A TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY: EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS WITH PROVISIONAL LICENSURE WHILE WORKING IN THE CLASSROOM

by

Shawn Kristine Ruiz

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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APPROVED BY:

Dr. Nancy Dejarnette, Ed.D., Committee Chair

Dr. Sandra Battige, Ph.D., Committee Member

Abstract

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenological study was to describe self-efficacy through the lived experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia. The theory guiding this study was Bandura's theory on self-efficacy, as it explained the sources of self-efficacy. The central research question this study set out to answer was: What are the self-efficacy experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia? The subsequent sub-questions focused on each of the four sources of self-efficacy: (1) mastery, (2) vicarious experiences, (3) verbal persuasion, and (4) physiological and affective states. The methodological approach integrated key elements of the design method, including epoché, in preparation for the qualitative data collection that included a systematic approach to effectively conduct phenomenological research, using a survey, individual interviews, and focus groups while deriving the essence of the lived experiences. Data analysis revealed composite structural and textural descriptions where five themes emerged by implementing the research design of Moustakas: (a) the provisionally licensed educator, (b) teaching experiences, (c) formal training and observation, (d) performance feedback, and (e) frame of mind. The findings confirmed Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy and demonstrated that provisionally licensed teachers described having low teacher self-efficacy combined with a high sense of teacher self-efficacy dependent on the source.

Keywords: teacher self-efficacy, provisional teaching license, education preparation program, student engagement, classroom management, parent communication, time management

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my family and, most importantly, my supportive husband, Joe. You have always gone out of your way to support me in any endeavor I embark upon, and this process has been no different. Thank you for your continued sacrifice to our family and for picking up the slack at home throughout my dissertation journey. You were my biggest cheerleader and encourager, believing in me every step of the way. I love you!

To my children, Madison, Riley, Gabe, and Chase, thank you for your support, especially at the homework table, where I was often in "deep quiet." Being in school together at the same time has been memorable. Madison, I am so proud of you as you have overcome many challenges while working toward your undergraduate degree. Riley, I treasure all of your visits to my office and look forward to graduating with you. Gabe, I will continue to support you as you begin your time at Liberty. Chase, I look forward to celebrating your senior year of high school and graduating with you too.

To my dad, who taught me never to give up even when things get tough. I wish you could be here today to celebrate this milestone with me, but your love will remain in my heart forever. I miss you!

To my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who helped me persevere through the completion of this degree. God's word reminded me often to "Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always" (1 Chronicles 16:11, NIV).

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Unknowingly, a conversation that one professor had with me at the completion of my postbaccalaureate degree has never been forgotten. Dr. Gil, thank you for planting the seed of getting my doctorate so many years ago. I did it!

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List of Abbreviations

Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

Education Preparation Program (EPP)

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT)

National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ)

National Education Association (NEA)

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

Teacher Self-Efficacy (TSE)

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

Today's education foreshadows tomorrow's society as teachers equip students to reach their fullest potential, leaving a lasting footprint on the world (Bas, 2022; Özkul & Dönmez, 2022; Ozonur, 2021). Every student deserves qualified teachers prepared to face the classroom demands (National Education Association, 2022). The massive exodus seen today in the teaching profession is a considerable cause for concern as the long-term effects for stakeholders remain to be determined (Mentzer et al., 2019; Nguyen et al., 2020; Sutcher et al., 2019; Wiggan et al., 2021). School leadership has been left to find innovative solutions to mitigate the issue by hiring uncertified teachers using alternative routes to licensure to address the national teacher shortage (Jotkoff, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2020). Provisional licensure is a means to begin working full-time as a teacher before completing a traditional state-approved licensure program (Devier, 2019; Weiss et al., 2020; Wilhelm et al., 2021). Teacher self-efficacy (TSE) is an indicator of long-term success impacting effectiveness, instructional pedagogy, and student achievement in the classroom throughout pre-service and in-service years (Ciampa & Gallagher, 2021; Ma et al., 2022; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

Self-efficacy is believing in one’s capacity to complete tasks successfully while overcoming challenges (Bandura, 1977; Barni et al., 2019; Berg, 2022; Ciampa & Gallagher, 2021). A teacher's success equates to a student's success, which accentuates the need for teachers to believe in their ability to be effective in the classroom by meeting the needs of diverse learners (Berg, 2022). This transcendental phenomenological study described the self-efficacy of provisionally licensed teachers while working in the classroom. This chapter laid the foundation of TSE, beginning with background information on teacher requirements, including a historical

framework of educational reform initiatives, the paramount teacher shortage and teacher certification, and the social impact emphasizing the need for TSE in the context of theory. The current literature on the topic supports the problem and purpose statement. The theoretical framework of self-efficacy was discussed in relationship to its theoretical, empirical, and practical significance for teachers and students. In closing, the researcher presented the research questions, concluding the chapter with a summary of the abovementioned information.

Background

Bandura's (1977) seminal work outlined his social cognitive theory by laying the foreground of his self-efficacy theory, which was the theoretical underpinning of this research. Social cognitive theory broadly emphasizes the reciprocal influence of the individual, their behavior, and their interaction with the environment, all of which impact human action (Ofem et al., 2021). As a psychologist, Bandura described self-efficacy as the belief in one's ability to succeed despite challenges, instilling perseverance to achieve a desired outcome (Bandura, 1997). TSE perceptions continue to be researched and its effects on classroom management (Hettinger et al., 2023; Mccullough et al., 2022; Poulou et al., 2019), student achievement (Poulou et al., 2019; Thornton et al., 2020; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), teacher motivation (Bas, 2022; Aytaç, 2021; Poulou et al., 2019; Woolfolk Hoy, 2021), and quality of instruction (Poulou et al., 2019; Woolfolk Hoy, 2021). The role TSE plays on novice teachers has been compounded by the national teacher shortages (National Education Association, 2022; Schultz et al., 2023; Weiss et al., 2020; Wiggan et al., 2021) as more teachers are entering the classroom with less training, by passing traditional routes to licensure (Devier, 2019; Mentzer, 2019; Ofem et al., 2021; Redding, 2022; Schmidt et al., 2020; Zugelder et al., 2021). The following section describes the historical and social factors amplifying the necessity of TSE.

Historical Context

The historical evolution of teaching pertinent to this study includes educational reform initiatives (Griffen, 2022; Peterson et al., 2022), educator preparation programs (EPP) (Darling-Hammond, 2023; Lamboy, 2023; Weiss et al., 2020), teacher licensure (Green et al., 2020; Rose & Sughrue, 2020), and the national teacher shortage (Hingorani, 2023; Ofem et al., 2021; Sutcher et al., 2019) each providing a rich context of how we arrived at the challenges faced by educators today underscoring the importance of TSE thereby motivating this study. Societies that value student achievement see schools as a means for progress to equip students to be productive members and contributors to society (Fackler et al., 2021). As such, teachers are a predominant factor directly linked to student achievement (Fackler et al., 2021; Mccullough et al., 2022; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

The factors that have significantly shaped education and how student achievement is measured can be seen historically through a series of government initiatives impacting teachers today. As a result, education has increased academic accountability through standardized testing, thereby increasing the pressures teachers face responsible for student achievement gains (Fuchsman et al., 2023). The emphasis on student achievement is well-founded, as there are over a million fourth-grade students in public schools each year who are included in our nation's list of nonreaders (Drake, 2020). Thus, a brief chronological progression of the influential educational reform beginning with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was an initiative launched by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965 to raise standards for education through testing to ensure educational equity for students by providing funding for schools with low-income students (Peterson et al., 2022). However, the Coleman Report surprised stakeholders by reporting that student success has more to do with socioeconomic

status and relationships with family and friends than the sole emphasis placed on schools and teachers (Griffen, 2022). Nonetheless, the 1983 publishing of A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform made policymakers look closely at teacher quality and performance again (Peterson et al., 2022), shifting the focus from minimum competency to high-stakes testing (Moon, 2007). A few decades later, after achievement gaps were failing to close, President George W. Bush 2001 implemented the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), reauthorizing the ESEA by advocating for mandatory state standardized testing as a measurement of learning (Griffen, 2022; Peterson et al., 2022). The NCLB was pushed with such momentum that schools not scoring well would send a representative from the government to address effective teaching strategies with the threat of removing teachers and principals not meeting performance standards (Peterson et al., 2022) while requiring every student to have a 'high-quality teacher' (Lane, 2020; Schmidt et al., 2020). Later, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were developed in 2010 to ensure that students received the same instructional approach as preparation for college and career years by preparing them to succeed with standardized testing (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010). Most recently, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was introduced by President Barack Obama in 2015, mandating standardized testing for students from third grade to eighth grade, as this administration shifted the control to the state level while maintaining federal oversight (Peterson et al., 2022). This historical review on education reform directly relates to teachers, the pressures they face, and their instructional pedagogy, underscoring the importance of TSE as it has been linked to student achievement (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Reform initiatives have impacted educators as pressures to ensure effective instructional practices in the classroom have mounted (Nichols & Brewington, 2020).

Reflecting on the origin of teacher preparation brings us to the Law of 1647, which

required any town with more than 50 inhabitants to establish a school and choose a teacher, paving the way for public education (LaBue, 1960). This led to the inevitable necessity of preparing teachers for the classroom. Following the establishment of schools in 1823, Samuel Hall created the first teacher training school in America, believing that better teachers resulted in better schools; thereby, training teachers was paramount for attaining this purpose (Stone, 1923). It has been echoed, both past and present, that the impact of effective teachers stands alone compared to any other factor (Schneider, 2018). Shortly afterward, in 1837, the first Normal School in Massachusetts was created to train teachers in one year (LaBue, 1960). Subsequently, teacher certification was introduced and began to accelerate in the 19th century, gaining traction with the development of the first Normal Schools, later replaced in 1925 by the National Education Association (NEA) (LaBue, 1960). Teacher colleges were established, adding schools of education as part of professional education found within universities (LaBue, 1960).

The 20th century birthed the idea of teaching as a profession requiring state standards for certification by earning a teaching license (LaBue, 1960; Schneider, 2018). The first National Teacher's Examination in the 1930s was created, not without controversy, as a measurement for establishing teaching competence as a recognized profession by requiring it for teacher certification (LaBue, 1960). Doing so was a precursor to state certification requirements, as thirteen states in 1959 incorporated these proficiency examinations (LaBue, 1960). Additionally, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) joined together with other accreditation agencies, resulting in the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (Schneider, 2018), which provided state accreditation to allow teachers to move across state lines teaching from one state to the next (LaBue, 1960). Although certifications obtained from one state were recognized by another through reciprocity, it became

difficult for states to determine the equivalency of training (LaBue, 1960). Therefore, the ESEA introduced the term highly qualified teacher (HQT), which became a vital factor in teacher certification (Green et al., 2020) as policymakers for each state determined what requirements constitute a HQT, resulting in various definitions. The NCLB reform defined HQT as having a bachelor's degree, fully state-certified or licensed through demonstrating the necessary content knowledge for every core subject taught (Green et al., 2020). Later, the new ESSA removed the term HQT from the language found within its regulations, although it still includes some of the original HQT requirements (Green et al., 2020).

Education has felt the impact of reform initiatives and certification requirements, and now, there is a teacher shortage. Although teacher shortages are not new to the United States (Lamboy, 2023), having occurred in our history following periods like the Great Depression, our current crisis has been traced back to 2016 by experts (Hingorani, 2023; Sutcher et al., 2019). While most states are experiencing teacher shortages, there are variations of need by endorsement (Sutcher et al., 2019). Studies have revealed that COVID-19 further exacerbated the teacher shortage, resulting in teachers leaving the profession with 567,000 fewer public-school educators than before the pandemic began (Hingorani, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2020). Several factors contribute to our current teacher shortage, including job satisfaction (Huang et al., 2020; Sutcher et al., 2019), sustainable salaries (Hingorani, 2023; Lamboy, 2023; Sutcher et al., 2019), and difficult working conditions impacted by psychological well-being and self-efficacy (Hingorani, 2023; Ofem et al., 2021). Notably, teachers reporting a lack of job satisfaction, stress, burnout, and exhaustion are less likely to be as successful as their peers with a strong sense of efficacy (Hingorani, 2023; Yurt, 2022). These are critical considerations with the current instability in education due to teacher shortages (Hingorani, 2023; Ofem et al., 2021;

Sutcher et al., 2019) while at the same time the number of students entering EPPs is declining (Lamboy, 2023; Weiss et al., 2020).

Social Context

EPPs are tasked with training the next generation of educators in an everchanging classroom climate while developing a robust pedagogical foundation throughout the pre-service years to replace veteran teachers (Young et al., 2022; Ozonur, 2021). Furthermore, teacher education has been found to develop confidence in the classroom through practicums and clinical experiences during their preparation program (Darling-Hammond, 2023) and the necessary dispositions required for success as defined by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) (Young et al., 2022). As a result, teacher training today is exponentially critical as the demand for teachers increases (Darling-Hammond, 2023) with the need for differentiation (Eddy et al., 2020; Hassan, 2019) and a positive impact on student achievement (Fackler et al., 2020; Mccullough et al., 2022; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

Global Impact

Teacher shortages and the need for qualified teachers are not problems faced only in the United States (Mentzer et al., 2019). Similarly, a global crisis also impacts international teachers, specifically in the sciences (Mentzer et al., 2019). Some countries, including all but four states in the U.S., are filling the gap by recruiting qualified and unqualified teachers through alternate routes to licensure (Chan et al., 2021; Devier, 2019; NCTQ Databurst, 2020; Zugelder et al., 2021) putting the future of education in jeopardy as the qualification of a teacher is significantly related to student success. Notably, the global pandemic compounded the issue of teacher preparation, student achievement, and teacher shortages (National Education Association, 2022; Osenberg et al., 2021). Teacher preparation plays a significant role in retention, burnout, and

efficacy (Osenberg et al., 2021), as the crisis reveals fewer individuals enrolling in EPPs with an increased teacher exodus of those already working in the classroom (National Education Association, 2022).

Local Impact

A perfect storm has emerged with the importance of TSE, pressure for student achievement gains, alarming teacher shortages (Lamboy, 2023; Ofem et al., 2021), and the increasing number of teachers in the classroom under provisional licensure. Due to the teacher shortage, policymakers have recommended lowering certification requirements, including removing performance assessments like edTPA and paving the way for undocumented students to enroll in EPPs, creating alternate routes to licensure (Lamboy, 2023). The national teacher shortage has resulted in many states having more vacant positions and more uncertified teachers than ever (Nguyen et al., 2020). Schools with low socio-economic status are up to 10 times more likely to have uncertified teachers or teachers working outside their endorsement area (Mentzer et al., 2019). Specifically, Virginia, during the 2022-2023 school year, had 2,594 vacancies; in 2021-2022, there were 11,212 underqualified teachers out of 86,917, with 10% leaving the profession, while 2,786 completed their teacher preparation program (Nguyen et al., 2020). However, teachers who enter the classroom without following the traditional pathway to certification have increased attrition rates and feel less prepared for their responsibilities (Hingorani, 2023; Rosenberg et al., 2021).

Classroom Impact

The field of education has applied the framework of self-efficacy to teaching as it relates to student achievement (Alibakhshi et al., 2020). Research has found that improving self-efficacy increases positive outcomes for all stakeholders (Berg, 2022). High TSE is developed by creating

a systematic approach to increasing the self-efficacy of teachers, thereby increasing positive student outcomes in school (Thornton et al., 2020) like student achievement (Alibakhshi et al., 2020) and student enjoyment (Hettinger et al., 2021).

Developing TSE is essential to providing novice teachers the confidence to implement innovative teaching strategies (Wilhelm et al., 2021). Research suggests that high TSE increases retention in a profession where 40%-50% of new teachers leave education within the first five years (Rose & Sughrue, 2020; Wilhelm et al., 2021). TSE begins in an educator preparation program (EPP) that provides foundational pedagogical content knowledge (Chan et al., 2021; Scarparolo & Subban, 2021). Clinical practicums and student teaching give opportunities to practice effective instructional practices and classroom management, fostering self-efficacy (Mccullough et al., 2022).

Theoretical Context

Bandura's (1977) seminal work on his social cognitive theory (SCT) is grounded in the idea that efficacy is a product of a person's actions based on the belief in one's ability to be successful in completing a task (Klassen & Usher, 2010; Ozonur, 2021). SCT emphasizes that people have agency over their choices and behavior and are not solely recipients of circumstances in life (Klassen & Usher, 2010). Bandura (1977) later introduced self-efficacy as an essential consideration to his SCT, resulting in his self-efficacy theory. However, Bandura's social cognitive theory must first be understood before examining the construct of self-efficacy (Berg, 2022). The framework of SCT, initially referred to as social learning theory, is rooted in the belief that environment influences motivation, learning, and self-management, focusing on how motivation drives behavior (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Additionally, this theory emphasizes the need for an individual to control their circumstances by setting and executing

goals yielding personal accomplishment (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). In essence, a person will be more likely to prevail over challenging circumstances and pursue solutions by believing their effort will positively impact the outcome (Berg, 2022). In the classroom setting, this occurs when a teacher believes their influence can result in student achievement despite external factors working against student success (Berg, 2022).

Research has examined the motivating factors contributing to teacher behavior as a critical influence on student achievement through various theoretical lenses (Cents-Boonstra et al., 2020). One theoretical consideration is found within the psychological perspective of the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which is grounded in the idea that motivation is driven intrinsically (internal satisfaction), extrinsically (external satisfaction), or from psychological well-being (lack of satisfaction) (Rosli & Saleh, 2023; Ryan & Deci, 2020). Studies have used the SDT to explore what behaviors exhibited by teachers produced high student engagement and those connected with low student engagement (Cents-Boonstra et al., 2020). SDT emphasizes the need an individual has for autonomy (decision-making ownership), competence (the perception of success), and relatedness (community and belonging) as a factor of motivation (Rosli & Saleh, 2023). This theory is an important consideration when factoring sources of motivation and psychological wellness as teachers face pressures related to the profession impacting educational outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Notably, the Job Demands-Resource model (JDR) is complimentary to Bandura's self-efficacy theory as it examines the connection between self-efficacy (internal resource) and teaching demands (external resource) in relationship to individual behavior due to those resources in the context of the classroom (Lazarides et al., 2020).

Problem Statement

The problem is that teachers are working in the classroom with provisional licensure before finishing their university coursework and pre-service training. This has effectively reduced the time and experience needed for the development of the four key sources of self-efficacy in preparation for the responsibilities required as novice classroom teachers, which has shown to be an indicator of long-term success and effectiveness (Ciampa & Gallagher, 2021; Clark, 2020; Keller-Schneider, 2021; Ma et al., 2022; McLean et al., 2023). Bandura (1997a) believed self-efficacy derives from four sources: mastery experiences (skill), vicarious experiences (observation), verbal persuasion (positive feedback), and physiological and affective states (frame of mind). Additionally, Bandura suggests that effective teachers require high self-efficacy shaped through pedagogical knowledge, observation, clinical experiences, and feedback to improve student outcomes (Clark, 2020). While the importance of TSE for novice teachers has been investigated, the primary focus has been on teachers who have completed their educator preparation programs through a traditional route to licensure (Keller-Schneider, 2021; Ma et al., 2022; McLean et al., 2023). According to Bandura (1997a), perceived self-efficacy impacts sustainability, effort, and endurance when facing stressful obstacles. The teacher shortage has resulted in granting provisional licensure to pre-service teachers, allowing individuals to enter the classroom sooner to meet the current demand for teachers (Ma et al., 2022).

Research has found that improving TSE increases positive outcomes for all stakeholders as student achievement has become a rising concern (Berg, 2022). Furthermore, a robust body of research has shown how TSE impacts the classroom environment, student achievement, and student motivation (Eun, 2019; Ciampa & Gallagher, 2021; Kiran, 2021; Ma et al., 2022). Studies have emphasized the impact of self-efficacy on teachers as related to student success, classroom setting, and the ability to manage complex situations in the classroom (Fackler et al.,

2021). An educator's self-efficacy begins as a pre-service teacher during their educator preparation program, where teaching methods are modeled (Kiran, 2021). Notably, as teachers work toward self-efficacy, Bandura (1977) believed that self-efficacy is not stagnant and can be developed over time through mastery of skills. As provisionally licensed teachers work to develop their TSE, they have the same expectations and face similar pressures as their fully certified counterparts. My study focused on K-12 teachers addressing the problem of working in the classroom under a provisional license while completing a traditional state-approved licensure program and the impact on TSE.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to describe the self-efficacy experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia. Self-efficacy was generally defined as the personal belief in one's ability to be successful (Bandura, 1997b). Whereas TSE was generally defined as the belief teachers have in their ability to impact student achievement through instruction, classroom management, and student engagement (Bas, 2022; Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021; Ma et al., 2022; Mccullough et al., 2022). The theory underpinning this study was Bandura's self-efficacy theory.

Significance of the Study

Teacher self-efficacy and provisional licensure may be linked by the potential impact of not yet having completed all the requirements to obtain full certification as one's belief in their ability to achieve success in the classroom. The emphasis in education for student achievement is connected to effective research-based instructional practices and the need for robust TSE (Berg, 2022). Studies have revealed that high TSE results in teachers being more receptive to new

teaching practices, professional goal setting, challenging themselves, effective instructional planning, efficient problem-solving skills, and making necessary adjustments in the face of obstacles (Alibakhshi et al., 2020). Higher TSE improves the educational experience for all stakeholders with increased motivation and student achievement. Acquiring educator preparation training to achieve the qualifications needed for teachers to develop sound pedagogical practices is paramount (Berg, 2022). The development of effective teachers requires dispositions demonstrating TSE (Berg, 2022). Teachers are more impressionable and receptive to change during the pre-service and novice years (Bandura, 1977; Ma et al., 2022). As teachers enter the classroom early under provisional licensure to meet the increasing demand from the teacher shortage, novice teachers must be supported to develop high TSE with a robust approach (Ma et al., 2022).

Theoretical

According to Bandura (1977), personal efficacy is cultivated through four fundamental sources: mastery, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and affective and physiological states (Klassen & Usher, 2010; Thornton et al., 2020). The self-efficacy theory was first introduced by Albert Bandura (Bandura, 1977; Fackler et al., 2021; Thornton et al., 2020) as a product of Bandura's social cognitive theory (Kiran, 2021). Bandura believed that efficacy is achieved by four sources: mastery (individual achievements), vicarious experiences (attained through observation), verbal persuasion (accolades from experts in the field), and emotional states (physiological reactions to stress and anxiety) (Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021; Ma et al., 2022). TSE is demonstrated in the school setting through instructional pedagogy, student engagement, student support, and classroom management (Fackler et al., 2021; Mccullough et al., 2022). Teachers with high TSE are increasingly more likely to implement innovative

teaching strategies, higher job satisfaction, and more compassionate classroom management (Alibakhshi et al., 2020; Kiran, 2021). High TSE is positively associated with increased student achievement (Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021). Teachers with higher self-efficacy are associated with better classroom management, meeting diverse needs, and responding effectively when factoring student success in the classroom (Fackler et al., 2021; Mccullough et al., 2022).

The theoretical significance of this study rested in Bandura's (1977) belief that self-efficacy is the most malleable during the early years of pre-service training and in-service experiences (Wilhelm et al., 2021). Stakeholders continue to show interest in TSE as policymakers address the role efficacy plays in attrition and student achievement (Perera & John, 2020). Notably, TSE shapes effective instructional practices, and teachers with high TSE benefit from increased job satisfaction, reduced levels of burnout, and increased student achievement (Perera & John, 2020; Yurt, 2022). This study contributed to the underpinnings of self-efficacy for provisionally licensed teachers and its influence on instructional decision-making. TSE is an essential factor and predictor of student achievement as teachers with high self-efficacy have increased expectations and resilience, improving student outcomes (Catalano et al., 2022).

Empirical

TSE has captured the attention of stakeholders as a predictor of student achievement and has been studied with a context-specific approach (Thommen et al., 2022), varying levels of instruction in a secondary setting (Perera et al., 2019), following clinical practice (Ma et al., 2022), and with novice teachers (Wilhelm et al., 2021). One study found that teachers could toggle between opposing domains of efficacy, perceiving one aspect of teaching as efficacious (instructional strategies and student engagement) while simultaneously having lower efficacy in classroom management (Perera et al., 2019). The research revealed that TSE can be high and low

across varying domains in teaching, contradicting previous research emphasizing a unidimensional composite summary of TSE, noting that teachers either have high or low TSE (Perera et al., 2019). Another study (Ma et al., 2022) found that TSE increased to its highest levels following the final clinical experience. Subsequently, Wilhelm et al. (2021) investigated the transformation of self-efficacy in beginning teachers entering the profession through alternative certification by examining how the self-efficacy of novice teachers was impacted when faced with challenges in the profession (Wilhelm et al., 2021). The findings suggested that TSE increased during the first year, contradicting previous research; the authors emphasized the importance of continued investigation of how TSE in beginning teachers is influenced by the certification route (Wilhelm et al., 2021). These empirical studies offered examples of research that describe the factors that influence TSE (Ma et al., 2022; Perera et al., 2019; Thommen et al., 2022; Wilhelm et al., 2021). The empirical significance of this study sought to expand on TSE (Wilhelm et al., 2021) by describing the four sources of self-efficacy with provisionally licensed K-12 teachers.

Practical

Educator preparation programs significantly contribute to TSE within the context of Bandura's (1977) four sources of experiences determining self-efficacy. In the education setting, mastery (classroom experiences), vicarious experiences (observing teaching practices while developing pedagogy), verbal persuasion (constructive feedback and encouragement), and physiological and affective states (anxiety in the school environment) impact classroom atmosphere and student behavior (Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021; Klassen & Usher, 2010). In the construct of TSE, the four sources can be expanded as mastery experiences are considered the most significant influence in the education environment (Klassen & Usher, 2010; Wilhelm et

al., 2021). Vicarious experiences occur through observing others who are successful and competent while also considered as role models to individuals thought to share similar characteristics like gender, race, and age (Berg, 2022; Klassen & Usher, 2010). Social persuasion is achieved through verbal praise, increasing the required perseverance when facing challenges (Berg, 2022; Klassen & Usher, 2010). Lastly, physiological states like sweating or quivering, typically acquired during stressful situations, may be misinterpreted as having low self-efficacy (Klassen & Usher, 2010). Bandura's self-efficacy experiences are applicable in contexts where the teacher believes that the outcome defines their efficacy (Klassen & Usher, 2010).

Research Questions

This research focused on the lived experiences of K-12 teachers working in the classroom under a provisional license while completing a state-approved licensure program. A transcendental phenomenological research design guided this study underpinned by the theoretical framework of Bandura's self-efficacy theory to describe the experiences and essence of this specific teacher population. The following central research question and supporting questions addressed the self-efficacy of K-12 teachers who have experienced the same phenomenon.

Central Research Question

What are the self-efficacy experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia?

Sub-Question One

What are the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed K-12 teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of teaching with mastery experiences as the primary source of self-efficacy?

Sub-Question Two

What are the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed K-12 teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of teaching with vicarious experiences as the second source of self-efficacy?

Sub-Question Three

What are the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed K-12 teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of teaching with verbal persuasion as the third source of self-efficacy?

Sub-Question Four

What are the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed K-12 teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of teaching with physiological and affective states as the fourth source of self-efficacy?

Definitions

1. *Alternatively Certified Teachers* – Individuals who obtained a bachelor's degree in something different than education and enter the field of education quickly with less coursework and training than their traditionally trained peers (Mentzer et al., 2019; Rose & Sughrue, 2020).
2. *Instructional expectations*- Student engagement and achievement, classroom and behavior management, differentiation, technology integration, instructional pedagogy, assessment, and meeting the needs of special education students. (Livers et al., 2021; Thornberg et al., 2022).
3. *Non-instructional expectations*- Parent-teacher conferences, professional development, administrative responsibilities, time management, and lesson planning (Berkowitz et al.,

2021; Livers et al., 2021; Thornton et al., 2020)

4. *Pre-service teacher* – An individual enrolled in an EPP training to become a teacher by learning pedagogy and gaining hands-on experience through practicums and student teaching under the supervision of university supervisors and veteran teachers (Rosenberg et al., 2021).
5. *Provisional licensure* – A non-renewable short-term license for pre-service teachers who have some training but have not met all the licensure requirements through the completion of coursework and exams (Virginia Administrative Code, 2018; Weiss et al., 2020).
6. *Teacher certification* – A document symbolizing qualification through preparation to perform the duties of a teacher (LaBue, 1960).
7. *Teacher shortage* – The teacher attrition rate is higher than that of incoming certified teachers, creating an inadequate network of teachers to meet student enrollment needs (Sutcher et al., 2019).
8. *Teacher self-efficacy* – Teachers' belief in their ability to impact student achievement through instruction, classroom management, and student engagement (Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021; Ma et al., 2022).

TSE is linked to teacher retention as teachers with lower self-efficacy are prone to leave education prematurely (Sulit & Davidson, 2020). Teacher retention directly impacts student achievement (Nguyen et al., 2020). Teacher attrition results from unhappiness within the profession, an increase in other employment opportunities, and retirement (Zirkle et al., 2019). Given the impact of teacher attrition, TSE has been found to increase job satisfaction by improving instructional effectiveness, ultimately lowering the attrition of teachers (Perera et al.,

2019; Zakariya, 2020).

Summary

The factors impacting TSE remain an essential consideration for long-term retention and success (Gonzales et al., 2020; Perera et al., 2019; Sulit & Davidson, 2020; Zakariya, 2020) addressing the current high turnover rates for novice teachers (Miller et al., 2019; Ofem et al., 2021; Zirkle et al., 2019). Teachers who complete traditional educator preparation programs stay in the profession longer, have a higher level of resilience and adaptability to unpredictable experiences, and have a deeper self-efficacy than teachers gaining certification through alternative routes (Beck et al., 2020). The teacher shortage has resulted in granting provisional licensure to pre-service teachers, allowing students to get into the classroom sooner to meet the current demand for teachers (Devier, 2019; Mentzer et al., 2019; Redding, 2022; Schmidt et al., 2020; Zugelder et al., 2021). Teachers today are facing challenges in the classroom challenges, such as student motivation (Eddy et al., 2020; Kwok & Cain, 2021), classroom management (Fackler et al., 2021; Mccullough et al., 2022), and time management (Kwok & Cain, 2021). Education stakeholders recognize the need for student achievement gains, which requires the development and retention of effective teachers (Nguyen et al., 2020; Stewart et al., 2021).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

A systematic review of the literature was conducted to explore the lived experiences of online higher education provisional licensure students studying at a private institution in Virginia and their self-efficacy regarding multiple aspects of teaching. This chapter offers a review of the scholarly research related to this topic. Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) is discussed in the first section, followed by a review of recent literature on provisional licensure, pre-service training, and TSE. The factors potentially impacting TSE include teacher burnout, parent communication, classroom management, time management, and working with school administration. The literature surrounding the connection between characteristics of high TSE and student achievement was also discussed. Finally, a gap in the literature is identified regarding the need for more research concerning TSE in teachers with provisional licensure.

Theoretical Framework

Bandura was a psychologist who first introduced his self-efficacy theory based on the premise that a person's belief in their capability to succeed affects human behavior through thoughts, behavior, and feelings (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Self-efficacy is rooted in behaviorism, which had a prominent place in psychology during this time in history and focused on human behavior and the influences of an individual's actions (Bandura, 1977). Behaviorism revealed that human behavior results from cognitive processes that can be affected by performance proficiency (Bandura, 2019). As a result, Bandura (1977) discovered that behavior can be shaped by cognitive processes as consequences and reinforcement influence and shape an individual's learned behavior and thoughts. Furthermore, he emphasized that self-efficacy influences performance through choices, effort, and endurance when faced with challenges and various

levels of difficulty with a given task. As a result, Bandura (1993) found that people are more likely to take on new challenges and stay committed to their success when self-efficacy is high. The self-efficacy theory was developed by Bandura (1977) after research revealed how human behavior is acquired and managed. Bandura (1977, 1986) explained that self-efficacy results from how an individual processes a large quantity of information regarding personal ability, affecting behavior and the degree of effort put forth toward a given task. However, personal ability is not a fixed variable for long-term performance, as mastery experiences can shape self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993).

While various disciplines have applied the theory of self-efficacy to their fields of expertise, it has been equally embraced in education (Bandura, 2019). In response, Bandura (1993) emphasized the relationship between self-efficacy and teacher effectiveness in the classroom, explaining that a teacher's instructional efficacy significantly impacts the ability to create a learning environment conducive to student success. Although this is true, teachers are less likely to achieve self-efficacy if it is not developed during their education preparation programs or later through professional development (Chan et al., 2021; Jordan et al., 2019). This is particularly important as provisionally licensed teachers enter the classroom through expedited pathways while having less time to develop their self-efficacy in preparation for the professional responsibilities of a teacher (Bowen et al., 2019; Kwok & Cain, 2021; Wilhelm et al., 2021). As the need for TSE is evident, provisionally licensed teachers entering the classroom early must do so with high self-efficacy to ensure student success (Clark, 2020). Particularly important, Bandura (1977) outlined that self-efficacy is derived from four primary sources: skill proficiency (enactive mastery), observation through modeling (vicarious experiences), positive feedback

(verbal persuasion), and frame of mind (physiological and affective states); emphasizing skill mastery being the most significant in improving self-efficacy.

Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory guided this study and research questions by focusing on the four sources of self-efficacy and their influence on the belief in one's ability to be successful in the classroom. Additionally, this theory informed the resulting themes and descriptions of the lived experiences of each participant. The self-efficacy theory provided the framework and lens by which this study was conducted while examining the self-efficacy of provisionally licensed teachers working in the classroom before completing their certification requirements. The importance of teacher efficacy is supported by Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977), which emphasizes that proficiency in a skill enhances a person's confidence in their ability. As teachers work towards self-efficacy, developing mastery of one task increases the willingness to approach another task with a higher degree of complexity (Thornton et al., 2020).

Related Literature

Quality education and qualified teachers equipped for the classroom and the needs of each student are something every child deserves (Bowen et al., 2019). Teacher preparation is essential as uncertified teachers are on the rise due to a growing teacher shortage (Schmidt et al., 2020), placing many unqualified teachers in the classroom (Bowen et al., 2019), effectively creating a need to understand the self-efficacy of these teachers as they face the realities of the classroom with less preparation (Bowen et al., 2019). In his self-efficacy theory, Bandura (1977) framed an individual's belief in their ability to organize and accomplish a task. Though research exists on teachers' self-efficacy, most research focuses on the self-efficacy of new teachers who have completed a traditional route to licensure (Kuok et al., 2020; Lauermann & Berger, 2021). Research focused on teachers' efficacy with provisional licensure through alternate pathways is

minimal. A literature review was conducted to include an understanding of provisional licensure based on the current teacher shortage, pre-service teacher preparation, TSE, and the challenges novice teachers face.

Provisional Licensure

Teacher certification can be obtained through either a traditional route (completing a formal state-approved teacher preparation program at a four-year university) or an alternate route (any alternative route to licensure that is different from university-based degree programs) focused on in-service training (Bowen et al., 2019; Devier, 2019; Kwok & Cain, 2021; Matsko et al., 2021). Devier (2019) continued to emphasize that the traditional route to licensure looks different for each state but likely includes graduating with a state-approved licensure degree, pedagogy coursework, practicums, passing content exams, and completing student teaching as the summative clinical practice.

Alternate routes to licensure do not come in one size fits all package, each varying from the next (DiCicco et al., 2019; Mentzer et al., 2019). The qualifications for a fast-track alternate pathway vary by state, including testing, reduced requirements, and experiences through on-the-job training (Devier, 2019; Matsko et al., 2021). The on ramp to the classroom is much shorter with the addition of alternative pathways by changing licensing requirements, resulting in less time for pedagogy acquisition (DiCicco et al., 2019; Wilhelm et al., 2021). These alternative routes serve as a means of filling the demands in high-need subject areas (DiCicco et al., 2019; Kwiatkowski, 1999), onboarding underrepresented teachers (Matsko et al., 2021), hiring for hard-to-staff urban schools (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019), and lowering the need for emergency licensing (Devier, 2019).

Due to the current teacher shortage, states have allowed for temporary provisional licensure (emergency certification) issued to individuals who have not fulfilled the traditional licensure requirements as one pathway to licensure (Devier, 2019; Schultz et al., 2023; Weiss et al., 2020; Wilhelm et al., 2021). Doing so places provisionally licensed teachers in the classroom as full-time teachers while simultaneously completing licensure and course requirements for their degrees or certification (Devier, 2019; Weiss et al., 2020). Provisional licensure allows teachers to enter the classroom before the completion of their pre-service training, placing the responsibility on the school systems to provide more support to these novice teachers while learning on the job (Mobra & Hamlin, 2020; Wilhelm et al., 2021). Notably, effective teachers require high self-efficacy, modeling of content knowledge, clinical experiences, and meaningful feedback as the essential factors to increase student success (Clark, 2020).

Teacher Shortage

The chronic shortage of qualified teachers and the decline of enrollment in educator preparation programs (EPP) is a national crisis (National Education Association, 2022; Schultz et al., 2023) as the issue has increased by 40% over the past ten years (Weiss et al., 2020; Wiggan et al., 2021) increasing the need for alternative pathways (Ford et al., 2020). In 2018, over 50 million students were enrolled in public schools, and 1.5 million teachers are estimated to be needed over the next decade (Wiggan et al., 2021). The disparity is greater in urban and rural schools, as 50% of teachers hired in these schools leave within five years (Mentzer et al., 2019). Some teachers are surprised with the amount of time required to dedicate to non-instructional tasks associated with the profession, like committees, lunch or bus duty, documentation, providing supplemental instructional materials, and developing a pacing guide for the content of each subject (DiCicco et al., 2019).

Simplistically, the teacher shortage can be alleviated through the recruitment and retention of teachers (Devier, 2019; Miller et al., 2019). However, teacher recruitment is even more difficult in rural and urban schools as the working conditions are more challenging, leaving administrators with uncertified teachers and teachers teaching outside their endorsement area (Miller et al., 2019). Initiatives like Grow-Your-Own (GYO) were developed to train individuals within the local community to be teachers as research found teachers preferred to work in settings that mirrored their own classroom experience to meet the needs of schools considered hard to staff with a focused approach to capture men and students of color to better represent the student populations found in K-12 schools (Jackson & Wake, 2022; Miller et al., 2019). Recruitment has included incentives like loan forgiveness, salary bonuses, and altering requirements for certification (Miller et al., 2019). The teacher shortage is concerning as the impact is evident in student achievement outcomes and student engagement (Miller et al., 2019), along with the continuing debate between traditional and alternative routes to licensure when preparing pre-service teachers for the classroom (West & Frey-Clark, 2019).

Traditional Routes to Licensure

Research has found that teachers who complete a traditional educator preparation program stay in the profession longer than those trained through alternative routes, exacerbating the teacher shortage (Beck et al., 2020; Kwok & Cain, 2021; Matsko et al., 2021). Teachers trained through traditional routes to licensure felt more prepared to implement effective teaching strategies and had increased self-efficacy (Matsko et al., 2021). Additionally, pre-service teachers completing their field experiences can be a valuable resource to classroom teachers serving as tutors for students facing learning losses due to poverty and second language learners (Rosenberg et al., 2021). Educator preparation programs historically have had a positive working

relationship, partnering with local school districts through teacher preparation and providing professional development opportunities (Rosenberg et al., 2021). Pre-service teachers can gain hands-on experience before the culminating student teaching semester through practicums early in their programs that begin with observation (Rosenberg et al., 2021). These clinical experiences allow pre-service teachers to start implementing their newly learned pedagogical instructional strategies under the supervision of a fully certified teacher, serving as assets to the local schools (Rosenberg et al., 2021). EPPs scaffold their training in three distinct segments, beginning with 'foundational skills' where pedagogical knowledge is rooted; moving to 'intermediate practice' where classroom instructional strategies are modeled through practicums; and finally, the 'culminating experience' where student teachers move into the role of full-time working during this internship under the supervision of a certified teacher (Rosenberg et al., 2021, p. 89).

Alternate Routes to Licensure

One of the most significant changes to the licensure climate was the introduction of alternate licensure pathways to get pre-service teachers in the classroom more quickly (Devier, 2019; Mentzer, 2019; Redding, 2022; Rose & Sughrue, 2020; Schmidt et al., 2020; Zugelder et al., 2021). One of President Bush's election initiatives for education was the endorsement of alternative routes to licensure (Darling-Hammond, 2023). This sentiment continued in 1995 as Newt Gingrich, the United States speaker of the House of Representatives, recommended eliminating teacher certification requirements (Darling-Hammond, 2023). Companies like iTeach have created their route to licensure under the premise of on-the-job training (Darling-Hammond, 2023). In 2019, the Commonwealth of Virginia issued guidelines for alternative routes to licensure, and in 2023, partnered with iTeach for 24 school divisions in the state to address the teacher shortage (Virginia Department of Education, 2023). This alternative

approach to traditional courses and the student teaching semester is replaced with the promise of supervision and mentorship in the schools, but research has found that these promises are often left unfulfilled (Darling-Hammond, 2023). GYO programs aim to recruit potential teachers from paraprofessional roles, non-education college students, and high school students, striving to increase diversity and reduce the constant stream of teacher turnover negatively impacting students (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019; Trompeter & Garcia-Fields, 2022). The underlying belief in this approach is that teachers will learn from doing instead of learning how to do it (Darling-Hammond, 2023). As a result, it has become acceptable and encouraged in the United States to seek licensure through alternative pathways (Rose & Sughrue, 2020).

Even as the pendulum swings between traditional and alternative teacher preparation, research continues to suggest that fully certified teachers have a higher success rate with students (Darling-Hammond, 2023; DiCicco et al., 2019). Alternatively, certified teachers have more difficulty lesson planning (Darling-Hammond, 2023), differentiating instruction (Rose & Sughrue, 2020), and leave the profession at a higher rate (Darling-Hammond, 2023; Rose & Sughrue, 2020). The short-term gain of getting teachers quickly in the classroom has long-term consequences, with increased expenses for school sites due to high turnover rates (Darling-Hammond, 2023; Rose & Sughrue, 2020) and lower academic outcomes (Mentzer et al., 2019; Schmidt et al., 2020).

Alternative routes to licensure have increased in response to the teacher shortages dating back to the 1980s (Rose & Sughrue, 2020; Wilhelm et al., 2021). Alternatively, certified teachers obtain a bachelor’s degree in something different than education and enter the field of education quickly with less coursework and training than their traditionally trained peers (Rose & Sughrue, 2020). Alternate routes to licensure provide a short onramp to the classroom with a condensed

approach to teacher preparation as students simultaneously work full-time while completing amended teacher certification requirements, often resulting in lower self-efficacy (Rose & Sughrue, 2020). The need for alternate routes to licensure due to the teacher shortage will be cyclical if efforts are not implemented for the mentorship and retention of these teachers (Rose & Sughrue, 2020).

Alternative routes to licensure allow teachers to obtain certification in less time than their traditionally certified colleagues, which typically require 4 to 5 years in undergraduate programs and 1.5 to 2 years in graduate programs (Mentzer et al., 2019; Schmidt et al., 2020; West & Frey-Clark, 2019). Typically, alternative programs require a completed bachelor's degree (Miller et al., 2019; West & Frey-Clark, 2019) and are sometimes referred to as career switchers (Schmidt et al., 2020). Proponents of alternate routes to licensure state that this fast track into the classroom addresses the teacher shortage (Bowen et al., 2019; Matsko et al., 2021; Schmidt et al., 2020). One study examining teachers alternatively certified through the Teach for America program found that they took up to two additional years to reach student achievement outcomes similar to their traditional certified peers (Mentzer et al., 2019; Schmidt et al., 2020). Critics of alternatively certified preparation programs claim they are ineffective due to the modified and limited training they received (Schmidt et al., 2020). Teachers entering the classroom through alternative routes with abridged field experiences feel less prepared, exacerbating attrition and efficacy (Rosenberg et al., 2021). Some say that both routes share some similarities and have begun to mirror each other (Matsko et al., 2021; Schmidt et al., 2020).

The Provisionally Licensed Teacher

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, the requirements for provisional licensure include having a conferred bachelor's degree, confirmed completion of one licensure course, and offered

a full-time teaching contract (Virginia Administrative Code, 2018; Weiss et al., 2020). According to the Virginia Administrative Code, the provisional license is non-renewable and valid for three years, allowing students to complete their teacher preparation program, including all licensure exams (Virginia Administrative Code, 2018), and other states offer comparable temporary licenses (Rose & Sughrue, 2020). These students completed a traditional program, which included the full depth of coursework and clinical practice with practicums and student teaching while working full-time in a classroom (Weiss et al., 2020). During pre-service training, instructional observation and feedback are weaved into the program through practicums and the culminating student teaching semester, which is missed for provisionally licensed teachers before they take on the full responsibilities of a teacher (Weiss et al., 2020). Teacher licenses are obtained through a variety of methods, including completing a traditional educator preparation program, alternative pathways, and temporary licenses like provisional licensure (Kraft et al., 2020).

A provisional license can be issued in the Commonwealth of Virginia for individuals who have conferred a college degree and have completed one course as part of a state-approved licensure program (Virginia Administrative Code, 2018). Most alternate pathways to licensure require a bachelor's degree (Kraft et al., 2020; West & Frey-Clark, 2019). However, the provisionally licensed teacher has three years to complete all remaining licensure components and requirements (Weiss et al., 2020). Teachers who enter the classroom, hired under a provisional license, may do so before completing their coursework, field experiences, and student teaching with the expectation of fulfilling all the responsibilities of a licensed teacher (Weiss et al., 2020). Provisionally licensed teachers are set apart from their alternatively certified

counterparts as they have completed a traditional EPP while working in the classroom (Virginia Department of Education, 2023).

Challenges for the Provisionally Licensed Teacher

Teachers hired under provisional licensure are expected to perform as fully licensed teachers with less preparation before completing coursework and practicums where best teaching practices are modeled and supervised by seasoned cooperating teachers (Kwok & Cain, 2021; Weiss et al., 2020). This practice effectively leaves teachers unprepared for their first day in the classroom, with classroom management issues, inadequate lesson planning training, and the danger of abandoning the profession altogether (Kwok & Cain, 2021). Consequently, this population of teachers is at high risk of having lower confidence and feeling unprepared for the realities in the classroom (Kwok & Cain, 2021). In addition, teachers entering the classroom through nontraditional pathways are overburdened with professional expectations due to a lack of training (Kwok & Cain, 2021). One study found that alternatively, certified teachers expressed a myriad of challenges such as student apathy while lacking strategies to increase student motivation, classroom management after experiencing disrespect from students, insufficient skills to manage their time efficiently, and trying to learn curriculum content while completing grading responsibilities (Kwok & Cain, 2021).

Challenges for Schools Hiring Provisionally Licensed Teachers

Field experiences and the culminating student teaching semester are designed to provide students with modeling, scaffolded release of teaching responsibilities, observation, practice, and feedback in the traditional route to licensure (Osenberg et al., 2021; Weiss et al., 2020). These field experiences are missed opportunities for provisionally licensed teachers designed to increase TSE (Osenberg et al., 2021). School sites are left to fill the gaps through mentor

programs, instructional coaching, teacher collaboration, and administrative support (Kwok & Cain, 2021; Wilhelm et al., 2021). Research has found that new teachers require increased support to ensure success and retention, given their reduced time as pre-service teachers within their EPP (Kwok & Cain, 2021; Wilhelm et al., 2021). Schools partnering these new teachers with quality mentors is essential for their success as well as including frequent collaboration throughout the year to facilitate the transition into the classroom (Kwok & Cain, 2021).

Educator Preparation Programs

Training tomorrow's teachers today has received recent attention to meet the high demands of the teacher shortage (Schmidt et al., 2020). EPPs play a critical role in the development of self-efficacy in pre-service teachers (Raymond-West & Rangel, 2020) by connecting theoretical frameworks to practical applications in the classroom (Nguyen, 2021; Rosenberg et al., 2021). EPPs are focused on a set number of methods courses, field experiences, state licensure exams, and the number of weeks in student teaching (Matsko et al., 2021). Teachers require consistent, meaningful feedback delivered in a safe environment and quality professional development to increase self-efficacy. Pre-service training impacts the self-efficacy of a teacher by directly connecting to content knowledge, research-based pedagogy (Chan et al., 2021), and the ability to differentiate (Scarparolo & Subban, 2021) in order to provide effective instructional practices. EPPs have been criticized for not preparing pre-service teachers for the classroom with relevant instructional skills and the necessary professional demands (Chan et al., 2021; Raymond-Wet & Rangel, 2020; Zugelder et al., 2021). EPPs are now faced with training these provisionally licensed candidates to balance the role of student and teacher (Schultz et al., 2023) while competing with the faster alternative routes to licensure (Zugelder et al., 2021).

Developing effective teachers with high self-efficacy is critical for EPPs, as efficacy impacts instruction and teacher effectiveness (Raymond-Wet & Rangel, 2020).

Pre-Service Years

Pre-service teacher training experiences are varied within EPPs regarding required courses and clinical experiences (Raymond-West & Rangel, 2020). The completion of EPP affects TSE by providing field experiences for pre-service teachers to practice theories they learn through coursework (Chan et al., 2021; Raymond-Wet & Rangel, 2020). Education scholars emphasize the importance of connecting theory to real-world practice (Zugelder et al., 2021). Teacher disposition development during the pre-service years cultivates the endurance and perseverance required to endure the challenges faced in the profession while decreasing high turnover rates, accentuating the need for quality teacher preparation (Young et al., 2022). Practical pedagogical development in pre-service teachers increases TSE and reduces burnout by providing support and feedback, resulting in improved outcomes for teachers and students (Mccullough et al., 2022).

Pre-service training is essential, as enactive mastery is achieved gradually over time and in environments where the acquired skill is based on self-evaluation instead of social comparison, thereby fostering a learning environment that improves achievement (Bandura, 1993). Mastery experiences are the primary influence on self-efficacy development, instilling the confidence to attempt a task with increased complexity (Thornton et al., 2020). However, encountering adverse mastery experiences before a rich sense of self-efficacy has been achieved may result in low TSE, thereby having a lasting impact on perceptions of new experiences in the future (Berg, 2022). For example, a teacher with low self-efficacy may attribute success to external variables perpetuating their low self-efficacy, whereas a teacher with high self-efficacy

would attribute a failure to a factor out of their control, preserving their high self-efficacy (Berg, 2022). Teacher preparation programs fostering the development of pre-service teachers and school leadership responsible for the professional development of in-service teachers should consider the importance of mastery experiences as they relate to TSE through coaching (Berg, 2022; Thornton et al., 2020). Perseverance leads to skill mastery, whereas self-doubt can result in quickly giving up before reaching performance accomplishments (Bandura, 1977). Mastery experiences are most effective when approached by systematically breaking down skills into reasonable steps, allowing teachers to achieve skill mastery, and fostering high TSE (Berg, 2022).

Field Experience

Field experiences are an essential part of teacher preparation programs for pre-service teachers to learn effective teaching strategies and apply that knowledge (Osenberg et al., 2021; Rosenberg et al., 2021; Zugelder et al., 2021). Pre-service teachers are encouraged to practice connecting the theory and pedagogy they have learned in the classroom through field experiences under the supervision of an experienced teacher (Fitzgerald, 2020; Nguyen, 2021; Osenberg et al., 2021; Rosenberg et al., 2021). These experiences in the field provide opportunities for practical application, developing teaching strategies, identifying weaknesses, and experiencing challenges faced by teachers in the classroom (Osenberg et al., 2021). Pre-service teachers begin with a variety of field experiences in the classroom depending on the route to licensure, traditional or alternative (Raymond-West & Rangel, 2020), and some researchers believe that more professional experiences are needed, which has been echoed by novice teachers (Fitzgerald, 2020).

Vicarious experiences and guided practice provide the skills to manage stress, inhibition,

and fears (Bandura, 1977). In the classroom, this provides context for a novice teacher through the understanding that failure can be an attribute of an ineffective instructional strategy instead of low efficacy (Berg, 2022). Mastery and vicarious experiences are developed throughout pre-service through practicums and clinical experiences (Ma et al., 2022). Bandura (1977) believed that experiences can be obtained through observing a peer modeling a desired skill vicariously fostering self-efficacy. Bandura (1993) emphasizes the importance of verbal encouragement while progressing toward a goal instead of focusing on shortfalls, thereby increasing efficacy derived from accomplishments. Performance feedback from peers and other educational stakeholders has been instrumental in the development of TSE (Berg, 2022). Regrettably, negative feedback carries exponentially more weight on self-efficacy than its positive counterpart (Bandura, 1997). The caveat is that the receiver of the feedback must value and respect the interpretive feedback of the provider (Berg, 2022). The more specific the feedback about the desired skill, the stronger the impact towards fostering self-efficacy (Berg, 2022).

Self-Efficacy in Pre-service Teachers

High TSE is developed throughout the pre-service years by participating in field experience as part of a formal teacher preparation program (Chan et al., 2021; Clark, 2020). Research has found that pre-service teachers begin with a high sense of self-efficacy during the coursework phase of their EPPs but discovered that this decreased over time once they began practicums (Ma et al., 2022). Self-efficacy can be developed through modeling, mentorship, and training (Chan et al., 2021; Feng et al., 2019). Pre-service teachers often begin teaching excitedly, but 50% leave the profession within five years, exasperating the teacher shortage issue many schools face (Feng et al., 2019). Self-efficacy is one predictor of educators staying in the profession and the feeling of competency for the remaining teachers (Feng et al., 2019). This

concept of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy is essential for confidence in instructional practices (Jordan et al., 2019). Pre-service training is necessary as beginning teachers are too often given complex learners, impacting their self-efficacy (Feng et al., 2019). One study revealed six themes that developed confidence for pre-service teachers entering the classroom: collaboration, university support, in-service experience, opportunities to work with students, real-world practice, and building a support network (Fitzgerald, 2020). Research has shown that self-efficacy is not only developed through mastery and vicarious experiences, but that coursework plays an essential role (Ma et al., 2022; Perera et al., 2019).

Teacher Self-Efficacy

The complexity of TSE is evident in retention, instructional strategies and practices, classroom management, differentiation, student motivation, parent communication, and overall effort in the classroom (Eddy et al., 2020; Martin & Mulvihill, 2019; Rose & Sughrue, 2020). TSE is the belief that a teacher has in student achievement outcomes (Akturk & Ozturk, 2019; Ciampa & Gallagher, 2021; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Zakariya, 2020)**.** The professional pressure to succeed faced by teachers is affected by salary, classroom resources, unsafe teaching and learning environments, student achievement accountability, and poor student behavior while ensuring that every student achieves academic success (Martin & Mulvihill, 2019). Most teachers begin with high self-efficacy, later experiencing a drastic decline during the transition from pre-service to in-service teacher in the first year (Feng et al., 2019). Self-efficacy impacts teacher retention, resulting in higher job satisfaction and optimism to avoid teacher burnout (Raymond-West & Rangel, 2020; Yurt, 2022; Zakariya, 2020). Educator preparation programs can best equip teachers for the classroom by devoting attention to increasing their self-efficacy (Raymond-West & Rangel, 2020). A small body of research has found that teaching level is a

factor in TSE, noting that elementary teachers indicate a higher TSE than their middle grades and secondary peers (Perera et al., 2019). Factors contributing to high TSE include effective instructional pedagogy, job satisfaction, and supportive work culture, whereas factors contributing to low TSE include burnout and stress (Finch et al., 2023; Zakariya, 2020).

Characteristics of High Self-Efficacy

A teacher with high self-efficacy dedicates more instructional time to academic success for students (Bandura, 1993) and supports students who struggle academically. Therefore, high TSE is essential as it leads to better instruction, resulting in higher student achievement (Thornton et al., 2020; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Research has shown that teachers with high self-efficacy have increased job satisfaction, increased mental health, and greater academic outcomes for students (Bandura, 1977; Barni et al., 2019; Ciampa & Gallagher, 2021; Yurt, 2022; Zakariya, 2020). Characteristics of high self-efficacy include teachers who put extra effort into classroom activities, persevere through challenges, implement various instructional strategies, frequently differentiate instruction, and have higher expectations of student performance (Lam et al., 2023; Ma et al., 2022; Zee et al., 2018). Bandura (1993) states people will view their successes and failures through personal self-efficacy. When teachers with high self-efficacy fail, the failure is attributed to a lack of effort and not capability (Bandura, 1993). High TSE results in confidence that motivates students to attain their efficacy, leading to greater student achievement (Hassan, 2019) while meeting the diverse needs found in the classroom (Scarparolo & Subban, 2021). A strong sense of self-efficacy encourages risk-taking and the drive to achieve mastery by utilizing innovative approaches (Ma et al., 2022; Raymond-West & Rangel, 2020).

Characteristics of Low Self-Efficacy

In contrast, a teacher with low self-efficacy easily gives up on students and can be critical of those with learning difficulties (Bandura, 1993). Low self-efficacy is linked to low student achievement (Jordan et al., 2019) and are more likely to leave the profession (Ciampa & Gallagher, 2021). Negative feedback on performance from colleagues, professors, and cooperating teachers affects self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Chan et al., 2021). When teachers with low self-efficacy fail, the failure is perceived as an inadequate ability (Bandura, 1993). This is compounded by creating self-doubt and avoiding future challenges, further lowering self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Low self-efficacy is associated with feelings of anxiety and frustration (Ma et al., 2022) and leads to the negative outcome of burnout (Kuok et al., 2020). A teacher with low self-efficacy is unlikely to accommodate the diverse student needs in the classroom and persist in the face of challenges (Clark, 2020; Scarparolo & Subban, 2021). Understanding that low self-efficacy can be based on perception, teacher preparation programs must invest in developing teacher efficacy during the formative pre-service years (Scarparolo & Subban, 2021).

Teacher Self-Efficacy and Student Achievement

Bandura (1993) emphasized that teacher performance is based on the belief and self-efficacy of individual ability, and teachers with high self-efficacy perceive they directly affect student outcomes (Bandura, 1997b). Increased teacher stress levels resulting from high-stakes testing and pressure for increased student achievement impact teacher performance and self-efficacy (Hassan, 2019). Research has found a relationship between TSE and student achievement outcomes (Hettinger et al., 2023; Jordan et al., 2019; Zee et al., 2018). Highly efficacious teachers implement various learning strategies and differentiation and predict more positive outcomes for student ability (Hassan, 2019). Teachers with high self-efficacy create environments with higher student engagement, increasing student performance and academic

achievement (Hassan, 2019). TSE is essential in today's climate of academic accountability placed on teachers for student performance as it has been linked to effective teaching practices and improved student outcomes (Slater & Main, 2020; Thornton et al., 2020). TSE has been studied to conclude that teachers have either low self-efficacy or high self-efficacy, however, some research suggests that self-efficacy can be multidimensional where a teacher's self-efficacy is fluid and dependent on the task (Lam et al., 2023; Thommen et al., 2022; West & Frey-Clark, 2019).

Teacher Burnout

Teachers face immense pressures regarding the impact of their instruction on student success, thereby increasing teacher burnout, which can negatively influence TSE (Yurt, 2022). Burnout is defined as stress or emotional exhaustion resulting from chronic occupational hazards (Bottiani et al., 2019; Donker et al., 2020; Klusmann et al., 2021; Kuok et al., 2020; Camacho et al., 2021; Luisa et al., 2020) caused by managing job-related tasks over long periods due to fatigue, work environment, increased performance pressure, depersonalization, and emotional exhaustion (Oberle et al., 2020; Oliveira et al., 2021; Yurt, 2022). Research has found that teaching matches the stress level of other service professions like nurses and physicians (Bottiani et al., 2019; Dell'Angelo & Richardson, 2019; Oberle et al., 2020; Oliveira et al., 2021) in the United States due to increased pressures of student achievement, differentiation, and restricted budgets (Bottiani et al., 2019; Luisa et al., 2020). Nearly half of teachers entering the profession will leave the demands of teaching behind within five years of being in the classroom (Bottiani et al., 2019). Improving teacher job satisfaction can improve teacher burnout (Yurt, 2022; Zakariya, 2020). Teacher burnout is a critical consideration to the sustainability within the profession as it impacts student outcomes seen in academic achievement and motivation (Klusmann et al., 2021;

Yurt, 2022). Teachers who enter the profession as a last resort are more susceptible to burnout than those who choose education for idealistic reasons (Luisa et al., 2020). TSE, stress and fatigue, and job satisfaction are contributing factors leading to teacher burnout and attrition if the teacher does not perceive themselves as capable of succeeding in a challenging task (Yurt, 2022; Zhang et al., 2021), resulting in a shift in instructional strategies and motivation (Klusmann et al., 2021).

Stress and Fatigue

Teachers report daily levels of high stress on the job, as one poll found that 60% of teachers reported feeling frequently or always stressed (Brannon & Clark, 2023). Stress can lead to increased anxiety and resentment created by the environment (Floress et al., 2022). Emotional exhaustion is the key contributor to burnout (Dell'Angelo & Richardson, 2019; Donker et al., 2020; Klusmann et al., 2021), impacting TSE and the outcomes evident inside the classroom setting (Eddy et al., 2020; Oliveira et al., 2021). Physiological and affective states are critical factors in a person's frame of mind influencing self-efficacy through personal goal setting, expenditure of effort, perseverance during difficulty, and resilience to failure outcomes (Bandura, 1977, 1993). Emotional state is linked to stressors and how an individual deciphers the meaning through the lens of their interpretation (Berg, 2022; Klusmann et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021). One study examined how emotional regulation strategies can reduce emotional exhaustion in teachers, effectively reducing stress (Donker et al., 2020). Teachers' ability to manage the emotions they experience professionally contributes to their success (Donker et al., 2020; Berg, 2022). Stress and fatigue are the result of an increase in high expectations in areas like classroom and time management with limited resources and support from school leadership (Camacho et al., 2021; Oliveira et al., 2021), and teachers working in an urban school face additional

obstacles like poverty, discipline, and violence within the community (Camacho et al., 2021). This further emphasizes the importance of EPPs in fostering social-emotional competency in teachers to effectively assess professional success and achieve goals (Oliveira et al., 2021).

Teacher Retention

States are faced with the challenge of recruiting and retaining qualified teachers (Miller et al., 2019; Zirkle et al., 2019). The teacher retention rate is alarmingly low, as 50% leave the classroom within the first five years in the profession (Oberle et al., 2020; Stewart et al., 2021). Student achievement is significantly impacted when teachers come and go through their schools' doors each year (Stewart et al., 2021). This problem was heightened after the COVID-19 pandemic as teachers were no longer interested in staying in COVID-19 education (Stewart et al., 2021). Research has revealed a relationship between a teacher's years of experience and student achievement, compounding the necessity for teacher retention (Stewart et al., 2021). Teacher retention also has financial implications, costing the United States $7.3 billion annually (Stewart et al., 2021) as it costs school districts $10,000 to $17,000 per teacher during their induction years (Nguyen et al., 2020). The repercussions of low teacher retention are a financial burden, lower teacher morale and community, and a feeling of instability within the local community as their children's education is at stake (Stewart et al., 2021). The seasoned teachers shoulder additional responsibilities due to the constant influx of novice teachers left to repeat the cycle as teacher turnover continues (Stewart et al., 2021).

TSE is linked to teacher retention as teachers with lower self-efficacy are prone to leave education (Sulit & Davidson, 2020). Ultimately, teacher retention directly impacts student achievement (Nguyen et al., 2020). Teacher attrition results from unhappiness within the profession, an increase in other employment opportunities, and retirement (Zirkle et al., 2019).

Given the impact of teacher attrition, TSE has been found to increase job satisfaction by improving instructional effectiveness, ultimately lowering the attrition of teachers (Perera et al., 2019; Zakariya, 2020).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the sentiment an individual feels toward their job developed over time (Yurt, 2022). Teachers with high job satisfaction have positive feelings about their profession, working environment, and pay scale, thereby increasing performance on the job and becoming more impervious to burnout (Mokhtar et al., 2023; Yurt, 2022; Zhang et al., 2021; Zakariya, 2020). High TSE affects job satisfaction, stress levels, and teacher attrition (Yurt, 2022; Zakariya, 2020), with school climate and classroom management as leading predictors (Zhang et al., 2021). Interestingly, some research has revealed the combination of teacher and school emphasizing the goodness of fit with factors like gender, age, and ethnicity regarding their role in teacher-administer and teacher-student relationships (Nguyen et al., 2020).

Classroom Management

An essential component of effective teaching is managing the classroom and student behavior, and TSE is a reliable predictor of teacher responses in this area (Catalano et al., 2022; Hettinger et al., 2023). Teachers must manage the classroom and the occurring behaviors with evidence-based approaches (Junker et al., 2021; Mccullough et al., 2022; Özkul & Dönmez, 2022; Slater & Main, 2020). Research has found that novice teachers lack the skills necessary for maintaining classroom management (Özkul & Dönmez, 2022) and reference student behavior as one of the reasons for premature attrition (Gilmour et al., 2022; Junker et al., 2021; Sezen-Gültekin et al., 2022). As teachers face classroom disruptions, lack of student motivation, and off-task behaviors, it becomes imperative for teachers to self-regulate their emotions (Catalano et

al., 2022) and focus on prevention instead of reaction (Junker et al., 2021; Slater & Main, 2020). Teachers must consider their approach and pedagogy with classroom management and procedures, enforcing the rules, maintaining student attention, and overseeing on-task and off-task behavior (Slater & Main, 2020). Students within a classroom that is managed well demonstrate on-task engagement through effective cooperative learning, peer collaboration, student participation, project-based learning, and seamless transitions between activities (Catalano et al., 2022). A structured learning environment enhances student outcomes, creating an atmosphere with minimal disruptions and increased on-task behavior through effectively reinforcing mastery experiences (Hettinger et al., 2023; Slater & Main, 2020). Novice teachers have less experience working with students who have emotional behavior disorders, which impacts classroom management and increases burnout (Gilmour et al., 2022). Veteran teachers are more skilled at predicting the management needs required for effective instruction based on the selected activity and lesson objective (Catalano et al., 2022) and may serve as role models for novice teachers (Özkul & Dönmez, 2022).

TSE, in relationship to classroom management, includes providing a learning environment free from disruptions with established rules and procedures to maximize on-task behavior (Hettinger et al., 2023; Özkul & Dönmez, 2022; Thommen et al., 2022). Notably, a teacher's classroom management efficacy is a critical component of the success of instructional strategies (Ford et al., 2020; Sezen-Gültekin et al., 2022). High TSE produces better student achievement as teachers extend more support as part of their classroom management approach (Catalano et al., 2022; Eddy et al., 2020; Lam et al., 2023; Mccullough et al., 2022; Sezen-Gültekin et al., 2022). Teachers with higher self-efficacy have better connections with their students, increased organization skills, and a willingness to approach new instructional strategies

that may be perceived as more challenging (Catalano et al., 2022; Ma & Cavanagh, 2022). Whereas teachers with lower self-efficacy view students through a negative lens, focus on behavior intervention that emphasizes punishment and prioritize discipline (Catalano et al., 2022; Finch et al., 2023). The perceived ability to effectively manage a classroom reduces stress and mitigates teacher burnout (Slater & Main, 2020). School leadership can increase TSE with classroom management, which can have lasting long-term success for novice teachers by differentiating the needs and development of each teacher (Ford et al., 2020). The leadership of the school sets the stage for instructional practices and classroom management, increasing student achievement outcomes indirectly through four leadership approaches: vision development, supporting and developing faculty and staff, organizational design through set expectations, and overseeing instructional pedagogy through intentional involvement to ensure success for all stakeholders (Kemethofer et al., 2022).

Student Engagement

Research has shown that teachers are the primary determinant of student outcomes and achievement (Nguyen et al., 2020). Classrooms with robust student engagement improve teacher job satisfaction and reduce the likelihood of teacher burnout (Chang & Hall, 2022). Student engagement begins with the teacher striving to understand the lived experiences of their students to better identify the learning challenges they face (Chang & Hall, 2022). Increased student outcomes are achieved in an atmosphere fostered by meaningful feedback while improving student motivation, resulting in effective student engagement (Thommen et al., 2022). A positive classroom climate reflects teachers encouraging their students, followed by students supporting each other (Hettinger et al., 2023). Student engagement can be described as the implementation of active learning using higher-order thinking skills and problem-solving strategies, thereby

creating an atmosphere that promotes a rich understanding of the content, increasing student outcomes (Lam et al., 2023; Thommen et al., 2022). As students learn in an environment where positive feedback and correction are utilized throughout the learning process, academic outcomes are increased, increasing student self-efficacy (Hettinger et al., 2023).

Behavior Management

As teachers are responsible for the social-emotional needs of students, high-stakes testing, effective instructional practices, and meeting the diverse needs found in the classroom, increased pressure is felt with the responsibility of managing behavior **(**Floress et al., 2022). Disruptive behavior in the classroom is a problem teachers face daily while determining behavior management approaches that include punitive (removing desired privileges) or positive (reward-based token systems) reinforcement strategies, each impacting the classroom climate differently (Brannon & Clark, 2023). Notably, some schools have adopted school-wide behavior management strategies like positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), shifting the focus to a positive classroom climate (Brannon & Clark, 2023; Floress et al., 2022). PBIS, when effectively implemented, reduces behavior management issues and increases positive student outcomes through positive reinforcement (Center on PBIS, 2022). It becomes critical to support teacher development in self-efficacy and behavior management to maximize the social-emotional development of students (Finch et al., 2023), as high stress increases burnout (Brannon & Clark, 2023).

Teachers with high self-efficacy reported fewer behavior problems than teachers with low self-efficacy (Finch et al., 2023). High TSE may result in favorable attitudes towards the profession while viewing students as teachable when selecting effective strategies to mitigate undesirable student behavior (Finch et al., 2023). TSE influences the behavior development of

students found within a positive learning environment (Finch et al., 2023). Teachers exhibiting high stress levels and lower TSE were found to have increased levels of student-teacher conflict (Brannon & Clark, 2023; Finch et al., 2023). Student conduct and misbehavior are perceived as threatening for educators with low TSE, resulting in punitive approaches to behavior management (Brannon & Clark, 2023). One study found that 1 in 5 teachers reported student behavior as the highest source of stress (Collie & Mansfield, 2022; Floress et al., 2022). Reducing emotional exhaustion in teachers and increasing TSE impacts students' response to undesired classroom behavior, mitigating the need to escalate student behaviors to administration, further exacerbating the problem (Brannon & Clark, 2023; Eddy et al., 2020).

Parent Communication

Student academic outcomes are fostered through positive teacher and parental involvement increasing their academic efficacy by creating a supportive atmosphere where trust is established when mistakes are made as learning takes place (Affuso et al., 2023). The parent-teacher relationship is a critical factor in student efficacy and academic success (Affuso et al., 2023; De Coninck et al., 2020; Ekornes & Bele, 2022). Ultimately, the parent-teacher relationship can result in either a negative or positive partnership (Harpaz & Grinshtain, 2020). For example, parent-teacher conferences can potentially be perceived as critical from the parent's perspective as teachers discuss their child’s emotional, developmental, behavioral, and academic progress (De Coninck et al., 2020). As teachers have difficult conversations with parents about areas of concern, such as student behavior, may create negative interactions with parents, causing teachers to withdraw from quality collaborative efforts (Ekornes & Bele, 2022). However, the goal of parent communication should be collaboration to achieve a shared goal, benefiting the student (Harpaz & Grinshtain, 2020). Notably, parental involvement in their child’s academic

success can positively influence the teacher's dedication to that student's success (Bandura et al., 1996; Ekornes & Bele, 2022). Novice teachers often feel unequipped and unsettled about communicating with parents while finding it to be a challenge professionally (De Coninck et al., 2020). Thereby emphasizing how TSE impacts the parent-teacher relationship (De Coninck et al., 2020; Ekornes & Bele, 2022) and the degree a teacher encourages parent participation in the academic achievement of their child (Bandura et al., 1996).

Harpaz and Grinshtain (2020) describe parent involvement as home-to-school, based at home, and parent-teacher connection. Parent involvement is evident through volunteering at school, academically supporting their child at home, participation in regular communication with their child's teacher, and through meaningful feedback with parent-teacher conferences (Berkowitz et al., 2021). However, a teacher with low TSE tends to discourage parents from being involved in their child's education (Bandura et al., 1996).

The Role of School Leadership

The complexity of leading a school has become increasingly difficult with teacher attrition (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019) and lagging job satisfaction with the profession (Sulit & Davidson, 2020). It is projected that by 2025, schools will need 200,000 teachers (Sulit & Davidson, 2020). However, elementary school teachers have been shown to stay in the profession longer than secondary teachers (Sulit & Davidson, 2020). Effective school leadership is responsible for mentoring novice teachers to increase teacher retention (Cells et al., 2023; Rose & Sughrue, 2020; Stewart et al., 2021) while directly impacting TSE (Thornton et al., 2020). Studies have shown the link between school leadership and teacher retention (Cells et al., 2023; Sulit & Davidson, 2020). In essence, teachers who feel taken care of by their school administration have the necessary resources to be successful and understand that the education

initiatives being implemented have increased job satisfaction and higher teacher retention (Cells et al., 2023; Ford et al., 2020; Thornton et al., 2020). Research has revealed a relationship between TSE and the role of school leadership (Ford et al., 2020).

Professional Development

Mastery experiences are the primary source of TSE by fostering the motivation to take on new challenges (Bandura, 1977), and professional development is one area in school leadership that can develop the master experiences of a teacher by introducing new pedagogical approaches to instruction (Thornton et al., 2020). Effective professional development incorporates coaching, practice, and genuine feedback, resulting in positive student outcomes by providing growth opportunities (Thornton et al., 2020). Fostering an environment where collaboration is encouraged promotes collective efficacy within a school and between teachers (Holzberger & Prestele, 2021; Thornton et al., 2020). Professional learning communities (PLCs) have shown to promote meaningful collaboration between teachers, thereby positively impacting instructional strategies and change (Yoo & Jang, 2023). Additionally, PLCs have shown to increase job satisfaction, TSE, pedagogy, and student academic outcomes (Yoo & Jang, 2023).

Professional development not only requires providing training on effective pedagogical classroom strategies but follows through with an implementation plan for teachers (Eun, 2019). A common strategy for school leaders is to conduct professional development training in large group sessions, which is convenient for time purposes; however, the deficiency of this approach prohibits an individualized approach to the training (Eun, 2019). Therefore, there is an existing need for school leadership to provide differentiated professional development for novice teachers who have been certified through alternative pathways by identifying the needs of these educators (Rose & Sughrue, 2020).

Teacher Evaluation

The teacher accountability mandates resulting from NCLB placed an increased significance on teacher evaluation as a means of measuring the performance of teachers as it relates to student achievement outcomes (Green et al., 2020; Lane, 2020; Peterson et al., 2022; Schmidt et al., 2020). Teacher evaluation has been an administrative tool to evaluate the instructional strategies of teachers to improve teacher effectiveness through classroom observations and performance feedback (Kraft & Christian, 2022). Scholars note that administrators require personal efficacy to provide valuable feedback on teacher evaluations and may benefit from training to foster these critical skills (Kraft & Christian, 2022). Teacher evaluation is a meaningful form of feedback to foster TSE and increase highly effective instructional practices (Krasniqi & Ismajli, 2022; Luo et al., 2022; Smith et al., 2020). Evaluating teachers is essential for building principals to develop evidence-based pedagogy (Krasniqi & Ismajli, 2022). However, teacher's perceptions on the accuracy of the feedback impacts their response when improving and implementing new pedagogical practices (Kraft & Christian, 2022; Lane, 2020). Therefore, effective teacher evaluation requires consistent, meaningful feedback delivered in a safe environment and quality professional development to increase student achievement (Kraft & Christian, 2022; Song et al., 2021).

School Climate and Job Satisfaction

In the same way that teachers influence classroom climate (Hettinger et al., 2023), administrators are responsible for fostering a positive school climate, which has been challenging due to constant interruptions of high teacher turnover (Stewart et al., 2021). There is a relationship between TSE and job satisfaction, which is impacted by internal and external factors (Mokhtar et al., 2023). Some examples of internal factors related to job satisfaction include

(professional responsibilities, professional development, acknowledgment, and appreciation) whereas external factors include (opportunity for promotion, school leadership, salary, and school climate) (Mokhtar et al., 2023). Novice teachers will thrive in a school climate developed by leadership that promotes mentorship, professional development, and collaboration (Cells et al., 2023; Stewart et al., 2021). In the context of TSE, school climate can be defined as student-teacher relationships, the perception of behavior management, and the collaborative nature of distributive leadership (Zhang et al., 2021). Distributive leadership is defined as an innovative approach to school leadership shifting from a top-down model to a collective approach to leadership that encompasses a shared responsibility with decision making opportunities that include the teachers (Mifsud, 2023; Parham et al., 2020; Rumeli et al., 2022). Research has shown that teachers with high TSE have higher job satisfaction (Mokhtar et al., 2023). School culture has been linked to student success, job satisfaction, and a positive school climate, increasing TSE (Zakariya, 2020).

Summary

The literature review revealed several themes related to the necessity of TSE for effective teaching and positive student achievement associated with Bandura's (1977) four sources of self-efficacy: mastery, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states. Notably, Bandura placed the most significant source of self-efficacy to be mastery experiences. TSE has been studied with beginning teachers (Kuok et al., 2020; Lauermann & Berger, 2021; Rose & Sughrue, 2020; Wilhelm et al., 2021), but minimally with provisionally licensed teachers working in the classroom full-time before completing their EPP and fulfilling licensure requirements (Kwok & Cain, 2021; Matsko et al., 2021; Weiss et al., 2020).

TSE often begins as part of an EPP (Chan et al., 2021; Scarparolo & Subban, 2021),

resulting in teachers entering the field with the supposition of their preparedness to be successful in the classroom throughout their coursework and clinical experiences (Livers et al., 2021). However, TSE has proven to decline once pre-service teachers enter the classroom and face the challenges of teaching (Feng et al., 2019). EPPs play a critical role in the development of TSE (Schultz et al., 2023), which research has shown to directly impact effectiveness in the classroom (Raymond-West & Rangel, 2020), underscoring its importance. Conversely, the national teacher shortage (National Education Association, 2022; Schultz et al., 2023) has fostered the development of alternative pathways to licensure, getting teachers in the classroom quickly, including through provisional licensure prior to completing their EPP.

TSE has been found to impact teacher burnout (Klusmann et al., 2021; Yurt, 2022), classroom management (Mccullough et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2021), time management (Camacho et al., 2021; Oliveira et al., 2021), parent communication, and the role of school leadership (Cells et al., 2023; Sulit & Davidson, 2020) and student academic outcomes (Hassan, 2019; Thornton et al., 2020; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Therefore, this study sought to contribute to the field of education and narrow the gap in research and literature concerning the factors that impact the self-efficacy of provisionally licensed teachers (George et al., 2018). Additionally, this study addressed the literature gap under the theoretical framework of self-efficacy by examining the mastery, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states of teachers working with a provisional license. Focusing on this gap and describing the lived experiences of provisionally licensed teachers and their impact on TSE can contribute to education as more alternatively certified teachers enter classrooms.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenological study was to describe self-efficacy through the lived experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia. This chapter explains the research design and data analysis implemented using one central research question and four sub-questions to guide the study. Additionally, the school setting and the selection of the participants are detailed in this chapter. Data collection was approached through triangulation with collection methods, including a survey, individual interviews, and focus groups. At the same time, data analysis was structured to discover themes to achieve the phenomenon's essence. The researcher's positionality is explained through the lens of a social constructivism interpretative framework, including three philosophical assumptions (ontological, epistemological, and axiological) impacting the role of the researcher. Trustworthiness was established through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability while including ethical considerations.

Research Design

A qualitative research design was the chosen inquiry methodology to describe the lived experiences of this population of teachers and its impact on their TSE. Qualitative research uses a theoretical framework to listen to participants' stories in a natural setting to better understand a specific issue or problem by exploring their experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This qualitative design allowed for the emphasis to be placed on the lived experiences of individuals who began teaching before completing an educator preparation program and their subsequent self-efficacy. Creswell and Poth (2018) explain five approaches under the umbrella of qualitative

inquiry: narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, case study, and ethnography, each with a distinguished purpose. It was determined that a phenomenological approach best addresses the central research question by exploring several shared experiences of this phenomenon to understand it well (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Phenomenology is rooted in 20th-century philosophy, with Edmund Husserl and Clark Moustakas taking the stage as the founding philosophers. Phenomenology is described as the beginning process of knowledge through a logical path of discovery, eliminating presuppositions with a transcendental vantage point (Moustakas, 1994). Husserl (1974) believed phenomenology is a critical beginning point for any researcher to verify the essence or perception of a phenomenon. This design attempts to remove preconceived biases and presuppositions of the researcher to achieve the authentic essence of the participant's experience through unfettered immersion.

Transcendental phenomenology sets out to describe and reflect the human experiences of others as defined by Husserl's notion of intentionality (Moustakas, 1994). Husserl (2004) believed that consciousness (intentionality) acknowledges how the self and the world work together to create meaning from an experience. Moustakas (1994) noted that the relationship between noesis (the perception, thinking, feeling/texture) and noema (the phenomenon, the experience/structure) is the foundation of intentionality, creating the textural and structural descriptions of phenomena. Intuition is the starting point of transforming human experience into knowledge as an essential component of transcendental phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994). Additionally, Moustakas emphasizes intuition to understand what lies beneath the surface of the experience, explaining that Husserl believed it precedes empirical knowledge. Husserl believed that intuition is the essence defined by consciousness (Moustakas, 1994).

The transcendental phenomenological researcher purposefully incorporated the methodology of phenomenology by implementing the first step of epoché (a concept developed by Husserl**)** into the design as the ability to approach the research and the phenomenon with discipline by refraining from judgment with a fresh set of eyes (Moustakas, 1994). He explained that to discover the essence of an experienced phenomenon, the researcher must first look inward to verify personal thoughts, feelings, and perceptions as the beginning of human science mixed with subjectivity and objectivity. Transcendental-phenomenological reduction emphasizes a pure vantage point, pulling the researcher back to understand the origin of the meaning within the lived experience, leading to the textural descriptions (thoughts and feelings of the experience), while the imaginative variation develops the structural descriptions of the individual's experience (Moustakas, 1994). Transcendental phenomenology bridges the textural and structural descriptions to derive the essence of the phenomena experienced (Moustakas, 1994). Intersubjectivity allows the researcher to acknowledge their own experiences while approaching the research to describe others' experiences as separate by setting foot into their experience and simultaneously creating a shared consciousness (Moustakas, 1994).

The transcendental phenomenological design approach was chosen as the research design with the simple premise of describing the lived experiences of people who have experienced the same phenomenon and focused on the commitment to describe experiences through reflection rather than explain or analyze them (Moustakas, 1994). He continued to emphasize that the root of phenomenology is based on the researcher's interest and connections to the phenomenon being investigated, noting that any phenomena selected is befitting while purposed at ascertaining the essence. *Epoché* provides the parameter for this research by minimizing (understanding that total elimination is unattainable) the researcher's preliminary assumptions to

see the phenomena through the experiences of others (Moustakas, 1994). Therefore, this research used the transcendental approach to phenomenology while minimizing the researcher's experiences to understand the phenomenon with a fresh perspective as if for the first time through epoché (Moustakas, 1994). The author expressed that human science and discovery through phenomenological research are never finished as knowledge and experiences are constantly in motion, a beautiful reality that keeps humanity connected.

Research Questions

The central research question and four sub-questions were utilized to describe the self-efficacy of provisionally licensed K-12 teachers through their lived experiences working in a classroom setting.

Central Research Question (CRQ)

What were the self-efficacy experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia?

Sub-Question One (SQ1)

What were the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed K-12 teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of professional teaching with mastery experiences as the primary source of self-efficacy?

Sub-Question Two (SQ2)

What were the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed K-12 teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of professional teaching with vicarious experiences as the second source of self-efficacy?

Sub-Question Three (SQ3)

What were the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed K-12 teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of professional teaching with verbal persuasion as the third source of self-efficacy?

Sub-Question Four (SQ4)

What were the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed K-12 teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of professional teaching with physiological and affective states as the fourth source of self-efficacy?

Setting and Participants

This study involved teachers who met the criteria for participation based on the research questions and phenomenon being investigated. The participants represented a variety of backgrounds, ages, locations, and ethnicities. The study included K-12 teachers with at least one year of teaching experience but less than three years of teaching experience while being provisionally licensed. The participants were education students pursuing their postbaccalaureate advanced degrees and teaching on the East Coast.

Setting

The setting for this research was online universities located in the Commonwealth of Virginia or the state of Georgia. The National Center for Education Statistics (2023) found that in the fall of 2021, of the 1.8 million postbaccalaureate students taking courses online exclusively, 48 percent (622,500 students) were taking coursework online in a state different from where they live. Meanwhile, 47 percent (608,500 students) took coursework online in their state (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023). In Virginia, the 2022 National Teacher Preparation Data for Title II reported that 8,788 students (7,139 female and 1,633 male) were enrolled in teacher preparation programs for the 2020-2021 academic year (Virginia, 2022). In

the current study, the selected site included students who attended exclusively online and were seeking a postbaccalaureate licensure degree.

This natural setting was selected for data collection purposes, which occurred as the participants were actively teaching in the field. Creswell and Poth (2018) note that a natural setting allows for multiple sources of data collection, including speaking directly with the participants within the context of their setting. The research site was selected to ensure that the setting included participants who met the research criteria of having experienced the same phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The rationale for this setting was based on the site's uniqueness. Although the participants all attended different universities, they represented individuals who have experienced the same phenomenon across a larger geographic region, including two states, because they attended online programs. Postbaccalaureate students in the U.S. enrolled in fall 2021 were ethnically comprised of 1.7 million White, 382,100 Black, 358,200 Hispanic, 254,600 Asian, 95,400 more than one race, 14,100 American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 6,200 Pacific Islander (National Center for Education Statistics, 2023). The Title 2 Higher Education Act (Virginia, 2022) reported the information for Virginia disaggregated by race to include 6,080 White, 937 Black/African American, 462 Hispanic/Latino, 386 two or more races, 317 Asian, 31 American Indian/Alaska Native, and 20 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

Participants

The participants in this study were: (1) teachers currently working in their own K-12 classroom under a provisional license; (2) teachers who had less than three years of teaching experience; (3) postbaccalaureate students in the process of completing their endorsement prior

to their student teaching semester. Participants in this study were K-12 provisionally licensed teachers with less than three years of experience as professional teachers.

The selection criteria of the participants were enrollment in an education preparation program before completing their culminating semester. As these teachers completed their education exclusively online, there was geographic diversity within the participants, including rural, urban, and suburban settings. The research was comprised of a population sample of postbaccalaureate education students studying at different institutions in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia that provided distance education.

Recruitment Plan

A sample pool includes participants who have all experienced the same phenomenon through their lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The sample pool for this study was K-12 teachers actively teaching in the field with a provisional license prior to completing their degree and licensure requirements. The concept of saturation is sampling with a purpose to address a smaller sample size, as the researcher collects data until it becomes redundant (Patton, 2023). This study approached the number of participants with predetermined purposeful sampling by implementing a reasonable sample size to address the phenomenon instead of waiting until saturation had been achieved (Patton, 2023). The sample size is the number of participants included in phenomenological research; the recommended range is between 3-10 (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The sample size for this research was 12 participants, allowing for an increased possibility of saturation within the predetermined number of participants. Upon receiving IRB approval (see Appendix A) for this study, participants were emailed a recruitment letter. The purposeful sampling approach used criterion sampling as all the participants had shared experiences with the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I utilized criterion sampling

when selecting the participants. Potential participants meeting the study criteria were emailed a recruitment letter to read (See Appendix B), which included a selection survey link using SurveyMonkey. The selected participants were emailed the consent form (see Appendix C) requesting a physical signature on the document as informed consent. The consent form included the purpose of the study, confidentiality protocols, voluntary participation, the ability to withdraw at any point, and the participant risks (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Monetary incentives were used to compensate the participants for their time to increase recruitment (Brown et al., 2021) and were funded solely by the researcher and not by another organization or source. After the data collection, participants received a $50 Amazon gift card for their participation in the survey, individual interviews, and focus group sessions.

Researcher's Positionality

For the purposes of my research, social constructivism (Creswell & Poth, 2018) was used to understand the lived experiences of people experiencing the same phenomenon within the field of education. Researcher positionality is defined as the worldview of the researcher and the assumptions inherently brought into the study (Holmes, 2020). Positionality acknowledges that the researcher is a participant in society, having developed an understanding of the world from their own lived experiences (Holmes, 2020). Therefore, researcher positionality is about honestly reflecting on those interpretations and beliefs about the world and disclosing their influence on the study, allowing the reader to determine the trustworthiness of the data analysis.

Interpretive Framework

Lev Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist view was the framework that guided this study to better understand the world through the eyes of the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Social constructivism is a theory rooted in how an individual's experiences shape their

perception of the world (Dempsey & Mestry, 2023; Naidoo & Mabaso, 2023; Vygotsky, 1978). This social constructivism worldview allows the analysis to move from a broad perspective to a narrower one while guiding the researcher to accurately describe participants' experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The model of a social constructivist emphasizes the acquisition of understanding and skills based on social interactions (Schunk, 2019). The development of TSE is predicated on the individual experiences of the educator, and the social constructivism worldview understands that these interactions shape their view of the world and, in turn, themselves.

Philosophical Assumptions

The worldview of the researcher impacts the lens through which the phenomenon is viewed (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My belief in the inerrant, infallible word of God has shaped my biblical worldview, making up my philosophical assumption and how I view truth (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This assumption is the fundamental viewpoint through which data is organized, collected, and analyzed (Creswell & Poth, 2018). More specifically, my philosophical assumptions can be expanded through the following descriptions of my ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions.

Ontological Assumption

Ontology focuses on the reality of people and the idea that multiple realities exist in the world around us, evident in research through the researcher, the participants, and the reader of the research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My ontological assumption (viewpoint of reality) is rooted in the belief that the word of God is inerrant and infallible, which has shaped my worldview (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My singular reality rests in the truth of God's word while recognizing the existence of differing viewpoints. The social constructivist framework is grounded in the

understanding that people develop their own perceptions and viewpoints through personal experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study is rooted in describing the lived experiences of each participant (Moustakas, 1994). Therefore, this study was conducted to describe the experiences of the participants through their viewpoint, not mine.

Epistemological Assumption

Developing a relationship between the researcher, participants, and the phenomenon being studied is the goal of the epistemological assumption, understanding that new knowledge can be obtained through the shared experiences of others (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As an educator of 17 years, understanding firsthand the demands classroom teachers are required to balance in the profession, my epistemological assumption may impact my point of view during the research process. I approached this study to gain new knowledge, with a fresh perspective (Moustakas, 1994), about the lived experiences of the participants while setting aside my background and knowledge on the topic. This was accomplished by developing rapport and valuing each point of view throughout the study to capture the essence of the participants. Transcendental phenomenology is predicated on the belief that (Moustakas, 1994) human experience is subjective and each lived experience is valuable. I remained unbiased to reflect the lived experiences of teachers in the field accurately.

Axiological Assumption

The researcher is transparent regarding their values, which describes the axiological assumption, while acknowledging the biases brought to the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My axiological assumption is based on an understanding that lived experiences contribute to the greater knowledge and understanding of a phenomenon that can be used for social change and the betterment of humankind. I respected the values of each participant in the same way I want to

be respected (New International Version Bible, 1978/2011, Matthew 7:12). My role as the researcher was to bracket my experiences and biases to reflect the experiences of the participants accurately. However, my value of integrity (Proverbs 10:9) positively contributed to this study as I conducted the study with excellence and reported the findings with accuracy. As a licensed teacher, although through a traditional route, I was committed to best practices and the success of all stakeholders. The value of the research is found in the participants' lived experiences to capture a picture of the phenomenon in the field.

Researcher's Role

This qualitative study included serving in the role of the researcher and as the instrument for how data was collected and analyzed. My role was to describe the self-efficacy experienced by provisionally licensed teachers working in K-12 classrooms before completing their teacher preparation program. I set aside any bias or presuppositions during the data collection and analysis (Moustakas, 1994) by bracketing my lived experiences as a veteran elementary school teacher. I was employed as an adjunct instructor at the same university where some of the participants attended. I did not have an authoritative role over any participants as their course professor prior to or during their enrollment.

I have a master's degree in education and hold a teaching license in three states with seventeen years of K-5 classroom experience as an elementary teacher in both public and private school settings. My desire for teacher educator preparation to thoroughly train future teachers to be effective in the classroom before they become teachers may influence the lens of how I see the data. As I have seen an increase in provisionally licensed teachers working in the classroom due to the teacher shortage, I was interested in how this impacted TSE. My experience as an educator gave me a deeper understanding of the demands placed on teachers. However, my role

was not to interpret the data but instead to describe the lived experiences of the participants who have shared the same phenomena. I collected data through a survey, individual interviews, and focus group sessions.

Procedures

This study began with requesting approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the research. Approval was also requested from the university administration (see Appendix D) to enable participant recruitment, and permission from the creators of the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) (see Appendix E). The data collection process began once approval from the IRB, the university administration, and Tschannen-Moran and Hoy had been received. The participants first received a recruitment letter in an email with a link to complete a selection survey (see Appendix F). If the participant met the research criteria, a follow-up email was sent with the consent form, requesting for it to be signed and returned. The signed informed consent for the study was received before beginning the TSES long-form online survey, semi-structured individual interviews using open-ended questions, and focus group sessions. The questions were pertinent to the central research question and the four sub-questions.

The data analysis included transcribing interviews while utilizing horizontalization to identify statements that effectively describe the phenomenon experienced by the participants (Moustakas, 1994). In doing so, textural and structural descriptions emerged through coding the themes. However, the primary instrument of this study was the researcher, as the designer of the open-ended questions for the interviews and focus groups (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Thus, horizonalization was achieved by reviewing the interview transcripts to identify any essential statements. Similarly, clustering was built on the data from the horizonalization process to develop common themes. The data revealed a variety of components and perspectives as the

discovery of elements led to the emerged themes by which to understand. The textural descriptions centered on what takes place during the lived experience of teachers with a provisional license. At the same time, the structural descriptions focused on how the participant's experiences and self-efficacy were impacted by working in the classroom before completing their degree and full certification. Particularly important, the essence was developed throughout the entire data collection process.

Data Collection Plan

Qualitative research includes investigative tools allowing the researcher to view the world from the perspective of the participant in their natural setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study incorporated three transcendental phenomenological data collection methods: an anonymous survey, individual interviews, and focus groups. Multiple data collection methods designed by the researcher and gathered in the natural setting of the participant revealed common themes found throughout the combination of methods (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study began with an anonymous survey as the initial data collection method providing raw data as a broad overview prior to the subsequent comprehensive questions during the interview and focus group sessions. The Likert scale survey yielded data used for descriptive analysis. The individual interviews followed the survey data analysis to provide the opportunity for participants to expand on their survey responses with open-ended semi-structured questions yielding more information on their individual lived experiences. Then, the focus groups concluded the data collection process, allowing participants to listen to the experiences of other educators who have experienced a similar phenomenon while elaborating on their own lived experiences. Triangulation was achieved by synthesizing the data collected from the three research methods to describe the lived experiences of the participants.

Survey

The first data collection method utilized the Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) as an initial tool to guide the following semi-structured questions in the interviews and focus groups. The TSES was created to provide insight into teaching responsibilities that are difficult (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Additionally, the anonymous survey began the triangulation process by anchoring the data analysis derived from the individual interviews and focus groups. The participants were emailed an invitation to participate in the study, including a link with a selection survey using SurveyMonkey. A consent form was emailed to the participants selected for the study one week prior to the beginning of data collection. Subsequently, the TSES was emailed to the participants using SurveyMonkey. The TSES included instructions on completing the form electronically asking participants to represent their individual experiences with self-efficacy and classroom experiences numerically, emphasizing that their responses were anonymous. Using descriptive statistics, this tool allowed participants to measure their TSE using a 9-point Likert scale: (1) nothing, (3) very little, (5) some influence, (7) quite a bit, and (9) a great deal. The authors explained the intent of the 9-point scale was to provide teachers with a broader range of scoring to avoid being too narrow when measuring their self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The Likert scale included three sub-factors of questions: (a) efficacy in student engagement, (b) efficacy in instructional strategies, and (c) efficacy in classroom management (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The instrument (see Appendix G) and scoring directions are available (see Appendix H).

Table 1

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale Questions (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001)

1. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students? CRQ, SQ1
2. How much can you do to help your students think critically? CRQ, SQ1

3. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom? CRQ, SQ1
4. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work? CRQ, SQ1
5. To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior? CRQ, SQ1
6. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work? CRQ, SQ1
7. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students? CRQ, SQ1
8. How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly? CRQ, SQ1
9. How much can you do to help your students value learning? CRQ, SQ1
10. How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught? CRQ, SQ1
11. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students? CRQ, SQ1
12. How much can you do to foster student creativity? CRQ, SQ1
13. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules? CRQ, SQ1
14. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing? CRQ, SQ1
15. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy? CRQ, SQ1
16. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students? CRQ, SQ1
17. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students? CRQ, SQ1
18. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies? CRQ, SQ1
19. How well can you keep a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson? CRQ, SQ1
20. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused? CRQ, SQ1
21. How well can you respond to defiant students? CRQ, SQ1
22. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school? CRQ, SQ1
23. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom? CRQ, SQ1
24. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students? CRQ, SQ1

Individual Interviews

Interviews are the typical foundation of data collection in qualitative research, defined by Creswell and Poth (2018) as information collected through direct conversations. Moustakas (1994) referred to this as the long interview resulting in a complete picture of the individual's lived experience with the phenomenon. This touch point provided data from semi-structured open-ended questions without the presupposition of having the answer to the central research question before beginning the individual interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The authors emphasized the importance of acknowledging that there is not one right story but a myriad of

stories or experiences waiting to be told. The essential consideration is that the story accurately reflects what was shared and experienced. Moustakas (1994) explained that interviews are comprised of two primary questions: What has the participant experienced with the phenomenon? What circumstances affected the participant's experience with the phenomenon? These questions set the stage for the researcher to develop the textural and structural descriptions of the experienced phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The individual interviews for this study were conducted virtually through Microsoft Teams and scheduled to last 60 minutes.

Table 2

Individual Interview Questions

1. Please tell me about yourself and the group of students you have this year in your classroom. Introduction Question
2. Where are you in your academic degree program, and what licensure requirements remain to be completed to be eligible for a renewable teaching license in your state? CRQ
3. What steps did you take to obtain your provisional licensure? CRQ
4. What previous academic preparation and experiences have prepared you to be successful in your current role teaching with a provisional license? CRQ
5. What challenges, if any, did you face in your current role teaching with a provisional license? CRQ
6. How have your previous academic preparation and experiences, if any, prepared you to be successful with classroom management? SQ1, SQ2
7. What are some of the challenges you have experienced with classroom management? SQ1, SQ4

8. How do you respond to classroom management challenges and students who do not follow the procedures and rules that have been implemented? SQ1, SQ4
9. How do you respond to the challenges of meeting the needs of diverse learners? SQ1
10. How would you describe your ability to influence student engagement and achievement? SQ1
11. What challenges have you faced with time management (lesson planning, grading, record keeping)? SQ4
12. How have your previous academic preparation and experiences prepared you to be successful with time management? SQ2
13. How have your previous academic preparation and experiences prepared you to be successful working with the families and parents of your students? SQ2
14. What are some of the challenges you have faced working with families and parents? SQ4
15. How do you respond to parent communication challenges when addressing concerns about their child? SQ4
16. How have your experiences impacted your teacher self-efficacy? CRQ
17. What advice would you give the next teacher following your pathway to licensure? CRQ
18. How would you describe your experience with performance feedback from mentors and school leadership? SQ3
19. How has positive feedback and encouragement impacted your self-efficacy? SQ3
20. Have you been partnered with a mentor, and if so, how has that experience impacted your self-efficacy? SQ3

The interview questions created a comfortable atmosphere for participants to share their lived experiences with the interviewer by developing rapport beginning with a grand tour question (see Appendix I). Questions 1-4 were designed to gain insight into the participant's current stage of their degree completion, educational background, and personal experience obtaining provisional licensure. Questions 5-9 focused on the first sub-question for the research addressing experiences with classroom instruction (classroom management, student engagement, student achievement, behavior management, and differentiation). These were followed by questions 10-14 that shifted the focus to the second sub-question designed to gain insight beyond classroom instruction (parent communication, time management, lesson planning, grading, and record-keeping). The final questions allowed the participants to elaborate on a previous answer and provide additional information not addressed in previous questions.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were an extension of the individual interviews (Gundumogula, 2021) conducted after the interviews were transcribed and member-checked. The questions used in the focus groups were based on themes found in the interviews to facilitate a deeper discussion (Gundumogula, 2021). Focus groups were utilized as one of the data collection methods to expand themes revealed in the individual interviews during the initial data analysis (Gill & Baillie, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The advantage and purpose of a focus group session included observing the interactions between the participants as they described their experiences, which highlighted similarities and differences in real-time, offering diverse perspectives for the researcher (Dimitrakopoulou & Theodorou, 2022; Luke & Goodrich, 2019; Morgan, 1997). Focus groups require greater attention from the researcher to synthesize the participants' lived experiences (Dimitrakopoulou & Theodorou, 2022; Morgan, 1997). Focus groups are a valuable

research strategy to effectively promote a dialogue, simultaneously achieving several perspectives on the phenomenon (Fusch et al., 2022; Patton, 2023).

The primary role of the researcher in this setting was to create an environment where participants felt comfortable with each other to share their lived experiences in a group format, ensuring time equity was given to each participant and making sure one participant did not dominate the conversation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The atmosphere of a focus group allowed the participants, who may feel more comfortable in a small group setting, to share more detailed information (Dimitrakopoulou & Theodorou, 2022). The participants were separated into two smaller groups to allow each person more opportunity to speak (Fusch et al., 2022).

The participants were reminded at the beginning of the session that the goal of the focus group session was to curiously listen to the lived shared experiences of others while emphasizing that its purpose was not to reach an agreed-upon conclusion or consensus to each question while respecting the diversity of experiences within the group (Dimitrakopoulou & Theodorou, 2022; Gundumogula, 2021). ‘Groupthink’ was addressed by asking participants to write down in a bullet format on a piece of paper the thoughts they had to the question before other participants began sharing their experiences to minimize the influence and persuasion of others before contributing to the discussion (Fusch et al., 2022). The researcher discouraged the perception of the ‘power dynamic’ by encouraging and supporting the different experiences shared by the participants, emphasizing that each participant has a valued voice (Fusch et al., 2022). A set of questions was utilized to begin the discussion, allowing the participants to share actively; if necessary, the researcher redirected the conversation back to the topic (Fusch et al., 2022).

The participants were informed that the focus groups would be conveniently conducted virtually through Microsoft Teams and scheduled for 60 minutes. Focus groups have been

commonly conducted through virtual meetings rather than in person, allowing greater convenience for the participants (Gundumogula, 2021). Data collected in this format provided an alternative to bringing together participants that may otherwise be impossible due to geographic distance and practicality (Creswell & Poth, 2018). However, the drawback of this data collection method included coordination of time to gather as different time zones may be a factor with participants spread out across the country (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Although the participants all taught with a provisional license, their geographic locations and school sites differed, allowing for unique experiences of the phenomenon (Fusch et al., 2022). Participants were sent an email reminder a week before the focus group and a text on the day of the focus group (Fusch et al., 2022).

Table 3

Focus Group Questions

1. How would you describe your previous teaching experiences that prepared you to work as a provisionally licensed teacher? SQ1
2. Please think about previous opportunities to observe other teachers; what stands out as particularly meaningful to you as a provisionally licensed teacher? SQ2
3. As a provisionally licensed teacher, what feedback have you received about your instruction and classroom management? SQ3
4. How do you feel when you think about teaching on a provisional license? SQ4
5. How would you describe the support you received as a provisionally licensed teacher?
6. What advice would you give to other teachers considering becoming a provisionally licensed teacher?

The focus group questions were designed to build community with other educators in similar career stages and paths to licensure (see Appendix J). The questions allowed participants to provide additional insight and detailed information after the individual interviews. Each question started with time for personal reflection before the discussion began collectively as a group (Dimitrakopoulou & Theodorou, 2022). Questions 1-4 focused on each of the four attributes of Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory, addressing their belief in their ability to be successful, in this case, teaching with a provisional license. Self-efficacy impacts how individuals face challenges with specific tasks (Bandura, 1977). The focus groups allowed participants to interact with each other, sharing and listening to the lived experiences of teaching with a provisional license and the impact on personal self-efficacy.

Data Analysis

Moustakas's (1994) modified version of van Kaam's method of data analysis for phenomenological qualitative research drove the strategies used for analysis in this research. Moustakas (1994) outlined the phenomenological data analysis method to include horizonalization, invariant constituents, clustering and themes, validation, textural and structural descriptions, and the essence of the studied phenomenon. Each step in the process was designed to be a precursor to the next. However, epoché (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2016) began the data collection process and continued throughout the analysis as the researcher intentionally prepared to be receptive to each participant's lived experiences while setting aside any presuppositions. Epoché was intentionally approached through self-reflection and dialogue (Moustakas, 1994) by practicing reflexive journaling during the data collection process (Dado et al., 2023). Bracketing was implemented to represent the experiences of the phenomenon described by participants accurately (Moustakas, 1994) by refraining from interjecting personal

opinions and bias into the research. The purpose of horizonalization (Moustakas, 1994) was to review the transcripts from each data source and identify essential statements that project the characteristics of the experienced phenomenon by placing the value of each expression equally. After removing any data that did not relate to the research questions, the remaining expressions resulted in horizons, thereby becoming invariant constituents that were grouped into unique themes, effectively eliminating repetition (Moustakas, 1994). Horizonalization ensured that each statement resulting from the data collection had equal value or weight (Moustakas, 1994). I validated the resulting clustered themes to ensure that the remaining themes were expressed explicitly by the participants (Moustakas, 1994). Saldaña (2021) explained that themes do not simply emerge from the data by jumping off the page but are the resulting constructs of the researcher's interpretation of the data. Theming data phenomenologically consisted of encapsulating the phenomenon (van Manen, 1990). The resulting unique themes discovered created individual textural descriptions (Moustakas, 1994), followed by the emerged structural descriptions. Imaginative variation honored the varying perspectives of the participants with the phenomenon. Moustakas (1994) explained that the meanings and essence are derived from the textural and structural descriptions of the experience. The textural descriptions were derived from the participant's verbatim interpretation of the phenomenon, whereas structural descriptions were developed using those interpretations to construct themes (Moustakas, 1994).

Throughout the individual interviews and focus group sessions, I utilized the process of memoing as a method of discovering patterns in the corpus of data through the process of writing down notes (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Saldaña, 2021). The analytic memoing method during the data collection utilized some of the prompts designed by Saldaña that included reflective questions like, “What do you find intriguing or surprising?” (2021, p.69). Each individual

interview (see Appendix K) and focus group session (see Appendix L) was recorded using Microsoft Teams, which initiated the transcription process as the data was later transferred into a Microsoft Word document for review. The initial audio transcription was meticulously reviewed and listened to multiple times to ensure the accuracy of every word. According to Moustakas (1994), each transcription was evaluated to ensure that it supported the description, providing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon while eliminating anything that does not fit this requirement. Through the detailed transcription process, a deeper understanding of the phenomenon was achieved, which allowed for effectively coding the data for theme development (Moustakas, 1994). Member-checking was used as one form of validation to check the accuracy of the transcription by asking each group member to review their individual transcripts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Moustakas (1994) emphasized using transcribed excerpts verbatim as examples of how participants described the phenomenon as part of data analysis. Saldaña (2021) described the coding cycle as beginning with data, coding the data received, grouping those codes into a commonality of categories, and finally clustering the categories into constructed themes, thereby answering the research question (see Appendix M). I began by following the initial coding method (Saldaña, 2021) of reviewing each transcription line by line. Initial coding was followed by secondary coding or sub-coding, according to Saldaña (2021). Sub-coding is an effective coding approach for studies with multiple participants and forms of data (Saldaña, 2021), as the process narrows broader coding while still correlating the initial code. A Microsoft Word document was created to gather the data obtained from each data source and store it. Each participant's data was transcribed and stored using pseudonyms.

Moustakas (1994) details van Kamm’s modified approach to synthesizing data as preserving lived experiences by describing human behavior through research. Data synthesis

began by utilizing the previously developed individual textural and structural descriptions to uncover the composite textural and structural descriptions (Moustakas, 1994). The data from the individual interviews and focus groups was synthesized, creating composite descriptions (see Appendix N). The development of composite textural and structural descriptions (Moustakas, 1994) was the representation of the group collectively by integrating the individual textural and structural descriptions derived from each data source to create a grouped textural and structural description. The grouped textural and structural descriptions were synthesized to develop the derived meanings and essences to describe the participants' lived experiences within the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). The essence was a reflective understanding of the phenomenon's nature through the lived experiences of people (van Manen, 1990).

The TSES survey data was analyzed using a factor analysis to measure how the participants scored their personal self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The 24-item long-form survey scale was used with the subscale areas of efficacy in classroom management, instructional practices, and student engagement (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), the subscale scores were computed using unweighted means for each factor. The survey focused on mastery experiences (SQ1), and the data was divided into three sub-factors: (a) efficacy in student engagement (Questions 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 22), (b) efficacy in instructional strategies (Questions 7, 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24), and (c) efficacy in classroom management (Questions 3, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21) (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The mean score for each of the three main constructs was calculated to determine if the mean was robust, being away from the middle score. As Bandura (1977) has explained, mastery experiences are the foremost influence on TSE, and the TSES effectively measured this primary source of self-efficacy. The multiple data collection methods resulted in a substantial depth of

information for triangulation, resulting in a comprehensive approach to data analysis (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Creswell & Poth, 2018), providing accuracy through this validation method. The data collection sources were synthesized to develop the phenomenon's essence as data was gathered from a survey, individual interviews, and focus groups to answer the central research question.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1982) pioneered the transition of trustworthiness from traditional research to inquiry-based research by shifting the descriptors from internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Guba (1981) emphasized that the criteria used for traditional (rationalistic) research are inadequate for inquiry-based (naturalistic) research. Trustworthiness is achieved when inquiry research can be examined to validate that the research methods were reasonable and rigorous (Lincoln & Guba, 1982). The criteria for inquiry research provided a clear picture of how to distinguish data collection and the results derived from that process, allowing for the audit process to be verified publicly and serving as historical documentation for future researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 1982). The authors emphasized that ethical considerations require attention by the researcher to ensure participant protection from any potential harm caused by the study.

Credibility

Credibility is achieved when the researcher accurately represents the experiences or views of the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1982; Nowell et al., 2017). Substantiating the research results provided credibility to the data collection methods planned (Lincoln & Guba, 1982). Guba (1981) noted that triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checks are three

methods for obtaining research credibility. Credibility was pursued by implementing triangulation, member-checking, and peer debriefing, as recommended by Guba. Lemon and Hayes (2020) emphasized that credibility provided confidence in the findings after the study. Additionally, qualitative phenomenological research recommended narrowing the participants to be studied from 5 to 10 individuals (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study included teachers provisionally certified between the ages of 18 and 44. The participants represented gender and ethnic diversity, adding depth and richness to the data collected while striving for maximum variation of participants.

Data Triangulation

Triangulation allowed for each data collection method to be substantiated by cross-checking the data during analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1982). The data was collected through three methods: an anonymous survey, individual interviews, and focus groups, resulting in a variety of perspectives to achieve triangulation. Lemon and Hayes (2020) explained that triangulation aims to identify emerging commonalities and potential inconsistencies in the experiences described by participants.

Member Checking

Member checking addressed credibility by having participants verify the transcriptions' accuracy to establish the data's dependability. The data collected was member-checked by the participants following each qualitative collection method (Lincoln & Guba, 1982). Bert et al. (2016) noted that member checking reduced the risk associated with researcher bias by incorporating this process, also called participant validation, to represent the experienced phenomenon precisely. The interview transcripts were returned to the participants via email and were member-checked within a week of the data collection, while the conversation was easier to

remember. After the focus group data was grouped into themes, the participants were asked to member-check the findings and review the developed themes.

Peer Debriefing

Peer debriefing provided a process for evaluating each research step through guidance and advice while maintaining an accurate audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1982). I selected a trusted peer outside the dissertation committee to serve as a debriefer (Spall, 1998). Confidential debriefing sessions were used to discuss research methodologies and challenges to minimize further any bias present in the study from an outside perspective. Spall (1998) noted that a peer debriefer provides peer recognition and support while reducing stress during the research process. I outlined the frequency and duration of each peer debriefing session throughout the study.

Transferability

Research transferability is achieved when the analysis process allows the data to be transferred to a different context or setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1982; Nowell et al., 2017). According to Lincoln and Guba (1982), transferability was possible with the inclusion of thick descriptions. Verbatim descriptions of provisionally licensed teachers working in their classrooms about self-efficacy were used. Guba (1981) explained that phenomenological research (the naturalist approach) avoids generalizations of the findings to a larger population; instead, the emphasis is placed on rich descriptive statements. The lived experiences of the phenomenon through the lens of each participant individually and collectively as a group were described.

Dependability

The dependability of a study is to ensure that the research remains within the parameters of "good professional practice" (Lincoln & Guba, 1982, p. 3). An examination of dependability included reviewing the documentation collected in the study, confirming that the chosen methodology stays within the boundaries of acceptability, thereby certifying the inquiry process (Lincoln & Guba, 1982). Guba (1981) explained that the dependability audit process should include an audit trail through detailed documentation, like interview notes and memoing. The audit trail included a detailed log of memoing during the individual interviews and focus groups throughout the data collection process. Additionally, a record of the transcriptions from each interview and focus group session was kept. The coding process and theme development were outlined as a record of how the data led to composite textural and structural descriptions and the essence (see Appendix).

Confirmability

Confirmability of the data occurs when the study results are derived from the data (Nowell et al., 2017) and when credibility, transferability, and dependability have been accomplished (Lincoln & Guba, 1982). Peer reviews allowed a data analysis audit to ensure the data is "unitized, categorized, documentable, and triangulated" (Lincoln & Guba, 1982, p. 15), certifying that the results were interpreted adequately. Guba (1981) stated that confirmability relies on triangulation (data collection from a variety of sources) and reflexivity (revealing the researcher's epistemological assumptions) as two strategies to address confirmability within a study. Triangulation was utilized to gather data from multiple sources through a survey, individual interviews, and focus groups. Reflexivity was achieved by disclosing my researcher positionality, which may impact the study, beginning with the central research question and concluding with the derived essence of the phenomenon. Intentional mindfulness allowed me to

remain aware of my perspectives and biases to abate their influence throughout the research process (Lemon & Hayes, 2020; Shufutinsky, 2020). I kept a record of my procedures, member-checked transcriptions, memoing notes, coding process, and data analysis method, allowing for a detailed audit trail to achieve confirmability.

Ethical Considerations

Considering the various ethical issues was essential when conducting research throughout the qualitative inquiry process while collecting and analyzing data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Forecasting the potential ethical risks that could surface during the study is a meaningful approach to addressing concerns before they emerge, and institutional review boards (IRB) serve to ensure ethical integrity is maintained to the smallest detail. The research for this study began upon approval from the Liberty University IRB. I anticipated three umbrella ethical issues that could potentially arise, including "the privacy of participants, the consideration of their well-being, and equitable treatment of everyone" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 149). IRB approval protected the participants, the integrity of the study, and myself. Ethical considerations were the foundation of data collection and began with informed consent (VandeVusse et al., 2022).

Permissions

Site permissions from the university were requested to allow straightforward data collection by seeking approval to use students for the study, thereby obtaining the necessary permissions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Informed consent listed the potential risks and benefits of participating in the study and emphasized that participation in the study was entirely voluntary while providing reassurance of their right to withdraw from the research at any point in the study. Participant and site confidentiality was maintained using pseudonyms to ensure privacy with participant consent and site approval before the data collection process began (Creswell &

Poth, 2018). The consent form listed the planned data collection and analysis methods while emphasizing how anonymity would be preserved, although it was not guaranteed during the focus groups.

Other Participant Protections

Protecting the well-being of each participant was achieved by explaining why they were selected; in phenomenological research, this included a description of the shared phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The data management process was addressed by explicitly explaining how privacy and security are maintained, including gathering, storing, and referencing confidential participant information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Security measures included password protection on a personal computer for the acquired electronic data. Data comprised of physical documentation was securely locked in a confidential location. Participants were reminded that information shared within the context of the focus groups was confidential. All data collection will be permanently deleted electronically after five years.

Considering the various ethical issues was essential when conducting research throughout the qualitative inquiry process while collecting and analyzing data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Forecasting the potential ethical risks that could surface during the study was a meaningful approach to addressing concerns before they emerge, and institutional review boards (IRB) serve to ensure ethical integrity is maintained to the smallest detail. The authors explained the importance of anticipating three umbrella ethical issues that could potentially arise, including participants' privacy, consideration of their well-being, and equitable treatment of everyone (p. 149). The IRB reviewed and approved the research proposal to protect the participants, the integrity of the study, and the researcher. Participant and site confidentiality were maintained using pseudonyms to ensure privacy with participant consent and site approval before the data

collection process began (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Additionally, the informed consent listed the potential risks and benefits of participating in the study and emphasized that participation in the study was entirely voluntary while providing reassurance of their right to withdraw from the research at any point in the study. Creswell and Poth (2018) stated that protecting the well-being of the participants can be achieved by explaining why they were selected; in phenomenological research, this would include describing the shared phenomenon. The data collection process included (Creswell & Poth, 2018) gathering, storing, and referencing confidential participant information, requiring the data management process to be addressed by specifically explaining how privacy and security were maintained. Security measures encompassed password protection for electronic data and securely locking data for physical documentation. Ethical considerations were the foundation of data collection.

Summary

Qualitative phenomenological research is organized and systematic (Moustakas, 1994), as outlined in the details of this chapter. This study used the transcendental phenomenological research design to arrive at the essence of the self-efficacy of provisionally licensed teachers working in the classroom by bracketing any presuppositions to achieve a fresh understanding of the participant's experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The guiding focus of this phenomenological study rested on one well-constructed central research question and four sub-questions, with every word carefully selected (Moustakas, 1994). The data collection method included an anonymous survey, individual interviews, and focus groups appropriate for phenomenology research. According to Moustakas (1994), each data collection method will point back to the central research question and was designed to highlight the phenomenon with rich textures and meanings.

The Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), was the initial data collection method to frame the semi-structured questions in the interviews and focus groups. The TSES was created to provide a balanced scale without oversimplifying the tool or making it overly complex (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The TSES was the first step in the triangulation process by anchoring the data analysis derived from the individual interviews and focus groups. The primary method selected as appropriate for this research design included in-depth informal interviews of a small sample size of participants who have experienced the same phenomenon utilizing bracketed open-ended questions (Moustakas, 1994). The interview atmosphere was effectively created by beginning with a broader social question, creating a positive climate where the participant was comfortable sharing their experiences with honesty (Moustakas, 1994). The process of epoché (Moustakas, 1994) was essential to set aside any biases interfering with the raw data collection by actively listening and seeing it simplistically, just as it appears. The critical component was describing what was experienced, not explaining or analyzing the experience (Moustakas, 1994).

The data was organized systematically for analysis by including textural and structural descriptions deriving the meaning and essence of the shared lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994) utilizing Moustakas' modified van Kaam method. The steps of phenomenology analysis included horizonalizing, clustering themes, and meanings of the transcribed interviews and focus group sessions to arrive at textural and structural descriptions revealing the phenomenon's essence (Moustakas, 1994). The process of horizonalization (Moustakas, 1994) included being open-minded to the participant's experiences and the statements they share by viewing each new layer as a new significant horizon, adding depth and meaning. Horizonalization was followed by clustering the data into themes (Moustakas, 1994) that commonly occurred while eliminating

repetition. Textural descriptions were first constructed (the how) from the theme development in the data analysis process (Moustakas, 1994), which was the foundation of the structural descriptions. This resulted in a synthesis of meanings and essences of human experiences connected with the phenomenon. Trustworthiness in inquiry-based research is not guaranteed in qualitative research but instead is a means to an end by providing a systematic structure to ensure reasonable steps have been taken (Lincoln & Guba, 1982) as this study set out to describe the self-efficacy experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenological study was to describe self-efficacy through the lived experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia. This chapter focuses on the findings from the data collected based on the research questions by describing the lived experiences of each participant teaching with a provisional license. The data analysis was anchored in the themes that emerged from the survey, semi-structured individual interviews, and focus groups. A rich description of each participant and the themes discovered are revealed in the following narrative themes, sub-themes, and tables guided by the research questions. Additionally, this chapter presents outlier data revealed from the data collection and responses to the research questions. Chapter Four concludes with a summary of these findings.

Participants

The participants represent K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia. Purposeful sampling was used, as over 6,000 emails were sent to individuals meeting the criteria of teaching with a provisional license. There were 107 responses received, which was later reduced to 51 eligible participants through the selection survey. Twelve participants signed the consent form after reading the study's purpose and understanding that participation was voluntary. Each participant portrayed a different teacher and their experiences working in a classroom while provisionally licensed. The pseudonyms selected intentionally reflect the participant's cultural background while protecting the participant's identity and location throughout the descriptions.

To participate in the study, participants were required to have taught in a K-12 classroom

for less than three years with a provisional license while enrolled in a master's program pursuing a professional renewable license. The participants lived in the United States, residing in either the Commonwealth of Virginia or the state of Georgia. The demographics (Table 4) reflect six female and six male participants, ranging in age from 18-44. The age groups were distinguished by the ranges 18-24, 25-34, and 35-44. Each participant had less than three years of teaching experience in a K-12 setting with a provisional license. Six participants were teaching in elementary (K-6th grade), and six participants were teaching in secondary (7th-12th grade). The ethnicity of the participants was evenly split between White and Black, with six participants being White and six being Black. There were six participants with less than one year of teaching experience in the classroom, three with one year of teaching experience, and three with two years of teaching experience.

Table 4

Provisionally Licensed Teacher Participants

Teacher Participant	Years Taught	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	State	Grade Level
Alara	1	25-34	Female	White	Georgia	9th-12th
Ashley	2	25-34	Female	Black	Georgia	2nd
Brianna	<1	35-44	Female	White	Georgia	7th
Cameron	<1	35-44	Male	Black	Georgia	2nd
Daija	2	35-44	Female	Black	Georgia	4th
Derek	<1	35-44	Male	Black	Georgia	4th

Kade	<1	25-34	Male	White	Georgia	3rd
Lamont	2	35-44	Male	Black	Georgia	9th-12th
Lynette	1	35-44	Female	White	Virginia	7th
Madalyn	1	18-24	Female	White	Virginia	7th
Miles	<1	25-34	Male	White	Georgia	8th
Octavia	<1	35-44	Female	Black	Georgia	6th

Alara

Alara, 25-34 years old, is a first year provisionally licensed White co-teacher working with special education high school students in social studies in a virtual classroom in Georgia. Although there were 40 students enrolled in each class, attendance was not mandatory unless they were failing, and approximately only ten participated in the lessons. The virtual program was designed for special education students and students who have been expelled from school, allowing them to finish their degree without having to choose the GED route. This program was going to be downsized from 40 to 4 teachers at the end of the year. In the upcoming school year, she will transition to a traditional in-person classroom in a new role working with autistic students in a K-2 setting. Alara was enrolled in a master's program in special education with approximately one year remaining to qualify for a professional teaching license. However, this was her second master's degree as a career switcher with a background in museum studies, which was where she fell in love with teaching. She part of a mentor program where she

explained, “I think they have really helped me develop as a young teacher and a first-year teacher.”

Ashley

Ashley is a second year Black provisionally licensed teacher, also 25-34 years old, working in an urban area with a class of 26 second graders at a Title I school in Georgia. She transitioned into this role after previously being an interrelated co-teacher during her first year of teaching with a provisional license. Ashley has completed her coursework in her master’s program, with only her student teaching semester remaining. She felt frustrated that her academic preparation program did not effectively prepare her for the challenges she had faced in teaching. Ashley felt unsupported due to a lack of mentorship as she faced challenges with classroom management, student engagement, differentiating the curriculum, and high expectations. She shared, “For me, most of my experience has been on-the-job learning, which is, you know, fine but only to some degree because then it makes you feel like you are kind of drowning and don’t know what you are doing.” Her confidence had declined in her two years of teaching, impacting her teacher self-efficacy, as she was unsure about remaining in the profession.

Brianna

Brianna had been co-teaching special education middle school students for less than one year with a provisional license in Georgia. This 35-44-year-old White co-teacher had four classes with 25 students on her caseload, and her day was split between two teachers. Brianna supported her special education students who were immersed in the general education classroom and prioritized building relationships with her students. One classroom management challenge she faced was “Getting kids to listen the first time is huge.” She also described challenges in meeting

the needs of diverse learners as “Differentiating the instruction and just trying to describe, you know, the standard and the lesson and give them ways they can understand it, and it is not the same for every kid.” Brianna relied on her network at the school, which included the administration, mentor teachers, and colleagues, for support in addressing these hurdles. Overall, positive feedback played an important role in her teacher self-efficacy as she explained, “I am somebody that kinda, I don’t necessarily say feeds off of, you know, words of affirmation, but it’s just something that keeps my mind and my thoughts where they need to be.” Although she has faced many challenges, Brianna continues to persevere, believing that teaching is a fulfilling profession.

Cameron

Coming from a family of teachers, Cameron has always known he would be a teacher. His dream was now a reality as he was teaching a class of 26 second graders in a Title 1 school in Georgia as a first-year provisionally licensed teacher. He is a 35-44-year-old Black male who describes his urban classroom as ethnically diverse. He was part of Georgia’s Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) and enrolled in a master’s licensure program, where he was working on gaining his professional teaching license. The TKES system was created to measure educator effectiveness in the classroom using the same instrument across the state, focusing on Teacher Assessment of Performance Standards (TAPS) and student and professional growth utilizing standardized test scores. Cameron had entered the classroom with experience in an educational setting as a long-term sub and a paraprofessional. He shared that his first year had been met with many obstacles, noting, “This year, I had a lot of challenges. I would guess not being prepared. They did not have the resources that I needed as a new teacher, which left me challenged and upset because I gotta help my students!” Cameron felt his strongest source of

support came from his master's program but had struggled with classroom management and time management this year and was looking forward to taking what he has learned into his second year of teaching.

Daija

Daija is a Black 35-44-year-old provisionally licensed teacher who teaches writing to fourth graders in a Title I school in Georgia. She had taught for two years, and most of the students at her school were at or below the poverty level. Most of the challenges Daija has faced, as she stated, are "Internal challenges, just being unsure, not totally confident because I didn't have the formal training beforehand." She described her classroom management hurdles as "Having students, like, trying to get through a lesson when they are constantly interrupting or shouting out, speaking out of turn, or not seated over distracting someone else while you are trying to teach." Daija made sure to frequently communicate with parents providing updates about their child. Time management was an area that has been difficult for her as she described, "I just don't always get to meet the deadlines, and it doesn't make me feel good about it, but, you know, there are so many things on the list. They don't always get done." She desired more constructive feedback for professional growth while noting, "I want as much feedback as possible because I know that I'm newer to this, and I didn't take the traditional route. I just kind of want to know how I am doing so that I can fix things." Daija felt that positive feedback and praise helped with her teacher self-efficacy.

Derek

Derek is a fourth-grade interrelated teacher in a self-contained classroom working with special education students in Georgia. As a 35-44-year-old Black male, he had been working for less than one year with a provisional teaching license and just started his master's in special

education as part of the Teach for America program. As a parent of a student with disabilities, Derek had a huge heart for special education. This allowed him to understand his students better and be compassionate when working with the parents of his students. Derek remembered his experience: "I know the parents are where I was, and I was just completely lost." His preparation and ability to address classroom management challenges came through on-the-job training, explaining, "I don't think anything really prepares you cause once you actually in there teaching, that was a real, real-world experience." He welcomed any performance feedback and desired to improve his teaching practices to meet the needs of his students. The positive feedback he had received increased his confidence and desire to, as Derek said, "Perfect my craft!"

Kade

This was Kade's first year teaching in the classroom with a provisional license as a third-grade teacher in Georgia. He is a White 25-34-year-old male, and his school is located in an urban area with a large population of English speakers of other languages (ESOL). Kade always wanted to be a teacher and was subbing for three years while completing his associate degree in early childhood before the COVID lockdowns, which caused him to pursue work elsewhere. He got his bachelor's in sports management before finding his way back to education. As a new teacher, he described the challenges he faced as "I'm hard on myself. I felt like at the beginning of the year, I was behind the eight ball, you know because I'm surrounded by blue-blood educators. I had to take two steps when everybody else had to take one." Kade struggled to meet the wide variety of needs in his classroom, including ESOL students who arrived from Guatemala without the ability to speak any English. However, he felt confident with time management while working at a school where the students were in class four days a week, and the fifth day was a planning day for the teachers. Kade thrived off constructive feedback,

believing it was needed to make a good teacher and person. Although he had not been formally partnered with a mentor, he was grateful for the seasoned teachers who had taken him under their wing and showed him the ropes, as he emphasized, “helping me become the educator I am today.”

Lamont

Lamont, a 35-44-year-old Black male, teaches high school math classes in Georgia with two years of experience under a provisional license. He enjoyed teaching Geometry and had a total of 90 students. Education ran in his family, with his mom serving as an Academic Coach. Formerly a lab technician, Lamont was a career switcher who never thought he would get into the field of education. However, a friend of his was working at a school as the head football coach and told Lamont they were looking for math teachers. He was hired quickly and began his certification program during his first year. His master’s program taught him “How to read the standards because it was just Morse Code to me. I didn’t know any of the acronyms.” He also learned about culturally responsive teaching, pedagogy, teaching philosophies, and differentiation. Time management continued to be a challenge during instructional time; he explained, “Time management is very difficult for me when it comes to instruction. I wasn’t able to get to the final unit in the first semester because of the time and how long it took me.” Mentors continued to play an essential role in providing support and guidance, resulting in increased confidence in his effectiveness as a teacher.

Lynette

Lynette is a middle school math teacher and a first year provisionally licensed teacher in Virginia. This 35–44-year-old White female educator taught 7th-grade algebra and math to her 63 students. She was working to complete her last class and was looking forward to getting her

renewable 10-year license at the end of the school year. Lynette enjoyed her master's program learning essential teaching strategies but felt the application of classroom management was very different in real-time. She explained, "I had to learn very quickly what expectations needed to change and what policies needed to change, and I did not anticipate that." Although she desired more performance feedback, the positive feedback she received was affirming. Lynette shared, "I think it has definitely validated me that I did make the right decision. I mean, at 38 years old, um, being a first-year teacher, it was very daunting. I wasn't sure I was making the right decision." Her mentor encouraged her to try new strategies, allowing her to grow that year with classroom management, thereby strengthening her teacher self-efficacy.

Madalyn

Madalyn, an 18-24-year-old White female, teaches at a Title I school as a 7th-grade English language arts teacher in a rural, impoverished community located in Virginia. Many of her students have grown up on or around tobacco farms. She worked with a diverse group of students, ranging from special education inclusion students to gifted students. There was a special education teacher who provided additional support for the students with IEPs and 504 educational plans in two of her classes. Madalyn described her challenges in her current teaching role, "I think that because I have a provisional license and not a renewable license yet, I'm not taken as seriously as teachers who are considered veteran teachers." Although she felt undervalued and not seen as an equal, the positive feedback she received with her evaluations helped build her confidence. During her second year, she continued to find her rhythm, and as she explained, "It's a lot of trial and error." Madalyn focused on building strong student-teacher relationships and differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all her students.

Miles

Miles, a 25-34-year-old White male, teaches an 8th-grade accelerated math class consisting primarily of gifted students while pursuing his master's degree to gain licensure in Georgia. This new educator struggled with time management, and how that impacted his work/home life balance by sharing, "We're given an hour to plan if that, and I'll be honest, sometimes I don't use that hour wisely. Sometimes, I just use it to relax and decompress." Miles learned through his academic preparation coursework that "arguing with students is counterintuitive," which is something that has stuck with him as he approached classroom management challenges. However, after exhausting all the strategies he had learned to manage the classroom, he explained, "When none of that works with the student, what I've struggled with is to rein them back in and make them realize that, hey, what we are doing is important." He continued to gain confidence each day by explaining, "I definitely feel more confident in not only how I teach but how I manage my classroom now than I did in August." Mentorship played a significant role in his growth as a teacher and was something he greatly appreciated. One conversation with his assistant principal stood out after an evaluation during a time when he wasn't feeling effective, when told, "Hey, on almost every category, you're not terrible, but you could use some improvement." Miles thrived off that honesty and constructive feedback, and his scores continued to improve since that first evaluation.

Octavia

Octavia has been working in the classroom for less than one year as a 35-44-year-old Black female teaching 6th grade in Georgia. As a special education teacher having students with specific learning disabilities, she was challenged to meet their individual needs while balancing her time during the work day. Octavia met the initial qualification to renew her provisional teaching license by enrolling in an educator preparation program and working on her master's in

special education. Co-teaching allowed Octavia to work in a classroom with another teacher, and she explained, “The biggest challenge is trying to get on the same page with another person.” Her strength in the classroom was her ability to influence student engagement and achievement, noting, “I get them engaged and keep them engaged because I constantly ask them questions to make sure that they understand.” She valued the role her mentor played while navigating the challenges she faced in the classroom. Overall, Octavia was committed to becoming an effective educator through meaningful feedback and a desire to impact the lives of her students better.

Results

This transcendental phenomenological study answered the central research question by describing the lived experiences of provisionally licensed K-12 teachers and to understand their teacher self-efficacy in the classroom. The data from this study was derived from the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) survey (see Table 1), twelve semi-structured interviews, and three focus groups. The five themes that emerged included the provisionally licensed educator, teaching experiences, formal training and observation, performance feedback, and frame of mind with fourteen corresponding sub-themes. The data findings are revealed in the following section.

Teacher’s Sense of Efficacy Scale

The TSES survey was the initial data collection method to measure how the participants rated their teacher self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The following results were derived from the 24-item long-form survey scale, which focused on three subscale constructs of efficacy in classroom management, instructional practices, and student engagement (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

Study Constructs

Descriptive statistical techniques were used to assess the study's three constructs: Student Engagement, Instructional Efficacy, and Classroom Management Efficacy. Participant responses within the survey items associated with the study's three constructs were addressed using the descriptive statistical techniques of frequencies (*f*), measures of central tendency (mean scores), variability (minimum/maximum; standard deviations), standard errors of the mean (SE_M), and data normality (skew; kurtosis).

The construct of Student Engagement reflected a mean of 6.09 (*SD* = 0.54, SE_M = 0.16, Min = 5.00, Max = 7.00, Skewness = -0.45, Kurtosis = -0.21). The construct of Instructional Efficacy reflected a mean of 6.31 (*SD* = 1.10, SE_M = 0.32, Min = 3.75, Max = 7.38, Skewness = -1.25, Kurtosis = 0.50). The construct of Classroom Management reflected a mean of 6.71 (*SD* = 1.20, SE_M = 0.35, Min = 4.25, Max = 8.62, Skewness = -0.55, Kurtosis = -0.08).

Table 5 contains a summary presentation of findings for the descriptive statistical analysis of study participant responses within the survey items associated with the study's three constructs identified for study purposes:

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics Summary Table: Study Constructs (Student Engagement; Instructional Efficacy; & Classroom Management Efficacy

Construct	*M*	*SD*	*n*	SE_M	Min	Max	Skew	Kurtosis
Student Engagement	6.09	0.54	12	0.16	5.00	7.00	-0.45	-0.21
Instructional Efficacy	6.31	1.10	12	0.32	3.75	7.38	-1.25	0.50
Classroom Management Efficacy	6.71	1.20	12	0.35	4.25	8.62	-0.55	-0.08

Research Instrument: Internal Reliability

The study's research instrument validation was conducted through an evaluation of internal reliability. The internal reliability of study participant responses to the 24 survey items represented on the study's research instrument was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha (Field,

2024). As a result, the internal reliability achieved for participant responses to the 24 survey items represented on the research instrument for the three constructs identified for study purposes of advising was considered excellent at α = .90 (Taber, 2018).

Table 6 contains a summary of findings for the evaluation of the internal reliability of participant responses across the 24 survey items represented on the study's research instrument for the three constructs identified for study purposes:

Table 6

Internal Reliability Summary Table: Internal Reliability of Participant response across the Three Constructs (Student Engagement; Instructional Efficacy; & Classroom Management Efficacy)

Scale	# of Items	α	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Overall Reliability	24	.90	.83	.96

Note. The lower and upper bounds of Cronbach's α were calculated using a 95.00% confidence interval.

Response Effects: Study Constructs

The magnitude of study participant responses to survey items within the study's three constructs was addressed using Cohen's *d.* As a result, all three study constructs reflected huge response effects. The greatest degree of participant response effect was reflected in perceptions within the construct of "Student Engagement" at $d = 3.85$.

Table 7 contains a summary of participant response effects within the study's three constructs of Student Engagement, Instructional Efficacy, and Classroom Management Efficacy

Table 7

Effect Size Comparison Summary Table: Participant Response Effects within the Three Constructs (Student Engagement; Instructional Efficacy, & Classroom management Efficacy)

Construct	*Mean*	*SD*	*d*
Student Engagement	6.09	0.54	2.01[a]
Instructional Efficacy	6.31	1.10	1.19[b]
Classroom Management Efficacy	6.71	1.20	1.43[b]

[a] Huge Effect Size ($d \geq 2.00$) [b] Very Large Effect Size ($d \geq 1.20$)

Individual Interviews and Focus Groups

The participants shared their lived experiences, providing robust data throughout the individual interviews and focus groups. Using the Dedoose program, the participants' responses were coded, and each unique code was counted only once in response to each question. For example, if a participant spoke about behavior challenges ten times in response to one question from either the individual interview or focus group, the frequency count would be 1 for the code *behavior challenges*. However, if that same participant spoke about behavior challenges three times in response to three different questions across the data set, the frequency count would be 3 for that unique code.

Table 8

Themes and Sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes	Code Frequency
Theme 1: The Provisionally Licensed Educator	Requirements	42
	Experience	38
Theme 2: Teaching Experiences (Mastery)	Classroom Management	57
	Instructional Efficacy	49
	Time Management	44
	Parent Communication	39
Theme 3: Formal Training and Observation (Vicarious Experiences)	Academic Preparation	36
	On-the-Job Training	42
Theme 4: Performance Feedback (Verbal Persuasion)	Mentorship	66
	Feedback Experiences	39
Theme 5: Frame of Mind (Physiological and Affective States)	Low Teacher Self-Efficacy	119
	High Teacher Self-Efficacy	43
	Reflection and Recommendation	60

The Provisionally Licensed Educator

The portrait of a provisionally licensed teacher was reflected as each participant shared their personal experience obtaining their provisional license, the time frame remaining for completing their degree/licensure requirements to be eligible for a renewable license, the state tests that were required, and their previous experience before teaching in the classroom. These lived experiences described the essence of the theme. The codes of *licensure/degree requirements* and *testing* were clustered to form the sub-theme *requirements* with a frequency of 44 throughout the individual interviews and focus group transcripts. Similarly, the codes of *life experience* and *experience in an educational setting* formed the sub-theme *experience* with a frequency of 38 times throughout the same data collected. All twelve participants described the requirements they have met and their remaining deficiencies as they continue to work toward their professional renewable teaching license. In total, these codes appeared 82 times (see Table 9) in the participant semi-structured individual interviews and focus group transcripts.

Table 9

Sub-Themes and Code Clusters

Sub-Themes	Code Clusters	Code Frequency
Requirements	*licensure/degree requirements* *testing*	42
Experience	*life experience* *experience in an educational setting*	38
Classroom Management	*building student-teacher relationships* *behavior challenges*	57
Instructional Efficacy	*student engagement* *diverse learners*	49

Time Management	*task prioritization challenge* *work/home life balance*	44
Parent Communication	*building family relationships* *frequent communication*	39
Academic Preparation	*academic preparation beneficial* *academic preparation not beneficial*	36
On-the-Job Training	*on-the-job training* *observation*	42
Mentorship	*strong source of support* *lack of support*	66
Feedback Experiences	*positive feedback* *more constructive feedback*	39
Low Teacher Self-Efficacy	*self-doubt* *little experience* *overwhelmed*	119
High Teacher Self-Efficacy	*gained confidence* *accomplishments*	43
Reflection and Recommendation	*perseverance* *seek support*	60

Some participants shared the options they were given to obtain their provisional licenses. Alara didn't anticipate having to go back to school and expressed, "I have to either do the master's program or get into another program. Well, they offered Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP), which is, you know, a different route to go." In an additional interview, another program option was described by Derek, "I joined the Teach for America program, and that's what helped me get into the door." However, Cameron participated in Georgia's Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES), where he explained, "TKES is like they observe you. How you are doing on your lessons, how is your classroom management, and

how you are presenting yourself." Notably, all twelve participants chose to pursue a graduate-level licensure program and were enrolled in a master's program. Five participants felt stressed about completing the licensure requirements while teaching full-time. Lamont shared in his interview, "I guess the only challenge would be just the pressure of trying to hurry up and get certified within the time frame, right?" As one focus group participant emphasized:

> "Absolutely do not get discouraged, and don't overwhelm yourself. Like, be mindful of how much time you have, but also don't feel like you have to cram everything in just a one-year time period just to try to get it done. Just pace yourself. Be mindful of your time, and it'll be okay at the end of the day; it will be okay."

Requirements

The requirements for a provisional license vary by state, but every participant discussed their degree and licensure requirements having a testing component. Seven participants explained how they were provided district-level help to apply for a provisional license while also monitoring their progress. Madalyn shared in her interview "The board is actually doing everything they can to help people who do not have a renewable license get their renewable license because it's just such a demand for teachers in my area." In another interview, Octavia noted:

> "The state, well, the district that I work for, they did everything for me. Um, I just have to meet certain criteria in order for it to renew. They give you a provisional for three years, so my first year, I had to be enrolled in school."

Every participant was enrolled in a master's licensure degree program and had various requirements remaining to complete that program, depending on where they were in their degree. Some of the participants were just beginning, while others were almost done. Derek was

beginning his program and explained, “I’ll finish next summer, and the state of Georgia, for the MAT, I believe there are 36 credit hours, and you have at least four practicums.” However, Brianna mentioned, “I am on a 45-credit hour program, and I am, after my summer classes, I’ll have six credits left, so I’m really close.” This was also conveyed by Lynette, who expressed:

> “I have one more class that I am currently taking, and I have to finish this year teaching and have a recommendation from my administration. All of that will get sent over, and my provisional license will be turned into a renewable 10-year license at the end of my school year.”

The testing requirements were also state-specific, although all 12 participants mentioned their required exams needed for licensure. One participant shared three different exams to meet licensure requirements; as Kade noted, “I don’t have much left to do. It’s just spread out for financial aid purposes, and this summer, at some point, I’ve got to take and pass the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA) and the Praxis exams. I have already passed the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE).” These exams were also mentioned by several other participants. Additionally, Daija mentioned, “I already have my bachelor’s, which was part of it, but then I also had to take, um, pass the short Educator Ethics course.” However, the Virginia participants were not required to take the GACE or the Ethics Educator assessment as they were Georgia assessments. One focus group participant described the difficulty of the Praxis content exam as:

> “I have never heard of this, and I felt, I'm not gonna lie, I felt a little inferior because I went through all these college courses in science, and I had no idea what was on these K through 12 science exams.”

Experience

The experience each participant brought with them into the classroom as an educator varied. Some had experience in an educational setting, while others brought with them life experience. The experiences in an educational setting prior to having a provisional teaching license ranged from being a paraprofessional, substitute teacher, tutor, teaching summer school, and a teacher's aide, which nine out of the 12 participants had. In an interview, Kade expressed, "I subbed from 2017 to 2020 until the schools, um, shut down due to Covid. So, that really helped with, like, being inside the schools and practicing and working on your classroom." One member of a focus group stated:

> "I worked as a paraprofessional for three years prior to having my own classroom, and then I served as an interrelated teacher, um, just last year. So, those experiences, um, were moderately helpful, in just being able to see how a classroom is run and like how to build out a lesson."

Life experience was an important factor to consider as six of the 12 participants were career switchers coming from professions like museum curator, science lab technician, natural gas plants, paralegal, recreation center, and other full-time jobs. A focus group participant shared, "Prior to now, I did work with kids as a volunteer coach. So, that has helped and prepared me somewhat to deal with kids in the classroom." Each participant had traveled a unique journey to the classroom and felt that the route to licensure through a provisional license was the right choice for them. When sharing about their choice, one participant emphasized in a focus group:

> "If someone chooses to be provisionally licensed before getting their renewable license and, you know, do it the long way, as what some people say, um, I think it's okay. I mean, I think everyone's journey puts them, you know, where they need to be, and that

> they should honestly just trust their instinct and their gut with their own path and just stay confident in that."

Teaching Experiences (Mastery)

Mastery experiences in the classroom included both instructional and noninstructional professional responsibilities for educators. These responsibilities depicted the essence of the theme as participants described their efficacy pertaining to the following teaching experiences. The codes of *building student-teacher relationships* and *behavior challenges* were clustered to form the sub-theme *classroom management* with a frequency of 57 throughout the individual interviews and focus group transcripts. Whereas the codes of *student engagement* and *diverse learners* formed the sub-theme *instructional efficacy* with a frequency of 49 times throughout the same data collected. The codes of *task prioritization challenges* and *work/home life balance* formed the sub-theme *time management* with a frequency of 44 times throughout the same data collected. Finally, the codes of *building family relationships* and *frequent communication* formed the sub-theme of *parent communication* with a frequency of 39 times throughout the same data collected. In total, these codes appeared 189 times (see Table 9) in the participant semi-structured individual interviews and focus group transcripts. Notably, this theme had the most sub-themes, as Bandura (1977) considered mastery experiences to be the strongest source of self-efficacy. Additionally, the TSES solely addressed mastery experiences, and the triangulated results are included throughout three sub-themes: classroom management, student engagement, and instructional efficacy within the umbrella theme of teaching experiences.

Classroom Management

Most of the participants agreed that classroom management was necessary to be an effective educator. Cameron asserted, "If you don't have classroom management, you cannot,

your kids cannot learn, it's gonna be hard." They addressed the importance of building student-teacher relationships. Ten out of 12 participants shared how they intentionally approached developing relationships with their students and its importance. Brianna expressed her strategy for reaching this goal:

> "Learning how to connect with the kids has been huge. Um, with, you know, building meaningful relationships and trying to meet them where they are so that you can get them to be receptive to what you're trying to say and that they know that you're trying to help them."

The participants each explained why building student-teacher relationships was the foundation of being successful. One focus group participant emphasized, "I feel like it's super important to build relationships first, and then everything else will come second, and it will be much easier." This was echoed by another member of the focus group who commented:

> "Something really big that I've seen when observing other teachers is building meaningful relationships because I just think that's huge. That kids don't want to learn from somebody that they don't have a relationship with, and I think building meaningful relationships is probably one of the top things that you need as a successful teacher."

Most of the participants discussed student behavior and the challenges faced in the classroom as a result. The behavior challenges mentioned by participants included having phones in the classroom, talking, being off task, being impulsive, interrupting, shouting out, being out of their seats, and distracting others. The realization of this new reality was described by Derek, "I don't think anything really prepares you cause once you actually in their teaching, once I actually became a teacher, it was, that was a real, real-world experience. So, it was surreal." Ashley shared this struggle, "There's definitely a handful of students who just do what they wanna do,

no matter how much you know, you kinda give them guidance and redirection and things like that, and it can be disruptive." There is one class that had a lot of behavior challenges for Daija, as she revealed:

> "I have one student in particular who is very active; he finds it hard to stay seated. Um, he can be very impulsive. So, having students, like, trying to get through a lesson when they're constantly interrupting or shouting out, speaking out of turn, or not seated over distracting someone else while you're trying to teach. I have another student who can be a little mischievous and not always doing what he's supposed to be doing. I do also have another student who's very, he doesn't get along well, get along well with his peers. Um, he and someone always have a conflict."

The TSES revealed results on the construct of classroom management. Each construct had eight questions allowing for a mean score to be created in response to the specific targeted questions designed to address the teacher self-efficacy of that construct. The participants, despite their classroom management challenges, showed a mean score of 6.71 (see Table 7) with a very large effect size, which showed that this population of participants had a strong sense of teacher self-efficacy in classroom management. Specifically, question three asks: How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom? Out of the 12 participants, seven felt they had either quite a bit or a great deal of influence, with five participants feeling they had only some influence. In response to question five: To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior? This question showed that 10 participants felt they had either quite a bit or a great deal of influence in making clear expectations about student behavior. However, the question that yielded the widest range of efficacy responses was in answer to question 13: How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules? There was one participant who noted

very little, five within the range of some influence, five participants within the range of quite a bit, and one participant felt they had a great deal.

Instructional Efficacy

The sub-theme of instructional efficacy included the final two constructs from the TSES which are instructional efficacy and student engagement. Beginning with instructional efficacy, the data showed a mean score of 6.31 (see Table 7) with a very large effect size, which shows that this population of participants had a strong sense of teacher self-efficacy in instructional efficacy. Question 10 asks: How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught? Out of the 12 participants, eight felt they had either quite a bit or a great deal of influence, and four participants fell within the range of some influence. Question 17 yielded the widest range of efficacy in response to: How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students? This question showed four participants within the range of very little, four within the range of some influence, two with quite a bit, and two with a great deal.

Instructional efficacy requires a classroom environment that effectively teaches the curriculum through student engagement and meeting the needs of diverse learners. All of the participants discussed student engagement throughout their individual interviews and focus groups. One focus group member expressed her challenges:

> "There was times when I create my lesson plan, and I would just freeze the lesson, and then when I go to check for understanding, they didn't understand it. So, then I had to go back and re-teach, and I just kept thinking, why do I have to keep re-teaching them?"

However, making connections between the curriculum and students' interests was frequently shared as an effective way to increase student engagement. Madalyn noted, "I just

make everything relatable to them. I try to relate to them with examples. So, sports, I know a lot of my students play sports." In an effort to increase learning, Diaja also expressed, "I try to bring in my student's interests into the lesson, or bring their strengths into the lesson, something that, you know, I know what interests them, and then that might help them to maybe get it better." Lamont also prioritized relating to his students through their interests:

> "As far as with my lessons, I will give examples and, every so often or, mention things because I know a lot of them enjoy anime. So, I try to bring that aspect into it. I talk about something in an episode or an anime show that I know that they watch."

The TSES data showed the construct of student engagement with a mean score of 6.09 (see Table 7) with a huge effect size, revealing that this population of participants had the highest sense of teacher self-efficacy in student engagement. Question six asks: How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work? Out of the 12 participants, nine felt they had either quite a bit or a great deal of influence, and four participants fell within the range of some influence. Question four yielded the widest range of efficacy in response to: How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school? This question showed one participant at very little, four within the range of some influence, and seven within the range of quite a bit.

Meeting the needs of diverse learners requires differentiated instructional strategies by incorporating small group instruction, peer support, and reteaching concepts for struggling learners. Some participants noted that differentiation was a challenge for students with behavior problems, different learning styles, and students with special needs found within the classroom. Octavia explained her struggle "This is one of the things that I am still learning on how to meet different needs for different students because they're all on different levels." Lynette described

the challenge in her classroom:

> "That's definitely such a challenge, especially in one of my classes, because I have some kids that can roll on through the material and ace it in just a few minutes, and then I have others that spend the entire class period and still don't grasp it. We do lots of small groups in my class. Um, I also try to have some material ready if I need to push somebody ahead, and I also have some material ready if I need to remediate or go back and reteach something."

Kade described his strategies for diverse learners working with primarily gifted students, "My different learners, as far as gifted, uh, I don't. I only have one SPED kid, but my slower learners I've got, like I said, I pull small groups. We use a lot of group work and peer-to-peer help." Madalyn was faced with a 7th-grade student who could not read:

> "I've had students who were completely illiterate. So, a lot of times, I would have to print off my PowerPoints and include different pictures, and her aid would read them to her, and she would be able to highlight and color."

Time Management

Most teachers described time management as a challenge, particularly task prioritization, challenges managing instructional time, and maintaining a work/home life balance. Lesson planning and grading need to be accomplished during prep time. However, teachers shared the need for downtime when the students are out of the classroom. Miles emphasized:

> "Another issue I've found is time management. You know, we're given an hour to plan if that, and I'll be honest, sometimes I don't use that hour wisely. Sometimes, I just use it to relax and decompress. But you know, when I do that and then 45 minutes pass and I look at my desk and go, oh, I was supposed to grade those papers or make plans for next

week."

Daija expressed that she struggles with meeting deadlines as a teacher, "I just have to prioritize things, you know, sometimes a lesson plan doesn't get turned in. I just, I don't meet as many deadlines as I would like, especially being new, new to this." The little time available during the day is sometimes needed to decompress and regroup, which was a shared challenge with Miles that Ashley faced:

> "When my kids go to lunch or when they go to specials, like my brain literally starts to try to shut down. It's like, girl, take a breath, take a breather because it feels like, for me, I'm just constantly overstimulated. So, the moment the kids are not in the room, my body tries to relax, but I still have things that I need to do. So, I really shouldn't be."

The difficulty with time management created an issue with work/home life balance for teachers, as any unfinished work from the day shifted into their home life. Miles expressed, "I didn't get it done, then I realized, oh, this is going to eat into my personal life. This is going to eat into my time at home if I have to get this done by tomorrow." The need to complete unfinished tasks at home created stress for some teachers. Cameron asserted, "Not enough time. I mean, this year was so stressful; I had to do work at home. You're doing meetings, you're doing training, but to actually plan the lesson, you have to do that after school or at home." Most teachers felt that their work responsibilities interfered with their home life. Ashley described that lack of balance, "It's 5:00 o'clock now; most days, I'm staying here until almost 6:00 o'clock, go home, and am still doing work."

Parent Communication

Parent communication was the final sub-theme for mastery teaching experiences, and most teachers emphasized the need to build family relationships while maintaining frequent

communication. The teachers described the need for developing rapport and transparency with parents as essential to student success. The emphasis on parent support was explained by Daija, "I lean heavily on parent support. So, um, some of my students do better once they have a conversation with mom or dad on the phone or whoever their guardian is." A common strategy among teachers was to begin the relationship on a positive note before any possible difficult conversations arose during the school year. Lynette reflected on her approach to parents:

> "I tried to start the year making a positive contact to all of my parents before I ever had to send anything home about a concern. I really think that helped me, um, get off on to a good start with all of my parents; many of them appreciated that."

Developing good rapport with her parents was also explained by Ashley:

> "I have definitely made it my business to, like, establish a good rapport with all of my parents. Like some of my parents even have my personal cell phone number, and based on that rapport we've built, I'm comfortable to extend myself in that way."

Frequent communication was something that most teachers highlighted as an effective strategy for maintaining a healthy parent-teacher relationship. Lynette leaned on her personal experience as a mother of a middle school student, "I just try to always keep that door of communication open with the parents, which, again, as a parent of a middle schooler, that's not always true." Octavia described her approach to over-communication, "I generally communicate with my parents using the Class Dojo. So, I over-communicate with them so that we will not have a communication breakdown." Sometimes, those conversations can be difficult, as Miles noted:

> "I show any progress that there is, and it definitely helps smooth those difficult conversations over. Just be respectful and try to get the parents to understand that we're

> on the same team because they don't always see what we see in the classroom, just like we don't always see what they see at home."

Formal Training and Observation (Vicarious Experiences)

Formal training comes from academic preparation programs through coursework where teachers can learn the best pedagogical practices and the theoretical frameworks that support them. Most teachers had the opportunity to observe another teacher in the classroom through their academic program, life experience, or peer modeling as a provisionally licensed teacher. The codes of *academic preparation beneficial and academic preparation not beneficial were clustered to form the sub-theme of academic preparation* with a frequency of 36 throughout the individual interviews and focus group transcripts. Whereas the codes of *on-the-job training* and *observation* formed the sub-theme of *on-the-job training* with a frequency of 42 times throughout the same data collected. In total, these codes appeared 78 times (see Table 9) in the participant semi-structured individual interviews and focus group transcripts.

Academic Preparation

Teachers described their academic preparation as either beneficial or not beneficial in preparing for the classroom early as provisionally licensed teachers. Ten out of the 12 participants found their academic preparation beneficial. Lynette expressed the value as "I think just putting into practice everything that you learn in your educational classes." Some of the things that were learned in the educational classes were explained by Kade, "You know this class I'm in now, it goes over summative and diagnostic testing and all these different types of tests and the benefits of them and the pros and cons." Most teachers were able to apply their coursework to their classroom. Brianna described her experiences:

> "The classes have definitely been helpful. I mean, it takes you through different

> scenarios, and you know ways to handle different situations in the classroom. Just you know, you learn about all the different ways that children learn, and you know their needs and things like that."

Some educators felt that their academic preparation was not beneficial, and they wrestled with that feeling. Miles conveyed that struggle: "I hate saying this because I love my school, but I feel like I've learned more from teaching and from my fellow teachers than I have from sitting in my classroom, and you know, studying." This sentiment was shared by seven of the 12 participants. Ashley mentioned:

> "I am not going to say they totally and completely haven't, but I feel like with what I've learned in school so far it hasn't exactly prepared me. I know I've taken some classes where we talked about classroom management and things like that, and it was good information, but like, actually applying it in real life is a completely, totally different thing."

On-the-Job Training

By design, the provisionally licensed teacher learns about teaching through on-the-job training. Brianna shared that "Hands-on experience goes a long way." Often, these teachers are experiencing the classroom for the first time without formal practicums or student teaching as in a traditional teacher preparation program. Octavia described this experience, "Well, prior to now, I had no experience. I literally walked in and did not have any experience. So, a lot of things that I'm learning is on-the-job training." One focus group member stated, "I didn't have any real teaching experience before teaching. Um, but truthfully, if I could speak candidly, I don't think anything truly prepares you for the classroom experience on your own." In the same focus group, two other participants agreed, "Nothing really gets you prepared for actual teaching in the class."

Miles explained on-the-job training as:

> "There's no better teacher than experience, just even if you get thrown into the deep end. Just know what you're getting yourself into because you will be expected to behave, you know, well, to communicate and teach like someone who has their teaching certification."

Teachers described their lived experience with peer modeling as another form of training and learning effective teaching strategies through observation. Observing experienced educators was beneficial for most of the teachers. In the words of one focus group member, "I'm going through a mentorship with one of my colleagues, and I've really enjoyed, you know, seeing what everyone, how everyone implements teaching in their own way." During another focus group, a participant mentioned, "When I was observing other teachers before getting my own classroom, I think what I pull most from those experiences now is the classroom management and their time management. I'm seeing how well they kept their students on task." Although some teachers positively reflected on the value of observation, others stood by on-the-job training as the best training. Kade shared, "I mean, until you got your name on the outside of the door, you never know the true ins and outs, and I got to really, um, see some very experienced teachers." One focus group member shared her perfect learning environment and unknowingly described a traditional student teaching experience:

> "Maybe somebody should be in my room with me, providing me pointers and providing me feedback based on the years of experience that they have. Instead of me just necessarily trying to go in there and figure it out or look at another teacher who's been experienced like to get the opposite end of feedback. I think that would be more beneficial to me as a provisional teacher trying to move into teaching because I just feel

like I wanna be as best prepared, and like, gain the tools and the knowledge and like things that are gonna be helpful to any teacher, whether it's your first year or your 30th."

Performance Feedback (Verbal Persuasion)

Performance Feedback was the fourth theme, with a focus on the effect of verbal persuasion on the self-efficacy of teachers. Mentorship and feedback experienced by provisionally licensed teachers impacted the self-efficacy of the participants. The codes of a *strong source of support* and *lack of support* were clustered to form the sub-theme *mentorship* with a frequency of 66 throughout the individual interviews and focus group transcripts. Whereas the codes of *positive feedback* and *desire more constructive feedback* formed the sub-theme *performance feedback* with a frequency of 39 times throughout the same data collected. In total, these codes appeared 105 times (see Table 9) throughout the participant semi-structured individual interviews and focus group transcripts.

Mentorship

Mentorship played a formative role as a strong source of support for most teachers in the study. Lynette reflected on her relationship with her mentor: "I realized how important my mentor was to me this year." Other teachers described how their mentor impacted their confidence. Lynette also shared, "I think just definitely knowing that a mentor is there if I had a question, really took a lot of concerns away, kind of helped me to be more confident." In one focus group, a participant commented, "Just being able to reach out to somebody that's teaching the same subject material as you, that just proved so valuable to me." Mentor support equipped teachers with encouragement, support, and resources to be successful in the classroom. Octavia shared, "Having a mentor and someone to guide me has made me want to pursue this career a little bit longer, and it has helped me to not feel so defeated." Having mentors also affected

Daija's lived experiences:

> "My other mentors have been very supportive, so that helps. They've also been very resourceful. They share a lot of resources. So, that definitely helps, and they've been welcoming. So, I don't feel apprehensive or, you know, unsure about even trying to go to them for the support; their doors are open. They check in on me."

The impact of mentors was even more evident as participants described what it was like to lack support, which resulted in a negative experience. In one focus group, a participant explained "I can just say like it's been very little support up front. Um, this is my first year teaching provisionally, and I've had to practically beg for all the help that I've received." Another focus group member pointed out, "Everything that comes with the school, it's just it's kind of like we fighting, you know, fighting for scraps, trying at least trying to make stuff happen from the small support that we have from the district." Additionally, Cameron expressed disappointment with his experience:

> "They did not have the resources that I needed as a new teacher, which left me challenged and upset because I gotta help my students. My mentor, I barely saw her in the year unless I came to her. I felt like I was alone, thrown to the wolves."

Feedback Experiences

Performance feedback was noted as a valuable part of being a reflective practitioner. Every teacher commented on the positive feedback they received through observations and evaluations. Brianna explained, "He has certain expectations, and I thrive off of structure and knowing what's expected of me. So, feedback has been great from mentors and admin." Ashley described her evaluations, "This is my first year, but they're always like, you're doing such a great job. They say I'm doing great. I haven't received a bad evaluation ever since I've been a

teacher, so I guess I'm doing all right." The impact of this positive feedback was described by Derek, "I definitely think that it has boosted my confidence and it made me want to work harder to perfect my craft, absolutely."

Meaningful feedback was not only appreciated but desired. Most teachers explained how they preferred more constructive feedback than was received. Alara explained, "I love to hear critiques and, you know, just helps me develop a lot more, and understanding, like, if I'm not doing this right, what's the better way to do it?" Similar sentiments were shared by other teachers; Octavia expressed, "I drive off of, um, feedback that helps me. So, I look forward to my mentor giving me feedback, be it good or bad", and Kade noted, "I really love to be critiqued, um, professionally and personally really," while Derek pointed out, "I'm very receptive. I welcome it as much as I can. Anyway, that I can better myself to better help my students, I absolutely welcome it." The desire for not any feedback, but meaningful feedback was echoed by most teachers. Lynette mentioned the importance of meaningful feedback in her experience:

> "I got lots of feedback on what I was doing great, not really a lot of things that they wanted me to do different. Um, I would have loved some, some more suggestions on that if there was something that they thought would have worked better."

Frame of Mind (Physiological and Affective States)

Teacher self-efficacy is a critical component of a successful teaching career and is the final theme. Athletes know this well, there is a mental component to playing a sport that has just as much influence, if not more, than physical ability. The same holds true for the self-efficacy of teachers and their effectiveness in the classroom. The codes of *self-doubt, little experience,* and *overwhelmed* were clustered to form the sub-theme *low teacher self-efficacy* with a frequency of

119 throughout the individual interviews and focus group transcripts. Whereas the codes of *gained confidence* and *accomplishments* formed the sub-theme *high teacher self-efficacy* with a frequency of 41 times throughout the same data collected. Additionally, the codes of *perseverance* and *seek support* were clustered to form the sub-theme *reflection and recommendations* with a frequency of 60 throughout the individual interviews and focus group transcripts. In total, these codes appeared 220 times (see Table 9) across the participant's semi-structured individual interviews and focus group transcripts.

Low Teacher Self-Efficacy

Teacher Self-Efficacy was an essential variable in the life of a provisionally licensed teacher, as self-doubt negatively impacted most of the teachers in the study. This sub-theme was best described in the words of those who shared their lived experience. Madalyn expressed, "I'm not taken as seriously as teachers who are considered veteran teachers. It was just a lot of questions and self-doubt, and it was just really exhausting because of that because I was constantly wondering." This expression of self-doubt was experienced by most of the participants. Ashley shared, "I don't know if that's just me being too hard on myself, but actually, I feel like at the end of the day, if I don't feel like I'm doing a good job, there's nothing you can say to me that's gonna make me feel better." According to one focus group member, "I have, you know, moments where I feel like, um, not to use this loosely or undermine, what paras do, but I almost feel like a glorified para, at times." Another focus group participant mentioned, "I think, if anything, I'm kind of like a stepchild because I'm a special ed teacher, and a lot of teachers have told me that they don't believe in special ed or special ed students shouldn't be in general education." These self-efficacy challenges were also conveyed by Kade:

"Personally, and this is purely personal, and nobody's ever made me feel this way, but I

> just, I'm hard on myself. So, I felt like at the beginning of the year, I was behind the 8-ball, you know, because I'm surrounded by blue-blooded educators, and that's just, and I wasn't."

As teachers new to the classroom, having little experience can also impact teacher self-efficacy. Every teacher described the role this played in their experience as a provisionally licensed teacher. Miles explained this as "There's just a learning curve to teaching, I found. You'll never know everything about this profession; no one does." The learning curve is steep for new teachers and even steeper for new provisionally licensed teachers. As one focus group participant put it, "That's just something that I've had to adjust and get used to doing because that was, you know, it's the disparity between how we teach now and how I was taught." Daija shared, "I might have to get help with it, or I may have more questions than other teachers do because I'm new to doing it." Understanding the curriculum can be a daunting task, as stated by Lamont:

> "Learning how to look at the whole standard as a lesson plan, breaking down the standards themselves, understanding how to do that, which was another thing that kind of frustrated me because I'm like, we gotta break down the standard even though the standard is supposed to tell us what we supposed to know. So, shouldn't it already be simplified enough where you could just read it and know exactly? Why do I need to break down something that I should already understand?"

Little experience and self-doubt led to most teachers feeling overwhelmed as a provisionally licensed teacher. Kade described this, "I always felt like I had to take two steps when everybody else had to take one." Teaching responsibilities can be overwhelming due to their nature and sheer volume. Daija continued to struggle in this area, "So, I don't always get to

meet the deadlines, and it doesn't make me feel so good about it, but, you know, there are so many things on the list. Um, they don't always, unfortunately, get done." Lamont explained his efficacy as he first started, "I really did not know, like, I didn't know if I was doing anything right when I first started, and I was just feeling like, man, I'm just out here winging it." There was an added pressure of completing a licensure program while learning on the job. One focus member explained, "I definitely feel overwhelmed cause I feel like I'm stressed cause I need to hurry up and get certified. You know what I'm saying, like, making sure I'm certified within the time limit." Sadly, one participant was unsure about remaining in the profession. Ashley shared her experience:

> "I have spent lots of days crying, like stressed out. I have very much been considering maybe not doing this because this is a lot like it's just a lot, and I don't feel equipped to do my job well. So, it's just like this plate, and there's all these things on the plate that need to be done, but there's not time to take anything off the plate, and then all year, they're constantly adding more stuff to the plate."

High Teacher Self-Efficacy

Teachers reported gaining confidence as their experiences increased through time in the classroom, demonstrating high teacher self-efficacy. During a focus group, one teacher observed how experience impacted their self-efficacy, "Okay, so for me, I think that I am, have a little bit more knowledge than I did when I walked in the door and August." Miles explained that a lot of teachers, "It's their first time in the classroom, you know, they have no idea what they've gotten themselves into." He also shared how his improved performance feedback evaluations contributed to his increased efficacy, "I also feel like I'm improving. I'm more confident teaching. Now I'm at the point where I not only where I feel more effective, but when I just had

my mid-semester evaluation not too long ago, my scores were improving." Student achievement was another area where teachers gained confidence. Kade shared the impact of student achievement:

> "My kid's MAP scores are off the chain. Then, my relationship with my students is phenomenal. I think I'm just nice, and I don't wanna sound arrogant, really, I don't, but I really just think I'm a natural leader, and they just fall in line. That's one thing I do pride myself on, is classroom management."

However, one phenomenon experienced by a participant was reversed as their teacher self-efficacy shifted from high to low, which was explained by Ashley, "When I first got here, I was so confident, and I was so excited, and now I feel like I can't do this. Like, if I'm being honest, that's honestly where I'm at."

Reflection and Recommendations

As teachers reflected on their choice to enter the classroom with less experience than their professionally licensed peers, they offered advice for any teachers following their path to licensure. These recommendations were a window into their personal journey of self-efficacy as they explained the importance of perseverance and seeking support. Brianna offered this encouragement, "Don't overload yourself. Take time to soak everything in, really, um, I guess just immerse yourself in the material and the classes, um, because it can get overwhelming, and just don't get discouraged. Huge thing, just don't get discouraged." One participant concluded in a focus group:

> "My thing is, um, something I've struggled myself with. Don't be afraid to ask for help. You know, know when you don't know something. Um, because like I said earlier, yes, provisional teaching is very much trial by fire. It's very much, you know. Are you cut out

for this? Is this the right job for you?"

Most teachers recommended seeking support as a new teacher with a provisional license. Lynette explained, "People in their building and other people that have been where they are, want them to succeed," and Miles added, "Don't assume you know everything." Seeking support was emphasized by Daija:

> "That is something I didn't do a lot of in the beginning, um, reaching out. I just tried to do everything, like, handle it all on my own in the classroom, and that didn't fare well for me my first year. Whether it's the parents, or admin, or your teammates, but definitely reaching out and not trying to handle everything on your own."

Outlier Data and Findings

All the participants in this study met the criteria of having a provisional teaching license and teaching in a K-12 classroom while pursuing their professional license through a master's program. One participant who met the aforementioned criteria was a full-time virtual classroom teacher in the state of Georgia. Although her lived experiences as a new provisionally licensed teacher were valid and contributed to the lived experiences of all the participants, her teaching experience was vastly different.

The classroom management challenges were unique to her setting. Alara expressed, "It's hard to talk to some of the kids because a lot of them don't wanna turn on their microphones or their cameras. So, it's like you are kind of pulling teeth some of the time." Fostering student engagement in a virtual setting was challenging for her, and there were no shared lived experiences with this population of participants.

The use of technology proved more challenging while teaching virtually. Alara expressed, "It's when I'm hit with a curveball, with like technology stuff, it takes me a minute to

kind of, you know, get in the groove of, like, how to, what works for me, and like, how do I interact with my peers as well." However, virtual classroom management was needed, as Alara described, "Having to interact with the kids, especially virtually, but you don't really know how much of the kids are, you know, standing right in front of the camera or if they're off doing something else." Her confidence and self-efficacy grew during her first year of teaching, as she explained, "I had little experience going into my first-year teaching job. I feel more confident in, you know, what I'm teaching the students, and you know, I'm not a big speaker in general." However, she concluded "I feel like I'm more, I feel more relaxed in teaching and teaching online."

Research Question Responses

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenological study was to describe self-efficacy through the lived experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia. The central research question this study set out to answer and the subsequent sub-questions focused on each of the four sources of self-efficacy: (1) mastery, (2) vicarious experiences, (3) verbal persuasion, and (4) physiological and affective states.

Central Research Question

What are the self-efficacy experiences of K-12 school teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia? The portrait of the provisionally licensed teacher working in the classroom represented teachers who experienced teacher self-efficacy through both success and frustration. Participants described the road to licensure as challenging to meet the demands of the classroom while enrolled in a master's program fulfilling the requirements of a professional license. Lamont explained:

> "Ultimately, you just doing a whole master's program in itself, but it's more catered toward people that's trying to get sort of, like, certified. So, they actually designed it for current teachers working on their provisional, compared to people that are, like, going directly straight out of college."

Sub-Question One

What are the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of professional teaching with mastery experiences as the primary source of self-efficacy? The teaching experiences that influenced mastery were classroom management, instructional efficacy, time management, and parent communication. Lynette explained classroom management as "It's different when you're actually applying them, but I was very glad to have the knowledge of those key classroom management pieces, setting rules, setting expectations, like, those really helped me to start the year off strong." Instructional efficacy was described by Ashley:

> "I'm just trying to do the best I can right now. I want to essentially be compliant, but in doing that, I don't know that there's as much space for me to do things that make things interesting for them. It just feels like I'm performing a little bit when I'm trying to make things super interesting for them."

Octavia highlighted time management: "There is not enough time in the day. Time management is, it's really been trial and error. At the beginning of the school year, I never was fully able to manage my time properly." Parent communication was emphasized by Ashley:

> "Because of my personality and how I have such a strong desire to connect well with others. I'm just good at doing that. I'm able to build rapport to where they trust me, we have very open, honest conversations. Like, I actually don't experience very much

difficulty with parents and families."

Sub-Question Two

What are the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of professional teaching with vicarious experiences as the second source of self-efficacy? Formal training through academic preparation and on-the-job training provided vicarious experiences of teacher self-efficacy. Kade explained the role of academic preparation "The very first class that I took was, it was like foundational stuff about instructional planning, curriculum planning, interpreting standards, and taking those standards, and determining how to teach them to various groups of students." On-the-job training, as Brianna described:

> "Um, not just the book smarts, um, if that makes sense. I was gonna say it's one thing to read about it and be like, oh, well, you know, you can do this, that, and the other, but it's a different thing to experience it; you know, day to day."

Sub-Question Three

What are the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of professional teaching with verbal persuasion as the third source of self-efficacy? Performance feedback was evident through mentorship and feedback experiences impacting the participant's teacher self-efficacy. Derek shared his mentor experience:

> "So, being able to talk to them about what I'm experiencing, they tell me what they experienced and how they got through it, helps me get through what I need to, and you know, gives me that little boost to where I can go back in there with more confidence and more understanding and knowledge and to help my students."

All the participants described the effect of feedback on their teacher self-efficacy. Daija commented on the positive feedback she received:

> "When you are doing something and you, and you're doing it well, and you're being told you're doing it well. Um, then obviously, you know, you feel over the moon. And you, you definitely feel confident in continuing to do what it is that you've done."

Sub-Question Four

What are the lived experiences described by provisionally licensed teachers on the instructional and non-instructional expectations of professional teaching with physiological and affective states as the fourth source of self-efficacy? Frame of mind was the foundation of low and high teacher self-efficacy described by most teachers and individual reflection about coaching others following their path to licensure. Low self-efficacy was described by Madalyn: "I think that because I am, you know, provisionally licensed, again, I'm really not taken as seriously as, you know, somebody who does have their official renewable license." Miles explained high teacher self-efficacy as, "I definitely feel more confident in not only how I teach, but how I manage my classroom now than I did in August. In August, definitely felt like I don't know what I'm doing." Lynette made recommendations for future provisionally licensed teachers:

> "I would definitely tell them that they're gonna be awesome and to go ahead and jump in with both feet. I would just tell them not to be afraid to reach out to people in their building or people at their school, or, um, whatever resources they have available to them because they're going to have questions."

Summary

Provisionally licensed teachers in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia

experienced all four sources of teacher self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) through the description of their lived experiences. Chapter Four revealed each participant through small biographies that provided an introductory glimpse into their lives. This chapter described the triangulated data findings, including the TSES, individual interviews, and focus groups. The answers to the central research question and four sub-questions emerged throughout the data analysis process. All of the participants were working toward completing their formal academic training through a licensure program consisting of degree requirements and testing. One participant was unsure if she would stay in the profession due to the challenges she has faced. Notably, the pendulum of teacher self-efficacy swung back and forth between low and high depending on the source, which differed for each participant. Participants' feelings of self-doubt, little experience, and being overwhelmed contributed to low teacher self-efficacy. Conversely, high teacher self-efficacy increased over time for most participants by gaining experience in the classroom. Performance feedback positively impacted teacher self-efficacy through mentorship and meaningful evaluations. Mastery experiences were the instructional and non-instructional expectations of teaching, including classroom management, instructional efficacy, time management, and parent communication. Similarly, these mastery experiences were the primary source of efficacy found in teachers. Despite the challenges and success found in the classroom, all the participants felt that the pathway to licensure through a provisional license was beneficial.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenological study was to describe self-efficacy through the lived experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia. This chapter presents the descriptions of 12 provisionally licensed teachers through their teaching experiences in the K-12 classroom. Chapter Five begins with a critical discussion of the study findings, the impact on policy and practice, implications theoretically and methodologically, limitations and delineations, and recommendations for future research. The chapter is closed with a comprehensive summary of the study, concluded with insights from the research findings.

Discussion

This section aims to discuss the study's emerging themes by critically examining the findings throughout the data analysis. Textural and structural descriptions of the phenomena derived from the individual interviews and focus groups produced the composite descriptions, thereby resulting in the following themes (Moustakas, 1994). The aforementioned five themes shared as a group collectively included (a) the provisionally licensed educator, (b) teaching experiences, (c) formal training and observation, (d) performance feedback, and (e) frame of mind (see Table 8).

Summary of Thematic Findings

Teacher self-efficacy (TSE) was measured on the Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) (see Table 7) in relationship to student engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies. The anonymous self-evaluations from the TSES, the individual interviews, and the focus group responses made up the data, resulting in five themes. Multiple

sub-themes emerged following the analysis of the phenomenon and were embedded within each unique theme.

As the first theme, The Provisionally Licensed Educator represented each participant, also a primary criterion of the study. This theme was guided by two sub-themes: requirements and experience. Every participant shared the requirements needed to obtain a provisional teaching license, which included testing and enrolling in a state-approved licensure program while simultaneously earning their graduate degrees. Most of the participants explained having help from their school district to apply for their provisional license, and some frequently monitor progress towards meeting licensure deficiencies. This group of new teachers had varied life experiences to wield, ranging from experience in an educational setting to life experience as career switchers in their new roles. Determined to obtain their professional renewable teaching license, these provisionally licensed teachers shared their lived experiences navigating each success and challenge.

Teaching Experiences (Mastery) represented the primary source of self-efficacy and formed the second theme. This theme was driven by four sub-themes: classroom management, instructional efficacy, time management, and parent communication. These mastery experiences included instructional and non-instructional teaching responsibilities like classroom management, time management, instruction, and working with families of students. An effective classroom management strategy mentioned by several participants emphasized the importance of building relationships with students, maintaining routines, setting clear expectations, and using incentives. Conversely, most of the provisionally licensed teachers struggled with time management and maintaining a healthy work/home life balance, often completing work at night and on the weekends. The participants described their success with instructional efficacy by

effectively engaging students as well as their challenges in meeting the needs of diverse learners. The importance of frequent and open parent communication was expressed by participants, while focused on building that relationship from the beginning of the school year. The TSES findings revealed that these provisionally licensed teachers had a high sense of TSE in student engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies, with student engagement having the highest mean.

Formal Training and Observation (Vicarious Experiences) created the third theme as participants described the role of vicarious experiences and their impact on TSE. This theme was influenced by two sub-themes: academic preparation and on-the-job training. As each participant was enrolled in a graduate program, a second study criterion, they all discussed the benefits of academic preparation as it pertained to success found in the classroom. Although, on-the-job training had a greater emphasis placed on it as the biggest source of training. These provisionally licensed teachers used their lived experiences to describe the challenges of teaching as a steep learning curve despite any academic preparation they received while they were teaching. The participants desired more on-site training in real-time.

Performance Feedback (Verbal Persuasion) revealed the importance of mentorship and meaningful feedback experiences while serving as the fourth theme of this study. This theme was informed by two sub-themes: mentorship and feedback experiences. Most participants expressed how positive feedback notably boosted their TSE. Although participants received varied feedback, they emphasized the desire, specifically, for more meaningful constructive feedback. Mentorship was viewed as essential by each provisionally licensed teacher, and some felt unsupported by a lack of mentorship provided. Despite experiencing low TSE, positive feedback proved to be an effective means of strengthening their TSE and confidence in the classroom.

Frame of Mind (Physiological and Affective States) explored the mindset of each participant, reflected in the final theme, which resulted in low TSE or high TSE. This theme was underpinned by three sub-themes: low teacher self-efficacy, high teacher self-efficacy, and reflection and recommendation. Throughout the triangulated data, all of the participants had varied levels of both low and high TSE, with the dependent variable being individual settings and experiences. Low TSE was described by participants through feelings of inexperience, being overwhelmed, and expressing self-doubt and comparison. High TSE, noted by participants, was achieved through newfound success in the classroom, and primarily a result of time. Each participant reflected on their path to licensure through a provisional teaching license and shared recommendations for future teachers following in their footsteps. These reflections and recommendations were another window into their TSE as they expressed not to get discouraged, to ask questions, and to have a shared sentiment of perseverance.

Critical Discussion

The research from this study yielded findings worthy of discussion, which included TSE, challenges of the provisionally licensed teacher, the power of feedback, the role of mentors, and teacher commitment and perseverance. The participants all experienced the same phenomenon of teaching in a K-12 classroom as a provisionally licensed teacher.

Teacher Self-efficacy

It is common for teachers to overestimate or underestimate their TSE, which can positively or negatively impact future efforts and decisions in the classroom (Emiru & Gedifew, 2024). In this study, through the TSES, the participants demonstrated high TSE in the areas of student engagement, instructional efficacy, and classroom management. Miles described his confidence in instructional efficacy, “I’m more confident, you know, assessing things. I’m more

confident in how I choose to assess my students," while a focus group participant explained her confidence in classroom management as, "The feedback I've received has been pretty positive, um, from what admin has told me, I relate to the students really well." Additionally, Derek described his student engagement as, "So, I try to do a lot of activities where they can be up and moving, and once they can do that, they're definitely engaged, and they have fun learning." However, throughout the individual interviews and focus groups, a different picture was portrayed as participants expressed low TSE, often from the same person. Miles asserted:

> "I really had to find what works for me because, yeah, we're presented with all these strategies and all these different things that the science, and the, you know, the experienced, and so many pedagogic experts say work. But then you try them, and if it doesn't work, you know, you get a little downtrodden."

Cameron shared, "I don't think I had good classroom management, like, again this year, I got my feet wet, but my classroom management wasn't, it wasn't good, it just wasn't good." Low TSE was echoed by Ashley, who explained, "When it comes to their achievement, I also feel mediocre there as well. That's, like, the biggest thing for me. I want to know that I'm doing my job right and that I'm doing it well." Similar expressions were shared by other participants describing self-doubt, feeling overwhelmed, and the impact of having little experience.

Previous research has explained TSE as one-dimensional, having either low TSE or high TSE; however, some studies suggest it can be multidimensional and fluid (Lam et al., 2023; Thommen et al., 2022; West & Frey-Clark, 2019). One study explained how TSE can toggle between opposing domains of efficacy, perceiving one source of efficacy as high and another as low (Perera et al., 2019). TSE represents a complexity as a multidimensional construct impacting instruction, classroom management, meeting the needs of diverse learners, student engagement,

relationships with parents, and the collective effort in each of these areas (Eddy et al., 2020; Martin & Mulvihill, 2019; Rose & Sughrue, 2020). The study revealed that this complexity of TSE may be present for these provisionally licensed teachers as well.

Challenges of the Provisionally Licensed Teacher

Time management was a recurring theme throughout the interviews and focus groups, as the participants described the challenge of managing their time during the workday. The literature explained exhaustion and stress are a result of high expectations for time management (Camacho et al., 2021; Oliveira et al., 2021). All the participants confirmed the literature as they expressed difficulty with time management by describing it as a whirlwind, an area for improvement, inability to meet deadlines, not having enough time in the day, so much to do, and juggling paperwork. Derek stated, “Sometimes I just have to take a break on the weekend.”

Teachers feel increased pressure and are responsible for meeting the needs of diverse learners, including students’ social-emotional needs while ensuring academic achievement (Floress et al., 2022). The literature confirmed the additional challenges teachers working in an urban school have (Camacho et al., 2021), as some participants were faced with students having language barriers, immigrant and refugee students, difficult home lives, and the added emotional situations that come with teaching in an urban area. Studies have found that TSE influences a teacher's belief in their student’s ability to succeed academically (Akturk & Ozturk, 2019; Ciampa & Gallagher, 2021; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Zakariya, 2020), further underscoring the importance of high TSE in today’s K-12 classrooms**.**

The Power of Feedback

Positive feedback from evaluations, mentors, colleagues, parents, and students proved to directly impact the self-efficacy of provisionally licensed teachers. Octavia shared her experience

with positive feedback, "It boosts my whole head up. It makes me feel good. It makes me work harder. It makes me wanna continue to do my best. I walk with a different attitude when I get positive feedback." The affirmation from positive feedback was a boost in self-efficacy, but participants wanted specific critiques, suggestions, and more practical advice to be identified. Notably, the desire for constructive feedback outweighed the generally positive feedback received, which lacked depth. Ashley described it:

> "If I had somebody to kind of teach me, and maybe if I had somebody I could shadow, or if I had somebody who could come in and essentially shadow me. In the sense of saying, like, okay, Ms. Brooks, this is what I'm seeing you do well, but you could really use some help in this area and then tell me what I could be doing better."

The research confirmed the need for meaningful, constructive feedback presented in a safe atmosphere to positively impact student achievement (Kraft & Christian, 2022; Song et al., 2021). Daija shared, "I want as much feedback as possible because I know that I'm newer to this, and I didn't take the traditional route. I just kind of wanted to know how I'm doing so that I can fix things." However, the meaningful feedback that was received validated their instructional efficacy giving the participants the needed encouragement to try different strategies in the classroom. One study emphasized how specific feedback regarding a desired outcome or skill fosters higher TSE (Berg, 2022).

The Role of Mentors

Mentorship was echoed by all of the participants as beneficial, playing a critical role in their development as a provisionally licensed educator. The literature showed that new teachers, due to their reduced time in an EPP setting as traditional pre-service teachers, require a strong source of support to ensure success and increase teacher retention (Kwok & Cain, 2021; Wilhelm

et al., 2021). Miles described his experience with a mentor:

> "She's helped me with my time management. She's helped me with lesson plan writing, but also to be able to go to her and go, "Hey, how did you approach this subject?" because I have no idea, and to be able to get, you know, experienced feedback on that has been really, really helpful."

One study emphasized the need for schools to partner new teachers with quality mentors that include frequent collaboration throughout the school year as a strong source of support (Kwok & Cain, 2021). Most participants were partnered with a mentor or instructional coach, confirming that seasoned teachers are more experienced in predicting instructional needs for a lesson (Catalano et al., 2022) and have the ability to positively influence novice teachers (Özkul & Dönmez, 2022). It is equally important to note how a lack of support impacted some of the participants who had a negative experience with mentorship. Participants expressed frustration from a lack of support and guidance, while others found their own support through YouTube and Vlogs. As a result, these participants described how their students were also negatively impacted because they were unequipped to meet their needs, as research has shown that effective teachers with high TSE require modeling and meaningful feedback to improve student academic outcomes (Clark, 2020). The literature explained the need for provisional licensed teachers will continue if intentional efforts are not put forth toward teacher mentorship as teacher retention will suffer (Rose & Sughrue, 2020).

Teacher Commitment and Perseverance

The challenges faced by these 12 participants were met with a growth mindset and a commitment to persevere. Most of the provisionally licensed teachers expressed a resolve to succeed and a desire to overcome their obstacles. This was evident as participants described the

changes they wanted to implement during the following school year. The desire to become an effective educator was approached with determination even though they experienced challenges and low TSE. Provisionally licensed educators entering the classroom with a lack of training through nontraditional routes are overwhelmed with the responsibilities of full-time teaching (Kwok & Cain, 2021). Octavia explained, "When I came into this career change in August, I was lost, and by the end of August, I wanted to quit." The TSE of each participant incrementally grew through daily experience in the classroom over time as they battled feelings of self-doubt and being overwhelmed in their new role. One focus group member expressed, "I kind of got thrown in the fire, but now I feel, you know, now I feel a lot better just because I got the experience. But yeah, yeah, it was, it was some trials and tribulations." This study revealed that provisionally licensed teachers face a steep learning curve, overcome challenges, demonstrate resilience, and need continuous professional development to ensure positive student outcomes, confirming the research explaining how entering the classroom with a short on-ramp provides less time to prepare for the responsibilities of teaching without sufficient time given to the development of TSE (Bowen et al., 2019; Kwok & Cain, 2021; Wilhelm et al., 2021).

Implications for Policy and Practice

The findings of this study support the literature, resulting in implications for policy and practice. Academic literature, supported by research, drives policy and practice. The subsequent implications for policy are comprised of regulatory recommendations for the state and school district level, whereas the implications for practice are narrowed to the school site with recommendations for administrators and mentors. The decision-makers at each level determine the transferability of research findings to their realm of authority and sphere of influence.

Implications for Policy

It may be beneficial to create standards limiting the number of pathways to licensure by creating more consistency between them while ensuring teacher preparation and development meet similar requirements. Policymakers might explore the development of clear expectations and criteria for alternative certification programs like iTeach, Teach for America, Georgia's Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP), Georgia's Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES), and provisional licensure to standardize the minimum required competency levels to enter the classroom. It could be advantageous to partner with EPPs to keep the traditional route to licensure viable and capitalize on their pedagogical expertise. There is potential for shifting the view of teaching from a profession to a trade by weakening the requirements for licensure.

Provisionally licensed teachers require strong support and resources to be successful in the classroom. One possible approach could be induction programs designed for beginning teachers, including those who are provisionally licensed. It is recommended that teachers with a provisional license are required to participate in an induction program fostering community while developing a robust network of educators to lean on for support. A possible strategy might include assigning mentor teachers to each new teacher and providing practical support, effective instructional strategies, classroom management approaches, differentiation techniques, and student engagement. It would be suggested to offer mentor teachers a financial stipend for attending the training and providing structured support to beginning teachers.

Policymakers may wish to monitor the progress of provisionally licensed teachers as they progress toward meeting the requirements of a professional renewable teaching license. Consideration should be given to a standardized schedule of frequent classroom observations and self-evaluations. These progress reports could be reviewed at the district level, demonstrating

growth in specific areas of instruction.

Implications for Practice

Schools could consider developing a mentorship program where seasoned teachers who have demonstrated effective instructional strategies provide pedagogical and emotional support to provisionally licensed teachers. It may be effective to create a schedule for the mentors as a measure of accountability to provide consistent check-ins, collaborative meetings, goal setting, and meaningful feedback, ensuring that each new teacher receives the same level of support. Teachers could potentially benefit from professional development workshops designed and created to meet the specific needs of provisionally licensed educators. Additionally, it may prove beneficial to provide provisionally licensed teachers with opportunities to observe their colleagues' teaching, allowing these new teachers to reflect on effective instructional strategies and classroom management practices.

It is suggested that frequent observations and evaluations of instruction and classroom management provide meaningful performance feedback on the teacher's effectiveness for provisionally licensed teachers. The constructive feedback should highlight accomplishments and areas for growth professionally that are actionable. Schools might want to explore how to ensure provisionally licensed teachers are adequately supported to meet the instructional and noninstructional responsibilities of teaching while working towards a renewable teaching license. These recommendations may better equip and prepare this group of novice teachers to meet the demands found in the K-12 classroom, thereby increasing student achievement outcomes.

Empirical and Theoretical Implications

The group of provisionally licensed teachers in this study shared their lived experiences teaching in a K-12 classroom setting and their subsequent TSE through the TSES, individual

interviews, and focus groups. The resulting data confirmed much of the related literature found in Chapter Two on TSE, evidenced by the empirical and theoretical implications in relationship to the five emerged themes. Participants contradicted literature that presented TSE as one-dimensional and confirmed other research that explained this construct as multi-dimensional and dependent on the specific task, as participants expressed feelings of high TSE and low TSE in the same interview.

Empirical Implications

Empirical research has provided examples of contributing factors to TSE (Ma et al., 2022; Perera et al., 2019; Thommen et al., 2022; Wilhelm et al., 2021). This study expanded on previous research but focused solely on Bandura's (1977) four sources of TSE: mastery, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states. These four sources are described in four of the five following themes: teaching experiences, formal training and observation, performance feedback, and frame of mind.

The Provisionally Licensed Teacher

The provisionally licensed teacher was represented in the central research question, which had set out to describe the self-efficacy experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license. Participants, having not completed the requirements for a renewable teaching license, explained their pathway to obtaining a provisional license, often with assistance from the school district. These responses confirmed the expedited pathways for provisionally licensed teachers to enter the profession, reducing the time to develop TSE in preparation for the responsibilities of teaching (Bowen et al., 2019; Kwok & Cain, 2021; Wilhelm et al., 2021). All of the participants obtained a bachelor's degree in something other than education, which confirmed the prevalence of educators entering the teaching field with no pedagogy coursework

or formal training, as they noted beginning their graduate licensure program after having their provisional license (Rose & Sughrue, 2020). The growing national teacher shortage has resulted in many unqualified and inexperienced teachers placed in classrooms (Bowen et al., 2019; Schmidt et al., 2020).

Teaching Experiences

Teaching experiences represent mastery skills, which are considered the primary source of TSE in the classroom and the most significant (Klassen & Usher, 2010; Wilhelm et al., 2021). Classroom management provides the structure for a disruption-free learning environment with clear expectations fostering student engagement (Hettinger et al., 2023; Özkul & Dönmez, 2022; Thommen et al., 2022). Although, EPPs have faced criticism for insufficiently preparing pre-service teachers for the demands of the classroom with the instructional skills needed to be successful (Chan et al., 2021; Raymond-Wet & Rangel, 2020; Zugelder et al., 2021). Most of the participants expressed gratitude and appreciation to their EPPs for equipping them with successful classroom management strategies, contradicting the literature. Lynette explained:

> "I definitely was very grateful for all the books that I had read and the assignments I had done on classroom management because being in the school system and seeing first-hand classes with great classroom management and classes without that classroom management piece."

An evidence-based approach to classroom management and student behaviors must be implemented by teachers (Junker et al., 2021; Mccullough et al., 2022; Özkul & Dönmez, 2022; Slater & Main, 2020). The participants confirmed the importance of classroom management and setting expectations when faced with behavior challenges, including getting student's attention, excessive talking, off-task behavior, shouting out, and impulsive behaviors. Disruptive classroom

behavior was a daily problem teachers faced when choosing approaches to behavior management impacting the climate of the classroom that included rewards and consequences (Brannon & Clark, 2023). The TSES found that these provisionally licensed teachers had a high TSE in the area of classroom management.

Participants confirmed being surprised by the amount of time required for non-instructional tasks like meetings, documentation, and planning (DiCicco et al., 2019) while lacking the necessary skills to manage their time efficiently (Kwok & Cain, 2021). They described time management challenges during the school day to include committees, grading papers, IEP meetings, lesson planning, and behavior meetings. Madalyn explained:

> "The time management aspect is kind of poor right now. I end up bringing home work every single day. Um, and I usually get most of it done on the weekends because I don't have time at school because I'm being pulled in so many different directions, um, that I genuinely just don't have a planning period. So, it ends up being around or supposed to be an hour and a half worth of planning each day, um, and because of SOL testing or meetings, or IEP meetings, behavior meetings, or just random meetings that admin or whoever else wants to call, I probably get maybe two days out of the entire school week of planning, and that's a good week."

The literature was extended as participants described time management as being exacerbated due to the need for mental rest during their planning period. This was explained by most participants as having the need to relax, decompress, chill, not think about work, take a breather, and feeling overstimulated, which compounded the stress with unfinished tasks, ultimately increasing the strain on their work/home life balance. However, one study discussed the challenges teachers face each day with their students and the need for teachers to self-

regulate their emotions (Catalano et al., 2022), and this downtime described by participants could be needed.

Instructional efficacy is comprised of student engagement and achievement. The literature revealed that the teacher shortage is impacting student engagement and academic achievement (Miller et al., 2019) embedded within the debate of best practices for teacher preparation, knowing that student achievement is at stake (West & Frey-Clark, 2019). Research has emphasized the role of high TSE as a factor for student achievement outcomes (Hassan, 2019), student engagement, job satisfaction (Chang & Hall, 2022), and meaningful feedback (Thommen et al., 2022). It was clear in the TSES data that these 12 provisionally licensed teachers had high TSE in the area of student engagement. Lynette explained, "When I can include some higher-order thinking and some real-world problems, it really gets engagement high. I try to engage them with a game when at all possible or hands-on manipulatives." Other participants shared they felt confident in this area. Daija reflected on her practice:

> "We kind of present their writing pieces, but in, like, a gallery format. So, we'll do, like, a gallery walk, and they can walk around and look at each other's pieces, but each student has a set of sticky notes, and they have to have their name on the sticky notes and write a glow only."

They believed their classroom management, instructional efficacy, and student engagement were effective. This corroborated the literature and research noting that TSE in classroom management was an essential component of effective instructional strategies (Ford et al., 2020; Sezen-Gültekin et al., 2022).

Each participant valued the importance of building a strong teacher-parent relationship, confirming research explaining the purpose of effective parent communication should be

centered around a shared goal with the teacher (Harpaz & Grinshtain, 2020). They believed it was essential to begin the relationship on a positive note before any potentially difficult conversations were needed. Miles described his approach to parents as, “Just be respectful and try to get the parents to understand that we're on the same team because they don't always see what we see in the classroom, just like we don't always see what they see at home.” The literature described the importance of parental involvement in their child’s academic success as having a positive influence on the teacher’s dedication to the success of that student (Bandura et al., 1996; Ekornes & Bele, 2022). Ashley confirmed this as she reflected:

> “There's only so much that I can do, and so I definitely put forth effort when it comes to the kids that I do have challenges with, and I’m communicating with their parents. But if I see that you're not receptive or responsive to said communication, nothings changing, things of that nature, I have to kind of take my hands off of it a little bit because I'm only one person, and there are 26 kids in here.”

Formal Training and Observation

Formal training and observation, known as vicarious experiences, occur through observing successful teachers and role models (Berg, 2022; Klassen & Usher, 2010). EPPs provide this through clinical experiences, whereas, for provisionally licensed teachers, this primarily occurs through mentors in the field. Most participants valued their academic training, as Alara explained, “I’m actually learning a lot with my, um, master’s degree courses. It’s kinda aligning with, like, you know, behavior management.” Octavia expressed, “My educational program is helping me to better understand the things that I’ve done this past year.” However, EPPs are faced with training provisionally licensed teachers toggling between being pre-service and in-service teachers simultaneously (Schultz et al., 2023).

All participants viewed on-the-job training as more beneficial than their academic preparation. However, it is important to note that this perspective may have been skewed by entering the classroom first, followed by academic coursework after obtaining their provisional licensure. Clinical field experiences are designed to increase TSE and provide students with vicarious experiences through modeling, scaffolded release of teaching responsibilities, observation, practice, and feedback in the traditional route to licensure, which are missed opportunities for provisionally licensed teachers (Osenberg et al., 2021; Weiss et al., 2020). One focus group member unknowingly described a typical student teaching experience, confirming the importance of field experiences pre-service:

> "I'm just saying that there's good hands-on experience, but I personally feel like there still needs to be more, like, training before, like, before you enter the classroom because I just think there are some things that you need to be better prepared for outside of gaining that hands-on experience."

Still, participants described on-the-job training as the best preparation. Madalyn shared, "Honestly, I don't really think anything truly prepares you for classroom experience on your own. I think a lot of teaching is kind of finding your own rhythm." The literature confirmed this feeling among provisionally licensed teachers, who are at high risk of feeling unprepared for the realities of the classroom and overwhelmed due to a lack of training (Kwok & Cain, 2021). One focus group participant described it as, "I just been learning on the fly." This sentiment was shared by Lamont, "Listen, I don't know nothing and I'm just here. I just got into education. I don't know what to do, so I'm just following what you are doing." Observation remains a valuable source of TSE, and academic coursework plays an essential role paired with mastery and vicarious experiences (Ma et al., 2022; Perera et al., 2019).

Performance Feedback

Performance feedback through verbal praise is the necessary social persuasion needed to persevere in the face of challenges (Berg, 2022; Klassen & Usher, 2010). Mentorship provides provisionally licensed teachers with a strong source of needed support through performance feedback, as TSE can be fostered through modeling, mentorship, and training (Chan et al., 2021; Feng et al., 2019). Most participants expressed gratitude for the mentors they had been paired with and the support they provided. Ashley explained, "The ones that I've had, they're awesome, like, they're so helpful. The things that they have provided me with have helped tremendously."

One study reported that mentorship and supervision are often promised for novice teachers entering the classroom through alternate paths to licensure but remain unmet (Darling-Hammond, 2023). Some of the participants' lack of support negatively influenced their experience, effectively impacting their TSE. A focus group participant explained it in this way:

> "I feel like that's one of the things I actually complained about a lot as a new teacher. I feel like there's not as much support and guidance. I wish there had been some kind of trainings before I got in the classroom about things that I just really needed to know before walking in here."

Research revealed that verbal persuasion is related to self-esteem, emphasizing that role models impact more than vicarious experiences, but also verbal persuasion as self-efficacy is not drawn from a single source (Lawrence, 2024). Alara explained the impact her mentors and administrators have made, "Telling me, you know, you're doing a lot better than you think. So, that's helped reassure me that, you know, I'm on the right track of what I need to be doing as a teacher." Verbal persuasion was an impactful source of TSE. Brianna shared:

> "I'm somebody that kinda, I don't necessarily say, feeds off of, you know, words of

affirmation, but it's just something that, you know, keeps, keeps my mind and my thoughts where they need to be. You know, because I can tend to be very self-critical."

Frame of Mind

Frame of mind includes physiological and affective states present during stress and can be misunderstood as low TSE (Klassen & Usher, 2010), and is Bandura's (1977) fourth source of efficacy. Ashley explained:

"For me, most of my experience has been on-the-job learning, which is, you know, fine, but only to some degree because it makes you feel like you are kind of drowning and don't know what you're doing."

The ability to manage the emotions new teachers experience professionally contributes to their success (Donker et al., 2020; Berg, 2022). Members from focus groups described their experience as being "thrown in at the deep end," feeling "overwhelmed," having "self-doubt," and being "thrown in the fire," which were feelings associated with anxiety and frustration (Ma et al., 2022). Stress, fatigue, and job satisfaction are contributing factors leading to teacher burnout and attrition if the teachers do not perceive themselves as capable of succeeding in a challenging task (Yurt, 2022; Zhang et al., 2021).

Conversely, high TSE results in teachers being committed to success and more likely to take on new challenges (Bandura, 1993). This was confirmed as one provisionally licensed participant described his level of commitment to the profession as "It's like dating. It's trying to figure out, um, whether or not you like it, and I feel like being thrown in at the deep end" showing evidence of lower TSE. Another focus group participant explained her level of commitment as:

"I do like the way I am obtaining my teaching certificate provisionally because it's giving

> me an opportunity to see if teaching is what I want to do. I do believe that onsite training and feedback is needed. I do believe that I have to give it a few more years to see if teaching is right for me."

Research has shown that teachers with high TSE have increased job satisfaction, increased mental health, and greater academic outcomes for students (Bandura, 1977; Barni et al., 2019; Ciampa & Gallagher, 2021; Yurt, 2022; Zakariya, 2020). Despite these obstacles faced by provisionally licensed teachers, they all expressed the need for perseverance for any future teachers following their route to licensure; as Lynette emphasized, "Jump in with both feet and not be afraid to reach out to people in their building or people at their school right away."

Theoretical Implications

The study's findings permeated the literature, creating theoretical implications for researching teacher self-efficacy. All the findings (see Table 9) reflected the four sources of self-efficacy from Bandura's (1977) Self-Efficacy Theory, which included (a) mastery, (b) vicarious experiences, (c) verbal persuasion, and (d) physiological and affective states. Bandura emphasized that mastery experiences are the prevalent source of increasing self-efficacy and believed that self-efficacy is achieved through the aforementioned four sources (Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021; Ma et al., 2022). The following table demonstrates how the four sources of self-efficacy correlate to the research findings and their theoretical implications.

Table 10

Theoretical Framework

Bandura's Self-efficacy Theory	Finding	Theoretical Implication
Mastery	Challenges of the Provisionally Licensed Teacher	Suggests that provisionally licensed teachers face challenges in the classroom with instructional and

		noninstructional tasks impacting their TSE.
Vicarious Experiences	The Role of Mentors	Supports the need for mentors in the development of TSE in provisionally licensed teachers.
Verbal Persuasion	The Power of Feedback	Highlights the impact positive feedback can boost TSE and increase the desire for constructive meaningful feedback.
Physiological and Affective States	Teacher Self-efficacy, Teacher Commitment, and Perseverance	Indicates that stress and frame of mind impact TSE and the desire to overcome the obstacles and persevere.

Mastery experiences, consisting of skill proficiency and individual achievements, are considered by Bandura (1977) as the primary source of self-efficacy. For educators, this would encompass classroom experiences (Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021; Klassen & Usher, 2010). The provisionally licensed teachers faced various obstacles in the classroom, hindering their effectiveness. Brianna discovered, “Getting the kids to listen for the first time is huge,” then Miles asked, “How to get your student’s attention when they’ve been talking for a while,” and Cameron shared, “The kids are talking, talking while I’m teaching. So, my kids weren’t self-motivated on their own to behave in class.” Furthermore, Bandura (1993) emphasized that although mastery experiences shape TSE, personal ability is not a fixed variable as a predictor for long-term performance. Notably, research has reported that high TSE through successful mastery experiences boosts one’s confidence to attempt a more complex task (Thornton et al., 2020). However, experiencing adverse mastery experiences without a high TSE may result in a low TSE and a lack of interest in attempting new tasks (Berg, 2022).

These mastery experiences can also be attained through observation and peer modeling,

known as vicarious experiences, fostering the development of TSE (Bandura, 1977). Teacher mentors and role models serve as effective vehicles for increasing TSE and supporting provisionally licensed teachers. In a traditional EPP setting, vicarious experiences typically occur during clinical practicums and student teaching (Ma et al., 2022). However, these provisionally licensed teachers enter the classroom without previous vicarious experiences, making mentorship essential to their success and the positive development of their TSE. One focus group member shared, “Something really big that I've seen when observing other teachers is building meaningful relationships because I just think that's huge.” Another focus group member also expressed the importance of student-teacher relationships:

> “I love seeing those great ideas and also just looking at the relationships between the students and the teachers. You can really see when that mutual respect is there, and I feel like the students are able to learn better. So, I just love looking at those ways to hopefully make some connections myself.”

Vicarious experiences are achieved when effective teaching practices are observed while pedagogy is being developed (Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021; Klassen & Usher, 2010).

The third source of self-efficacy was verbal persuasion, which is comprised of positive feedback from experts in the field, including colleagues, mentors, and administrators. This source of social persuasion increases the needed commitment and perseverance to overcome challenges (Berg, 2022; Klassen & Usher, 2010). Madalyn described the effect of verbal persuasion as “the positive feedback, honestly, is just confidence.” The literature also described verbal persuasion as constructive feedback and encouragement (Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021; Klassen & Usher, 2010). Most of the participants confirmed the research as they expressed a desire for more meaningful constructive feedback.

Bandura's fourth source of self-efficacy was reflected in emotional states, described as physiological reactions to stress and anxiety in the school environment (Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021; Klassen & Usher, 2010). Participants revealed the impact of stress through feeling overwhelmed and having self-doubt about their abilities. Prolonged stress or mental exhaustion can increase teacher burnout (Bottiani et al., 2019; Donker et al., 2020; Klusmann et al., 2021; Kuok et al., 2020; Camacho et al., 2021; Luisa et al., 2020) and negatively impact TSE. Cameron shared about his first-year teaching, "I had no kind of help. It was just horrible. It was a really horrible first year, to be honest." Bandura (1993) emphasized when teachers with low TSE experience failure, it creates self-doubt, lowering TSE further. Derek explained, "There's a lot of times when I come home, and I am just burnt out," confirming the literature associating low TSE with feelings of frustration, eventually leading to burnout (Kuok et al., 2020).

Limitations and Delimitations

The limitations and delimitations of this transcendental phenomenological study were a combination of controlled and uncontrolled variables to be discussed in the following section. Specifically, the limitations were the uncontrolled variables that pertain to the specific research design implemented. Conversely, the delimitations were intentional decisions made under the purview of the researcher to create study parameters and boundaries for the research. Furthermore, the delimitations defined the boundaries of the study and included choices made specifically by the researcher (Coker, 2022).

Limitations

The primary limitations of this study included a small sample size of participants and external determinants influencing TSE outcomes. Although the sample size fell within the acceptable range for qualitative research, it limits the scope of transferability. It was clear that

external factors influenced self-perceptions of TSE, including age, gender, previous experience, years of experience in the classroom, amount of academic training completed, different postbaccalaureate sites, school settings (urban, rural, suburban), being placed with a mentor, and even individual grade level assignments. Although these determinants were beyond the control of the researcher, these variables influenced the lived experience of each participant as they described the phenomenon from their point of view. Effectively, the participants were not all starting from the same vantage point even though they met the same criterion. However, discovering the essence of a phenomenon is never complete but rather ongoing, as the essence described in this study relates to this specific time and group of participants (Moustakas, 1994).

Delimitations

Participant selection was confined to a specific population of educators defined by multiple criterion parameters. Specifically, the educator must (a) have a provisional teaching license; (b) have less than three years of teaching experience; (c) currently be teaching full-time in a K-12 setting; and (d) be enrolled in a postbaccalaureate program taking courses that lead to a full professional renewable teaching license. The participants reflected full-time provisionally licensed K-12 educators teaching while completing their postbaccalaureate degree and outstanding licensure requirements. The aforementioned criteria were selected to ensure that each participant experienced the same phenomenon with shared lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A transcendental phenomenological design was selected as the research design to reflect on the lived experiences of the participants with a fresh perspective to discover the essence of the phenomena (Moustakas, 1994). The research design was a careful decision the researcher made, recognizing the strengths and limitations of each approach (Patton, 2023).

Recommendations for Future Research

This study focused on the four sources of self-efficacy for teachers working under a provisional license in the K-12 classroom setting. The findings, including the limitations and delimitations, informed recommendations for future research to further extend this topic.

This study focused on teachers obtaining their provisional teaching license. Future research could approach this topic by utilizing a longitudinal study following provisionally licensed teachers to investigate how many complete their licensure requirements and transition to a full professional license. Additionally, it could examine the retention rates of provisionally licensed teachers.

This study reflected provisionally licensed teachers with less than three years of teaching experience. A comparison study examining the TSE of provisionally licensed first-year teachers compared to the TSE of their fully licensed first-year counterparts. This perspective could extend the topic by comparing the lived experiences of first-year teachers with a provisional teaching license to those with a full professional teaching license.

Participants in this study were teaching full-time in a K-12 setting, which provided a diverse group of teachers, including elementary educators, secondary educators, special education educators, co-teachers, and a virtual online educator. Additional research could focus on one specific K-12 setting, allowing for more boundaries when reflecting on the participants' lived experiences.

This study revealed that provisionally licensed teachers had an overall high self-perception of TSE. A correlation study comparing the TSE of provisionally licensed teachers to performance feedback from administrators on evaluations or student achievement scores could validate whether new teachers underestimate or overestimate their TSE.

Conclusion

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenological study was to describe self-efficacy through the lived experiences of K-12 teachers working with a provisional license in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Georgia. The transcendental research methodology design guided this study, underpinned by the theoretical framework of Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory to describe the experiences and essence of the phenomenon through a fresh perspective with this specific teacher population. The extant literature review provided historical context utilized as the foundation for the central research question and four sub-questions focused on Bandura's (1977) four sources of self-efficacy.

Twelve provisionally licensed teachers working in classrooms became the study's participants, sharing their lived experiences through triangulated data collection methods, including the TSES, individual interviews, and focus groups. The composite structural and textural descriptions of the experienced phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994) resulted in five themes. These themes corroborated and extended the literature from an empirical and theoretical perspective, later informing policy and practice implications.

The prevailing finding from this research revealed that TSE is not linear and restricted to only two options, but rather nonlinear, as provisionally licensed teachers expressed having both high and low TSE. Each participant shared their unique lived experiences with the phenomenon, providing a greater understanding of the complexities of TSE in relation to instructional and noninstructional teaching responsibilities. One complexity included the underestimation and or overestimation of TSE perceiving their ability to effectively overcome challenges. This outcome was because the knowledge of a provisionally licensed teacher is limited to the scope of their existing understanding and lived experiences. In other words, they only know what they know.

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Appendix A

IRB Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

March 19, 2024

Shawn Ruiz
Nancy DeJarnette

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY23-24-1406 A TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY: EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS WITH PROVISIONAL LICENSURE WHILE WORKING IN THE CLASSROOM

Dear Shawn Ruiz, Nancy DeJarnette,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application per 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 described in your IRB 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, **which you must use to conduct your study**, can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

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

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Shawn Ruiz
Nancy DeJarnette

Re: Modification - IRB-FY23-24-1406 A TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY: EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS WITH PROVISIONAL LICENSURE WHILE WORKING IN THE CLASSROOM

Dear Shawn Ruiz, Nancy DeJarnette,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has rendered the decision below for IRB-FY23-24-1406 A TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY: EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS WITH PROVISIONAL LICENSURE WHILE WORKING IN THE CLASSROOM.

Decision: Exempt - Limited IRB

Your request to make the following changes to your study has been approved:

1. Expand your participant criteria to include middle and high school teachers working in their own classrooms under a provisional license who are students completing their middle, secondary, or special education endorsement and
2. No longer limit participants to Liberty University students.

Thank you for submitting your revised study documents for our review and documentation. **For a PDF of your modification 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 Modification under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. If your modification required you to submit revised documents, they can be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.** Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Thank you for complying with the IRB's requirements for making changes to your approved study. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions. We wish you well as you continue with your research.

Sincerely,

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

Appendix B

Recruitment Letter

Dear Potential Participant,

As a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree. The purpose of my research is to describe self-efficacy through the lived experiences of K-12 school teachers working with a provisional license on the East Coast, and I am writing to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older, teach full-time in a K-12 classroom with a provisional license, have less than three years of teaching experience, and be in the process of completing the endorsement. Participants will be asked to take an anonymous online survey, take part in a one-on-one, audio, and video-recorded interview, take part in a video-recorded and audio-recorded focus group, and review their interview and focus group transcripts to check for accuracy. It should take approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes to complete the procedures listed. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but participant identities will not be disclosed.

To participate, please click here to complete the selection survey. If you meet my participant criteria, I will contact you to schedule study procedures.

A consent document will be emailed to you one week before the study procedures begin. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me before completing any study procedures.

At the conclusion of all study procedures, participants will receive a $50 Amazon gift card. Participants who withdraw at any point during the data collection process will receive a $10 Amazon gift card.

Sincerely,

Shawn Ruiz
Director of Licensure, Adjunct Instructor
[redacted]

Appendix C

Consent Form

Title of the Project: A Transcendental Phenomenological Study on Teacher Self-Efficacy: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Teachers with Provisional Licensure While Working in the Classroom
Principal Investigator: Shawn Kristine Ruiz, Doctoral Candidate/Director of Licensure, School of Education, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older, teach full-time in a K-12 classroom with a provisional license, have less than three years of teaching experience, and be in the process of completing your elementary endorsement. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

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

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

The purpose of the study is to describe self-efficacy through the lived experiences of K-12 school teachers working with a provisional license on the East Coast.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

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

1. Participate in an online survey where you will be asked to answer some questions with a score of 1 to 9. The estimated time for the online survey will be approximately 30 minutes.
2. Participate in an online, audio- and video-recorded interview that will take approximately one hour. The individual interview will consist of questions about your experiences as a classroom teacher while working with a provisional teaching license. Your interview will be transcribed from the recording.
3. Participate in an online, audio- and video-recorded focus group after the individual interview has been completed. The focus group will include questions to have a conversation about similarities and differences of experiences from the individual interviews. The focus group will also be transcribed. The estimated time for the focus group session will be one hour.
4. Each participant will be able to review their interview and focus group transcriptions to check for accuracy. The estimated time will be approximately one hour for each transcript.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Benefits that participants can expect to receive include the opportunity to speak with other provisionally licensed elementary teachers within the focus group setting.

This research benefits the field of education as the United States navigates this current teacher shortage. The study will add to the literature on provisional teacher licensure experiences by providing meaningful descriptions through the lived experiences of elementary teachers working with a provisional license prior to completing their educator preparation programs.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

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

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

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. 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.

- Survey responses will be kept anonymous, and only the researcher will have access to them.
- Participant responses during interviews and focus groups will be kept confidential by replacing names with pseudonyms.
- Interviews will be conducted by the researcher virtually through Microsoft Teams, where others will not easily overhear the conversation. The interviews will be audio- and video-recorded and video-recorded and transcribed for accuracy. Only the researcher will have access to the recordings and transcriptions.
- 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. The focus group will be recorded and transcribed for accuracy, and only the researcher will have access to the focus group recordings and transcriptions.
- Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for five years and then deleted. Only the researcher will have access to the recordings.
- Data collected from you may be used in future research studies and shared with other researchers. If data collected from you is reused or shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed beforehand to ensure anonymity.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer or in a locked drawer. After five years, all electronic records will be deleted, and all hardcopy records will be shredded.

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

Participants will be compensated for participating in this study. At the conclusion of all study procedures, participants will receive a $50 Amazon gift card via email. Any participant who chooses to withdraw from the study after beginning but before completing all study procedures will receive a $10 Amazon gift card via email.

Is study participation voluntary?

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

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

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

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

The researcher conducting this study is Shawn Kristine Ruiz. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at [redacted] or [redacted] You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Nancy DeJarnette, 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 address is irb@liberty.edu.

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

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing 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

_____
Signature & Date

Appendix D

University Administration Approval

RE: Dissertation Participant Request

Raleigh, Donald Ray (School of Ed

To Ruiz, Shawn Kristine (School of Education)

Cc Dejarnette, Nancy Kay (School of Education)

Thu 1/25

Start your reply all with: Thank you! | Yes, you have my permission. | Permission granted! | Feedback

Shawn,

Please use this email as permission to contact online MAT students in the Liberty University School of Education as a part of your research study, A Transcendental Phenomenological Study on Teacher Self-Efficacy: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Teachers with Provisional Licensure While Working in the Classroom.

I wish you the best in your research and look forward to reviewing your findings.

Blessings,

DR

Don R. Raleigh, Ed.D.
Dean
School of Education
(434) 592 - 6985

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Appendix E

Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale Permission

William & Mary
School of Education

MEGAN TSCHANNEN-MORAN, PHD
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

January 29, 2023

Shawn Ruiz,

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

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

Please use the following as the proper citation:

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

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

All the best,

Megan Tschannen-Moran
William & Mary School of Education

P.O. Box 8795 • Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795 • (757) 221-2187 • mxtsch@wm.edu

Appendix F

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale[1] (long form)

Teacher Beliefs	How much can you do?								
Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below. Your answers are confidential.	Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
1. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
2. How much can you do to help your students think critically?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
3. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
4. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
5. To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
6. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
7. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
8. How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
9. How much can you do to help your students value learning?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
10. How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
11. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
12. How much can you do to foster student creativity?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
13. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
14. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
15. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
16. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
17. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
18. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
19. How well can you keep a few problem students form ruining an entire lesson?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
20. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
21. How well can you respond to defiant students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
22. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
23. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
24. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Appendix G

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale Scoring Directions

Directions for Scoring the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale[1]

Developers: Megan Tschannen-Moran, College of William and Mary
!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!Anita Woolfolk Hoy, the Ohio State University.
!

Construct Validity

For information the construct validity of the Teachers' Sense of Teacher efficacy Scale, see:

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

Factor Analysis

It is important to conduct a factor analysis to determine how your participants respond to the questions. We have consistently found three moderately correlated factors: *Efficacy in Student Engagement, Efficacy in Instructional Practices*, and *Efficacy in Classroom Management*, but at times the make up of the scales varies slightly. With preservice teachers we recommend that the full 24-item scale (or 12-item short form) be used, because the factor structure often is less distinct for these respondents.

Subscale Scores

To determine the *Efficacy in Student Engagement, Efficacy in Instructional Practices*, and *Efficacy in Classroom Management* subscale scores, we compute unweighted means of the items that load on each factor. Generally these groupings are:

Long Form

Efficacy in Student Engagement:	Items 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 22
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies:	Items 7, 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24
Efficacy in Classroom Management:	Items 3, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21

Short Form

Efficacy in Student Engagement:	Items 2, 3, 4, 11
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies:	Items 5, 9, 10, 12
Efficacy in Classroom Management:	Items 1, 6, 7, 8

Appendix H

Selection Survey

Selection Survey

* 1. What is your name?

* 2. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to answer

* 3. How old are you?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

* 4. Do you have a provisional teaching license?

- Yes
- No

Other (please specify)

* 5. What state do you teach in?

* 6. What grade do you teach?

* 7. How many years have you taught with a provisional license?

- Less than 1 year
- 1 year
- 2 years
- 3 years
- More than 3 years

* 8. What ethnicity are you?

- White
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Asian or Asian American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

* 9. What would be your preferred method of contact to set up an interview?

- Email (please include your email in the comment box below)
- Phone (please include your phone number in the comment box below)
- Text (please include your phone number in the comment box below)

Other

* 10. If selected, what is your preferred day and time to schedule an interview/focus group session?

- Weekday afternoon (4-6pm EST)
- Weekday evenings (7-9 pm EST)
- Saturday morning (8-12 am EST)
- Saturday afternoon (12-4 pm EST)
- Saturday evening (5-9 pm EST)
- Sunday morning (8-11 am EST)
- Sunday afternoon (12-4 pm EST)
- Sunday evening (5-9 pm EST)

Other (please specify)

* 11. What is your email address?

* 12. What is your phone number?

* 13. Are you enrolled in a Master's program?

- Yes
- No

Done

Appendix I

Individual Interview Procedure

Participants were greeted and reminded that their interview would be audio and video recorded, emphasizing the use of pseudonyms in the data analysis. Teacher self-efficacy was defined as a teacher's belief in their ability to impact student achievement through instruction, classroom management, and student engagement (Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021; Ma et al., 2022).

Individual Interview Questions

---

1. Please tell me about yourself and the group of students you have this year in your classroom. Introduction Question
2. Where are you in your academic degree program, and what licensure requirements remain to be completed to be eligible for a renewable teaching license in your state? CRQ
3. What steps did you take to obtain your provisional licensure? CRQ
4. What previous academic preparation and experiences have prepared you to be successful in your current role teaching with a provisional license? CRQ
5. What challenges, if any, did you face in your current role teaching with a provisional license? CRQ
6. How have your previous academic preparation and experiences, if any, prepared you to be successful with classroom management? SQ1, SQ2
7. What are some of the challenges you have experienced with classroom management? SQ1, SQ4
8. How do you respond to classroom management challenges and students who do not follow the procedures and rules that have been implemented? SQ1, SQ4
9. How do you respond to the challenges of meeting the needs of diverse learners? SQ1

10. How would you describe your ability to influence student engagement and achievement? SQ1
11. What challenges have you faced with time management (lesson planning, grading, record keeping)? SQ4
12. How have your previous academic preparation and experiences prepared you to be successful with time management? SQ2
13. How have your previous academic preparation and experiences prepared you to be successful working with the families and parents of your students? SQ2
14. What are some of the challenges you have faced working with families and parents? SQ4
15. How do you respond to parent communication challenges when addressing concerns about their child? SQ4
16. How have your experiences impacted your teacher self-efficacy? CRQ
17. What advice would you give the next teacher following your pathway to licensure? CRQ
18. How would you describe your experience with performance feedback from mentors and school leadership? SQ3
19. How has positive feedback and encouragement impacted your self-efficacy? SQ3
20. Have you been partnered with a mentor, and if so, how has that experience impacted your self-efficacy? SQ3

Appendix J

Focus Group Procedure

Participants were greeted and reminded that the purpose of the focus group is to be an extension of the individual interviews. The questions used in this session are to facilitate a deeper discussion collectively. The goal is for each participant to curiously listen to the lived shared experiences of others (Dimitrakopoulou & Theodorou, 2022; Gundumogula, 2021). However, the purpose was not to reach an agreed-upon conclusion or consensus to each question but to respect the diversity of experiences within the group by ensuring that time equity is given to each participant (Creswell & Poth, 2018). You will be asked to write down in a bullet format on a piece of paper your thoughts on each question before other participants begin to share their experiences (Fusch et al., 2022). Finally, the definition of teacher self-efficacy was reviewed again as a teacher's belief in their ability to impact student achievement through instruction, classroom management, and student engagement (Fackler et al., 2021; Kiran, 2021; Ma et al., 2022).

Focus Group Questions

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1. How would you describe your previous teaching experiences that prepared you to work as a provisionally licensed teacher? SQ1
2. Please think about previous opportunities to observe other teachers; what stands out as particularly meaningful to you as a provisionally licensed teacher? SQ2
3. As a provisionally licensed teacher, what feedback have you received about your instruction and classroom management? SQ3
4. How do you feel when you think about teaching on a provisional license? SQ4
5. How would you describe the support you received as a provisionally licensed teacher?

6. What advice would you give to other teachers considering becoming a provisionally licensed teacher?

Appendix K

Individual Interview Transcript Sample

Daija Warren Interview Transcript
May 18, 2024, 9:45 AM

Ruiz, Shawn Kristine (School of Education) 11:10
How do you respond to those classroom management challenges and students who don't follow your procedures or the rules that you've implemented?

Daija Warren (4th Grade Writing Teacher) 11:14
I lean heavily on my team.
Sometimes, I'll give a student a, some time out of the room into a different classroom, just to, kind of, get a change of scenery.
Getting a change of environment.
Maybe they can calm down and bring it back before returning back to class.
My team and I are pretty good with that.
I'm just, and I lean heavily, heavily on parent support.
So, um, some of my students do better once they have a conversation with mom or dad on the phone or whoever their guardian is.
Um, if that isn't always working, then we have to have conversations.
Um, either the student and myself.
If that conversation isn't seeming to bring any resolve to a situation, then we'll include the school counselor or some member of administration.
Um, and then I have some students who don't respond as well to me as they do to another teacher.
So, I might say, hey, you know, he and I are having this issue, and you know, maybe could you, you know, speak with him, and then we can all come back together later because I know I'm not

the, I'm not everybody's favorite.
So, you know, and just try to find what works best for each student.
So, I use a multitude of things.

Ruiz, Shawn Kristine (School of Education) 12:37
Now that's great.
How do you respond to the challenges of meeting the needs of diverse learners?

Daija Warren (4th Grade Writing Teacher) 12:47
That can be difficult, especially when you have a plan in place, and then it doesn't quite go that way, as you thought.
Um, so, um, I think I've said this already, but I have, I lean heavily on my team, and so if I have a student who is not responding, I guess to my instruction, in the way, you know, I do take their like, we, I'm heavy on exit tickets at the end of lessons.
Okay, and if I have a student that's still not getting it, and it's like Wednesday of the lesson, right, or unit, um, then I might go to another teacher and say, hey, you know, I know you've taught this before.
I know you teach this now, and I have this student who's still struggling here.
How can I help them?
And so, um, I am very, we have a lot of great teachers there who taught all over and taught all of the grade levels and all of the subjects, and so I lean heavily on them.
And I also try to bring in my students interest, excuse me, into the lesson.
Or bring their strengths into the lesson, something that, you know, I know interests them and then that might help them to maybe get it better.
Um, I don't know if I have answered your question.

Ruiz, Shawn Kristine (School of Education) 14:26
You're doing great.
No, I appreciate it all.

Daija Warren (4th Grade Writing Teacher) 14:28
Okay.

Ruiz, Shawn Kristine (School of Education) 14:28
So, you're doing great.
Okay, so we're on question 10 out of 20, just so you know.
So, we're almost about the halfway point.

Daija Warren (4th Grade Writing Teacher) 14:35
Okay

Ruiz, Shawn Kristine (School of Education) 14:36
How would you describe your ability to influence student engagement and achievement?

Appendix L

Focus Group Transcript Sample

Focus Group 1 Transcript
April 21, 2024, 4:00 PM

Ruiz, Shawn Kristine (School of Education) started transcription

Stewart, Kade (3rd Grade Teacher) 7:52
Okay, um, like Miles said, definitely classroom management, but something really big that I've seen when observing other teachers is building meaningful relationships because I just think that's huge.
That kids don't want to learn from somebody that they don't have a relationship with.
And I think building meaningful relationships is probably one of the top things that you need as a successful teacher.

Octavia Gayle (Special Education Teacher) 8:24
I agree.

Ruiz, Shawn Kristine (School of Education) 8:24
Kade, what is one way that you would accomplish that goal?

Stewart, Kade (3rd Grade Teacher) 8:30
Um, there's a few ways that I do it, but one of the main ways is every morning from when they get there.
I stand at my classroom door and, well, actually, I sit because, like I said, I teach 3rd grade.
So, I try to stay at their eye level when I'm talking to them unless I'm teaching a lesson.

But if I'm talking one-on-one, I try to stay at eye level with them.
I greet each and every one of them by name, ask them how they're how they're weekend was, how their previous day was, you know, complement what they, the clothes they have on or tell them I like the way they got their hair done up or just things like that.
Just, I make them feel like they're seen because I feel like a lot of times at home, they don't get some kids, just don't get love.
They don't; they don't feel seen.
They feel invisible, and I would feel like a terrible person if I didn't make my students feel like they were loved the eight hours that they are with me.

Ruiz, Shawn Kristine (School of Education) 9:32
That's great.
Octavia, did you have something to share?

O

Octavia Gayle (Special Education Teacher) 9:36
I do.
So, because I'm an interrelated teacher, I co-teach with two different teachers.
So, I get to see two different teaching style points.
Um, things that I take away from both parties is the classroom management aspect.
I see two different ends of how they both handled their classrooms.
So, I take away some things from both.
Um, it's just like with Kade, said.
Um, building relationships with students, I take that away from one of my co-teachers because she does it very well.
So I make sure that my kids know that I am there for them.
And like you said, every morning, I make sure I greet them, I speak with them, I talk to them, but I talk to them on their level, um, their level understanding, and I teach middles.
So, a lot of them, the girls, they have hair problems, they have boyfriend problems.
So, I just talk to them on their levels.

Ruiz, Shawn Kristine (School of Education) 10:35
That's fantastic.

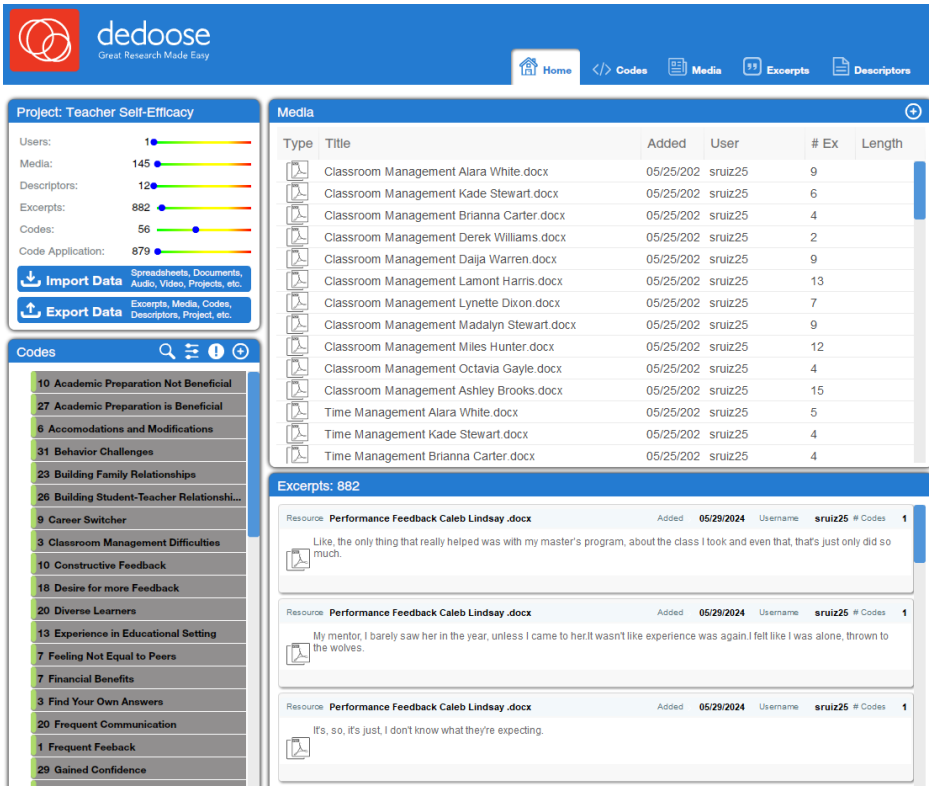
5

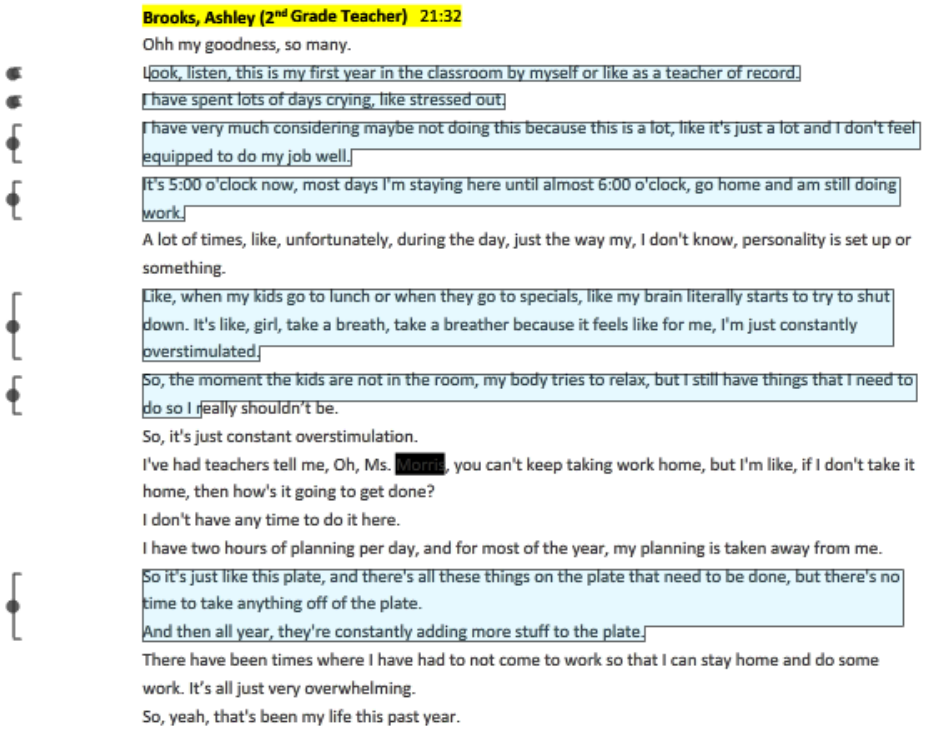
Brooks, Ashley (2nd Grade Teacher) 10:42
I can go ahead and jump in.
Um, for me, I think one of the most profound things that I saw another teacher do was involve the kids in their own behavior management.

Um, and, so I kind of, I kind of stole that from her and then been using her, you know, strategy in my classroom.
But she had these jars in her room, and, like, as a class, there were certain expectations for the entire class as far as, like, walking quietly to and from lunch.
And you know how they behaved outside of her classroom and things like that.
And so whenever they got compliments, or whenever they like, did something successfully as a class, they were aiming to move tokens from one jar to fill up the other jar, and once they filled up the other jar, she would reward them as a class.

Appendix M

Coding Data in Dedoose





Brooks, Ashley (2nd Grade Teacher) 21:32

Ohh my goodness, so many.

Look, listen, this is my first year in the classroom by myself or like as a teacher of record.

I have spent lots of days crying, like stressed out.

I have very much considering maybe not doing this because this is a lot, like it's just a lot and I don't feel equipped to do my job well.

It's 5:00 o'clock now, most days I'm staying here until almost 6:00 o'clock, go home and am still doing work.

A lot of times, like, unfortunately, during the day, just the way my, I don't know, personality is set up or something.

Like, when my kids go to lunch or when they go to specials, like my brain literally starts to try to shut down. It's like, girl, take a breath, take a breather because it feels like for me, I'm just constantly overstimulated.

So, the moment the kids are not in the room, my body tries to relax, but I still have things that I need to do so I really shouldn't be.

So, it's just constant overstimulation.

I've had teachers tell me, Oh, Ms. [redacted], you can't keep taking work home, but I'm like, if I don't take it home, then how's it going to get done?

I don't have any time to do it here.

I have two hours of planning per day, and for most of the year, my planning is taken away from me.

So it's just like this plate, and there's all these things on the plate that need to be done, but there's no time to take anything off of the plate.

And then all year, they're constantly adding more stuff to the plate.

There have been times where I have had to not come to work so that I can stay home and do some work. It's all just very overwhelming.

So, yeah, that's been my life this past year.

Appendix N

Themes and Code Frequencies

Theme 1: The Provisionally Licensed Educator

Requirements (44)

- (24) Licensure/ degree requirements 12/12
- (20) Test requirements 12/12
- (11) Time remaining 10/12
- (7) Optional Routes 3/12
- (7) Had help applying 7/12
- (7) Financial Benefits 4/12

Experience (38)

- (25) Life Experience 10/12

- (13) Experience in an education setting 9/12
- (9) Career switcher 6/12

Theme 2: Teaching Experiences (Mastery)

Sub-Theme: Classroom Management (57)

- (26) Building student-teacher relationship 10/12
- (31) Behavior challenges 10/12
- (16) Set expectations 8/12
- (2) Routine and consistency 1/12

Sub-Theme: Instructional Efficacy (49) Instructional Efficacy

- (29) Student engagement 12/12
- (20) Diverse Learners 10/12
- (6) Accommodations and modifications 5/12
- (4) Incentives 4/12

Sub-Theme: Time Management (44)

- (34) Task prioritization challenges (including managing instructional time, 5/12) 11/12
- (10) Work/home life balance (setting boundaries) 8/12
- (3) Heavy EPP course load 3/12

Sub-Theme: Parent Communication (39)

- (20) Building family relationships 10/12
- (19) Frequent communication 10/12
- (8) Unresponsive parents 6/12
- (5) Unhappy parents 3/12

- (3) Language barriers 1/12

Theme 3: Formal Training and Observation (Vicarious Experiences)

Sub-Theme: Academic Preparation (36)

- (27) Academic preparation IS Beneficial 10/12
- (9) Academic preparation NOT Beneficial 7/12

Sub-Theme: On-the-Job Training (42)

- (23) On-the-Job Training 12/12
- (19) Peer modeling/observation 10/12
- (14) Not enough training 4/12
- (1) Too much training 1/12

Theme 4: Performance Feedback (Verbal Persuasion)

Sub-Theme: Mentorship (66)

- (45) Strong source of support/Coaching 11/12
- (21) Lack of support/Negative experience 9/12
- (8) Meaningful collaboration 6/12

Sub-Theme: Feedback Experiences (39)

- (21) Positive feedback 10/12
- (18) Desire more constructive feedback 11/12
- (10) Constructive feedback 7/12
- (1) Frequent feedback 1/12
- (4) Not enough feedback 4/12

Theme 5: Frame of Mind (Physiological and Affective States)

Sub-Theme: Low teacher self-efficacy (119)

- (48) Self-doubt and comparison 11/12
- (40) Little experience 12/12
- (31) Overwhelmed 11/12
- (13) Stressed about licensure requirements 5/12
- (12) High expectations 7/12
- (7) Feeling not equal to peers 4/12
- (9) Unsure of remaining in this profession 7/12
- (3) Classroom management difficulties 3/12

Sub-Theme: High teacher self-efficacy (41)

- (29) Gained confidence 11/12
- (14) Performance Accomplishments 7/12
- (6) Strong time management 5/12
- (2) Strong parent relationships 2/12

Sub-Theme: Reflection and Recommendation (60)

- (35) Perseverance (Don’t give up) 12/12
- (25) Seek support/Ask Questions 10/12
- (6) Know the provisional time frame 4/12
- (9) Pace yourself 6/12
- (3) Find your own answers 3/12