QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING PRESERVICE EDUCATORS'

MINDSETS REGARDING TRAINING IN IDENTIFYING

PRE-VIOLENCE INDICATOR PATTERNS

by

Aaron Glenn Walp

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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APPROVED BY:

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative hermeneutical phenomenological study was to understand the mindsets of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns at XYZ University. Pre-violence indicator patterns are defined as behaviors symptomatic of violent or aggressive behavior. The theory guiding this study was Dweck's implicit theory of intelligence. The central research question was: What is the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns? Qualitative hermeneutical phenomenological methods were used to study the beliefs of 12 preservice educators through a questionnaire, individual interviews, and a group discussion. The data were examined through line-by-line coding and thematic analysis to understand each participant's process, narrative, structure, and values. The findings revealed deficiencies in current training and collegiate conversations on pre-violence indicators, the need to integrate growth mindset principles and situational awareness to improve educator preparedness and safer educational environments, and an overall mindset shift toward pre-violence indicator pattern training.

Keywords: pre-violence indicator patterns, mindset, implicit theory of intelligence, situational awareness, neuroplasticity, bracketing, lifeworld

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my Heavenly Father; Counselor, Guide, and eternal God, without whom I would be dead in my sins and trespasses. To God be the glory forever and ever. To my dad, Colonel Glenn Walp, PhD, who raised me in the fear and admonition of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and continually motivated me to seek my five university degrees. To my remarkable wife, Tammy Walp; professional businesswoman, incredible mother, and loving grandmother. She is my rock, fortress, soulmate, sustainer, best friend, and a gift from God. Without her, I would be lost and wandering this world alone. To my beloved children, Chandler and Austin, and granddaughter, Autumn; may you know and pursue God's eternal love, transcendent wisdom, gift to humanity, the Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations

Implicit Theory of Intelligence Scale (ITIS)

Pre-violence indicator patterns (PVIP)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

Since Cain attacked and murdered his brother, Abel (*New Living Translation*, 1996/2015, Genesis 4:9), humanity has borne a malevolent spirit that thrusts families and communities into despair. Despite modernism and post-modernistic philosophy promising that society would become wise and peace would rule the land (Young, 1999), it has not. Most disturbing is that aggression and violence have crept into one of civilization's most innocent, protected, and revered institutions—kindergarten through 12th grade. Once a rare event, aggression and violence have become a persistent and constant concern. In 2022, the United States experienced a record-breaking 305 school shootings, according to Liberman (2023). The number of incidents made 2022 the worst year for school shootings at that time. This statistic marked an increase from the 2021 figure of 250 incidents and the 114 reported in 2020. However, the worst year on record for school shootings in the USA was 2023, reaching 306 incidents. This growth follows a trend of rising school violence over the past several years, with 2023 marking the third consecutive year of record-breaking incidents. It has become apparent that no school is immune, and the violent pattern continues.

Chapter One includes seven primary sections: Overview, Problem Statement, Purpose Statement, Significance of the Study, Research Questions, Definitions, and Summary. Chapter One also includes10 secondary sections: Historical Context, Social Context, Theoretical Context, Theoretical Significance, Empirical Significance, Practical Significance, Central Research Question, Sub-Question One, Sub-Question Two, and Sub-Question Three.

Background

The purpose of this section is to explore the historical, social, and theoretical context of preservice educator mindsets regarding mandating training for identifying pre-violence inventory patterns (PVIP). The historical context elucidates the history of school violence in K–12 schools in the United States, how violence has impacted schools, and how educators have traditionally recognized and addressed escalating student aggression. The social context elucidates the impact of school violence on society. The theoretical context identifies various theoretical interventive approaches when teachers believe a student displays PVIPs.

Historical Context

For this study, school violence is defined as any violent act occurring on school property, including bullying, physical fights, verbal abuse, or the use of weapons. It extends to aggression that occurs off school property during any school-related event, and travel to and from school by students or staff. School violence has a long history in the United States. One of the deadliest events occurred in Bath, Michigan, on May 18, 1927, when a disgruntled board member killed 45 people in and around a school with dynamite (O'Toole, 2014). The Bath School Disaster remains one of the most horrifying tragedies in educational history. Another tragedy unfolded in 1966 at the University of Texas at Austin, when a former Marine, Charles Whitman, climbed the university's clock tower and opened fire on the campus below, killing 14 people and wounding over 30 more (Murray, 2018). Whitman's actions marked the first mass shooting of its kind on a college campus, but not the last. In more recent history, the Columbine High School shooting on April 20, 1999, profoundly impacted the national psyche. Two students murdered 12 classmates and a teacher and injured 21 others before taking their own lives. The tragedy underscores the dangers of bullying, the influence of violent media, and the accessibility of firearms, prompting significant shifts in school security policies and the implementation of zero-tolerance policies

nationwide (Larkin, 2007). Zero-tolerance policies are generally strict disciplinary measures with predetermined consequences, often suspension or expulsion, for specific infractions, regardless of the context or severity of the behavior (Skiba & Peterson, 1999).

Fuentes (2018) discussed strategies school leaders and politicians have employed over the years in attempting to curtail disruptive and aggressive behavior. She stated that many rules for violent students in the 1800s were like modern zero-tolerance policies (Welch & Payne, 2018). Modern zero-tolerance policies leave little room for consideration of individual circumstances and often lead to disproportionate punishment. In the1800s, corporal punishment was also widely used to prevent or stop unruly behavior, including flogging, tying students to chairs, or locking them in closets until they regained self-control. Heekes et al. (2020) found that some states still permit and encourage corporal punishment but the more mental health professionals a school has, the less likely they are to use it. The Center for Civil Rights Remedies and Southern Poverty Law Center (2019) argued strongly that corporal punishment should be eliminated, notwithstanding that Bandini and Francis (2020) noted that corporal punishment remains a staple among both religious and non-religious schools. Both approaches (zero tolerance and corporal punishment) prioritize uniform enforcement of rules over nuanced, rehabilitative methods (Skiba, 1999). Despite numerous and various remedial tactics, school violence continues. Statistics indicate that student aggression in K–12 programs has increased in the last 10 years, the consequences are multiplying, and proposed solutions are not working (Jackson & Stevens, 2022). Any aggression that takes place in schools is troublesome.

Current action is being taken because of the failure to significantly reduce school violence. Examples include security cameras, armed guards, school police officers, metal detectors, zero-tolerance policies, threat-assessment plans, social-emotional curricula, parenting

classes, uniform behavioral policies, student training, parking lot monitoring, violence

prevention programs, violence prevention curricula, protective barriers, increased hallway

presence, armed educators, remote panic buttons, pepper spray for staff, agenda points on board

meetings, revised safety protocols, increased lockdown drills, bullet resistant backpacks, see

through backpacks, and increasing psychological evaluations (Pew Research, 2021).

Han et al. (2018) found a connection between various archetypes of speech and student

violence and recommended training to identify student speech patterns that lead to aggression.

Dweck (2017) stated that mindset type determines willingness for self-improvement. Myers et al.

(2016) posited that abilities could be improved with growth mindsets instruction. Owens and

Tanner (2017) argued that the existence of neuroplasticity, which enables the brain to form new

neural connections, substantiates the potential for individuals to develop a growth mindset.

Kandaki and King (2002) found that preservice educators are interested in learning how to

identify PVIPs. Johnsen (2017) posited that current school safety measures are ineffective and

require improvement. Curran et al. (2019) argued that the psychosocial damage to students and

faculty and the legal implications of continued school violence cannot continue, but prevailing

school safety responses are inadequate and warrant innovative ideas. Note: While this chapter

was being researched, there was a fatal stabbing in a North Carolina school (Fieldstadt, 2022).

Social Context

A study from Duke Law (2017) revealed that students who experience violence, whether

directly as victims or indirectly as witnesses, are more likely to drop out of high school. Jenkins

and Urbanski (2019) found that bullied students have a higher dropout rate. Moore (2018)

concurred, finding that high school students who experience gun violence drop out more than

those who do not. When students drop out of high school, vocational and life opportunities are

significantly reduced (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018), and lifetime earning potential is significantly lower (Lee-St. John et al., 2018). The connection between school violence and a profoundly negative social impact is extensive.

The impact of school violence extends beyond students, affecting families, the economy, and the broader community. Families of students involved in school violence often experience significant emotional stress and psychological trauma. According to Borofsky et al. (2013), parents of victimized children reported higher levels of anxiety, depression, and feelings of helplessness. They also face increased economic burdens due to medical bills, therapy costs, and lost work hours needed to care for their children (Borofsky et al., 2013; Ybarra et al., 2017).

Economically, school violence can contribute to a cycle of poverty. Brown (2019) noted that high school dropouts earn significantly less over their lifetimes compared to graduates, leading to lower tax contributions and greater reliance on social welfare programs. Additionally, school districts often need to allocate significant resources toward increased security measures and crisis management training, diverting funds from educational programs (Rosiak, 2019). Moreover, businesses and local economies suffer when a poorly educated workforce hinders regional competitiveness (Brown, 2019).

Feelings of insecurity among students and faculty are also heightened due to the pervasive fear of violence. Students who feel unsafe at school tend to suffer academically, exhibit higher absenteeism, and display symptoms of anxiety and depression (Gonzales et al., 2021). In turn, teachers report less job satisfaction and experience burnout from the stress caused by potential violence. Higher attrition rates result which further destabilizes school environments (Berkowitz et al., 2017).

Theoretical Context

One of the essential aspects of hermeneutical phenomenology is the theoretical framework. I used the implicit theory of intelligence, commonly called mindset theory (Dweck, 2006; Dweck & Yeager, 2019) as the guiding structure. Mindset theory revolves around the belief that individuals have different perspectives on their abilities and intelligence, which influence how they respond to life's challenges. There are two types of mindsets: *fixed* and *growth*. People with a fixed mindset believe their abilities are static and cannot improve. In contrast, those with a growth mindset believe they can develop and improve their talents and intellect through diligence and dedication (Dweck, 2006). Mindset theory is relevant to this study for several reasons. First, an educator's mindset significantly impacts the safety of a classroom's environment more than their beliefs, morals, values, etc. (Arieli & Sagiv, 2018). An educator's mindset is the core of their *meaning system* that determines how they perceive and respond (Molden et al., 2006). Second, the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in PVIPs has not been explored. Teacher's mindsets influence their goals (Dweck & Yeager, 2019), and if identifying PVIPs is not a goal, it is unlikely to occur naturally (United States Secret Service, 2002). Third, Heino et al. (2021) argued that involving mindset training in relation to situational awareness and PVIP during first responder training has enabled officers to identify and prevent aggression before it escalates. Research indicates that an informed and attentive mindset allows first responders to quickly assess and engage with aggressive individuals (McLean et al., 2019).

Educators are the logical first line of defense against school violence (Njelesani et al., 2021; Nkuba et al., 2018). Molden et al. (2006) explored how different mindsets shape an individual's meaning system, which influence the types of goals they pursue. Their findings indicated that individuals with a growth mindset tend to frame challenges as opportunities for

learning and development, leading them to set mastery-oriented goals. Conversely, those with fixed mindsets often focus on proving their ability and seek performance-oriented goals. Molden et al. stressed the relationship between an educator's goals and how they interpret student behavior. Educators with a growth mindset were found to be more likely to view student challenges and mistakes as learning opportunities, leading them to adopt more supportive and encouraging approaches, as opposed to violence. In contrast, those with a fixed mindset were inclined to attribute student difficulties to a lack of ability, resulting in less helpful responses and lower expectations for improvement. These findings emphasize the importance of mindset training for educators, as their perspectives can significantly influence classroom dynamics and student outcomes. As Brooks and Goldstein (2008) explained, mindset training can expand one's capacity to identify aggressive behavior proficiently.

Police work operates primarily from a retroactive mindset, but preventing violence requires a proactive mindset. Intentionally or not, universities recalibrate or create preservice educator mindsets (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Richardson, 2003). Currently, no literature exists regarding the mindset of preservice educators and their desire to learn a skill usually relegated to first responders and the military. An educator with a situationally aware mindset could detect subtle signs of violent behavior in a student (McLean et al., 2019). An educator's ethics, morals, beliefs, values, worldview, or attitude would not protect students and faculty. Educators must adopt a daily mindset that acknowledges they are entering a classroom filled with diverse personalities, each facing unique circumstances. Some of these circumstances could lead certain students to develop violent tendencies or harbor intentions to harm others. An educator's situational awareness and attentiveness to behavioral cues are essential for identifying early warning signs and preventing potential violence. By understanding the diverse backgrounds and

challenges that students face, educators can foster a supportive environment that addresses underlying issues and reduces the risk of violent behavior (Astor & Benbenishty, 2017). The cues are often subtle, fast, and blink of an eye *microexpressions* (Ben et al., 2021). Unless a teacher has a mindset to be ready, willing, and able to detect PVIPs, they may miss them or dismiss them as paranoia (Gladwell, 2007).

Gibbs (2014), Kandakai and King (2002), Pusey (2020), and White and Beal (1999) investigated preservice educators' beliefs on school PVIP training via a quantitative framework. The research did not entail self-reported analysis of preservice educators' lived experiences; however, each of the studies revealed that preservice educators believed that universities did not prepare them to effectively confront aggressive students. The researchers also discovered that preservice educators desired to learn more about identifying and managing violent situations.

According to van Manen (1990), there is significant value in collecting comprehensive data from diverse individuals. However, equally important is carefully listening to and interpreting the responses of a representative group of participants, while setting aside preconceived notions. Further biases were set aside via the following strategies: bracketing, reflexivity journaling, triangulation, peer debriefing, expert reviews, and member checks were offered to all participants, but none were accepted (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To further reduce the impact of biases and structure participant responses, interpretative phenomenological analysis was engaged (Smith et al., 1995). This method ensures that researchers can capture the authentic experiences and perspectives of participants, leading to a deeper understanding of the phenomena. In this study, understanding the participants' beliefs was via open dialogue centered on their rich lived experiences (Smit & Onwuegbuzie, 2018).

According to the FBI (2019), it is vital for social scientists to listen with discernment to preservice educators who have lived through an era of well-documented school violence where hundreds of students have become victims. Osher et al. (2004) argued that there are detectable PVIPs before problems begin. Gable and Van Acker (2000) contended that it was time for higher education institutions to include training about curbing student aggression and violence to preservice educator programs.

Finally, it was intriguing to learn why preservice educators chose a field where they may need to sacrifice their well-being for the safety of others. Unlike police and military personnel who enter their professions knowing the risk (International Association, 2022), it is unlikely that educators consider themselves similarly at risk. Notwithstanding, the teaching profession has increasingly become one where the potential for encountering extreme violence is a significant concern, and society has come to expect such hazards for teachers (Jacobson, 2022).

Problem Statement

The problem was the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in identifying PVIPs was unknown. Educators did recognize that school violence was a pressing issue (Stringer, 2022), and various studies revealed there were PVIPs that educators could identify to reduce school violence (Alatahari et al., 2019; Büchele et al., 2020; CDC, 2016, 2022; National Education Association, 2022; Virginia Education Association, 2022). Using a quantitative framework, White and Beal (1999), Kandakai and King (2002), and Pusey (2020) discovered that preservice educators voiced a need for assistance on school violence prevention. Despite extensive searches (Google Scholar; JSTOR; PubMed; EBSCOHost; ERIC; PsycINFO; Scopus; Web of Science), I was unable to locate any hermeneutical phenomenological research

focused on the mindsets of preservice educators concerning mandatory PVIP training. My searches included scholarly databases such as

American education leaders have attempted to solve school violence with limited success (Astor et al., 2006; National Center, 2022). Some schools have become fortresses, yet the problem persists. Nicole Hockley, mother of 7-year-old, Dylan Hockley who was slain at Sandy Hook Elementary, worked with numerous school violence prevention professionals to develop a national program called, The Sandy Hook Promise. A few organizations offer professional development to active educators, but academia has thus far overlooked an opportunity at the preservice mindset maturation phase (DOJ, 2022; Zaruba et al., 2021). According to Sprague and Miller (2022), universities should have a mandatory course that equips preservice educators to detect signs of people in crisis.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative hermeneutical phenomenological study was to understand the mindsets of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns at XYZ University. Pre-violence indicator patterns are defined as behaviors symptomatic of violent or aggressive tendencies. I examined whether preservice educators believed that additional training beyond academic theory and standard pedagogies and was necessary. According to the FBI (2018), PVIP training can significantly enhance an educator's ability to identify and mitigate potential violent behavior in school settings. Wild (2020) also noted that pre-incident training, a style of training similar to PVIP, was crucial for maintaining a healthy and proactive educational environment.

Significance of the Study

This section addresses the study's theoretical, empirical, and practical implications. The theoretical discussion connects the theory to the research questions. The empirical discussion clarifies how the data adds to the current body of literature. The practical discussion is focused on why this study was conducted in terms of application.

Theoretical

The American people are ardent about solving the problem of student violence (Gupta, 2022). The reality of sustained and increasing school violence has gripped the thoughts of families and academics, who rightfully demand answers (CDC, 2016; Pierce, 2021; Sawchuck, 2021). For decades, research has been conducted and published, and it has rendered promising theories and solutions, but preservice educator training is lagging (Alatahari et al., 2019). The literature revealed theoretical solutions exist (FBI, 2022; Osher et al., 2008; Pierce, 2021; Polanin et al., 2021; Sawchuck, 2021; The National Education Association, 2022; Virginia Education Association, 2022), but universities are not always collaborative. I attempted to offer real-world solutions based on sound theory for university education departments to consider.

Empirical

Dweck's (2006) theory of fixed and growth mindsets served as a foundational framework for this study, clarifying how beliefs about one's own abilities influence responses to challenges and stress. Individuals with a fixed mindset, who perceive their abilities as unchangeable, may feel particularly threatened by challenges, potentially leading to defensive or aggressive behaviors when they perceive their capabilities as being under evaluation or threat. Meloy (2000) identified precursors to violent behavior, proposing that signs of perceived threat or grievance could predispose individuals to violence. Individuals with a fixed mindset may be more likely to perceive situations as threatening or overly challenging, aligning with Meloy's indicators of

potential violence such as fixation, identification, and grievance. In a policy brief for the United

States Secret Service, Alatahari (2019) presented real-world solutions to the ongoing school

violence problem. The National Education Association (NEA, 2022) has publications on

detecting students at-risk for violence and has developed curricula whereby micro-credentials in

preventing school violence can be earned. The American Psychology Association (APA) found

that the threat of school violence has led to many educators exiting their careers or transferring to

less violent locations (Stringer, 2022). Astor and Benbenishty (2017) argued that there are

known and detectable PVIPs. Gaffney et al. (2019) conducted a meta-analysis of programs

created to stop bullying and violence before they occurred and concluded that more research is

required if society expects to reduce or eliminate it. The CDC has developed numerous technical

packets to help schools mitigate or stop school violence before it occurs. PVIP lists and other

detection tools have been developed by a variety of professionals, including police departments,

politicians, city councils, psychologists, and school leaders, to identify potential risks before

violence occurs. Yet, the gap remains between theoretical and concrete application of resources

with preservice educators at the higher education level. Given the complex interplay between

mindset theory and practical implications for identifying and mitigating threats in educational

environments, the empirical significance lies in bridging the gap in preservice educator

preparation.

Practical

School violence is demographically inclusive, and it leads to psychological problems and

declining school attendance (Park, 2022). According to the Center for Homeland Defense and

Security (2022), school shootings in the United States went from 118 incidents in 2018 to 305 in

2022, setting a record at that time. The upward trend persisted into 2023, setting another record

with 306 shootings. According to Frederique (2020), no matter how the data are viewed, school violence is prolific, and there are no viable solutions on the horizon. Given that known and detectable behavioral patterns exist before violence occurs (Alatahari et al., 2019; CDC, 2022; FBI, 2019; Stringer, 2022), I explored preservice educator beliefs about their ability to detect them and their mindsets about PVIP training. A university course to assist preservice educators in identifying PVIPs to reduce or stop violence in school is a worthy goal for future research (Sandy Hook Promise Board, 2022).

Research Questions

The central research question aligns with the study's problem and purpose statements. It is focused on Dwecks (2006) mindset theory, which proposes that people with growth mindsets are willing to learn and apply a novel life skill. Each sub-question (SQ) was developed to explore how preservice educator university experiences shaped their mindset regarding the ability and motivation to identify PVIPs. SQ one was related to coursework, SQ two was related to personnel interactions on campus, and SQ three was related to career decisions.

Central Research Question

What is the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns?

Sub-Question One

What is the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns via coursework?

Sub-Question Two

What is the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns via interacting with students and faculty?

Sub-Question Three

What influence does exposure to social media and news outlets about school violence have on preservice educators' mindsets regarding their decision to pursue a teaching career?

Definitions

The following terms are used in this study and defined as stated.

1. *Lifeworld* - The world as experienced in the everyday, subjective lives of individuals, distinct from the abstract and theoretical worlds constructed by the sciences. It encompasses the pre-reflective, taken-for-granted background against which all human experiences and activities occur, stressing the fundamental role of personal and cultural contexts in shaping perception and understanding (Husserl, 1970).

2. *Mindset* theory - The foundational beliefs individuals hold about their intellectual abilities and their capacity for personal growth. According to Bernecker and Job (2019), mindset theorists posit that individuals' beliefs about the malleability of their intellectual characteristics are crucial in shaping how they approach learning and challenges. Those with a *fixed* mindset perceive their intellectual abilities as static and unchangeable, which often leads to a reluctance to embrace challenges or learn from mistakes. Conversely, individuals with a *growth* mindset view their intellectual abilities as qualities that can be developed through effort, learning, and persistence. This perspective encourages them to embrace challenges, persevere through difficulties, and see failure as an opportunity for growth and self-improvement (Dweck, 2017).

3. *Neuroplasticity* - The brain's ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections throughout life. This capability allows the brain to adjust its activities in response to new situations or changes in the environment, injuries, and learning

processes. It is central to theories of cognitive function, rehabilitation, and learning methodologies. (De Oliveira, 2020).

4. *Pre-service educator* - People who are actively enrolled in coursework at a university with the intention of working in education (Ryan et al., 2017).

5. *Pre-violence indicator patterns* - Detectable pre-aggression cues (Lombard, 2008). Some cues are scanning, target glance, pugilistic stance, flanking, response hesitation, targeted complaints, comments about death, suicidal ideation, narcissism, statements about weapons, depression, defiance, ADD/ADHD, and developmental delays (Alatahari et al., 2019; APA, 2020; FBI, 2019).

6. *School violence* - A broad term encompassing any aspect of hostile behavior including, but not limited to; physical assault and battery, physical aggression, noncontact aggression (e.g., throwing things), broadly defined externalizing behavior, bullying, fighting, robbery, unwanted sexual contact, weapon possession, and verbal threats (Turanovic & Siennick, 2022).

7. *Situational awareness* - The understanding and awareness of one's surroundings, influenced by the belief that surrounding events, people, and objects may impact one's life and the conviction that one can control these situations (Salvendy & Karwowski, 2021).

8. *Student aggression* - Any action where a student intended to cause physical or emotional harm or sought to damage the property of others (Alami et al., 2015; Jackson & Stevens, 2022).

Summary

The problem is that people do not know the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns. The purpose of this qualitative hermeneutical phenomenological study was to understand the mindsets of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns at XYZ University. School violence has been a concern for decades, with one of the deadliest incidents occurring in 1927[1] and while researching Chapter One, there was a fatal stabbing in a North Carolina school[2] (Fieldstadt, 2022).

Despite concerns about student safety shared by police, citizens, politicians, students, and school personnel, some argue that the increase in school violence is a misconception and contend that media coverage and news reports, which often focus on rising arrest rates for violent crimes, skew public perception and do not accurately reflect the actual situation in schools. Notwithstanding, the CDC (2016, 2022) has identified school violence as a public health problem, and the FBI (2018) produces yearly reports on the topic. School leaders have responded by adding security measures and violence prevention programs. Han et al. (2018) suggested that training in identifying speech patterns that may lead to aggression could be an effective approach. Dweck (2017) emphasized that mindset plays a crucial role in learning, emphasizing the importance of fostering a growth mindset for enhancing educational outcomes. Myers et al. (2016) suggested that teaching growth mindsets can improve people's lives and may enhance school violence prevention efforts by empowering students to adapt and cope in healthier ways. Additionally, Owens and Tanner (2017) demonstrated that neuroplasticity can improve cognitive

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[1] The Bath School disaster, which took place on May 18, 1927, in Bath Township, Michigan, was a series of bombings that killed 38 elementary school children and six adults, injuring at least 58 others.
[2] In 2022, a fatal stabbing occurred at Northside High School in North Carolina, highlighting ongoing concerns about school violence (Fieldstadt, 2022).

function, which could be leveraged in educational settings to help students develop the skills

necessary to de-escalate conflicts and reduce violence. Kandaki and King (2002) noted the

interest of preservice educators in identifying potentially violent individuals and underlined the

need for training that equips them with effective strategies for violence prevention. Lastly,

Curran et al. (2019) posited that the prevailing responses to school safety were inadequate and

advocated for innovative and evidence-based strategies to prevent school violence. These studies

underscore the need for integrating psychological and educational approaches in violence

prevention programs in schools.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Chapter Two provides context regarding preservice educators' mindsets concerning mandatory training to identify pre-violence indicator patterns (PVIPs). The literature review involved identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing research on mindset theory and PVIPs from various vocations, scientific fields, and academic sources, but nothing was found that addressed preservice educators' mindsets about mandatory PVIP training. Chapter Two includes three primary sections: Theoretical Framework, Related Literature, and Summary. Chapter Two also includes 11 secondary sections: Implicit Theory of Intelligence, Implicit Theory and Identifying PVIPs, Evolving Mindsets Regarding PVIP, Why Identifying PVIP Matters, PVIP Relevance, Mindset and Neuroplasticity, Educator Discernment of PVIP, Mindset Development and Preservice Educators, Mindset and Educator Situational Awareness, Mindset and Student Emotional Stability, and The United States Violence Predicament.

Theoretical Framework

The implicit theory of intelligence (Dweck 1976, 2006) addresses one's belief in their ability to improve cognition. Dweck's (2006) coined the phrases *fixed* and *growth mindsets* to describe how people view life and asserted that people with fixed mindsets view their intelligence and abilities as unchangeable. People with fixed mindsets believe they are unchangeable which limits academic performance, diminishes drive, and makes them susceptible to anxiety and depression. Conversely, people with growth mindsets believe they can incrementally develop intelligence and abilities through learning and effort. As a result, they are more likely to embrace challenges and develop greater resilience and self-confidence.

Heider (1958) theorized that people possess an innate curiosity about the world, seeking to understand their place and relationship with others, and that pursuing knowledge, purpose, and meaning is a fundamental source of significance for humanity. Bodill and Roberts (2013) posited that the interpretation of surroundings shape responses, and the interpretations are significantly influenced by their mindset. Dweck (1976) developed mindset theory, or the implicit theory of intelligence, and asserted that life is challenging and constantly presents new obstacles and opportunities. To live a gratifying life, Dweck argued that people must embrace growth mindsets, which enable them to adapt and thrive through adversity. In contrast, people with fixed mindsets are more likely to falter in similar circumstances. Dweck's implicit theory of intelligence framed this study.

Implicit Theory of Intelligence

Dweck earned a PhD in psychology from Yale University in 1972. In 2006, Dweck published *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* which advanced her in the field. In 2019, Sternberg (2019) listed Dweck as a world-renowned mindset-theory expert in the widely respected, *Cambridge Handbook of Intelligence.*

Dweck's (2006) theoretical framework has roots in what Seligman and Maier's (1967) termed *learned helplessness*, which denoted the role of recurrent struggles in shaping a belief of powerlessness. Seligman and Maier proposed that consistent exposure to unmanageable situations lead people to perceive themselves as helpless, prompting them to refrain from action even when opportunities are present. Dweck proposed a complementary yet distinct psychological construct. A fixed mindset is characterized by an individuals' belief that their abilities, intelligence, or talents are unchangeable, and significant changes over time are not

possible. Learned helplessness is a result of this belief. While both constructs—learned helplessness and fixed mindsets—inhibit personal potential, they are not interchangeable.

Limeri et al. (2020) revealed that people with fixed mindsets often fail to achieve their desired goals. Conversely, people with growth mindsets view challenges as something to learn from and a tool to help them improve. Dweck (2006) theorized that people with fixed mindsets do not have to remain unchanged but can receive training to think like people with growth mindsets. Limeri et al., in support of Dweck, proposed that people with growth mindsets have a greater chance of living fulfilling lives than those with fixed mindsets.

While Dweck (2006) did not create tests to measure mindset, she suggested several reputable psychological tools to aid researchers. Dweck's preliminary tests are the Implicit Theories of Intelligence Scale (ITIS), a questionnaire that evaluates people's beliefs about their intelligence as fixed or adaptable; the Incremental Theory of Intelligence Scale (ITIS-II), a revised version of the ITIS that includes items assessing beliefs about the malleability of abilities beyond intelligence; the Effort Beliefs Questionnaire, a scale that evaluates beliefs about the importance of effort; and the Implicit Theories of Personality Scale, that assesses beliefs about the stability of personality traits. Dweck chose these tools to help measure the extent to which people hold a fixed or growth mindset in various circumstances. Dweck stated that while these tests are reliable and essential, combining these tools with a diagnostician's observations, and lived experiences help identify mindsets.

Dweck (2006) argued that everyone lives with undeveloped potential. The difference is that people with growth mindsets seek ways to open undeveloped areas, while people with fixed mindsets typically refuse to seek new solutions. People with fixed mindsets need more self-confidence or a cognitive structure that permits personal problem-solving. They view failures as

impenetrable barriers that define life. Dweck's (2006) mindset theory research revealed that

people with fixed mindsets purposely find limitations that support feelings of hopelessness. From

this fixed-thought process, they stop seeking self-improvement, preferring to remain stagnant to

avoid the discomfort associated with personal growth.

Cook et al., (2017) conducted two validation studies using the ITIS questionnaire and

found a positive correlation between mastery goals and cognitive load. Schleider and Schroder

(2018) observed that people with a positive ITIS result, equaling a strong growth mindset,

possess more robust coping mechanisms when facing challenges, regardless of age. Sternberg

(2019) interviewed 100 students and found that many students with growth mindsets were high

achievers even with low test scores and warned against relying on test scores to measure student

success, advocating for examining environmental and psychological factors shaping students'

mindsets. Li and Bates (2020) conducted a survey-based quantitative study involving 500

participants and discovered that student-mindset training could compensate for the disadvantages

of an underprivileged upbringing and according to Barber (2019) people with growth mindsets

often lead more fulfilling lives. However, some studies contradict these findings. For example,

Burnette et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of 72 samples (N = 17,692) that indicated that

growth mindsets are negatively related to psychological distress and positively related to

treatment value and the ability to cope with stress. The study indicated a minimal yet significant

effect of mindset on coping with life stressors.

Despite any contrary claims to the implicit theory of intelligence, a preponderance of

literature supports Dweck's assertions. For instance, Blackwell et al. (2007) examined the

relationship between implicit theories of intelligence and academic achievement in a longitudinal

study of adolescents. The findings indicated that students with growth mindsets demonstrated higher academic motivation, effort, and achievement compared to those with fixed mindsets.

Additionally, Yeager et al. (2016) explored the effectiveness of growth-mindset training during the transition to high school. The mixed methods study indicated that students who received growth mindset training had higher academic achievement, fewer course failures, and better adjustment to high school challenges. The results demonstrated a positive impact of growth mindset training during a critical transition period. Paunesku et al. (2015) investigated the effectiveness of growth-mindset training on academic underachievers ($N = 1594$) via an online quasi-experimental study using brief growth mindset and sense-of-purpose interventions across 13 geographically diverse high schools. Finally, Muenks et al. (2017) used qualitative and quantitative methodology to examine the relationship between grit (a related construct to a growth mindset) and academic achievement. Grit refers to a combination of passion and perseverance for long-term goals. They found that students with higher grit levels exhibited higher academic achievement, as measured by grades and standardized test scores. The study stressed the importance of mindset-related factors such as perseverance and passion in predicting academic success.

My literature review revealed few studies that contradicted the positive impact of the implicit theory of intelligence on academic achievement. Notably, none indicated that growth mindset training was harmful. Summarily, the studies supporting the theory far outnumbered those that did not. Therefore, it can be reasonably concluded that the prevailing academic consensus underscores the positive influence of a growth mindset on academic success (American Psychological Association, 2020).

School Violence Indicators

School violence is defined differently, but it always includes recurring physical and psychological aggression among peers or targeted at school personnel (Bodil & Roberts, 2013; Karumbaiah et al., 2017). Multiple studies have demonstrated that people with growth mindsets are better equipped to respond constructively to challenges (Bodil & Roberts, 2013; Karumbaiah et al., 2017; Schleider & Schroder, 2017; Yeager et al., 2013). For example, Lee and Jang (2018) conducted a moderation analysis with 1,011 middle and high school participants, finding that students with growth mindsets are more adaptable to environmental changes. Additionally, detectable PVIPs were identified in the FBI (2019) and Siddoway (2021) in their study of Columbine school shooting. The FBI's analysis highlighted specific behaviors and patterns, such as drastic behavior changes, increased impulsiveness, and pre-attack planning that were common among school shooters. These behaviors, known as pre-attack indicators, were identified through detailed witness interviews and behavioral analysis. The FBI's and Siddoway's studies emphasized that individuals lacking PVIP training might misinterpret aberrant behaviors as mere overreactions during stressful situations instead of serious situations requiring immediate actions to prevent violence. Safe and Sound Schools co-founder, Michelle Gay (2022) identified common PVIPs (via case studies) that can be detected with training. Properly identifying and responding to PVIPs is critical in stopping school violence.

Mindsets significantly influence how students respond to aggression. Students with growth mindsets are more likely to pursue non-aggressive responses compared to students with fixed mindsets, who may perceive aggression as an effective means to alleviate anxiety, and dismiss other solutions (Schroder et al., 2019). Furthermore, Lee and Ryu (2019) utilized quantitative moderated mediation methodology to demonstrate that trained educators can

effectively coach students with fixed mindsets to develop growth mindsets. This intervention reduces the likelihood of students responding to aggression with violence.

<div align="center">**Related Literature**</div>

The purpose of this section is to provide a comprehensive review of research regarding mandatory training for preservice educators in identifying PVIPs, underlining and synthesizing major themes and findings. This section includes an investigation of The United States Violence Predicament, Why Identifying PVIP Matters, PVIP and Mindset History, PVIP Relevance, Educator Discernment of PVIP, Mindset and Neuroplasticity, Mindset Development and Preservice Educators, Mindset and Educator Situational Awareness, Mindset and Emotional Stability, The Literature Gap, and Summary.

The United States Violence Predicament

Alatahari et al. (2019) analyzed school violence in the United States and wrote a policy book where researchers sought to assist educators with identifying violent offenders before aggression occurred. Their analysis involved violent school offenders (N = 35) from which PVIPs surfaced. Notably, 94% (n = 33) exhibited identifiable PVIPs on school premises. About 77% (n = 27) demonstrated similar behaviors at home or during community events. Upon reviewing the offenders' online personas, they found that 74% (n = 26) had discernible PVIPs. The United States Secret Service concluded that if school personnel were trained to recognize PVIPs, many problems could be addressed before they escalated (Alatahari et al. 2019). Schools need effective intervention strategies in place when students show signs of aggression (Alatahari's et al. 2019; Coppersmith et al. 2022; Mullarkey & Schleider, 2020; Schroder, 2019). Alatahari et al. recommended that schools employ a set of 11 questions to aid in the identification of student PVIPs.

Why Identifying PVIPs Matters

Alatahari et al. (2019), in conjunction with the United States Secret Service, conducted a study of recent shootings and violence in U.S. schools and concluded that understanding PVIPs is critical to reducing aggression and increasing the potential for reconciliation or rehabilitation prior to violence. Conversely, managing violence retroactively perpetuates a cycle that burdens students and staff. When teachers identify PVIPs, they can engage students, propose solutions, and avert potential crises (Alatahari et al., 2019). Ensuant to a proactive approach Alatahari et al. integrated options such as student counseling, psychological, and psychiatric services. They added that should the PVIPs indicate violent intentions, or a student rejects psychological services, engaging law enforcement is often required.

Evolving Mindsets Regarding PVIP

Attempts to identify PVIPs began as early as the 1800s, with foundational work exploring the predictors of aggressive behavior (Schreck, 2021). Early criminological studies provided initial insights, laying the groundwork for future research on school violence. In the 20th century, significant progress was made in understanding PVIPs. For example, Glueck and Glueck's (1950) work in the 1930s and 1940s offered insights into juvenile delinquency, emphasizing the importance of early intervention. Albert Bandura's (1973) social learning theory in the 1970s further advanced the understanding of aggressive behavior by demonstrating how it could be learned through observation and imitation.

In recent decades, the focus on school violence has intensified due to the increase in incidents and media coverage. Modern studies have expanded the scope of PVIP research. For instance, the United States Secret Service, in conjunction with the Department of Education (2002), conducted extensive studies on school shooters, identifying common pre-attack

behaviors and stressors and Ringeisen et al. (2003) reported that many students require psychological intervention to address school violence and other disruptions.

Continuing in the PVIP research, Ringeisen et al. (2016) reported that 4% to 12% of students require psychological intervention at any given time to help reduce school violence and other classroom disruption concerns. Additionally, Kern et al. (2017) conducted a comprehensive study that underscored the need for school-based mental health services. Kern found that approximately 20% of students presented with mental disorders associated with aggressive behavior. Kern also argued that the findings emphasize a critical need for accessible mental health support within schools to reduce violence. Trach et al. (2017) studied early elementary through high school students via a social-ecological approach, studying group processes and social dynamics, and found a positive correlation between educator/student relationships and the teacher's ability to identify psychological distress.

Katsiyannis (2018) further explored the link between student psychological issues and the rise in school shootings in the United States, introducing the tiers method. In this method, students classified as tiers two or three require mental health services to help reduce school violence. These findings underscored the importance of identifying PVIPs via addressing the psychological needs of students to prevent school violence. Kern et al. (2020) conducted another comprehensive study highlighting the critical need for school-based mental health services, revealing that a significant percentage of students exhibit behaviors associated with aggression (Kern et al., 2020). Saputra et al. (2020) used a peace counseling method to study students and found that with guidance from properly trained people, violent students can control their emotions regardless of the situation. The results indicated that a key to recognizing PVIPs is identifying repetitive aggressive behavior. Saputra identified aggression triggers (e.g., excessive

participation in violent video games, acceptance of low levels of aggression without intervention, ignoring emotional instability), but no trigger accounted for all violent acts.

Schroder (2019) conducted a longitudinal study, which revealed a connection between mindsets and dealing with typical school-day stressors. Schroder claimed that unaddressed irritants could lead students with fixed mindsets to increased anxiety, often leading to depression, and sometimes, their depression led them to commit violence. Using a commonality analysis approach, Mullarkey and Schleider (2020) revealed a correlation between students with fixed mindsets and a propensity toward high anxiety, which can, as Schroder defended, lead to other psychological complications, including violence. These studies revealed, in part, that students with fixed mindsets are less likely to try to improve their situation because they believe they are fixed in their responses to demanding situations and thereby believe that violence is a viable answer to their obstacles (Dietrich & Zimmermann, 2019; Dweck, 2006).

Additionally, Krause et al. (2022) examined school violence by analyzing surveillance footage from a single institution between 2015 and 2019. They noted from the videos that direct threats led to depression and school avoidance among students. Cornell (2020) investigated five school shootings via controlled studies. With the assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice (2017), Cornell disclosed opportunities for school staff to recognize PVIPs via continual threat assessments. Cornell wrote that the concept of threat assessment marks a meaningful change in how school employees approach risk assessment. Rather than emphasizing predictive risks, violence prevention emphasizes preventing violence by supporting troubled students. Training preservice educators would provide them with tools to identify troubled students, allowing them to intervene before violence occurs (The Virginia Education Association, 2022; University of Virginia, 2017).

Cornell (2020) also posited that when educators know how to identify PVIPs, schools have fewer discipline issues, including reduced suspensions, and a healthier, more productive classroom. The National Association of School Psychologists (2022) outlined steps for schools to reduce acts of aggression; PVIPs are central to the program. Additional support is found in a study by The Virginia Education Association (2022), which worked with the United States Secret Service, to develop a PVIP detection system using case studies of 67 disrupted school shootings from 2006–18. The investigators noted that every person involved with schools has a role to play, and specially trained educators can be part of the solution. They maintained that without collaboration and focused educator training, schools would continue to experience violence. Recent research by the FBI (2018) has also identified specific PVIPs in their analysis of school shootings, emphasizing the importance of early detection and intervention. Studies like those conducted by the FBI, Virginia Education Association (2022), and Cornell (2020) further support the need for continuous threat assessments and educator training to recognize and respond to early warning signs of violence. Modern studies underscore the importance of mental health support, early intervention, and continuous monitoring to create safer school environments (Bare et al., 2022) and indicate an evolving mindset regarding PVIP training.

Dweck's (2006) mindset theory provides a pathway for intervention. By promoting growth mindsets, educators can help students develop resilience and healthier coping mechanisms. Growth mindset training has been shown to reduce psychological distress and improve students' ability to cope with stress, as argued in a meta-analysis by Burnette et al. (2020). These findings suggest that fostering growth mindsets can be a preventive measure against both depression and violence in schools.

The role of educators in this process is crucial. As noted by Lee and Jang (2018), students with growth mindsets are more adaptable and less likely to resort to violence when faced with pre-violence indicator patterns (PVIPs). Educators trained to recognize and respond to these indicators can intervene effectively, promoting a safer and more supportive school environment.

Dweck's (2006) mindset theory not only provides insight into the psychological mechanisms underlying depression and violence among students but also offers practical strategies for intervention. The literature revealed that by shifting students from a fixed to a growth mindset, educators can reduce the prevalence of depression and its associated risks of violence, ultimately fostering a more positive and resilient student body.

PVIP Relevance

Several studies have shed light on the predictive variables and behaviors related to school violence (Bare et al., 2022). Newman et al. (2005) identified social withdrawal and increased introversion, suggesting that isolating may facilitate violent behavior. Verlinden et al. (2000) noted a sudden change in mood and weapon-related interest as risk factors. Ferguson et al. (2011) conducted a meta-analysis and noted the significance of students studying violent acts. Meloy et al. (2011) documented the propensity for students to make harmful comments before committing acts of violence. Additionally, Horgan (2008) found that violent offenders often demonstrate an interest in extremist ideas coupled with dehumanization. Gerodimos (2022) characterized warning signs of impending violence as cyclical, encompassing domestic violence, animal abuse, and previous violent crime. Finally, Swanson et al. (1990) identified substance abuse as a significant risk factor for violent behavior, although the exact nature of the relationship between substance abuse and violence is complex and not entirely understood. Together, Ferguson et al. (2011), Gerodimos (2022), and Meloy et al. (2011) underscored the

complexity and multidimensionality of factors leading to school violence and identified the importance of a comprehensive understanding of prevention strategies.

Zaruba (2021) found that educators' self-perceptions, whether positive or negative, impacted their students. Tassell's (2020) mixed-methods research echoed this sentiment, showing a connection between mindfulness, mindset, anxiety, and self-efficacy, and noted a lack of training for preservice educators in growth mindset and its effect on students in most universities. Reinforcing Tassell's point, Derr and Morrow (2020) conducted a mixed-method study with 60 adults aged 18–25 who exhibited fixed mindsets to determine if they could be trained to adopt growth mindsets. They found that an educator's mindset affected their responses to students, particularly in situations of aggression. They discovered that educators with growth mindsets tend to be more supportive of victims of violence than those with fixed mindsets. Thus, Derr and Morrow (2020), Tassell (2020), and Zaruba (2021) collectively underscored the importance of fostering growth mindsets in educators.

Kandakai and King (2002) conducted a quantitative study involving 800 preservice educators from six Ohio universities and found the participants felt unprepared to manage school violence. They emphasized that violence-prevention training could help educators manage classrooms more effectively. They noted that although the educators were not interested in using law enforcement methods to identify PVIPs, they wanted assistance in recognizing and responding to potential violence. Kandakai and King's research underscores the need for tailored training programs that equip educators with the skills to handle violence prevention within an educational context. Kandakai and King acknowledged the limitations of their study, noting that the quantitative, questionnaire-based methodology might not have captured the full depth of teachers' experiences. They suggested that a phenomenological approach could provide richer

insight. They also pointed out the potential influence of social desirability bias (a tendency to answer favorably) on the respondents' answers, which could have affected the accuracy of the data. Kandakai and King indicated that additional research was needed on violence-prevention programs.

Perkins (2018) conducted a mixed methods study to explore in-service educators' perceptions of their professional development training on school violence. His findings revealed a widespread lack of confidence in existing crisis plans, despite their prevalence. He suggested further research into how teachers are prepared for such situations by universities. Pusey (2020) investigated preservice educators' perceptions about preparation for violent acts. Guided by prospect theory[3], Pusey identified three themes: lack of consideration for school violence, vulnerability to classroom attacks, and concerns about their professional reputation. The connection between prospect theory and decision-making under risk[4] can be understood through Dweck's mindset theory, which suggests that individuals with fixed mindsets may be more susceptible to fears and concerns, while those with growth mindsets may be better equipped to handle challenges and adapt to potential threats.

Educator Discernment of PVIPs

A growth mindset leads to resilience and perseverance, even in the face of failure (Dietrich & Zimmermann, 2019). Salmivalli and Nieminen (2001) argued that individuals with growth mindsets are more likely to avoid violence, even when faced with limited options. Additionally, Derr and Morrow (2020) noted that individuals with growth mindsets demonstrate

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[3] Prospect theory describes how people make decisions involving risk and uncertainty. It highlights that people value gains and losses differently.
[4] Decision-making under risk involves making choices when the outcomes are uncertain and can be influenced by how individuals perceive potential gains and losses.

resilience by consistently striving to overcome everyday challenges and complete their plans. In contrast, Dweck (2006) observed that those with fixed mindsets often react negatively to challenges and struggle with plan completion. Understanding mindset differences can help educators discern pre-violence indicator patterns in students, as those with fixed mindsets might exhibit elevated negative reactions to stress and challenges, signaling potential concerns.

The positive impact of mindset-training programs, particularly those emphasizing growth and empathy has been a focus of research. Karumbaiah et al. (2017) found that growth-mindset training positively impacted growth mindset abilities and positive student behavior, with additional benefits observed when empathy training was incorporated. Limeri et al. (2020) reported similar findings, noting improved outcomes, such as GPA and self-confidence. McCabe et al. (2020) observed a positive correlation between growth mindset training and academic progress in undergraduate students. However, they emphasized that progress also depended on the students' inherent abilities and the strategies employed by their professors. Brody and Hadar (2017) found undergraduates who had growth mindset training exhibited better cognitive adaptation and greater ability to solve daily problems.

Kroeper (2022) asserted that an educator's ability to identify PVIPs was influenced by their mindset more than training. Kroeper's research contrasts with Brez et al. (2020), who found no connection between instruction based on Dweck's (2006) intelligence theory and increased GPAs, suggesting that the application of growth mindset principles alone does not necessarily improve academic performance. However, Brooks and Goldstein (2008) argued that educators with growth mindsets foster academically successful, highly motivated students, even when the student is stressed. Zhang et al. (2017) added that students with growth mindsets typically exhibited cognitive resilience during stress, enhanced motivation, and matured into successful

adults with high socioeconomic status and affective capabilities. The more students shift toward growth mindsets, the less likely they develop emotional and cognitive disorders that lead to violence. Acknowledging Zhang's work, Seaton (2017) argued that university administrations should empower preservice educators to teach growth mindsets to their students, thereby enhancing their ability to identify and respond to PVIPs effectively.

This body of research suggests that growth-mindset training programs, particularly those that incorporate empathy, can positively influence academic performance, cognitive adaptability, and emotional resilience. Harnessing the potential of such training requires strengthening and supporting teachers and understanding and adapting to changes within academia.

On December 14, 2012, the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, resulted in the death of 20 children and six staff. The victims' parents formed The Sandy Hook Promise Board (2022) which identified deficits in school PVIP training. In a related investigation, Ronkainen et al. (2019) conducted a case study of a Finnish elementary school which provided further insight. They examined the growth mindset principles that were integrated into teaching practices and emphasized the role of universities to foster growth mindsets of educators. They discovered that by intensifying these growth mindset efforts, educators can better support students in developing their own growth mindsets.

General Classroom Management via PVIP Identification

Teacher awareness and effective classroom management are critical elements in identifying and addressing PVIPs and fostering a positive mindset among students. Supporting identifying PVIPs and coaching a growth mindset are Alatahari et al. (2019), who emphasized the importance of teachers' situational awareness in recognizing early signs of potential violence, and Barber et al. (2019), who highlighted strategies for effective classroom management that

created a safe and supportive learning environment. Fernández et al. (2020) discussed how fostering a growth mindset in students helps build resilience and adaptability, essential for preventing violent behaviors and academic and emotional well-being. Collectively they underscore the necessity of integrating PVIP identification with growth mindset development to enhance both safety and educational outcomes. This section provides an overview of the interplay between teacher awareness, classroom management, and the identification of PVIPs, underlining the importance of a growth mindset in educators to mitigate potential school violence.

Teachers are often the first line of defense in recognizing behavioral patterns that may indicate a propensity for violence (Njelesani et al., 2021; Nkuba et al., 2018). Katsiyannis et al. (2018) and Kern et al. (2017) found that a significant number of students exhibiting violent behavior had identifiable PVIPs, emphasizing the need for early detection and intervention. The research underscores the importance of educators being trained to identify PVIPs, which include signs of anxiety, depression, and aggression (Alatahari et al., 2019). Terrasi and De Galarce (2017) emphasized the importance of training educators to address psychological needs before they escalate into violence. Their literature review on trauma and learning in America's classrooms argued that proactive violence preparedness training is more effective than reactive, post-incident training which can lead to a safer and more productive educational environment.

Classroom management significantly influences the identification and mitigation of PVIPs. Effective management strategies create a structured and supportive environment where students feel safe and understood. A key component of classroom management is fostering a growth mindset among both students and teachers. Organizations such as the National Association of School Psychologists and the Virginia Education Association advocate for

systematic training in PVIP detection. They argue that such training enables educators to identify at-risk students and intervene appropriately before violence occurs (Virginia Education Association, 2022). Dweck's (2006) mindset theory differentiates between fixed and growth mindsets, with the latter being more conducive to resilience and adaptive coping strategies.

Teachers with growth mindsets are more likely to create an inclusive and supportive classroom atmosphere, which helps in identifying and addressing PVIPs. Studies by Schroder et al. (2019) and Mullarkey and Schleider (2020) highlighted that students with fixed mindsets are more prone to anxiety and depression, which can lead to violence if unaddressed. By promoting a growth mindset, educators can help students develop healthier responses to stress and reduce the likelihood of violent behavior.

Research indicates that many preservice educators feel unprepared to handle school violence due to a lack of specific training (Kandakai & King, 2002). By incorporating comprehensive training programs that focus on situational awareness and PVIP detection, educators can be better equipped to recognize and respond to potential threats. Moreover, fostering growth mindsets in educators is crucial. Teachers with growth mindsets are more likely to be vigilant, responsive, and supportive when dealing with students showing PVIPs (Johnson, 2018). Training programs should, therefore, include components that enhance educators' self-awareness and mindsets, enabling them to model positive behaviors and attitudes in the classroom.

Several studies provided evidence of the effectiveness of a growth mindset and PVIP training in reducing school violence. For example, a study by Saputra et al. (2020) demonstrated that students trained in peace counseling, guided by educators with growth mindsets, showed a significant reduction in aggressive behaviors. Similarly, research by Cornell (2020) found that

schools with staff trained in PVIP detection and growth mindset principles experienced fewer disciplinary issues and a more supportive school climate. These findings underscore the importance of adopting a holistic approach to teacher training, incorporating both PVIP detection and growth mindset development. This dual focus not only equips educators to identify and mitigate potential violence but also fosters a more resilient and adaptive student body.

Mindset Theory, Depression, and School Violence

Carol Dweck's (2006) mindset theory, which differentiates between fixed and growth mindsets, provides a foundational understanding of how an individuals' beliefs about their abilities influence their responses to challenges and their overall mental health. According to Dweck, individuals with fixed mindsets believe their abilities and intelligence are static and unchangeable. This belief often leads to a reluctance to take on new challenges and a higher susceptibility to anxiety and depression. Conversely, those with growth mindsets view their abilities as malleable, which fosters resilience and a willingness to embrace challenges.

Depression, a prevalent mental health issue among students, has been linked to the fixed mindset and sometimes violence. Individuals with fixed mindsets are more likely to experience feelings of helplessness and despair when faced with difficulties (Mullarkey & Schleider, 2020; Schroder et al., 2019; Seligman & Maier, 1967). This vulnerability is closely related to the concept of learned helplessness (Seligman & Maier,1967). Individuals believe they have no control over their circumstances which can also end in violence. Schroder et al. (2019) conducted a longitudinal study, involving 293 students over a span of five weeks, on the relationship between mindsets and depression. Their findings suggested that students with fixed mindsets struggled more with typical school-day stressors, often leading to increased anxiety and depression. Schroder contended that a fixed mindset set on anxiety predicts future psychological

distress, suggesting that students with such mindsets may be at increased risk for behaviors related to violence due to unmanaged emotional challenges. Schroder's research aligns with the commonality analysis conducted by Mullarkey and Schleider (2020). Their investigation involved 200 participants in Study 1 and 430 participants in Study 2. Both studies evaluated the unique contributions of emotion and anxiety mindsets to anxiety and depression symptoms relative to hopelessness. They concluded that there was a correlation between fixed mindsets and high anxiety, which can exacerbate other psychological issues. These studies indicated that students with fixed mindsets are less likely to engage in positive problem-solving. They tend to perceive failures as insurmountable barriers which can lead to violence as their answer to obstacles. Unaddressed depression and anxiety can lead to violent behaviors (Mullarkey & Schleider, 2020); Schroder et al., 2019; Seligman & Maier, 1967). For example, Schroder et al, (2019) found that students with fixed mindsets who experienced depression were more prone to externalizing their frustrations through aggression.

Mindset and Neuroplasticity

Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to reshape and change itself (Innocenti, 2022). Neuroplasticity involves creating new brain cells, moving them to where they need to be, differentiating them to perform specific roles, forming connections between cells, and organizing them in a certain way. The changes can lead to significant alterations in the brain's structure and facilitate learning specific abilities like language or eye dominance. Innocenti (2022) acknowledged that in adulthood, the brain's flexibility is more limited and is usually realized as changes in the strength of connections between brain cells.

Though closely interlinked, the mind and the brain are distinct. The brain is a physical entity and an organ that exhibits tangible and measurable properties. Scientists can actively study

and map out the brain's functions and structure (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2017). It is responsible for all physiological processes and responses, including the unconscious ones, such as maintaining the heartbeat, breathing, and reflexive actions. On the other hand, the mind is an abstract entity that refers to consciousness, thought processes, memories, emotions, and imagination. It includes cognitive faculties such as perception, thinking, judgment, and memory. The mind thus governs subjective experiences, thoughts, feelings, and interpretation of the world around us. It is where our sense of self and individuality is believed to reside (Pinker, 2003).

Because the human brain is neuroplastic, reorientation, including growth mindset is possible (Samadi, 2017; Sarrasin et al., 2018). Owens and Tanner (2017) found that neuroplasticity results in the ability to adapt beliefs. Dweck (2017) argued that people could develop growth-mindset habits to replace fixed-mindset habits. Li and Wang (2020) studied undergraduate students ($N = 172$) to examine the effects of growth-mindset training on brain development. They found evidence that growth-mindset training resulted in the creation of neuronal pathways and concluded that the brain is not a static organ and mindset improvement is possible. Their findings echoed those of Jain and Weiten (2019), who found that the human mind is highly adaptable and cognitive abilities could be improved over time through experiences. From a review of the literature, Owens and Tanner (2017) ascertained that changes that take place in a growth mindset entail physical alterations in the neuronal matrix. The researchers proposed a three-part pedagogical approach known as *Think-Pair-Share* to enhance mindset. First, the professor introduces a real-world problem to solve. Second, students independently contemplate multiple solutions and then pair- up to discuss their ideas. Finally, the student pairs reach a consensus and share solutions. According to Owen and Tanner, this strategy promotes problem-solving and fosters collaborative learning, key components of a growth mindset.

Cabib et al. (2020) conducted a comprehensive literature review on neuroplasticity and stress. Their study revealed that the brain persistently produces new neurons, a process known as neurogenesis. They found that increased engagement in problem analysis leads to a reconfiguration of the neuronal matrix, highlighting the brain's ability to adapt and reorganize in response to cognitive challenges. This functional neuroplasticity is crucial for learning to cope with stress effectively. In a similar study, Erdman et al. (2019) suggested that a potential advantage of mindset training was equipping students to devise healthier solutions to life's challenges. Building further with a literature reviews, Cabib (2020) also discovered that positive neuroplastic changes can potentially prevent students from resorting to aggression. In a longitudinal study spanning 17.5 years, Karlen et al. (2019) engaged upper secondary students (N = 1215) and determined that the metamorphosis of growth mindset was contingent on an educator's willingness to apply the techniques integrated in the Think-Pair-Share pedagogical approach. Understanding neuroplasticity and brain-growth capacity represents a powerful and transformative potential in education (Cabib et al., 2020).

Educator Mental Health Gaps

Kratt (2018) found that the pressure for teachers to identify violent students has escalated and highlighted the mental health competencies required by educators to manage these pressures effectively. Kratt emphasized that without a growth mindset and sufficient training to identify PVIPs, educators lack the necessary tools to intervene effectively. Similarly, White and Beal (1999) argued that without proper training, educators are ill-equipped to identify and address potential violence.

Universities often overlook the psychological well-being of preservice educators and rarely address mindsets (Keesey et al., 2018). In a quantitative study involving preservice and in-

service educators ($N = 783$) from nine universities, Clark and Newberry (2018) found that preservice educators were often not required to undergo psychological evaluations to graduate. A survey by Ringeisen et al. (2016) spotlighted the risks from the lack of proper assessment in educational institutions; between 4.3% and 11.5% of students may need mental health intervention. The situation is further complicated when the instructor requires psychological support, hindering their ability to recognize student needs. These concerns were echoed by Kern et al. (2017) in a mixed-method study that indicated that 46.3% of adolescents aged 13 to 18 reported mental health conditions at some stage in their life, and just over 20% were diagnosed with a severe mental illness. From these results, Kern et al. argued for policy changes mandating the provision of mental health services for teachers.

Komarraju and Nadler (2013) postulated that successful students can self-regulate and persevere amidst challenges. Their study, anchored in Dweck's (1975) implicit theory and Bandura's (1977) social-learning theory, revealed that students not well equipped to manage stress earn lower GPAs. Lee and Ryu (2019) noted that fixed mindsets and low GPAs could signal a student's propensity for violence. Dekkers et al. (2019) and Pascual-Sagastizabal et al. (2019) further demonstrated that cortisol levels and stress-support hormones were higher in students with fixed mindsets. These perspectives bring the discussion to the nature versus nurture debate, further complicated by the role of epigenetics. Epigenetics refers to changes in gene expression that do not involve alterations to the underlying DNA sequence, but are influenced by factors such as age, environment, lifestyle, choices, and disease state (Christensen et al., 2022).

Xiao et al. (2017) conducted a five-year longitudinal study that highlighted national mental health and treatment trends in college counseling centers. Their findings indicated a growing mental health crisis among college students, underscoring the need for universities to

equip preservice educators with the skills to recognize and address psychological stress. Such preparation aligns with fostering a growth mindset, enabling educators to support students effectively in managing stress and improving overall well-being. In a cohort study, Brez et al. (2020) investigated the effects of growth mindset intervention on college student success and found a failure to replicate expected outcomes. Specifically, the anticipated improvements in academic performance and resilience to academic challenges were not observed, suggesting that the context and implementation of the intervention may play critical roles in its effectiveness. Their study revealed that educators should closely examine student performance, emotional stability, and mindset to identify and address psychological needs effectively. In a longitudinal study involving nearly 1300 first-year undergraduates, Schroder et al. (2019) found a broad range of psychological issues in university classrooms, including fixed mindsets. The purpose of their study was to compare how undergraduates with growth mindsets and undergraduates with fixed mindsets managed high anxiety and self-reported depression. They found a positive association between growth mindsets and handling psychological stressors. However, Schroder et al. also found that few universities address what his study discovered. Lawson et al. (2019) argued that trauma literacy is essential for educators to recognize students grappling with psychological distress and highlighted the secondary traumatic stress experienced by educators. According to Lawson et al., promoting trauma literacy aligns with fostering a growth mindset in educators, equipping them to identify and address student distress before it escalates to violence.

Mindset and Educator Situational Awareness

Situational awareness, the ability to interpret the environment to predict future outcomes, has been expressed across various professions, including education (Sarter & Woods, 2018; Torres et al., 2022). Endsley (2011, 2016) explored mindsets as they pertain to educators'

situational awareness and noted the importance of having a growth mindset to effectively navigate classroom dynamics. Brennan et al. (2020) emphasized situational awareness for being alert to everyday threats and in high-risk professions, being that it boosts performance and minimizes errors. It can be argued that education is a high-risk profession where situational awareness is vital, and Endsley (2018) posited that situational awareness training would be helpful. Although situational awareness training is standard in law enforcement (Ilijazi et al., 2019), it is less common in academic settings. Nonetheless, Gregory et al. (2015) found that situational awareness can be taught outside of law enforcement.

School violence, classroom observations, and research indicate that students often show signs of crisis (Deckro et al., 2002; Evans et al., 2018).

Crane et al., (2021) conducted a literature review and derived that situational awareness is typically cultivated through pre-planning and coaching and sharpened in real-world situations. Crane et al. also investigated how soldiers employed post-event debriefing to sustain psychological resilience when facing violent situations. This approach can be paralleled to the current rise in school violence, which exposes educators to similar psychological challenges as those experienced by first responders and military personnel (McIntyre et al., 2019). By learning and adopting situational awareness skills, educators can develop strategies to process and cope with the aftermath of violence, enhancing their psychological resilience and preparedness for future challenges. Further, this practice can help teachers reflect on and analyze their responses, leading to improved responses in future violent encounters. It is argued that largely due to a person's situational awareness, they can make rapid decisions, specifically while under tremendous stress (Wild et al., 2020), such as a student committing violence. Society expects educators to utilize situational awareness skills like first responders (Jennings, 2018). In

Addressing Student Mental Health: *Teachers as First Responders*, Casbarro (2020) posited that educators would benefit from first responder training, which would empower them to identify troubled students before violence occurs. However, Brunzell et al. (2019) studied trauma-impacted classrooms and found that universities were unaware of preservice educators' attitudes toward mandatory PVIP training.

A strong advocate for training educators on situational awareness is the ALICE Training Institute (2024). ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate and is a proactive, option-based strategy for active shooter response training in schools. The core of the ALICE program emphasizes situational awareness, teaching participants to be fully cognizant of their surroundings and recognizing potential threats. By training teachers to identify, assess, and respond to unusual behavior and situations like police and other first responders, ALICE can enhance school safety. Situational awareness allows a person to remain vigilant to detect changes in emotional stability and, in the case of a teacher, aids them in properly identifying students who demonstrate PVIPs (Gregory et al., 2015). Teachers and first responders are both expected to manage extensive amounts of information and problem-solve in real-time. Situational awareness is a skill that can help teachers create a safe learning environment (United States Department of Justice, 2017), but it should be implemented without creating an atmosphere reminiscent of a police state; it should empower teachers to be vigilant and maintain a nurturing classroom setting.

Mindset and Student Emotional Stability

The focus on students' psychological needs and the role of educators in identifying and addressing mental health issues has intensified, but Akeman et al. (2019) posited that the education system is failing to meet those needs. The researchers maintain that neglecting the

mental needs of students contributes to an upsurge in self-harm and harm to others. König et al. (2020) utilized mixed methods and discovered that academic performance tended to decline for students experiencing stress. A clinical study by Lattie et al. (2019) identified social media and news outlet exposure as contributing factors and suggested that school leaders were not taking adequate measures to assuage the issue. Similarly, Smith (2021) illustrated a prevailing mental health crisis in U.S. schools and suggested that nearly all educators lacked adequate training to identify students undergoing mental health crises. Smith's mixed-methods study denoted the need to embrace innovative solutions, such as training for educators and parents to recognize and address students at risk of depression or violence. In another mixed-methods study, Kern (2017) found that educators who spend plenty of time with students can create positive change. Similar to Kern's discoveries, Pennings (2017) conducted an in-depth study on the interpersonal dynamics of teacher-student relationships and found that educators who built relationships were more capable of identifying students in crisis. His research indicated that significant progress could only be achieved through specialized training for educators. Overall, Pennings' findings signal a need for a shift in the educational landscape, one that includes training educators how to build positive student-educator relationships and introducing innovative methods to protect the mental health of students.

Schroder et al. (2019) examined the potential connection between mental health and mindset in college-aged students in a quantitative investigation involving surveys of first-year undergraduate students ($N = 293$) over five weeks. They found that students with growth mindsets, despite encountering similar stressors, outperformed students with fixed mindsets academically and maintained a more stable psyche. Schroder et al. posited that students harboring fixed mindsets, when unaddressed, were prone to opt for the path of least resistance

and often grappled with mental health disorders, expressing frustrations through self-harm or violence. Mullarkey and Schleider (2020) applied a commonality analysis approach, consistent with Dweck's implicit theory of intelligence and found that students with fixed mindsets often struggled to overcome depression, leading to sustained deterioration in their psychological health. Their research unveiled the significant impact of fixed mindsets on mental well-being and highlighted the necessity for further investigation into these associations to develop effective interventions.

Katsiyannis's (2018) review of school shootings in the United States indicated that solutions may reside in a system wherein educators are trained to identify struggling students. By accurately identifying students with fixed mindsets, a reduction in school violence is feasible (Mullarkey & Schleider, 2020; Schroder, 2019). Osagiede et al. (2018) interviewed 468 educators regarding school violence and found that most educators could not identify or address students experiencing mental health crises. Fear of administrative retribution led many teachers to avoid personal conversations with students, and they sometimes refrained from reporting their concerns. Osagiede advocated for schools to employ mental health professionals to assist students and provide educator training to identify students facing psychological issues.

Table 1 outlines 11 PVIP questions a teacher can use to know if a student may be ready to commit a violent act. The questions are from a study by the United States Secret Service and the Department of Education designed to help educators identify PVIPs (Fein et al., 2004, pp. 55–57). The findings indicated that there are actionable, quantifiable steps that schools can take to mitigate self-harm and violence among students. This information is in the public domain.

Table 1.

Threat Assessment

Number	Question
1	What is the student's motive(s) and goals?
2	Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?
3	Has the subject shown inappropriate interest in any of the following?
4	Has the student engaged in attack-related behaviors?
5	Does the student have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?
6	Is the student experiencing hopelessness, desperation, and/or despair?
7	Does the student have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult?
8	Does the student see violence as an acceptable—or desirable—or the only way to solve problems?
9	Is the student's conversation and "story" consistent with his or her actions?
10	Are there other people concerned about the student's potential for violence?

Table 2 outlines eight steps that school leaders should follow to mitigate violence (Vossekuil et al., 2001, pp. 1–10).

Table 2.

Eight-Step Violence Reduction Plan

Number	Question
1	Establish a multidisciplinary threat assessment team of school personnel, including faculty, staff, administrators, coaches, and available school resource officers who will direct, manage, and document the threat assessment process.

2   Define concerning behaviors, including those that are objectively concerning or prohibited, which should trigger an immediate intervention (e.g., threats, violent acts, or weapons on campus), and other lower level concerning behaviors (e.g., depressed mood, interest in violent topics, or conflicts between classmates).

3   Establish and provide training on a central reporting system, like a smartphone application, an online form, or a dedicated school email address or phone number. Ensure that it provides anonymity to those reporting concerns and is monitored by personnel who will follow up on all reports.

4   Determine the threshold for law enforcement intervention, especially if there is a risk of harm to self or others.

5   Establish threat assessment procedures that include practices for maintaining documentation, identifying sources of information, reviewing records, and conducting interviews. The assessment should be guided by understanding the thinking and behavior observed in past school attackers, as described in Protecting America's Schools: A United States Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence.

6   Develop risk management options to enact once an assessment is complete. Create individualized management plans to mitigate identified risks. Notify law enforcement immediately if the student is determined to pose an imminent risk of harm to self or others. Take steps to ensure the safety of potential targets, create a situation less prone to violence, redirect the student's motive, and reduce the effect of stressors.

| 7 | Create and promote a safe school climate built on a culture of safety, respect, trust, and emotional support for students. Encourage communication, intervene in conflicts and bullying, and empower students to share their concerns. |
| 8 | Train all stakeholders, including school personnel, students, parents, and law enforcement. |

Note: The questions are designed to guide the establishment of a comprehensive threat assessment process within a school setting

Despite research and programs designed to curtail school violence, practical solutions are needed. Various measures have been implemented, including hiring police officers or private security, arming teachers, conducting lockdown drills, and providing professional development so educators can detect PVIPs; however, the impact of these programs is unclear. Several studies revealed that while some schools provide staff with professional development focused on school and general classroom safety, many educators lack trust in current training programs and desire more effective preparation (Alatahari et al., 2019; Gibbs, 2014; Kandakai & King, 2002; Pusey, 2020; White & Beal, 1999).

The Literature Gap

There is a gap in the literature regarding college mandates related to general school safety and bridging the gap will help equip future educators. The United States Secret Service and Department of Education (2002) emphasized threat assessment and the need for effective strategies to create safe school climates. Henrix-Soto (2018) and Aalto et al. (2019) advocated for the inclusion of school safety measures, including components of PVIP identification in

university curricula, but the absence of such training in preservice educator programs and limited curricula options reveals a disconnect between research findings and practical application. Ultimately, the review of the literature revealed a need for research examining the mindset of preservice educators concerning mandatory training to identify PVIPs in order to plan efficient and effectual training. Nothing was found.

Summary

While Dweck's work on growth mindset does not specifically address PVIPs, her research on the implicit theory of intelligence (Dweck, 2006) is relevant to this study. According to Dweck, mindset significantly influences how individuals perceive and respond to their experiences. A growth mindset, which emphasizes a belief in personal development and improvement, can help teachers become more attuned to changes and patterns in student behavior. Supporting Dweck's theory, Kern et al. (2017) posited that growth mindsets can help teachers identify PVIPs. Additionally, Dweck (2006) noted that students with fixed mindsets often exhibit anxiety and PVIPs. Dweck's theory, combined with Kern et al., suggests that fostering a growth mindset in both teachers and students can enhance the detection and understanding of pre-violence indicators, thereby promoting a safer school environment. Organizations like the National Association of School Psychologists and the Virginia Education Association (2022) advocate for implementing PVIP detection protocols and extensive educator training to identify and prevent school violence.

White and Beal (1999) underscored the need for specialized training for educators to address school violence due to rising student anxiety. Croft et al. (2019), Harris et al. (2019), and Pierce (2021), also suggested preservice training to help address school safety concerns, pointing out how the training could positively impact a student's academic performance and overall

school environment. Kandaki and King (2002) found that while preservice educators acknowledged the importance of violence prevention, they lacked the confidence to intervene. According to ALICE (2024), Barber et al. (2019), and Dweck (2006), school violence is partly due to a lack of comprehensive violence detection training, including PVIP. Educators with growth mindsets were adept at identifying and assisting distressed students (Li & Bates, 2020; Limeri, 2020; O'Meara et al., 2017). In contrast, Clark (2018) and Zhang et al. (2017) cautioned that preservice educators embracing fixed mindsets may foster graduates with fixed mindsets. Additionally, some literature indicates that educators with a fixed mindset might inadvertently permit or exacerbate aggressive behaviors in students with fixed mindsets who are more prone to aggression and violence (Aelterman et al., 2019; Chao et al., 2017; Fernandez, 2020). Such educators may fail to recognize early warning signs or address the underlying issues effectively, potentially allowing these behaviors to escalate.

Johnson (2018) studied police arrests where the suspects became violent and observed PVIPs displayed by the suspects prior to their aggression. Johnson posited that combining PVIP training, growth mindset training, and situational awareness could significantly improve enhance identifying potential threats. Alatahari et al. (2019) worked with the United States Secret Service to develop systems for teachers to identify PVIPs and revealed that 94% of violent school offenders displayed PVIPs on school premises. Coppersmith et al. (2022), Mullarkey and Schleider (2020), and Schroder et al. (2019) had similar findings and emphasized the need for effective intervention strategies. Additionally, the United States Secret Service and the Department of Education recommended employing a set of 11 questions for identifying student PVIPs (Fein et al., 2004). The literature supports a training approach where a growth mindset,

situational awareness, and PVIP identification equip preservice educators to identify students exhibiting PVIPs before potentially violent actions.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative hermeneutical phenomenological study was to understand the mindsets of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns at XYZ University. The general problem was that people needed to learn the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns. Chapter Three includes nine primary sections: Overview, Research Design, Research Questions, Settings and Participants, Researcher Positionality, Procedures, Data Collection Plan, Trustworthiness, and Summary. Chapter Three also includes 27 secondary sections: Central Research Question, Sub-Research Questions, Site, Participants, Interpretive Framework, Philosophical Assumptions, Ontological Assumption, Epistemological Assumption, Axiological Assumption, Researcher's Role, Permissions, Recruitment Plan, Questionnaire Data Collection Approach, Questionnaire, Data Analysis Plan, Individual Interviews Data Collection Approach, Individual Interview Data, Analysis Plan, Focus Groups Data Collection Approach, Focus group questions, Focus Group, Data Analysis Plan, Data Synthesis, Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, Confirmability, and Ethical Considerations.

Research Design

The research was conducted using qualitative methods developed by Husserl (1931, 1970) and van Manen (1990). Qualitative research provides a valuable, in-depth, and detailed understanding of complex issues and is conducive to delving into the experiences, perspectives, and interpretations of the participant, providing a rich context that cannot be achieved with quantitative data (van Manen, 1990). Qualitative research addresses the social and cultural contexts in which behavior occurs (van Manen, 1990) which is critical for studying school

violence. Furthermore, qualitative methodology facilitates the collection of rich data and the development of effective, context-specific strategies (Husserl, 1931).

Hermeneutic phenomenology, as proposed by van Manen (1990), facilitates a deep exploration of lived experiences. In the context of school violence and teachers' beliefs about pre-violence indicator patterns (PVIPs), the approach is conducive to exploring teachers' personal experience with violence and how it shaped their beliefs and attitudes. Qualitative phenomenology addresses broad social, cultural, and institutional contexts, thereby providing insight into nuanced school environments (van Manen, 1990).

Hermeneutical phenomenology evolved from transcendental phenomenology as proposed by Edmund Husserl (1970) which emphasized *epoché*. Using epoché, researchers attempt to set aside biases. Bourgeois (1972), Ricoeur (1974), Heidegger (1975), and van Manen (1990) later developed hermeneutical phenomenology. Ricoeur (1990) noted the inherent dialectical tension in interpreting participants' lived experiences, stressing the role of language and the need to recognize subjective and objective elements, such as denotative and connotative features, within speech. These elements of understanding can assist in identifying fundamental aspects of school violence and teachers' beliefs to foster interventions that align with their belief systems. Hermeneutical phenomenology affords the opportunity to understand lived experiences within cultural, historical, and linguistic contexts (Heidegger, 1975; van Manen, 1990). Given that this study involves deeply embedded cultural and social phenomena, hermeneutic phenomenology offers the most appropriate methodological framework.

In addition, hermeneutic phenomenology aligns well with interpretivist epistemology, where reality is understood as subjectively constructed (Heidegger, 1975; van Manen, 1990). Firsthand experiences as a former undercover cop and detective in a large metropolitan police

force influenced the selection of this approach. The literature review emphasized parallels between school and law enforcement (reactive) approaches to violence, underscoring the need for proactive strategies.

Based on a multi-year search of scholarly databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, PubMed, EBSCOHost, ERIC, PsycINFO, Scopus, and Web of Science, Cornell (2020) and Ferrara et al. (2019) conducted quantitative studies, while Goodrum et al. (2019) and Lesneske and Block (2016) conducted case studies dissecting a plethora of statistics on school violence. However, no qualitative hermeneutical phenomenological research about what preservice educators believe about PVIPs and their potential to aid in preventing school violence was found.

Edmond Husserl, the founder of phenomenology, emphasized lived experience and how people perceive and understand their world (Smith, 2007). Later, Martin Heidegger (1975) expanded on Husserl's phenomenology by adding the concept of hermeneutics or the interpretation of these experiences. Neubauer et al. (2019) and Ricoeur (1974) indicated that the hermeneutical phenomenological method allows for dialectical tension, underscoring the importance of language. One example is the tension between the demand for police to maintain law and order while protecting individual rights and liberties. A specific scenario may be the use of *stop and search* tactics. On one hand, the language of crime prevention and safety could justify these practices, emphasizing the need to deter criminal activity, locate evidence, and maintain public safety. On the other hand, using language centered around civil liberties and racial justice these same tactics could be criticized as infringements on personal freedom and privacy and potentially discriminatory if disproportionately applied to racial or ethnic groups. The dialectical tension lies in the struggle to balance competing demands, and the interpretation of language plays a key role. It shapes how police practices are understood, communicated, and

justified, affecting public perceptions and police-community relationships. It underscores the need for clear, transparent, and inclusive language in law enforcement policy and practices to bridge the gap between these opposing expectations. This method promotes the analysis of lived experiences from both subjective and objective perspectives, which aids in formulating suitable conclusions.

Husserl (1970) emphasized the study of subjects' *lifeworld.* Lifeworld research addresses phenomena as personally experienced by individuals. The lifeworld concept focuses on participants' unique perceptions, feelings, and interpretations that often stem from emotions, opinions, and external evidence through dynamic and thorough interactive discussions. (Ricoeur, 1974; Salter & McGuire, 2019). External evidence is information gathered from outside sources, such as observations, interactions, and detailed records of events, which contribute to a deeper understanding of participants' perspectives. This study was designed to investigate preservice educators' perspectives about PVIP training using Ricoeur's (1974) approach of narrative interpretation and existential symbolism. The focus extended beyond describing experiences to interpreting the underlying meanings for a profound understanding. Heidegger's (1975) *hermeneutic circle*, a holistic and circular interpretation of the data, guided this study to an understanding of the separate parts and the whole (Peters, 1977; Weinsheimer, 1985).

Husserl used hermeneutical phenomenology to study the world via *noema* (learning) and *noesis* (interpreting) what others believe about their observations. Noesis is focused on removing natural bias by examining how people think based on rich-lived experiences (Neubauer et al., 2019). Aguas (2022) remarked that hermeneutical phenomenology permits researchers to dissect how participants view the world based on their epistemology and daily approach to life.

Heidegger (1975) was another proponent of hermeneutic phenomenology. He believed that researchers could not thoroughly remove presuppositions and introduced the notion of *daesin*. Dasein refers to experience that is particular to humans. It represents the complex and intertwined relationship between an individual and the world they inhabit (Heidegger, 1975). Heidegger stated that this philosophical lens helps researchers recognize the reality surrounding oneself and interpret those elements via a hermeneutical approach acknowledging that no one escapes preconceived notions or assumptions. Therefore, analysis requires breaking data into parts, synthesizing the fragments, and returning to the whole for a reevaluation or, "interpretation is revision" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 112).

Research Questions

Central Research Question

What is the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns?

Sub-Question One

What is the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns via coursework?

Sub-Question Two

What is the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns via interacting with students and faculty?

Sub-Question Three

What influence does exposure to social media and news outlets about school violence have on preservice educators' mindsets regarding their decision to pursue a teaching career?

Settings and Participants

The purpose of this section is twofold. The first purpose is to describe the setting so the reader can visualize it. The second purpose is to explain the criteria for participation in the study.

Setting

XYZ University was chosen because it was convenient, within easy driving distance. XYZ University was also chosen because U.S. News & World Report (2023) ranks it as a best college. Additionally, the university is stable, having existed since 1960, and continues to break records for student growth (■, 2022) and has a dedicated school of education. Lastly, I have relationships with various leaders which proved invaluable to gaining permission to conduct the investigation.

XYZ University is a rapidly growing four-year private Christian university in the southwestern United States. The school owns one campus and has nearly 500 online students. It offers 18 undergraduate and graduate programs to a total of more than 1,000 students. It is known for teaching a biblical worldview and is accredited by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. XYZ University is approved by The Arizona State Board of Education for elementary and secondary education in preparation for state certification and is approved by the United States Department of Justice for educating international students. XYZ University has other regional and national memberships and licenses (■, 2022). It is a registered 501c3 nonprofit institution supervised by a board of trustees, a president, and other academic leaders and employs nearly 89 full- and part-time staff.

XYZ University is respected locally for providing public and private primary and secondary schools with academic and administrative support, including on-site professional development and the use of campus facilities (Niche, 2024). Its education department has a licensure track for educators accepted by regional and nationally recognized accreditation

institutions (Council for Higher Education. 2022) and offers early childhood, elementary, secondary, special-education, and administration.

Participants

This study involved preservice educators who were attending on-campus classes and intended to work as a primary or secondary educator in the United States. The sample coincided with Polkinghorne's (1988) and Creswell and Poth's (2018) endorsements of 5–25 participants. Gender, race, age, political affiliation, and socioeconomic background helped to diversify the sample. The justification for a diverse sample was transferability (Gall et al., 2007; Moustakas, 1994). Given the significant gap between genders in education (Hansen & Quintero, 2018), more participants were female.

Recruitment Plan

A purposeful sampling was used to generate 12 preservice educators enrolled at XYZ University who planned to work at a school in the United States. After obtaining approval from XYZ University, Liberty SOE, the Chair, and the IRB, students who fit the selection criteria were emailed. The university sent emails to the selected students. Of their own volition, students replied, stating a desire to participate. The 12 participants who completed the process received a $50 Amazon gift card as a thank-you. I had no authority over the participants, and if any participant declined the invitation, the next responder was contacted, and so forth, until the goal of 12 participants was reached. Six students sent an initial email of interest, but they did not respond to follow-up emails. No connections with any participant existed.

Researcher Positionality

Given the amount of time that teachers and students interact, it is prudent to equip educators with tools to identify and effectively respond to students in crises (Cornell, 2020), yet

few universities require teacher courses that address situational awareness. Universities mandate that preservice educators learn theory, pedagogy, classroom discipline, and content before earning a diploma, yet most fail to teach how to detect a student in crisis.

Interpretive Framework

The interpretive framework for this dissertation is social constructivism, in which knowledge and meaning are co-constructed through personal interaction and the broader social context. I assert that an individual's understanding, behavior, and interpretations are not isolated phenomena but emerge from the intricate interaction of relationships and cultural narratives. By examining the subject through an interpretive framework, it is possible to explore how interactions, societal norms, and values informed and shaped the participants' realities. Post-positivism framework was influenced by scholars such as Adams-Quackenbush et al., (2019), Doddy (1984), Hawkins (1938), Johnsen (2017), Park et al., (2020), Kuhn (1964), and Vygotsky (Frawley, 1989). Johnsen explained that post-positivism characterizes scientific inquiry as a process of developing falsifiable hypotheses, which are then tested on observable data with unknown outcomes. With a post-positivist framework and the structure of hermeneutic phenomenology, I sought to interpret the lived experiences of the participants, aiming to unveil the meanings they attributed to their experiences (van Manen, 1990).

My biblical worldview is grounded in the belief in a supreme authority from whom ultimate answers can be obtained and it influenced the epistemological and ontological perspectives of this research. This perspective supports the notion of accountability to a higher power to protect those who are unable or unwilling to protect themselves (John 10:10-29).

From my years as a police detective, I have observed that some individuals are physically incapable of resisting evil. However, other emergency calls have revealed that some people,

despite having the ability to defend themselves, are unwilling to. Biblical teachings urge us to "Love our neighbor as ourselves" (Mark 12:31). Therefore, ensuring the safety of others is a direct expression of our Christian love and biblical responsibility.

The investigation was consistent with experiences I faced in childhood as a victim of physical violence and as an 11-year career as a police detective. It elucidated the distress caused by violence for victims, first responders, bystanders, and the community. Additionally, as a school administrator with over 20 years of experience, I find school violence particularly daunting. During my career I developed crisis plans for four schools across two states, and garnering requests from other primary and secondary school leaders who needed assistance formulating their plans. This study represents a partial culmination of my personal lived experiences.

Philosophical Assumptions

I gained an understanding of violence while serving as a detective in a major metropolitan area. The position involved reporting and witnessing thousands of crimes and surviving numerous violent assaults. Firestone (2019) conducted pilot studies involving in-depth interviews with inmates from numerous prisons. His research revealed that violent offenders do not abruptly appear; developing violent tendencies is a process that unfolds over time, often marked by a complex interplay of personal, social, and environmental factors. The research focused on identifying thought processes that regulate aggressive behavior, which are crucial for assessing the violence potential in high-risk individuals. The data underline the importance of early recognition and intervention which might alter the trajectory of individuals with violent tendencies such as found in PVIP identification techniques. Friends, family, and teachers often recognize issues retrospectively; too late (The Hartford Staff, 2021; Varela et al., 2018). The

purpose of this section is to disclose my ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions.

Ontological Assumption

There is one universal reality, and it comes from the Bible. The Bible defines reality and informs the interpretation of data. I hold a biblical worldview that the purpose of humanity is to honor and glorify the Creator God. Truth is tied to God and implies inseparability. This ontological assumption upholds the biblical teachings defending the weak (Psalm 82:3), seeking knowledge, and practicing righteousness to suppress wrongdoing (Isaiah 1:17). Additionally, the biblical perspective elevates children as a divine legacy (Psalm 127:3) and prohibits harming them (Matthew 18:6). Consequently, this ontological view of school violence mandates doing everything possible, guided by academic skill and passions uniquely instilled by God to prevent school violence (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).

Epistemological Assumption

In hermeneutical phenomenological research, the emphasis lies on the subjective narratives of the participants. While their voices are central, the influence of their unique beliefs, assumptions, and interpretations must be acknowledged. The foundation of this study was to carefully and methodically listen to and dissect the participants' lived experiences, seeking to capture their interpretations of reality. This study was not about cataloging observable actions or gathering measurable data, it was about discovering how participants understood, explained, and distinguished different phenomena. Delving into their lived experiences to discern the intricate ways they perceive, interpret, and make sense of the world revealed profound insight into their mindsets.

Axiological Assumption

Axiological assumptions pertain to acknowledging personal values and biases within a study and the awareness that humans collect information, judge them, and assign value based on ideas, perceptions, feelings, and interpretations that are personal and unique (Research-Methodology, 2020). As a former police detective, my axiological assumption embodies a fusion of values and biases about the safety of students and staff. The values and biases influenced me to implement strict rules and discipline in the educational setting. I am inclined to emphasize responsibility and accountability, transparent reporting, clearly defined protocols, and rule enforcement. I believe in personal responsibility for safety and consider pragmatic, action-oriented solutions, and early intervention critical which could cause bias toward training, community engagement, and collaboration between schools and law enforcement agencies, but it was bracketed. I believe that nothing occurs devoid of other influences; everything is an amalgamation of events, socioeconomics, and psychological factors and choices.

Despite biases, Marin (2019) suggested that objectivity can be achieved through free-flowing dialogue, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. To help attain free-flowing dialogue, ethics and values were prioritized and participants were treated with due respect. The utmost importance was placed on participant experiences, narratives, and voice.

Researcher's Role

In hermeneutical phenomenological studies, researchers face particular challenges. Collins (2022) contended that regardless of reflexivity and other strategies to mitigate the influence of the researcher's personal experiences, a crucial step lies in comprehending the full scope of the researcher's reality. As the researcher, I served as an instrument for data collection and interpretation. The objective was to illuminate the essence and nuances of participants' lived

experiences. Building trust through careful and empathetic listening, thoughtful questioning, and reflective analysis to create an environment where participants felt comfortable sharing personal and intimate details was paramount. There is value in uncovering the deeper meanings and structures underlying a phenomenon for a richer and more nuanced understanding of human experience. I had no authority over the participants, and they were free to pause or end the interviews anytime. The approach contributed to more open and honest dialogue.

Procedures

This section outlines the steps of the study, providing enough detail to enable replication. The study was initiated by securing Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Liberty University (see Appendix E). IRB approval and the prerequisite XYZ University documents were emailed to the university departments for approval. Once the research was approved, participant recruitment was initiated by XYZ University via email. Participants were engaged through an initial questionnaire, individual interviews, and a focus group.

The initial questionnaire was crafted to elicit detailed accounts of participants' encounters with violence and capture quantitative and qualitative data. This approach ensured a broad understanding of each participant's context and experiences. Questions were designed to uncover demographic information, specific instances of violence, and the participants' perceptions of these events.

Following the questionnaire, individual interviews were conducted to delve deeper into each participant's personal narratives. These semi-structured interviews allowed for a flexible, yet focused exploration of the themes identified in the questionnaire. The interview protocol included open-ended questions that encouraged participants to share detailed stories and reflections, providing riche context and insight into their lived experiences with violence.

The final step involved a focus group session. This method allowed for the validation of individual accounts through group discussion and helped to identify commonalities and differences in experiences. The focus group also provided an opportunity for participants to engage in a dialogical process, enhancing the depth of data through shared insights and reflections.

Data were recorded using an audio device during the interviews and focus groups. The recordings were then transcribed verbatim. The analysis plan was structured to interpret the transcribed data line by line. Each transcript was meticulously reviewed, with every line examined to uncover deeper meanings and insights. This approach ensured that the essence of participants' experiences was captured and interpreted accurately. Initially, significant statements and phrases were highlighted, which were then grouped into meaningful units. These units formed the basis for identifying themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data. The process was iterative, involving multiple readings and cross-references to ensure consistency and depth in the interpretation. By engaging with the text at a detailed level, the analysis remained true to the hermeneutical phenomenological framework, allowing for a rich, nuanced understanding of the lived experiences of violence among participants.

Data Collection Plan

Based on van Manen's (1990) approach to hermeneutical phenomenological research and Saldaña's (2016) three step process, the data collection for this study encompassed a modified Social Desirability Response (SDR) III questionnaire, individual interviews, and focus group discussions. The focus was to engage with the data to capture emergent themes. Modern technology and non-technical tools including a laptop, iPhone, field notepad, and a pen and paper were used. Once the data were captured, three steps were applied to code the information.

Stage one involved understanding the participants' process, narrative, structure, and values. Stage two involved line-by-line coding, transitioning from a basic comprehension of the information to a detailed identification and organization of the initial codes. Stage three involved thematic analysis, scrutinizing the codes for emerging themes.

Questionnaires Data Collection Approach

To understand the participants' experiences, 15 questions based on Streiner and Norman's (1989) SDR III questionnaire were developed. The answer options ranged from *never* to *always*. The modified questions used specific language to gather relevant data about the participants and their connection to the phenomenon (Aithal & Aithal, 2020). The initial questionnaire was conducted first to gather broad, foundational data about the participants' lived experiences, which provided context and guided the development of subsequent interview questions. The participants received an email with a formal greeting, an introduction explaining the goal of the study, instructions suggesting that they find a comfortable environment to take the survey and a hyperlinked, modified SDR III questionnaire. They were assured that there were no right or wrong answers and encouraged to record honest reflections. The questions were designed for clarity and used typical phenomenological terms like *what* and *how* (Dahlberg, 2022). After IRB and participant approval, the surveys and hyperlinked questionnaire were emailed. The completed surveys were automatically sent to me via the domain, www.wufoo.com. Emailed surveys were verified via a review of Wufoo's[5] survey to help retain reliability.

Questionnaire Questions

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[5] Wufoo.com is an online form builder that allows users to create and manage surveys, forms, and questionnaires easily.

The questionnaire was designed to draw out the participants' perceptions about violence, whether they had experienced crime in any form, what they thought about crime, and how much they wanted to help reduce school violence (Marsh & O'Neill, 1984). The questions follow van Manen's (1990) standards, emphasizing a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. The questionnaire involves crafting open-ended questions that prompt participants to reflect deeply on their experiences, describe events and feelings, and explore the meanings and essences of their lived experiences in relation to the research topic. The 15 questions were submitted to experts in the field of hermeneutical phenomenology before they were submitted to IRB for approval and then they were sent to all students at XYZ University registered as preservice educators. In sum, the questions included in the questionnaire in Table 3 help elucidate participants' lived experiences related to violence throughout their lives.

Table 3 presents the data set of initial questions used in the study to assess participants' experiences and perceptions related to violence. The questions cover a range of topics, including personal experiences with violence, observations of violence, and concerns about safety and crime. Each question is accompanied by response options, allowing participants to indicate the frequency or extent of their experiences and worries.

Table 3.

Initial Questionnaire

No.	Question	Response Options
1	How often have you been a victim of violence?	Never, Once, Twice, Three, or More Times
2	How often have you been in the same location where someone became a victim of violence?	Never, Once, Twice, Three, or More Times

3	How often have you been an offender of violence?	Never, Once, Twice, Three, or More Times
4	How often have you been an offender of violence on someone's property?	Never, Once, Twice, Three, or More Times
5	How often have you observed violence on the news?	Never, Once, Twice, Three, or More Times
6	How often have you observed a violent scene after the violence was over?	Never, Once, Twice, Three, or More Times
7	How often do you worry that you cannot read people's body language well enough to keep yourself safe?	Never, Rarely, Often, Sometimes, Always
8	How often do you worry about feeling powerless to stop crime?	Never, Rarely, Often, Sometimes, Always
9	How often do you avoid places where you do not feel safe?	Never, Rarely, Often, Sometimes, Always
10	How often do you worry about people you care about becoming a victim of a crime?	Never, Rarely, Often, Sometimes, Always
11	How often do you worry that you might become a victim of a crime?	Never, Rarely, Often, Sometimes, Always
12	How often do you worry about becoming a victim of violence by working at a school?	Never, Rarely, Often, Sometimes, Always
13	How often do you worry about witnessing a student becoming a victim by working at a school?	Never, Rarely, Often, Sometimes, Always

| 14 | How often do you think about ways you can help stop school violence? | Never, Rarely, Often, Sometimes, Always |
| 15 | How often do you think about ways you can reduce school violence? | Never, Rarely, Often, Sometimes, Always |

Questionnaire Data Analysis Plan

I analyzed the modified SDR III questionnaire by applying van Manen's (1990) phenomenological model of interpretive reflection. Responses were explored using a two-step process. The first step involved evaluating each response in depth to identify the core thoughts embedded in the participants' narratives. This phase involved reading and re-reading the texts multiple times to capture the essence of the lived experiences described by the participants. The goal was to understand the deeper meanings and intentions behind their words, moving beyond the literal content to uncover the underlying phenomena. The second step involved interpreting abstract thoughts identified in the first step which, once gathered, were simplified into manageable ideas. This process involved condensing the complex and nuanced reflections into more concise and coherent themes. By breaking down the responses in this manner, it became possible to organize and interpret the data systematically. Following these two steps, emergent data points were clustered into a thematized whole.

Thematic creation was achieved through keyword extraction within the context of phenomenological reductionism (Giorgi, 1985; Husserl, 1931). The interview questions were based solely on the purpose and problem statement (Marsh, 1990). This self-examination element is integral to hermeneutical phenomenology (Marsh & O'Neill, 1984). Self-examination refers to the reflective process that the researcher and participants incorporate during the study.

For participants, self-examination involves introspection and consideration of personal experiences, thoughts, and feelings related to the study's themes. The reflective practice allows participants to articulate their lived experiences in a rich and meaningful way (Marsh & O'Neill, 1984). The hermeneutical phenomenological system applied in this study was designed to uncover how preservice educators perceive themselves within their lived experiences and the influence of significant others in their lives (Marsh & O'Neill, 1984).

Individual Interviews Data Collection Approach

Interviews are an effective tool for delving deep into human emotions, thoughts, and experiences (van Manen, 1990). Semi-structured interviews capture the essence of participants' lived experiences (Husserl, 1970), allowing spontaneity essential for genuine dialogue (Bredal et al., 2022). Participants were given a choice of an in-person or Zoom call format. All participants chose the Zoom call format, times were arranged, and each interview lasted between 18 and 33 minutes. Individual interviews were conducted second to explore participants' experiences in greater depth, allowing for a detailed narrative and personal insights that could not be captured in the questionnaire.

Thirteen open-ended questions were developed to draw candid responses 13 (Aithal & Aithal, 2020). Prior to the interviews, emphasis was made regarding the significance of honesty and candidness of responses, urging participants to be forthright to ensure that the findings were accurate and mirrored the data. Member checks were offered to all participants during all stages of analysis to ensure participant responses were accurate and interpreted accurately, however, none accepted.

Individual Interview Questions

The individual interview questions in Table 4 were based on van Manen's (1990) methodology and submitted to experts in hermeneutic phenomenology for review. The questions were designed to explore preservice educators' perspectives on identifying PVIPs.

Table 4.

Individual Interview Questions

Number	Question
1	Please describe how your experiences prepared your mindset to identify pre-violence indicator patterns before they erupt. This question addresses the CRQ.
2	Describe coursework experiences that influenced your mindset to better understand identifying pre-violence indicator patterns. This question correlates with SQ1.
3	Describe professor interactions that influenced your mindset toward identifying pre-violence indicator patterns. This question aligns with SQ2.
4	Describe how social media, including news outlets, have influenced your mindset about school violence. This question addresses SQ3.
5	Describe critical factors influencing your mindset regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns. This question addresses the CRQ .
6	What barriers might prevent you from fully engaging in mandatory training to identify pre-violence indicator patterns? This question addresses SQ1.

7	Describe friends' and classmates' interactions that influenced your mindset toward identifying pre-violence indicator patterns. This question pertains to SQ2.
8	How has social media, including news outlets, influenced your thinking about your need to know how to identify pre-violence indicator patterns as a teacher? This question addresses SQ3.
9	Describe how valuable you believe mandatory training in identifying pre-violence indicator patterns is for preservice teachers. This question addresses the CRQ.
10	What do you think about federal and state laws mandating educator training on identifying pre-violence indicator patterns? This question expands on the CRQ.
11	How has your overall university experience influenced your understanding of identifying pre-violence indicator patterns outside the classroom? This question is relevant to SQ2.
12	Describe how social media and news outlet coverage of school violence has influenced your mindset toward becoming a schoolteacher. This question directly links to SQ3.
13	What are your beliefs about state or federal laws that mandate universities address mandatory training in identifying pre-violence indicator patterns? This question addresses the CRQ.

Individual Interviews Data Analysis

Per Paulus and Lester (2021) the Zoom interviews were recorded. An audio-only recording device was also used in case of technical issues. Participants' words were meticulously transcribed and verified accurate by a disconnected third party, capturing vivid descriptions and interpretations of their lived experiences, as informed by Ricoeur's hermeneutic phenomenology (1974). Each participant's thoughts and feelings were valued and emphasized, aligning with the principles outlined by Tufford & Newman (2010). This approach ensured that the rich, personal narratives of the participants were authentically represented. Field notes allowed me to listen and be intent on understanding the participant's meaning (Glaser, 1998). Field notes were transcribed reflectively which allowed locating and decoding the uniqueness of participants' voices (Dodgson, 2019) while remaining cognizant of personal presuppositions (Haynes, 2011). The goal remained constant; to interpret (*noesis*) each participant's responses and discover what they believed (*noema*) (Husserl, 1970; Penchev, 2021).

Interview responses were analyzed using inductive and deductive techniques. Inductive analysis involves identifying patterns and themes emerging directly from the data without preconceived categories, allowing for a grounded understanding rooted in the participants' own words. It facilitates the discovery of new insights and themes that might not be anticipated. Conversely, deductive analysis is guided by existing theories and frameworks to establish concepts to organize and interpret the data. The dual approach ensures a comprehensive analysis, combining the richness of participant-driven insights with the rigor of theoretical grounding. A modified version of van Manen's (1990) and van Kaam's (1966) method of analyzing phenomenological data, and Ricoeur's (1974) hermeneutic phenomenological six-step methodology consisting of (a) bracketing, (b) horizontalization, (c) clustering, (d) textural description of the experience, (e) structural description of the experience, and (f) textural-

structural synthesis was used. The modification involved integrating procedures to enhance the depth and rigor of the analysis process. The process began with, in brief: bracketing, reflexivity journaling, triangulation, peer debriefing, expert reviews, and member checks (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) which involved setting aside preconceptions and biases to approach the data with an open mind, ensuring that the analysis remained grounded in the participants' actual experiences. Horizontalization followed, where each statement from the participants was treated with equal value, allowing all aspects of the experience to be considered. Next, clustering was used to group related statements together, identifying patterns and commonalities within the data to develop thematic categories. The following step applied was textural description which focused on the "what" of the experience, capturing the essence of the participants' lived experiences. The structural description of the experience revealed the "how" of the experiences, exploring the underlying contexts and conditions that shaped the participants' perceptions and actions. Finally, textural-structural synthesis was used to present a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences, integrating the essence and the context of the phenomena. By combining these methodologies, the analysis achieved a robust and nuanced interpretation of the data, balancing descriptive richness with analytical rigor.

Interviews were transcribed verbatim, and an independent third party (Written Musings Inc.) reviewed and verified their accuracy. Participant statements of lived experiences were given equal significance. The data were triangulated to ensure unbiased codes, themes, and conclusions.

Horizontalization was employed to decipher comments and determine their importance. Repeated re-reading of the narratives ensured no meaningful comments were overlooked (Fairfield, 2004). Through repetitious re-reading, phenomenon-central statements and ideas were

coded appropriately (van Manen, 1990). Themes emerged solely from the data, and an idea was only considered a potential theme if participants had repeated it at least twice (van Manen, 1990).

Themes emerged from cross-coding for an image of how preservice educators viewed the phenomenon (Saldaña, 2016). The evaluation was conducted equally by reading, studying for meaning, and re-reading (van Manen, 1990). Analysis involved moving slowly and deliberately to ensure strict adherence to core principles for accurate theme identification and interpretation. Each theme was treated as a distinct representation of lived experiences, allowing it to stand on its merit. As the analysis progressed, connections between themes emerged, leading to clustering. These steps helped give a complete understanding of the data.

Focus Groups Data Collection Approach

Focus groups are invaluable for eliciting diverse perspectives and deep insights, serving as an effective tool to enrich and contextualize qualitative data (Merton et al., 1956). The final data-gathering stage entailed a one-hour Zoom conference which is acceptable for scholarly research (Archibald et al., 2019; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Gray et al., 2020). The focus group was held to facilitate a collective discussion, validating individual accounts, and revealing additional insights through group interaction. The formation of the focus group depended on participants' willingness to engage, indicating their passion for the subject, and was determined during initial interviews. Their passion indicated they had the emotional depth necessary to elucidate the phenomenon. I met with the same participants in a group setting to "disseminate preliminary findings and gather feedback to inform refinement of the framework" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 117). By the time the focus group took place, the participants had time to consider and reflect on the problem statement and were able to add more to the discussion. Some researchers warn that

focus groups may be inappropriate in hermeneutical phenomenological research as they move from subjective lived experiences to pooled consideration (Virat, 2020). Other investigators contend that collecting data via groups is acceptable (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Laverty et al., 2003; Memduhoğlu et al., 2017). I found that the focus group was a valid method for gathering data because it fostered a collective discussion that validated individual accounts and revealed additional insights through group interaction. One participant's memories would often trigger recollections in others, enhancing the depth and richness of the data. While there were occasional disagreements, these moments highlighted the diversity of perspectives and ultimately strengthened the consensus on the need for PVIP training. This dynamic allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena. Meeting with the same participants in a group setting provided an opportunity for reflection and additional contribution. The focus group proved to be an effective and insightful approach to data collection in this research context.

An agreed-upon meeting time was established via email. A Zoom conference invitation was sent, utilizing the waiting-room feature to allow only invitees to join. A brief outline of rules was provided to foster comfort and prevent any individual from dominating the conversation (Archibald et al., 2019; Cypress, 2018). Before the focus group began, the participants were informed that the event was being recorded. Participants were reminded that their names would be protected using pseudonyms in the report, confidential information they wished not to be used would be redacted, and they were free to remove themselves temporarily or permanently from the discussion. Additionally, the group was reminded that while educators have implicit biases (Miller, 2019), as a retired detective, I may have biases toward criminals and their chosen comportment (Adams-Quackenbush et al., 2019). However, the line of questioning used a hermeneutical phenomenological study approach, which invites interviewees to participate

openly in the process and engage in a rich dialogue of ideas, emotions, and potential solutions to the problem (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 1990).

The ability to remain cognitively active during a taxing conversation is roughly 10 to 15 minutes (Bradbury, 2016). If the participants became unfocused, various speaking techniques were used to help recover the group's attention and participation. The group was notified at 45 minutes that they could take a break or stop at one hour. No one requested to stop. The participants stopped answering questions after 54 minutes with no breaks. Member checks were offered to all participants throughout the interview process to ensure statements were interpreted accurately. However, none were accepted.

Focus Group Questions

The questions in Table 5 were designed to help understand participants' perspectives by encouraging interactive dialogue. enabling exploration of complex attitudes, experiences, unpredictable responses, and social processes. Focus group discussions are known to traverse multiple subjects and address unknown topics.

Table 5.

Focus Group Questions

Number	Question
1	How has this research experience made you think about your need to be able to recognize pre-violence indicator patterns? CRQ
2	What are your thoughts on obtaining training to recognize pre-violence indicator patterns? SQ3

3	How did your understanding of school violence influence your search for a university? CRQ
4	What questions have you asked university personnel that have helped you recognize pre-violence indicator patterns? SQ2
5	How do you describe your professors' ability to help you recognize pre-violence indicator patterns? SQ2
6	How do you describe your coursework's concern for teaching you how to recognize pre-violence indicator patterns? SQ2
7	What conversations have you had with classmates about recognizing pre-violence indicator patterns since receiving the original questionnaire? SQ3
8	Does anyone have any additional comments they want this report to convey before closing the session? CRQ

Focus Group Data Analysis Plan

To ensure biases were set aside in the final report, the following strategies were used: bracketing, reflexivity journaling, triangulation, peer debriefing, expert reviews, and member checks were offered to all participants, but none were accepted (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To further reduce the impact of biases and structure participant responses, interpretative phenomenological analysis was engaged (Smith et al., 1995). Despite some controversy regarding focus groups, interpretative phenomenological analyses "allow rigorous exploration of idiographic subjective experiences and, more specifically, social cognitions" (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008, p. 215).

Once participants' corporate grasp of their lived experiences was captured, accepted methods found in hermeneutical phenomenology for focus group analysis were used. Bracketing, and phenomenological reduction requires that biases are set aside to record the participants' statements without alteration or prejudice. Regardless of the strength of personal biases or preconceptions, engagement in thoughtful and reflective interpretation consistent with hermeneutical phenomenological research transpired. Diligence was used in capturing, translating, and thematically analyzing the data, with a steadfast focus on understanding and representing the authentic lived experiences shared by the participants.

Data Analysis

During this phase, an in-depth understanding of the participants' lived experiences was sought, as guided by van Manen's (1990) hermeneutic interpretation approach. Understanding the phenomenon was derived from the transcripts through a rigorous and comprehensive process. Interpretation began with carefully crafted questions and listening to each participant's lived experiences during the interviews and by reviewing the video recordings multiple times. This engagement allowed me to capture the spoken words, and the nuances of body language and interaction. The transcripts were then analyzed line by line through a detailed coding process, which facilitated the identification of key themes. Thematic analysis was employed to synthesize these themes, ensuring that each participant's unique perspective was represented. Additionally, focus group interactions provided further insights, as participants' discussions triggered memories and reflections that enriched the data. This multifaceted approach, incorporating individual and group dynamics, was crucial to fully understand the phenomenon. It enabled accurate and rich portrayal of themes.

Bracketing is a process where researchers sets aside preconceptions and biases to engage with the participants' perspectives. By suspending personal judgments, researchers can approach the data with an open mind, ensuring that the participants' voices and experiences are captured. This technique is essential in phenomenological research as it helps to maintain the integrity of the participants' lifeworlds, allowing their lived experiences to be conveyed accurately and without external influence. Member checks transpired during all stages of data analysis to ensure the answers were accurate and their meaning was interpreted accurately. These steps were integrated to develop a composite textural description, resulting in a collaborative and cohesive depiction of the participants' experiences (van Manen, 1990).

In the analysis, I sought an understanding of how the participants' backgrounds impacted their beliefs that led to their current view of the phenomenon. Careful attention was given to categorizing the descriptions, themes, and contextual details to grasp how they combined to form the experience (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Van Manen, 1990). The thematizing method was applied across data analysis techniques to spotlight collective experiences as it offered a robust methodology to understand participants' beliefs (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Ricoeur, 1974, van Manen, 1990). Every triangulation step feeds into the synthesis. Understanding the depth of the data and integrating all insights formed a cohesive understanding.

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of hermeneutic phenomenology lies in maintaining transparency and consistency in data collection and analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). One of the most critical aspects in achieving this goal is to use a minimum of three data collection systems for triangulation. The various processes in the triangulation progression allow the investigator to declare the findings reliable and transferable. This study involved a modified SDR

III questionnaire, individual interviews, and a focus group interview. Encoding the amassed data adhered to established protocols found in hermeneutical phenomenological literature to allow for replication, for example, participant selection, informed consent, data collection methods, data saturation, transcription standards, iterative analysis, interpretive accuracy, validation and reliability, and ethical reviews. Additionally, prior to publication, subject-matter experts will evaluate the concluding report for its fidelity to these guidelines. Via these steps, this study should pass scrutiny and earn the title of trustworthy, as Lincoln and Guba (1985) described.

Credibility

Credibility supports the reality of the study's conclusions over presuppositions so that the truth of the investigation is revealed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The investigator's actions and research perspectives remove subjectivity and develop a study's credibility (Creswell & Poth, 2018). It is essential to take memos during the data collection and coding stages to maintain clarity and prevent the loss of unique perspectives and key insights. This process helped capture the participants' unique mindsets in reference to the problem and purpose statements. Participants were assured that meticulous care would be taken during the recording and coding phases to enhance credibility. Moreover, participants had the opportunity to review the field notes and transcripts and freely comment on their accuracy. Participants who believe a researcher is seeking truth and not presuppositional validation are more likely to become comfortable enough to open fully and provide a detailed description of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Eisner, 1991). Triangulation was used to bolster credibility; data were gathered through a three-pronged strategy by administering a modified SDR III; individual interviews; and a focus group session. The focus group served as a platform for posing follow-up questions and clarifying details. This multi-method approach ensured a comprehensive and

nuanced understanding of the subject matter, enhancing both the validity and reliability of the findings.

Transferability

An investigator can only reach the elements required for trustworthiness by seeking to hear, record, and dissect participants' rich descriptions of their lived experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) cautioned researchers to be keenly aware of the significant differences between hermeneutical phenomenological studies that employ generalizability and transferability as their guiding principles. In studies focused on generalizability, the researchers seek to apply the findings broadly, making them relevant to a broader population beyond the participant sample. In contrast, studies employing transferability prioritize the depth and complexity of specific experiences, with the understanding that the findings may apply to similar contexts but are not universally generalizable. The richness of the data is designed to provide nuanced insights into the phenomenon being studied, allowing for a more interpretive and contextual understanding. Transferability is the essential element that defines and elevates hermeneutic phenomenology. Regardless of location or vocation, people have similar lived experiences, and it is through recording, analyzing, and coding that the study is transferable (Erlandson et al., 1993). It is acknowledged that conditions for transferability can be sought but cannot be assured. This judgment can only be made by the reader of the research.

Dependability

Dependability reveals the investigation's consistency so that other researchers can replicate the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The study is expected to provide direction, values, and answers to the studied phenomenon based on participants' detailed descriptions of their lived experiences. For this study, biases were set aside via the following strategies: bracketing,

reflexivity journaling, triangulation, peer debriefing, expert reviews, and member checks were offered to all participants, but none were accepted (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To further reduce the impact of biases and structure participant responses, interpretative phenomenological analysis was engaged (Smith et al., 1995). Dependability was achieved by adhering to Liberty University's standards of an inquiry audit where the dissertation committee and qualitative research director examined all aspects of the study.

Confirmability

In adherence to confirmability, as outlined by Lincoln & Guba (1985), preconceived biases were set aside to focus on the lived experiences of respondents for the research outcomes. The same rigor I applied in criminal investigations as a police detective, wherein personal opinions could not influence the direction of evidence, was exercised in this research. Personal biases borne of traumatic experiences—such as being ambushed, assaulted, and threats to friends and family— and the profound emotional impact stemming from cases involving child victims were acknowledged, as were biases generated from over 20 years of experience in educational leadership. To address these biases, the following strategies: bracketing, reflexivity journaling, triangulation, peer debriefing, expert reviews, and member checks were offered to all participants, but none were accepted (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To further reduce the impact of biases and structure participant responses, interpretative phenomenological analysis was engaged (Smith et al., 1995). Reflexivity journaling involved maintaining a personal journal to document one's thoughts, biases, feelings, and reactions throughout the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Liberty University School of Education requires triangulation using at least three methods (Liberty University, 2023) to cross-verify findings and enhance the validity results (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Peer debriefing involved fellow scholars reviewing and commenting about the

processes and conclusions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additional confirmability methods used were, in brief, bracketing, reflexivity journaling, triangulation, expert reviews, and member checks were offered to all participants, but none were accepted (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The research was consistent with professional standards and adhered to the mandates of accepted literature and expert auditors without deviation. The investigation followed the highest dissertation standards for trustworthiness.

Ethical Considerations

This study represents a deep exploration of understanding the true meaning of participants' lived experiences. I prioritized truth over biases and presuppositions. To ensure these stated elements were met, bracketing, reflexivity journaling, triangulation, peer debriefing, expert reviews, and member checks were implemented (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To further reduce the impact of biases, interpretative phenomenological analysis was engaged (Smith et al., 1995), establishing a foundation of integrity and rigor (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Experience as a police detective, and an unyielding dedication to serving Jesus Christ informed the psychological and ethical understanding through a biblical worldview. While these elements can be considered biases, they led to meticulous adherence to strict ethical parameters. The oversight board at my current position graded my ethical commitment as a senior leader at the top of the scale (Payson Christian School Board, 2023). Ethical issues for this research were addressed with the same level of care. Member checks were offered to all participants, but none were accepted.

The IRB waved informed consent signatures because the study was exempt (see Appendix E). Approval from the IRB at both universities was sought and obtained as exempt status. I followed, respected, and heeded all IRB mandates and recommendations without equivocation. Participants were notified if they could, at any time and for any reason, withdraw

from the study without recourse or concern for their reputation. Liberty University's Honor Code (2022), to be professional and ethical while representing Liberty, was respected during all aspects of the dissertation process. Participants were informed of procedures before via IRB-approved informational documents with clear and concise verbal directions. Participants were informed of the specifics of recording devices, and the devices were easily observed. Participants were informed that pseudonyms would be used. Legally recognized standards for data protection, such as password-protected computer systems, external hard drives, and documents, were adhered to. Paperwork remains in a locked and secured file cabinet at my residence. accessible only to authorized individuals or any subjects Liberty University SOE requests. Retention and destruction of all data is based on Liberty University's IRB policies. After three years, the data will be destroyed via a paper shredding machine with at least 400 strips per page using twin blades in a cross-cut pattern. Likewise, recorded conversations will be permanently deleted after three years of the report's publication. Until then, data and artifacts will remain locked in a secure cabinet accessible only to me.

Permissions

IRB permission was obtained (see Appendix E), an XYZ University permission request (see Appendix A), a CV, a recent NCIC certificate, and an XYZ University permission response (see Appendix B) was emailed to XYZ University's leadership per their guidelines. Upon approval, students were sent a participant recruitment email (see Appendix C) outlining the study's scope, benefits, risks, and alternatives. The email clarified the central research question, motives based on lived experiences, and potential biases. A participant general consent form for voluntary participation was attached (see Appendix D).

Other Participant Protections

To ensure their protection, this study exceeded conventional measures to prioritize participants' psychological well-being. Participants were provided with a list of free counseling services to address any negative psychological responses during questionnaire, interviews, or focus groups. Furthermore, participants were reminded of these services at the conclusion of each phase, fostering continuous awareness and access. All data collection procedures were conducted online, leveraging emails, a published website for questionnaire administration, and Zoom meeting rooms exclusively. The utilization of Zoom meeting rooms is fortified with password protection and a "waiting room" feature to safeguard against unauthorized access, ensuring the integrity and security of participant interactions throughout the study.

Summary

Chapter Three included the rationale for adopting a qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological study design, emphasizing the principles of rigor, confirmability, and authenticity as central to exploring participants' lived experiences. I justified the purposive selection of 12 preservice educators currently enrolled at XYZ University. Data collection involved a triad of techniques: a modified SDR III questionnaire, individual interviews, and focus group discussions. The study's ethical framework adhered to academic integrity standards, emphasizing confidentiality and secure data storage. Procedures are in place to destroy all collected data after a secure storage period of three years, in accordance with institutional guidelines. Chapter Three addressed coding strategies and theme identification, following established guidelines in the field of hermeneutical phenomenological research. Acknowledging the susceptibility to researcher bias inherent in qualitative research, a mitigation plan was applied involving, in brief: bracketing, reflexivity journaling, triangulation, peer debriefing, expert reviews, and member checks were offered to all participants, but none were accepted,

confirmability, and validity. This chapter outlined the methodological framework that guided the execution of this research and provided a template for replication.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of Chapter Four was to present the findings regarding 12 preservice educators' perceptions of mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns (PVIPs) attending XYZ University in the southwestern United States. Chapter Four includes five primary sections: Overview, Participant Descriptions, Results, Research Question Responses, and Summary. Chapter four also includes six secondary sections: Participant Pseudonyms, Themes, Sub-Themes, Central Research Question, Sub-Questions, and Outliers.

Participants

A purposeful sampling of 12 preservice educators was used for this study. Out of 48 preservice educators initially contacted via email, 18 responded, and 13 completed the initial questionnaire. Subsequently, 12 were interviewed individually for 18 to 35 minutes. Six of the interviewees consented to join a focus group from which four ultimately participated. The formation of the focus group, comprising participants exhibiting a heightened passion for the subject during initial interviews, met the stipulation of four to six members. Additionally, the unexpected reduction in participant numbers is not detrimental to the integrity of the study. Drawing on the established guidelines provided by Krueger and Casey (2015), who suggested that focus group sizes can effectively range from four to 12 participants, it is within the acceptable threshold for productive and in-depth discussion. Furthermore, Morgan (1997) noted the effectiveness of smaller focus groups, especially in facilitating detailed and focused discussions which is critical for the topic's complex nature. Stewart and Shamdasani (2014) also acknowledge the viability of smaller groups in qualitative research, particularly when the subject matter requires participants to provide nuanced and thoughtful insights. Therefore, the presence

of four participants is considered sufficient to achieve the research objectives and to foster a detailed exploration of the training needs of preservice educators in identifying PVIPs. The focus group session, which lasted 58 minutes, was conducted after the completion of the individual interviews.

Alice

Alice, a White female first-year student always attended private Christian schools. She was the first participant to respond to the initial email and repeatedly expressed her excitement about the study, stating, "I am so thankful you are doing this study and that I am part of the solution." Alice asked for a copy of the report because she was interested in the results.

During the interviews, Alice revealed that she had never been directly involved in violence as a victim or perpetrator, nor had she engaged in vandalism. When asked about her experience with violence, she said she had not thought about it much but "had seen a lot of fights happen." However, she was concerned about personal safety and the safety of her loved ones, revealing a sense of vulnerability. She added that working at a school was unsettling, though she seldom felt threatened personally. Her experience was primarily indirect; she reported observing violence on the news, and she once encountered a scene post-violence. Concerning personal safety, Alice said she rarely worried about misinterpreting body language for her safety but occasionally pondered her powerlessness against crime.

Alice's thoughts about combating school violence were minimal, indicating a passive stance. She expressed that she had difficultly relating to the interview questions because she had difficulty imagining violence. She had no formal education on prevention, but her interest was strong and from her limited experience, she noted that there might be patterns that preceded

violence. She found the study of violence prevention deeply compelling and believed that PVIP training should be an integral part of college curriculum.

Alice shared insight into her perception and experience of violence. She discussed witnessing pre-violent cues, such as facial expressions and hand gestures that indicated a buildup to violence. Alice reflected on controversial topics like religion and politics in classroom settings that could escalate to violence. She also shared personal experience and concern about violence in school, emphasizing the importance of being aware and prepared, stressing the value of self-defense knowledge and the need for schools to provide training on handling violent situations. Alice also noted the impact of social media and news outlets in shaping perceptions of violence. Her personal experiences, including a close friend's abuse story, have made her more cautious and aware of her surroundings, underscoring her belief in the importance of preparedness for both educators and students in facing violence.

Alice was initially excited to participate in the focus group; however, she indicated that her life was too hectic with sports and academic commitments, and she declined.

Ava

Ava, a White female first-year student, attended private Christian schools before finishing high school at a public school. Her questionnaire answers revealed a person deeply aware of the violence around her despite no involvement as a victim or perpetrator. She acknowledged being in proximity to violence once, contrasting with repeated exposure to violent events through news media. Ava was genuinely concerned about personal safety and crime prevention and constantly tried to avoid unsafe places. She had frequent thoughts of personal vulnerability and the vulnerability of her loved ones. Particularly notable was her anxiety related to her environment at school, and the possibility of violence against her or her students. Ava often contemplated how to

reduce school violence which suggested a mindful engagement with potential solutions and her role within a broader scope. However, her desire to become a teacher remained unaffected by the threat of school violence.

During the interview, Ava shared poignant insight on the complexities of school violence, underpinned by her academic and firsthand experiences. She emphasized the role of education in addressing violence, stating, "Understanding the psychological underpinnings of violent behavior is crucial for early intervention," indicating the importance she placed on psychological awareness. She also reflected on the practicalities of preparation, saying, "We need to equip our educators with the skills to handle these situations . . . mandatory training isn't just beneficial, it's essential," endorsing comprehensive educator preparedness of violent scenarios. The interview quotes encapsulated Ava's belief in an informed and proactive approach to creating safer educational environments.

Ava participated in the focus group, contributing valuable insight. Ava mentioned something unique to the others: She surmised that because of her "young age," and being "relatable," she could recognize signs of crisis among students and potentially prevent violence: "Sometimes, little things, you know, could trigger my brain to think of, 'Oh, that might be, you know, a precursor to violence or anything like that as well.'" She recognized her mindset shift regarding the need for PVIP training, stating: "Originally, it wasn't too much on my radar initially, but after having discussions and talking about it, it brought it more to my attention and made me want to be more prepared to be able to notice those signs."

Isabella

Isabella, a White female junior always attended private Christian schools. She witnessed numerous violent crimes, including her friend being shot. Her questionnaire responses revealed a

cautious yet resilient approach to violence and personal safety. Although she never directly experienced or perpetrated violence, she had encountered a violent scene. Regular exposure to violence on news outlets created an awareness of violent crime. Isabella rarely worried about misinterpreting body language for safety. Although she sometimes felt defenseless against crime, she avoided unsafe places. She did not fear for her safety on campus but occasionally worried about loved ones far away. However, when anticipating her future role in education, Isabella expressed concerns about victimization and student violence and thought about ways to mitigate it. However, her desire to become a teacher remained unaffected by the threat of school violence.

During the interview, Isabella provided rich detail about her experiences and perspective on PVIPs and the importance of preparation for educators. Reflecting on a traumatic incident from her senior year of high school, she said, "One of my friends got shot by a gang. … It was traumatic, and just looking back at his actions before that, it definitely gives me a lot of [things to think about], I wish I realized that before it happened."

Isabella also emphasized the value of violence prevention training for educators, stating, "I think it's really valuable. If you already know the pre-indicator of behaviors, you could help prevent that from a student, or you can be aware of it before something violent happens." She also experienced her mother attempting suicide, and it had "a profound impact on [her] thinking." Isabella was open and credited her experiences for providing a unique perspective on school violence and its prevention: "I think my past experiences have obviously given me a different perspective."

Isabella volunteered to participate in the focus group and contributed valuable insight about the first theme, mindset shift regarding the need for PVIP training. As she considered the

need for PVIP training, "I do think that if we are obviously properly trained, then we could prevent [school violence]."

Mia

Mia, a White female junior completed K–12 in public schools; XYZ University marked her introduction to private Christian education. Her questionnaire answers revealed she had few direct experiences of violence. She had never been a victim, perpetrator, or witness to violence, and her interaction with violence through the news was minimal. Despite occasional concerns for her loved ones and herself, her worries related to school violence were minimal.

During the interview, Mia reflected on the importance of being prepared for violence in educational settings. She emphasized the anxiety that arises from uncertainty about emergency protocols, "I never felt like I was really clear on what exactly would happen, and that always made me feel a little anxious." Additionally, Mia expressed openness to training but cautioned against mandating it, "I would be open to this type of training and without reserve . . . but not sure that I would go so far as a law." She contended that, despite having few personal encounters with violence, her lived experiences combined with the portrayal of violence by social media and news outlets made her feel like it is omnipresent. Consequently, she has become a strong advocate for integrating PVIP training into educational programs. Mia harbored a strong hope that higher education institutions would recognize the importance of this research and integrate PVIP training into their programs.

Mia was one of the four focus group participants, adding to the discussion on social media's portrayal of violence and its impact on her thoughts about PVIP training. She added, "I would also think that it would also be a good idea for XYZ University to include something like that in their program."

Olivia

Olivia, a White female senior, always attended private Christian schools. Her questionnaire answers revealed she had never personally experienced or perpetrated violence, nor had she witnessed violence directly or its aftermath. However, she frequently observed violence on the news. Sometimes Olivia worried about her ability to read body language for safety but rarely felt powerless against crime. She often avoided unsafe places, reflecting a proactive stance toward safety. Despite rarely worrying about herself or her loved ones becoming crime victims, she thought about ways to stop or reduce school violence.

During the interview, Olivia elaborated on her awareness and concern toward the need to be prepared in educational environments to avoid violence. She reflected on PVIP training as a senior ready for the field, "It's definitely scary! I think it should be a conversation and a training that students go through." Further, she emphasized the potential benefits of such PVIP stating, "I think it's necessary. I've never really thought about it before this discussion, but . . . if we have that training, we know how to deal with pre-behaviors, behaviors leading to [violence]." She mentioned how much she trusted in a non-violent society, stating, "We got these new locked door systems, soft locks, and that's the only experience I can think of." Despite her positive outlook, she was disturbed XYZ University did not train her in addressing school violence; "The only crisis we've talked about is fire drills and lockdown systems." She desired more training.

Darius

Darius, a Black male junior completed K–12 in public schools; XYZ University marked his introduction to private Christian education. His questionnaire answers revealed a significant contrast in his experiences and perceptions of violence. He had never been a direct victim or perpetrator of violence, yet he found himself in places where violence had occurred on multiple

occasions. He witnessed several of his friends being victimized and perpetrating violence. Observing violence on the news elevated his awareness, but he did not find it overly concerning. Despite the exposure, Darius never worried about misinterpreting body language or felt powerless against crime and had confidence in his ability to navigate unsafe situations; nevertheless, he actively avoided unsafe places. He did worry about the safety of loved ones.

During the interview, Darius detailed his perspective on recognizing pre-violence cues and the importance of safety education, grounded in his upbringing and personal observations. He believed his upbringing and family connections with law enforcement equipped him with insight for recognizing pre-violent behavior, stating, "My parents actually taught me about [PVIP]. … You could tell by somebody's stances that they were thinking about committing violence." Darius emphasized the educational value of safety training, "It's very valuable because we . . . can stop the violence and also just prepare the generation to basically just flee away from it." His desire to become a teacher remained unaffected by the threat of school violence.

Sophia

Sophia, a White female sophomore, attended private Christian schools for elementary and middle school and then graduated from a public high school. Her questionnaire answers revealed a complex relationship between violence and safety. She had never perpetrated violence but had been a victim of violence multiple times and demonstrated an acute awareness of its impact. She also frequently observed violence on the news, which contributed to a heightened sensitivity. Sophia often worried about her ability to read body language for safety, felt powerless against crime, and avoided unsafe places. Although she rarely worried about violence in school, Sophia contemplated ways to reduce or stop violence.

Reflecting on being a victim of several violent crimes, she stated, "I might be a lot more on edge than the average person. … I also believe that that puts me at an advantage." She emphasized the value of PVIP training for pre-service educators and underscored its utility, "It's very helpful to know how to spot those indicators in a child."

During the interview, Sophia's emotions became elevated and she became motionless considering her experiences quietly stating, "I don't want to talk about that any further." She supported PVIP training and government mandates, "I definitely think that would be a huge benefit, and obviously not just women, but men as well."

Lisa

Lisa, a White female junior was homeschooled until the sixth grade, went to a private Christian middle school, and then a public high school. Her questionnaire responses indicated that she had never been a direct victim or perpetrator of violence but had been present during violent incidents on more than three occasions. Additionally, her frequent exposure to violence through news reports heightened her awareness of such events. Sometimes Lisa worried about her ability to read body language for safety, felt powerless to stop crime and avoided unsafe places. Interestingly, Lisa never worried about herself or her loved ones becoming crime victims, nor did she express concern about violence in school.

During the interview, Lisa reflected on her educational experience and the evolving awareness of violence in schools. She recounted a moment of concern in high school due to rumors of a weapon on campus, "I remember . . . people were scared to go to school." Additionally, Lisa emphasized the importance of preparedness for educators, "It would be good to learn . . . how to respond to any form of violence in your school." Despite witnessing violence three times, Lisa had difficulty relating to the focus of the study. However, like all participants,

she expressed a mindset shift regarding PVIP training and was open to diverse opinions concluding, "I don't feel like I know enough about the topic to speak into it." She recognized her inability to protect her students and desired to learn the skills taught in PVIP training, stating, "I want to know more about this."

Tala

Tala, an American Indian female senior received a K–12 education in private Christian schools before attending and graduating from a state college. Although she never directly experienced or perpetrated violence, her exposure to social media and news outlets and viewing the aftermath of a violent crime informed her perspective. Sometimes, [the world] can often be a dark place sometimes." Tala rarely contemplated her powerlessness against crime but was proactive toward personal safety by avoiding unsafe places. She occasionally thought about school violence prevention.

During the interview, Tala underscored the importance of a supportive environment in mitigating negative thoughts and violence, saying, "Having a good support system . . . helps keep those negative thoughts out" which reflected her belief in community and dialogue as tools for violence prevention. Additionally, she emphasized the role of educators in fostering safe spaces for expression and was one of two participants to mention that prayer brought a sense of security, "At XYZ, our teachers would always pray over us and have us share whatever we were feeling. It was very supportive."

Ella

Ella, a Latina female senior completed K–12 in public schools. XYZ University marked her introduction to private Christian education. Her questionnaire answers revealed her concern regarding violence and safety. While she had never been a victim or perpetrator of violence, she

had witnessed violent scenes after they occurred more than three times. Ella rarely worried about reading body language for safety but sometimes felt powerless to stop crime. She took safety measures by avoiding unsafe places. She thought about the safety of loved ones, personal safety, and the safety of students. Ella often thought about ways to stop or reduce school violence.

During the interview, Ella shared observations on the nuanced interactions between teachers and students of different ethnicities in her high school noting, "I noticed that the teachers would interact with different students . . . a little more cautiously sometimes, a little less cautiously with others." She expressed the importance of non-biased, consistent discipline and favored proactivity over reactivity. Furthermore, Ella discussed the significance of building good relationships with students to prevent misbehavior and violence suggesting, "building good relationships with all the students . . . you're going to help prevent some possible violence in the future."

Susan

Susan, a White female junior completed K–12 in public schools, attended a state college during her freshman and sophomore years, and transferred to XYZ University, her first experience with private Christian education. Susan's questionnaire answers revealed she had been a victim of violence once but never perpetrated it or witnessed it in person. She indicated that her exposure to violence was primarily through media portrayals, as she had not directly experienced or observed other violent incidents or their consequences. Susan worried about interpreting body language for safety but credited her father, a probation officer, with teaching her about body language and the subtleties of aggression, "He probably was the only one who's made me aware of anything like that." She felt powerless against crime, avoided unsafe places and frequently worried about loved ones becoming victims. Her concern extended to school

where she worried about student victimization. Susan often thought about ways to stop or reduce school violence, reflecting a proactive stance.

During the interview, Susan said that college did not prepare her for recognizing or dealing with violence, a gap in knowledge she felt was significant. Susan partly attributed her heightened fear to violence portrayed on social media and news outlets and the lack of discussion in school. Because her ambition was to work at a low-income, Title One school where she observed violence even among young students, she understood the importance of being prepared. She shared, "It would give me peace of mind for sure."

As a young adult, Susan was a victim of violence. Her father's occupation as a probation officer significantly influenced her vigilance against victimization. This experience, coupled with learning about violence prevention from her father and other family members, reinforced the importance of staying aware and informed. Susan feared walking alone at night on campus, "I am usually scared when it comes to walking at night," and noted that social media and news outlets heightened her apprehension, "It's definitely made me more fearful!" Susan asserted that XYZ University did not adequately prepare her for encountering violence in her career path, "I don't think they prepared me when it comes to knowing violence."

Jenny

Jenny, a White female sophomore attended public school from kindergarten through fourth grade and a private Christian school from fifth grade through college. Her questionnaire answers revealed limited personal exposure to violence, having never been a victim, perpetrator, or witness to violence directly. According to Jenny's questionnaire and interview, her exposure to violence was limited to occasional news reports, suggesting minimal engagement with violent content in the media. Although she did not frequently dwell on violence, she said that she

occasionally reflected on how to interpret body language and avoided unsafe places. Despite occasional thoughts about loved ones falling victim to violence, Jenny rarely considered the possibility of herself, or her students, being directly affected.

During the interview, Jenny shared that her formal education was conspicuously void of training on recognizing or dealing with violence. She said that her understanding of violence and its warning signs, minor as they may be, largely came from media portrayals which she saw as unrealistic. Jenny believed that discussions on student behavior were important and noted a lack of focus on student crime. She emphasized the need for educators to be prepared for violence but was unsure about how to obtain such training. Jenny supported the idea of government input for handling violence but advocated for individual institutions to tailor their approaches. Her desire to become a teacher remained unaffected by the threat of school violence, but she stressed the urgency of being prepared, suggesting that training should start in college. Despite military and EMT background in her family, Jenny felt unprepared to address violence stating, "[I had] no formal training or anything. The only thing I could even think of being somewhat related to [PVIP training] would be what you just see in movies, watching cop shows, or whatever."

Table 6 provides a detailed overview of participant demographics and experiential data. It presents each participant's pseudonym, academic grade, gender identification, and respective exposure to incidents of violence.

Table 6.

Participant Demographics

Name	Grade	Gender	Status
Alice	Freshman	Female	V3+/WV
Ava	Freshman	Female	NV/WV

Isabella	Junior	Female	NV/WV
Mia	Senior	Female	NV
Olivia	Senior	Female	NV
Darius	Junior	Male	NV/WV
Sophia	Sophomore	Female	V
Lisa	Junior	Female	NV/WV
Tala	Senior	Female	NV
Ella	Senior	Female	NV/WV
Susan	Junior	Female	V
Jenny	Sophomore	Female	NV

V = victim of a crime; NV = never a victim (NV); WV = witnessed violence.

Results

The data were coded from 13 preservice educators via an initial questionnaire, 12 individual interviews, and a four-person focus group. Using thematic analysis, the data were collated to align with the research questions (Giorgi, 1985; Husserl, 1931). The data underwent a three-stage processing, as outlined by Saldañna (2016). The initial stage was used to comprehend the participants' personal experience as a victim, personal experience as a perpetrator, indirect experience as a witness, witnessing its aftermath. The second stage delved deeper into the process via line-by-line coding, progressing from a simplistic understanding of the information to a detailed format of the initial codes. In the third stage, codes for emerging themes were scrutinized.

Questions 1–6 addressed violence from four perspectives: personal experience as a victim, personal experience as a perpetrator, indirect experience as a witness, witnessing its aftermath. There were three instances of victimization, seven instances of witnessing violence,

no instances of perpetration, 11 instances of observing violence in the media, and four instances of observing actual violence (Table 7).

Table 7

Initial Questionnaire: Responses to Questions 1– 6

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Total
Never	10	6	13	13	2	9	53
Once	1	2	-	-	1	1	5
Twice	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Three +	2	3	-	-	10	3	18

N = 13.

Questions 7–11 addressed personal safety concerns from various perspectives: worrying about reading body language, feeling powerless to stop crime, avoiding unsafe locations, worrying about loved ones becoming victims, and worrying about personal victimization. There were 16 instances of rarely or never considering school violence, 19 instances of sometimes considering school violence, and 30 instances of often or always considering school violence (Table 8).

Table 8.

Initial Questionnaire: Responses to Questions 7–11

	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Total
Never	3	1	-	2	4	10
Rarely	2	2	-	1	1	6
Sometimes	6	4	1	4	4	19
Often	2	4	4	3	3	16
Always	-	2	8	3	1	14

N = 13.

Questions 12–15 addressed personal safety concerns related to school violence: worrying about becoming a victim of violence at work, worrying about witnessing a student become a victim, thinking about ways to help stop school violence, and thinking about ways to reduce school violence. There were 23 instances of rarely or never considering school violence, 14 instances of sometimes considering school violence, and 15 instances of often or always considering school violence (Table 9).

Table 9.

Initial Questionnaire: Responses to Questions 12–15

	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Total
Never	4	4	3	3	14
Rarely	4	3	2	-	9
Sometimes	3	1	3	7	14
Often	2	3	4	3	12
Always	-	2	1	-	3

$N = 13$.

The following themes, sub-themes, and codes emerged (Table 10).

Table 10.

Themes, Sub-Themes, and Corresponding Codes

Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
Mindset Shift	Concept to Reality	Study Awakened Mindset (12); Unaware of Established PVIP Training (12); Fear of Violence in Vocation (12); Fear of Campus Places (9); God's Calling Overrides Violence Concerns (3)

	Ignorance Unveiled	Strong Desire for Training (12); Past Trauma Elevated Violence Awareness (2); Prayer (2); Strong Desire to Know How to Protect Future Students (9)
Training Void	Mandated Training	No Coursework (12); Bible, Psych, and LA Mentioned Crisis Students (9); Mandatory Coursework (12); Mandatory Secondary Training (4); Females have Greater Concern (7); More Must be Done to Prepare Preservice Educators (12); Families Fear for their Students (10), Families want Training for Students (9)
	Support and Concerns	Who will Teach (1); How Long (5); No Federal Govt (6); Federal Govt. Good; State Govt Good for Core Subjects (7); Not for Other Professions (3)
Training Oversight	Training Demands	Lack of Professor Conversations on Violence (12); Lack of Peer Conversations on Violence (8); More Discussions Desired (12); Public University Lacks PVIP training (2); Student Teaching Led to Some Lockdown Discussions (2)
	Conversation Void	For High School and Above Only (1); Preservice Educators Only (4); Increased Student-Teaching PVIP training (2)
Media Influence	Positive Media Influence	Overhyped Exposure (2); Calling is More Critical (3); Reveals a Fake Reality (9); Self-Education Possible (3); Keeps Students Informed; UNLV Shooting and Current University Stalker (8); Uninvolved in Social Media

| | | (5); Somewhat Involved in Social Media |
| | Negative Media Influence | Strikes Fear (11); Calls into Question their Vocation (9); Calls into Question their Major (5); Peers Ignore Violence Potential (9); Reveals Partial Reality (7) |

Mindset Shift

Prior to the study, participants had not considered their role in identifying school violence and did not know about PVIP training. Learning about it during the interviews caused a mindset shift. Olivia commented, "I've never thought about it until this discussion, but, like, it is scary and if we have the training, we know how to deal with pre-behaviors." Later she iterated that PVIP training "is definitely necessary." During the focus group, Ava stated that knowing PVIP training existed, "makes me think about it a lot more and makes me either want to go look for it at a different university or want to advocate for it to become a part of the curriculum at XYZ." Her awareness of her role as an educator responsible for the well-being of students prompted her to consider the value of PVIP training and the possibility of seeking training outside of XYZ University. This theme was evident in the questionnaire, interviews, and focus group; participants mentioned 43 times that training should be available to preservice educators. Ella recognized its value, stating, "I would be all for training like that; I think it would be a really great idea, actually." Participants also discussed the potential for schools to alter violent trajectories by identifying early signs of conflict. Ava said, "I have a chance to change the outcome of some of these kids' lives and recognize, you know, the indicators . . . because then I can, in turn, save, you know, people's lives."

Concept to Reality

Participants struggled to move from conceptualizing violence to preparing for it. They acknowledged that violence could occur in their classroom or school, but only one participant viewed it as likely. During the interview, Lisa did not concede the likelihood of imminent violence; "It's not very likely that things happen," adding, "but things can always happen." Ella became visibly uncomfortable when asked about her ideas and preparedness to address violence in her future classroom. She used the word "nervous" three times in one answer, stating, "I know it would make me nervous, and I know it would make me really paranoid." Shortly thereafter, she added, "I tend to get pretty nervous just thinking about it." She emphasized again, "But I also understand, like, that it should make you nervous. But you should know how to respond while your anxiety levels are up." Ella's repeated emphasis on nervousness and paranoia highlighted her apprehension and the challenge she felt in transitioning from understanding the concept of violence to being prepared to handle it in a real classroom setting.

Darius added:

> Like the scenario in Las Vegas (UNLV shooting[6]), there was a shooting there. So, you know, that's something that really opened a lot of people's eyes. Like, hey, we need to really be careful and mindful of what's going on in our world, and that, you know, we need to pay attention, and take care of our people around us.

Darius, Ellan, and Lisa acknowledged the existence of violence; however, they did not concede the imminence of violence happening in their school.

Ignorance Unveiled

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[6] "UNLV campus shooting leaves 1 dead, 1 wounded." (2024, March 17). Associated Press. https://apnews.com/article/campus-shooting-las-vegas-unlv-0b12656a801e227d6aa2b9ccee56d9f6

Participants expressed ignorance of violence prevention strategies and PVIPs. Prior to the study, participants perceived themselves as facilitators of knowledge only, not agents of safety and well-being. Every participant had trouble understanding the concept of PVIPs, asking me to repeat the term numerous times throughout the interviews. The only exception was during the focus group, where they were informed and had time to process and research the topic following the initial interview.

Despite providing a clear definition of PVIP with examples, Alice repeatedly referred to violence prevention strategies and PVIPs as "violence ideas," and, like all other participants, she never used the term correctly, stating, "I am sorry, but I don't know about these things." When Jenny was asked about her understanding of PVIPs, she remarked with a disconnected thought, "I don't know how much those events have shaped my perception of it [violence]. Rather than simply raising an awareness [about violence]." Similar to Alice, when Darius was asked about PVIP identification, he responded several times, "What is PVIP again?" Likewise, when Camilla was questioned about her understanding of violence prevention strategies and PVIPs, she struggled greatly throughout her interview, often speaking about unrelated elements of teaching that were far outside the scope of the study. Her cognitive disconnection was partially revealed in her initial response, which was vague and incoherent from the study's question on how she thinks about school violence, stating, "Having me get those negative thoughts out and having a good support system." She then stopped and asked me to repeat the question and definitions, remarking, "Sorry! I have never heard these things before."

Mia commented, "I just thought, well, [violence will] probably happen at some point, or it could happen, and so I do not think I need to know more or [be able to] predict this." Jenny revealed that she has not paid much attention to school violence nor how to address it, stating,

"It's not something that I have spent a lot of time researching." However, as the interview continued, she admitted, "It is something that should be discussed." Ella remarked, "The biggest experience that I've had with violence was when I noticed that the teachers would interact with different students. Like students of different ethnicities."

Ava highlighted her general lack of knowledge, stating, "It's definitely been lacking in the amount of knowledge and awareness about pre-violence indicators." The lack of specific training and reliance on media portrayals was further exemplified by Jenny's comment, "The only thing I could even think of being somewhat related to it would be what you see in movies, watching cop shows, or whatever."

Training Void

XYZ University did not train the participants in PVIPs or offer coursework. Susan commented, "I have learned nothing about pre-violence at all." Mia also noted an absence of discussion on the topic, with the only related instruction being a professor's focus on stress management, a tangential connection at best. Susan's blunt admission encapsulated the pervasive shortfall in the curriculum; "I had learned nothing about pre-violence at all." This sentiment was echoed by Mia: "There really wasn't any mention of things like that in any of the classes I took." Lisa concurred, "No, I have not experienced any classes relating to that. No, I really have not." Darius thought for an extended period before he said, "Coursework? I mean. I would not say it was coursework."

Similarly, Sophia discussed the gaps in her formal education and her proactive steps to fill these through self-directed learning. Her statement, "It's definitely brought a lot more of my attention to how I might go about getting that training, especially if the university doesn't start requiring it," underscores a critical self-awareness and initiative. Her statement made her desires

clear, "I think it's [PVIP training] very, very, very valuable, and I think that it is absolutely something that should be offered!" Her narratives highlight how positive exposure to media content can drive individuals to seek out essential knowledge and skills proactively.

The narratives from the participants underscore a progression in their understanding and approach to violence prevention education. This shift indicates a growing realization among preservice educators of the need for structured training in identifying PVIPs. Ava's reflections capture the significant change in school violence and her need to be prepared due to her involvement in this PVIP research. Initially, violence indicators were not prominently on her radar; however, through engaging discussions and reflective learning, her awareness intensified, culminating in the focus group where she had grown angry that PVIP training was absent in the school's offerings.

During the focus group, the curriculum deficiency became more prominent. Ava stated that after she recognized the PVIP curriculum deficiency, she wanted it to "become a part of, you know, the curriculum at XYZ." She added, "We talked through some experiences and things we had had in classrooms, but it never really went to the point of talking about pre-violence indicators." Sophia's comments illustrated the steps some participants were willing to take due to inadequate curriculum. She articulated a self-driven approach to acquiring the necessary PVIP skills, "It's definitely brought a lot more of my attention to how I might go about getting that training . . . especially if the university doesn't start requiring it." The participants unanimously desired to incorporate a curriculum to help them identify and respond to PVIPs.

Mandated Training

The data revealed that preservice educators believed that PVIP training should be mandatory, most advocating for government involvement vis-à-vis laws. Mia, representing the

majority, asserted, "I never felt like I was really clear on what exactly would happen, and that always made me feel a little anxious. I feel like having more training and having something mandatory would be helpful." All except one participant were in favor of mandatory PVIP training. The dissenting participant was concerned about government overreach. Sophia advocated for immediate action:

> If the university doesn't start requiring it, or there's no way for us to actually do that through the school. I still think that getting that training on our own is extremely important. We still need to know how to look for these signs and how to handle those situations on our own if no one else is going to help us do so.

Sophia left no room for options. Jenny expressed a similar view: "We should be taught and prepared for it because we're prepared for everything else about education. So why not be prepared for, you know, an actual life-or-death situation?" She ended the interview by expressing gratitude to her professors who spent the time to pray with her.

Only Ava's responses were ambivalent, reflecting a complex view of preservice educators' engagement with PVIP training: "As a teacher, I need to be aware of that. And maybe not; it's maybe not my responsibility to address that." As she developed her thoughts, she added, "Students' lives are more than just what I'm teaching in the classroom." Her intimation was that students have intrinsic rights beyond academia, arguing that teachers need "to know that other things are going on behind the scenes and not just what's happening in the classroom."

Support and Concerns

The participants generally supported PVIP training; however, some had reservations about government overreach, constitutional conflicts, the scope of training across educational levels, additional requirements for university students, qualifications of instructors, and risk of

injury. Olivia posited, "I would hope that most people would be okay with it. But once you say that state is and the government is mandating it, I think people might have a problem with that."

The participants displayed a range of reactions about the role of government in mandating PVIP training. Camilla simply said, "I don't like that." Ella posited, "They already have requirements. So, in my opinion, I don't think it would be an issue if they required one more." Alice proposed, "If it was a required class where we got a grade. I think that would help." Ava speculated, "I think you know everything with federal and government-mandated stuff is going to be a touchy subject because people don't, you know, like the government being all over their business and everything." Ella concurred, "I'm very hesitant whenever someone asks how I feel about the state or federal law mandating something." Olivia, representing the concerns of seven participants, expressed skepticism about mandated government intervention, "If the government is mandating it, I think people might have a problem with that," but she acknowledged a potential acceptance if the training were presented differently, "If you don't say those words, I think it would be okay. … I think my university would be okay with it. I think they would love it."

Conversation Oversight

The data uncovered an absence of academic conversations regarding PVIP training among preservice educators. Participants uniformly reported the absence of formal and informal conversations with professors or peers. They recalled professors touching upon responses to students in crisis, but those conversations did not encompass actionable strategies. Isabella contributed, "I don't think we've ever talked about if there's a violent crime that's happening, this is what you should do." Similarly, Mia reflected, "Hmmm, I think the closest thing that I can think of that would be sort of along those lines is one of my professors spent a good deal of time

talking about stress and how that influences people's behavior." Sophia shared a post-class dialogue regarding a professor's personal experiences with violence, recounting, "The Professor had talked about in class that before he had converted to Christianity, he had had patterns of violence himself toward women, and we kind of discussed that after class as to what he meant by that."

According to participants, peer discussions lacked action steps. Darius stated, "We'll just talk about how we can better our school, and make sure that we prepare all things as happening as far as violence, and even just around us." Later he posited that preservice educators should "talk to people, and, as I said before, to see what's really going on, and be genuine." Isabella said, "I think my past experiences have obviously given me a different perspective of those things, but it is something we do talk about. But I do think that we could talk about it more in blocks. I guess, just because I think it's a real thing that's happening now, just like yesterday with the [UNLV]" shooting.

Faculty Commitment

Participants wanted a more robust commitment from faculty and universities beyond the current curricula, a mere mention, and emphasized the need for inclusion of PVIP training. They supported the adoption of hands-on and practical methodologies to equip them.

Alice noted in her questionnaire and interview that her experiences with gang-related violence brought a sharp focus to the swift and extensive nature of violence. She expressed concern about school shootings and encountering workplace violence. She noted the absence of training saying, "How many shootings there are, and how much violence there could be possibly in the schools that I'm going to is a little concerning in the fact that we don't get any training."

Ava emphasized the superficiality of violence discussions in her training, noting that while classroom disruptions were mentioned in general, PVIP training was not. "We talked through some experiences and things we had had in classrooms, but it never really went to the point of talking about pre-violence indicators," she explained.

Isabella and Sophia reflected on educational practices that failed to delve deeply into PVIPs. Isabella noted, "I feel like we just went surface level. As in little outbreaks that students could have. But nothing too big." Sophia added, "We did go over a little bit of what would be referred to as classical conditioning and students, which is children with trauma experience maybe having some triggers." She added, "We need to know how to look for these signs and how to handle situations if no one else is going to help." The implication is that classical conditioning is a theory that might be leveraged to inform violent behavior and enhance PVIP training.

Ava's realization of training deficiencies led her to advocate for formally incorporating PVIP training into the university's offerings. She contended, "I need to know about it! You know it's going to be there. It's always going to be there . . . I want to learn how to recognize those indicators." This theme underscored the need for courses that go beyond teaching pre-service teachers how to react to disruptions and focus on the subtler but predictive behaviors that could precede serious incidents. Mia's commentary rounds out this theme by pointing to the deficiencies within educational programs regarding PVIPs: "I think that it would also be a good idea for XYZ to include something like that in their program because there really wasn't any mention of things like that in any of the classes I took."

Conversation Void

During interviews, participants discussed the lack of substantive collegiate conversations and recommended strategies. Ava's frustration with the absence of academic conversations about PVIPs is evident in her emphasis on the need for comprehensive PVIP training:

Placing mandatory training for teachers and universities, I think, is extremely important, and should be looked at more carefully and hopefully embedded in and put it into university curriculum because it's going to be something that's around forever and so, we might as well start now in creating a safe place for our students.

Others repeatedly expressed concern for females and a sense of urgency to speak with university leaders, professors, and students about PVIPs. Sophia commented about the lack of communication from the university and classmates about general safety, stating, "It would be beneficial if we had safety courses in place in college . . . I don't believe I have had any conversations with professors about this." Sophia highlights a lack of dialogue about campus safety and initiatives. Female participants stated they were open to various forms of PVIP training, including coursework, professor-led discussions, self-defense classes on or off campus, and multi-day or multi-week symposiums.

Darius underscored the value of an enduring educational approach to PVIP training, suggesting that it should be a permanent element of educational culture, "I think that it's important to have those talks with college students...and just pass it down so it can be just a continuous cycle of learning constantly about this, instead of having serious conversations only when violence occurs."

Media Influence

Social media, including news outlets that use social media platforms to disseminate news, influenced participants differently. Three participants balked at pursuing a teaching career

because of social media and news outlet influence, four downplayed it, and three indicated they avoided it. Lisa stated, "I am on social media, but my filters keep me from seeing violence," rationalizing that she did not want to think about how violent the world can be. Similarly, Darius commented, "I wouldn't even say that social media can be a factor. I mean, it can be a factor. But I wouldn't say it's a huge factor." Olivia recounting an experience in high school, "I remember one day, people were scared to go to school because they heard something about a student on social media, that he was going to be bringing a gun to campus." The incident had a lingering effect on Olivia's attitude toward a career in education.

Mia mentioned that she often discusses incidents of school violence with her mentor teacher, acknowledging that these discussions have made her more aware of the importance of noticing pre-violence indicators. She stated, "I'm actually like they're doing things with kids. And seeing how they behave every single day. I think that I would benefit like we could all benefit from knowing signs of pre-indicator behaviors."

Ava reflected on her college experiences, noting, "It makes me think about it a lot more and makes me either want to go look for that at a different university or wants to advocate for that to become a part of. You know the curriculum at XYZ."

Susan, whose father is a probation officer, shared that she feels more fearful due to the constant exposure to violent news on social media, saying, "I even have the ring app which tells me near my house you know in Mesa some you know. I heard this or I you know somebody jumped me or whatever. But I would say it's definitely made me more fearful just because I don't know what I would do in those settings other than just run."

Camila mentioned that social media can be a harsh place and sometimes takes breaks from it due to the negative content. He stated, "Social media? I wouldn't really say much just

because I think that sometimes social media can be a very harsh place and sometimes, I often find myself needing to take some breaks too just because of what is being posted and shared."

Ella discussed how social media and news reports shape his views on preventing violence, saying, "I think the biggest thing was just finding what my own convictions were about how to prevent it. Because that's mostly what I see on things like my Instagram feed or the news stuff like that is what people's reactions to those things are and most of the time. They have very strong opinions." Participants' experiences with social media and news outlets varied from positive to negative, impacting their perspectives and approaches to dealing with school violence in their educational careers.

Positive Media Influence

Despite social media and news outlets amplifying concerns about teaching, all participants had an unwavering sense of duty to their vocation. Sophia shared, "There have definitely been things that have sort of started to dissuade me from taking this route. But in the end, I am the person who believes that is the exact reason that I should be a teacher." Mia was aware of school shootings, but it did not sway her to leave teaching. The more Alice read about school violence in social media and news outlet reports, the more she adopted a stoic and resolute attitude: "Though there is the part of violence that can happen at any time, if it's my time, it's my time."

Ella continued the notion of how social media and news outlets have served as a motivator to become a teacher so she could help stop violence. She stated, "The biggest thing was finding what my convictions were about how to prevent school violence. Because that's mostly what I see on my Instagram feed or the news." Ella continued this theme when she stated later in the interview, "I think that was probably the biggest influence that social media has had

on me personally was how my opinions on how I should prevent those things?" Her answer was to remain in the teaching vocation so she could be a force of positive change. Similarly, Mia was not deterred despite school shootings portrayed on social media and news outlets: "You need to think about it. But not in a way that would make me change my mind."

Despite the negative portrayal that can elevate fears, Isabella also viewed its influence as motivating: "Social media has undoubtedly stressed the urgency of these issues . . . [which can] dissuade individuals from pursuing education as a career. [But] I think it has influenced me in a positive way." She said that the more issues kids face, the more she wants to be part of the solution. Isabella believed there were answers and wanted to be part of the solution: "I want to know what I would do."

Olivia shared similar sentiments about the influence of being informed through social media and news outlets, expressing the motivational aspect of media exposure: "It's scary to think about as I'm about to go into student teaching, like, what if this happens? What do I do? And I think social media has made it urgent to the world that this is happening." Her words capture the dual nature of media influence, instilling fear yet also spurring a proactive approach to seeking better preparation and training for handling such scenarios.

Camilia expressed how social media and news outlets help keep her informed of the potential for school violence and without it, she would not consider how important preparation is by stating, "I think that they're a lot of things that can be, I guess, benefited by social media like [revealing] anything can happen. So basically, getting the word out there."

Isabella's involvement during her student-teaching phase further exemplifies this change in thinking. Conversations with her mentor teacher opened her eyes to the practical aspects of

PVIP. She noted, "Since talking about it, it's definitely been eye-opening to me. I think that I

would benefit like we could all benefit from knowing signs of pre-indicator behaviors."

All participants had some concerns about how social media and news outlets depict

school violence. However, despite their concerns, the participants exhibited an unwavering sense

of duty toward their education degree and future in teaching. This progression showcases how

the influence from social media and news can be a catalyst to a deeper understanding and

commitment to address school violence.

Negative Media Influence

During interviews, some participants noted that social media and news outlets amplified

concerns about teaching. Isabella lamented, "I know students that I've interacted with, and

they've stepped away because they're so scared that it's [violence] going to happen." The

consensus among participants was that social media and news outlets consistently exposed the

public to negative content, including unsettling reports of violence. Susan shared how even

limited exposure to social media and news outlets impacted her, "My first reaction is a little

scared because there are crazy people out there," but she stayed the course, crediting her

Christian faith, "I just pray, and hope God will take care of me. But it's definitely nerve-

wracking."

Lisa, like Susan, engaged with social media and news outlets sparingly, concurring that

exposure caused anxiety. Darius, who contended he does not use social media, stated, "But if I

did see [violent school] content, I think that would definitely worry me." Olivia identified a

widespread worry among preservice educators about the negative influence of social media and

news outlets in spreading fear. She expressed a common concern among her peers about the

possibility of violent incidents, often shown in the media, happening in their future teaching

spaces, "I think being a teacher, it can be scary to think about that stuff seen on social media being like, oh, that could be my classroom." Three other participants expressed that social media's depiction of school violence troubled them to the point of reconsidering their future in education. Ella shared, "I was first trying to decide whether I should become an educator, it was something I really wrestled with." Withdrawing from the education program was mentioned 15 times during the interviews due to the negative depiction of teaching on social media. Isabella expressed, "It definitely scared me a lot. It's a scary thing to think about as I'm about to go into student teaching, like, what if this happens? What do I do?" Sophia stated, "There have definitely been things that have sort of started to dissuade me from taking this route." Alice reflected, "I think the picture that social media paints could be very detrimental to one's view of violence." She opined that social media, even if only viewed now and then, impacts thoughts about life, including vocation choices.

Outlier Data and Findings

Individuals adapt to and navigate safety concerns in unfamiliar and challenging environments differently. The narratives of several participants underscored two important aspects: heightened vigilance in solitude and the role of relationships in preparing for and responding to potential violence. These outliers provided a greater understanding of the strategies individuals employ to ensure their safety in new and potentially risky environments. They also represent broader implications for educational institutions.

Outlier Finding #1

Six of the participants found solitude challenging as they transitioned to university life leading to apprehension about personal safety. Alice reflected, "So I think just being alone has made me more aware of my surroundings and making sure to watch people to see if there are any

tendencies of them showing violence. Violent tendencies." Her sense of security at home waned with campus life and she responded by adopting precautionary measures, "I think it has influenced me to be more cautious of my surroundings, and making sure if I'm out late at night, I'm on a, I'm on facetime with someone, on a phone call."

Concern about personal safety was not limited to campus. Olivia shared, "Being a girl out in Arizona by yourself, it can be scary, so, I never go to the stores alone, and participants discussed the nexus to safety and being an educator. They showed growing recognition that an educator's responsibility went beyond teaching; it included establishing a secure learning environment. Ava posited, "It's very important that safety is now like a pillar of education because that's where students spend so many hours of their day. And so, I'm also going to be responsible for that safety." Jenny agreed, "We should be taught and prepared for it, because we're prepared for everything else about education."

Outlier Finding #2

Eight of the participants expressed that building and maintaining relationships, particularly family relationships, helped them prepare for potential violence. Susan commented, "I would say if anybody's taught me anything about knowing body language, or you know, raising a voice or even just kind of what they're saying, it would be my dad. Darius added, "My mindset was, I grew up in a home where my parents actually taught me about these things and also family, officers as well. So, something that they taught me was, you could tell by somebody's stances." Isabella reflected, "From my past experiences with my friends, I would say those are some things that have helped me or have prepared me, I guess, for emotions." Susan commented, "I'm 5'2", I'm 120 pounds, and if I'm going against a man, like, he has the upper hand advantage . . . we're easily prone, easy targets." Sophia stated, "There's always some

skepticism that needs to be in place, especially for us as women." Alice shared, "I need to be aware of my surroundings when I'm out by myself or even with people, especially girls. If we're just a group of girls around, we need to be extra cautious." The female participants commented that they purposely built safety networks with other females, and sometimes sought males for support. Sophia remarked, "It's been something that I've definitely been looking into a lot more and trying to stay alert myself as well as keep my female and male friends aware of the things that are going on." She wanted a "large male friend" to walk with her on campus. Conversely, the only male participant, Darius, stated that he felt safe and believed that most troubling situations could be avoided by making the right decisions: "Basically just flee away from it because violence isn't okay anywhere."

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Research Questions Responses

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Central Research Question

What is the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence indicator patterns?

The participants favored mandatory PVIP training. Sophia, echoing all participants stated her belief about the need for PVIP training;

> I definitely, since going through these questions and that first meeting that we had. It's definitely brought a lot more of my attention to how I might go about getting that training going into my future career. And I feel like it's very important to do so.

> Similarly, Mia remarked, "I feel like having more training and having something

mandatory would be helpful." Ava also spoke about mandatory PVIP training, stating, "It makes me think about it a lot more and makes me either want to go look for it at a different university or want to advocate for it to become a part of you know, the curriculum at XYZ." Ava

acknowledged the responsibility of teachers to ensure student safety and contemplated preparation beyond what XYZ University offered. Mia continued the mandatory PVIP theme, commenting, "I think it should be from a university to university, making those decisions in general." She believed that influences outside of universities should be minimal or null and that the choice was not whether universities should integrate PVIP training but how it would. Isabella commented, "We should have mandatory training to be able to see . . . violent behaviors." Mia said, "I feel like having more training and having something mandatory would be helpful" Olivia concurred, "There should be a mandatory class or training like a 6-week training at night, or something that student educators go to learn about how to deal with school shooting[s], school violence."

Sub-Question 1

What is the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in PVIPs via coursework? The participants revealed that their university education, including state schools, did not include PVIP coursework or any substantial PVIP training. Psychology and Bible courses were not designed to train students on PVIP, but their professors did speak briefly about students in crisis. Darius remarked about the lack of PVIP training stating, "Coursework? I mean. I wouldn't say it was coursework." All participants advocated for PVIP training coursework supporting Heimann and Fritzsche's (2022) findings on the necessity of teaching violence-prevention strategies in education. Their study, designed for professionals and volunteers, identified the role of social education and preventive strategies in protecting children from violence. Regarding mandatory PVIP training, Alice did not think there would be resistance in the education department at XYZ University, arguing, "I don't think there'd be pushback because I think, as educators, they would see the purpose of it."

Despite agreement on the need for PVIP training, some concerns emerged about state or federal government mandates. Olivia posited, "I would hope that most people would be okay with it. But once you say that state is and the government is mandating it, I think people might have a problem with that." Mia preferred a decentralized approach, "I think that it should be from university to university, making those decisions in general. For what sort of things to provide?" Notwithstanding, Isabella had no reservations about government involvement, "We should have mandatory [PVIP] training to [be able to] see [recognize] violent behaviors."

Sub-Question 2

What is the mindset of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in PVIPs via interacting with students and faculty? The responses varied widely yet converged; there was dissonance between the reality of school violence and academic conversations, coupled with limited peer-to-peer discussions. Mia emphatically responded to whether professor or peer conversations about PVIPs transpire, "No!" Sophia observed naivety among her peers who "seem to not really think about that sort of thing so much." Ava recalled having one peer conversation about professional responsibilities, "It's hard to think right now, as an 18-year-old, to be responsible for 20 10-year-olds or whatever. But you know, in a few years, that will be, you know, the case."

Isabella and Camila represented the minority acknowledging their discussions about violence. Isabella confirmed, "I've definitely talked about it with a lot of peers, especially us peers that are going to be educators in the future," but conceded, "We haven't talked about anything that could help prevent it." Darius shared that casual conversations occurred, "We'll just talk about how we can better our school, and make sure that we prepare all things happening as far as violence."

Sub-Question 3

What influence does exposure to social media and news outlets about school violence have on preservice educators' mindsets regarding their decision to pursue a teaching career? The data revealed that social media and news outlets influenced preservice educators positively and negatively. Turan et al. (2013) illuminated the powerful influence of social media and news outlets on cognitive processes. Yet, against the backdrop of research emphasizing social media and news outlets' pervasive influence, the participants maintained that social media and news outlets did not dominate their thinking on violence or PVIPs. Darius summed, "I don't really watch much social media. I don't think it has any influence on my way of thinking about violence." Four other participants made similar statements.

In contrast, Alice acknowledged social media's (sometimes negative) influence stating, "I think the picture that social media and news outlets paint could be very detrimental to one's view of violence just because of the fact that media can pose anything, and anyone can believe it." Isabella reflected, "I know [college] students that I've interacted with, and they've stepped away [from teaching] because they're so scared that it's going to happen."

Summary

Chapter Four revealed the absence of PVIP training in preservice educator programs at XYZ University. Methods espoused by Husserl (1931/1970) and van Manen (1990) informed thematic coding of responses from 13 preservice educators, gathered through questionnaires, 12 individual interviews, and a focus group. The data revealed four primary themes: mindset shift; training void; training oversight; and media influence. Participants unanimously grasped the need for PVIP training but expressed reservations about blanket government mandates. Seven participants indicated a preference for universities to maintain control over curriculum content.

Chapter Four also underscored the limited dialogue, academically and among peers, on strategies to reduce violent incidents. The data revealed that the way social media and news outlets depict school violence can diminish or bolster vocational aspirations. Varna and Rushit's (2023) argument that social media and news outlets have a significant influence on the younger generation, enriching and challenging their worldview was reinforced by the findings but not acknowledged by all participants. Finally, outlier responses underscored the need for constant vigilance, especially when an individual is in solitude. Outlier responses also introduced interpersonal relationships as a strategic factor in mitigating the risk of violence.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative hermeneutical phenomenological study was to understand the mindsets of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence-indicator patterns at XYZ University. Data were gathered via questionnaire, individual interviews, and a focus group. Chapter Five includes two major sections: Discussion and Conclusion. Chapter Five also includes and five subsections: Interpretation of Findings, Implications for Policy and Practice, Theoretical and Methodological Implications, Limitations and Delimitations, and Recommendations for Future Research.

Discussion

The discussion section provides a comprehensive analysis of the following sections: Summary of Thematic Finings, Interpretation of Findings, Mindset Shift Regarding the Need for PVIP Training, Recognizing Deficiencies in PVIP Curriculum, Advancing Comprehensive Collegiate Conversations in Violence Prevention Training, and Exploring the Impact of Social Media and News Outlets. These sections explore the individual and institutional aspects featured throughout the research, proposing a holistic approach to enhancing violence prevention training in educational settings. The discussion includes a synthesis the findings and actionable recommendations to improve training and policy frameworks.

Summary of Thematic Findings

The following section presents discoveries and interpretations of the data following thematic analysis. Four themes emerged. Analysis revealed that participants recognized a mindset shift regarding the need for PVIP training, deficiencies in PVIP curriculum, the need to

discuss PVIP training, and recognized the influence of social media and news outlets on preservice educators regarding school violence.

Interpretation of Findings

This section includes my interpretation of the findings, drawing a connection with Dweck's (2006) seminal work on the implicit theory of intelligence, which serves as a foundational element in understanding the results. In agreement with Arieli and Sagiv (2018), who explored the impact of educator mindsets on learning environments, this study corroborates the role of educator mindsets in nurturing safe learning places.

Heino et al. (2021) underscored the significance of tailored PVIP training in enhancing first responder capabilities to anticipate and mitigate violence. Extending this paradigm, this study elucidates preservice educator perspectives regarding mandatory PVIP training. Firstly, there was a universal shift toward a more conscious and receptive mindset about mandatory PVIP training. Secondly, participants acknowledged a deficiency in the current curriculum. Thirdly, there was an absence of conversation about PVIP training. Lastly, participants acknowledged that social media and news outlets shaped their perceptions of the teaching profession, affecting their enthusiasm and commitment. While some were inspired to embrace education as a career, others reconsidered when contemplating the possibility of violence. The understanding gleaned from this study underscores the imperative for context-specific training programs for preservice educators.

Mindset Shift Regarding PVIP Training

The discussion begins by underscoring the role of academic institutions in cultivating a growth mindset regarding PVIP training in preservice educators. A growth mindset can awaken preservice educators to embrace and engage in PVIP training. The data indicates the need for

further investigation into mandatory PVIP training, as such training may enhance classroom

management (DOJ 2017, 2022; FBI 2018, 2019). Participants demonstrated reluctance toward

street-level law enforcement methodologies for mitigating school violence and a preference for

enhancing their expertise in recognizing PVIPs. This nuanced stance is underscored by Kandaki

and King's (2002) investigation, which delineated educators' desire for PVIP training to

overcome their lack of confidence in addressing classroom violence. Their finding corresponded

with others. Perkins (2018) and Pusey (2020) shed light on the inadequacies and lack of

confidence in prevailing crisis management frameworks, professional development programs,

and concerns related to school violence, vulnerability, and the impact on educators' professional

standing. Alatahari et al. (2019), Gibbs (2014), and White and Beal (1999) concurred. Moreover,

this concept aligns with Wild's (2020) advocacy for a shift toward proactive training approaches,

underscoring a collective call within the academic community for a strategic reevaluation of how

educators are trained to tackle the specter of school violence.

    While Gupta (2022) posited that individuals are keen to address student violence, the

results of my research indicated that participants seldom considered preparing for it before being

introduced to PVIP training. Notably, as the interviews progressed, particularly in the focus

group, a significant transformation occurred in participant perceptions of the central research

question. Each participant revealed an urgency regarding PVIP training, like Dweck's (2006)

concept of a growth mindset. Ava remarked about a mindset shift that occurred due to this study:

    Originally, it [PVIP training] probably wasn't too much on my radar initially, but after

    you know, having discussions and talking about it, it's brought it more to my attention

    and makes me want to be more prepared to be able to notice those signs.

Ava's newfound recognition of the need for training resonated with others about the mindset shift. Sophia said, "Since going through these questions and that first meeting that we had, it's definitely brought a lot more of my attention to how I might go about getting that training." The call for PVIP training was present throughout the interviews. Some experiences were deeply personal and revealing. Alice's statement, "Entering this field and witnessing the frequency of shootings and potential violence in the schools I'm entering is disconcerting, given the lack of training on these issues," encapsulates the anxiety shared by all participants regarding the insufficiency of their training on school violence. This prevalent concern among preservice educators is echoed by Gladwell (2007), who argued that educators without the appropriate mindset regarding known PVIPs are likely to overlook critical warning signs. This connection underscores the vital need for comprehensive training to equip educators to effectively identify and respond to potential threats. As participant mindsets broadened to acknowledge the training gap and seek solutions, they proposed various avenues for acquiring the needed skills, yet consistently bemoaned the lack of support from the university system. Suggestions often correlated with literature from the National Education Association (2022), Osher et al. (2008), and Pierce (2021), whose recommendations ranged from offering off-campus self-defense courses to funding external specialists.

Recognizing Deficiencies in PVIP Curriculum

The mindset shift regarding the need for PVIP training emphasizes the importance of identifying deficiencies in the curriculum. Despite numerous studies providing various levels of violence prevention curriculum (Alatahari, 2019, FBI, 2019, Gaffney et al., 2019; NEA, 2022), participants unanimously lamented the absence of university curriculum tailored to equip them for recognizing and managing violent incidents. The discussions extended beyond individual

mindsets and addressed university leadership failures, advocating for immediate curriculum reforms that encompass the reality of school violence and the skills needed for prevention. According to Isabella, "Because it happens so often that teachers need to be aware of what to do or how to see it before it happens. Yeah. I think that it needs to be part of our training." They noted that the curriculum at XYZ University, as well as at two state institutions, neglect instruction on classroom violence prevention or PVIP identification. This study corroborates the quantitative findings of Kandakai and King (2002), Pusey (2020), and White and Beal (1999) that preservice educators want and, in some cases, advocate for PVIP training and seminars into their core curriculum. Ava went as far as to threaten to leave XYZ University unless it began to offer PVIP training.

The need for mandatory violence curriculum may extend beyond university leadership to government intervention. All the participants were cynical of government intervention, but seven were open to it. According to Ella, "[The government] already has requirements, so, in my opinion, I don't think it would be an issue if they required one more." The participants made thirty-six statements expressing their desire for university leaders to rethink their reticence regarding PVIP training. Instead, the seven participants advocated for state or federal governments to pass laws requiring PVIP training.

Jacobson (2022) asserted that teachers are likely to encounter violence in their profession and require training to keep students and faculty safe. Smith (2021) also found a deficiency in educator training for identifying students in mental health crises. Akeman et al. (2019), argued that schools inadequately address students' psychological needs, contributing to rising cases of self-harm and aggression. Recognizing the need for training, Lee and Ryu (2019) posited that university leaders do not need to invent curriculum; it is available. Furthermore, the DOJ (2017;

2020), and the FBI (2018), created school violence reduction plans and PVIP identification curricula that universities can use to develop PVIP training. The federal law enforcement resources provide a foundation for enhancing preservice educator training and addressing gaps in the violence-prevention curriculum.

Missing Violence Prevention Conversations

Neither professors nor students discussed how to tackle school violence. This theme builds on previous ones. Gable and Van Acker (2000) asserted that higher education must pivot to include discussions on violence. The participants recognized that they will likely face violence in their careers, a sentiment espoused by Jacobson (2022). The absence of communication from professors is an oversight and an obstacle to effective PVIP training. Preservice educators unanimously called for the university system to address the lack of open dialogue on established PVIP strategies. According to Jenny, "We should be taught and prepared for it, because we're prepared for everything else about education. So why not be prepared for, you know, an actual life-or-death situation? I think that's what's really important." Her statement underscored a pervasive desire for candid discussions on violence among professors and peers.

This narrative was supported by Osagiede et al. (2018), who suggested professors' reluctance to discuss violence may stem from fears of administrative repercussions for addressing unsettling topics that could deter preservice educators from their career path. Participants in this study advocated for a culture that promoted transparency and engagement, encouraging the discussion of challenging topics without fear of administrative backlash. In Jenny said, "We should be taught and prepared for it [violence] because we're prepared for everything else about education. So, why not be prepared for, you know, an actual life-or-death situation?" She recognized the need to transcend concerns about student emotional responses and

confront the reality of violence in schools. Data from this study supports the previous reports from the DOJ (2017, 2022), and the FBI (2018, 2019).

Contrary to federal reports advocating for PVIP training, no participants recalled any formal conversations on the topic. Three participants alluded to limited guidance from professors about assisting students in crisis, but the discussions were described as brief and cursory and not integrated into the curriculum. The conversations were sporadic, occurring by chance, and initiated by students emphasizing the lack of systematic PVIP training.

To address the revealed lack of PVIP conversations, Osagiede et al. (2018) suggested that universities employ qualified personnel to facilitate the discussions. Participants expressed reservations about the prospect of untrained individuals leading such conversations and advocated for substantive comprehensive collegiate conversations with professors or other professionals well-versed in school security. While not all participants sought top-tier PVIP training, they all desired some level of engagement and dialogue. Comprehensive collegiate conversations are not only about enriching the educational experience but also about ensuring that future educators are well-equipped in violence prevention and part of a community that values open communication and critical thinking.

The Impact of Social Media and News Outlets

The existing scholarly literature lacks research on how social media and news outlets impact preservice educator views regarding school violence. This study also revealed an absence of comprehensive collegiate conversation on preventing school violence in formal curricula and comprehensive collegiate conversations. The participants exposed a lack of structured conversation and limited informal exchanges regarding violence prevention curriculum. To counteract the often-skewed portrayal of school violence in the media, it is essential to expand

these discussions. Through in-depth and frequent dialogue, educators can deepen their understanding of real-world violence-prevention strategies and break down preconceived notions.

Olivia's perspective was representative of a broader sentiment among the preservice educators: "It can be scary to think about that stuff seen on social media." While brief, her statement encapsulated the dual-edged sword of social media: its power to inform and simultaneously terrify which aligns with the work of Varna and Rushit (2023). They explored the significant and complex influence of social media and news outlets on younger generations, acknowledging its capacity to enrich and challenge their worldview. Social media and news outlet platforms can affirm or diminish future educators' dedication to their profession. This study reveals how educators' perceptions and concerns are shaped by the narratives encountered on these platforms. Mia recognized the influence of social media and news outlets but refused to let it deter her commitment: "You need to think about it. But not in a way that would . . . change my mind." Her sentiment reflected a thoughtful engagement with the issue and underscored resolve despite social media and news outlet narratives of school violence. Mia also indicated a desire for PVIP training, "It would also be a good idea for XYZ University to include something like that in their program." Isabella encapsulated the anxiety felt by all participants about their future profession: "It definitely scared me a lot. It's a scary thing to think about as I'm about to go into student teaching like, what if this happens? What do I do?" The data indicated that preservice educators are influenced by the narratives presented on social media and news outlets, shaping their professional aspirations. Preservice and in-service educators will encounter portrayals of school violence on social media and news outlets, and it may influence their career decisions. It underscores the need for open dialogue and recognizes the complexities introduced

by modern communication channels. PVIP training would help counter social media and news outlet influence, assuage preservice educator concerns, and defer or eliminate in-service educator attrition.

Five participants reported limited engagement with social media and news outlets, while three said their consumption was too minimal to significantly alter their beliefs. Of those who recognized the influence of social media and news outlets on their perspectives, commitment to their future in education overcame their fears. For instance, Darius commented, "So I wouldn't even say that social media can. I mean, it can be a factor. But I wouldn't say it's a huge factor." The influence of social media and news outlets underscores the complexity of influences impacting preservice educators' dedication to their vocation.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Implications for policy and practice arising from the data provide insight for decision-makers, stakeholders in higher education, and government bodies. The recommendations for policy and practice discussed in the ensuing sections exist to bridge gaps in the literature and make recommendations that foster environments where school violence discussion can flourish. The integration of scholarly insight and practical recommendations underscores an informed and responsive educational framework that equips future educators to navigate the multifaceted challenges of the profession with confidence and critical acumen.

Implications for Policy

The data suggest a pronounced interest among preservice educators in understanding appropriate responses to classroom challenges, as indicated by previous qualitative and quantitative research (Aalto et al., 2019, Alatahari et al., 2019; Gibbs, 2014; Hendrix-Soto, 2018, Kandakai & King, 2002; Pusey, 2020; White & Beal, 1999).While some preservice educators

expressed a preference for formal training, others leaned toward informal interactions with experts in school safety. Participants from XYZ University wanted PVIP training. Other universities should consider including PVIP training in the existing core curriculum for preservice educators. Besides safety issues, institutions that fail to adapt risk losing prospective educators to universities that actively incorporate relevant coursework and discussions.

Implications for Practice

The purpose of this section is to explore the practical implications of the findings underscoring transforming theoretical knowledge into actionable strategies that enhance intervention capabilities and overall school safety via violence awareness and PVIP training, PVIP curriculum development, academic advocacy and strategy for PVIP training, and addressing the impact of social media and news outlets on preservice educators' perceptions. Integrating simulation-based methods into comprehensive curriculum development would help bridge the gap between awareness and action in violence prevention. Additionally, utilizing social media and news outlets as tools for educational advocacy would provide a dual-faceted approach, promoting the growth mindset essential for effective PVIP training. The implication is that these strategies can be implemented to foster safer educational environments.

Awareness to Action

Theory merges with practical application, suggesting that educational institutions and training organizations should prioritize the development of comprehensive PVIP training programs that extend beyond theoretical frameworks as outlined in federal law enforcement reports such as the DOJ (2017, 2022), and the FBI (2018, 2019). The data from this study supports solutions from federal reports suggesting integrating practical PVIP training with real-world scenarios and enabling preservice educators to apply their knowledge in simulated

environments. For instance, in healthcare, simulated environments are accomplished via virtual reality simulations. Simulated systems are used for training purposes, providing a safe environment for professionals to practice and refine their skills without the risks associated with real-life procedures. Gegenfurtner et al. (2014) argued the effectiveness of digital simulation-based training in improving learning outcomes and skill acquisition, underlining its significance in various training contexts. In the automotive industry, driving simulators are employed to improve road safety by allowing drivers to experience various driving conditions and scenarios in a controlled environment, mirroring Lateef's (2010) findings on the benefits of simulation-based learning in medical education for applying knowledge and skills in risk-free settings. The application of simulated systems demonstrates the broad utility of simulated environments for enhancing safety, efficiency, and the ability to respond effectively in critical situations. Using simulated systems of instruction in PVIP training could bridge the gap between knowing the signs of potential violence and effective intervention.

Violence Prevention Curriculum

The undeniable presence of school violence and the revelation of an absence in curricula for violence prevention underscores the need. Policymakers and curriculum developers should consider working toward embedding PVIP training modules in existing courses or as a standalone subject. The undertaking will have its challenges, such as resource allocation, instructor qualifications, and institution resistance, but it may be possible to collaborate with violence prevention experts who can enhance curriculum relevance and applicability.

Advocacy and Strategy for PVIP Training

Dialogue regarding PVIP training is absent as evidenced by the data. Universities and academic bodies would do well to take a proactive stance in violence education by organizing

forums, workshops, and research initiatives that focus on PVIP. Other feasible ideas include developing strategic plans for integrating PVIP training into academic programs and an interdisciplinary approach to foster a comprehensive understanding and response to violence prevention.

Social Media and News Outlets' Impact

Social media and news outlets can have positive and negative impacts on preservice educator career perceptions. These prolific technological elements offer insight and networking opportunities while also spreading misconceptions and stereotypes about the teaching profession. Educational institutions should consider capitalizing on the positive aspects by promoting authentic and inspiring content about teaching, while also implementing media literacy programs, critical thinking skills, and campaigns to dismantle harmful myths. By doing so, they can offer a balanced, realistic view of education careers, enabling educators to navigate the media landscape with discernment and confidence.

This section provided a roadmap for enhancing PVIP training and education. By addressing the four key areas, it may be possible for educational institutions and policymakers to contribute to the prevention of violence and the promotion of safer learning environments.

Empirical and Theoretical Implications

The data aligns with Dweck's mindset theory (2006) and has empirical and theoretical implications. Understanding the relationship between diverse implications and Dweck's foundational framework enhances comprehension and emphasizes the importance of mindset in formulating effective strategies for PVIP identification.

Empirical Implications

The lack of PVIP training and related curricula underscores the importance of developing a growth mindset as a strategy for preventing school violence. When teachers and students embrace challenges and persist in learning new material, they are better positioned to learn and apply PVIP training. It can be argued that the growth mindset and PVIP training connection are supported by Saputra et al. (2020), who found that nurturing a *peaceful mindset* (a form of a growth mindset) in students helps reduce violence and evokes its integration into PVIP training. The concept is further supported by Dweck's (2006) who posited that resilience and adaptability are crucial for learning complex skills, such as those needed to detect and act on early signs of violence. Therefore, by creating an educational environment that values growth and adaptability, teachers can improve methods of preventing violence in schools and its praxis.

Influence of Social Media and News Outlets on Educational Career Perceptions

The dual influence of social media and news outlets on career perceptions in education, as noted in the fourth theme, ties back to Dweck's Mindset theory. This research advances beyond Dweck's work by proposing that social media and news outlets influence people's mindsets regarding their education careers. Social media and news outlets can either encourage a growth mindset by showcasing development and success opportunities or support a fixed mindset by emphasizing stereotypes and constraints, as Ringeisen et al. (2016) suggest.

In conclusion, this study contributed to the theoretical understanding of mindset in the context of violence prevention education. It empirically supports the need for a growth mindset approach in developing effective PVIP training and strategies, thereby expanding Dweck's Mindset theory to a new realm of application.

Theoretical Implications

This research expands Dweck's (2006) mindset theory into the realm of violence prevention and the need for educational leaders to cultivate growth mindsets among preservice educators. This approach aligns with two separate studies, one by Ringeisen et al. (2016) and the other by Kern (2017), each highlighting the role of growth mindsets in enabling educators to effectively identify and intervene in potentially violent situations. The primary theoretical implication is that the integration of comprehensive PVIP training and discussion within academic settings, grounded in an expanded application of mindset theory, would help prepare educators for the challenges of violence prevention.

Expansion of Mindset Theory in Violence Prevention

Following data analysis, the findings revealed a need for the application of Dweck's (2006) mindset theory regarding violence prevention, advocating for a shift toward a training growth mindset to aid in recognizing and intervening in potential violence. Mindset theory expansion supports Ringeisen et al. (2016) stressing the responsibility of academic leaders in training preservice educators to identify student mindsets effectively to reduce violence. This awakened mindset regarding PVIP training extends Dweck's theory, as individuals' confidence in intervening aligns with a growth mindset. Kern (2017) supports this nuance that an appropriate mindset enables teachers to identify students experiencing crises more effectively. Research consistently shows that individuals with growth mindsets respond more adaptively to adversity as revealed in Bodil and Roberts (2013), Karumbaiah et al. (2017), Schleider and Schroder (2017), and Yeager et al. (2013). Further, Lee and Jang's (2018) analysis reinforces this idea, indicating that growth mindset students handle potential violence more effectively. Conversely, fixed mindset students are more prone to hostile responses as stated by Schroder et al. (2019). Gay's (2022) case study identifies indicators of violence, stressing the importance of proactive

intervention. Lee and Ryu (2019) suggest educators can cultivate growth mindsets, reducing violent responses. These findings underscore the importance of mindset in violence prevention, emphasizing the need for comprehensive PVIP training programs.

Mindset Theory in Academic Discussions

The need for a paradigm shift in academia's approach to violence prevention education is underscored by the data, emphasizing the adoption of proactive strategies and a growth mindset. The data from this study reinforces Kern's (2017) assertion of the effectiveness of a growth mindset in enhancing violence prevention strategies in educational environments. The limited comprehensive collegiate conversations on PVIP training underscore the urgency of this transformation and are crucial for equipping educators and students with the necessary tools to effectively address potential violence.

Limitations and Delimitations

This section acknowledges various boundaries and constraints that frame the scope and interpretation of the conclusions. These boundaries emphasize the study's context and the importance of interpreting the findings within the setting and target population for broader applications.

Limitations

The gender representation within the participant pool is restricted, with only one male participant. This limitation possibility was mentioned in Chapter Two and supported by Hansen and Quintero (2018), who stated that most teachers are female. This limitation raises concerns regarding generalizability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) across genders. The singular male perspective may not capture the full range of male experiences and perceptions.

Additionally, there was a scarcity of participants who had been victims of crimes. This limitation is significant, as experiencing a crime can profoundly affect an individual's worldview and, by extension, their responses, and interactions with the research topics (FBI, 2019; Jacobson, 2022; Sandy Hook Promise, 2022). The underrepresentation means that the data may not fully encapsulate the nuances that diverse experiences of crime among participants might offer.

Delimitations

This study's setting was confined to a private Christian university due to convenience and to explore the dynamics that a private, religious educational environment may impart to the phenomenon. However, the results may not be transferable to non-religious or public university settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Additionally, all participants were preservice educators with a limited understanding of their future profession. The findings align with those of Kandaki and King (2002), who contended that preservice educators were keen on learning how to identify PVIPs. Yet, the focus on preservice educators means the findings might not mirror the views of experienced educators.

Recommendations for Future Research

Including experienced educators in similar studies could elucidate their adaptive strategies in various educational settings (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). A balanced gender representation would foster a more comprehensive, nuanced understanding of experiences and viewpoints (Johnson & Smith, 2019). These two theories align with the thematic finding of this study about the need for context-specific training programs. The lack of professional dialogue about violence prevention indicates that future research should also explore the efficacy of discussions in enhancing preservice educators' readiness for handling school violence. Finally,

the finding that social media influences preservice educators' views and career decisions indicates a need for more investigation on how structured PVIP training and comprehensive media literacy programs can promote a balanced understanding of school violence.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative hermeneutical phenomenological study was to understand the mindsets of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence-indicator patterns (PVIPs) at XYZ University. Thematic analysis revealed that participants did not understand what PVIP was prior to this study. Upon discovering the existence of PVIP identification through this study, participants experienced a significant shift in mindset, resulting in a strong desire for training. Other themes highlighted the need for open and honest discussion about school violence and PVIP training, echoing calls from Gable and Van Acker (2000), and Jacobson (2022). Lastly, the data confirmed that social and news media could affect career choices, as noted by Lattie et al. (2019) and Varna and Rushit (2023).

This study enriches the dialogue on preventing school violence, aligning with themes and findings of the works of the National Education Association (2022), Osher et al. (2008), Pierce (2021), Polanin et al. (2021), Sawchuck (2021), and the Virginia Education Association (2022). Although these publications were not the foundation of this research, it parallels their conclusions, emphasizing the need to reevaluate preservice educator programs for the inclusion of PVIP training. By integrating PVIP training into collegiate curriculum, emphasizing ongoing dialogue on violence, and social media literacy, institutions can better prepare future educators to create safe and supportive learning environments. Finally, this research deepens awareness of preservice educators' perceptions of school violence and lays the groundwork for future studies on growth mindset, situational awareness, classroom management, and PVIP integration. The

study highlights the role of proactive, informed educators in fostering secure and productive

learning environments.

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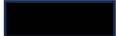
Appendix A

XYZ University Permission Request

August 30, 2023
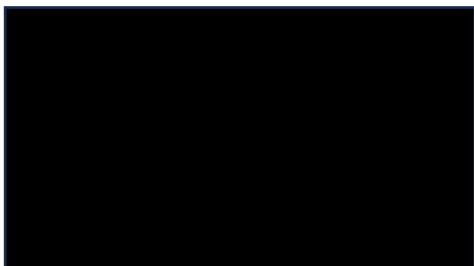
As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a PhD in Higher Education Leadership. The title of my research project is A Qualitative Study Exploring Preservice Educators' Mindsets Regarding Training In Identifying Pre-Violence-Indicator Patterns. The purpose of my research is to understand the mindsets of preservice educators regarding mandatory training in pre-violence-indicator patterns. At this stage in the research, discovering if there is a perceived need for mandatory training in detecting pre-violence-indicator patterns will be generally defined as uncovering the mindset of preservice educators toward school violence as shaped by their lived experiences.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research at

Participants will be asked to complete the attached surveys and contact me to schedule two interviews either in person or online. The data will be used to determine if preservice educators desire training in detecting PVIP in their future students. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please provide a signed statement on official letterhead indicating your approval. A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Aaron Walp
Payson Christian School Administrator
PhD Candidate

Appendix B

XYZ University Permission Response

[Please provide this document on official letterhead or copy and paste into an email. Permission response letters/emails should be returned to you, the researcher, and not the IRB. Upon receipt of documentation of permission, please attach it to your Cayuse application and return your application to the IRB.]

August 30, 2023
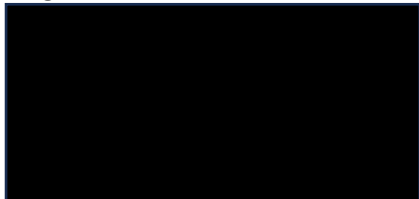
Dear Aaron Walp:

After a careful review of your research proposal entitled Qualitative Study Exploring Preservice Educators' Mindsets Regarding Training In Identifying Pre-Violence-Indicator Patterns [I/we] have decided to grant you permission to contact our undergraduate students and conduct your study on campus or online with our School of Education students and faculty and invite them to participate in your study.

Check the following boxes, as applicable:

Retain, delete, modify, or add to the below options as applicable to your study.

☐ I/We will provide our preservice undergraduate student list to Aaron Walp, and Aaron Walp may use the list to contact our students to invite them to participate in his research study.

☐ I/We grant permission for Aaron Walp to contact our preservice undergraduate students to invite them to participate in his research study.

☐ I/We will not provide potential participant information to Aaron Walp, but we agree to send his study information to our preservice undergraduate students on his behalf.

☐ I/We are requesting a copy of the results upon study completion and/or publication.

Sincerely,

Vice President of Academic Affairs

Appendix C

Participant Recruitment Email

Dear [Recipient]:

As an undergraduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. in Higher Education Leadership. The purpose of my research is to reduce school violence by seeking to understand how preservice educators describe their mindset toward mandatory training in pre-violence-indicator patterns (PVIPs) and what impact, if any, their coursework, university personnel and fellow student interactions better prepared them for their career in academia. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older and enrolled at ▮▮▮▮ as a student pursuing a teaching vocation in the United States. If willing, participants will be asked to complete a self-description questionnaire with14 questions about your lived experiences with violence committed in your presence. This element should take at most 10 minutes. 1212 of the respondents to the self-description questionnaire will be asked to participate in an individual interview with 14 questions. A five-person representative group of the 1212 will participate in a focus group discussion. Each interview should take approximately 30- with a maximum of 60 minutes to complete. Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

To participate, please click *here* (hyperlink to an online survey will be inserted) to take the self-description questionnaire (ten minutes or less). Upon completing the survey, please contact me at ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ for more information and to schedule an interview.

A consent document is provided as the first page of the questionnaire. The consent document contains additional information about my research. Because participation is anonymous, you only need to sign and return the consent document if you prefer. After you have read the consent form, please click the link to proceed to the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to participate in the survey.

Participants who become part of the 1212 participants and complete the study as outlined will receive a $50.00 Amazon gift card. For those who participate in the final step, a group discussion, you will be entered in a raffle and may receive an additional $150.00 Amazon Gift Card.

Sincerely,

Aaron Walp
PhD Candidate
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▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Appendix D

Participant Information Sheet

Title of the Project: Qualitative Study of Preservice Educators' Mindsets Toward Identifying
Pre-Violence-Indicator Patterns
Principal Investigator: Aaron Walp, Doctoral Candidate, School of Education, Liberty
University.

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, Participants must be 18 years of
age or older, currently enrolled in the Department of Education at █████ actively attending
classes on campus (Not online), and not yet working as a teacher but plan to work in the United
States in the K-12 educational system. 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 discover if there is a perceived need for mandatory training in
detecting pre-violence-indicator patterns (PVIP) among undergraduate preservice teachers.
Discovering if there is a perceived need for mandatory training in detecting PVIP will be
generally defined as uncovering the mindset of preservice educators toward school violence as
shaped by their lived experiences.

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:
1. The first task is completing a self-description questionnaire with 14 questions about your
   experiences with violence. This element should take at most 10 minutes.
2. 1212 of the respondents to the self-description questionnaire will be asked to participate
   in an individual interview with 1414 questions. The interview should take approximately
   30- to a maximum of 60 minutes to complete. I will use an audio recorder during this
   phase so that I can translate your answers accurately and without bias.
3. A five-person representative group of the 1212 will participate in a focus group
   discussion. The group discussion should take approximately 45 to a maximum of 60
   minutes to complete. I will use an audio recorder during this phase so that I can translate
   your answers accurately and without bias.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. Benefits to society include gaining an understanding of what preservice teachers believe about their need for mandatory training in PVIP. This increased awareness may urge university leaders to adjust their training of preservice teachers to include PVIP training so that schools become safer environments.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life. The risks involved in this study include the potential of having to recall a past trauma caused by a violent event that occurred in your presence or to your person. To reduce risk, I will monitor participants, discontinue the interview if needed, and provide referral information for counseling services.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

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 kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation or online.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in focus group settings. While discouraged, other focus group members may share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.
- Data collected from you may be used in future research studies and shared with other researchers. If data collected from you is reused or shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed beforehand.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic and hardcopy records will be deleted, and all hardcopy records will be shredded.
- Recordings will be stored on a password-protected hard drive in a locked storage compartment in a secure location for three years and then erased. The researcher and his doctoral committee members will have access to these recordings.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

After steps one and two, participants who complete these steps will receive a $50.00 Amazon gift card. Additionally, after the focus group discussion, those subjects will be entered into a raffle and may receive an additional $100.00 Amazon gift card. Email addresses will be

requested for compensation purposes; however, they will be collected by email after the survey to maintain your anonymity.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or withdraw at any time before submitting the survey 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 contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Aaron Walp. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at ▬▬▬▬▬▬▬ ▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Bailey, at ▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬.

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 IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is 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.

Appendix E

Liberty IRB Approval

IRB #: IRB-FY23-24-519

Title: QUALITATIVE STUDY EXPLORING PRESERVICE EDUCATORS' MINDSETS

REGARDING TRAINING IN IDENTIFYING PRE-VIOLENCE-INDICATOR PATTERNS

Creation Date: 9-26-2023

End Date:

Status: Approved

Principal Investigator: Aaron Walp

Review Board: Research Ethics Office

Submission Type: Initial Review

Review Type: Exempt

Decision: Exempt

Key Study Contacts Member: Frank Bailey

Role: Co-Principal Investigator Contact fsbailey@liberty.edu

Member: Aaron Walp

Role: Principal Investigator

Contact: ███████████████

Member: Aaron Walp Role

Primary: Contact ███████████

Appendix F

Themes, Sub-Themes, and Corresponding Codes

Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
Mindset Shift	Concept to Reality	Study Awakened Mindset (12); Unaware of Established PVIP Training (12); Fear of Violence in Vocation (12); Fear of Campus Places (9); God's Calling Overrides Violence Concerns (3)
	Ignorance Unveiled	Strong Desire for Training (12); Past Trauma Elevated Violence Awareness (2); Prayer (2); Strong Desire to Know How to Protect Future Students (9)
Training Void	Mandated Training	No Coursework (12); Bible, Psych, and LA Mentioned Crisis Students (9); Mandatory Coursework (12); Mandatory Secondary Training (4); Females have Greater Concern (7); More Must be Done to Prepare Preservice Educators (12); Families Fear for their Students (10), Families want Training for Students (9)
	Support and Concerns	Who will Teach (1); How Long (5); No Federal Govt (6); Federal Govt. Good; State Govt Good for Core Subjects (7); Not for Other Professions (3)
Training Oversight	Training Demands	Lack of Professor Conversations on Violence (12); Lack of Peer Conversations on Violence (8); More Discussions Desired (12); Public University Lacks PVIP training (2);

		Student Teaching Led to Some Lockdown Discussions (2)
	Conversation Void	For High School and Above Only (1); Preservice Educators Only (4); Increased Student-Teaching PVIP training (2)
Media Influence	Positive Media Influence	Overhyped Exposure (2); Calling is More Critical (3); Reveals a Fake Reality (9); Self-Education Possible (3); Keeps Students Informed; UNLV Shooting and Current University Stalker (8); Uninvolved in Social Media (5); Somewhat Involved in Social Media
	Negative Media Influence	Strikes Fear (11); Calls into Question their Vocation (9); Calls into Question their Major (5); Peers Ignore Violence Potential (9); Reveals Partial Reality (7)