, $TLI = .85$, $NFI = .92$, $SRMR = .06$, and $p < .001$ (Monteiro & Forlin, 2020). Assumption of validity was not found and there was an overall standard deviation of .82 (Monteiro & Forlin, 2020). Overall TSES–short reliability was demonstrated with a Cronbach's Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). alpha of .90 (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Subscale reliability was also established in this study. Engagement was found to have a .81 Cronbach's alpha, instruction was found to have a Cronbach's alpha of .86, while management had Cronbach's alpha level of .786 (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

The TSES–short has 12 questions that are answered on a Likert Scale of 1 to 9 (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Participants respond by using the Likert scale indicators, which are 1 = nothing, 3 = very little, 5 = some influence, 7 = quite a bit, and 9 = a great deal (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The majority of the statements inquired about how much an educator feels a particular way. When determining the subscale scores, the items were unweighted and averaged. The combined possible score for the TSES ranged from 12 to 108. As score of 12 was the lowest possible, which indicated lower self-efficacy, while 108 was the highest score possible, which indicated feeling higher self-efficacy. The survey was distributed to all participants through their work email via a Microsoft Form. The participants agreed to participate in the research prior to completing the survey. This survey took approximately five

minutes for participants to complete. The participants completed the survey at their desired time since it was electronic. All educators within the school district that was surveyed were provided with laptops, so technology was available to all participants. The researcher scored the instruments after all participants completed the survey. All surveys remained anonymous and locked within a passcode-protected computer to ensure confidentiality. There was no training required to score the instruments. Permission to use this instrument was granted. See Appendix B for permission to use the instrument.

Procedures

Institutional review board (IRB) approval was obtained prior to beginning the data collection. See Appendix C for IRB approval. Upon receiving IRB approval, the district research approval form was completed and submitted to the research department. The district took the approval to the school board to receive permission to conduct research within the school district. Once approval from the school district was received, surveys were distributed. Participants were drawn from a convenience sampling. All participants were educators within a local school district in suburban Georgia. The participants were all general and special education teachers who taught in the district during the 2023–2024 school year. Participants were provided with a flyer that included a brief overview of the research that was being conducted. Embedded within the flyer was the link and QR code to the Microsoft Form. The survey on Microsoft Forms contained questions on demographic information to be completed, the TSES–short, and the SEL Belief Scale. Eligible participants received a consent form if they chose to participate in the study. See Appendix D for the participant consent form. After consent was given, the participants completed the two surveys through a Microsoft Forms link. The participants were notified that all information provided by them would remain anonymous. Data was stored in a

password-protected computer. All information will remain secure for five years after completion of the research. The researcher compiled the scores from the instruments and conducted data analysis.

Data Analysis

For this study, a bivariate linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether a predictive relationship existed between SEL beliefs and teachers' self-efficacy. Bivariate linear regression measures two variables that are used within the study and assumes variables are linear (Gall et al., 2007). Linear regression also predicts the effect of the variables on each other. An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was also conducted to assess variability between SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy. Essentially, the analysis determined the relationship between SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy. Prior to analyzing the relationship, descriptive statistics will be conducted.

There are three assumptions that must be met for bivariate linear regression to be an appropriate methodology. These assumptions can be tested by examining the scatter plot of predictor and criterion variables (Cohen et al., 2002). A linear relationship occurs when there is a tendency for units of each variable to increase concurrently (Cohen et al., 2013). This linear relationship can be positive or negative, which is determined by the formation of data points on the graph. Linearity can be determined if the points on the graph follow the line of fit. If the assumption is not met, then Pearson's correlation coefficient will not sufficiently capture the relationship. The second assumption is that there are no outliers present on the scatterplot for the predictor and criterion variables. Outliers, which are points plotted on graph that are farthest away from the regression line, can also be detected through visual inspection. If no outliers are present, the assumption was met. Lastly, the assumption of normal distribution must be met. This

can be assessed through a visual inspection of a scatterplot to determine whether the data points follow a characteristic “cigar”-shape along the line of fit.

When reporting bivariate linear regression, Pearson’s product-moment correlation, to generate Pearson’s R , was run to determine whether there was a predictive value between the variables. The product-moment correlation test established the value of R , which is the effect size statistic. Directionality of R can also be analyzed to determine whether the relationship between variables is positive or negative. The closer that the value of R is to 1 or -1, the stronger the relationship present between the two variables. R^2 represents the goodness of fit within the model. It indicates the amount of discrepancy in the criterion variable being predicted from the predictor variable. The confidence level for the study is 95%, which indicates that $\alpha = 05$. Furthermore, the F value will be determined, which tests the null hypothesis and serves as the test of significance. If $F < .05$ then there is no significant difference between the variables. The p -value will also be determined to ensure that that the null hypothesis is true. If $p < .05$, then there is a statistically significant relationship between the variables (Warner, 2020).

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

For the purpose of this study, public education teachers within a suburban school district located in North Georgia participated in the study. In this chapter, the findings from the data analysis are presented. Nominal-level and demographic frequencies and trends are analyzed and presented. The Cronbach's alpha level was determined to assess internal validity. Bivariate linear regression analysis was used to determine the research question through data analysis. This analysis was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant predictive relationship between teachers' SEL beliefs and their self-efficacy.

Research Question

RQ1: Does the degree of SEL beliefs predict teachers' self-efficacy?

Null Hypothesis

H₀1: There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between teachers' SEL beliefs and their self-efficacy.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated for each of the variables, which include SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy. The sample consisted of $N = 71$ participants. Participant educators were recruited through school faculty meetings. The researcher acquired permission from the administrator of each school to present the purpose of the study, the consent form, and a flyer to prospective participants. Participants were provided with a QR code to take the survey if they desired. Data for the study were collected using two survey instruments. Social emotional learning beliefs were assessed using the SEL Belief Scale (Bracket et al., 2012). Teacher self-efficacy was assessed through the TSES-short (Tschannen-Morn & Hoy, 2001). SEL belief

scores could range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), while the TSES–short scores could range from 1 (nothing) to 9 (a great deal). Descriptive statistics for each survey are reported in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics

Instrument	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Teacher Self-Efficacy	71	51	108	86.25	10.241
SEL Beliefs	71	12	50	35.63	9.023

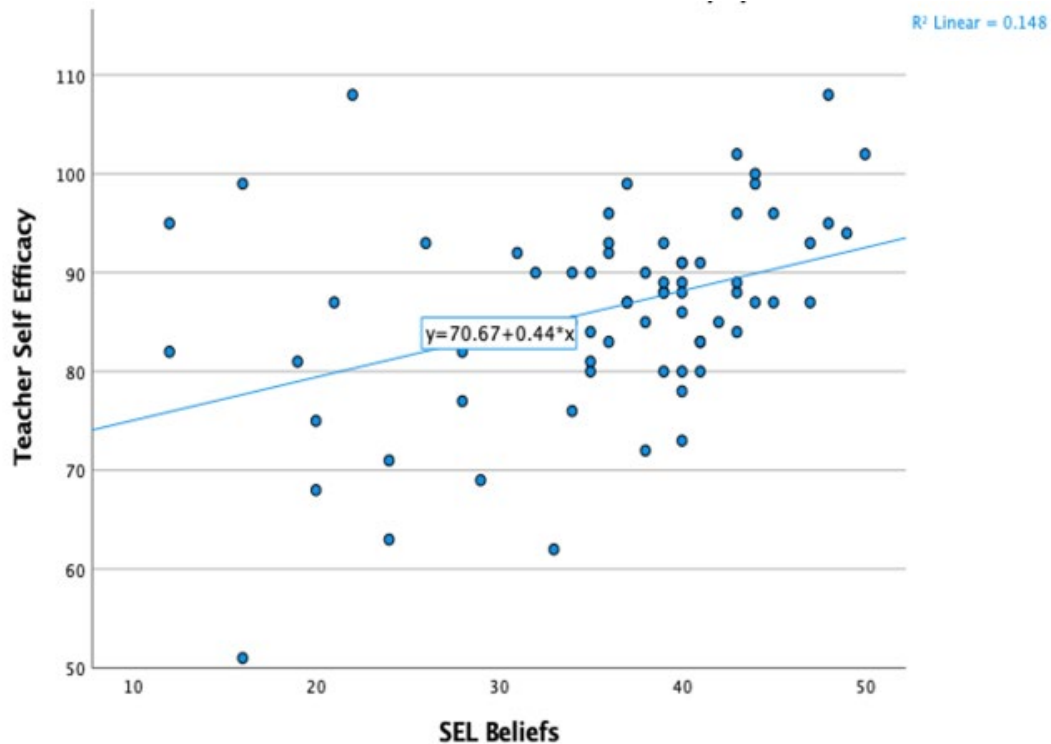
Results

Assumption Tests

The first assumption was tested by examining the scatter plot, which indicated no extreme outliers. Therefore, the assumption of outliers was met. Bivariate regression requires that the assumption of linearity be met. The scatter plot included the line of fit, which tested the assumption of linearity. This assumption was tested by examining a scatter plot of the two variables. The assumption of linearity was met due to the linear distribution of the scatter plot. See Figure 1 for the bivariate scatter plot. Bivariate regression requires that the assumption of bivariate normal distribution be met. The assumption of bivariate normal distribution was examined using a scatter plot. Through visual inspection of the scatterplot, it was found that the data followed the “cigar”-shape along the line of fit. The assumption of bivariate normal distribution was met. See Figure 1 for the scatter plot. All data were screened for missing data points and inaccurate entries. No missing data points or inaccurate entries were found, so the data were retained.

Figure 1

Scatter Plot of Teacher Self-Efficacy by SEL Beliefs



Hypothesis

The model's effect size was medium where $R = .385$. This indicates a positive relationship between teachers' SEL beliefs and their self-efficacy. Furthermore, $R^2 = .148$, indicating that approximately 13.6% of the variance of the criterion variable can be explained by the predictor variable. The full model that contains the teachers' demographic variables and the teachers' SEL beliefs as predictors explained about 15% of the variance in the teachers' self-efficacy ($R^2 = .148$), which was a statistically significant amount of explanatory variance, $F(5, 65) = 2.58, p < .001$. Thus, the rejection of the null hypothesis was statistically supported. See Table 2 for model summary.

A bivariate regression was conducted to determine whether SEL beliefs of teachers could predict their self-efficacy. As part of the analysis, ANOVA was used to assess the variability between the two groups (Gall et al., 2007). The results indicated a statistically significant, predictive relationship between the predictor variable (SEL belief scores) and the criterion variable (teacher self-efficacy scores). The ANOVA indicated that there was significant variation between the two groups in which $\alpha = .05$. The null hypothesis was rejected at 95% confidence where $F(1, 69) = 12.02, p < .001$. See Table 3 for ANOVA results.

Table 2

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.385a	.148	.136	9.519

^a Predictors: (Constant), SEL Beliefs

Table 3

ANOVA Results

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1089.419	1	108.419	12.023	<.001 ^b
	Residual	6252.018	69	90.609		
	Total	7341.437	70			

^a Dependent Variable: Teacher Self Efficacy.

^b Predictors: (Constant), SEL Beliefs.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

Chapter five provides a discussion of the findings, as well as their implications, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research. The results are analyzed with regard to recent research and the implications of the study are discussed in this context. Next, limitations of the study are then addressed. Lastly, recommendations for future studies are provided.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to determine whether teachers' beliefs in SEL impacts their self-efficacy. The study found that teachers' beliefs in SEL correlated positively with their self-efficacy. The bivariant regression analysis indicated a medium effect size. This indicates a direct correlation between SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy. When educators demonstrated a higher score for belief in SEL, there was a correlation with higher self-efficacy. The results of this study were consistent with the findings of previous studies, which found that online teachers who maintained higher levels of SEL competencies were more attuned to negative influences on their self-efficacy (Yang, 2021). The theory that SEL beliefs impact teacher self-efficacy was supported through this study. Lastly, this study contributes to research on the impacts of SEL instruction within the public education school system.

Regarding the ethnicity of the participants, 63 (89%) of the participants were of Caucasian/European American descent. Furthermore, most of the participants identified as women (76.1%, women = 54), whereas the remaining 23.9% (men = 17) identified as men. The racial demographics of the participants were comparable to the demographics found in the county where the data were collected (United States Census Bureau, 2023). Therefore, the racial

demographics amongst the participants of the study were representative of those of the suburban county where the study was conducted.

The gender demographics of the county in which the study occurred were not representative of the demographics of the county population. The county in which the study occurred had a population that consisted of 50% women and 50% men (United States Census Bureau, 2023). However, the gender demographics of participants in the study were consistent with the national gender demographics for public school educators, wherein 77% of educators were women and 23% were men nationwide (National Center of Education Statistics, 2023).

Through the analysis of the responses provided, it was found that teachers who maintained high levels of SEL beliefs also reported high levels of self-efficacy. This indicates that teachers who have positive beliefs in SEL had higher likelihood of maintaining higher levels of self-efficacy. Furthermore, teachers who indicated low levels of SEL beliefs had lower levels of self-efficacy. These findings demonstrate the impact that SEL beliefs and practices can have upon teacher self-efficacy, which could, indirectly, have a positive impact on their job satisfaction and enjoyment.

The current research was consistent the previous findings that indicated a positive correlation between SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy. Previous research conducted on this topic is limited. Yang (2021) concluded that SEL increased teacher self-efficacy amongst online educators. The study demonstrated that teachers with higher SEL competencies were more aware of online teaching self-efficacy (Yang, 2021). The current study focused on teachers who were providing face-to-face education within the local school district. However, similar findings were reported in both studies. This indicates that SEL beliefs have a positive correlation with teacher self-efficacy whether they are using the traditional or digital educational platform.

When looking at teacher self-efficacy, the current findings were also consistent with those of Kim et al. (2021), which demonstrated that when educators taught and modeled SEL practices, specifically mindfulness practices, they experienced an increase in job satisfaction and support when handling disruptive student behaviors, suggesting improved self-efficacy. Educators have reported increased stress and decreased self-efficacy when students continually exhibit disruptive behaviors within the classroom (Kuronja et al., 2019), and these experiences have been shown to adversely impact educators (Rubbi Nunan & Ntombela, 2022). A positive correlation has been found between SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy, suggesting that disruptive student behaviors are likely to decrease with increased SEL beliefs, which will increase teacher self-efficacy.

To understand the impact of SEL practices on teacher self-efficacy, the root causes must be considered. In a meta-analysis, de Oliveria et al. (2021) found that teacher burnout, which was an indicator of negative teacher self-efficacy, was reduced when SEL strategies were implemented. Aspects of SEL interventions, such as providing students with self-regulation strategies to reduce problem behaviors, self-regulation of emotions, and promotion of communicating feelings, were attributed to reduction of teacher burnout, which leads to negative teacher self-efficacy (de Oliveria et al., 2021). When educators engaged in mindfulness practices, an SEL strategy, they were likely to reduce negative stress and burnout rates (Guidetti et al., 2019). Kim et al. (2021) also found that educators had an increase in their beliefs that SEL would benefit students and improve their confidence to teach the material when mindfulness practices were put into place. Educators also reported that they perceived meaningful changes in their thoughts regarding student behaviors and their personal responses towards those behaviors (Kim et al., 2021). Teachers who implemented the Faith and Wellness Resources within the classroom also

perceived an increase in their own SEL confidence and teaching of SEL concepts (Al-Jbouri et al., 2022; Guidetti et al. 2019).

Implications

The aim of this study was to determine whether SEL beliefs impact teacher self-efficacy. The results indicate a positive correlation between SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy. Additionally, numerous studies have been conducted on the implications of SEL programs for students (Albrecht & Brunner, 2019; Li et al., 2023; Low et al., 2019). While limited research has been conducted on beliefs regarding SEL and teacher self-efficacy, the fundamental aspects of SEL are intended to increase attributes that are associated with high self-efficacy.

Despite the limited number of studies on this topic, other studies have explored additional aspects of both SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy, and some studies have researched aspects of both SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy. For instance, when mindfulness practices, an SEL strategy, were implemented, teachers reported an increase in support when managing challenging behaviors and higher levels of job satisfaction. These factors can have a positive impact on a teacher's self-efficacy (Kim et al., 2021). Similarly, positive effects were indicated regarding SEL practices, including decreased emotional exhaustion amongst teachers and increased personal accomplishment (Iancu et al., 2018; Oliveira et al., 2021). The current study aims to support what previous research has indicated.

Along with the impacts of SEL upon teachers, research has been conducted on teacher self-efficacy, which indicates the importance of determining whether there is a positive correlation between SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy. Given the current nationwide teacher shortage, it is imperative that school districts determine ways to reduce teacher burnout and increase teacher retention. Teacher shortages have been found to occur due to various reasons,

such as dissatisfaction, pursuing of another profession, or for personal or family reasons (Ingersoll & Tran, 2023). The findings of this study are relevant, as Huang et al. (2019) found that teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy also maintained higher levels of contentment in their jobs.

Teacher burnout, which can occur due to negative teacher self-efficacy, was found to be reduced once SEL strategies were implemented (de Oliveria et al., 2021), suggesting that SEL strategies reduce teacher burnout. The current study purports that higher beliefs in SEL correlate with higher self-efficacy, which suggests that work by school systems to increase teachers' SEL beliefs will increase self-efficacy amongst their educators. While limited research has been conducted on SEL beliefs and teacher self-efficacy, previous studies have shown correlations in line with the current research.

Limitations

The survey was completed by a total of $N = 71$ participants, which exceeded the minimum standard for bivariate regression ($N = 66$). An increase in sample size would provide improved clarity in the results (Gall, 2007). Therefore, a study with a larger sample size is needed to ensure an inclusive assessment.

The participants of the study were all from a single school district located in a suburban area in northern Georgia. Therefore, the research was limited by its restricted geographical reach. The results would have provided a clearer and more inclusive assessment had educators from multiple geographical locations been surveyed regarding teacher self-efficacy and their SEL beliefs.

When using the correlation design, a causative relationship cannot be determined, i.e., whether one variable changes the other (Asamoah, 2014). Although a correlative study indicates

whether a relationship is present between the predictive and criterion variables, causation is not a targeted outcome.

Finally, the narrow nature of the study limited the available perspective on teacher self-efficacy and limited the assessment of its impacts upon the predication variables related to teacher self-efficacy. By expanding the potential variables that could have a positive or negative impact on teacher self-efficacy, more insightful and robust outcomes could be predicted.

Recommendations for Future Research

It would also be beneficial for future research to compare educators' SEL beliefs and self-efficacy by gender, grade, and sample size. Research could also be conducted with a focus on different types of educators, such as content teachers, elective teachers, special education teachers, and English Language Learner (ELL) teachers. By focusing on these variables, it could be determined whether there were different needs amongst male and female educators as they work to increase their self-efficacy. In the future, a larger sample size may provide a clearer perspective on teacher beliefs.

In contrast to the current study, it would be beneficial to expand the geographical location of the population. The study was limited to teachers in a suburban school district in the southern region of the United States. Future research could be conducted in urban areas, rural areas, and within different regions of the United States. This would provide a clearer perspective of teachers nationwide instead of being limited to an isolated population of educators and would provide more generalizable results.

The SEL belief survey inquired about teachers' SEL belief in terms of comfort, commitment, and culture. The current study did not include assessment of these variables in isolation, which is an area that can be expanded upon. Overall, continued research on SEL

beliefs and their impact on self-efficacy would be beneficial to substantiate the current research.

Additional research to consider includes:

1. Comparing the beliefs of teachers of different subject areas.
2. Expanding the research to include participants from different geographical areas within the state and within the United States.
3. Increasing variables to include SEL comfort, commitment, and culture.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: SEL Belief Permission

[External] Re: Doctoral Student Survey Request

Brackett, Marc <[REDACTED]>

Thu 9/28/2023 6:21 PM

To: Davis, Amber Hobson <[REDACTED]>

[EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open attachments unless you know the sender and trust the content.]

Of course. Best wishes!

Marc A. Brackett, Ph.D.
Director, [Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence](#)
Professor, [Yale Child Study Center](#)
Co-Creator, [RULER](#) Approach to SEL

My book, [Permission To Feel](#)
Twitter: [@marcbrackett](#)
Instagram: [@marc.brackett](#)
Facebook: [@drmarcbrackett](#)
Mood Meter [App](#)

[REDACTED]

From: Davis, Amber Hobson <[REDACTED]>
Date: Thursday, September 28, 2023 at 1:45 PM
To: Brackett, Marc <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Doctoral Student Survey Request

Good afternoon Dr. Brackett,
My name is Amber Davis, and I am currently a doctoral student at Liberty University. I was writing to gain permission to use the SEL Belief Scale within my research. Please let me know you have any questions or concerns.

Amber Davis

Appendix B: TSES-short**William & Mary
School of Education**

MEGAN TSCHANNEN-MORAN, PHD
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

November 1, 2023

Amber Davis,

You have my permission to use the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (formerly called the Ohio State Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale), which I developed with Woolfolk Hoy, A., in your research.

You can find a copy of the measure and scoring directions on my web site at <https://mxtsch.pages.wm.edu/>.

Please use the following as the proper citation:

Tschannen-Moran, M & Hoy, A. W. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17, 783-805.

I will also attach directions you can follow to access my password protected web site, where you can find the supporting references for this measure as well as other articles I have written on this and related topics.

All the best,

Megan Tschannen-Moran
William & Mary School of Education

Appendix C: IRB Approval

Date: 9-26-2023

IRB #: IRB-FY22-23-1694

Title: The Impact of Social Emotional Beliefs on Teachers' Self-Efficacy: A Correlative Study

Creation Date: 6-3-2023

End Date:

Status: **Approved**

Principal Investigator: Amber Davis

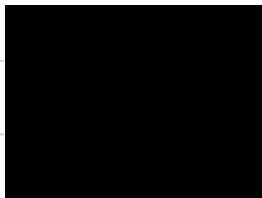
Review Board: Research Ethics Office

Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Exempt	Decision	Exempt
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Key Study Contacts

Member	David Lee	Role	Co-Principal Investigator	Contact	
Member	Amber Davis	Role	Principal Investigator	Contact	
Member	Amber Davis	Role	Primary Contact	Contact	

Appendix D: Consent Form

Consent

Title of the Project: The Impact of Social Emotional Beliefs on Teachers' Self-Efficacy: A Correlative Study

Principal Investigator: Amber Davis, Liberty University Student

Co-investigator(s): David A. Lee, PhD., Committee Chair and Treg Hopkins, PhD., Committee Member

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a teacher. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to examine the effects of SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) beliefs on teachers' self-efficacy.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. Complete a survey that will take approximately 5 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be anonymous.

- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted. Paper documents will be stored in a locked filing cabinet and will be destroyed after three years.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University and Cherokee County School District. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Amber Davis. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, David A. Lee, PhD., at [REDACTED].

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

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. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.