

LATERAL ENTRY SECONDARY CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS'
PERCEPTION OF TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Liberty University

2024

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Abstract

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to describe lateral entry career and technical education (CTE) teachers' experiences with self-efficacy within a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States. Guided by Bandura's self-efficacy theory, the study aimed to uncover the subjective experiences and perspectives of lateral entry CTE teachers as they navigated their teaching roles. The central research question addressed was: How did lateral entry CTE teachers describe experiences of self-efficacy development in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States? A sample of 10 lateral entry secondary CTE teachers who meet all study criteria were selected. Data was collected through semi-structured individual interviews, focus groups, and audio journaling to facilitate triangulation. The analysis of the data involved horizontalization the data, clustering common experiences, and developing textural and structural descriptions of the essence of the phenomenon. The results of the study revealed three main themes: supportive leadership, instructional support, and professional development. These themes highlighted the significant influence of administrative support, mentorship from experienced educators, and opportunities for reflective practice on lateral entry CTE teachers' self-efficacy development. Through supportive leadership, teachers felt empowered and confident in their roles, while instructional support and mentorship provided valuable guidance and strategies for navigating the challenges of teaching. Additionally, opportunities for reflection and professional development were essential for enhancing teaching effectiveness and addressing diverse student needs.

Keywords: career and technical education, teachers, self-efficacy, alternative teacher certification, professional development

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my father, Robert N. Bennett, who's been here in spirit, watching over me and guiding my every step through this doctoral journey.

I dedicate this to my mom, Sharon, who's also been here in spirit, and who inspired me to always pursue my dreams while providing unlimited support and guidance. *I love you.*

To my children, who may not have understood all the sacrifices that I had to make but still supported and encouraged me every step of the way.

To my family and friends, for always checking up on me, finding the time to ask about my progress and cheering me on, and often believing in me more than I believed in myself.

To my first senior class—Chris, Melody, Javi, Ed, and Yvonne—for being the first to see me start this journey—and my last senior class—Ivette, Franco, Damian, Angel, Isaac, Nathaniel, Adrian, and Gavin—for being the last to see me complete it.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	3
Copyright Page.....	4
Dedication.....	5
List of Tables	13
List of Abbreviations	14
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	15
Overview.....	15
Background.....	16
Historical Context	17
Social Context.....	19
Theoretical Context.....	21
Problem Statement	23
Purpose Statement.....	24
Significance of the Study	24
Theoretical	25
Empirical.....	25
Practical.....	26
Research Questions.....	26
Central Research Question.....	27
Sub-Question One.....	27
Sub-Question Two	27
Sub-Question Three	27

Definitions.....	27
Summary.....	31
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	32
Overview.....	32
Theoretical Framework.....	32
Related Literature.....	34
Teacher Self-Efficacy	34
Performance Accomplishments	37
Vicarious Experiences	39
Verbal Persuasion	40
Physiological Arousal	42
The Role of a CTE Teacher	43
Lateral Entry CTE Teacher.....	45
CTE Teacher Retention.....	48
CTE Teacher Self-Efficacy.....	50
Professional Development	53
Curriculum Integration.....	55
Instructional Coaching.....	56
Collaboration.....	58
Administrator Support	59
Support Component	61
Summary.....	63
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS.....	65

Overview.....	65
Research Design.....	65
Research Questions.....	68
Central Research Question.....	68
Sub-Question One.....	68
Sub-Question Two	68
Sub-Question Three	68
Setting and Participants.....	68
Site	69
Participants.....	69
Recruitment Plan.....	70
Researcher’s Positionality.....	72
Interpretive Framework	73
Philosophical Assumptions.....	74
Ontological Assumption	74
Epistemological Assumption	75
Axiological Assumption	75
Researcher’s Role	76
Procedures.....	77
Data Collection Plan	77
Individual Interviews	78
Document Analysis.....	82
Focus Groups	84

Audio Journals	86
Data Analysis	88
Clustering and Thematizing.....	89
Validation.....	89
Synthesis of Meaning and Essences	90
Trustworthiness.....	92
Credibility	93
Transferability.....	94
Dependability	94
Confirmability.....	95
Ethical Considerations	96
Permissions	96
Other Participant Protections	97
Summary.....	97
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS.....	99
Overview.....	99
Participants.....	99
Ben	100
Dana	101
Anna.....	101
Bill	102
Erica	102
Andy.....	102

	10
Manny	103
Mike	103
Richard.....	104
Rebecca.....	104
Results.....	105
Research Questions.....	106
Central Research Question.....	106
Sub-Question One.....	106
Sub-Question Two	106
Sub-Question Three	106
Supportive Leadership	107
Teacher Mentorship	109
Feedback	110
Reflection.....	112
Instructional Practices.....	114
Classroom Management.....	116
Student Engagement	118
Professional Development	119
Teacher Quality.....	121
Pedagogical Training	123
Collaboration.....	124
Outlier Data and Findings.....	126
Outlier Finding.....	127

Outlier Finding.....	127
Research Question Responses.....	128
Central Research Question.....	128
Sub-Question One.....	129
Sub-Question Two	130
Sub-Question Three	131
Summary.....	132
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION	133
Overview.....	133
Discussion.....	133
Summary of Thematic Findings.....	134
Critical Discussion	136
Fostering A Positive and Empowering Environment	136
Reflective Practice in Enhancing Teaching Effectiveness.....	138
Integration of Academic and Technical Education.....	140
Implications for Policy and Practice.....	142
Implications for Policy.....	142
Implications for Practice.....	143
Empirical and Theoretical Implications.....	144
Empirical Implications.....	144
Theoretical Implications	145
Limitations and Delimitations.....	145
Recommendation for Future Research.....	147

Conclusion	149
References.....	150
Appendix A.....	167
Appendix B.....	168
Appendix C.....	170
Appendix D.....	171
Appendix E.....	172
Appendix F.....	175
Appendix G.....	177
Appendix H.....	178
Appendix I.....	179

List of Tables

Table 1. Pre-Screening Survey	72
Table 2. Individual Interview Questions	79
Table 3. Focus Group Questions	84
Table 4. Audio Journal	87
Table 5. Participant Demographics	100
Table 6. Themes & Subthemes	106
Table 7. Supportive Leadership Enumeration Table	109
Table 8. Instructional Practices Enumeration Table	116
Table 9. Professional Development Enumeration Table	121

List of Abbreviations

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Elementary and Secondary Act (ESA)

English Language Learner (ELL)

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The future of career and technical education (CTE) and its secondary education programs has been a topic of discussion at the state and federal levels for the past 20 years. CTE is the practice of teaching middle and high school students the academic, technical, and employability skills needed to succeed in postsecondary education and in-demand careers (Association for Career and Technical Education, 2022, para. 1). Vocational education has a long-standing history in America but was not federally supported until 1965 when the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESA) was passed (Wang, 2009). According to Gamson et al. (2015), “The ESA of 1965 was initially a fight against poverty and was imperative in ensuring that all children had the best education possible” (p. 3). The ESA was the first federal educational legislation of its kind that allowed school districts across the United States to take serious steps toward implementing CTE programs in their schools. This act mandates all schools in America to teach every enrolled student the high academic standards that will prepare them for success in college and careers (United States Department of Education, 2021, para. 3). The new reauthorization eliminated (Schmidtke, 2017) several key components of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. Thus, the primary focus on preparing students exclusively for postsecondary opportunities has shifted. Schmidtke found that, “The educational reform legislation of 2015 school districts with creating secondary CTE programs with high-quality teachers that could provide every student with smoother transitions from high school into postsecondary education and highly skilled career opportunities” (p. 205).

This chapter introduces one of the most silent and often overlooked groups directly affected by education reform in secondary education: lateral CTE teachers. The chapter provides

a foundation and rationale for exploring the perceptions of secondary lateral CTE teachers' self-efficacy in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States where they have started their teaching careers through lateral entry. Chapter one is organized as follows: (a) background; (b) problem statement; (c) purpose statement; (d) significance of the study; (e) research questions; and (f) definitions. This chapter begins by describing the historical context of federal education reform and the demand placed on high schools to prepare all students for postsecondary education and career pathways.

Background

Extensive literature has documented the advancement of federal legislation moving school systems from a strictly academic focus to career readiness (Coppe et al., 2021). From the Industrial Revolution to the IT revolution, CTE and the federal policies that fund and govern its programming have responded to the shifting priorities of the nation (Imperatore & Hyslop, 2017). The Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) was the Obama administration's response to the effects of NCLB's high school dropout rates and the realization of a low-skilled workforce that plagued the United States (Coppe et al., 2021). The enactment of the ESSA legislation was "economically imperative" if America desired to be a competitive force in the new global knowledge-based economy (Perry & Wallace, 2013, p. 34).

Recent qualitative research finds that CTE, once viewed as an alternate path through high school, has since become a vital component of the integrated curriculum taught in secondary schools (Bozick & Dalton, 2013). As education policies permeate every educational system across the United States, educators on the front lines are most impacted, as they are responsible for facilitating and implementing successful educational changes in their classrooms (Endacott et al., 2016). Many lateral entry CTE teachers who have graduated from alternative teaching

programs must learn, understand, and deliver the educational requirements expected in their classrooms. According to Zirkle et al. (2019), lateral entry CTE teachers tend to excel in their technical skills and knowledge, yet they struggle with their pedagogical abilities and oftentimes experience extreme difficulty transitioning from successful careers in various industries to teaching in the classroom. Moreover, numerous professional responsibilities come with being a lateral entry CTE teacher. Therefore, to be successful as a CTE teacher and fulfill these responsibilities, one needs timely and appropriate in-service training (Zirkle et al., 2019).

Additionally, the desired educational outcomes placed on today's CTE teachers in unsupportive working climates have resulted in many of them leaving their classrooms and returning to industry jobs (Song et al., 2011). According to Kelley et al. (2020), for example, exit interviews with CTE teachers revealed that they did not receive the professional development necessary to prepare them for classroom expectations, and research findings revealed a relationship between teachers' comfort levels and motivation. These educators emphasized the significance of teacher self-efficacy, stating that feeling knowledgeable and comfortable in the classroom impacted their self-efficacy and confidence in teaching integrated curricula (Kelley et al., 2020; Stohlmann et al., 2012).

Historical Context

As early as the 19th century, educational reform became a part of the United States legislature, with legislation providing guidance and funding for free public education (Miller, 1993). During World War I, America's labor market began to expand significantly. Miller also notes that the growth of employment opportunities resulted in the availability of federal funding for students who did not attend college but entered the labor force. With the continued demand

for skilled workers, federal legislation began to play a vital role in the historical evolution of formal vocational education delivery in U.S. classrooms.

Imperatore and Hyslop (2017) have discussed how federal legislation-initiated funding for educational programs prepared students for highly skilled trades and industry programs, such as construction, mechanics and repair, precision production, and transportation and material moving. They also noted the construction and manufacturing sectors' stagnation and the service sector's expansion were dramatic indicators of the economy's transition toward the impending recession. Also, vocational training programs evolved with the times and started preparing students for employment in the services and information sectors, including the communication, technology, and healthcare sectors (Imperatore & Hyslop, 2017).

During the 20th century, the United States began its transition from a manufacturing-based economy to one that offers services and information. As such, technology became the motivating factor in advancing the role of career technical education in secondary schools. Furthermore, the preparation of students with the required skills for a smooth transition from secondary school to either postsecondary education or lucrative employment has always been greatly influenced by CTE. Hence, CTE in public education is anticipated to bring skilled employees into the American labor market and successfully compete with the global competition (Miller, 1993).

Today, CTE programs are a requirement in all secondary schools that receive federal funding. Through CTE, students can obtain college credit as well as industrial qualifications (Devier, 2019; Jackson & Hasak, 2014). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014), 71% of the skilled labor force is projected to retire in the next 15 years, with only 21% of jobs requiring a four-year college degree. Hence, students need to take advantage of CTE programs

(Devier, 2019; Johnson & Green, 2014). Indeed, these adjustments were a very strong indication that students' field education and training would undergo an ongoing change, which would necessitate an evolution in the function of vocational education teachers.

Hasselquist and Graves (2020) have argued that, throughout the history of CTE, there has always been a shortage of CTE teachers, formally known as vocational education teachers. However, they also argued that the role of the CTE teacher is continually changing in various ways and that, over time, school systems would seek out CTE instructors of the highest caliber. Also, CTE teachers that obtained their certification through alternative pathways are career change teachers. Hence, according to a study by Stair et al. (2017), these individuals quit their professions in the private sector to instruct middle and high school pupils in their fields through alternative teaching certification programs. In addition, some lateral entry CTE teachers find that once they have entered the classroom, their focus is not only on real-world skills and career training, but also on the necessity of implementing English/language arts and mathematics into their industrial training curriculum (Stair et al., 2017). As a result, this heavy emphasis on developing students' reading, writing, reasoning, critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills (Blosveren et al., 2014; CCSS, 2015; Stair et al., 2017) is leading to specialized teachers leaving their classrooms in large numbers. Still, many studies like the one by Stair et al. cite that the lack of professional development, administrator support, workplace culture, increased responsibility, and the lack of belief in their classroom abilities are some of the reasons why these CTE teachers are exiting the teaching profession.

Social Context

The concept of vocation education has deep roots in agriculture. However, before the Industrial Revolution, students learned the agricultural trade from family farms. They then went

on to work in the family agriculture profession, as many trades were learned through apprenticeships and not in a classroom (Hasselquist & Graves, 2020). In 1901, vocational education became a part of education reform. According to Wang (2009), society began to differentiate between those who would become workers and those who would become members of the corporate elite. Wang also states that as America shifted from relying solely on natural resources to a mix of natural and human resources, education for work became a top priority. Specifically, in the 1920s, the American need for skilled workers prompted the federal government to formally introduce, embrace, and fund vocational education.

According to the study by Imperatore and Hyslop (2007), the United States felt great waves of anxiety regarding its position among its neighboring countries in the 1980s and 1990s. In addition to that study, the one by Gordon (2014) similarly notes that poor student results were being produced by American schools, and a workforce was growing that lacked the most fundamental academic and employment skills. Meanwhile, globalization sparked much unease in the 1990s. Imperatore and Hyslop observe that, to retain the country's economic competitiveness, the United States started hiring foreign employees and outsourcing jobs abroad. There were two waves of educational reform that approached America's educational and employment issues in distinct ways (Gordon, 2014; Imperatore & Hyslop, 2017). First, there was the NCLB law, which focused exclusively on test scores and academic performance. Second, the ESSA law stressed the importance of integrating academics and workplace readiness skills to strengthen a shrinking labor force. However, the latter wave created a place where vocational training could contribute to finding a solution.

After high school, further education and training are undoubtedly necessary for individuals to ensure their career success. However, a four-year degree does not guarantee

employment or a high-paying job (Perry & Wallace, 2013). The primary goal of the ESSA law was to require school systems to develop academic, career, and technical education programs that would create pathways to economic mobility. By doing so, schools would be able to provide students with more realistic and rewarding opportunities based on their interests, goals, and skills, resulting in a powerful, secure, and competitive global workforce. However, to cultivate a competitive workforce, students in a secondary setting would require training from a highly qualified secondary and postsecondary CTE teacher (Conneely & Uy, 2009). Besides, CTE would need to adjust and change as our society continues to live in the information and technology era. Due to the skills and requirements of 21st-century jobs, CTE would need to be in tune with technological and economic advancements, as the ability of the CTE profession to attract and prepare highly prepared instructors will determine the future success of CTE. Nevertheless, the nationwide shortage of qualified CTE teachers has made it necessary for the implementation of alternative CTE certification/licensure pathways, and as the demand for CTE teachers grows due to student course demand and teacher retirement, more industry and business professionals will require alternative CTE certification/licensure to fill the void.

Theoretical Context

The self-efficacy theory proposed by Bandura in 1977 will serve as the theoretical framework for this investigation. In educational research, Bandura's writing has been used to show how teachers' effectiveness directly impacts student accomplishment. According to Bandura, self-efficacy refers to one's internal perception of their skills to accomplish tasks like teaching at specific levels (Duncan et al., 2013). Also, the self-efficacy theory has been used to explain how educators' interactions with their environmental, behavioral, and personal determinants directly affect their sources of self-efficacy (Duncan et al., 2013; Tschannen-Moran

& Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). As the name implies, self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capability "to organize and execute the course of action required to manage prospective situations" (Bandura, 1997, p. 2). Because of its strong influence on thought, affect, motivation, and action, self-efficacy is especially important when exercising self-regulation (Bandura, 1991).

According to a study by Klassen and Tze (2014) of CTE high school teachers, a teacher's effectiveness was found to be more important than class size and student makeup when determining student success. Besides, a teacher's psychological characteristics, such as personality, have long been considered a contributing factor to teacher effectiveness (Barni et al., 2019; Barr, 1952; Klassen & Tze, 2014). According to Klassen and Tze's research, self-efficacy beliefs can influence how a teacher responds to stressful and challenging situations. Bandura (1991) argued that self-belief in accomplishing a goal is positively related to the level of challenge individuals set for themselves and their commitment to accomplishing such a goal. Research by Barni et al. and Klassen and Tze supports Bandura's argument that an individual's assessment of self-efficacy is not influenced by physical or social circumstances; rather, environmental, behavioral, and personal determinants.

Technical developments and the new realities teachers will face in years to come were not accounted for in Bandura's previous research. According to Bandura (2006), "New realities present new challenges and vastly expanded opportunities for people to exercise some measure of control over how they live their lives" (p.175). When lateral entry CTE teachers suffer from self-limiting beliefs about their ability to teach, the question of how they can exercise control over their classroom arises (Cannon et al., 2013). Existing research has primarily focused on general teacher self-efficacy, often neglecting specific populations such as lateral entry CTE teachers in secondary schools. Although teachers' self-efficacy has been a long-standing

foundation for research, there is still minimal research to address the self-efficacy of lateral entry CTE teachers in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States. Studies, like those by Cannon et al. and Duncan et al. (2013), have begun to explore the unique challenges faced by these teachers, highlighting a critical gap in the literature. Therefore, investigating individuals currently participating in the phenomenon can uncover the difficulties that specific teachers face in their schools, particularly in the classroom, as well as the reasons for those challenges.

Problem Statement

A problem affecting the education system is that lateral entry CTE teachers are not being retained in secondary education settings as they transition from industry jobs to the classroom. The role of the CTE teacher is constantly evolving, even though lateral entry CTE teachers have not received the continuous support and professional development that would provide them with the tools to transition into their new teaching careers successfully (Powel et al., 2019). According to existing literature, the workloads placed on educators have resulted in high turnover among new teachers, which is rapidly increasing in career and technical education (Claflin et al., 2019). Besides, the ability to teach confidently influences a teacher's attitude toward teaching (Shepherd, 2009; Stanley, 2017). In U.S. schools, 10% of the beginning teachers did not teach in the second year; 12% of the teachers did not teach in the third year; and about 32% did not return after the third year (Gray & Taie, 2015; Mitani et al., 2022). Compared to their core content counterparts, approximately 25% of new CTE teachers in the United States quit the teaching profession before their third year on the job (Park & Johnson, 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). This is because CTE teachers who leave school systems for other employment opportunities now earn higher wages (Hasselquist & Graves, 2020). This highlights the low salaries that many CTE

teachers earn throughout their educational careers (Boone & Boone, 2009; Hasselquist & Graves, 2020).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to describe lateral entry CTE teachers' experiences with self-efficacy within a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States. For this study, lateral entry CTE teachers are generally defined as teachers who transitioned from industry jobs to full-time teaching jobs in middle schools and high schools with CTE course content geared toward students gaining academic, technical, and employability skills to succeed in postsecondary education and in-demand careers (Association for Career and Technical Education, 2021). The theory guiding this study is Bandura's self-efficacy theory.

Significance of the Study

This research is significant to the field of education because it advances the theoretical understanding of self-efficacy among teachers who do not teach academic content courses. With the need to be well-versed in the latest pedagogical techniques and the increased pressure to create an engaging curriculum; develop instructional strategies; design quality assessments; and provide much-needed support for increasing special populations, lateral entry CTE teachers are struggling to stay in the classroom (Wilkin & Nwoke, 2011). Also, more research is needed to determine whether lateral entry secondary CTE teachers can increase their levels of self-efficacy if proper professional development and support are put in place. This study also gives voice to a small group of teachers who are often overlooked by school systems but significantly impact student populations. Providing this information to administrators, directors, teachers, and

researchers may significantly influence their decision-making. Thus, this section includes explanations of this study's empirical, theoretical, and practical significance.

Theoretical

This study will add to the theoretical context of teachers' self-efficacy by providing a theoretical explanation for the development and perceived benefits of CTE teacher self-efficacy that did not previously exist. Specifically, I will build on Bandura's self-efficacy theory to provide a broader application of his work as it pertains to lateral entry secondary educators that teach career and technology education. This study will examine Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy and how they apply to the development of CTE teacher self-efficacy. In addition, the present study will contribute to the theoretical understanding of the relationship between the agentic nature of lateral entry CTE teacher self-efficacy and the professional development and support provided to them by school leaders. (Bandura, 1982, 1989, 2001; Dennison et al., 2020; Heuer & Donovan, 2017; & Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020).

Empirical

This study will not only add to existing theoretical knowledge but also fill a significant gap in the empirical data related to professional development and the continued instructional support that lateral entry CTE teachers receive from their school districts. This study will also provide empirical evidence based on data collected from documenting secondary lateral entry CTE teachers' interactions with their environmental, behavioral, and individual determinants, as teachers instructing inside a classroom would experience them. In addition, the information gathered will be used to explain how lateral entry CTE teachers felt about their experiences and how they might have affected their feelings of self-efficacy. There has been significant information accumulated from literature and research studies on core teacher self-efficacy. In

contrast, few studies have been done on the self-efficacy of secondary CTE health science teachers (Bates & Bray-Clark, 2013).

Practical

By integrating CTE and academic curricula, students are provided with equitable learning experiences that are rigorous and relevant (Gordon & Schultz, 2020). Therefore, these components are foundational to the current CTE objectives of preparing students for “a wide range of high-wage, high-skill, high-demand careers” (ACTE, 2022, para. 3). Gordon and Schultz also note that previous studies support those educational initiatives that combine CTE and academic curricula with helping students in a variety of ways. Hence, students who participate in an integrated CTE and academic model are more engaged, have improved academic performance, and are more successful in pursuing postsecondary education and professional possibilities (Gentry et al., 2007; Gordon & Schultz, 2020). According to Mincer (1958), secondary schools are among the first settings to introduce activities that have an impact on future real income by instilling resources in their students. The resources that CTE teachers give their students also go far beyond their academic abilities and are attributed to human capital. These CTE courses, in turn, help break up the monotony that students feel from being in academic classes all day. With this, students find joy in learning career development skills because they can figure out their vocational interests and what they are good at (Chadd & Drage, 2006). Additionally, the result of this study is expected to help school districts identify the needs of CTE teachers.

Research Questions

Research questions are developed to maintain the focus of and appropriately guide an investigation (Moustakas, 1994). As per Moustakas, this research study will employ participant

interviews, focus groups, and participant journaling to describe and document teachers' experiences in a way that is rich, layered, and texturized. Based on Bandura's (1991, 2012) social cognitive theory of self-regulation, the central question, which will guide this study, was derived from the problem and purpose statement. Meanwhile, the sub-questions will address Bandura's (2012) three reciprocal determinants, demonstrating how individuals experience and react to a phenomenon related to their sense of self-efficacy.

Central Research Question

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe experiences of self-efficacy development in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States?

Sub-Question One

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe their professional development experiences with self-efficacy development in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States?

Sub-Question Two

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe their experiences with receiving instructional support within their home campuses regarding self-efficacy?

Sub-Question Three

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe their physical and physiological experiences in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States with regard to self-efficacy?

Definitions

1. *Attrition* - A component of teacher turnover (Zirkle et al., 2019).

2. *Comprehensive high school* - A high school that serves grades seven to 12 or nine to 12 and offers an array of curricula, including standard courses that promote academic achievement and traditional subjects that all students must study (Fletcher & Tan, 2022).
3. *Career and technical education (CTE)* - The practice of teaching middle and high school students the academic, technical, and employability skills needed to succeed in postsecondary education and in-demand careers (ACTE, 2021).
4. *Determinants* - Terms used to describe the various influences on an individual's perceived sense of self-efficacy. These influences are divided into three primary categories: environmental, personal, and behavioral (Bandura, 1977)
5. *English language learner (ELL)* - An individual who is not proficient in English and whose native language is not English (McVee et al., 2017).
6. *Enactive mastery experience* - A personal event in which someone faces opposition through perseverant effort, learns from 31 failures, and develops positive views of their own abilities (Bandura, 1977).
7. *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* - An act that sought to improve learning conditions among students living in poverty by increasing the quality of vocational equipment, classrooms, and teaching for all students (Calhoun & Finch, 1976, as cited in Wang, 2009).
8. *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* - A reauthorization of federal statute ESEA that requires that all students in America be taught to high academic standards that will prepare them to succeed in college and careers through rigorous content that increases equity, improves the quality of instruction, and increases outcomes for all students (United States Department of Education, 2021).

9. *Lateral entry teachers* - Individuals who completed their teaching and/or certification coursework outside of the traditional program (Tipton, 2018).
10. *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* - A reauthorization of federal statute ESEA that sought to close and eliminate persistent academic achievement gaps among various sub-pools of students by requiring states to meet a series of outcome-based student-achievement benchmarks (Heise, 2017).
11. *Performance accomplishments* - The most consistent source of self-efficacy, as one's performance clearly indicates what one can accomplish (Beauchamp et al., 2019).
Observing a successful performance can raise observers' self-efficacy, whereas observed failures can lower it (Beauchamp et al., 2019).
12. *Phenomenology* - A description of an event. "It is concerned with wholeness, with examining entities from many sides, angles, and perspectives until a unified vision of the phenomenon's essence is achieved" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 58).
13. *Physical and physiological state* - The process of increasing self-efficacy by reducing anxiety and depression, building physical strength and stamina, and reframing the interpretation of physical and physiological responses to threatening contexts (Bandura, 1977, 1997, 2012).
14. *Professional development* - Structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes (Cannon et al., 2013).
15. *Self-Efficacy* - The self-assessed conviction of the ability to successfully execute the behavior required to produce the desired outcome as informed by personal accomplishment, observation of social models, social persuasion, and physical and physiological states (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1994, 1997, 2012).

16. *Social cognitive theory* - A learning theory based on a triadic relationship between personal, behavioral, and environmental determinants, which theorizes that the acquisition and regulation of behavior is the response to how experiences—personal and vicarious—are perceived, how they are remembered, and how they impact future actions (Bandura, 1977).
17. *Triadic reciprocal determinism model* - A model that describes the reciprocal influence among three sets of factors: personal (cognitive, affective and biological events); environmental (any external influence); and behavioral (patterns of behavior that the person engages in) (Bandura, 2018; Woodcock & Tournaki, 2023).
18. *Teacher burnout* - A condition that occurs when an individual is subjected to stress that occurs specifically in the workplace for an extended period, causing emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low levels of self-efficacy (Herman et al., 2018).
19. *Teacher self-efficacy* - A teacher's belief in their ability to successfully teach students and produce learning experiences (Ryan et al., 2015).
20. *Verbal persuasion experience* - The process through which a respected, valued mentor or peer provides feedback that convinces someone to reappraise their abilities, increase their resolve to succeed, and increase their self-efficacy views in the face of difficulties (Bandura, 1977, 2012).
21. *Vicarious experiences* - The process by which an observer gains increased aspirations and self-efficacy beliefs by observing similar people who succeeded through perseverant effort in such a way that the observer can envision their own success (Bandura, 1977, 2012).

Summary

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to describe lateral entry CTE teachers' experiences with self-efficacy within a secondary school in the Southcentral region of the United States. The issue and purpose statements, significance of the study, research questions, and the definitions are included. This study will provide insight into the overall experiences of lateral entry CTE teachers in a secondary school in the Southcentral region of the United States and describe how proper professional development and support can increase levels of self-efficacy. This study also gives voice to a small group of teachers who are often overlooked by school systems but significantly impact student populations. Providing this information to administrators, directors, teachers, and researchers may significantly influence their decision-making. This study's background, historical, sociological, and theoretical foundation was presented in this chapter. The following chapter will discuss how the theoretical framework, previous research, and related articles justify the need for this qualitative study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This chapter will introduce and discuss the theoretical framework, previous research, and interrelated studies that justify the need for this qualitative study. The related research section includes the history of Bandura's self-efficacy theory, as well as an introduction to the four primary sources of self-efficacy and how they are directly affected by environmental, personal, and behavioral determinants. Each source will be identified and explained in the subsections examining the phenomenon. This chapter will identify ways that lateral entry CTE teachers can access sources of self-efficacy through professional development opportunities such as curriculum integration, instructional coaching, collaboration, administrator support, and high-quality school support. This chapter concludes with a summary evaluation of the information presented and the identification of specific gaps in the research.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is drawn from Bandura's self-efficacy theory, a subcategory of the social learning theory that he advanced in a 1965 study. Each of these theories stems from the work of Bandura (1977, 1977, 1982, 1990). Since its inception, self-efficacy has been a model for multiple educational research studies. Little (2020) examined the phenomenon of teachers with high self-efficacy being more likely to retain their positions as teachers and open to new ideas and new teaching methods. Bandura (2006) also argued that there is a strong link between the proficiency of the teacher and their individual success as a teacher (Little, 2020).

Theory of Self-Efficacy

Bandura's self-efficacy theory frames this study to explain the factors that influence a teacher's success in their position. According to his theory, individuals will only put effort into a task if they have confidence in their ability to finish it. Bandura (1994) also emphasizes that people with high self-efficacy frequently recognize their successes and do not blame others for their failures. They also have a strong sense of efficacy: the conviction that one can do even the most challenging tasks (Veronika et al., 2018). These individuals are more likely to be self-regulatory, strategic, and confident in their ability to overcome obstacles. To them, challenges are seen as opportunities for mastery, not threats that need to be avoided. Bandura (1977) also divided self-efficacy into two constructs: outcome and expectations. The outcome expectancy construct is the degree to which one believes a particular outcome will occur. In contrast, efficacy expectation outcome is the degree to which one believes in their potential to execute a certain activity (Veronika et al., 2018).

Achievement and personal well-being are all aspects of having a strong sense of efficacy. They are sources of self-efficacy or the means to foster strong ability-based beliefs (Bandura, 1977, 1997). Studies published by Bandura between 1977 and 2012 theorized that self-efficacy beliefs develop through engaging in experiences. Bandura (2012) specifically highlighted enactive experiences that enhance teachers' self-efficacy, such as mastery of vicarious experiences through social models, listening to social persuasion, and appropriately appraising and regulating physical and physiological states. These four streams of information inform people's beliefs in their capabilities. Self-efficacy contributes to an individual's job performance and impacts attrition and absenteeism (Zakariya, 2020). A teacher's level of confidence varies based on four sources of self-efficacy: performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences,

social persuasion, and physiological impacts (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy plays a role in enhancing job performance. Acts as a significant factor in reducing turnover and absenteeism (Zakariya, 2020). This research utilizes Banduras self-efficacy theory as a foundation to dig deeper into how the concept of self-assurance offers a framework for understanding the factors influencing the confidence of teachers working in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States.

Related Literature

In the context of teaching, we know that teacher self-efficacy is not a new topic in educational research. However, self-efficacy in nontraditional teaching roles has not been a widely researched topic, particularly with regard to lateral entry CTE teachers. This section synthesizes the researched literature and discusses teacher self-efficacy, the role of a CTE teacher, CTE teacher self-efficacy, CTE teacher shortage, lateral entry CTE teachers, and professional development. This chapter concludes with a summary evaluation of the information presented and the identification of specific gaps in the research.

Teacher Self-Efficacy

Teacher self-efficacy is defined as a teacher's assessment of their ability to effectively plan and carry out specific actions (Bandura, 2006; Marschall, 2021). It has been a long-standing and significant factor in teacher functioning (Marschall, 2021; Soini et al., 2015). Educational research has found a strong relationship between a strong sense of self-efficacy and an educator's willingness to engage with innovative teaching methods, quality instructions, and effective classroom management (Marschall, 2021; Nie et al., 2013; Thurlings et al., 2015). Teacher self-efficacy also refers to teachers' beliefs in their ability to engage in specific teaching behaviors that influence students' educational outcomes, such as achievement, interest, and motivation

(Ainley & Carstens, 2018; Zakariya, 2020). In addition, teacher competency is based on self-efficacy (beliefs in one's abilities), and a lack of self-efficacy can lead to various psychological issues, including low confidence and self-esteem (Shahzad & Naureen, 2017). Personal accomplishments, experiences, social connections, and physiological states are thought to contribute to self-efficacy (Ketchledge et al., 2021; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

The classroom environment is created by demographics, teacher qualities, district expectations, and curriculum. When examining teachers' self-efficacy, there are several ways in which teachers process information retrieved from different experiences. According to research by Marschall (2021), receiving information about the success of their performance through enactment is also a mastery experience. As noted by Marschall, vicarious experiences consist of observations of others and an assessment of one's capabilities based on the observed success of others and the similarities between oneself and those others. Additionally, social and verbal persuasion are examples of social feedback and support, which represent a realistic assessment of one's capabilities and words of encouragement. Physiological and affective states include affective and physical reactions related to one's performance, either as a result of such performance or in its anticipation (Bandura, 1997; Marschall, 2021).

According to Bandura (1997), the classroom culture is influenced by a teacher's attitudes about instructional efficacy, while improving the caliber of the teaching workforce is also important for raising student results (Alaways, 2020). These beliefs greatly influence teachers' efforts. In the same way that students respond to the atmosphere their teacher has created in the classroom, teachers establish their own classroom procedures based on the environment their students produce. On the other hand, how long a teacher can work, handle setbacks, and cope

with stress or depression brought on by the teaching responsibilities greatly depends on a teacher's beliefs (Bandura, 1997).

Studies by Bandura helped to expound on this issue, revealing the conditions that boost teachers' self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1986, 1997, 1997), "performance attainments" or "mastery experience" are the main sources of confidence. These findings were later supported by a recent cross-national study among Japanese and Finnish teachers, and it was found that mastery experience has the strongest influence on the self-efficacy of teachers from those two countries (Yada et al., 2022; Zakariya, 2020). The cognitive processing of information retrieved from the four self-efficacy sources leads to the development of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Marschall, 2021). When examining the self-efficacy of teachers, there are several ways in which they process information retrieved from different experiences, and receiving information about the success of their performance through enactment is a mastery experience (Marschall, 2021).

According to Marschall, vicarious experiences consist of observations of others and an assessment of one's capabilities based on the observed success of others and the similarities between oneself and those others. Marschall also notes that social and verbal persuasion are good examples of social feedback and support, which represent a realistic assessment of one's capabilities and words of encouragement. Affective and physical responses to one's performance are considered physiological and affective states either as a result of the performance or in anticipation (Bandura, 1997; Marschall, 2021). Theoretical perspectives have allowed researchers to show that teacher self-efficacy is a complex affective construct thanks to theoretical views. According to Yada et al. (2022) and Zakariya (2020), three dimensions might conceptualize and operationalize teachers' self-efficacy: self-efficacy in classroom management, self-efficacy in instruction, and self-efficacy in student engagement. Having self-efficacy

demonstrates the relationship between self-belief and achievement. Poor self-confidence prevents underprepared teachers from believing they can encourage high levels of learning in all students. Due to their belief in themselves and their pupils, these teachers cannot apply various instructional practices that will aid in their success (Stanley, 2017; Tipton, 2018). Teachers' lack of confidence might also affect student motivation because they serve as role models for learning (Ford, 2012; Tipton, 2018). As a result, it is equally critical for school systems to focus on enhancing teachers' well-being, school administration effectiveness, and teaching and learning outcomes.

In the context of teaching, self-efficacy is defined as the ability to impact students' outcomes. Educators with high self-efficacy, however, are receptive to new teaching techniques and can implement them. Although teacher self-efficacy is not new in educational research, little research has been done regarding atypical teaching jobs, notably lateral entry CTE teachers. The self-efficacy levels of nontraditional teachers, such as CTE teachers, are considered valuable indicators of job performance and satisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Whitley et al., 2019). As a result, a CTE teacher with high self-efficacy can positively affect their students' efforts and make them more confident in their ability to learn and develop new skills. (Bandura, 2002; Shahzad & Naureen, 2017). A teacher's confidence will differ depending on the four sources of self-efficacy: performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological impacts (Bandura, 1977). A general overview of each is presented below.

Performance Accomplishments

Performance accomplishments are considered the most consistent source of self-efficacy, as one's performance clearly indicates what one can accomplish (Beauchamp et al., 2019). Observing a successful performance, as noted by Beauchamp et al., can raise observers' self-

efficacy, whereas observed failures can lower it. Experimental research conducted throughout the years has shown that performance-based accomplishments are the most effective in effecting psychological improvements by influencing one's choice of activities, effort, persistence, achievement, and self-regulation, and in turn is affected by the results of one's achievement efforts (Bandura, 1997; Honicke & Broadbent, 2016; Klassen & Usher, 2010; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020; Schunk & Usher, 2019). According to Bandura (1997), a person's self-efficacy is also influenced by difficulty and effort, as achieving a simple task may not boost confidence in one's ability in the same way that accomplishing a demanding task would. The primary agent of transformation is thus shifting from symbolically based experiences to successful performance. Performance experiences, particularly apparent success or failure, are proposed to be the most powerful sources of self-efficacy information (Bandura, 1977; Maddux & Gosselin, 2012). As a result, teachers with experience will develop a higher level of confidence, which is important early on in their careers (Stanley, 2017). Also, when a person experiences success at a task, behavior, or skill, their self-efficacy expectation of self is strengthened for that task, behavior, or skill. When an individual experiences failure in the same areas, their perception of failure diminishes their self-efficacy expectancy.

Today, the demands of the education profession necessitate clear evidence of teacher preparedness and a positive impact on students' learning (AACTE, 2017; Whitley et al., 2019). However, even after accounting for previous student learning and family background characteristics, a teacher's quality remains a significant factor in determining advances in students' accomplishments. Performance accomplishments constitute the most influential source of efficacy for teachers. Therefore, if teachers perceive their teaching performance to be successful, they anticipate future success and have higher efficacy beliefs; if they perceive their

teaching performance to be unsuccessful, they expect failure in future performance, and their efficacy beliefs are lowered (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

The prominent role of teaching performance in forming self-efficacy has supported empirical results (e.g., McMaster, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In addition, Holzberger and Kunter (2013) found that high-quality teaching performance increases teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in the subsequent school year. Teachers can assess their level of self-efficacy by demonstrating genuine teaching techniques during professional reviews, more self-efficacy in classroom management, developing lesson plans, and encouraging student engagement during instruction. Standing in front of a classroom of students requires more mental effort than planning or assessing. As a result, teachers' self-efficacy grows as they gain continuous classroom experience and master classroom management, subject, and curriculum, enabling them to perform at their best (AACTE, 2017; Whitley et al., 2019).

Vicarious Experiences

The second source of self-efficacy, vicarious experiences, influences a person's perception of their own self-efficacy through the observation of someone in a similar situation succeeding or failing at a task they both must do. Self-efficacy is, thus, increased when individuals want to do something after seeing a peer successfully complete such a task. Teachers witnessing teachers who exhibit successful leadership qualities can also affect new teacher confidence (Bandura, 1997). Observing a peer fail, however, damages or jeopardizes self-efficacy. The extent to which vicarious experiences affect self-efficacy is related to how much an individual thinks the model is like them (Bandura, 1994). Additionally, the influence on the assumption that one can likewise carry out the conduct being witnessed increases the more

closely one identifies with the person being viewed. “People must evaluate their performances in relation to the successes of others” (Bandura, 1991, p. 250).

When an individual learns through observation, modeling, imitation, or verbal persuasion, a vicarious experience occurs. Observing the behaviors of others and what they can accomplish, whether positive or negative, is used to establish expectations regarding the observers’ behavior. The consequences of vicarious experiences are determined by elements such as the observer’s perception of the similarity between themselves and the model, the number and variety of models, the perceived power of models, and the similarity between the problems faced by the observer and the model (Bandura, 1986; Maddux & Gosselin, 2012; Schunk, 1986). Vicarious experiences can also influence the efficacy of the individual teacher and “change efficacy views through the transmission of competence and comparison with others’ attainment;” (Bandura, 1997; Wagler, 2011).

In education, vicarious experiences refer to observing another teacher’s performance in the classroom. These kinds of experiences are common on field trips and when new teachers observe master teachers. Hence, the impact that a vicarious experience has on an individual’s teacher (preservice teacher) differs from that of an experienced in-service teacher (Wagler, 2011). According to Bandura (1986), self-reflection is the most human capability that allows a person to identify their experiences, explore their beliefs, participate in self-evaluation, and change any behaviors.

Verbal Persuasion

The third source of self-efficacy, verbal persuasion, is also known as social persuasion. Social persuasion is presumed to be a less potent source of enduring change in self-efficacy expectancy than performance and vicarious experiences (Maddux & Gosselin, 2012). It is the

source of self-efficacy that is influenced by knowledge, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. According to research, verbal persuasion is relatively effective in changing an individual's perceived expectancies and expected results. Although social persuasion is presumed to be less influential than the other tenets of self-efficacy, verbal persuasion is one of the most significant sources of self-efficacy for educators. In an educational setting, this source comes from school administrators, parents, and colleagues through informal and formal feedback, instructional coaching, and high-quality professional development. Verbal persuasion is thus a type of interpersonal support provided through various discussions and professional development opportunities (Bandura, 1997; Simpson, 2016).

Collaboration with coworkers, participating in workshops, and attending events featuring motivational speakers are all effective ways for teachers to increase their sense of self-efficacy. However, mastery experiences and leadership collaboration are essential for social persuasion (Simpson, 2016). Simpson also states that, in the first year, school administrators and mentors should collaborate and provide essential input to affect teacher efficacy. In examining recent advances (and contentious issues) related to teacher self-efficacy, a significant positive association between instructional leadership and teachers' self-efficacy was found when administrators provided immediate and beneficial feedback to instructors after classroom walkthroughs and instructional observations (Beauchamp et al., 2019).

Bandura (1997) contended that when goals are socially assigned (i.e., prescribed by significant others), these assigned goals can raise people's sense of efficacy by virtue of conveying a sense of confidence (via verbal persuasion) in the other person's capabilities (Beauchamp et al., 2019). Such theoretical postulates linking assigned goals to subsequent self-efficacy beliefs are also in line with those of goal-setting theory (Beauchamp et al., 2019;

Latham & Locke, 1991). According to the researchers, the principal's role model, explicit goal setting, and support of student outcomes "significantly affect instructional leadership style" (Beland, 2016; Fackler & Malmberg, 2016).

Physiological Arousal

The final source of self-efficacy is physiological arousal, which has a physiological impact on self-efficacy. This source of self-efficacy is linked with a stimulus. This aversive stimulus comes from poor behavioral performance, perceived incompetence, and failure. When an individual experiences negative physiological arousal, they are more likely to doubt their competency (Maddux & Gosselin, 2012). Stress, anxiety, fear, and the ability to tolerate change can all impact teacher confidence (Bandura, 1997). Teacher confidence provides a framework for understanding instructors' motivation and the ability to impact student learning. Bandura also notes that past experiences play an important role in influencing teachers physiologically. For example, when educators have bad moral sentiments, it can either be productive or unproductive. Teachers must experience positive emotions in the classroom as these emotions allow teachers to think of more ideas and enable creativity. Positive emotions can "undo" the subjective and physiological components of negative emotions and stress (Sutton, 2005).

This research identifies and differentiates various integration and professional development practices that assist lateral entry CTE teachers who are transitioning from industry jobs to the classroom. It will also identify how integration and professional development practices are designed to assist lateral entry CTE teachers in their classrooms by influencing their four sources of self-efficacy. By providing a platform for the unheard lived experiences of lateral entry CTE teachers who are placed in secondary high schools, the faith is that these experiences will not only increase the retention of these educators but also increase their access to resources

that help, maintain, or increase their self-efficacy within their careers (Claflin et al., 2019; Kantrovich, 2010; Smith et al., 2018).

The Role of a CTE Teacher

In the 21st century, CTE teachers play a major role in secondary education. Career and technical education teachers must know and understand employment and career readiness trends. Since these educators are experts in their fields, they can teach in both a classroom and a lab environment (Jacques & Potemski, 2014). Career and technical education teachers account for approximately 14% of the teaching workforce, accounting for less than one-fifth of all middle and high school teachers (Jacques & Potemski, 2014; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2008; Walter & Gray, 2002).

Career and technical education teachers teach in curriculum areas that span a wide range of career domains and in various settings. CTE teachers are state certified and can work in either a middle or high school. They also specialize in CTE disciplines such as health sciences, veterinary science, engineering, computer programming, and business. They are expected to implement classroom management while using best practices to encourage student engagement (Jacques & Potemski, 2014). Prior to entering the classroom, new lateral entry CTE teachers have experienced numerous performance accomplishments in their career fields. Although lateral entry CTE teachers begin their teaching profession with an extremely high level of self-efficacy and have great confidence in their ability to teach a specialized trade, they are unaware of district curriculum standards, different student populations, different learning styles, and different student needs.

Over the last decade, the role of the CTE teacher has developed, and the integration of core topics within the CTE curriculum has received special attention. Today's CTE is

responsible for assisting students in making the connection between their educational achievement and a future high-wage, high-demand, and satisfying career (Ketchledge et al., 2021; Loera et al., 2013). Studies have also shown that when CTE teachers develop integrated connections between academia and vocational studies, they can create a foundation for career pathways as holistic learning experiences (Fletcher & Dumford, 2021; Klein, 2006). Recent studies show that CTE can provide high school students with economic and academic benefits by including academic subjects in CTE classrooms (Pierce & Hernandez, 2015; Silverberg et al., 2004; Stone et al., 2006). This will help close many high school students' academic gap. Since the beginning of the NCLB law, there has been a continuous gradual deterioration throughout the middle and high school years (McMurrer & Kober, 2011; Pierce & Hernandez, 2015). Even more alarming is the widening gap between U.S. and international student performance in mathematics, science, literacy, and problem-solving (Fleischman et al., 2010; Pierce & Hernandez, 2015).

Teachers who successfully integrate curriculum can connect several academic areas to break down overarching theories, concepts, and major ideas that benefit students and boost learning from one subject to another (Fletcher & Dumford, 2021; Klein, 2006). This literature has also shown that teachers participating in this process reap significant rewards (Fletcher & Dumford, 2021; Klein, 2006). As a result, CTE teachers specifically benefit from curriculum integration. They also gain socially by having the ability to build stronger ties with their counterparts who also teach within academic curriculum areas. The professional development aspect also provides these teachers with increased collaboration, instructional practices, more active participation in the curriculum development process, development of pedagogical

knowledge, and development of content knowledge. (Fletcher & Dumford, 2021; Gentry et al., 2007; McNeir, 1994).

Despite all the positive findings regarding CTE teachers integrating curriculum in many school districts across the United States, CTE teachers and administrators still hold several beliefs that can limit integrative education, such as CTE teachers not receiving the type of teacher preparation that will enable them to teach an integrated curriculum (Pierce & Hernandez, 2015). Career and technical education teachers may also be hesitant to try new teaching and learning practices because they perceive a lack of commitment and support from leadership when it comes to developing, implementing, and sustaining successful curriculum integration projects (Johnson et al., 2003; Pierce & Hernandez, 2015). As more accountability is placed on CTE programs, federal, state, and education leaders should establish high-quality teacher preparation programs that provide educational career pathways, professional development, and support to ensure that districts and their schools have the capacity to offer CTE programs.

Lateral Entry CTE Teacher

Once known as vocational education teachers, CTE teachers typically held postsecondary degrees in their field before teaching in the early 20th century. In today's classroom, one will find a mixture of CTE teachers who have taken the traditional teaching degree route and CTE teachers who have taken alternate routes to their teaching careers (Conneely & Uy, 2009). Many CTE teachers still hold bachelor's degrees in their fields (Imperatore & Hyslop, 2017). Ohio State University has a long history of preparing career and technical education teachers, dating back to the days of the Smith-Hughes Act (Zirkle et al., 2019). Data obtained from a study (Blackburn and Robinson 2008, as cited in Zakariya, 2020) completed in the 2017-18 school year suggested that CTE teachers who completed their bachelor's or master's degrees in a

traditional educational program retained their position as CTE teachers (Zirkle et al., 2019). A survey by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) found that CTE teachers who perceive themselves as well-prepared to teach have obtained associate and bachelor's degrees in the CTE areas in which they teach (American Federation of Teachers, 2014; Zirkle et al., 2019). The study results reflect the findings of AFT and demonstrate that CTE teachers tend to have higher levels of self-efficacy when attending traditional educational institutions compared to their alternative certified peers (American Federation of Teachers, 2014; Zirkle et al., 2019).

Compared to their peers from traditional institutions, lateral entry CTE teachers are more likely to have been out of school for a more extended period, and given their focus on postgraduate study, they may have also needed fewer academic courses (Cramer, 2004; Hasselquist & Graves, 2020). Career and technical education teachers start their careers with a vastly diverse level of preparation for the topic they are expected to teach and how to do it (Feistritzer, 2011; Henry et al., 2014; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2009). Today, classrooms are filled with lateral entry CTE teachers who have chosen different career paths and may have never worked in a school before their first day of classes (Conneely & Uy, 2009). States in America have designed unique teacher preparation programs that consider local requirements. Texas and Minnesota, for example, have been actively using alternative certification programs that recruit career changers to fill teaching positions with qualified candidates (Devier, 2019; Reese, 2010). However, alternative certification programs are designed to mitigate teacher shortages and fast-track interested individuals into education (Heinen & Scribner, 2009; Uriegas et al., 2014). As a result, many prospective teachers can now choose nontraditional or alternative certification routes to achieve teaching certification regardless of their content choice. Alternative certification programs are also expedited programs

that place prospective teachers into the classroom after a brief introductory training and a student support period (Jacobs & Walsh, 2007; Uriegas et al., 2014).

Alternative certification programs can also be delivered using different formats. These programs consist of online modules that must be completed within a specific time frame during the participant's internship year. Alternative certification programs are believed to have continued professional development and support for lateral entry teachers who have completed the program and have transitioned into the classroom. However, while other programs may require actual classroom time with an instructor or a mixture of the two methods, continued training and support have been identified as key factors in teacher success (Henry et al., 2014; National Center for Education Information [NCEI], 2005).

Classroom management and teaching strategies are also crucial skills that most lateral entry CTE teachers lack, as they often become so discouraged by the complexity of the work and lack of formal and informal organizational support that they leave the profession (Hasselquist & Graves, 2020; Hunt & Carroll, 2003; Joerger, 2003). Upon entry into the classroom, teachers are responsible for the education of their students. They must find the most effective way to teach, maintain order, and build relationships with their students using effective classroom management techniques (Harrison & Killion, 2007; Henry et al., 2014). Despite that, schools across the United States are experiencing all-time highs in behavioral problems (Abede & Haile, 2007; Henry et al., 2014). Administrators have now discovered that lateral entry teachers, particularly CTE teachers, have difficulty distinguishing between what constitutes a discipline infringement and a classroom management concern (Henry et al., 2014; Wyatt, 2010).

Additionally, regarding CTE teacher attrition and mobility, 25% of all new teachers are estimated to leave within the first three years (Hasselquist & Graves, 2020; Marvel et al., 2006).

This is due to CTE teachers having little to no positive classroom experience and inadequate school support. The abilities and self-confidence required to integrate the level of reading, writing, and mathematics that students will need to succeed in school and the industry may also be lacking in CTE teachers with alternative certification. Today, it is a known fact that teacher motivation, attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, and practices play a critical role in the quality of instruction (Berger & Girardet, 2021; Grossman et al., 2013; Kunter et al., 2013; OECD, 2009). As a result, when sufficient support is given consistently, lateral entry CTE teachers can succeed in the classroom and meet the challenges of educating students both academically and for their careers.

CTE Teacher Retention

Over the past few decades, politicians, scholars, and administrators have begun to pay more attention to the substantial and ongoing issue of teacher turnover in the United States. Systems are also impacted by attrition in a variety of ways, including academic costs from reduced student achievement, direct financial costs, and programmatic costs associated with a shortage of qualified teachers to fill vacancies (Barnes et al., 2007; Claflin et al., 2019; Gonzalez et al., 2008). Across the country, states have continually documented CTE teacher shortages (Devier, 2019). Therefore, to attract more teachers, several states recently enacted legislation that reduced the teacher requirements for individuals seeking CTE teacher certification. With the noticeable change in the American workforce, the federal government has taken steps to combat the critical CTE teacher shortage. The senate also recently introduced legislation that adds funding to support prospective CTE educators (ACTE Policy Watch, 2018; Devier, 2019), as the bill targets mid-career professionals in high demand in their field, recent college graduates, veterans, and licensed teachers who want to switch to CTE.

Currently, a U-shaped curve best describes the pattern of teacher departure, with younger and retiring teachers leaving at very high rates (Devier, 2019; Ingersoll, 2001). On the national level, there is also a severe national CTE teacher shortage in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs. Another CTE sector that has experienced teacher shortages for more than 40 years is agricultural education (Claflin et al., 2019; Kantrovich, 2010; Smith et al., 2018). This shortage has been linked to several factors, including the expansion of classroom sizes and classroom management. The main factor influencing the retention of CTE teachers has been the increased standard of academic accountability. However, this burden of academic accountability is disproportionately placed on the shoulders of the teachers responsible for incorporating higher academic standards while catering to the needs of different students (Dougherty & Lombardi, 2016)

Program closures result from CTE teacher shortages, and their long-term effects may significantly impact the economy and labor market in the United States (Bartholomew, 2014; Claflin et al., 2019). However, as the federal government continues to find ways to strengthen the American workforce, more students remain unprepared to enter the industrial workforce upon leaving high school. This is due to the CTE teacher shortage, which has gotten worse due to the significant new teacher turnover in districts with particularly high needs. Teachers, on the other hand, are less likely to leave their jobs if they are confident in their abilities to perform well in these schools (Boyd et al., 2005; Boyd et al., 2011; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Ofem et al., 2021; Pedota, 2015; Rodriguez, 2019). And teachers who reported high levels of job satisfaction also reported a high level of self-efficacy.

CTE Teacher Self-Efficacy

For some time now, education research has focused on the variables that either increase or decrease teachers' self-efficacy in elementary and secondary settings (Mahler et al., 2018). For example, according to studies, teachers who reported feeling satisfied with their job also had high levels of self-efficacy. However, there has not been much study done on the connections between the dimensions of teacher self-efficacy, school climate, job satisfaction, CTE teachers' recruitment, retention, recruitment, and the quality of learning outcomes. Thus, when it comes to all aspects of CTE teacher self-efficacy, it is implied that these teachers must have faith in their ability to enact certain teaching behaviors that influence students' educational outcomes, such as achievement, interest, and motivation (Ainley & Carstens; 2018; Zakariya, 2020).

According to Bandura (1997), mastery experience strongly influences teachers' self-efficacy (Yada et al., 2022; Zakariya, 2020). Recent studies, like those by Choi et al. (2019) and Fackler and Malmberg (2016), have also identified several variables empirically related to teacher self-efficacy: innovative teaching methods and a supportive learning environment. From a theoretical perspective, teacher self-efficacy is a complex affective construct influenced by self-efficacy in instruction, classroom management, and student engagement (Zakariya, 2020). Blackburn and Robinson conducted a study in 2008 involving 80 career teachers, researchers discovered a significant positive correlation between "teacher self-efficacy in student engagement" and job satisfaction and a significant negative correlation between "teacher self-efficacy in classroom management" and job satisfaction (Zakariya, 2020, p. 2). According to this study, teachers who completed intrinsic evaluations of their jobs had strong retention indicators and were more likely to leave their jobs than other teachers (McConnell, 2017; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; Zakariya, 2020). However, a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction from one's

work as a teacher is provided by the teacher's job satisfaction (Zakariya, 2020; Ainley & Carstens, 2018).

In recent studies, teacher self-efficacy has been linked empirically to factors that increase teacher self-efficacy (Choi et al., 2019; Fackler & Malmberg, 2016; Zakariya, 2020) such as innovative teaching practices and a supportive school environment (Turkoglu et al., 2017). However, although job satisfaction is not one of the most extensively researched factors influencing teacher self-efficacy, several studies have established a strong relationship between CTE teacher self-efficacy and work happiness (Edinger & Edinger, 2018; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Zakariya, 2020). It is indeed critical that teachers gain experience early in their careers, as approximately 25% of new CTE teachers in the United States leave the teaching profession before their third year on the job due to job performance and career dissatisfaction (Park & Johnson, 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Experiences with mastery will also boost one's confidence. The same goes for secondary CTE teachers. However, although requiring fewer courses in pedagogy for certification may help to increase the recruitment of CTE teachers, it may also intensify the challenges that many CTE teachers experience in being unprepared for classroom instruction (Jacques & Potemski, 2014).

Over the last century, the pedagogical means of educating students in CTE programs has drastically changed. With the increased attention, expectations, and funding also comes the need for greater accountability (Center for American Progress and the Council of Chief State School Officers, 2014; Darling-Hammond et al., 2014; Devier, 2019). With this change in CTE also comes the need to continually examine the extent to which teachers are meeting the needs (academic and personal) of their students (Devier, 2019; Duncan & Ricketts, 2008). For the last two decades, CTE educators have had to meet the academic objectives set by their districts, and

this has caused a great deal of stress for them. Although high levels of stress in the workplace can affect self-efficacy, studies have indicated that it can also mitigate stress (Claflin et al., 2019; Putwain & von der Embase, 2018).

Today, CTE teachers have a strong desire to change the idea that the courses they teach are just as important as English, math, reading, and social studies through teaching quality content. However, an unknown consequence that CTE educators experience from entering the field of education through alternative routes is the absence of the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to plan, deliver, and manage a challenging, engaging, and meaningful learning experience for students (Bottoms et al., 2013). In a recent study, agricultural education researchers identified factors that may influence CTE teacher efficacy, such as teacher preparation programs (Swafford, 2020; Whittington et al., 2006) and teacher support within the school system (Swafford, 2020; Swan et al., 2011). Similar aspects have been observed by researchers outside the field of agricultural education (Capa, 2005; Swafford, 2020). In addition, it has been argued that perceived collective efficacy may also be influential. Perceived collective efficacy refers to how a group views its shared capabilities to perform given tasks (Bandura, 1997; Goddard et al., 2000; Swafford, 2020).

In today's competitive work environment, it is important to ensure that teachers are satisfied and engaged at work because of the level of dedication and value they provide to the success of students and schools (Park & Johnson, 2019), as high collective self-efficacy leads to persistence in CTE teachers' efforts to promote student engagement and achievement in their classrooms (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007; Swafford, 2020). According to researchers, preservice teacher education programs positively impact beginning teachers' sense of teaching efficacy by

reducing uncertainty about one's ability to perform teaching activities (Swafford, 2020; Whittington et al., 2006).

Conclusively, the perception of CTE teachers' preservice preparation program was substantially connected to their sense of efficacy regarding their teaching effectiveness (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Raudenbush et al., 1992; Swafford, 2020). Research evidence also suggests that CTE teachers' sense of efficacy increased after receiving professional development that improved their teaching skills. Career and technical education educators who felt prepared for success in the classroom were more likely to reach all their students, manage classroom problems, and teach all students to high levels (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Swafford, 2020).

Professional Development

It has long been established that teacher self-efficacy develops through the cognitive processing of information accessed through four self-efficacy sources (Bandura, 1997; Marschall, 2021). When CTE teachers are continually exposed to various professional development opportunities, they are given direct access to the four self-efficacy sources (Marschall, 2021). Zirkle et al. (2019) completed a research study at Oregon State University during the 2017-18 school year and found that out of the 41 CTE teachers who completed master's degrees, 10% of the teachers in that group had earned a second master's degree. This trend suggests that CTE teachers are participating in continuing education and professional development and want to earn professional college-level degrees (Zirkle et al., 2019).

Preservice training establishes an assessment of one's behavioral success, attribution, effort expenditure, and examination and helps balance the role of both personal and external factors in achieving this success (Bandura, 1997; Marschall, 2021). Such factors can include personal characteristics (Marschall, 2021; Poulou, 2007), cultural norms (Cheung, 2008; Klassen

et al., 2009; Marschall, 2021), social interaction and relationships (Marschall, 2021; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007), and environmental circumstances (Bandura, 1997; Marschall, 2021). In CTE teacher education, teachers' subject knowledge and curriculum integration are the most frequently discussed factors (Bates et al., 2011; Gresham, 2007; Marschall, 2021; Morris et al., 2017; Sinclair et al., 2011; Thompson et al., 2017; Tschannen-Moran & Johnson, 2011).

According to Bandura (1986), the most powerful source contributing to preservice teacher self-efficacy is the mastery experience. Career and technical education teachers are provided with effective exposure to enactive mastery experiences and means for them to encounter resistance, overcome obstacles through perseverant effort, learn through managing failures, and develop positive views of their own abilities (Bandura, 1997, 2012). Therefore, developing professional development that would scaffold opportunities to gain accomplishment through increasing content knowledge and growing pedagogical praxis would naturally increase self-efficacy (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020; Schunk, 2012; Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018).

According to several studies, mastery experiences enhance preservice teachers' self-efficacy (Cantrell et al., 2003; Clark & Newberry, 2019; Fives et al., 2007; Knoblauch & Chase, 2015; Knoblauch & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2008; Siwatu, 2011; Smolleck & Morgan, 2011; Yeung & Wakins, 2000).

Studies conducted by the National Assessment of Vocational Education showed a positive relationship between professional development, occupational experience, and teacher effectiveness for beginning teachers (Devier, 2019; Lynch, 1996). Career and technical education teachers that were provided with continued professional learning opportunities have been observed to positively affect student achievement and can also help connect classroom learning to students' career paths (Constantine et al., 2009; Devier, 2019). High-quality professional

development for CTE educators, then, must consist of more than content-rich material.

Development opportunities for CTE teachers should also include dialogue with peers, application of new learning through authentic tasks implemented over time, and reflection on their learning (Bottoms et al., 2013; Mezirow, 1997).

Professional development modules that greatly benefit CTE teachers are framed around the perceived needs of beginning teachers and the authentic tasks they face during the first year of teaching (Bottoms et al., 2013; Bottoms & McNally, 2005; Heath-Camp & Camp, 1990a, 1990b; Joerger & Bremer, 2001; Rochkind et al., 2007). Therefore, there are four professional development modules that all CTE teachers should complete on a regular and ongoing basis: instructional planning, instructional strategies, classroom assessment, and classroom management (Bottoms et al., 2013). In today's CTE classroom environment, teachers are expected to integrate rigorous academic material into CTE content that will intellectually challenge all student learners. However, there was a clear indication a decade beforehand (Bottoms & McNally, 2005; Bottoms et al., 2013; Hunt & Carroll, 2003; Joerger, 2003; Joerger & Bremer, 2001) that new CTE teachers should not only be better prepared to deliver the level of instruction that is engaging but also high-quality instruction.

Curriculum Integration

Between 1917 and 1984, there were very few attempts to compel public schools to incorporate academic content into their vocational curriculum through federal legislation (Gordon & Schultz, 2020). However, although many contemporary programs at that time may not have lasted, they were still successful in integrating content from both trajectories because they effectively trained teachers through ongoing professional development and whole-school

support. Examples of these programs are the Dewey School (1898-1948), Lincoln School (1926), Houston City Schools (1924), and the Bank Street Workshops (1943-1948).

Those programs were all for teacher professional development, and an analysis of them (Gordon & Schultz, 2020; Mackerel, 1998) found that continued teaching and learning growth was necessary even for the earliest attempts at curriculum integration (Johnson et al., 2021). Teachers, particularly CTE teachers, need continued development that includes teacher creativity, technology, industry standards, and innovative curriculum and instructional methods (Johnson et al., 2021). Thus, curriculum integration establishes fruitful relationships between academic and CTE disciplines by enabling CTE teachers to recognize the substantial amount of academic knowledge and skills embedded in their technical content, while equipping them with real-world problem-based instructional strategies (Zhang & Zirkle, 2020). The ability to successfully integrate curriculum and facilitate that curriculum in the classroom provides a source of self-efficacy and performance-based accomplishment. Self-efficacy is influenced by difficulty and effort, as achieving a simple task would not boost teachers' confidence in their ability in the same way that accomplishing a demanding task would (Bandura, 1997).

Instructional Coaching

In large school districts, the demands placed on CTE administrators often limit their time to nurturing the growth and professional development of their newly hired CTE teachers. Important communications with new CTE teachers are also often lost due to coordinators and administrators' responsibilities regarding running a department (Amyett, 2019). Since CTE administrators are tasked with duties outside the school, lateral entry teachers would benefit from having weekly instructional coaches available to them.

Professional development with instructional coaching can provide sustained support that enables teachers to practice authentic instructional strategies in their classrooms with assistance from a peer or expert coach (Dailey & Robinson, 2017; Soon et al., 2022). Furthermore, a CTE instructional coach may be requested to conduct training to assist CTE teachers in staying current in their specialties. Quality teacher professional development is essential to improving students' accomplishments, teachers' self-efficacy, and job happiness (Gordon & Schultz, 2020; Mackerel, 1998). Throughout their careers, teachers must be challenged in their profession. They also need to create and deliver new ideas that foster a classroom culture of student engagement and lead to achievement (Amyett, 2019). As a result, an instructional coach is an embedded professional development practitioner who helps teachers attain these lofty educational outcomes (Amyett, 2019; Blackman, 2010).

New CTE teachers are allowed one-on-one training from an instructional coach during their probation. These instructional coaches assist with curriculum alignment and implementation, certification procedures and expectations, professional development and standards, and departmental and school communication protocols and expectations. Career and technical education instructional coaches are also often asked to contribute to current departmental goals (Malette et al., 2020). Studies have shown the effectiveness of instructional coaching by experts or peer teachers (Knight, 2018; Lee et al., 2018; Nugent et al., 2018; Soon et al., 2022).

Instructional coaching influences a teacher's self-efficacy through vicarious experiences. A teacher's perception of their self-efficacy is influenced through the observation of someone in a similar situation succeeding or failing at a task they both must do. These kinds of experiences are common when new teachers observe master teachers. As a result, a vicarious experience's

impact on an individual's teacher (preservice teacher) differs from that of an experienced inservice teacher (Wagler, 2011). Studies have claimed the importance of the coaches' roles, modeling, coaching protocols, or interpersonal skills to successfully support the teachers being coached (Connor, 2017; Desimone & Pak, 2017; Jacobs et al., 2018; Knight, 2018; Soon et al., 2022).

Collaboration

Collaboration between CTE and academic teachers is made possible through curriculum integration. Unexpectedly, a surprising number of academic content teachers are unaware of their CTE colleagues or the various career pathways available to students enrolled in CTE programs (Scott, 2014). When these teachers collaborate, they engage in discussions about classroom observations and provide valuable resources to one another by participating in shared planning and exchanging information (Whitley et al., 2019). There is also value in teacher collaboration, as collaboration provides opportunities that allow teachers to develop professionally and learn new instructional methods and pedagogical approaches. Collaborating with peers also facilitates teachers' professional growth and allows educators to become more innovative and actively engaged as they work through the curriculum design process (Castellano et al., 2001; Edling & Loring, 1996; Whitley et al., 2019).

The benefit of CTE teachers actively working with teachers from various content areas is that it advances their pedagogy by sharing instructional methods, discussing students in common, and developing correlated instructional strategies. Career and technical education teachers are also able to develop instructional strategies and deeper interdisciplinary content knowledge (Whitley et al., 2019). When these CTE teachers are allowed to collaborate with other teachers

from different content areas, schools, and districts, they can learn about courses and content and are exposed to multiple intelligences and learning styles.

Administrator Support

Effective schools are led by administrators who involve themselves in the teaching and learning processes (Murphy et al., 2016). An educational leader's instructional leadership can positively impact teacher self-efficacy. This is because effective leaders focus on teacher development and promote activities to improve instructional practices (Bellibas & Liu, 2017; Cansoy & Parlar, 2018). Building teacher self-efficacy is one of the most powerful ways that leaders can indirectly impact student achievement. However, due to many mandates and expectations, principals often struggle to fulfill the roles of instructional leaders (Duncan et al., 2013). Therefore, a lack of support in the school environment also impacts teacher self-efficacy, adding to the already present stress levels (Gonzalez et al., 2017).

Presently, school districts and schools are starting to take accountability when concerns about teacher career commitment, instructional competence, and self-efficacy arise. New CTE teachers need to feel supported by administrators and colleagues, and this can be done through appropriate preparation time, group planning, and peer support, as well as through supportive and timely feedback (Hunt & Carroll, 2003; Murphy et al., 2016; Stigler & Hiebert, 1999; Yoon et al., 2007; Yopp & Young, 1999). Professional feedback has the power to impact new teachers' self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997). Consistent feedback provided by administrators has also shown a significant and positive association between instructional leadership and teachers' self-efficacy. According to research, verbal persuasion can alter perceived expectancies and expected outcomes. For educators, verbal persuasion is one of the most significant sources of self-efficacy (Maddux & Gosselin, 2012).

Research also suggests that the problems with the career commitment of CTE teachers are likely the result of school systems (Camp & Heath-Camp, 1991; Ruhland & Bremer, 2004). At the same time, new teachers can thrive in positive school environments. A significant component that raises teachers' retention rate is school climate, a topic that has been studied for more than a century.

Recent studies have also shown that a positive school environment is connected to student achievement, school success, violence prevention, healthy development of students, and teacher retention (Murphy et al., 2016). As such, the support a school system provides its new CTE teachers is a major factor in helping teachers tackle the demands of the teaching profession. As important as effective leadership and support are to every beginning teacher's efficacy, a lack of or ineffective support is just as damaging. However, although lack of administrative support has been linked to disengagement from work (Demerouti et al., 2001; Marschall, 2021), principal support has also been found to be a significant predictor of school effectiveness (Marschall, 2021; Oy et al., 1992), which has been linked to collective efficacy (Marschall, 2021; Goddard & Goddard, 2001) and to personal teaching efficacy and school administration satisfaction (Marschall, 2021; Pajares, 2002).

How well a school is seen may also significantly impact how well its faculty is seen as effective teachers (Goddard et al., 2004; Marschall, 2021). Career and technical education teachers work almost exclusively in their classrooms and labs. From the outside, CTE teachers and their courses could appear external because CTE courses do not test for academic criteria. Despite working independently, CTE instructors are part of a CTE department in their school system. The resources and opportunities offered by the school system, as well as its hindrances, determine how effective people are in a given environment.

Support Component

High-quality school support is defined as weekly interactions between a new teacher and a qualified mentor and administrator, regular interaction with peers, and consistent observation and feedback (Bottoms et al., 2013; Mezirow, 1997). Throughout the first year of their alternate program, CTE teachers gain a sense of commitment to the field, instructional competence, and self-efficacy. The assistance of a qualified on-site mentor, instructional coaching, and participation in an ongoing professional learning community through in-person meetings, online discussions, and guided reflection would be beneficial to CTE teachers. Due to a lack of traditional credentials and training, CTE teachers face unique challenges in the secondary educational setting, where many arrive from the industry following a career change.

Novice CTE teachers need more assistance than academic content teachers, veteran peers, and administrators may be able to provide. However, due to a lack of needed support, career and technical educators would benefit from mentorship programs geared toward new educational professionals. Teacher mentoring is also important for CTE teachers' long-term success as educators (Malette et al., 2020). One qualitative study (Blatnick-Gagné et al., 2019, as cited in Malette et al., 2020) examined current practices in teacher mentorship programming provided to CTE teachers, specifically Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) teachers.

Data was analyzed to investigate the need for a national CTE mentorship program.

Family and Consumer Sciences teachers across the U.S. participated in an online survey.

Of the 363 respondents, 96% were females between the ages of 45 and 64. Most respondents attained their initial teaching certificate/license by completing either a four-year teacher-preparation program (70%) or a post-baccalaureate teacher-preparation

program (12%). Over half (52%) of the responses came from high school FCS teachers (Mallette et al., 2020, p. 30)

Participants who were asked about one or more years of related business and industry experience before accepting a teaching position were evenly split. Those with no prior business or industry work experience represented 49.9% of participants, while those with one to two years of prior work experience represented 50.1% of participants. Finally, when asked about their participation in various CTE-related extracurricular activities while in middle or high school, only 18% of the FCS teachers identified participation (Mallette et al., 2020). According to data gathered from the study's participants, most teachers completed a four-year training program before becoming certified. However, the majority of CTE teachers that completed the program lacked the experience, knowledge, and skills needed to be successful in their classrooms (Mallette et al., 2020).

Career and technical education programming and CTE teachers are at the national forefront of public education. To increase CTE teacher retention, there has been an increased push to develop mentorships for novice CTE teachers. Collaboration with coworkers, participating in workshops, and attending events featuring motivational speakers are all effective ways for teachers to increase their sense of self-efficacy (Simpson, 2016). New CTE teachers must learn how to implement classroom management and best practices for engaging students. They will generally benefit from understanding the field of education (Amyett, 2019). Career and technical education teachers also need to be as equally informed about the school environment, work expectations, academic achievement, special populations, and school policy as their core content teaching peers (Amyett, 2019). Having confident and highly competent CTE educators is essential for the success of students enrolled in programs, the retention of

quality teachers, and the profession in general (Mallette et al., 2020). Creating a national mentorship model for CTE may directly influence their choice to work in education.

Summary

Chapter two examined research that discussed lateral entry CTE teachers and their growing responsibility in increasing the productive value of high school students transitioning into the labor market after high school. An elaboration on the theoretical framework was drawn from the theory of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a subset of Bandura's (1977, 1978, 1991, 1994, 2012) social cognitive theory, formally known as Bandura's (1965) social learning theory, which has been used to explain how humans and emphasized determinants influence an individual's four sources of self-efficacy and how they are directly affected by environmental, personal, and behavioral determinants. Each source was identified and explained in the subsections examining the phenomenon. The related literature section addressed the most recent research published on teacher self-efficacy, the role of CTE teachers, CTE teacher self-efficacy, and CTE teacher shortage.

There have been studies conducted on self-efficacy and classroom management (Aloe et al., 2014), self-efficacy and educator burnout and stress (Herman et al., 2020), and self-efficacy and instructional leadership (Cansoy & Parlar, 2018). Neither of these studies allows the voices of lateral entry CTE teachers to be heard. More research on the identified problem will provide a voice for vocational educators and will help school systems and education researchers structure their school culture and professional development in ways that support all teachers regardless of curriculum content. Several themes emerged from the literature review centering on the value of preservice training, ongoing professional development, collaboration, and instructional support benefiting lateral entry CTE teachers and increasing retention. This transcendental

phenomenological study aimed to understand lateral entry CTE teachers' lived experiences and how those experiences influence teacher self-efficacy in a secondary high school. This study seeks to fill a knowledge gap regarding the self-efficacy of secondary lateral entry CTE teachers and help school systems support every program and teacher, as they all contribute to the growth and development of the future members of our society.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to describe the self-efficacy experience of lateral entry secondary CTE teachers employed with a school district in the Southcentral region of the United States. This chapter provides a description of qualitative research and is followed by an explanation of why that research method has been chosen for this study. This chapter will address the research design, research questions, the site and participants, and the procedures for this research study. As the researcher, I discuss my role, collection techniques, and the analysis processes that will be used to analyze and interpret the data, followed by specific data collection methods and analysis of individual interviews, focus groups, and qualitative audio journals. This chapter concludes by exploring the data synthesis plan, an explanation of the trustworthiness of the research, and ethical considerations for phenomenological study and summary.

Research Design

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to describe lateral entry CTE teachers' experiences with self-efficacy within a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States. This study was conducted using the method of qualitative research. An explanation of qualitative research and why a phenomenological approach is pertinent to the research will be provided. Special attention was made to the idea of *epoché*, due to my previously mentioned conflict of interest as a lateral entry CTE teacher myself. The collection of data specific to the approach and how the researcher collected interviews and held focus groups will be reviewed and explained. The appropriate steps of analysis for the research design are sequenced.

To bring different dimensions to the study specifically, a transcendental phenomenological design was used. The phenomenological study that was conducted will assist in understanding the nature of the participant's workplace, and how receiving continued professional development and support influences lateral entry CTE teacher motivation and achievement. This phenomenological study also examined the multiple realities that are rooted in the lateral entry CTE teacher's ability to prepare students for career and college readiness. By providing the participants with the opportunities to tell their stories, I was provided with more information on the problem of practice.

The word phenomenon stems from the Greek word "phaenesthai, to flare up, to show itself, to appear" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 26). Williams (2021) found that the word "phenomenon" derives from the Greek words "phainein," meaning "bring to light," and "phainesthai," meaning "to appear." It also directly derives from the late Latin word "phænomenon," which is also from the Greek "phainomenon" meaning "that which appears" (p. 367). Phenomenology is a form of inquiry that seeks to understand human lived experiences, to explore phenomena and how it is perceived and experienced by individuals in the phenomenological event (Moustakas, 1994). This study strived to restrain personal biases and preconceived speculations about human experiences, emotions, and influences on a particular research situation.

Qualitative research seeks to understand and describe situations or experiences that individuals or groups have by finding meaning in their perceptions (Frankel & Devers, 2000). Frankel and Devers (2000) stated that "qualitative methods are needed when the questions being asked pose puzzles that are difficult, if not impossible, to address using conventional research approaches" (p. 253). Interviews are conducted between the research participants and myself, the researcher. Online interviews will be used. Experiences are captured through textual data before

developing and/or testing more general theories and explanations. Not all aspects of the design can be managed or controlled by the researcher. Although quantitative research designs are also subject to change, doing so is unusual and is typically considered undesirable.

Phenomenological research is popular among various social sciences and education disciplines. There are several types of phenomenological research; (a) hermeneutical; (b) *epoché*, or bracketing; (c) transcendental; and (d) textual and structural (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Theoretically, phenomenological research is a subcategory of interpretivism, the understanding and explaining of human reality. Utilizing the phenomenology approach will give me the ability to present from an individual's subjective vantage point (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018). A transcendental phenomenological design will be used in this qualitative research study.

Transcendental phenomenology, as illustrated by Moustakas (1994), consists of identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing out one's experiences, and collecting data from several who have experienced the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In the transcendental design, researchers analyze the data by reducing the information to significant statements or quotes and combining the statements into themes. Based on the themes developed, a textual and structural description of each person's experience is also developed (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Transcendental phenomenology is an appropriate method for this study, as a combination of textual and structural descriptions will allow the opportunity to convey the overall essence of lateral entry secondary CTE teacher experiences with self-efficacy in a school district in the southcentral region of the United States.

Research Questions

Central Research Question

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe experiences of self-efficacy development in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States?

Sub-Question One

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe their professional development experiences with self-efficacy development in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States?

Sub-Question Two

How do lateral entry CTE teachers in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States describe their experiences with receiving instructional support within their home campuses?

Sub-Question Three

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe their physical and physiological experiences in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States with regard to self-efficacy?

Setting and Participants

The purpose of this section is to describe the setting and participants in this phenomenological study. In qualitative research, the focus is not just on providing generalization but also on a methodology of broadly exploring the main phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This section will provide the rationale and details regarding the population, demographics, and physical description of the setting for this study. The setting of this study will be a high school located in a school district located in the southcentral region of the United States.

Site

The physical data collection site used for this study was Samson High School, which is located within a school district in the southcentral region of the United States. The high school was chosen based on the growth of its special student population. The student population totals 2613 and the demographics are made up of 45% at-risk youth, 47.8% economically disadvantaged youth, and 9.9% ELL youth. The high school faculty consists of 168 certified teachers that include 19 CTE teachers. The administrative faculty consists of the principal, associate principal, academic dean, and four assistance principals. Each academic content has a coordinator. There is one CTE coordinator and the total population of CTE students is 2400.

Participants

The individuals that participated this study were: (1) 21 years of age or older; (2) employed with a school district located in the southcentral region of United States for a minimum of three complete school years (2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023); (3) had an alternative teaching certification; (4) had a minimum of three years work experience outside of the field of education in their content area; and (5) had a minimum of three years consecutive comprehensive high school CTE teaching experience. There were 10 lateral entry CTE teachers that participated in this study. In the context of this research study, lateral entry content areas are health science, law enforcement, agriculture, and business. Criterion sampling was used to identify the participants for this study. Criterion sampling refers to picking cases that meet some prespecified criterion. Criterion sampling works well when all individuals studied represent people who have experienced the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Criterion sampling was appropriate for this study, as those who participated were selected based on established criteria for studying select individuals. Participants in this research study came from a variety of

demographic backgrounds (e.g., age, gender, and/or ethnicity). My planned sample size was between 10 and 15 participants. Saturation was achieved with 10 participants. Saunders et al. (2012) noted that saturation is often described as the point in data collection and analysis when new incoming data produces little or no new information to address the research question. I am empirically confident that the category in this study is saturated.

Recruitment Plan

The recruitment of study participants did not begin until IRB approval (see Appendix A). Recruitment was conducted at Samson High School, which is located in the southcentral region of the United States. The research pool of lateral entry CTE teaching positions at the high school is comprised of 18 CTE teachers. After obtaining school district approval (see Appendix B), initial contact with participants was through e-mail and included a recruitment letter (see Appendix C) introducing the researcher, the study's subject, an invitation to participate in the research study, and a link to a screening survey created using a SurveyMonkey (see Appendix D). The recruitment letter explained: (a) the goal of this phenomenological research; (b) the criteria for volunteer participants; (c) no compensation for participating in the study; and (d) a timeline for those teachers who volunteered to engage in the research. All participants' information, such as names, school locations, and other confidential information provided for this study, will be given pseudonyms (Yin, 2016).

The research participants were lateral entry CTE teachers that are current employees in a secondary school. Study participants were identified using purposive sampling. Participants were selected for this study because they can purposefully form an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study. Participants who took part in the study signed a consent form (see Appendix E) in person or used an electronic signature using DocuSign. The

consent form clarified the research project and purpose via e-mail. The participant's security and confidentiality were preserved by using pseudonyms during the study.

The time to complete the survey was about five minutes. Each question assisted in determining each participant's eligibility for the study. When researchers collect important education and career history information about participants, they are finding the best way to determine eligibility to participate in a study, guide interview questions, and affirm that information is accurate (Creswell, 2014). Upon successful completion of the screening questions, a time-stamped response was collected through the finished online survey form and documented in a spreadsheet that was saved safely in the virtual cloud, as well as downloaded as a file to a backup location. Receipt of all completed surveys triggered an email response to the participant thanking them for completing the survey and indicating potential times and dates to schedule the interview. Out of 20 responses, 10 participants were deemed eligible based on criterion and the availability to participate in all data collection processes (see Table 1).

Table 1*Pre-Screening Survey*

1. What was your career(s) prior to teaching?
2. How many years were you in the private or public industry prior to teaching?
3. Do you have a bachelor's degree?
4. How did you obtain your teacher certification?
5. If you completed your teacher certification through an alternative certification program,
 - a. Was the program online? Yes or No.
 - b. Was the program in person? Yes or No.
 - c. Was the program hybrid (online/in-person)? Yes or No.
6. What CTE content are you certified to teach?
7. How many years have you been a certified CTE teacher? 0-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, 13 or more.
8. How long have you been teaching at your current high school?

Researcher's Positionality

This research study will follow the transformative worldview paradigm (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As a lateral entry CTE teacher, employed in an urban high school located in the same southcentral region of the United States, I have a unique perspective. Prior to entering the field of education, I had previous experience working in private and public employment sectors for two decades. For the last six years, I have taught business and finance classes. As a lateral entry CTE teacher, I have experienced the tasks of developing and delivering rigorous academia and combining them with relevant career and technical education. In addition to having first-hand knowledge as a lateral entry CTE teacher, I have observed my peers and other lateral entry

CTE teachers continuously struggle with classroom management, creating engaging lessons, and delivering educational content in a way that stirs students' interest, develops their skills, and prepares them for college and career goals. My research will recognize how lateral CTE teachers' experiences inside secondary school settings influence self-efficacy. The purpose of this phenomenological study is to describe and understand lateral entry secondary CTE teacher experiences with self-efficacy.

Interpretive Framework

For this research study, the transformative worldview will be the interpretive framework used (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The basic principle of this framework is that knowledge is not neutral, reflects the power and social relationships within society, and as such the purpose of knowledge construction is to aid people to improve society (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Mertens, 2003). The framework directly engages the complexities that are encountered by researchers and evaluators in culturally diverse communities when their work is focused on increasing social justice (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Mertens, 2009). A transformative worldview focuses on the tensions that arise when unequal power relationships permeate a research context that addresses intransigent social problems (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Mertens, 2009; Greene, 2008). The transformative framework also focuses on the strengths that reside in communities that experience discrimination and oppression on the basis of their cultural values and experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Mertens, 2007, 2009, 2010). As these issues are studied and exposed, the researcher provides a voice for participants, raising their consciousness and improving their lives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this qualitative transcendental phenomenological study, I am seeking to understand and provide a voice to lateral entry CTE teachers and their experiences of self-efficacy in a secondary high school.

Philosophical Assumptions

Philosophical assumptions are typically the first ideas in developing a study, but how they relate to the overall process of research remains a mystery (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this section, I will articulate my own philosophical assumptions and identify how they may influence this study. In addressing my ontological, epistemological, and axiological ideals, it is vital to the study that I practice *epoché* while conducting this phenomenological study. Creswell and Poth (2018) found that “Moustakas focuses on one of Husserl’s concepts, *epoché*, in which investigators set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under examination” (p. 80). By practicing *epoché*, I set aside prejudgments and biases and look at the phenomenon with a clear perspective. This will allow me to remain objective.

Ontological Assumption

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), “multiple realities are constructed through our lived experiences and interactions with other” (p. 35). Ontology is defined as a concept dealing with the existence and interrelation of many parts of society, such as social actors, cultural norms, and social structures (Jupp, 2006). Ontological inquiries are concerned with the kind of things that exist inside society (Al-Saadi, 2014; Crotty, 1998). Researchers must be truthful in disclosing their impressions of the phenomenon in order to ensure credibility and validity (Moustakas, 1994). To capture participant’s multiple realities, I will present their diverse viewpoints on emergent themes, as well as how they saw their experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). My ontological assumptions going into this research study are based on my own perception of my experiences as a current lateral entry CTE teacher. My ontological assumption is that lateral entry CTE teachers’ experiences and perceptions can come from

multiple realities. This will be kept in the forefront of my mind, as this investigation will have multiple and common realities. Different perceptions require researchers to recognize potential biases derived from previous experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

Epistemological Assumption

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), epistemology is the study of knowledge acquisition, understanding how knowledge claims are justified, and the link between what is being researched and the researcher. My epistemic assumption is that lateral entry CTE instructors should be provided with ongoing assistance and professional development to help them effectively transition into their new teaching professions. This investment would help educational institutions because the function of the CTE instructor is continually changing. Knowledge and reality will be altered by participant experiences in a phenomenological study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My understanding of this phenomenon will be based on the subjective experiences shared by participants in their completed surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

Axiological Assumption

Simply put, axiology is the study of what you value in your research. According to Saunders et al. (2012), axiology entails assessing the impact of the researcher's personal value at each stage of the research process. This branch of philosophy research attempts to clarify if the purpose is to know the universe for its own sake or to forecast or explain it (Li, 2016). My axiological presumption is that secondary school lateral entry CTE teachers who educate students value vocational education because it provides students with employment opportunities that may improve their quality of life.

My second axiological assumption is that secondary school CTE teachers are not provided with the same support systems as academic content teachers; as a result, approximately

25% of new CTE teachers in the United States leave the teaching profession before their third year on the job due to job performance and career dissatisfaction (Park & Johnson, 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). I also believe that vocational education helps every student in America take a step toward a better future. In identifying my own philosophical assumptions, bracketing will be employed during the data-collecting operations to avoid the potential impact and to report the participant's experiences. My goal for this transcendental phenomenological study will be to focus on the description of my participants' experiences rather than the interpretation of the experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Researcher's Role

As the researcher, I am the human instrument for this research. I contacted each of the research participants through email to inform them of the tools that will be used to conduct the interviews: focus group interviews and audio journals. I also scheduled the time and dates to conduct the individual interviews and focus group interviews. I provided each participant with a deadline to turn in the audio journals. During data collection, I ensured that my opinions, views, or experiences did not determine how I interacted with the participants. I communicated with participants respectfully. I ensured that I did not use any bias against any participant during the study. The was to ensure that there are no prejudices or preconceived views that could undermine the quality of the research. As a researcher, I validated their contribution to the study by documenting their words and by recording their contribution. In data collection and analysis, I deferred my knowledge and perception of lateral entry CTE teachers' experiences with self-efficacy within a secondary school. I would only consider the feedback given by the participants to determine the results and analysis of the date obtained.

Procedures

The processes used to collect data are discussed in the section that follows. The research procedures included obtaining permission from Liberty University's Institutional Review Board (IRB see Appendix A). Once IRB approval is obtained, I also obtain permission from the research site (see Appendix B). With site approval, I will begin recruiting participants (see Appendix C). Initial contact with participants will be through e-mail and include a recruitment letter (see Appendix C) introducing the researcher, the study's subject, an invitation to participate in the research study, and a link to a screening survey created using a SurveyMonkey (see Appendix D). Once potential participants are screened for eligibility and selected an informed consent form will be provided to each participant (see Appendix E). Once all signed informed consent forms are received, data collection procedures will start (see Appendix F, Appendix G, and Appendix H). When data collection procedures are complete, I will analyze the data and provide an account of how triangulation was accomplished.

Data Collection Plan

This section will focus on the different forms of data collection that were used for this transcendental phenomenological research study. Moustakas (1994) emphasizes that the evidence of phenomenological research comes from first-person reports. There were three forms of data collection that were implemented: semi-structure individual interviews, focus groups, and audio journal prompts. Overall, the combination of all three methods provided a rich and multifaceted exploration of human experiences, aligning well with the goals of a transcendental phenomenological study. This approach acknowledged the significance of individual perspectives while also considering the communal nature of certain experiences and the temporal dynamics involved.

The chosen data collection methods assisted in identifying different themes or perspectives provided by the participants by allowing the use of triangulation. In triangulation, researchers make use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Ely et al., 1991; Erlandson et al., 1993; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1980, 1990). By utilizing this method, I was able to enhance the validation and credibility of the study findings.

Individual Interviews

Upon receiving IRB approval (see Appendix A) and site approval (see Appendix C) from school officials, the data collection began with individual interviews involving semi-structured questions (see Appendix E).

Semi-structured interviews are designed to have a number of interview questions prepared in advance, but such prepared questions are designed to be sufficiently open that the subsequent questions of the interviewer cannot be planned in advance but must be improvised in a careful and theorized way (Wengraf, 2001, p. 6)

The individual interview questions were developed according to the information needed for my study. This provided me the opportunity to discover what the participants experienced and how they experienced it (Creswell & Poth, 2018) from their perspective. All individual interviews were conducted through the online meeting platform Zoom. Each participant was asked specific questions in key areas that answer the research question and sub-questions. Comprehensive questions were asked so that their responses would be rich, layered, and texturized (Moustakas, 1994). Williams (2021) stated that “conducting a phenomenological interview is consequently not simply a question of being open-minded and interested in the first-

person experience. It is very much also about adopting and employing a comprehensive theoretical framework that will allow one to ask the right questions. (p. 378)

Moustakas (1994) stresses that interviews in a phenomenological study are key for a deep dive into what people have gone through. To make sure ethics are in place and people are okay to talk about their experiences, it's vital to build a good connection and get their clear agreement to participate. Using *epoché* is important to researchers staying unbiased and open to what people have to say. By listening and getting detailed stories, researchers can gather in-depth, fine-tuned information that's needed to get to the core of what they're looking into (Moustakas, 1994). Asking questions that dig deeper can reveal more about people's experiences, while taking down and transcribing interviews ensures the details are correct and sets a strong foundation for later looking at the information (Moustakas, 1994). Thinking about how the interviews went helps researchers get better at their methods and ways of doing things making their study stronger. By taking these steps, researchers can carry out one-on-one interviews that get into the complexity of what people have experienced giving critical views into what's being researched (Moustakas, 1994).

Table 2

Individual Interview Questions

1. Please introduce yourself by stating your name, your current role at the school, and the number of years you have taught in the classroom. SQ3
2. Describe how your personal experiences influenced your decision to become a CTE teacher in a secondary school. CRQ
3. With specific details, describe your experiences with being a lateral entry CTE teacher in a secondary school. CRQ

4. What is your perception of the correlation between self-efficacy and lateral entry CTE teachers' professional development experiences? SQ1
5. Describe the kind of professional development training that has been provided to you on a consistent basis that was intended to assist with classroom management, development and delivery of instruction, and planning. SQ1
6. Describe how professional development training has impacted your ability to meet all the standards that should be taught in your classroom. SQ1
7. What is your perception of the correlation between self-efficacy and lateral entry CTE teachers' instructional support experiences? SQ2
8. Think back to when you were a first-year lateral entry CTE teacher. Please describe your experience with the level of instructional support received during that time. SQ2
9. Think back to your first three years of being a lateral entry CTE teacher. Describe how the level of instructional support received influenced your ability to handle the stress of being a lateral entry CTE teacher. SQ2
10. Explain the impact of district or school supports that have been in place to help you be successful in your instructional practices. SQ2
11. Regarding job-related feedback and/or encouragement you have received from administrators or instructional coaches, what stands out to you as particularly significant? SQ3
12. Describe your experiences with providing college and career readiness to the students that come from special populations (special education, economically disadvantaged, ELL, other). SQ2

13. Please describe your experiences with staying up to date on the trades that require skills training in high-growth fields that are offered through your school's CTE program. SQ1
14. Describe positive changes you would implement that would benefit future lateral entry CTE teachers in maintaining and building their self-efficacy in secondary schools. SQ3
15. Is there additional information you'd like to share, even if it is something we've spoken about? SQ3

Question one addressed the components of the central research question and implored the participants to provide background information about themselves. In addition to creating a relaxed atmosphere, it established a rapport among the participants and myself (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Question two drove the investigation for the study and added structure to the central researcher question as it pertains to this study. Question three addressed sub-question one and was designed so that the researcher could gain a clear perspective of the participants' perception of their professional development experiences with self-efficacy development in secondary schools in the southcentral region of the United States. Question six spoke to sub-question one and sought to determine the perceptions that lateral entry CTE teachers have on the professional development being provided to them and whether it has influenced the delivery of high-quality, ongoing, and classroom-focused instruction and teacher performance (Threton, 2007). Question seven assisted the investigation for this study and adds structure to the central researcher's question and sub-question two. Kwok (2017) acknowledges that receiving instructional support assists educators in facilitating an environment that supports student learning, building relationships with students, delivering effective instruction, and making effective instructional decisions.

Question eight sought to determine the perceptions that CTE teachers have about the instructional support received while attending alternative certification programs and directly tackled sub-question two. Teachers that receive consistent instructional support that is high-quality, ongoing, and classroom-focused has an impact on classroom instruction and the teachers' performance in the classroom (Threeton, 2007). Questions nine and 10 assessed the participants' responses to sub-question two and invited them to reflect on their perception of the stress of being a lateral entry CTE teacher. Although alternative certification programs spend a considerable amount of time training teachers' attention on behavior and academics, beginning teachers with no prior classroom experience tend to have considerable difficulty in classroom management and instructional strategies or have low self-efficacy in classroom management (Kwok, 2017; McCarthy, Lineback, & Reiser, 2014). Question 11 spoke to feedback received on job performance and its influence on participants and addressed sub-question three. Bandura (1977) highlights that feedback acknowledging effort and incremental progress is crucial for reinforcing self-efficacy, as it helps individuals recognize their growing competence and control over tasks (p. 198). Questions 12, 13, and 14 encouraged participants to reflect on experiences that have influenced their individual perceived sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1997, 2012) as it evaluates responses to sub-question three. Question 15 allowed the research participants and researcher to bring clarity to any questions that emerged from the preceding questions and share anything they have not yet discussed (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Document Analysis

The data analysis techniques that were used for the interviews were based on Moustakas' (1994) process of *epoché*, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and textural and structural descriptions. The interview analysis began by reviewing and transcribing all audio and

video recordings. The interview transcripts were provided through Zoom audio recording and the closed caption program function. The data obtained from the interviews were analyzed for themes that were addressed during the focus group session with the participants. Participants conducted member checking upon completing their interviews. Participants reviewed their interview transcripts and verified that the information provided was accurate and conveyed properly and that additional information pertaining to their interviews needed.

The next stage in data analysis was phenomenological reduction. This took place by reducing the sense that I make of the experience based on my prior knowledge and personal opinions have been bracketed. After attempting to achieve the *epoché*, where I purposefully set aside any preconceived knowledge or everyday beliefs that I might have that can be used to explain the phenomena being investigated, I listened and recorded the participant's description of an experience in an open and naïve manner (Moustakas, 1994). During the interviews, I engaged in bracketing through memos as part of the process of phenomenological reduction, which means to describe in textural language of what one sees (Moustakas, 1994).

Imaginative variation was the next methodological step in the phenomenological research process. This allowed me to uncover any structural themes sourced from the textural descriptions, which were produced during the process of phenomenological reduction. Imaginative variation required me to see the phenomenon from a variety of perspectives so that I could understand the essence of the participants' experiences. In the last step in the phenomenological process, as advised by Moustakas (1994), I carefully read through each interview transcript and identified words and statements that described the participant's experience with the phenomenon. I then developed statements from the composite textural and structural descriptions that revealed the essences of the phenomenon being researched.

Textual accounts follow the phenomenological reduction (Moustakas, 1994). Participants were able to explain their experiences with the phenomenon using textual descriptions.

Moustakas (1994) discovered that textural descriptions offer equal focus to each phrase. Textual descriptions of the participants' encounters using constituencies and themes will be created. The remarks, responses, and descriptions of each participant will be equally valued and analyzed.

Focus Groups

Upon completion of individual interviews, the second method of data collection was implemented with a total of two focus group interviews. A focus group is a group discussion on a particular topic organized for research purposes. This discussion is guided, monitored, and recorded by a researcher sometimes called a moderator or facilitator (Gill et al., 2008, p. 293).

Focus groups are beneficial to my research study because the participants may generate different information than that articulated in the one-on-one interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Focus groups were conducted through Zoom with cameras on, which allowed the group to see each other and for a sense of inclusion to be fostered. There were two focus group meetings scheduled. The focus group had five participants. The focus group meetings lasted 45 minutes. The focus group questions (see Appendix F) were used to encourage collaboration between the participants in sharing their experiences of a similar phenomenon while in their position as lateral entry CTE teachers in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States.

Table 3

Focus Group Questions

1. As part of this focus group, we would like to gather insights from instructors like you. Please tell us your name and how long you have been a lateral entry CTE teacher. CRO
2. What is it like being a lateral entry CTE teacher in this secondary school? SQ3

3. As lateral entry CTE teachers, please explain the confidence levels experienced in effectively engaging and instructing students from different backgrounds and using different learning styles? CRQ
4. Thinking about those feelings, how have professional development opportunities influenced lateral entry CTE teachers' ability to effectively instruct all student populations? SQ3
5. Thinking about those feelings, how have instructional support opportunities influenced lateral entry CTE teachers to effectively instruct all student populations? SQ2
6. As CTE teachers, what could school districts do to help lateral entry CTE teachers in a secondary school feel more confident in their job? SQ3
7. What, if any, comments, concerns, or suggestions do you have for those who are interested in becoming lateral entry CTE teachers in a secondary school? CRQ

Question one addressed the components of the central research question and asked the participants to provide background information about themselves. In addition to creating a relaxed atmosphere, it establishes a rapport among the participants and myself (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Question two opened the investigation for the study and added structure to the central researcher question. Question three addressed the central question and was designed so that the researcher could gain a clear perspective of the participant's perception of their instructional capabilities and experiences. Question four spoke to sub-question three and sought to determine the perceptions that lateral entry CTE teachers have on the professional development and instructional support that is provided to them. Kwok (2017) acknowledges that receiving instructional support assists educators in facilitating an environment that supports

student learning, building relationships with students, delivering effective instruction, and making effective instructional decisions.

Question five investigated whether instructional supports influence the delivery of high-quality, ongoing, and classroom-focused instruction and teacher performance (Threeton, 2007) among all student populations. Question six assisted the investigation for this study and added structure to the central researcher's question and sub-question three. Kwok (2017) acknowledges that receiving instructional support assists educators in facilitating an environment that supports student learning, building relationships with students, delivering effective instruction, and making effective instructional decisions. Question seven encouraged participants to reflect on experiences that have influenced their individual perceived sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1997, 2012) as it evaluates the response to sub-question three.

Audio Journals

After completing the semi-structured interview and focus group meetings, participants were given directions for answering audio journal questions (see Appendix G). Audio diaries involve the audio recording of participants' responses and reflections over a period of time (Crozier & Cassell, 2016; Buchanan, 1991). Diary methods are flexible and heterogeneous. Diary methods have the potential to yield rich qualitative data and, unlike methods that rely on retrospection, offer the potential to ensure that accounts are sequentially ordered and reduce the likelihood of feelings or events being forgotten (Mackrill, 2008; Milligan et al., 2005; Williamson et al., 2015). This approach provided the respondents with the opportunity to disclose information that they may not have felt comfortable sharing in interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Four questions were created that were supported by the theoretical framework, Bandura's self-efficacy theory, which focuses on performance outcomes, verbal persuasion, vicarious experience, and physiological feedback. Participants were informed that the audio journal entries were designed as four questions that captured the participants' experiences at the end of their workday. The participants were instructed to record themselves reading and answering each question using the voice memo application on their cellular phones for five consecutive days. Once the audio journal entries were completed for each day, the journal recordings were emailed to me. Each participant turned in their journal entries within 10 days of receiving the questions.

Table 4

Audio Journals

1. What positive or negative influences impacted your performance as a lateral entry CTE in a secondary school today? CRO
2. What verbal feedback indirectly or directly influenced your performance day? SQ2
3. Compared to other lateral entry CTE in a secondary school, how successful are you at doing your job to help students? SQ1
4. What feelings do you have about today's work experiences? Why? SQ3
5. What, if any, comments, concerns, or suggestions do you have for those who are interested in becoming a lateral entry CTE teacher in secondary schools? CRQ

Question one explored the factors that affect the self-efficacy of lateral entry CTE teachers who enter the teaching profession through non-traditional routes and is directly related to the central research question. Self-efficacy is one of the most important factors in determining how teachers approach their teaching tasks, how much effort they invest, and how resilient they are in facing challenges. Question two addressed sub-question two by confirming through

participants' experiences that positive and negative feedback from colleagues, administrators, and students can enhance self-efficacy by affirming the teacher's competence and effectiveness (Bandura, 1997, p. 101). Question three addresses sub-question one. Having access to professional development opportunities can provide lateral entry CTE teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful in the classroom and improve their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997, p. 81). Question four explored sub-question three by addressing the participants' experiences throughout their workday and their influence on their self-efficacy. Experiencing successful classroom management or effectively delivering a lesson can reinforce a teacher's belief in their teaching capabilities (Bandura, 1997, p. 80). Question 15 allowed the research participants and researcher to bring clarity to any questions that emerged from the preceding questions and share anything they have not yet discussed (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data Analysis

I examined all three data pieces and looked for evidence that showed the repetition of experiences in the information collected for this transcendental phenomenological study by applying *epoché*, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and textual/structural descriptions (Moustakas, 1994). The first step I took in the analysis was applying *epoché*, which enables my prejudices to reveal themselves so that I can view things clearly (Moustakas, 1994). *Epoché* continued over the course of this research as I consciously and consistently laid aside preceding events to allow the participants' experiences to be the center of the research (Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenological reduction was the second step in data analysis (Moustakas, 1994) and was critical to the analysis process. Each experience described by the participants was reviewed and analyzed in light of its unique evidence (Moustakas, 1994). To ensure that this procedure was followed, the recorded and transcribed interviews, focus groups,

and audio journals were examined and synthesized beginning with horizontalization (Moustakas, 1994). NVivo software was used to import, sort, organize, share, and search all of the data obtained so that I could accurately assess the audio content of participants.

Clustering and Thematizing

I examined the data for recurring themes and patterns that gave thematic meaning to the participants' narratives of their encounters with the phenomena of work embeddedness. At this point of the process, the researcher uses several strategies to extract meaning from all of the data collected elements (Moustakas, 1994). I accomplished this procedure through phenomenological reflection, which refers to the strategies for examining empirical data that I utilized to learn about the participants' experiences with the phenomena (Maharaj, 2020). This approach was used by clustering the data from all three data pieces to identify the themes that were common to all three data sets.

Validation

According to Moustakas (1994), the validation method allows the researcher to produce a thorough record of the phenomena by compiling all of the participants' descriptions of their experiences with self-efficacy as a CTE teacher in secondary schools. I verified the data using a two-step approach. The initial phase was triangulation. Triangulation occurs when a researcher uses numerous data sources in qualitative research to gain a thorough picture of the phenomenon (Patton, 1999). I accomplished triangulation by reviewing the data and identifying common themes among the interviews, focus groups, and audio journal entries. Validation occurred through member checking, namely by collecting participant input and having them investigate themes that were common across all pieces of data and repeated in the accounts of several

participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I performed this member checking by asking the members to affirm whether or not the data analysis accurately represented their experiences.

Synthesis of Meaning and Essences

In this study, I used various qualitative data collection tools to gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences. Individual interviews, focus groups, and audio journaling were used to capture both personal and collective perceptions. The analysis that I used followed Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological approach, focusing on creating both textural and structural descriptions to understand the essence and context of the experiences. First, the creation of textural description began with transcribing of all data collected from the individual interviews, focus groups, and audio journals. I then identified significant statements that provided insight into participants' lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994). For example, in the individual interviews, participants frequently mentioned feeling "overwhelmed when working with English language learners" who were placed in CTE classes. Similarly, in the focus groups, common themes such as "classroom management" and "student engagement" emerged through the group discussions. Secondly, I took statements were taken and grouped into meaning units to capture the core essence of the experiences, such as feelings of being overwhelmed by the responsibility of keeping students engaged while implementing classroom management techniques (Moustakas, 1994). A detailed description was then written to emphasize what the participants experienced. For instance, the textural description highlighted how participants consistently reported feeling overwhelmed and pressured by the expectations placed upon them (Moustakas, 1994).

Third, I created structural description by contextualizing these experiences. This was accomplished by describing the settings and conditions under which they occurred. The

participant described entering their working environment with inadequate preparation that was obtained from their alternative education programs. This was a significant context in which these feelings of being overwhelmed emerged (Moustakas, 1994). The focus groups revealed that participants' experiences were not isolated but influenced by common structural factors, such as the requirements of their job and professional training limitations. By reflecting on these experiences, it was possible to identify underlying themes that explained how the experiences were structured (Moustakas, 1994). These structural descriptions provided a deeper understanding of the contextual factors influencing the participants experiences

According to Moustakas (1994), data analysis allows the researcher to synthesis textural and conceptual descriptions into statements that eventually illustrate the essence of the phenomena, which in this case included participants' accounts of their self-efficacy experiences as a lateral entry CTE teacher in secondary schools. I created structural description by contextualizing these experiences. This was accomplished by describing the settings and conditions under which they occurred. The participant described an environment that did not offer practical hands-on training to lateral entry CTE teachers. This was a significant context in which these feelings of being overwhelmed emerged (Moustakas, 1994). The focus groups revealed that participants' experiences were not isolated but influenced by common structural factors, such as the requirements of their job and professional training limitations. By reflecting on these experiences, it was possible to identify underlying themes that explained how the experiences were structured (Moustakas, 1994). These structural descriptions provided a deeper understanding of the contextual factors influencing the participants experiences. Finally, I synthesized the textural and structural descriptions allowing for comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). The synthesis revealed that participants felt overwhelmed

(textural) primarily due to their job expectation and lack of adequate teacher preparation and ongoing professional development (structural) (Moustakas, 1994). This approach ensured that both the essence of the experiences and the contextual factors were thoroughly explored, providing a holistic view of the participants' lived experiences. This method, based on Moustakas's phenomenological research approach, allowed for an in-depth exploration of both the "what" and "how" of the participants' experiences, leading to a richer understanding of the phenomenon under study (Moustakas, 1994).

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness addresses credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability—four terms that describe a method involving four standards created by Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Creswell & Poth, 2018). Participants were asked to review their transcripts from the collected data, which consisted of (a) semi-structured interviews, (b) focus group interviews, and (c) audio journals. This approach, writ large in most qualitative studies, involved me taking data, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions back to the participants so that they can judge the accuracy and credibility of the account (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This approach helped clarify any bias that I may have had from the outset of the study. By doing so, this allows the readers to understand the researcher's position and any biases or assumptions that impact the inquiry (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam, 1988). Eliminating all preconceived notions based on my own experiences redirects my focus on the participants in the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Patton (2015) explains that triangulation is a term for a researcher utilizing multiple methods of data collection will strengthen the trustworthiness of a study.

Credibility

In qualitative research, the researcher seeks a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility and allows us to feel confident about our observations, interpretations, and conclusions (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Eisner, 1991). Credibility refers to the truth of the data or the participant's views and the interpretation and representation of them by the researcher (Cope, 2014; Polit & Beck, 2012). Credibility is enhanced by the magnitude of the research findings and how accurately the researcher explains the reality of their own experiences throughout the study. A qualitative study is considered credible if the descriptions of human experience are immediately recognized by individuals who share the same experience (Cope, 2014; Sandelowski, 1986).

The first step that was taken toward credibility was establishing trust with all participants early in the research process. I further established credibility by learning as much as possible about the participants and the secondary school and district in which they were employed. The second step I implemented was the triangulation method. Triangulation allowed me to corroborate evidence from different sources to shed light on a theme or perspective. When qualitative researchers locate evidence to document a code or theme in different sources of data, they are triangulating information and providing validity to their findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study established credibility through member checks that were conducted after participants contributed to multiple data sources such as Zoom interviews, focus groups, and audio journals. Participants were asked to review my analysis of the information and to provide feedback on the findings of the study before I published and shared the results. All these tactics were beneficial in helping to ensure credibility.

Transferability

A second factor for trustworthiness offered by Lincoln and Guba (1985) is transferability. This plan is somewhat tricky, given that by design qualitative research cannot aim for replicability. The information from the research is transferable if it is likely that the study can be found relevant in other situations or populations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This transcendental phenomenological research study examined a phenomenon experienced and perceived by lateral entry CTE teachers at Samson High School in the southcentral region of the United States. The results of my study are considered trustworthy, as they can be transferred to other contexts through the concentrated, clear descriptions of those who have experienced the same phenomenon. Research participants were identified via the pre-screening questionnaire (see Appendix D) by asking for their age, race, education, and career information.

Each participant was asked the same set of questions and had the same opportunity to email with follow-up information. Participants were provided with a copy of the individual interview transcript for review. Transferability was assured by providing the interview questions, the focus group guiding questions, and the participants' audio journal questions. The data obtained was triangulated across multiple data collection tools to achieve transferability (Yin, 2016). This transferability will allow other researchers and readers to make their own judgments about the work. This study's results can transfer to the perspectives and perceptions of lateral entry CTE teachers at Samson High School in the southcentral region of the United States.

Dependability

Rather than reliability, one seeks dependability, as the results will be subject to change and instability (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Dependability refers to the constancy of the data over similar conditions, and this can be achieved when another researcher analyzes agrees with the

decision trials at each stage of the research process (Cope, 2014; Polit & Beck, 2012; Tobin & Begley, 2004). Researchers look for confirmability rather than objectivity in establishing the value of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Both dependability and confirmability are established through auditing of the research process, as well as whether the study findings can be replicated with similar participants in similar conditions (Cope, 2014; Koch, 2006).

A data collection system was created so that accurate records could be maintained (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To increase dependability, I adhered to the data collection methods and had participants available for the auditing process externally and internally. Triangulation of data also ensured the dependability of the study. To achieve this, I analyzed the data from the interviews, focus groups, and audio journals to ensure they were consistent with one another. Saturation was reached when the participants' responses became repetitive, and no new information was available (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Saturation was achieved in this study by categorizing the responses to determine themes.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the outcome goal of research and is based on trustworthiness and external reviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015). Confirmability was addressed through the auditing process. Second, rich, thick descriptions of the themes of the collected data was developed. A collaboration with participants using member-checking (Creswell & Poth, 2018) was used to ensure confirmability and dependability (Moustakas, 1994). Member checking is a technique for exploring the credibility of results. Data was returned to participants to check for accuracy and resonance with their experiences. Member checking is often mentioned as one in a list of validation techniques (Birt et al., 2016). Third, all interview questions, focus group questions, and directions for audio journals were fair and not leading, and as such addressed

dependability. Finally, to outline the researcher's thoughts as they collect and code research, a document log was created to collect the data as prescribed by Creswell and Poth (2018).

Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations that are part of the study consist of approval from Liberty University's Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A). After approval from the school system (see Appendix I), signed consent forms were received from the volunteer participants to conduct the research (see Appendix D). The names of participants, as well as the name of their school, were given pseudonyms (Yin, 2016). All participants were asked to sign a letter of consent that will explain the purpose of this research study.

Permissions

The first step in conducting this phenomenological study was obtaining authorization from a school district in the southcentral region of the United States. Permission was obtained to conduct research on CTE teachers in various classrooms at Samson High School by completing a research application and turning it in to the school district's office of research and development (see Appendix H) for approval. The application outlined the research that would be conducted within the school. Along with the research application, a request was sent for a list of all current high school CTE instructors, as specified by the individual school. Following approval from the school district, a request for authorization to perform this study was sent to Liberty University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). An IRB is an organization that emphasizes human subject protection as a critical safeguard for ethical research.

Other Participant Protections

Participants were informed on how they and others would benefit from this research. The participants were also advised on how all personal information will be protected, as well as how they were expected to participate in the research. And they were informed through a consent form that their participation in the research study is voluntary. The consent form also informed each participant that it is in their right to withdraw from participating at any time. Confidentiality was maintained through careful documentation of participant responses through online meeting platforms and transcribed to ensure accuracy and clarification of responses. Participants were asked to member-check data and review their transcripts, which assisted in confirming trends and identifying themes. All data, such as recorded transcripts, participant journals, and all other research information collected for this phenomenological study, are locked in a file cabinet in my home office. All digital records were saved on an encrypted external hard drive and stored in a locked file cabinet in my home office. When this research study is completed, all raw data, such as written documents and copies of the written documents, will be maintained for three calendar years. At the completion of the three years, all raw data will be destroyed by a professional document shredding company. All PDF files transferred to an encrypted hard drive used to hold the digital audio recordings will remain secure in a locked file cabinet in my home office. I will be the only individual to have access to the research data. This study was conducted with the assurance that all procedures for confidentiality were followed. This encrypted external hard drive will be stored in my home for three years. At the required date all data will be deleted.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to outline the methods and procedures for data selection, data collection, and data analysis in this phenomenological study. A phenomenological research

approach was used to describe the lived experiences of lateral entry CTE teachers in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States. In this chapter, the rationale and description of participant criteria and setting provide a contextual foundation for the study. The methods of data collection that were used in this study consisted of semi-structured one-on-one interviews, focus group interviews, and audio journals. Each method of data collection is explained in detail. Interview questions and journal prompts are provided. In this chapter, the researcher's positionality and the relationship with the participants were discussed.

This chapter concludes by addressing issues of trustworthiness and how this researcher would establish (a) credibility, (b) dependability, (c) transferability, and (d) confirmability of the phenomenological research study. Using triangulation of data, member checking, and researcher reflexive journaling, this study met the criteria for trustworthiness. Finally, ethical considerations were described to ensure that all data related to the study were organized and stored in a secure location to avoid potential compromise of the confidentiality of participants and research data. Their views and rights will be accurately represented with respect. The subsequent chapter provides a summary of the participant data and brief individual participant descriptions, followed by depicting the participants' experience. Next are the results of the study, which include a summary of the data collection and analysis process.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to describe lateral entry CTE teachers' experiences with self-efficacy within a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States. This chapter provides participant demographics in Table 5 and themes and subthemes in Table 6. Thematic coding for each theme is then identified and enumerated in Tables 7, 8, and 9. The data collection topics address the key research question of this study. The data analysis reveals the following three themes: supportive leadership, instructional practices, and professional development. The subthemes of supportive leadership encompass teacher mentorship, a desire for feedback, and an opportunity for reflection. The second theme presented information regarding instructional support, with subthemes including classroom management, student engagement, and professional identity. The final theme of professional development identified subthemes, teacher quality, pedagogical support, and collaboration. The responses to the research questions of this study are also provided in this chapter. Chapter five will also include descriptions of the participants' experiences, themes from the data, and responses to the research question.

Participants

The participants who completed this study were 10 lateral entry CTE teachers who are employed at Samson High School. Each participant accepted and engaged in an individual interview, contributed to focus groups, and completed an audio journal. The individual interviews and focus groups were conducted through the Zoom meeting platform. Table 5 displays demographic and descriptive data for the participants. The table shows the number of

years the participants taught, their highest degree, content area, and the grades they taught at the time of the study. The participant profiles are included below the table.

Table 5

Participants Demographics

Participant	Age	Highest Degree	Teaching Experience	Content Area	Grade Level
Andy	48	Associates	7	Law Enforcement	9 th – 12 th
Anna	47	Masters	10	Business & Finance	9 th – 12 th
Ben	44	Bachelors	7	Health Science	10 th – 12 th
Bill	39	Masters	7	Health Science	10 th – 12 th
Dana	62	Masters	14	Health Science	9 th - 12 th
Erica	30	Bachelors	9	Fashion	10 th – 12 th
Manny	41	Masters	13	Public Service	9 th – 12 th
Mike	37	Masters	8	Health Science	10 th – 12 th
Rebecca	45	Masters	8	Cyber Security	9 th – 12 th
Richard	42	Bachelor	30	Automotive	10 th – 12 th

Ben

Ben is a lively 44-year-old who comes with a lot of healthcare industry knowhow. With a bachelor's in applied science, he has spent over 20 years being an emergency health technician. But his journey didn't stop there. Ben joined an alternative teaching certification program in the southcentral U.S. to mix things up. In the past eight years, he's been using his health science skills as a CTE teacher through lateral entry. Ben gets his drive not only from his amazing past but also from his passion to shape his students' lives. Since he has no kids, he sees his lasting

mark in the opportunities he gives to his eager learners. With his strong dedication and alertness, Ben teaches more than just subjects; he encourages dreams and opens doors for lots of chances ahead.

Dana

Dana, a lively 62-year-old with a deep love for healthcare and teaching, has a master's in sports medicine. She spent 30 years as an athletic trainer showing her strong dedication to people's health. Dana then chose to join a teaching certification program in the central U.S. For the last 14 years, she has worked as a health science CTE teacher in high schools without the typical teacher training. Dana's story includes her wins and her struggles, not just her skills. Even with her skills, she had trouble getting help with teaching. Dana keeps trying to teach well. She isn't just facing hard times; she's improving and giving her students the best learning. Dana never stops trying to get better and to know more. This makes everyone near her want to do great things.

Anna

Anna, aged 47, loves management and leading others. Her career started in the banking sector after she got her master's in educational leadership. For 16 years, she honed her skills. Wanting to make a difference, Anna joined a teacher certification program in the U.S. central region. She has been a CTE teacher at secondary schools for nine years, teaching business and finance. Anna's story doesn't stop there; she changes things for the better. Taking on a leadership role in CTE at her school has brought her great joy. Teaching for Anna isn't just about sharing knowledge, but also about leaving a mark on her students' lives. She's dedicated to her work and her students.

Bill

Bill has worked in healthcare and teaching and is 39 years old. He holds a master's in leading education. Bill began his work life in the lively healthcare sector. As a respiratory therapist for 10 years, he worked hard to save lives and do good. Yet, Bill wanted to learn more and change the world. This wish led him to switch careers to teaching. He did this by finishing a web-based teacher certification in the southcentral U.S. Bill has taught as a key CTE teacher at a high school for the past seven years with a focus on health science. His unique mix of experience and the way he shares insights set him apart. In a group discussion, he shared his thoughts on how much help schools give. Bill has skills, energy, and a knack for speaking his mind. He's a teacher who pushes for change and betterment, and he always inspires people to aim for better things in school and elsewhere.

Erica

Erica, 30, moved from the world of fashion to teaching. She has a bachelor's degree in fashion merchandising and spent five years as a successful personal shopping, always keeping up with the latest styles. She joined an alternative teaching certification program in the southcentral U.S., and upon completing it, Erica switched to teaching. For nine years, Erica has been a dedicated CTE teacher at a high school. She teaches family and consumer science.

Andy

Andy, 48, holds 34 years of peace officer service experience under his belt, and his public safety insight is second to none. Despite lacking a formal college degree, real-life events led him to pursue a career in education. Andy embarked on a fresh career phase by finishing a combination of online and in-person teacher certification in the dynamic southcentral region of the U.S. For the past seven years, Andy has devoted himself as a high school CTE instructor

specializing in public safety. His route into teaching wasn't typical, as he entered the teaching world from the field, without prior training. Andy's hands-on knowledge and enthusiasm for teaching benefit his students. With steadfast dedication, he educates and inspires future public safety professionals.

Manny

Manny, who was 41 when the study took place, has a master's in leading education. He worked as a public safety officer for 15 years, keeping the peace and helping the community. Manny switched to teaching after finishing an online course for teaching certification in the southcentral region of the U.S. Now with six years of teaching under his belt, he is a CTE teacher in high school. His classes center on law enforcement and public safety, showing his pledge to improve society. Manny switched from working in law enforcement to teaching driven by his deep wish to shape future public safety pros. In the classroom, Manny builds an environment where students think and use what they learn in actual situations, teaching them the skills and knowledge for law enforcement success. A dedicated teacher, Manny cares about good schoolwork and being active in the community. He uses his experience as a public safety officer to improve the performance of his students in education.

Mike

Mike, who was 37 years old when this study was conducted, is a master's degree holder in educational leadership. Before he started his teaching career, Mike worked for 12 years as a certified medical assistant, gaining a wealth of knowledge in delivering critical medical support and compassionate care. Mike moved into teaching after completing an alternative teaching certification program while living in the southcentral region of the U.S. Now, Mike works in the secondary school system as a lateral entry CTE teacher, where he has made a substantial

contribution over the previous five years. Mike teaches allied health sciences and knows a lot about helping through medicine. He moved from treating patients to teaching because he wants to train new medical workers. Mike makes sure that his classroom is an ideal place for learning—that is, a place where students can learn how to harness education into real-life experience and change. He gives students the base and the hands-on skills they need to do well in the health field.

Richard

Richard, who was 42 at this time of the study, earned a master's degree in educational leadership. He worked as an auto mechanic and owned a car repair business for 12 years before switching to teaching. Richard completed an online teaching certification course in the southcentral region of the U.S. and now has been a CTE teacher for six years. He teaches automotive technology in high school using his industry experience and is committed to growing new car mechanics. In class, he helps students learn by doing and shares key skills for being good at fixing cars. As a teacher, Richard focuses on both school success and job training. He uses his deep work experience to teach students important things and skills they need to thrive in the automotive industry.

Rebecca

Rebecca holds a master's degree in educational leadership and was 45 years old at the time of the study. With seven years of experience as an IT specialist in the field, she switched to teaching after completing an online teaching certification program in the southcentral region of the U.S. Now Rebecca serves as a dedicated CTE teacher at a high school and has done so for four years. She specializes in teaching cybersecurity, which is critical in today's computer-based world. Rebecca's reason for moving from the tech sector to the classroom was two-fold: She

aimed to teach her students important abilities and knowledge and wished to do it. Thus, her classroom acts as a place where students can grow their cybersecurity abilities, preparing them to face the future challenges of digital security.

Results

This section presents three main themes and nine subthemes resulting from the research. The data obtained from individual interviews, focus groups, and audio journal prompts generate information identifying themes and subthemes. The themes of supportive leadership, instructional support, and teacher quality are established after the analysis of all participant-reviewed transcripts. These common themes create the structural and textural descriptions of the participants' lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

Individual interviews and focus group meetings are conducted online and recorded using Zoom meeting software. Zoom automatically transcribes recordings, after which I manually reviewed the transcriptions and asked participants to check for accuracy. Participants completed an audio journal about their experiences with self-efficacy at a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States. All digital documents and recordings were stored on a password-protected laptop in a secure location. This chapter methodically categorizes the key themes and subthemes based on the interview questions, focus group sessions, and participant audio journal responses, highlighting lateral entry CTE instructors' experiences with self-efficacy at a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States. This section provides a list of the research questions, an enumeration table (Yocum et al., 2015), and a narrative explanation for all themes and subthemes.

Research Questions

Central Research Question

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe experiences of self-efficacy development in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States?

Sub-Question One

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe their professional development experiences with self-efficacy development in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States?

Sub-Question Two

How do lateral entry CTE teachers in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States describe their experiences with receiving instructional support within their home campuses?

Sub-Question Three

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe their physical and physiological experiences in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States with regard to self-efficacy?

Table 6

Themes & Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes		
Supportive Leadership	Teacher Mentorship	Feedback	Reflection
Instructional Practices	Classroom Management	Student Engagement	
Professional Development	Teacher Quality	Pedagogical Training	Collaboration

Supportive Leadership

90% of participants recognized supportive leadership as being an influence in shaping their lived experiences as lateral entry CTE teachers at Samson High School. Elements of this theme appeared across all sources of individual participant interviews, focus groups, and audio journal response data. Each participant was requested to provide a comprehensive account of their encounters as a lateral entry CTE teacher at a secondary school. Each participant discussed their initial three years of probationary teaching. Individually, they looked at the interactions they had with their administrators and how those experiences influenced their teaching ability.

Manny, for example, attributed administrator support as an important component of feeling confident in their teaching position. He compared his experience with a different school district where he previously held a CTE teacher position. Manny elaborated on how the administration at his present school actively secures funds and enhances the quality of various CTE programs, indicating that the significance of the programs are understood. Manny emphasized that students are attracted to the school not only because of the teachers but also due to the appealing programs.

Erica, for her part, attributed staying for eight years at the same school because it was where she felt the most support during her first three years as a teacher. She has been at her current school for nine years, the entire length of her teaching career. Erica explained that there had been a complete change in the school administration and her previous coworkers have all left. Most returned to their previous professional industry. Erica elaborated, “When I first entered the teaching field, the current administration put us at the forefront...I felt supported as a teacher and have newfound confidence to try new things in the class.”

These examples are strong evidence for the theme of supportive leadership because they highlight the direct impact that administrators' support can have on teachers' confidence, job satisfaction, and willingness to innovate in their classrooms. In Manny's case, he directly attributes his confidence in his teaching position to the support he receives from the administration. By comparing his current experience with a previous one where he didn't feel as supported, Manny emphasizes the significance of administrative backing in creating a positive teaching environment. The administration's proactive approach to securing funds and investing in CTE programs demonstrates a commitment to enhancing the teaching experience, which fosters teacher confidence and job satisfaction. Manny's observation that students are attracted to the school because of the supportive leadership further reinforces the positive impact of such support on both teachers and students.

Similarly, Erica's experience underscores the importance of supportive leadership in teacher retention and job satisfaction. Despite witnessing a complete turnover in school administration and the departure of her previous coworkers, Erica's decision to stay at the same school for nine years is directly linked to the support she received during her initial years as a teacher. The shift in administration could have been disruptive, but Erica's positive experience with the initial leadership instilled confidence and loyalty in her. Her willingness to try new things in the classroom is a testament to the supportive environment created by the administration, which prioritized and empowered its teachers. Overall, both examples illustrate how supportive leadership can foster a positive work environment, enhance teacher confidence, and ultimately contribute to teacher retention and student success.

Table 7*Supportive Leadership Enumeration Table*

Open Codes	Enumeration of open-code appearance across data sets	Theme	Subtheme
Guidance	21	Supportive Leadership	Teacher Mentorship
Mentorship	36		
Coaching	29		
Communication	11		Feedback
Observation	25		
Evaluation	7		
Review	11		Reflection
Assessment	9		
Introspection	31		

Teacher Mentorship

In their focus group, participants discussed their experiences with the supports that have been put in place by their district to help with instruction. Three codes—guidance, mentorship, and coaching—were clustered to form the subtheme of teacher mentorship, and these codes appeared 86 times in the collected participant interview transcripts, focus group transcripts, and audio journals.

Individually, participants looked at their experiences with their mentor teacher and the influence that connection had on shaping their teaching careers, then expressed the reasons why they believed mentorship had the greatest influence on them as lateral entry CTE teachers. Dana stated, “I had a very good first year teaching...and then I had my Master teacher across the hall...So, it was awesome.” Participants frequently mentioned how this level of guidance influenced their feelings of success in the classroom. When prompted to elaborate on experiences

with their teacher mentorship, Mike reflected on his teacher mentorship experience, noting that he had a mentor during his entire three-year probationary period as a teacher. Mike also thought back to his time being mentored. Indeed, he had a mentor for his full three years of starting out as a teacher. He compared this to his old job at a different school where he got a mentor for the first year. Mike gave a shout-out to his headteacher, who was his mentor and met with him every week. Those talks were key in helping him grow into a good teacher. He wrapped up by highlighting the huge help this mentoring gave him, which made him a better teacher.

During the group discussion, Anna agreed that a single year as a mentor isn't enough to grow skills or really understand the subject because there's not much coaching. Anna also said, "My mentor was excellent and provided me with considerable assistance...I've had exposure to exceptional teachers, which has been more beneficial than professional development opportunities. Despite my mentorship lasting only a year, I felt the need for as much support as possible, particularly in my first year. Unfortunately, there isn't enough support available for us." These examples provide evidence for the subtheme of teacher mentorship within the broader theme of supportive leadership. Experienced teachers and principals show that guiding new CTE teachers is key to helping them grow and do well in their careers. Dana's story shows that good guidance makes teaching a better experience. The support Dana received from an experienced teacher emphasizes the significant influence that guidance and mentorship have on feelings of success and satisfaction in the classroom. This demonstrates how supportive leadership, embodied by experienced mentors, results in a good work setting for new teachers.

Feedback

Three codes—communication, observation, and evaluation—were clustered to form the second subtheme of feedback. This subtheme emerged when participants were asked to think

back to when they were first-year lateral entry CTE teachers and to describe their experience with the level of instructional support received during that time. In total, these codes appeared 44 times in the collected participant interview transcripts, focus group transcripts, and audio journals. Individually, participants looked at the experiences of lateral entry CTE teachers' experiences with self-efficacy was a result from the thematic category of teacher mentorship. More than half of the participants expressed feelings of empowerment and autonomy and the impact it had on their early years of teaching. Mike described his relationship with his academic dean, saying, "Every time I walked into the office of the academic dean, I walked out a better teacher. Because of the open dialogue in communication. She took the time to listen and helped problem-solve. She always made time for the communication that took place in her office."

In response to how school districts could support lateral entry CTE teachers in secondary schools to feel more confident in their roles, Dana suggested, "Not just observations from administrators that consist of a score, your performance level, and what you did wrong." More than half of the participants stated that their observations did not provide the feedback needed for improvement. Rebecca shared that she was immediately thrown into the classroom and had to figure things out on her own. She just had to run with it, with little to no time to prepare. Rebecca recalled her first observation was very intimidating, stating, "I don't even think the observer was a CTE administrator. I don't remember discussing my mistakes or receiving guidance on how to improve or do things differently."

Participants highlighted how crucial it is to talk in helpful ways and have backing from mentors or bosses. They talked about times when good talks like these made their teaching better. Mike's academic dean helped him teach better by talking and solving problems together. However, Dana's suggestion reflects a common way of thinking among participants regarding

traditional observation methods in providing meaningful feedback for improvement. Rebecca's account stresses how crucial it is to have helpful support systems, as she describes being left to navigate teaching challenges alone—that is, without adequate preparation or guidance following observations. Rebecca's account stresses how crucial it is to have helpful support systems. She talks about tackling classroom troubles on her own. She had no proper prep or tips to follow up with after her observation. Rebecca's experience shows that the lack of feedback or coaching can shake a teacher's belief in themselves and their skills to teach well.

The experiences of the participants highlight how important feedback is for helping and giving tools to lateral entry CTE teachers that will enable them to thrive at their jobs. This is important when we look at how supportive leadership helps teachers do well in their work. Effective feedback not only contributes to individual teacher growth but also foster a culture of support and collaboration within a school district. Addressing the challenges in current feedback practices is essential for cultivating supportive leadership environments that facilitate teacher success and ultimately benefit student learning outcomes.

Reflection

Three codes—review, assessment, and introspection—were clustered to form the subtheme of reflection. In total, these codes appeared 51 times in the collected participant interview transcripts, focus group transcripts, and audio journals. Individually, participants looked at their experiences when asked during focus group sessions to describe their confidence levels experienced in effectively engaging and instructing students from different backgrounds and learning styles. During the discussion, the participants reached a consensus that having the ability to reflect on their instructional practices hadn't been consistently provided to them.

The essence of the subtheme was captured in a statement shared by Ben, who said, “I remember...I think one of my first lessons. I gave my students an assignment with like 60 vocabulary words. I thought that was normal because well no one showed me otherwise. Just like Rebecca I just ran with it. No one took the time to set me down reflect on my day and learn different teaching strategies.”

Many of the participants agreed with Ben’s response and expressed that from the onset of their teaching career, it had been a sink-or-swim environment. Richard, with over 25 years of teaching experience as an automotive teacher, explained that he had never been under the supervision of an administrator, even including principals, with a background in CTE. He expressed the belief that having someone familiar with automotive content, such as an administrator or instructional support specialist, would have been beneficial throughout his teaching career. Reflecting on his experience, he emphasized the necessity of working with individuals who can provide insights into classroom interactions, assessments, and feedback to succeed in the teaching profession.

The third subtheme, reflection, highlights the crucial role of introspection and self-assessment among CTE teachers within the broader theme of supportive leadership. With codes such as review, assessment, and introspection appearing frequently in participant transcripts, it becomes evident that the ability to reflect on instructional practices is integral to teacher development. Participants discussed their experiences of confidence levels in effectively engaging students from diverse backgrounds and learning styles, emphasizing the lack of opportunities for reflection. The finding under the subtheme shows how new lateral entry CTE teachers often find themselves navigating the challenges of teaching without proper guidance or opportunities for reflection. The reflection subtheme brings an awareness of the need for

administrators to provide structured opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practices, receive feedback, and accessing specialized support. By prioritizing reflective practices, supportive leaders can empower teachers to improve their instructional methods, enhance student engagement, and ultimately contribute to positive learning outcomes.

Instructional Practices

Across all three sources of data, elements of instructional practices emerged prominently, capturing the attention of 70 percent of participants. Through interviews, focus groups, and audio journal responses, participants shed light on their experiences with instructional support opportunities and their impact on effective teaching for all student populations. Dana expressed her perspective and stressed the need for enhanced support within the realm of career and technical education, saying, “I think CTE needs more support. I don’t recall opportunities for instructional support being offered or anyone coming to visit my classroom.”

Participants consistently emphasized the importance of having their instructional practices evaluated. 90% of participants perceived student engagement and comprehension of the CTE curriculum as barriers hindering their success in the classroom. Dana continued, “No one has said...you are doing this wrong or here is an easier or less stressful way of doing this. I think that there needs to be specialists in CTE that like, you know, they’re helping teach CTE teachers how to be a CTE teacher.”

Bill reflected on the challenges faced by students with limited English proficiency in understanding medical terminology within the course, stating, “In medical terminology, my students with limited English proficiency struggle to understand the medical terms in the course.” Bill continued the discussion by adding, “Each chapter gets more challenging as we go. The ability to communicate the various concepts effectively across language barriers can be very

frustrating for my students and burdensome to me as the teacher. I want my students to find success in my classroom.”

Rebecca echoed similar sentiments, underscoring the complexities of teaching cybersecurity to students with diverse learning, saying, “Teaching cybersecurity to students with diverse learning needs requires me to differentiate teaching strategies so that I accommodate the different learning styles in my classroom.” After some thought, she added, “I spend a lot of time modifying assignments. I was told I should do these things, but no one has sat me down and showed me how to do this. Not even in my certification program.”

Instructional practices emerged as a significant theme across the different data sources. The participants shared their experiences with instructional support and its impact on effective teaching, especially in diverse learning environments. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of evaluating teaching methods to overcome barriers to student engagement and comprehension. The participants expressed a desire for specialized support to address academic integration into the CTE curriculum. Participants’ reflections on supporting students with diverse needs highlighted the necessity of adaptive instruction and practical guidance. The instructional practice theme emphasizes the vital role of instructional practices in promoting student success and the need for tailored support to enhance teaching effectiveness across different educational environments.

Table 8*Instructional Practices Enumeration Table*

Open Codes	Enumeration of open-code appearance across data sets	Themes	Subtheme
Clinical Teaching	28	Instructional Practices	Classroom Management
Classroom Environment	2		
Hands-On Learning	18		Student Engagement
Connection	13		
Involvement	11		

Classroom Management

The first subtheme emerged when four codes—alternative education, clinical teaching, and classroom environment—were clustered to form the subtheme of classroom management when the participants were asked about their thoughts and experiences on their teaching certification programs. In total, these codes appeared 76 times in the collected participant interview transcripts, focus groups, and audio journals. Nearly every participant spoke about their experience with their alternative education programs prioritizing academic content delivery over building strong classroom management skills.

During our interview, Ben said, “Looking back at my program, I would say...the focus was more on the theory of teaching in the classroom and did provide opportunities for hands-on, practical experience in classroom management.” He contrasted this with the experience of traditional students who typically undergo clinical teaching, whereas lateral entry teachers like himself observe classrooms that are in session for 20 to 30 hours. Ben candidly admitted, “As a new teacher, I struggle to effectively implement classroom management techniques.” This quote

summarizes the challenges faced by novice educators in translating theoretical knowledge into practical classroom skills.

Andy also touched on the assumption when he said, “There is a stigma that there are no classroom management issues for CTE teachers in general.” During the focus group session, Richard shed light on the perceptions surrounding CTE courses, stating, “In CTE courses, they are considered fun and easy classes,” while also acknowledging that they are often viewed as electives. He further elaborated on the assumption that CTE courses do not hold students to the same academic rigor as academic courses. Richard emphasized the disconnect between students’ understanding of how these courses relate to future career opportunities, noting that freshmen, sophomores, and even juniors may struggle to grasp this connection. Reflecting on his experiences in the auto shop, Richard expressed concern about student behavior, stating, “There are many times throughout the day when I have redirected my students...safety is my number one concern.” These quotes describe the challenges CTE teachers face in managing student expectations and fostering a deeper understanding of the value of vocational education.

The emergence of the subtheme of classroom management reflects a critical aspect of lateral entry secondary teachers’ experiences. Codes such as alternative education, clinical teaching, and classroom environment underscore the challenges faced by novice educators in prioritizing practical classroom management skills. With these themes appearing 56 times across various data sources, it’s evident that participants overwhelmingly highlight the lack of emphasis on classroom management in alternative education programs, focusing instead on academic content delivery. Ben’s reflection on his program highlights the struggle to bridge theoretical teaching methods with practical skills, a sentiment echoed by many lateral entry CTE teachers. Additionally, Andy and Richard’s insights reveal prevalent assumptions and perceptions

regarding classroom management issues in CTE courses. Richard's account highlights the challenges of managing student behavior and fostering student understanding of the value of vocational education, highlighting the need for targeted support in classroom management for CTE teachers. There is an importance of addressing classroom management training within teaching certification programs to better equip lateral entry CTE teachers for the demands of real-world teaching environments.

Student Engagement

The exploration of student engagement emerges as a subtheme influencing lateral entry secondary CTE teachers in the teaching profession. Across interviews, focus groups, and audio journals, the significance of hands-on learning, connection, and involvement becomes evident, with these themes recurring 42 times in participant transcripts. Participants consistently express their role in guiding students toward their passions and career paths, underscoring the profound impact of fostering student engagement. In his interview, Andy stated, "The law enforcement courses that I teach offer my students hands-on learning experiences. We have crime labs, fingerprinting workshops, and driving simulations. We also participate in competitions." His account clarifies how law enforcement courses not only captivate students but also prepare them for future careers and educational opportunities.

Similarly, Mike emphasized, "These are industry-standard certifications students are earning. Upon graduation, many of them can make up to \$17 an hour." He further explained the commitment of CTE students, stating, "CTE students have to find time outside of the classroom to meet a certain number of training hours." Mike continued, "Students stay after school, they come on the weekend." Then, when reflecting on the dedication required, he said, "I have students whom I have seen graduate years ago who are now sending me invites to their nursing

school graduation.” This illustrated the lasting impact of CTE education on students’ lives. At one point, Mike also touchingly said, “The feeling you have when you see your student at CVS, behind the counter as a pharmacy technician—you cannot help but be proud.”

In essence, the findings explain the multifaceted nature of student engagement and stress the complex challenges faced by lateral entry CTE teachers in effectively reaching all students. Participants’ narratives shed light on the critical need for comprehensive instructional support and ongoing professional development to address diverse learning needs and foster inclusive learning environments. This subtheme shows the dynamic relationship between educators and their students, emphasizing the importance of providing meaningful learning experiences that resonate with students’ interests and aspirations. Andy’s and Mike’s testimonies represent the transformative potential of CTE in preparing students for the workforce and beyond. By nurturing student engagement and facilitating real-world learning experiences, lateral entry teachers play a vital role in shaping the next generation of skilled professionals, contributing to both individual student success and a strong American workforce.

Professional Development

In examining the experiences of lateral entry CTE teachers, 70% of participants recognized professional development as being an influence in shaping their lived experiences at a secondary school in the Southcentral region of the United States. Professional development was identified as the third theme. Participants articulated the critical role of ongoing training and support in enhancing their effectiveness as educators. Dana emphasized the need for continuous pedagogical training, stating, “I need ongoing pedagogical training it would help me and teachers with my background acquire a deeper understanding of effective instructional techniques and apply them.” Mike agreed by stressing the importance of mentorship during his probationary

teaching years, saying, “I had a mentor my entire probationary period—three years of teaching. I had weekly meetings with her. And that’s how I developed the skills necessary to become a teacher.”

Participants stressed the vital role of professional development opportunities that are tailored to the requirements of CTE classrooms. They emphasized the necessity for training in critical areas such as classroom management, instructional strategies, and curriculum development. Richard, drawing from his extensive teaching experience, expressed frustration at the absence of specialized support in his content area, noting, “None of them could actually help me teach my students...It would have been helpful for me to have an administrator or an instructional support specialist who was familiar with automotive content.” These reflections show the pressing need for targeted professional development that will equip lateral entry CTE teachers with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to feel successful in their positions and the overall quality of CTE education.

Table 9*Professional Development Enumeration Table*

Open Codes	Enumeration of open-code appearance across data sets	Themes	Subtheme
Assessment	7	Professional Development	Teacher Quality
Differentiation Abilities	36		
Content Knowledge	29		
Training Effectiveness	11		Pedagogical
Application in Practice	25		
Content Knowledge	7		
Review	11		Collaboration
Assessment	9		
Introspection	31		

Teacher Quality

In exploring the experiences of lateral entry CTE teachers in secondary schools, three codes—assessment practices, differentiation abilities, and content knowledge—were clustered to form the subtheme of teacher quality. In total, these codes appeared 27 times in the collected participant interview transcripts, focus group transcripts, and audio journals. Participants consistently conveyed the challenges they faced in reaching all students, citing barriers related to language proficiency and varying academic levels. Ben’s poignant reflection encapsulated the struggles encountered, particularly in teaching medical terminology to students with limited English proficiency. He clarified, “In medical terminology, my students with limited English proficiency struggle to understand the medical terms in the course. Each chapter gets more challenging as we go.” Similarly, Rebecca expressed the challenges of teaching cybersecurity to students with diverse learning needs, highlighting the importance of differentiated teaching

strategies. She explained, “I was told I should do these things, but no one has sat me down and showed me how to do this. Not even in my certification program.”

The exploration of teacher quality among lateral entry CTE teachers not only addressed the diverse student needs within the classroom but also highlighted the crucial role of ongoing professional development in achieving this goal. Participants’ narratives vividly portray the challenges encountered in reaching all students, particularly those with limited English proficiency or diverse learning needs. Ben’s account of teaching medical terminology to students struggling with language barriers and Rebecca’s reflections on the complexities of teaching cybersecurity underscore the necessity of differentiated teaching strategies to effectively engage every learner. These insights emphasize the critical need for tailored professional development initiatives aimed at enhancing teachers’ ability to meet the diverse needs of CTE classrooms.

Moreover, participants’ emphasis on supportive leadership underscores the transformative impact of administrative support in fostering teacher confidence and effectiveness, further reinforcing the significance of ongoing professional development. Through investment in professional growth opportunities tailored to the unique demands of CTE teaching, educational institutions can empower lateral entry CTE teachers to navigate the complexities of the classroom effectively, ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes and the overall quality of CTE education. Thus, the subtheme of teacher quality contributes to the broader theme of professional development by highlighting the essential role of ongoing training and support in equipping teachers with the skills and strategies needed to effectively address the diverse needs of CTE classrooms and fostering supportive leadership, ultimately enhancing the overall quality of CTE education for lateral entry teachers.

Pedagogical Training

The second subtheme that emerged prominently among the codes, training effectiveness, application in practice, and content knowledge were clustered to form the subtheme of pedagogical training and its critical role in enhancing teaching effectiveness within the context of lateral entry CTE education. In total, these codes appeared 43 times in the collected interview transcripts, focus group transcripts, and audio journals. Participants were asked to reflect on the professional development opportunities provided to them to support classroom management, instructional delivery, and lesson planning. Dana articulated the need for ongoing pedagogical training, emphasizing its potential to deepen understanding of effective instructional techniques and their practical application in the classroom. She stated, “I need ongoing pedagogical training. It would help me and teachers with my background acquire a deeper understanding of effective instructional techniques and to apply them.” This sentiment was echoed by a consensus among participants during focus group sessions, highlighting the codes, meaningful assessments, instructional techniques, and measuring student progress. In total, these codes appeared 41 times in the collected interview transcripts, focus group transcripts, and audio journals.

Manny illustrated the significance of pedagogical training through a practical example, expressing concern over ineffective teaching practices observed within his professional context. He critiqued a teacher’s approach of providing questions and answers for midterm preparation, highlighting the lack of meaningful assessment and instructional strategies. Manny emphasized the importance of pedagogical expertise in fostering effective teaching practices, stating, “So, one of my teachers gave the questions and answers for the midterm to their students to study and prepare for the test. How can he measure progress by doing that?” Manny continued to explain, “He will not be able to successfully teach in a certification program because he doesn’t know

how to really teach well—like, he gives answers to the summative assessments and has the student primarily completing worksheets.” Andy further underscored the significance of pedagogical training in preparing lateral entry CTE teachers to effectively navigate the unique assessment requirements within their content areas. He highlighted the importance of continuous pedagogical development in honing assessment skills to measure student progress and enhance learning outcomes, stating, “We do not have the same standardized testing requirement as academic core teachers, but we do have industry-standard certification.”

Participants believe that continuous pedagogical training will allow teachers to hone their assessment skills so they can effectively measure student progress and increase student learning outcomes. In essence, these accounts emphasize the indispensable role of pedagogical training in equipping entry CTE teachers with the necessary skills and strategies to deliver high-quality instruction, assess student learning effectively, and foster continuous improvement in educational outcomes.

Collaboration

In participant responses regarding the influences on their performance as a lateral entry CTE teacher in a secondary school, elements of collaboration appeared across all three sources of data for most participants and was the last subtheme to emerge. Three codes—sharing ideas, peer support, and collaborative projects—were clustered to form the subtheme of teacher quality. In total, these codes appeared 18 times in the collected interview transcripts, focus groups, and audio journals. Collaboration emerged as the third prevalent subtheme identified across all data collection methods. Participants consistently expressed a desire for increased opportunities to collaborate with colleagues who teach similar content areas. In Rebeca’s audio journal responses regarding the influences on her performance as a lateral entry CTE teacher in a secondary school,

she highlighted the impact of a lack of collaboration on her morale and effectiveness. She recounted feeling isolated during a professional learning community (PLC) meeting, stating, “Every Wednesday morning, we have a PLC meeting with teachers that have the same content area and I was alone in our Wednesday PLC meeting. It really got me down. I’m having trouble with lesson planning...it’d be helpful to hear from others. Today was just overwhelming.”

Rebecca admitted how this lack of engagement dampened collaboration, negatively affecting her day. She explained that lesson planning has been particularly difficult, and she is currently struggling with a program glitch. She also expressed feeling isolated, which adds to her challenges. “[I feel] like I’m on my own island is just too much sometimes,” she said.

Participants also recognized the importance of cross-curricular collaboration in promoting college and career readiness and integrating academic and technical education. Richard reflected on the evolving expectations for CTE teachers, stating, “I have been teaching for 30 years. It has been during the last five to seven years that we [CTE] teachers have been asked to help bridge the academic and technical skill gap.” Dana echoed this sentiment, expressing her opinion about the pressure to ensure students graduate with both academic knowledge and practical skills to remain competitive in the workforce. She stated, “There’s this pressure to make sure that all of my students graduate with both academic knowledge and practical skills so they will be competitive in today’s workforce.”

However, participants also acknowledged that collaboration experiences, particularly for new teachers, are not always positive. Andy shared his experience of attempting cross-curricular collaboration with an English teacher, which did not materialize as expected. He said, “When I entered this district, I was so excited and, of course, eager to prove that I was open to working with everyone to make great experiences for our students. I approached an English teacher about

working together on a project with my law enforcement students. She really wasn't interested in any ideas I had. She'd be like, 'You could try it if you want, but I don't think it'll work.'" These accounts underscore the importance of fostering a collaborative culture within educational institutions to support teacher effectiveness and student success. They highlight the need for structured opportunities for collaboration, as well as the challenges and complexities inherent in cross-curricular partnerships.

Three central themes were revealed by the data: supportive leadership, instructional practices, and professional development. Within the theme of supportive leadership, subthemes include teacher mentorship, a desire for feedback, and an opportunity for reflection. The analysis of instructional practices reveals subthemes such as classroom management, student engagement, and professional identity. Finally, professional development emerges as a critical theme, encompassing subthemes of teacher quality, pedagogical support, and collaboration. These findings provide a nuanced understanding of lateral entry CTE instructors' experiences with self-efficacy in a secondary school setting.

Outlier Data and Findings

In this section, we address noteworthy deviations observed among participants during interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires. While the majority of participants conformed to the identified themes, two outliers emerged, presenting distinctive perspectives. These outliers serve to illuminate the intricate nature of lateral entry CTE teachers' circumstances and disrupt overarching assumptions. Their narratives contribute diverse dimensions to our comprehension of lateral entry CTE teachers' experiences, emphasizing the significance of acknowledging individualized needs and competencies over sweeping generalizations. By delving into these

exceptional cases, we gain a comprehensive understanding of the spectrum of experiences encountered by lateral entry CTE teachers.

Outlier Finding

An inconsistent finding emerged from three participants, who, unlike their counterparts has a unique view of their positions and program within their CTE department. These participants spoke often of support and recognition. These participants were also identified as the only CTE teachers, specifically lateral entry CTE teachers, to receive stipends for their career and technical education student organizations (CTSO). These participants' circumstances stress the significance of targeted support for niche programs within the broader CTE landscape. Furthermore, this particular outlier status sheds light on the disparities in program-specific support across different educational settings. These participants benefit from proactive and invested leadership that prioritizes the advancement of all CTE programs. All participants that teach different CTE content struggled with a perceived lack of attention and resources directed toward their respective domains. This outlier not only heightens the importance of equitable distribution of support but also highlights the need for tailored strategies to address the unique requirements of diverse CTE programs. By recognizing and addressing the unique needs of individual programs within the educational institution, stakeholders can foster a more inclusive and supportive environment beneficial to teacher success and student achievement.

Outlier Finding

In contrast to the views of the majority of participants regarding the significance of pedagogical training, the second outlier data obtained from two participants offered a distinct perspective rooted in the belief that industry-specialized training or subject-matter expertise holds greater influence in determining teaching effectiveness within the realm of CTE. These

lateral entry CTE teachers expressed a belief that practical knowledge and firsthand experience within their specific industry or vocational field are of greatest importance for delivering meaningful instruction. The participants emphasized the value of refining industry-specific skills and staying informed on emerging trends and technologies relevant to their vocational area, asserting that such expertise directly improves their ability to prepare students as they enter a competitive labor market. This outlier data highlighted that industry-specialized training reflects a deeply held belief in the practical application of knowledge within the CTE classroom. The participants acknowledge that while pedagogical support certainly holds value, it is the combination of instructional strategies with industry-relevant insights that truly empowers lateral entry CTE teachers to excel in their roles and career pathways.

Research Question Responses

This study was designed to address the central research question examining the experiences that lateral entry CTE teachers experience within secondary schools. In this section, direct answers to the central research question and the sub-questions surfaced across all three qualitative data collection methods—individual interviews, focus groups, and audio journal prompts—and are provided based on the findings of this study. Further analysis of the findings is discussed in Chapter Five.

Central Research Question

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe experiences of self-efficacy development in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States? In the ever-changing field of secondary education in this region, CTE teachers who enter the profession laterally face a complex process of developing their self-confidence. This process is influenced by various factors, such as having supportive leaders, receiving instructional support, collaborating with

others, and effectively combining academic and technical education. Reiterating the opinions of her colleagues, one participant emphasized the crucial importance of continuous pedagogical training in improving instructional methods. She stated, “I require ongoing pedagogical training, as it would assist both me and teachers with similar backgrounds in developing a more profound comprehension of effective instructional techniques and implementing them.” Investing in administrative support for CTE programs and providing instructional assistance enhances instructors’ confidence and proficiency. However, the lack of collaboration negatively affects morale and performance, highlighting the crucial need for peer support. In addition, educators are faced with the urgent need to close the gap between academic and technical abilities. To prepare students for the constantly changing job market, this requires integrating academic knowledge and practical skills in teaching. Within the complex process of self-efficacy growth, lateral entry CTE teachers demonstrate resilience, adaptability, and a strong dedication to strengthening the upcoming cohort of proficient professionals.

Sub-Question One

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe their professional development experiences with self-efficacy development in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States? Lateral entry CTE teachers in such schools describe their professional development experiences with the development of self-efficacy. They highlight themes such as having supportive leadership, receiving instructional support, engaging in collaboration, and integrating academic and technical education. Participants highlight the influence of administration involvement in CTE programs on their self-assurance and proficiency, with one individual stating, “Administration allocates funds.” Furthermore, another participant emphasizes the importance of continuous pedagogical training in improving instructional methods, stating, “I

would like ongoing pedagogical training, as it would assist both myself and teachers from similar backgrounds in gaining a more profound comprehension of effective instructional techniques and implementing them.” However, when collaboration is lacking, issues develop, as indicated by participants feeling alone during professional learning community sessions. In addition, educators have the challenge of closing the gap between academic and technical skills. They aim to combine theoretical knowledge and practical abilities in their teaching to adequately prepare students for the demands of the job market.

Sub-Question Two

How do lateral entry CTE teachers in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States describe their experiences with receiving instructional support within their home campuses? Lateral entry CTE teachers provide insights on their experiences with instructional support in their home campuses, specifically about self-efficacy. These insights revolve around themes such as supportive leadership, instructional support, collaboration, and the integration of academic and technical education. Participants emphasize the crucial significance of administrative investment in CTE programs for promoting confidence and competence. This is illustrated by one participant’s remark: “Administration secures funds.” Further, continuous pedagogical training in refining instructional methods is emphasized by another participant’s comment: “I require ongoing pedagogical training. It would assist both myself and teachers with similar backgrounds in gaining a more profound comprehension of effective instructional techniques and implementing them.” However, the lack of teamwork presents issues, as indicated by participants’ reports of feeling alone during professional learning community sessions. In addition, educators face the challenge of closing the gap between academic and

technical abilities. All CTE teachers are expected to incorporate theoretical knowledge, in addition to academic and vocational skills, into their teaching to prepare students for the job market. These experiences showcase the lateral entry CTE teachers' tenacity, adaptability, and unwavering dedication to educating the upcoming cohort of skilled professionals.

Sub-Question Three

How do lateral entry CTE teachers describe their physical and physiological experiences in a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States with regard to self-efficacy? When considering their experiences, lateral entry CTE instructors disclose a complex combination of physical and physiological reactions related to self-efficacy. One teacher described the concrete requirements of their job, expressing a sense of isolation during professional learning community meetings. This participant emphasized the difficulty of lesson planning and program effectiveness. She voiced frustration as she explained her attempts to diagnose the cause of a program malfunction, stating, "It would be beneficial to discover whether other educators are facing similar challenges and if they can provide recommendations or aid. I experienced a sense of isolation as if I were on an island." This led to a feeling of being overwhelmed during the entire day. This highlights the demanding nature of their duties, among intermittent instances of susceptibility. The participants' candid thoughts on their early teaching experiences emphasize the emotional intricacies that come with the profession. In addition, participants highlight the significance of controlling stress levels and giving priority to self-care routines to maintain effectiveness. These accounts provide insight into the diverse experiences of lateral entry CTE instructors, highlighting their ability to adapt and remain committed in the face of the difficulties they encounter in their field.

Summary

The data collected for this study offers vivid descriptions of the lived experiences and perspectives of lateral entry CTE teachers, drawing from qualitative data obtained through individual interviews, focus groups, and audio journals. Through rich narratives, the study delves into multifaceted aspects of teachers' experiences within CTE education, shedding light on their challenges, successes, and areas of growth. The analysis of this data revealed three overarching themes: supportive leadership, instructional practices, and professional development. Subthemes within supportive leadership included teacher mentorship, feedback mechanisms, and reflective opportunities. Transitioning to the second theme of teacher quality, subthemes such as classroom management, student engagement, and professional identity were explored. Finally, the theme of professional development uncovered subthemes including pedagogical support and collaboration. Outlier data was identified, and the central research question and sub-questions were answered. This chapter examined the outcomes of data collection and provided answers to the central research question and sub-questions posed in the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative transcendental phenomenological inquiry was to describe lateral entry career and technical education (CTE) teachers' experiences with self-efficacy within a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States. Motivated by the identified research gap highlighted by Fletcher et al. (2021), Zakariya (2020), and Zirkle et al. (2019), which underscores the need for qualitative investigations into CTE teachers' self-efficacy experiences at the secondary school level, this study is grounded in Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory. Chapter Five commences with a broad discussion of the study, followed by a comprehensive synthesis of thematic findings encompassing empirical evidence and theoretical discussions. The chapter then outlines implications for theory advancement, empirical exploration, and practical applications. Additionally, the chapter addresses the limitations and delimitations of the study, proposing two recommendations for future research. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Discussion

After conducting data analysis, the findings revealed significant insights into the experiences of lateral entry CTE teachers in secondary schools within the southcentral region of the United States and how they influenced their level of self-efficacy. The data collections align with the literature associated with Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy, specifically teacher self-efficacy. Three overarching themes and eight subthemes appeared in this study, and this section outlines the study's thematic findings, providing a comprehensive overview.

Additionally, I will discuss implications for policy and practice, theoretical and methodological implications, limitations, and delimitations, as well as recommendations for future research.

Summary of Thematic Findings

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to describe lateral entry CTE teachers' experiences with self-efficacy within Samson High School in the southcentral region of the United States. This study's findings revealed three overarching themes: supportive leadership, instructional practices, and professional development. Subthemes within supportive leadership included teacher mentorship, feedback mechanisms, and reflective opportunities. Transitioning to the second theme of teacher quality, subthemes such as classroom management, student engagement, and professional identity were explored. Finally, the theme of professional development uncovered subthemes including pedagogical support and collaboration. Each theme highlights the critical need to address barriers and ensure equitable access to resources and support for lateral entry CTE teachers, as a teacher's confidence will differ depending on these four sources of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). By understanding and addressing these themes, educational leaders and policymakers can work toward enhancing teacher efficacy and improving student outcomes in CTE programs, ultimately fostering a more supportive and effective learning environment. Among the subthemes identified were teacher mentorship, feedback, reflection, classroom management, and teacher quality. These subthemes shed light on the multifaceted nature of teacher efficacy, which is influenced by such factors as performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological impacts.

In addition to the identified themes and subthemes, the study revealed complex insights into the challenges and opportunities encountered by lateral entry CTE teachers in their pursuit of self-efficacy. Through interviews, focus groups, and audio journaling and thematic analysis,

participants shared their experiences navigating the difficulties in obtaining purposeful instructional practice and professional development within the CTE domain. These insights draw attention to the importance of ongoing support and collaboration among educators, as well as the need for targeted interventions to address areas of concern, such as classroom management and instructional delivery. By utilizing these insights, educational leaders can tailor support to meet the unique needs of lateral entry CTE teachers, thereby enhancing their confidence and effectiveness in the classroom.

Moreover, the study clarified the role of organizational culture and climate in shaping teacher efficacy and instructional effectiveness. Participants highlighted the impact of school culture on their sense of belonging and professional growth, emphasizing the need for inclusive and supportive environments where all educators feel valued and respected. Furthermore, the study gives emphasis to the importance of leadership practices in fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation within educational institutions. By promoting transparency, accountability, and collaboration among stakeholders, school leaders can create an environment that is conducive to teacher empowerment and student success.

Finally, the study emphasized the connection between teacher efficacy and student outcomes in CTE programs. Participants shared their perspectives on building meaningful relationships with students and how that influenced teacher confidence and student engagement, highlighting the importance of fostering a positive and supportive learning environment for all learners. By prioritizing teacher development and student-centered pedagogical approaches, educational leaders can create opportunities for academic achievement and career readiness among CTE students. Ultimately, by applying the information collected from this study, educational leaders and policymakers can implement meaningful changes to enhance teacher

efficacy and improve student outcomes in CTE programs, thereby fostering a more equitable and effective learning environment for all stakeholders.

Critical Discussion

The study revealed three significant findings between the literature review, data collection, and analysis. The first finding was that fostering a positive and empowering environment provides vicarious experiences and physiological arousal, both sources of self-efficacy that make a substantial difference in the experiences of lateral entry CTE teachers in Samson High School. The second finding, that reflective practice in enhancing teaching effectiveness among lateral entry CTE teachers in Samson High School improves instructional effectiveness over time, aligns with performance accomplishments, a source of self-efficacy. The third finding, that lateral entry CTE teachers in the southcentral region of the United States can have the ability to integrate academic and technical education, aligns with mastery experiences, the last source of self-efficacy.

Fostering A Positive and Empowering Environment

The study's findings point to the importance of fostering a positive and empowering environment for lateral entry CTE teachers in secondary schools. Central to this environment is the role of supportive leadership, where administrators prioritize and invest in CTE programs, demonstrating a commitment to the success of teachers and students. Participants praised their school leaders for actively seeking resources to improve CTE courses, showing a commitment to supporting teachers. Participants emphasized the proactive stance of school leaders in securing resources and avenues for enhancing CTE opportunities. This investment not only acknowledges the importance of CTE educators, but also provides them with a sense of validation and support that is crucial for their effective teaching (Goss & Sonnemann, 2019). Through structured

mentorship, lateral entry CTE teachers benefit from the knowledge and guidance of experienced CTE teachers. Master CTE teachers can assist them in developing requisite skills and fostering confidence in their instructional practice. Vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1997) during the teaching practice, specifically observation of mentor teachers' modeling practices, shape teachers' teaching self-efficacy and professional identity—a prominent element in facilitating the assimilation and professional growth of new instructors (Anderson et al., 2023). This aligns with existing research emphasizing the important function of mentorship in supporting teacher effectiveness (Wang et al., 2020), hence emphasizing its significance in fostering a sense of belonging and pedagogical expertise among CTE instructors.

Fostering a positive and empowering environment aligns well with Bandura's (1977) theoretical framework. Fostering a positive and empowering environment influences sources of self-efficacy known as social persuasion and vicarious experiences. Social persuasion (Bandura, 1997) involves receiving verbal encouragement, support, and constructive feedback from others, which can strengthen one's belief in their capabilities (Anderson et al., 2023). When educators create a positive and empowering atmosphere in the classroom or workplace, they provide encouragement, praise, and constructive feedback to individuals, fostering a sense of confidence and competence. Establishing a supportive atmosphere can be facilitated by administrators, coworkers, mentors, or even students, who provide confidence and validation of an individual's capabilities. When individuals receive positive reinforcement and support from others, they are more likely to develop a belief in their ability to succeed, which enhances their overall feeling of self-efficacy (Johnston, 2020). Creating a supportive and empowering atmosphere is in line with the origin of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) and linked to social persuasion (Bandura, 1997), as it includes the impact of verbal motivation and assistance from others.

Although the results mostly support Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy, there are some apparent exceptions. An important departure is the focus on the proactive involvement of school leaders in obtaining resources and support for CTE programs. Bandura's (1977) theory recognizes the significance of external elements, such as social support, in influencing self-efficacy. However, its main emphasis lies on people's internal beliefs and experiences. The study's focus on the external impact of supportive leadership indicates that organizational characteristics, beyond individual perspectives, have a significant influence on promoting self-efficacy among lateral entry CTE teachers. Furthermore, Bandura's (1977) theory highlights the significance of mastery experiences in developing self-efficacy. However, the study underlines that organized mentorship and vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1977) also play a crucial role in shaping instructors' self-beliefs (Anderson et al., 2023; Smith & Ingersoll, 2021). This emphasizes the intricate nature of the various aspects that impact an individual's belief in their own abilities within educational environments. It also proposes that (Bandura, 1977), framework should be broadened to include considerations of how organizational dynamics and interpersonal interactions contribute to the development of teacher confidence. In general, although the results mostly support Bandura's (1977) theory, the differences highlight the necessity for a more thorough understanding of the factors that impact self-efficacy in educational settings.

Reflective Practice in Enhancing Teaching Effectiveness

Reflective practice has become a crucial element in improving the quality of teaching among lateral entry CTE teachers. This aligns with Bandura's idea of performance success. I discovered that the ability for instructors to thoroughly analyze their teaching approaches and experiences was essential for enhancing teaching effectiveness among lateral entry CTE teachers at Samson High School. According to Bandura (1997), this concept is consistent with the notion

that achieving success in one's actions through performance accomplishments can enhance self-confidence and effectiveness. When educators engage in self-reflection on their instructional methods and witness favorable results, it might enhance their assurance in their aptitude to deliver successful teaching.

Engaging in self-reflection and analysis allows teachers to gain insights from their experiences and enhance their instructional effectiveness gradually. This aligns with Bandura's (1977) concept of performance successes, where individuals develop confidence by achieving success (Wyatt, 2018). By engaging with mentors and peers, lateral entry CTE teachers obtained confirmation of their skills and concepts, strengthening their confidence in their teaching effectiveness. Receiving positive feedback from others enhances one's belief in their own talents. This is consistent with the Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy, which is influenced by social persuasion.

The participants' narratives clearly demonstrated the physiological effects of reflective practice, aligning with Bandura's (1977) notion of how emotions and physiology might influence self-efficacy. Participating in introspective practices like journaling and peer conversations enabled instructors to effectively handle stress, control emotions, and develop resilience when confronted with difficulties (Johnson & Louws, 2022). One participant expressed that engaging in reflective practice assists them in managing the challenges of teaching, resulting in decreased stress levels and fostering a sense of well-being. Through recognizing and managing their emotions, educators cultivated an enhanced understanding of themselves and the ability to control their emotions, which ultimately enhanced their effectiveness in the classroom.

Reflective practice not only enhances teaching practices but also plays a crucial role in increasing the emotional well-being of instructors. The significance of fostering an environment

that encourages and supports reflective practice is shown by this twofold advantage. In addition, ongoing pedagogical training and collaborative assistance amplify the beneficial effects of reflective practice by equipping teachers with supplementary tools and frameworks to improve their teaching practices (Shanks et al., 2020). The experiences of lateral entry CTE teachers emphasize the crucial importance of reflective practice in promoting teaching effectiveness and self-confidence. Through the process of self-reflection, the acceptance of constructive feedback, and the effective management of emotional problems, these educators have the opportunity to improve their instructional practices and bolster their confidence in their teaching abilities. This is consistent with academic research on the significance of reflective practice in the growth of teachers and the wider field of education.

Integration of Academic and Technical Education

Integration of academic and technical education resonated with Bandura's (1977) concept of vicarious experiences. Participants explored the challenges of bridging the gap between academic knowledge and practical skills in their instructional practices. They emphasized the importance of preparing students for the demands of the job market through cohesive academic-technical integration. For instance, one participant highlighted the need for collaborative lesson planning that incorporates both theoretical concepts and hands-on application, stating, "Integrating academic and technical content helps students see the real-world relevance of what they're learning in the classroom." This emphasis on integration allows students to witness the practical application of academic concepts, fostering a deeper understanding of subject matter and aligning with Bandura's (1977) notion of vicarious experiences, where individuals learn from observing others in similar situations.

Participants discussed the role of targeted instructional support and professional development initiatives in addressing the challenges of academic-technical integration, aligning with Bandura's (1997) concept of social persuasion. Collaborative professional learning communities and workshops provided opportunities for teachers to share strategies, resources, and best practices for integrating academic and technical content effectively (Liu et al., 2021). As one participant stated, "Collaborating with colleagues from different disciplines allows us to design interdisciplinary projects that engage students and promote deeper learning." Through these collaborative efforts, lateral entry CTE teachers received affirmation and encouragement from their peers, reinforcing their belief in their instructional efficacy and aligning with the source of self-efficacy related to social persuasion (Kang et al., 2022).

Furthermore, participants highlighted the need for authentic assessments that assess both academic understanding and technical skills, resonating with Bandura's (1977) concept of performance accomplishments (Kang et al., 2021). By designing assessments that require students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, teachers can provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their mastery of academic and technical concepts. As one participant noted, "Incorporating performance-based assessments allows students to showcase their skills in a meaningful way, bridging the gap between theory and practice." These successful experiences in assessment design and implementation contribute to students' confidence in their abilities, aligning with Bandura's (1977) source of self-efficacy related to performance accomplishments (Johnson & Leung, 2020).

The integration of academic and technical education not only enhances student learning outcomes but also improves teacher collaboration and professional growth. Teachers who participate in interdisciplinary projects and professional development activities are more likely to

adopt innovative instructional strategies that benefit student engagement and achievement (Jones & Dexter, 2022). This collaborative approach to teaching and learning fosters a supportive environment where educators can continuously refine their practices, thereby enhancing their self-efficacy and effectiveness in the classroom.

Implications for Policy and Practice

The implications for policy and practice stemming from the findings of the study are multifaceted and offer valuable insights for educational stakeholders and policymakers aiming to enhance the effectiveness of CTE programs and support the professional growth of lateral entry teachers. This study points to the critical importance of supportive leadership within educational institutions. Policymakers and school administrators should prioritize investing in CTE programs and fostering a positive teaching environment through supportive leadership practices.

Implications for Policy

The implications for policy from this transcendental phenomenological study suggest several actionable steps for policymakers to consider in improving CTE programs and supporting lateral entry teachers. First, policymakers should prioritize the implementation of structured mentorship programs for new lateral entry CTE teachers. These programs should pair them with experienced educators who can provide guidance, feedback, and practical strategies to navigate the challenges of teaching (Smith & Ingersoll, 2021). Second, there is a need for increased investment in professional development opportunities focused on pedagogical training and instructional effectiveness, ensuring that all teachers, regardless of their entry pathway, have access to ongoing support (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Policymakers should advocate for the establishment of transparent communication channels and collaborative problem-solving processes to facilitate meaningful feedback beyond performance evaluations. Finally, efforts

should be made to integrate academic and technical education within CTE programs, emphasizing interdisciplinary projects, authentic assessments, and real-world application of academic concepts to better prepare students for college and career pathways. By addressing these policy implications, policymakers can contribute to creating a more supportive and effective learning environment for both teachers and students in CTE programs.

Implications for Practice

The implications for practice highlight actionable steps that educational institutions and administrators can take to support lateral entry CTE teachers and enhance the effectiveness of CTE programs. Institutions should create mentorship programs that pair new teachers with experienced educators. These programs should provide opportunities for regular feedback, guidance, and collaboration to support the professional growth of new teachers (Smith & Johnson, 2022). Schools should invest in ongoing professional development programs that are tailored to the needs of lateral entry CTE teachers, focusing on pedagogical training, instructional strategies, and classroom management techniques (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Developing a culture of open communication and collaboration among teachers, administrators, and stakeholders is crucial. Institutions should create platforms for meaningful dialogue, feedback, and problem-solving to effectively address the diverse needs of CTE programs (Johnston, 2020). Finally, there should be intentional efforts to integrate academic and technical education within CTE curricula, promoting interdisciplinary approaches, project-based learning, and real-world application of knowledge. By implementing these practices, educational institutions can create a supportive environment that nurtures the growth and success of lateral entry CTE teachers while enhancing the quality and relevance of CTE programs for students (Jones & Dexter, 2022).

Empirical and Theoretical Implications

This section addressed the theoretical and empirical implications of this study. The theoretical implications concur with the foundational framework of Bandura's theory of self-efficacy as a guiding lens. Bandura's (1977) theory theorizes that individuals' beliefs in their capabilities profoundly influence their actions, aspirations, and resilience in the face of challenges. The empirical implications are addressed by explaining the lived experience of lateral entry CTE teachers in Samson High School.

Empirical Implications

Empirically, the findings of this study provide valuable insights into the factors that contribute to the development and enhancement of teacher self-efficacy among lateral entry CTE educators. By examining the experiences of teachers within the southcentral region of the United States, this study offers context-specific knowledge that can inform educational policies and practices aimed at supporting teacher efficacy and improving instructional quality in CTE programs. The identification of supportive leadership, instructional support, mentorship, and reflective practice as key themes underscores the importance of systemic interventions that address these factors to promote teacher self-efficacy and student success (Goss & Sonnemann, 2019). The empirical findings highlight the interconnectedness between teacher self-efficacy, instructional effectiveness, and student outcomes, emphasizing the need for holistic approaches to teacher professional development and support (Johnson & Louws, 2022). The empirical implications of this study provide actionable insights for educational stakeholders and policymakers seeking to enhance teacher efficacy and improve the quality of CTE education (Wang et al., 2020).

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical framework that supports this transcendental phenomenological study that described lateral entry CTE teachers' experiences with self-efficacy within a secondary school in the southcentral region of the United States is Bandura's self-efficacy theory. Offering significant empirical and theoretical implications, this pioneering theory advances that individuals' beliefs in their capabilities shape their behaviors and outcomes. This study sheds light on how teacher self-efficacy influences instructional practices and professional development in the context of CTE education. By exploring the experiences of lateral entry CTE teachers through the lens of the self-efficacy theory, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on teacher efficacy and its impact on educational outcomes.

Recent research by Johnson and Louws (2022) has highlighted the role of teacher self-efficacy in predicting instructional quality and student engagement in CTE classrooms. Similarly, findings from a study by Wang et al., (2020) emphasized the importance of teacher self-efficacy in creating professional development programs and enhancing instructional effectiveness in educational settings. Through observation, modeling, and social interaction, teachers can acquire and reinforce beliefs in their capabilities, ultimately influencing their instructional practices and student outcomes. By drawing on these theoretical perspectives, this study provides an understanding of the factors that contribute to the development and maintenance of teacher self-efficacy in CTE.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations and delimitations in this study provide a nuanced understanding of its scope and applicability. One of the limitations of this study lies in its focus on lateral entry CTE teachers within a specific geographic region in the southcentral United States. While this focus

allows for in-depth exploration of the experiences of this particular group, it also limits the generalizability of the findings to other contexts and populations of CTE educators (Lee et al., 2021). The reliance on qualitative methods, such as interviews and focus groups, may introduce potential biases or subjectivity in data collection and analysis (Smith & Flowers, 2019). Despite efforts to alleviate these biases, the interpretive nature of qualitative research inherently involves a degree of subjectivity.

The delimitations of this study include its exclusive focus on CTE teacher experiences and perspectives, without considering other stakeholders such as administrators, students, or parents. While CTE teachers play a central role in shaping instructional practices and classroom dynamics, their experiences represent only one aspect of the broader educational ecosystem (Wang et al., 2020). This study's emphasis on Bandura's self-efficacy theory as a theoretical framework may overlook other relevant theoretical perspectives that could enrich the understanding of teacher experiences in CTE education. Exploring complementary theories, such as Weiner's (1986) attributional theory of motivation and emotion, could provide a more holistic understanding of the factors influencing teacher efficacy and instructional quality in CTE settings (Johnson & Leung, 2021).

Despite these limitations and delimitations, this study offers valuable insight into the experiences and challenges faced by lateral entry CTE teachers. By addressing these limitations, researchers and educators can better interpret and apply the findings of this study in educational policy and practice. The delimitations provide opportunities for future research to explore different geographic regions, populations, and theoretical frameworks, thus advancing our understanding of teacher effectiveness and student success in CTE programs.

Recommendation for Future Research

Recommendations for future research stemming from this study offer avenues for further exploration and refinement of our understanding of lateral entry career and technical education (CTE) teachers' experiences and professional development. First, future research should seek to expand the geographic scope of the study to include diverse regions and contexts, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing teacher efficacy and instructional quality in CTE programs. By examining variations across different educational settings, researchers can identify contextual factors that may impact teacher experiences and effectiveness.

Second, future studies could adopt a longitudinal approach to examine the long-term effects of supportive leadership, mentorship, and reflective practice on teacher efficacy and student outcomes in CTE education. Longitudinal research designs would enable researchers to track changes in teacher beliefs, practices, and student achievement over time, providing insights into the sustainability and effectiveness of professional development initiatives. Additionally, incorporating quantitative measures alongside qualitative methods could facilitate a more nuanced analysis of the relationships between variables and outcomes.

Third, additional research could explore the intersectionality of identities, experiences, and contexts among lateral entry CTE teachers, considering factors such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, and prior career experiences. By examining how intersecting identities shape teachers' perceptions of efficacy and their interactions with students and colleagues, researchers can develop targeted interventions to support diverse educators and promote equity and inclusion in CTE programs.

Fourth, future research should focus on exploring the outlier data identified in the study, particularly regarding program-specific support and industry-specialized training for lateral entry CTE teachers. Firstly, investigating the factors contributing to the unique experiences of teachers receiving program-specific support, such as stipends for involvement in career and technical education student organizations (CTSO), can provide valuable insights into effective strategies for promoting success in specialized CTE areas. Comparative studies across different educational contexts can help identify systemic barriers and inform efforts to promote equity and inclusivity in CTE programs. Secondly, further research is needed to understand the perspectives and experiences of teachers prioritizing industry-specialized training over pedagogical support. Longitudinal studies tracking the professional courses and instructional practices of teachers with vocational expertise can provide insights into the long-term impact of this approach on teacher efficacy and student success in CTE programs. By addressing these areas of inquiry, future research can enhance our understanding of the diverse experiences and needs of lateral entry CTE teachers and inform the development of evidence-based strategies to support their professional growth and effectiveness in the classroom.

Finally, there should be research that explores innovative approaches to teacher professional development in CTE education, leveraging technology, online platforms, and community partnerships to provide accessible and tailored support for lateral entry teachers. By integrating emerging pedagogical practices, digital tools, and industry partnerships into professional development initiatives, educational stakeholders can ensure that CTE teachers are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to prepare students for success in the 21st-century workforce.

Conclusion

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to describe self-efficacy experiences among lateral entry secondary CTE teachers employed by a school district in the southcentral region of the United States. Through thematic analysis, it was found that supportive leadership, instructional support and mentorship, professional development, and reflective practice are significant and transformative to lateral entry CTE teachers. The themes also uncovered challenges in integrating academic and technical education.

The study discusses the factors contributing to self-efficacy, as described in Bandura's theory, including mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological effects. These sources significantly influence teachers' beliefs, practices, and interactions. Future research should focus on understanding the process that these factors interact and influence teacher efficacy. Research should also focus on practices that uncover new insights and strategies for professional development and instructional effectiveness among lateral entry CTE educators.

The study concludes by emphasizing two key points: the strong influence of supportive leadership and mentorship on lateral entry CTE teachers, and the importance of focused professional development and reflective practice. Strong leadership and mentorship empower teachers to overcome the specific challenges of integrating into the CTE environment, improving both teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Comprehensive mentorship programs and leadership training should be prioritized to empower teachers and enhance educational quality. Additionally, continuous, specific professional development programs are essential for addressing the unique challenges faced by CTE educators.

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Appendix A

IRB Approval



November 10, 2023

Chunnisee Jackson
Shariva White

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY23-24-498 LATERAL ENTRY SECONDARY CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

Dear Chunnisee Jackson, Shariva White,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

Appendix B

Permission Email and Letter for District Personnel

Date: 11/10/2023

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a philosophical doctorate in Education. The years I have spent working in this district have been pivotal in my teaching career, and I wish to somehow give back through intentional research that will benefit the state of the field of career and technical education. The title of my research project is “Lateral Entry Secondary Career and Technology Teachers’ Perceptions on Teacher Self-efficacy: A Phenomenological Study”, and the purpose of my research is to understand lateral entry secondary CTE teacher experiences with self-efficacy.

I am writing to request your permission to contact members of your organization to invite them to participate in my research study. I am also requesting approval to conduct parts of this study on site at John Marshall High School. Participants must be 21 years of age or older, and current employees with the school district located in the Southcentral region of the US. Participants have obtained their teaching certification by way of an alternative certification program. Participants are required to have a minimum of three academic years of comprehensive high school CTE teaching (direct) experience. A minimum of five years of work experience outside of the field of education in their content area.

Participants will be able to take part in one-on-one online interview, participate in an online focus group, and complete a personal audio journal response. Participants will be asked to validate their recorded responses. It should take approximately 45-90 minutes to complete the interview, 45-90 minutes to complete the focus group, and 30 mins to complete the audio journal, in the classroom at the of their workday. Participants will be asked to validate their recorded responses. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential, and participant identities will not be disclosed.

A recruitment letter will be emailed to your 2023-2024 CTE teachers. Once I am able to recruit 5 – 10 teachers with 3 or more years of classroom teaching experience in CTE, there will be no other obligations requested from the school. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants will be welcome to discontinue participation at any time. Results will remain

confidential, and findings are aimed at improving professional development and special educator support systems in our districts. I will be more than happy to share this research with your leadership team upon completion.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, respond by to me at this email A permission letter document is attached for your convenience to return to this email. I intend to get this underway prior to the start of this upcoming school year, pending university approval.

Sincerely,

Chunnisee T. Jackson
Liberty University Ph.D. of Education Candidate

Appendix C

Participant Recruitment

Dear [Recipient Name]:

As a doctoral student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree in Education. The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to describe and understand lateral entry secondary CTE teacher experiences with self-efficacy, and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 21 years of age or older, current employees with the school district located in the Southcentral region of the US. Participants have obtained their teaching certification by way of an alternative certification program. Participants are required to have a minimum of three academic years of comprehensive high school CTE teaching (direct) experience. A minimum of five years of work experience outside of the field of education in their content area.

If interested in participating in the study, participants will be asked to complete an online screening survey. Once eligibility is determined, participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in an online individual interview, online focus group, and complete a personal audio journal response. Participants will be asked to validate their recorded responses. It should take approximately 45-90 minutes to complete the interview, 45-90 minutes to complete the focus group, and 30 mins to complete the audio journal. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential, and participant identities will not be disclosed.

To determine your eligibility to participate in this study, please [click here](#) to complete the online survey. You may contact me at [REDACTED] with any questions.

A consent document will be provided via email if you are deemed eligible to participate in this study. The consent document will contain additional information about my research. It will be provided in separate email correspondence following the initial screening process. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me prior to the study beginning.

I look forward to the opportunity of learning through your experiences gained in the field of career and technical education over your career.

Sincerely,

Chunnisee T. Jackson
Liberty University Ph.D. of Education Candidate

Appendix D

Screening Survey

To determine eligibility to participate in this study, please answer the below questions. The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to describe and understand the lateral entry secondary CTE teacher experiences with self-efficacy.

1. Please provide your first and last name.
2. Please provide your contact information (email and phone number) that can be used during the duration of the study.
3. What was your career prior to teaching?
4. How many years were you in private or public industry prior to teaching?
5. Do you have a bachelor's degree?
 - Yes
 - No
6. How did you obtain your teacher certification?
7. If you completed your teacher certification through an alternative program, was the program;
 - Online
 - In person – classroom
 - Hybrid
8. What CTE content are you certified to teach?
9. How many years have you been a certified CTE teacher
 - 0 – 3 years
 - 4 – 6 years
 - 7 – 9 years
 - 10 – 13 years or more
10. How long have you been teaching at your current high school?

Appendix E

Consent Form

Title of the Project: Lateral Entry Secondary Career and Technology Teachers' Perceptions on Teacher Self-efficacy: A Phenomenological Study

Principal Investigator: Chunnisee Jackson, Ph.D. Candidate, Liberty University

Invitation to be part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. Participants must meet the following eligibility;

- 21 years of age or older.
- Current employees with the school district located in the Southcentral region of the United States.
- Obtained a teacher certification through an alternative teacher certification program.
- A minimum of three academic years of comprehensive high school CTE teaching (direct) experience.
- A minimum of five years of work experience outside of the field of education in their content area.

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 this phenomenological study is to understand lateral entry secondary CTE teacher experiences with self-efficacy that are employed with the Johnson County School District

What will happen if you take part in this study?

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

1. Participate in a one-on-one, individual interview with the researcher. The interview will last from 45 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes and will be audio and video recorded. The interview will take place after school hours in an online format such as Google Meet or Zoom.
2. Participate in a focus group with other participants. This focus group will take about 45 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes to complete and will be audio and video recorded. This will take place after school hours in an online format such as Google Meet or Zoom.
3. Participate in completing an audio journal. This will take about 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete and will be audio-recorded. This will take place after school hours in the school classrooms.
4. Verify the accuracy of the interview and focus group transcripts. This process will only take about 15-30 minutes to complete.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

The direct benefits participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study are having their voices heard about the career they have opted to remain in for their career thus far.

This study supports providing high-quality and equitable professional development and support to lateral entry career and technical education teachers (CTE) within all American school systems.

Benefits to society include your experiences becoming a part of the larger research base that exists in relation to CTE teacher's retention and interventions against burnout.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

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

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant interview and focus group responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted in person and where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- The school names and identities will be placed under a pseudonym and concealed for this research study.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in focus group settings. While discouraged, other members of the focus group may share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and in a locked filing cabinet. The data may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted, and all physical records will be shredded.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

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

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

What are the costs to you to be part of the study?

There are no costs associated with the participation of this study.

Does the researcher have any conflicts of interest?

The researcher serves as a Ph.D. candidate and is in the process of completing a dissertation in accordance with the degree requirement. There are no conflicts of interest and no financial benefit from this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

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

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

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the following 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 **Ms. Chunnisee Jackson**. If you have questions pertaining to this study, **you are encouraged** to contact her at [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Shariva White, at [REDACTED].

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

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the 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 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.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you agree to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

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

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

Printed Subject Name

Printed Subject Name

Appendix F

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Please describe yourself as an educator. SQ3
2. Please explain your level of education and tell me about the work experience that you have in your content area? CRQ
3. What are your thoughts on the teaching certification program you completed? CRQ
4. Please tell me how long you have had experience in a secondary school setting and how would you describe your current school's culture? SQ3
5. Please give me your first thoughts and opinions on the level of support that the administration provides to the CTE program in your school? SQ2
6. What are your views on instructional support affecting a teacher's level of self-efficacy? SQ2
7. Describe the kind of professional development training that is provided to you that is intended to assist with classroom management, development and delivery of instruction, and planning. SQ1
8. Explain the impact that existing district or classroom supports have had on helping you to be successful in your instructional practices? SQ!
9. As a CTE teacher, please describe how you contribute to helping to create high student test scores on federal and state tests? CRQ
10. As a CTE teacher, describe how you can make a difference in your students' lives? CRQ
11. What is your knowledge of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2016? In your opinion, how has it impacted CTE programs? Describe how it has influenced CTE negatively? SQ2

12. Please identify how you are kept current on the trades that require skills training in high-growth fields, such as cybersecurity, nursing, and engineering that are offered through your school's CTE program? SQ3
13. Describe your experiences with the professional development you have received to support your ability to provide college and career readiness of the students that come from special populations (special education, economically disadvantaged, ELL, other)? SQ2
14. Describe what has influenced you to remain in the teaching profession. SQ3
15. Is there any additional information you would like to provide? SQ3

Appendix G

Focus Group Questions

1. As part of this focus group, we would like to gather insights from instructors like you.
Please tell us your name and how long you have been a lateral entry CTE teacher. CQR
2. What is it like being a lateral entry CTE teacher in a secondary school? SQ3
3. As lateral entry CTE teachers, please explain the confidence levels experienced in effectively engaging and instructing students from different backgrounds and learning styles? CRQ
4. Thinking about those feelings, how have professional development opportunities influenced lateral entry CTE teachers' ability to effectively instruct all student populations? SQ3
5. Thinking about those feelings, how have instructional support opportunities influenced lateral entry CTE teachers to effectively instruct all student populations? SQ2
6. As CTE teachers, what could school districts do to help lateral entry CTE teachers in secondary schools feel more confident in their job? SQ3
7. What, if any, comments, concerns, or suggestions do you have for those who are interested in becoming a lateral entry CTE teacher in a secondary school? CRQ

Appendix H

Audio Journals

1. What positive or negative influences impacted your performance as a lateral entry CTE in a secondary school today? CRQ
2. What verbal feedback indirectly or directly influenced your performance day? SQ2
3. Compared to other lateral entry CTE teachers in a secondary school, how successful are you at doing your job to help students? SQ1
4. What feelings do you have about today's work experiences? Why? SQ3
5. Is there additional information you'd like to share, even if it's something we've spoken about? CRQ

Appendix I

Audit Timeline

Date:	Action Item:
11/10/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Received IRB approval from Liberty University. - Pasted approved IRB documents into manuscript appendices. - Requested site approval.
12/11/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site approval granted. - Received email list of CTE teachers in the district. - Set up Zoom and Calendly accounts to use for study. - Set up e-mail notifications for survey completion.
12/13/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Created a checklist to ensure each step of data collection is completed correctly once participants complete recruitment screener survey. - Set up e-mail notifications for survey completion. - Created a checklist to ensure each step of data collection is completed correctly once participants complete recruitment screener survey.
12/14/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Started recruitment. - E-mailed recruitment letter and recruitment screener survey. - Monitored recruitment survey responses. - Began sorting and identifying eligible participants.
12/22/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selected 10 participants that met participation criteria. - Selected participants that reflect a diverse group of individuals with different content areas. - Created files with pseudonyms for participant names and colleges. - E-mailed participation selection e-mails and consent forms. Asked participants to return signed consent form

	by 12/27/23.
12/27/23 – 1/12/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Received signed consent forms, e-mailed Calendly scheduling links, e-mailed Zoom links, and sent interview reminder e-mails. - Conducted first interview on 12/27/23. - Conducted last interview on 1/6/24. - Conducted first focus group meeting on 12/29/23. - Conducted focus group meeting on 1/6/24. - Received for audio journal response 1/3/24. - Received for audio journal response 1/12/24. <p>At this time, saturation was reached in the data; therefore, data collection had ended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All 10 participant interviews were conducted via Zoom between 12/28/23 and 1/12/24.
12/28/2023 - 1/12/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Printed submitted qualitative surveys as participants completed via SurveyMonkey. - Began analyzing and coding member checked interviews on 12/30/2023.
12/28/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emailed focus group scheduling invitation to all participants. - Sent Zoom links for selected dates to all participants.
12/29/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducted first focus group meeting and transcribed discussion.
1/6/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducted second focus group meeting and transcribed discussion.

12/30/2024 - 2/2/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Continued data analysis and coding of remaining member checked interviews, qualitative surveys, and focus group discussions.
2/3/2024 - 3/22/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Added participant data to chapter four.- Wrote drafts for chapters four and five.
3/22/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Send chapter four and five to Chair for formal review.