7-2023

Teacher Self-Efficacy in Novice Job-Embedded Practitioners

Shay Shannon
East Tennessee State University

Teacher Self-Efficacy in Novice Job-Embedded Practitioners

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A dissertation

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

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by

Shay Michael Shannon

August 2023

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Dr. Pamela Scott, Chair

Dr. Jill Channing

Dr. William Flora

Keywords: self-efficacy, novice teachers, job-embedded practitioners, teacher prep program

ABSTRACT

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Each year, thousands of novice teachers are hired, and within a few years, many of these teachers decide to leave the profession. Job-embedded practitioners, teachers who have yet to fulfill their academic requirements at their universities to become fully licensed teachers and are taking an alternative route to obtain their teaching licenses, comprise a large proportion of those novice teachers. Local and state school districts spend thousands of dollars trying to recruit new teachers to balance high attrition rates. With current teacher shortages nationwide, schools must find novel mechanisms to combat teacher attrition, rather than constantly hiring new teachers to fill vacancies. Increasing teachers' sense of self-efficacy is vital to reducing the high rate of turnover. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the perceptions of novice teachers who are job-embedded practitioners on how prepared they were for employment and how well they believe they are currently doing. Understanding and increasing new teacher efficacy are essential for school districts nationwide. To address this purpose, individual interviews with 10 novice job-embedded practitioners were conducted. These interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. The novice job-embedded practitioners interviewed in this study described their teaching self-efficacy as a work in progress and highlighted key barriers and facilitators to their self-efficacy. They also described benefits and drawbacks of their teacher preparation programs, highlighting curriculum changes that would significantly enhance their self-efficacy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee: Dr. Pamela Scott, my chair, for being patient; Dr. William Flora and Dr. Jill Channing for providing valuable advice throughout the process. I would like to thank my family and friends for the support they have given throughout this process. Everyone has made this journey an enjoyable one.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Attrition and burnout among teachers are at an all-time high due to unprecedented demands (Jennings, 2020). As a result, the United States is experiencing a significant teacher shortage (Bryner, 2021) that has been persistent and prevalent throughout the 2000s (Stucher et al., 2016). However, in the last five years, the frequency of teacher burnout has only further deteriorated (Garcia & Weiss, 2021). Public school teachers in the United States have faced significant challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (Garcia & Weiss, 2021), which lasted from 2020 through 2023, and rising concerns about violence inside schools (Bryner, 2021).

In addition to attrition, fewer students enter teacher training programs, amplifying the teacher shortage. In Tennessee, 3,000 educators graduated in 2020, while 3,700 graduated in 2015 (Aldrich, 2022). Many states, including Tennessee, are easing requirements to obtain a teaching license to address the increase in attrition rates among teachers. Furthermore, many states facilitate the transfer of teaching licenses from out of state (Aldrich, 2022), and there are programs where teachers can work full-time in the classroom while fulfilling the requirements of teaching credentials (Mangrum, 2022). With the available knowledge regarding teacher burnout and attrition, the education community must continue to monitor and study the level of teacher self-efficacy in all teachers, especially new teachers.

Garcia (2020) noted that Grow Your Own (GYO) programs and policies have been implemented in all 50 states to combat the teacher shortage. Through GYO programs, local community members are recruited and trained to become teachers in their communities through partnerships between educator preparation programs, school districts, and community organizations. Similar programs take advantage of job-embedded practitioners who have a

bachelor's degree and are already working as a teacher while at the same time working towards fulfilling the requirements for a teaching license through a university (Adams et al., 2019).

There has been much attention paid to the role of teachers in determining the quality of teaching and learning processes in schools by educational researchers and policymakers around the world (Wai et al., 2018). Several studies focus on the relationship between teacher characteristics and student achievement, concluding that teachers play an essential role in enhancing student achievement (Abuhassna et al., 2020; Bal-Taştan et al., 2018; Donohoo, 2018; Fauth et al., 2019; Howe et al., 2019; Kim & Seo, 2018; Podolsky et al., 2019a). Teachers' self-efficacy, as well as their belief in their own abilities to teach and promote student learning has also been discussed. According to existing research, teacher self-efficacy influences students' motivation, engagement, and achievement, as well as teachers' improvement of their teaching skills and practices (Bandura, 1977). However, it is unclear how job-embedded practitioners perceive their self-efficacy, teacher preparation programs, and their futures as teachers.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the level of teacher self-efficacy in novice teachers fulfilling requirements to obtain a teaching license through alternative licensure preparation programs while being a job-embedded practitioner. Previous research shows that teacher self-efficacy affects student achievement, attrition, burnout, use of teaching strategies, and attitudes toward innovation (Ortan et al., 2021). Retaining teachers is a continuing challenge for many educational departments (Bressman et al., 2018). Furthermore, teacher retention is a national problem when discussing the retention of teachers in their first five years of teaching (Perryman & Calvert, 2020). Every year, nine out of ten teachers hired replace colleagues who quit voluntarily, with more than two-thirds leaving before retirement (Carver-Thomas & Darling-

Hammond, 2019). There is an average annual departure rate of 8% among teachers. In addition, since the same proportion of educators shift schools each year, the United States has a teacher turnover rate of approximately 16% per year (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). During the first ten months of 2018, the United States Bureau of Labor (2018) found that 83 public school teachers out of every 10,000 quit their jobs each month. This attrition rate is the highest rate for public educators since such records began in 2001 (Hackman & Morath, 2018). The 2018 statistic represents nearly twice the number of educators who quit their jobs in 2009, the year with the lowest number (Reisinger, 2018).

Turnover rates in some other countries are significantly higher; Australia has a turnover rate between 30-50%, Canada averages around 40%, and Finland's turnover rate is increasing even though the Finnish are known for having a high appreciation for the teaching profession (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). This problem is not just a problem in the United States. Instead, it is a global problem that needs to be addressed. Furthermore, it is essential to consider that these numbers are likely higher in areas of poverty and minority populations (Camelo & Ponczek, 2021). Collins and Schaaf (2020) reported that in Tennessee, teacher attrition is around 10% but that percentage increases as the school and population sizes increase.

Significance of the Study

This study is an effort to contribute to the understanding of new teacher self-efficacy, specifically in teachers who are working as job-embedded practitioners. The study examines job-embedded practitioners' perceptions of their own self-efficacy as teachers and how they perceive their job. With current teacher shortages across the nation, the influx of teachers recruited to fill teaching positions through alternative licensure programs is growing (García & Weiss, 2019). Each student has individual factors that make them unique, such as differing cognitive abilities,

making the educator one of the most critical influences in determining and promoting students' outcomes (Mahler et al., 2018). Since teacher self-efficacy is closely associated with both teacher burnout and student academic achievement (Herman et al., 2018), it is imperative to build a critical understanding of novice job-embedded teachers. The need for studies such as the current research was highlighted by Podolsky et al. (2019a), who recommended three actions. First, researchers should continue to examine how a teacher's working conditions and collegial environment influence the effectiveness of their teaching careers. Second, administrators should facilitate teachers' abilities to create collective expertise and effectiveness within and across teams that have a diverse mix of teaching experiences, and third, researchers should investigate the influence of teaching experience on teachers' ability to teach in more sophisticated ways to prepare students for success.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the teacher self-efficacy in novice teachers who are job-embedded practitioners. Teacher self-efficacy will be defined as teachers' beliefs in their ability to effectively handle their tasks, obligations, and challenges (Barni et al., 2019).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used for this study is based on Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Social cognitive theory is the foundation of this study as it considers that teacher self-efficacy relates to many academic and career success factors, including the success of students and teachers. Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's perception of themselves and how they react to their surroundings. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to

produce given attainments" (p. 3). From a teacher's perspective, self-efficacy is an individual's assurance in their teaching capabilities and responsibilities to the profession (Lauermann & Berger, 2021). Many studies report that a higher sense of teacher self-efficacy can lead to higher levels of classroom management, academic achievement, and student motivation (Bal-Taştan et al., 2018; Burić & Kim, 2020; Lazaraides et al., 2020).

A factor that can affect teacher self-efficacy is teacher preparation programs (Nasir & Iqbal, 2019). Through observations and practical experiences, novice teachers can enter their careers more prepared (VanLone et al., 2022). Some teacher preparation programs follow traditional paths for a teaching license, and others offer an alternative path to licensure (West & Frey-Clark, 2019). Research suggests that efficacy is most malleable early in the learning process, regardless of the path to becoming a teacher (Lee & Soland, 2022). Teacher efficacy may be developed in the first years of teaching (Edinger & Edinger, 2018; Podolsky et al., 2019a; Savolainen et al., 2022). It is essential to examine the self-efficacy of new teachers entering the profession so that educators may create programs that place effective teachers into school systems.

Research Questions

The essential research question guiding this study was:

What are the perceptions of novice job-embedded practitioners on their own teacher self-efficacy and teacher self-efficacy in general?

The following sub-research questions were devised to help address the essential research question:

Sub-research Question 1: How do novice job-embedded practitioners perceive their teacher preparation program?

Sub-research Question 2: How do novice job-embedded practitioners perceive their future as a teacher?

Definition of Terms

For this study, the following terms and definitions are used:

Self-Efficacy: Self-efficacy is a term commonly defined as an individual's beliefs in his or her capabilities to execute a particular action or achieve a specific goal (Bandura, 1977).

Job-Embedded Practitioner: A job-embedded practitioner is a teacher who has completed a bachelor's degree, is working in a classroom as a teacher, is getting paid as a teacher, and is currently working towards fulfilling the requirements for a teaching license through a university (MTSU, 2020).

Novice Teacher: Novice teacher is a term used to define a teacher teaching in their first 5 years. The term can also be interchanged with beginning teacher or apprentice (Rahman et al., 2020).

Teacher Preparation Program: A teacher preparation program is a program for college or university students that allows students to pursue a teaching degree and certification (Goldhaber, 2019).

Limitations and Delimitations

The study is delimited to novice, job-embedded practitioners in a small, rural school district in Tennessee. The study was also delimited to participants who worked for the chosen school district between 2022-2023. Not all participants were enrolled at the same university for their teacher preparation programs.

Limitations for this study include non-random sampling, which excludes generalization to a larger group. All participants in this study were employed by one school district in

Tennessee, which limits the findings to the characteristics of these participants and the general culture of Tennessee. The delimitation to one school district in one southeastern state may limit the transferability of the study to a more general population of novice job-embedded practitioners in the United States. The participants' lack of teaching experience and possible lack of knowledge regarding their teaching abilities in comparison to more experienced teachers could affect the results. That is, participants may not be completely objective regarding their self-efficacy. To mitigate this limitation, the researcher chose interview questions that will ask teachers about self-efficacy in an indirect way so that their responses can be analyzed in an unbiased fashion.

Summary

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 introduced the study and includes the history of the issue, statement of the problem, the study's significance, the purpose of the study, theoretical framework, research questions, definition of terms, and limitations. Chapter 2 presents a literature review of past studies, articles, and information on teacher self-efficacy and job-embedded practitioners. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used, including research questions, research design, site selection, sampling, participants, data collection, data analysis, theoretical framework, and role of the researcher. Chapter 4 reports the results of the study relative to the research questions. Chapter 5 presents further context, implications for practice, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2. Review of the Literature

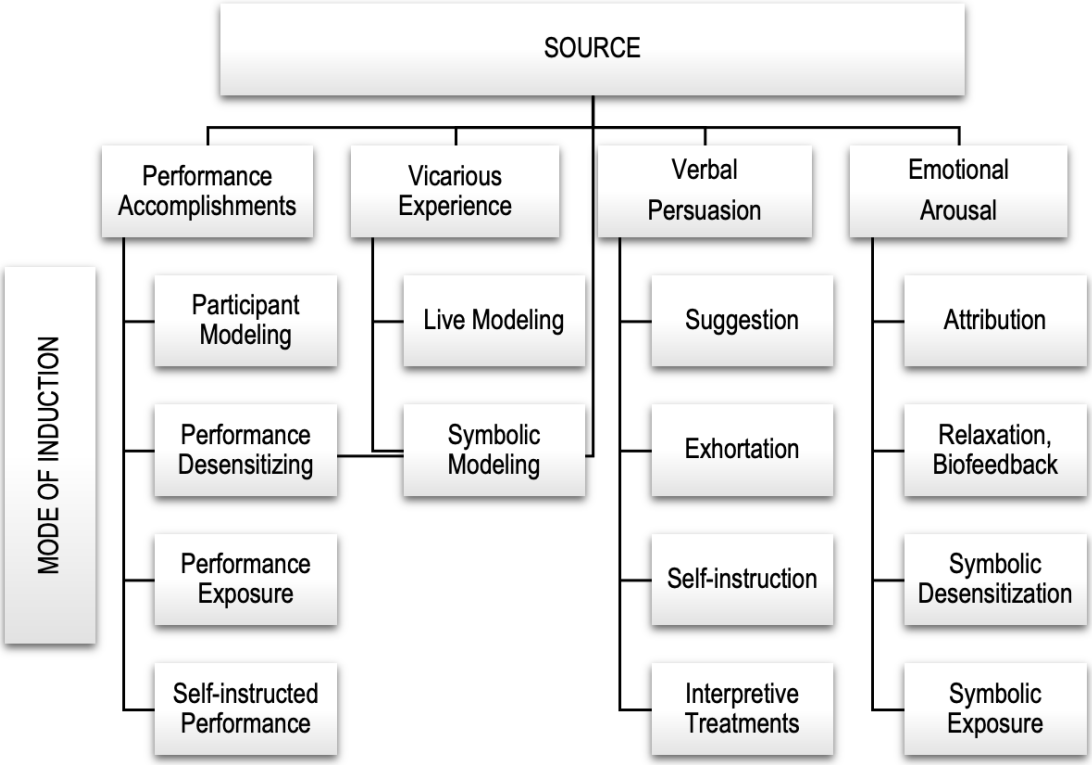
The literature review supports the understanding of new teacher self-efficacy, specifically in novice teachers working as job-embedded practitioners. Chapter 2 provides a foundation for the current study through a detailed review and synthesis of the literature related to self-efficacy, teacher self-efficacy, and related concepts surrounding teacher self-efficacy including for novice teachers, the impact on student achievement, teacher retention, attrition, burnout, and job satisfaction. To put these topics into context, literature pertaining to the teacher shortage, teacher preparation, and traditional and alternative paths to teacher licensure are also discussed.

Self-Efficacy

Exploring teacher self-efficacy through the lens of social cognitive theory affords consideration of teacher self-efficacy as it relates to many academic and career success factors, including the success of the students and the teachers themselves (Lauermann & Berger, 2021). Self-efficacy refers to the belief that an individual can carry out a particular action or achieve a particular goal (Bandura, 1977). The sense of efficacy that Bandura attested to is one's belief that one can influence a specific outcome. A person's self-efficacy is determined by four sources: (a) performance accomplishments or mastery, (b) vicarious experiences, (c) verbal persuasion or social persuasion, and (d) emotional or physiological, arousal (Bandura, 1977, 1994). These sources are demonstrated and further defined in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Efficacy Expectations



Note: Sources of efficacy information are the primary sources through which the modes of induction operate. Adapted from Bandura (1977).

To achieve mastery, individuals must complete a task successfully, but they must also attribute the success to their own effort rather than external factors (Hesbol, 2019; Ronnie & Philip, 2021). Observation and imitation of other people's experiences increase self-efficacy by demonstrating the goal can be met (Verma & Bhandari, 2022). When people are encouraged and praised, their confidence grows, allowing them to have more confident and effective social persuasion. Arousal or physiological response relates to one's emotional state regarding a task (Bandura, 1997). When stressed about a task, individuals feel vulnerable and their self-efficacy decreases (Bandura, 1997).

Bandura first introduced the term, self-efficacy, in 1977. Bandura's work aimed to describe the effect of psychological procedures, such as therapy, on individuals in a unified theoretical framework. Procedures should be measured based on their effect on self-efficacy in intensity, level, and generality (Syahrastani, 2022). Rather than measuring a person's ability, Bandura (1997) argued that self-efficacy indicates a person's perception of his or her ability. The construct of self-efficacy is also multifaceted and not equivalent across contexts, subjects, or tasks (Bandura, 1997).

Bandura (1997) argues that self-efficacy is often mistakenly associated with self-esteem. An individuals' self-esteem results from their perception of value, worth, or position based on their skills or circumstances. According to Bandura (1997), although self-esteem has its place and value in an individual's well-being, it does little to instill a sense of capability or capacity to accomplish a goal. A person can formulate goals, rationalizing and strategizing the necessary actions to accomplish them, only when they realize their perceived personal efficacy, as evidenced by an ability to judge their capabilities (Bandura, 1997).

Bandura demonstrated that efficacy expectations are the mechanism by which the detection of self-efficacy change~~s~~ occur, and that efficacy expectations influence outcomes in Bandura's experiments (1977). Human agency, an individual’s belief in their ability to act in any situation, was integrated with self-efficacy (Bandura, 2018). In other words, self-efficacy is the belief that teachers can affect student outcomes due to their ability and agency (DiBenedetto & Schunk, 2018).

Teacher Self-Efficacy

There is correlation between teacher efficacy and student achievement, motivation, and self-efficacy beliefs. Teacher efficacy is also related to teachers’ persistence, enthusiasm,

commitment, and instructional behavior (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Thus, a teacher's perceived level of competence as an educator, as well as how they respond to the challenges and demands of their job, is inherently the concept of teacher self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Yang, 2021). Studies carried out by the RAND Corporation were the first to measure teacher self-efficacy in the 1970s based on Rotter, as noted by Bibi et al. (2020) and Hoy (2022). Rotter hypothesized a reciprocal relationship between efficacious behavior and outcomes (Bandura, 1977; Rotter, 1966). In the RAND research, teacher efficacy emerged as an input factor that led to success in student reading outcomes (Armor, 1976).

The efficacy measurement began to evolve as Bandura's (1977) construct of self-efficacy became more widely known. Scholars noted differences between Rotter's theories rooted in efficacious behavior and Bandura's theories founded on efficacy expectations (Donohoo, 2018; Gist, 1987). Teachers' self-efficacy and efficacy are measured by many scales today, but some lack sufficient consideration of the two theories' differences. Thus, it is crucial to understand how a survey or interview question wording can significantly affect the interpretation of its results.

The measurement of teachers' self-efficacy relies on the context of their teaching. Bandura (2005) argues that one cannot be all things since mastery of all spheres of life would be impossible. Efficacy can be developed in different ways by different people, even within the realm of their chosen pursuits. Therefore, efficacy belief is not an all-encompassing trait, but a differentiated set of self-beliefs linked to distinct functional areas. To measure teacher efficacy, researchers must consider self-efficacy, context, environment, and task specificity (Bandura, 1997).

In addition to spending considerable time planning and collaborating with peers, teachers with high self-efficacy are open-minded (Martin & Mulvihill, 2019). They do not hesitate to implement new strategies and ideas, view student mistakes as opportunities for learning and growth, strive to engage students, and take risks when overcoming classroom challenges (Creely et al., 2021). There have been countless studies examining teacher self-efficacy in the last 25 years, and Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory has been critical to framing these studies. Gibson and Dembo (1984) extended the self-efficacy construct by creating a new measure separating the efficacy component into two factors: personal and general efficacy. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) suggest that teacher self-efficacy is situational, so they developed the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES), which measures teacher self-efficacy using task content.

Research indicates higher levels of teacher self-efficacy correlate with a more positive learning environment, increased student engagement, and improved academic performance (Sökmen, 2021). Teachers with high self-efficacy exhibit greater competence, are more likely to implement innovative strategies, and persist in the face of student learning challenges. Their self-confidence is reflected in every aspect of their teaching strategies. Correspondingly, students with high self-efficacy demonstrate greater engagement, motivation, resilience, and academic achievement. Mutual respect seems to correlate positively with behavioral engagement, with no correlations found between student negotiation and engagement facets (Sökmen, 2021). Students are internally motivated, and their self-confidence can be a direct reflection of that.

A clear reciprocal relationship exists between teacher and student self-efficacy. High teacher self-efficacy appears to foster greater student self-efficacy, largely due to the teacher's ability to construct a supportive, engaging learning environment (Perera, 2020). Conversely, classrooms filled with students demonstrating high self-efficacy can reinforce teachers'

perceptions of their effectiveness. The acknowledgement of this reciprocity becomes essential for the educator's effectiveness. This finding aligns with the growing research interest in teacher self-efficacy in recent years, particularly its impact on student performance and various instructional outcomes, including student engagement and achievement.

The stage of the teacher's career may also significantly influence self-efficacy. As Dixon's (2023) study indicates, teachers later in their careers have more opportunities to refine the knowledge and skills required to accurately self-assess their classroom management abilities. The difference in self-efficacy between novice and late-career teachers could stem from the accumulation of knowledge, skills, and strategies that teachers obtain through years of experience (Dixon, 2023).

Teacher-student relationships play a significant role in shaping student self-efficacy and, consequently, individual students' positive identity as learners (Jederlund, 2022). Such an identity includes students' confidence in their ability to self-regulate learning and interact socially in school, which is fundamentally their self-efficacy and contributes to their own identity. A positive teacher-student relationship can nurture these aspects, promoting students' self-belief and expectations, which are strongly associated with learning outcomes. The quality of this relationship, characterized by emotional support and low conflict, is associated with academic self-efficacy and achievement.

Teacher Self-Efficacy in Novice Teachers

Teachers face many challenges in their first year (Thomas et al., 2019). Especially considering the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, school leaders will need to redouble their efforts to support novice teachers (Baker et al., 2021). The development of self-efficacy, or a belief in one's ability to succeed in any situation, is a key aspect of support (Malureanu et al.,

2021). In acclimating new members of the profession, developing self-efficacy in novice teachers is often overlooked despite its importance for continued motivation, perseverance, optimism, and achievement of teachers (Reaves & Cozzens, 2018). Mentors and instructional coaches offer support and advice to new teachers in many districts (Renbarger & Davis, 2019). However, new teachers often do not achieve their full potential unless they receive consistent support from their administrators (Bressman et al., 2018).

School culture influences teachers' self-efficacy, which in turn influences the collective efficacy of a school (Dimpoulou, 2014). Collective efficacy is defined as the ability of members of a community to influence the behaviors of other individuals or groups within the same community (Donohoo et al., 2018). According to Daloz (1999), growth is most conducive to environments where challenge and support are combined. It is more difficult to take risks in environments that combine high levels of challenge with low levels of support. Regardless of support levels, a lack of challenge results in stagnant skill development or leadership development.

Anderson and Schuh (2021) studied the effectiveness of Daloz's theory of environments in school settings to mitigate attrition rates for novice teachers. Anderson and Schuh (2021) interviewed and collected written reflections from teachers in Midwest public schools during the 2018–2019 school year to determine how administrative interactions support or detract from secondary teachers' sense of self-efficacy. The findings from Anderson and Schuh's (2021) study indicated that leaders' support for new teachers' efficacy comes in three specific areas: (a) balancing autonomy and feedback, (b) balancing professionalism and self-care and (c) balancing risk and advocacy.

Teacher Self-Efficacy and Student Achievement

The self-efficacy of teachers plays a key role in their success. According to McLean et al. (2018), teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to believe that their future efforts will result in positive outcomes. A positive achievement is not only important for the students but also for the school, their colleagues, and their profession. Moreover, teachers with more confidence will be able to impact their students positively (Lukáčová et al., 2018), which can have a positive effect on their students. The likelihood of teachers accomplishing positive academic outcomes increases if they believe they can.

Retaining teachers and increasing student achievement are dependent on teacher self-efficacy and teacher job satisfaction. Academic achievement and growth positively correlate with teacher self-efficacy (Veiskarami et al., 2017; Xu & Qi, 2019). A student's academic performance, such as grades or test scores, is considered academic achievement, and an increase in quality of such work is considered academic growth (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018). When teachers feel self-efficacious, they are more likely to devote additional time to academic work and provide more assistance to struggling students (Bandura, 1993). The opposite is true for teachers with low self-efficacy, who spend more time on non-academic tasks and give up on students sooner when they are not making progress (Bandura, 1993).

Various aspects of teaching require different levels of teacher self-efficacy. Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management are one aspect of teaching. Based on Wilson et al.'s (2018) definition, teacher self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management refer to the belief that teachers can arrange and manage a safe and organized classroom. In this way, the success of a teacher depends on the management of the classroom. The components of classroom management take time and experience to master, and students are more likely to succeed in a

safe, organized classroom environment. In addition to classroom management, teacher self-efficacy also encompasses instructional strategies. Wilson et al. (2018) defines teacher self-efficacy as the belief that they can design and implement lessons and activities that promote student learning. Depending on the needs of the students, the instruction differs across grade levels and content areas.

In a high-performing classroom, students will achieve higher levels of achievement and mastery if the teacher believes in their abilities. Self-efficacy beliefs will increase as student achievement and learning improves (McLean et al., 2018; Sensoy & Yildirim, 2018). The teacher and the students will become more self-efficacious due to their positive results. Teachers and students will stay on the right path when they see more success.

Teachers' contributions to their schools will be more positive if they are satisfied with their jobs. In schools, high levels of job satisfaction will contribute to success and improve academic performance (Dogan et al., 2018). Increasing student achievement requires job satisfaction (Lüleci & Oruk, 2018). Teachers who work at a place they enjoy are more likely to care and work harder. Students and other staff interact more positively with teachers when job satisfaction increases (Yavuz, 2018).

Meanwhile, teachers who are unsatisfied at work tend to impact the school negatively. A teacher who is unhappy with his or her teaching position feels unhappy about the school (Dogan et al., 2018). As a result of the negative feelings, the school will be at a disadvantage. Negative feelings will prevent students and teachers from promoting learning and success (Rowe & Fitness, 2018). Students and schools succeed when teachers are satisfied with their jobs.

Student achievement and discipline data are also affected by teacher job satisfaction. Student achievement will be improved when teachers are satisfied with their jobs (Zakariya,

2020). Moreover, student discipline and rules compliance contribute to job satisfaction (Kapa & Gimbert, 2018). An environment of learning and success develops when students follow the rules and expectations, so students' behavior does not impede instruction or learning for teachers.

Teacher Self-Efficacy and Teacher Retention

Teacher empowerment leads to job satisfaction which contributes to job retention (Ahrari et al., 2021). The concept of teacher empowerment refers to the freedom teachers have regarding the resources and problems they face in their teaching (Kusumaningrum et al., 2019). Teachers who have control over their jobs demonstrate higher levels of self-efficacy than those who don't (Safari et al., 2020).

Job satisfaction heavily impacts teacher turnover (Edinger & Edinger, 2018; Parveen & Bano, 2019; Renbarger & Davis, 2019). An individual's definition of job satisfaction may vary depending on their background and experiences. Polatcan and Cansoy (2019) define job satisfaction as the opinions and sensations people have about their work. Job satisfaction is a positive feeling caused by an individual's assessment of their job experiences and a belief in what they must receive versus what they receive regarding rewards (Ahmed, 2019). Teaching organizations must fulfill an obligation to teachers by promoting teacher job satisfaction to retain the teaching force (Ansley et al., 2019).

According to Bandura (1997), empowerment does not come from decree, but rather from personal efficacy, which allows individuals to take advantage of opportunities and remove the constraints imposed by others. Vidic et al. (2021) found a negative correlation between self-efficacy and depersonalization, which occurs when an individual feels a loss of control over their work situation.

Teacher Self-Efficacy and Teacher Attrition

There is a significant teacher shortage facing schools in the United States (Oyen & Schweinle, 2021). Over the past few decades, teacher attrition rates have steadily increased, so that more teachers are leaving voluntarily rather than remaining in the classroom until retirement (Glazer, 2018). Teacher attrition concerns have been under study since 2001, when teacher attrition tracking began (Hackman & Morath, 2018). Darling-Hammond (1999) concluded that 30% of new in-service teachers leave the profession within their first five years, and Johnson (2004) estimated that novice teacher attrition rates could be as high as 50%. Teacher attrition is the result of various factors, including: (a) low self-efficacy concerns, (b) low motivation, (c) a demoralizing workplace, (d) work-life balance problems, and (e) burnout (Ortan et al., 2021).

As a result of issues related to their work environment, teachers are subject to high-stress levels. Due to the nature of education, teachers are often faced with problematic relationships with their students, students' parents, and school administrators (Farmer, 2020). Teachers face many issues, from violence in the classroom (De Cordova et al., 2019) to workplace expectations beyond their professional expertise (Bodenheimer & Shuster, 2020). Working with students with severe issues can also lead to compassion fatigue and burnout (Ziaian-Ghafari & Berg, 2019). In addition to parents and unsupportive administrators, teachers are leaving the profession because of the stress they feel at work (Hester et al., 2020). Farmer (2020) emphasized the mental health impact on teacher attrition and made recommendations for improvement, highlighting that schools should provide their teachers with employee assistance programs and access to counseling services.

Issues researched in the past three decades have focused on commitment to teaching, job satisfaction, and federal involvement in school improvement (Aloe et al., 2014; Beltman et al.,

2011; Gu & Day, 2007; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Lauermann & König, 2016; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; Ventura et al., 2015). Collective bargaining legislation in 2006 created a major shift in the teaching field and resulted in a cut of collective bargaining rights, tenure elimination, and a reduction in teacher benefits (Anderson et al., 2019; Strunk et al., 2022). These factors deterred people from pursuing careers in education, but teachers' self-efficacy is one of the primary concerns associated with attrition (Ballantyne & Retell, 2020). When people lack self-efficacy, their ability to cope with difficult situations declines, and their motivation to achieve academic success is minimized (Sari et al., 2021).

The can-do mentality is at the core of teacher self-efficacy concerns contributing to attrition (Reaves & Cozzens, 2018). The likelihood of educators succeeding and continuing in their careers increases when they internalize a high level of self-efficacy (Martin & Mulvihill, 2019). Moreover, Mérida-López and Extremera (2020) found that low teacher self-efficacy contributed to teachers leaving the profession due to a lack of commitment. Similar findings were found in Koswara et al. (2021), Ma et al. (2021), and Yang (2021).

Teacher Self-Efficacy and Burnout

Teacher burnout negatively impacts students' emotional wellbeing, depending on teachers' perception of their work and their stress burden (Oberle et al., 2021). A high level of stress is reported by primary and secondary school teachers due to workloads and a variety of students' needs (Herman et al., 2020). An employee who is stressed at work exhibits damaging physiological, psychological, and behavioral reactions because of work demands that do not match their needs and abilities (Bakker & de Vries, 2021). The consequences of chronic stress include emotional exhaustion, loss of work enthusiasm, alienation, and the feeling of inadequate

achievement (Vidic et al., 021). Burnout, or excessive emotional fatigue, is characterized by tiredness, loss of energy, and lack of enthusiasm at work (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020).

A teacher who is emotionally drained manifests estrangement by displaying negative attitudes, disregard for others (students, colleagues), and exhibiting indifference to their surrounding work environment (Frenzel et al., 2021; Huk et al., 2019). Various factors can lead to teacher burnout, including individual, organizational, and transactional factors (Collie, 2021; Fathi & Derakhshan, 2019; Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki, 2019). Among the factors are a teacher's age, gender, length of career, and personality (Saloviita & Pakarinen, 2021). Organizational characteristics include things such as work demands and administrative support (Sokal et al., 2020). Transactional factors include the interactions between individual and organizational factors, such as employees' perceptions of management and teachers' attributions of students' misbehavior (Sokal et al., 2020).

Teachers can be emotionally affected by their level of self-efficacy (Burić & Moe, 2020). When an individual is in a state of emotional well-being, they have the emotional resources and support they need to function through times of stress (Obernovic et al., 2020). In contrast, someone who is emotionally exhausted will feel debilitated and exhausted, as well as fatigued. There is a negative correlation between self-efficacy and emotional exhaustion, which indicates that as self-efficacy decreases, emotional exhaustion and burnout increase (Kuok et al., 2020). Teacher burnout is a result of mismatches between job demands and perceived abilities.

Evidence that teacher burnout correlates to self-efficacy is available in several studies. Zee and Koomen (2016) examined 22 studies published between 1976 and 2014 and found that the correlation between teacher burnout and self-efficacy ranged from an r^2 value of 0.17, showing no correlation, to an r^2 value of 0.63, suggesting a strong correlation between burnout

and self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy, personal accomplishment, and depersonalization correlated with exhaustion (Zee & Koomen, 2016). For example, the average correlation value between teacher burnout and teacher self-efficacy was an r^2 of 0.33 in a meta-analysis of 29 studies by Shoji et al. (2016), indicating a moderate correlation between burnout and teacher self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy was also correlated with exhaustion, depersonalization, and decreased personal accomplishment in a mean r^2 of 0.31, 0.33, and 0.49, respectively, also indicative of moderate correlations between these variables. Although the studies reviewed were primarily cross-sectional, the relationship between the constructs may be challenging to predict. Brouwers and Tomic (2000) conducted similar research and found a significant correlation between teacher self-efficacy and teacher burnout when measured simultaneously. The level of teacher burnout measured later may be predicted based on data from a previous point in time. To further investigate the causal relationship between these two constructs, Kim and Buric (2020) conducted repeated measurements of both constructs for three time points. They found that teachers' efficacy only predicted disengagement at a single point in time. Study findings indicated that teacher burnout, exhaustion, and disengagement could predict teachers' self-efficacy over time.

Teachers at risk of burnout are frequently those who feel their job demands are greater than what they can achieve due to low teacher self-efficacy (Huang et al., 2019; Shakeel et al., 2022; Yang, 2021). For teachers who have high levels of self-efficacy, the objective demands of daily teaching may seem less threatening than for those who harbor low levels of self-efficacy (Fathi & Derakhshan, 2019). A teacher with high self-doubts about their professional effectiveness tends to focus more on resolving problems causing stress (Kwee, 2020). Low self-efficacy teachers, however, avoid tackling academic problems and instead focus on relieving

their emotional distress by turning inward (Kim & Burić, 2020; Kwee, 2020). According to Bandura (1993), withdrawal coping contributes to occupational burnout. It can be predicted how well teachers will adapt and avoid job burnout based on their self-efficacy (Veiskarami et al., 2017).

Teacher Self-Efficacy and Job Satisfaction

The level of self-efficacy of teachers, according to Bartosiewicz et al. (2022), is strongly linked to their job satisfaction, and this may predispose them to burnout. Toropova et al. (2021) explained that teacher's job satisfaction and retention are typically measured using personal characteristics like age and gender, professional characteristics such as years of teaching experience, degree type, professional development participation, and motivational beliefs such as self-efficacy among teachers. Ali and Anwar (2021) define job satisfaction as people's judgments about their jobs, whether they are positive or negative. How satisfied a teacher is with their job and how likely they are to remain in the profession depends on their level of self-efficacy (Liu et al., 2021). Teacher satisfaction impacts job performance, attrition, and student achievement (Dicke et al., 2020). The effectiveness of schools is enhanced when teachers are satisfied with their jobs (Toropova et al., 2021).

It is imperative to identify factors contributing to teacher job satisfaction and implement effective remedies to mitigate the wave of teachers exhibiting low job satisfaction (Zang et al., 2022). Teachers who report low job satisfaction are at risk for leaving the profession, and job dissatisfaction is a predictive factor of teacher attrition (Boamah et al., 2022; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Madigan & Kim, 2021). Therefore, the study of teacher job satisfaction is timely because a quarter of teachers in the United States leave before their third year of service (Madero, 2019; Park & Johnson, 2019; Steiner & Woo, 2021).

Approximately 50% of teachers recently contemplated leaving the education field (PDK, 2019), indicating a collective educator dissatisfaction with their employment that could lead to a significant teacher shortage if not addressed (Cheong et al., 2021). Data on teacher job satisfaction provides insight into many aspects of teaching, nuances of the workplace or school where teachers experience job satisfaction, and subtleties of individual motivation (Hascher et al., 2021). A lack of teacher job satisfaction is correlated with an increased likelihood that an educator will leave the profession (Toropova et al., 2021). Moreover, the degree of teacher job satisfaction is inversely related to job-related stress (Chichra et al., 2019), psychological distress (Capone & Petrillo, 2020), and absenteeism (Utami et al., 2021), especially if absenteeism is the result of job-related injury or school violence (Logan et al., 2020).

School location, funding, and demographic makeup are secondary factors that affect teacher job satisfaction (Bartosiewicz et al., 2022). In less affluent schools with high minority student ratios, this type of research is crucial to predicting teacher retention rates. In urban areas, teachers were up to 50% more likely not renew their contracts or voluntary resign compared to rural teachers, indicating a disparity in job satisfaction based on geographical location (Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018). Nguyen et al. (2020) argued that teacher job satisfaction warrants further study since academic content areas such as special education, mathematics, and science are considered high turnover areas, where teachers are retained less frequently than others. Geiger and Pivovarova (2018) found that elementary teachers stay employed in the profession longer than their counterparts in middle or high schools. Teachers' untimely departures from employment can have unintended consequences and even cause conflict for those who remain employed by schools while under duress (Dos Santos, 2021; Jerrim & Sims, 2022; Wronowski & Urick, 2019). An increase in teacher turnover can also harm other educational stakeholders

(García Torres, 2018; Harris et al., 2019). Furthermore, a shortage of educators harms students, teachers, and the public education system, impeding student learning, impairing teacher effectiveness, and diluting educational resources (García & Weiss, 2019).

The data on teacher shortages calls for policymakers to address this issue and focus on recruiting and retaining teachers (Swanson & Mason, 2018). Salary, loan forgiveness, and other incentives strongly impact teachers' recruitment and retention (Tran & Smith 2022). It is crucial, however, to also consider teacher job satisfaction. Phi Delta Kappa (2020) reported that 85% of American citizens believe that the federal government should focus on attracting and retaining good teachers. As well as predicting retention, research into teacher job satisfaction identifies factors associated with educators' well-being. Specifically, low teacher job satisfaction is correlated with adverse effects such as burnout (Ewen et al., 2021) and job stress (Dicke et al., 2020).

A teacher's self-efficacy is often studied independently of their job satisfaction. Research has shown, however, that the concepts are interrelated in several ways. Due to increased pressure on schools to perform, teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction have gained more attention in recent years (Granziera & Perera, 2019). Teaching in general, teacher self-efficacy, and job satisfaction have several dimensions. Teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction often correlate with engagement in teaching and learning (Granziera & Perera, 2019). Teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction play a significant role in student success.

The quality of instruction, teacher retention, and student learning outcomes are also affected by teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Schools can improve when teachers are self-confident and satisfied with their jobs. Studies suggest that teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction are related. For example, Caprara et al. (2003) surveyed 2,688 teachers from 103

Italian schools, finding that teacher self-efficacy is strongly correlates with job satisfaction. In a follow-up study, the same research group examined the relationship between teacher self-efficacy beliefs and student academic performance. Approximately 2,184 teachers from 75 Italian junior high schools contributed to the data. There was a similarity in the answers from teachers from the same school (Caprara et al., 2006). These findings were corroborated by similar studies in the United States (Kasalek & Dagyar, 2020; Mokhtar et al., 2021). It affects how well teachers can perform basic tasks and functions of their jobs based on their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. A teacher's self-efficacy beliefs positively influence job satisfaction and student achievement. The environment for teachers and students will improve if school leaders focus more on teacher self-efficacy.

According to Klassen and Chiu (2010), teacher self-efficacy is related to years of teaching experience, teacher characteristics, job stress, and job satisfaction, confirming previous studies indicating a direct correlation between teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Researchers found that teachers with high levels of self-efficacy were also more satisfied with their jobs. Teachers who reported more stress had decreased job satisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). The researchers found a relationship between classroom management, instruction self-efficacy, and satisfaction with teachers' jobs. However, teacher self-efficacy for student engagement did not impact teacher job satisfaction.

A positive work atmosphere is crucial to teachers' satisfaction with their jobs. Self-efficacy and job satisfaction of teachers are affected by their age and experience. Klassen and Chiu (2010) investigated K-12 teachers' job satisfaction and self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction were correlated in a study of 1,430 teachers. High levels of self-efficacy were associated with high levels of job satisfaction, especially for elementary school teachers

(Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Teachers' years of experience showed nonlinear relationships with self-efficacy, increasing from early career to mid-career and then decreasing in late career (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Female teachers had greater workload stress, greater classroom stress from student behaviors, and lower classroom management self-efficacy, suggesting that gender may influence teacher self-efficacy. Infurna et al. (2018) found similar results in preschool teachers in an urban school district in Canada. Therefore, increasing teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction can increase motivation for special education students; classroom and school environments affect teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

Teacher characteristics influence job satisfaction and teacher engagement. Topchyan and Woehler (2020) surveyed 238 full time and substitute teachers about their perceptions of teacher job satisfaction and engagement. The findings suggested that full-time teachers' social engagement with each other and students, and job satisfaction, were significantly higher than those of substitute teachers. Female teachers were also more engaged with students than their male counterparts and substitute teachers. Culture and climate also directly influence teacher enthusiasm. Considering that context, Frenzel et al. (2021) examined the teacher emotion-student outcome relationship and found it to be based on three psychological mechanisms: (a) direct transmission effects between teacher and student emotion, (b) mediated effects via teachers' instructional and relational teaching behaviors, and (c) recursive effects back from student outcomes based on teacher emotions. Moreover, Smith et al. (2020) found that teacher self-efficacy is directly influenced by the attitudes and actions of school principals. These results suggest that teacher self-efficacy is multifaceted and is influenced by various factors including teacher status and school culture.

Teachers who were more self-efficacious and satisfied with their jobs were more enthusiastic. When it comes to being enthusiastic in the classroom, teachers need to feel self-efficacious and satisfied with their jobs. Teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction can increase when they work in a nurturing environment. Few researchers have examined teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction using qualitative or mixed methods approaches. One example, however, is Katz (2015), who explored how a Three Block Model for Universal Design affects teacher self-efficacy, stress, and job satisfaction through qualitative interviews with 58 teachers from ten schools in Manitoba, Canada. As a result of implementing the three-block model for universal design, teachers reported fewer office referrals, fewer behavioral issues, and less discipline time for students. As a result of implementing the three-block model for universal design in professional learning communities, teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction increase. Another example is Reeves et al. (2017), who conducted interviews with United States teachers to investigate factors influencing teacher job satisfaction. They concluded that teacher collaboration significantly influenced job satisfaction in this population.

Successful schools require teachers to have high levels of self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Improving school teaching and learning outcomes requires understanding teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction (Zakariya, 2020). Teacher identity and self-efficacy is one of the most important things school leaders should consider and promote within their schools. School leaders can use teacher self-efficacy beliefs and job satisfaction to achieve school management and success in the school setting (Caprara et al., 2003). Those who believe they can succeed are more likely to achieve success and be satisfied with their work.

Teacher Shortage

Teachers' self-efficacy is associated with attrition, burnout, teaching strategies, and student achievement (Ortan et al., 2021). Many educational departments face challenges retaining teachers (Bressman et al., 2018). In addition, retaining teachers in their first five years of teaching is not only a national issue, but a global one (Perryman & Calvert, 2020). More than two-thirds of teachers leave before retirement every year (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Teachers leave the profession at a rate of 8% per year. Additionally, the United States has an annual teacher turnover rate of approximately 16% (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Eighty-three out of every 10,000 public school teachers quit their jobs during the first ten months of 2018 (United States Bureau of Labor, 2018). The attrition rate for public educators is the highest since records started in 2001 (Hackman & Morath, 2018). Nearly twice as many educators quit their jobs in 2018 as in 2009, the year with the lowest number (Reisinger, 2018).

Several other countries ranked as high-performing countries in education also have significantly higher turnover rates, highlighting the global nature of the problem of teacher attrition. For example, Australia has a turnover rate of 30-50%, Canada averages about 40%, and Finland's turnover rate is increasing, even though it is known that the Finnish value the teaching profession highly (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). Thus, this is not a problem unique to the United States but a global issue that requires attention. Additionally, these numbers are likely to increase in poverty-stricken areas and among minorities (Camelo & Ponczek, 2021).

Teacher Preparation Programs

Kolodny and Breitborde (2022) define teacher preparation programs as programs that prepare undergraduate and graduate students for licensure in a variety of fields, including early childhood, elementary and secondary education, as well as specialist roles. The term teacher

preparation programs is also referred to as teacher education programs. Students in these programs have completed the minimum equivalent of a high school diploma prior to entering them. Current teacher preparation programs are approved at the state level, demonstrating that candidates enrolled in them meet specific state standards (Putnam & Walsh, 2021). Most programs encompass both content and pedagogical studies and require mastery of teacher licensure tests. Pre-practicum and practicum experiences are also embedded into these programs. In addition, these programs may be accredited at the national level by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (Putnam & Walsh, 2021). Attributes connected to contemporary teacher preparation programs reflect societal contexts which are joined powerfully to accountability movements (Wright & Richard, 2021).

Pre-service teacher preparation programs in the United States date back to the early nineteenth century (Nguyen, 2018). Women dominated the teaching group in common schools due to their willingness to accept lower salaries than male teachers at the time (Apple, 2018). Among the first teacher preparation schools in the United States were the Emma Willard School, originally known as Troy Female Seminary, which opened in Troy, New York, in 1814, as well as the Reverend Samuel Hall in Concord, Vermont, founded in 1823 (Komline, 2020; Nguyen, 2018). Aside from content training, teachers-to-be also received instruction in pedagogical methods, class management, and moral character development as part of their teacher education program. Emma Willard, the owner of the Troy Female Seminary, signed recommendation letters that were considered the first documents certifying qualified pedagogues (Smith, 2019). There was an increase in the number of women enrolled in academies during the post-revolutionary period (Kolodny & Breitborde, 2022).

According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996), insufficient investments in education led to low literacy rates which correlated with financial dependence and increasing crime. According to Darling-Hammond (1997), those without higher education are less likely to be employed, more likely to rely on the state, and more likely to be incarcerated. In the mid to late 1990s, approximately 40% of juvenile delinquent children struggled in school, and more than half of U.S. prison population was illiterate (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

Thousands of pupils experienced unprepared and inexperienced teaching due to inadequate educational expenditures, low teacher recruitment, and attrition rates in poor areas during the 1990s (Podolsky et al., 2019b). The 1996 report by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future found that at least 48% of high school students were taught physics by either mathematics teachers (27%) or by English teachers (21%). This scenario in the American education system escalated due to several school districts recruiting unprepared teachers (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996). Notably, K-12 teachers in the United States were forced to teach online during the 2020-2021 school year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many teachers reported being unprepared for the technological and pedagogical challenges associated with this transition (Francom et al., 2021). Such challenges were cited as an influencing factor in teacher attrition during and after the pandemic (Pressley, 2021).

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996) reported data from more than 40 states that painted a bleak picture. One-in-four novice teachers lacked adequate job qualifications, 12% had no formal training, and 14% of new hires did not meet state teaching standards. These findings resulted in national calls for school reform. After 20 years, the

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2016) reaffirmed that teachers are the heart of the educational system. It was, therefore, crucial to seek out qualified teachers, help them maximize their potential, and reward them for their dedication to the field.

As stated in the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future report (1996, 2016): (a) teacher preparation programs need to be revised, (b) licenses issued, (c) qualified teachers hired, (d) profession inductions conducted, (e) standards for teachers and students established, (f) professional development offered to teachers, (g) schools need to be organized in a manner that facilitates student and teacher success, and (h) effective teachers should be recognized by the administration. Pre-service teacher programs played an increasingly important role between 2000-2020. Teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills are vital to the success of all aspects of education reform (Darling-Hammond, 1997). To achieve higher educational standards and to create the human capital needed to compete in the workforce, legislators, experts, and educators nationwide have called for dramatic reforms in prospective teacher programs. Several areas requiring change were identified by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2016) including: (a) an emphasis on eliminating unprofessional teachers, (b) inadequate teacher training programs, (c) incompetent teaching practices, and (d) unbeneficial pedagogical methods.

Legislation enacted by the federal government influenced teacher preparation programs in the early twenty-first century (Kolodny & Breitborde, 2022). Among these laws are the Goals 2000: Educate America Act (2000), Improving America's Schools Act (1994), No Child Left Behind Act (2001), and Every Student Succeeds Act (2015). The Goals 2000 initiative supported academic standards aimed at improving students' academic performance. Specifically, the Goals 2000 Educate America Act required states to develop curriculum standards for teaching and

mastering each grade level from preschool through the 12th grade (Vinovskis, 2019). As part of the Improving America's Schools Act, the United States government identified the urgent need to improve the quality of teachers and teaching throughout the country (Lam, 2021). As part of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965), the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (2001) included provisions that applied to disadvantaged students (Vinovskis, 2022). The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (2015) expanded and revised provisions set forth in NCLB for standardized testing, teacher qualification requirements and school accountability (Chu, 2019). The ESSA led to substantial changes in teacher requirements (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018). The ESSA eliminated the NCLB requirement for schools to hire highly qualified teachers and notify parents when a teacher isn't highly qualified (García & Weiss, 2020). Moreover, schools no longer must prove that teachers are highly qualified in order to receive Title I funding (Adler-Greene, 2019). To be considered a highly qualified teacher, an educator must possess a bachelor's degree, be fully certified or licensed by their state, and be competent in their subject area (Colley & Lassman, 2021).

Pathways to Licensure and Teacher Self-Efficacy

United States' schools employ thousands of teachers a year who have gone through certification programs (Nguyen, 2018). Creating, hiring, and maintaining highly qualified and effective teachers have been a major focus of academic and political attention (Salgado et al., 2018). Before becoming certified, a teacher must attend a college or university and complete a teacher education program (Donovan & Cannon, 2018). A student teaching experience is part of this process. An individual may apply for standard certification once he/she has completed all coursework, student teaching, and examination requirements (Clayton, 2018). Typically, it takes four years or more to complete this pathway to teacher certification (McFarland et al., 2018).

Teacher shortages can be addressed through alternative pathways that increase both quality and quantity of teachers (Espinoza et al., 2018).

Those who already possess a bachelor's degree and are looking to become certified to teach can do so by enrolling in a state-defined alternative certification program rather than having to re-enroll in college and complete requirements from a campus-based teacher training program (Whitford et al., 2018). Teacher shortages have led to the development of alternative certification programs to meet the demand (Bowling & Ball, 2018; García & Weiss, 2019).

Under ESSA, states can determine whether provisional and emergency certifications will be considered alternative certifications instead of high qualifications under NCLB (Green et al., 2021). Aside from teacher and school leader certification reforms, ESSA allows states to develop ways to recruit and retain teachers and improve equitable access to effective teachers and school leaders (Lee et al., 2019). A state may use up to 2% of the funds from Title II to establish teacher preparation academies outside of alternative certification programs and colleges of education regulated by the state (Adler-Greene, 2019; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019; Espinoza et al., 2018). State authorization would be gained by these teacher preparation academies if participants were exposed to effective teachers and demonstrated their effectiveness as teachers before graduation (Kraft et al., 2020).

Cruz et al. (2020) used the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE) scale to assess teachers' self-efficacy when implementing culturally responsive teaching practices (CRT) and the factors that affect the self-efficacy of both preservice and practicing teachers. Cruz et al. (2020) surveyed 245 participants who were either enrolled in teacher credential programs or practicing teachers. According to Cruz et al. (2020), no statistically significant impact of credential preparation type, subject type, school type, or geographical location was

observed on CRTSE scores. Despite prior studies suggesting that teacher training may impact one's self-efficacy (Clark & Newberry, 2019; Ma & Cavanagh, 2018; van Rooij et al., 2019), Cruz et al. (2020) suggests that both traditional and alternative credential programs are equally capable of training teachers to feel confident working with culturally and linguistically diverse students. They noted, however, that several of their findings appeared to be statistically significant. The CRTSE scores of intern credential teachers were slightly lower than those of traditionally credentialed teachers, for example. A truncated credential program and completing coursework while teaching full-time may cause teachers with an intern credential to feel less effective (Cruz et al., 2020).

Summary

Chapter 2 explored existing research on self-efficacy relative to teacher's training, careers, and student outcomes. In addition, Chapter 2 provided background and historical information on the teaching profession through more recent information about pathways teachers follow to earn teaching credentials. Chapter 3 includes details of the methodology of this study, including the research design, data collection strategies and the theoretical framework that guides this study. Chapter 4 includes an overview of the findings of the study and Chapter 5 contains a narrative discussion drawn from the findings, implications for practice and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 3. Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the teacher self-efficacy for novice teachers who are job-embedded practitioners. In Chapter 3, the research methodology will be described in detail using the following chapter organization. First, the chapter will include a review of the research questions that guide the study. Second, the rationale for choosing a phenomenological research design will be discussed. Following these preliminaries, the researcher will discuss the site selection, the sample, and the participants chosen for the study. Chapter 3 will also include a discussion of the data collection and analysis procedures used in the study. Trustworthiness and ethical considerations of the study are also addressed in Chapter 3.

Research Questions

The essential research question guiding this study was:

> What are the perceptions of novice job-embedded practitioners on their own teacher self-efficacy and teacher self-efficacy in general?

The following sub-research questions were devised to help address the essential research question:

> Sub-research Question 1- How do novice job-embedded practitioners perceive their teacher preparation program?
>
> Sub-research Question 2- How do novice job-embedded practitioners perceive their future as a teacher?

Research Design

This study used a phenomenological research design. Phenomenological research designs are used to examine the perspectives of persons who have encountered a phenomenon to

comprehend its universal character. The premise behind phenomenological research design is that individuals employ a common structure or essence to interpret their experiences (Miller et al., 2018). To understand the phenomenon under investigation, phenomenological researchers interpret the participants' lived experiences, perceptions, and beliefs (Errasti-Ibarrondo et al., 2018). Any preconceived notions the researcher may have about the experience or phenomena must be bracketed in phenomenological research design (Sundler et al., 2019). This method is used to investigate lived experience, learn more about how people think, and broaden a researcher's understanding of a phenomena (Fuster-Guillen, 2019). Thus, a phenomenological research design allows researchers to examine the lived experiences of participants within the context of the studied phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). In this study, phenomenology will be used to examine the lived experiences of novice job-embedded practitioners within the context of the phenomenon of teacher self-efficacy.

Site Selection

The site chosen for the study was four rural school districts in Tennessee. Tennessee was chosen based on its high teacher attrition rate (Collins & Schaaf, 2020). Rural school districts were chosen because teacher attrition has steadily increased in rural K-12 schools since 2010, which are reportedly higher than in urban settings (Schmitt & deCourcy, 2022).

Sample

Research participants were purposefully recruited from rural school districts in Tennessee. Purposeful sampling allows researchers to select participants conversant with the topic of research and that have experience with the phenomena under study (Noyes et al., 2018). Purposeful sampling is applied as the main sampling strategy to identify research respondents that fit the inclusion criteria of novice, job-embedded teachers that worked for four local school

districts between 2021-2022. This sampling approach will ensure that respondents that fit the description in the research are chosen. This sampling strategy is useful as the deliberate selection of individuals and subjects based on their experiences and expertise can improve the validity of the findings. By considering what type of data can be gathered, the researcher can find participants that are willing to respond to the survey and participate in the research (Etikan et al., 2016).

The study required ten novice job-embedded teachers to participate in semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions to explore their perceptions of teacher self-efficacy. The researcher intended to recruit participants until saturation, which is the point when no additional data will render new information (Guest et al., 2020). To this end, the researcher performed ten interviews, conducted data analysis, observed the repetition of themes and concluded that data saturation had been reached. Consequently, the researcher did not recruit additional participants after the tenth interview.

Participants

The population of the study is novice, job-embedded teachers in four rural school districts in Tennessee. Participants must meet the inclusion criteria detailed below:

1. Participants must be novice, job-embedded teachers in the school districts chosen for the study.
2. Participants must have worked in the chosen school districts between 2021-2022.

In phenomenological studies, a sample size of 12-15 participants is considered optimal for reaching data saturation (Moustakas, 1994; Guest et al., 2020). Participants were purposefully selected with permission of the school districts under examination. Participants were assigned

pseudonyms to ensure anonymity, protect their personal information, and ensure confidentiality of interview responses. The participants' demographic profiles are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Participants Demographic Profiles

Participant	Gender	Race	Age	Marital Status	School ID	Years Teaching	Subject	Grades Taught
P1	Male	White	43	Married	S1	5	Social Studies	Grades 9-12
P2	Male	White	25	Single	S2	3	Math	Grades 9-12
P3	Female	White	28	Single	S3	1	Science	Grades 6-8
P4	Female	White	25	Married	S4	2	Finance, Business	Grades 6-8
P5	Male	White	27	Married	S5	2	Special Education, Agriscience	Grades 6-8
P6	Female	Hispanic	29	Married	S6	2	Math	Grades 9-12
P7	Male	White	24	Married	S7	1	N/A	Grades 6-12
P8	Male	White	26	Married	S1	5	Physical Education	Grades 9-12
P9	Female	White	25	Single	S2	1	Math	Grades 9-12
P10	Female	White	23	Single	S8	N/A	Science	Grades 9-12

The gender and ethnicity demographics of the participants in this study largely reflect the general population of Tennessee. The population of Tennessee is 51% female and 49% male (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Fifty percent of the participants in this study were male, and 50% were female, encompassing the gender characteristics of the Tennessee population. Tennessee's population is 73.1% White, 17.0% Black or African American, 6.1% Hispanic, 2.0% Asian, and 1.8% other ethnicities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). The participants in this study were 90% White and 10% Hispanic (Table 1). White and Hispanic individuals were slightly

overrepresented in this study when compared to the population of Tennessee, and Black or African American individuals were underrepresented.

Since the participants were novice job-embedded teachers, they did not have much teaching experience. Most of the participants had only one to two years of experience. Three participants were in their first year of teaching. Two participants, P1 and P8, were in their fifth year of teaching. However, it should be noted that these participants were still completing their coursework for their teaching credentials. As such, they are still considered novice job-embedded teachers. The participants also represented diverse teaching expertise: one taught social studies, three taught mathematics, two taught science, one taught finance and business, one taught special education and agriscience, and one taught physical education. Thus, the participants represented most subjects taught in most public schools in the United States, except for language arts, English, and foreign languages. These demographics and backgrounds of the study participants represent a diverse group of novice job-embedded teachers, which has implications for the transferability of this study to the general population of all novice job-embedded teachers, not just those working in rural school districts in Tennessee.

Most of the participants in this study were high school teachers. Six participants (P1, P2, P6, P8, P9, and P10) taught at high schools. Those six participants represented five different high schools. Three participants (P3, P4, and P5) were middle school teachers at three different middle schools. One participant (P7) worked as both a middle school and a high school teacher. Together, the ten participants represented eight different schools, indicating that the participants' experiences were varied.

Data Collection Strategies

Interviews were conducted using Zoom telecommunications software. Virtual interviews were chosen as the interview modality for three reasons. First, virtual interviews allow for flexibility in scheduling the interviews, as the participants will choose a date and time that is convenient for their schedule. Second, virtual interviews allow for ease of transcription of data, as the video recordings can be replayed to ensure that each interview is transcribed properly. Lastly, virtual interviews ensure the safety of both the researcher and the participants in the context of the COVID-19 global pandemic. The researcher conducted the interviews in his home office.

Data collection consisted of utilizing semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. Participants were emailed an informed consent form and demographic questions to be completed and submitted via DocuSign within 48 hours of the start of the interview. Prior to each interview, the researcher reviewed the informed consent document and explained the participant's right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher asked for verbal consent to conduct and record the interview using audio and video capabilities of Zoom.

The researcher took field notes to record the non-verbal behaviors of the interviewees and to reinforce data collection from the audio and video recordings (Tessier, 2012). At the end of each interview, the researcher made a statement that the interview was complete and turned off the recording capabilities of Zoom. The researcher reminded the participants that data would remain anonymous, and that all data collected (audio recordings, video recordings, and field notes) would remain secured in a locked file cabinet and destroyed after five years (see Daniel, 2018).

Audio recordings of the interviews were uploaded to the NVIVO Version 12 qualitative research analysis software for transcription. Each transcript was compared to the original Zoom recordings and were corrected in case of inaccuracies. Audio recordings were transcribed, reviewed, and verified within 36 hours, so that transcripts could be sent to participants as a means of member checking (Candela, 2019).

Data Analysis Strategies

The researcher conducted a thematic analysis to analyze the gathered data for this study. Thematic analysis is the process by which the researcher immerses themself in the collected data while searching for patterns or categories that are relevant to the research questions (Peterson, 2017). This flexible method can be used to aid in the understanding of many diverse types of qualitative data through a variety of perspectives and is often a nuanced, iterative strategy through which the researcher identifies higher level abstract concepts from the collected data (Peterson, 2017). This method was chosen because it is readily accessible, offers flexibility with respect to the inclusion of unanticipated findings, and it is widely accepted as a standard method of data analysis for this type of research.

According to Padilla-Diaz (2015), in phenomenology, data analysis is characterized by the identification of common meanings and essences involving textual and structural analysis of what was expressed by the participants. According to Dey (1993), qualitative data analysis is narrative development of the categorization and interconnectedness of phenomena with the investigator's ideas. Hence, qualitative data analysis has the overall intention of explaining a phenomenon in detail, comparing cases, identifying discrepant cases, and constructing a concept of the lived experiences of the participants from the analysis of observable data (Flick, 2013).

In data organization and analysis, the researcher will conduct thematic analysis following Peoples' (2020) technique, which involves six distinct stages in data analysis in which researchers: (a) read and delete irrelevant information, (b) create preliminary meaning units, called codes, (c) generate final codes for each interview question, (d) synthesize final meaning units into situated narratives, or themes, under each interview question, (e) synthesize situated narratives, integrating all major themes or participants, and (f) generate general descriptions of the data.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used for this study is based on Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). From a teacher's perspective, self-efficacy is an individual's assurance in their teaching capabilities and responsibilities to the profession (Lauermann & Berger, 2021). Numerous studies have demonstrated that a higher sense of teacher self-efficacy can lead to higher levels of classroom management, student academic achievement, and student motivation (Bal-Taştan et al., 2018; Burić & Kim, 2020; Lazaraides et al., 2020). Social cognitive theory is appropriate for the study of the perceptions and experiences of novice, job-embedded teachers regarding their own self-efficacy and teacher preparation programs because it considers that teacher self-efficacy relates to many academic and career success factors, including the success of the students and the teachers themselves.

Assessment of Quality and Rigor

According to Yin (2016), the trustworthiness of qualitative research requires addressing and making efforts to ensure the appropriateness of the methodology in determining if the design

is consistent and repeatable. In addition, analysis of rigor includes determining if the population selection and data collection are appropriate and if research questions and data analysis procedures are aligned (Yin, 2016). To ensure the quality of research findings, a researcher establishes the reliability and validity of a study, the goal of which is to reduce biases (Yin, 2016). Trustworthiness of a study refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods the researcher uses to ensure the quality of a study (Connelly, 2016). Establishing trustworthiness regarding the concepts of validity and reliability is a crucial concern in ensuring the quality of qualitative research (Ang et al., 2016). The researcher will use the strategies discussed in the following paragraphs to ensure the study maintains trustworthiness.

Credibility

The credibility of the study is confidence in the truth of the study and the findings; therefore, credibility is the most important criterion (Connelly, 2016). To ensure this study maintains credibility, the researcher will: (a) adopt a well-established data collection plan; (b) utilize Zoom to conduct the research in the participants' settings, (c) give sufficient time to listen, document, and achieve saturation of data; (d) perform member checking to ensure narrative truth, and (e) pay attention to the reflexivity of researcher, which will remind the researcher to maintain awareness about how the research results unfold and document emerging patterns (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Palaganas et al., 2017).

Transferability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), transferability is also known as external validity. To achieve transferability, the researcher will rely on strong corroboration, and supplied evidence reported using interview responses directly quoted from the transcripts (Cope, 2014). The researcher must provide satisfactory descriptive information for transferability to take place

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Lincoln and Guba (1985) stressed that the audience is given the opportunity to liken findings to others. The recommendation is that data about the framework, fact-finding, and the decisions, should be appropriately described so that other investigators can feel confident about transferring the study's conclusions to other similar populations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To promote transferability in this study, quotations from the participants were used and the demographics of the sample were clearly defined.

Dependability

Also known as the reliability of the research, dependability is characterized as the consistency or repeatability of the study (Leung, 2015; Morse, 2015; Yin, 2016). To achieve dependability, the researcher will clearly report and document the methodology, procedures, and processes in collecting and analyzing the data. Corrections are necessary to ensure the reliability and validity of the data collected (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Therefore, the researcher will check whether the analysis process is congruent with the accepted standards for the research design. As suggested by Korstjens and Moser (2018), the researcher will use an audit trail and document the inquiry process. The researcher will provide a complete set of notes on decisions made during the research process, reflective thoughts, sampling, research instruments, the emergence of the findings, and information about data management. Adopting an audit trail enables the auditor to study the transparency of the research path (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

Confirmability

The aim of confirmability is to safeguard that the outcomes are independent of the researcher's biases. The researcher will demonstrate that findings are based directly on participant's interview responses and not on the researcher's preconceptions or biases by providing transparent in-depth descriptions of how the data were collected and analyzed, also

reporting their own opinions that could shape the study (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Leung, 2015). Another way the qualitative researcher develops confirmability is through rival explanations and negative cases. Negative cases regularly deliver a strategy to distinguish the norm and are critical to recognizing the complete experience (Morse, 2015). Data was analyzed for discrepant cases and such cases were identified in the data analysis and presentation of the findings.

Ethical Considerations and the Role of the Researcher

This section contains a description of the ethical considerations of the study and the role of the researcher.

Ethical Considerations

Within the context of international research norms and practices, the 1978 Belmont Report remains particularly important. The Belmont Report protocol outlines the basic ethical principles for researchers to follow when conducting research involving human subjects. The three principles mentioned in the Belmont Report are respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. First, it is suggested that people should be treated with respect because all individuals are autonomous agents, and those with diminished autonomy are entitled to protection (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). The second principle states that researchers should minimize the risk of harm and maximize the potential benefits. Thirdly, as it relates to justice, people should be treated fairly. These principles ensure that a researcher meets the participant's right to privacy and the treatment of the participants with dignity (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). As required by the Belmont Report, a researcher must ensure justice through attention to the significance of the study purpose and through careful choices in the research design that generates rigorous findings without unduly burdening subjects

(National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). The researcher followed the ethical guidelines of the protocol.

Before any data was collected and any interviews were conducted, the researcher sought approval from the East Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB ensured that all data collection and recruitment procedures employed in this study were sound and would not cause any undue harm to the research participants. After IRB approval was received, recruitment began, and all interested participants were required to sign an Informed Consent form. This form provided the participants with additional information about the study, who they could contact if they had questions about the study, how they could withdraw from the study without consequence, the risks and harm present if they decided to participate, and who would have access to their data. Each participant was required to sign the informed consent form using DocuSign and email it back to the researcher to ensure voluntary participation in the study.

The protection of each participant, which included the information they provided to the researcher and their identities, is the highest priority in any research project. A study relating to human beings must embrace sufficient requirements to preserve the confidentiality of research data. Preserving confidentiality necessitates protection of the data that an individual has revealed and anticipation that it will not be released to others without consent. To protect the identity of the participants, each participant was given a pseudonym (P1, P2, … P10). To further protect the identities of the participants, each audio recorded interview was coded with an alpha numeric sequence. The sequence consisted of the date the interview took place and the order of the interview (such as, P1_07142022). After completion of all interviews, each interview was transcribed and labeled with the same alphanumeric sequence as the recorded interview. The audio recorded interviews, the transcribed files, and the informed consent were kept by the

researcher on the researcher's password-protected computer and on a password-protected cloud service for a total of five years. After five years, the data will be securely deleted from the researcher's hard drive and the secured cloud service. The researcher, the researcher's doctoral committee, and East Tennessee State University were the only entities with access to the data, including transcripts and recordings used in the study.

Role of the Researcher

In this qualitative phenomenological study, the role of the researcher was, first and foremost, the research instrument (see Fassinger & Morrow, 2013). The researcher's function and duty were to examine and unravel the influence of the study subject matter on the participants' lived experiences. Hence, when instruments are included in qualitative studies, an individual will be the fundamental part of the procedure (Fink, 2000). As an instrument for the study, the researcher took the responsibility for developing the research plan, identifying research questions that address a gap in the scholarly literature, determining the interview questions, conducting the interviews to collect relevant data, and analyzing the collected data to address the research questions. Also, it is noteworthy that being the principal instrument, the researcher needed to be transparent about his responsibilities, experience, expectations, mannerisms, and curiosities that could influence the outcome of the study (see Yin, 2011).

The researcher was also responsible for delivering trustworthy, credible, and reliable research. Thus, to sustain research integrity, ensure objectivity, and eliminate any bias, the researcher adhered to guidelines as established in the Belmont Report, which helped in removing personal biases, avoiding influencing study participants, and suspending the researcher's preconceived ideas or assumptions that could negatively affect the credibility of the research findings.

Moreover, as the instrument for the study, it was almost impossible to retain everything without the use of a reflective journal as a tool to document and record all the stages of the research. The key purpose of the qualitative researcher keeping a reflexive journal is to document a thorough account of the research progression and the researcher's own contemplations of their standards, benefits, and perceptions as the instrument (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Summary

Chapter 3 included a detailed discussion of the specific methodology chosen for the present study. The researcher first reviewed the purpose of the study and the research question employed by the study. The purpose and research questions surrounded the idea of exploring the perceptions of the self-efficacy and teacher preparation programs of novice, job-embedded teachers. Next, the researcher discussed the phenomenological research design chosen for the study. Phenomenology was chosen for the study, as it is a qualitative research design that is used to understand the subjective realities of the participants in the study by making personal interpretations about their lived experiences and perceptions. Following the discussion of research design, the researcher reviewed the site selection, sample, and participants, including the inclusion criteria to be employed in the study.

After discussing the sampling strategies for choosing the participants, the chapter turned towards a discussion of the data collection and data analysis strategies. These sections explained in detail the purposeful sampling to be employed in the study, followed by a discussion of the procedures to be utilized in the semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. Data collection strategies included a description of the thematic analysis to be employed in the study, as well as the steps to be followed for phenomenology. Next, the chapter reviewed the theoretical

framework that will be used to understand and frame the perceptions of participants; the theoretical framework chosen is Bandura's social cognitive theory, which is directly related to an individual's self-efficacy. Following this discussion, the researcher analyzed trustworthiness, including the credibility, transferability, dependability and credibility. Lastly, the researcher discussed ethical considerations of the study and the role of the researcher in the study. In Chapter 4, the researcher presents the findings of the study, including an analysis of the data derived from the participants within the context of Bandura's social cognitive theory. In Chapter 5, conclusions, implications and recommendations are presented.

Chapter 4. Results and Findings

The United States is currently experiencing unprecedented demands for elementary and secondary school teachers. Teacher attrition and burnout are significant problems, especially in public schools (Jennings, 2020). Some factors influencing teacher attrition and burnout include challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic (Garcia & Weiss, 2021) in 2020 and rising and consistent concerns about school violence (Bryner, 2021). Teachers also report working long hours and contributing financially to their classrooms, which lack many resources for student success (Minkos & Gelbar, 2021). In addition to attrition, fewer students generally enter teacher training programs, further amplifying the teacher shortage.

Many states are addressing the shortage of teachers by using job-embedded practitioners. Job-embedded teachers are individuals who have a bachelor's degree and are already working in a classroom as a teacher while working towards fulfilling the requirements for a teaching license through a university (Adams et al., 2019). Current research suggests that teacher self-efficacy influences students' motivation, engagement, and achievement (Burić & Kim, 2020), as well as teachers' teaching skills and practice (Mok & Moore, 2019). Specifically, teacher self-efficacy enhances confidence, which, in turn, impacts delivery of content (Ladendorf et al., 2021). However, it is presently unclear how job-embedded practitioners perceive their self-efficacy, teacher preparation programs, and their futures as teachers. Therefore, this qualitative phenomenological study explored teacher self-efficacy for novice teachers who are job-embedded practitioners. The following research questions were devised to address this purpose:

> Essential Research Question: What are the perceptions of novice job-embedded practitioners on their own teacher self-efficacy and teacher self-efficacy in general?

Sub-research Question 1- How do novice job-embedded practitioners perceive their teacher preparation program?

Sub-research Question 2- How do novice job-embedded practitioners perceive their future as a teacher?

Chapter 4 will include a presentation of the results of this study. First, the chapter includes an examination of the central research question by presenting the participants' perceptions of their teacher self-efficacy. Next, sub-research question 1 is investigated by describing the participants' beliefs regarding the strengths and weaknesses of their teacher preparation programs. Lastly, the chapter includes a description of the participants' perceptions of their future as a teacher.

RQ: Perceptions of Novice Job-Embedded Practitioners on Their Teacher Self-Efficacy

In analyzing this research question, different aspects of teacher self-efficacy are explored. First, participants were asked to give their perceptions of their teacher self-efficacy, which answered the posed research question. Then, the participants discussed facilitators of and barriers to self-efficacy and how the school environment affects teacher self-efficacy.

Participants' Perception of Their Self-Efficacy

Three main themes emerged from the data analysis regarding perceived self-efficacy. These three themes were: (a) high self-efficacy, (b) passion, and (c) work in progress. These themes are summarized in Table 2 and are subsequently discussed.

Table 2

Participants' Perceptions of Their Self-Efficacy

Theme	Participants	Excerpt
High Self-Efficacy	P9, P10	"I think content-wise I'm pretty solid. Not to be full of myself, but I think I'm really strong with that, and I think I'm good at getting the students engaged" (P9).
Passion	P1, P4, P7, P8	“I would say that I'm very passionate about what I do. I genuinely love kids. Kids strive to get the most out of life, which excites me” (P4).
Work in Progress	P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9, P10	"I think that I could always do better. I think that I do enough to get the job done and always keep the students busy, but there are some things that I would need to work on" (P3).

High Self-Efficacy. Two of the participants (P9 and P10) reported that they had high teacher self-efficacy. For example, P9 said, “I think content-wise I'm pretty solid. Not to be full of myself, but I think I'm really strong with that, and I think I'm good at getting the students engaged.” P9 believed strongly in their self-efficacy and had high self-confidence regarding their teaching capacity, especially regarding their content knowledge. Similarly, P10 said, “I think my self-efficacy is high. I love what I do. I try hard every day to make sure I’m prepared for my classes, and I think I succeed.” P10 portrays themselves as having high self-efficacy due partly to their motivation to work hard and prepare. These findings underscore the notion that self-efficacy not only derives from content knowledge but also from hard work and preparation.

Passion. Four participants (P1, P4, P7, and P8) expressed passion for their position as novice job-embedded teachers. This passion contributed to their self-efficacy. For example, P4 said, “I would say that I'm very passionate about what I do. I genuinely love kids. Kids strive to get the most out of life, which excites me.” P4 describes their passion for children contributing to their passion for their job and self-efficacy. P1 also believes that their passion contributes to their

self-efficacy. P1 described, “I wasn’t sure I wanted to be a teacher at first, but now that I’m in it, I love it.” For P1 and P4, their passion for teaching influences their self-efficacy.

Two other participants spoke about their passion for teaching as having a direct relationship with self-efficacy. P7 said:

> Self-efficacy is a moving target. I didn’t have much confidence when I first started, but I'm getting better now that I’m a few months in. I think my passion for teaching comes through, and the kids can see and respect that.

For P7, their passion for teaching impacts the students, who, in turn, provide feedback that increases P7’s self-efficacy. This finding is congruent with findings in the literature indicating that teacher self-efficacy influences student self-efficacy (Engin, 2020; Shulka et al., 2020) and vice versa. P8 also describes their students' progress as igniting their passion for teaching. P8 said:

> As a [physical education] teacher, I get kids of all skill levels, sizes, shapes, and athletic abilities. When I see some of the kids who aren’t as skilled or athletic having fun and making physical gains, it fires me up. They make me want to be a better teacher so I can continue seeing them make progress.

For both P7 and P8, their self-efficacy is influenced by their students’ progress and goal attainment. Both describe situations in which they have favorable self-efficacy outcomes based on their students’ progression. This suggests that the self-efficacy of novice job-embedded teachers is greatly influenced by the students’ perceptions of them as a teacher and student progression.

Work in Progress. Seven participants (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9, P10) discussed their self-efficacy as a work in progress. When asked about their self-efficacy as a teacher, P2 said:

> I think I have a lot to learn. Even though I've been teaching for three years, I think I spent the first two years figuring out how to handle a classroom. I'm just getting to the point where I'm comfortable with classroom management and figuring out who I am as a teacher.

P2 describes their first two years of teaching as a classroom management lesson. They believed they couldn't focus on their teaching skills because they spent so much time learning to keep their students' attention in the classroom. They described their self-efficacy as a teacher as a work in progress. P3 and P4 believed that they were still learning and could do better. P3 said, "I think that I could always do better. I do enough to get the job done and always keep the students busy, but there are some things that I would need to work on." Like P3, P4 said, "I want to do better. There's such a significant learning curve that it's impossible to be the best teacher in your first few years. I do my best, and that best moves the needle a little at a time." Both P3 and P4 ascribe their self-efficacy as a work in progress. Both acknowledge that they do some things right but are still learning and have room for improvement.

Other participants also describe their self-efficacy as a work in progress but in different aspects. Like P2, P5 believes their classroom management skills still need improvement. P5 said:

> I think my content knowledge is great. I've worked hard to understand what I'm teaching well. But, working in special education can be challenging. I feel like I'm learning on the seat of my pants. Classroom management is really difficult sometimes.

P5 highlights the specialized topic of special education, noting that their self-efficacy is still a work in progress, especially regarding classroom management. On the other hand, P6 highlights that content knowledge is an area in which they need improvement. P6 said: "I'm pretty good

with the content, but I can always be better. Teaching math, I always have to refresh the material before I teach it. If I don't prepare, classes don't go well, which is unfair to the students."

For P6, their content knowledge and preparation are areas they believe need improvement. As such, they also describe their self-efficacy as a work in progress. Many of the participants in this study identified areas in need of improvement. While they did not specifically say that their self-efficacy needs improvement, identifying areas of strengths and weaknesses indicates that their self-efficacy is high in some respects and low in others.

Facilitators of Self-Efficacy

The participants identified two general facilitators of their self-efficacy as novice job-embedded practitioners. These two facilitators were self-progress and student progress. These two themes are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Participants' Perspectives of Facilitators of Self-efficacy

Theme	Participants	Excerpt
Self-Progress	P1, P6	"Sometimes it's nice, as a teacher, to see yourself progressing. Sometimes, there have been certain lessons or lectures that I've done where maybe I struggled in the past, but I've bought books on it, read up on it, and I've gotten better. Sometimes you have some personal satisfaction" (P1).
Student Progress	P1, P7, P8, P9	"I love helping students, not necessarily with math, but I like getting students to the point where they're not afraid of math. It makes me feel good to see them when they finally get it. That's my favorite part" (P7).

Self-Progress. Two participants (P1 and P6) identified self-progress as a facilitator of their self-efficacy as a teacher. For example, P1 said:

> Sometimes it's nice, as a teacher, to see yourself progressing. Sometimes, there have been certain lessons or lectures that I've done where maybe I struggled in the past, but I've bought books on it, read up on it, and I've gotten better. Sometimes you have some personal satisfaction.

P1 describes their self-efficacy as being facilitated by their progress as a teacher. When they can teach a lesson more effectively than previously, they gain confidence in their teaching ability. Their increased confidence facilitates self-efficacy. P6 concurred with P1 saying:

> I like seeing myself progress. I struggled my first year, and I'm getting progressively better. I like seeing that I can teach lessons better, handle the students' questions without getting flustered, and even anticipate questions sometimes. I feel better about being a teacher as I become more proficient.

Both P1 and P6 describe their self-efficacy as bolstered by their abilities to effectively teach lessons better than in previous years. Therefore, self-progress as a teacher may facilitate self-efficacy in novice job-embedded practitioners.

Student Progress. Student progress was another theme identified by the participants as being a facilitator of their self-efficacy as a teacher. For example, P7 said, "I love helping students, not necessarily with math, but I like getting students to the point where they're not afraid of math. It makes me feel good to see them when they finally get it. That's my favorite part." P7 describes their self-efficacy growing when their students make progress, especially as it relates to math anxiety. P8 expresses similar thoughts, saying:

> It's gratifying seeing the students learn to love movement. So many of them sit at home on the couch in front of the TV or video games and don't have the experience of

movement and athletics. Most of them come into my classroom hating gym class. I feel good about being a teacher when I can make even one of them learn to love movement.

For P7 and P8, imparting enjoyment to the students in their respective classes facilitates their self-efficacy as a teacher. Both describe becoming more confident in their teaching abilities when the students enjoy their respective subjects.

P1 and P9 also cited student progress as an important facilitator of self-efficacy. P1 said, "I get more confident when I see the students succeed." P9 also describes their self-efficacy in terms of student progress. P9 said, "I know I'm getting better as a teacher when the students make progress in some way, whether that's asking good questions, getting good grades, or whether I'm seeing improvements on their standardized test scores." In this way, both P1 and P9 describe student progress as facilitating their self-efficacy. Like the other participants, P1 and P9 have increased confidence and self-efficacy when they view their students' success.

Barriers to Self-Efficacy

In addition to identifying facilitators of self-efficacy, the participants also identified barriers to their self-efficacy as novice job-embedded teachers. Three themes were identified as barriers to self-efficacy: (a) the accountability of the education system, (b) disrespectful students, and (c) the general system of education. These themes are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4

Participants' Perspectives of Barriers to Self-Efficacy

Theme	Participants	Excerpt
Accountability of Education System	P1, P5, P9	"As a whole, the system is too lenient on the students. The system tries to encourage you to pass students when we would have failed them in the past. I think it's doing them a disservice because it teaches them that, in life, if they screw up, they get a free pass" (P1).

Disrespectful Students	P1, P5, P6	"My greatest dislike is the kids' attitudes. Some kids have no respect for authority or respect for each other" (P6).
General System of Education	P2, P3, P4, P8, P9	"It's ironic, but I don't like how serious education is. It's not playful, like we no longer have time for fun things. You have to hit all the standards, and I understand that, but I feel like it's a different education system from when I was in school" (P4).

Accountability of Education System. Three participants (P1, P5, and P9) believed that the accountability of the education system served as a barrier to their self-efficacy as a teacher. For example, P1 said:

> As a whole, the system is too lenient on the students. The system tries to encourage you to pass students when we would have failed them in the past. I think it's doing them a disservice because it teaches them that, in life, if they screw up, they get a free pass.

P1 describes feeling pressure to pass children even if they don't meet the minimum requirements for a passing grade. This serves as a barrier to their self-efficacy because they view their role as a teacher as being important to teaching their students life lessons. P5 described similar thoughts, saying:

> The system is flawed. We're supposed to pass students regardless of whether they deserve to pass. Our school has this retesting system for assessments that would have never flown in previous years. We give the students too many chances, when they need to learn that in order to pass, you have to study for the test the first time. I feel like I'm teaching the students that it's ok to fail.

P5 similarly describes their self-efficacy as being hindered by the accountability of the education system. While they may have high self-efficacy about their teaching skills, their self-efficacy is

generally low regarding their role as a teacher. Thus, the accountability of the education system may serve as a barrier to the participants' self-efficacy in some cases.

Disrespectful Students. Three participants highlighted disrespectful students served as barriers to their self-efficacy. For example, P6 said, "My greatest dislike is the kids' attitudes. Some kids have no respect for authority or respect for each other". P6 further stated that "the children's attitudes make me feel like I'm doing something wrong". Thus, disrespectful behavior of students stands as a barrier to their self-efficacy as a teacher. P1 concurred with P6, saying, "Sometimes I feel bad about myself as a teacher when the kids are so disrespectful. I don't feel like I'm teaching them anything about life." Thus, P1's self-efficacy as a mentor suffers from the students' lack of respect. P1 and P6 view their role as a teacher as being more than just teaching students academic material. However, their self-efficacy is diminished when the students are disrespectful towards them and other students.

General System of Education. Five of the participants (P2, P3, P4, P8, and P9) described the general system of education in the United States as being a barrier to their self-efficacy as a teacher. For example, P4 said:

> It's ironic, but I don't like how serious education is. It's not playful, like we no longer have time for fun things. You have to hit all the standards, and I understand that, but I feel like it's a different education system from when I was in school.

P4 believes they're doing a disservice to the students by not being allowed to make the school environment playful and enjoyable, especially as an elementary school teacher. P4 further believes that this influences their self-efficacy. They said, "I feel bad as a teacher making them specialize so early." Thus, for P4, the general education system serves as a barrier to their self-efficacy. P3 expressed similar feelings, saying, "Sometimes I feel so bad for the students. They

don’t have the background from previous years to succeed in my class. That isn’t their fault. It’s the system’s fault.” P3, like P4, feels like the education system is failing the students, which, in turn, impacts their feelings regarding being a teacher. Thus, the education system serves as a barrier to their self-efficacy.

Summary of Essential Research Question

In answering the essential research question, participants discussed their self-efficacy as teachers. Some of the participants expressed having high self-efficacy as a teacher, while others described their self-efficacy in terms of their passion for teaching. However, most of the participants described their self-efficacy as a work in progress. Some cited their classroom management skills as needing improvement, while others described their content knowledge as a work in progress. Thus, for many job-embedded novice teachers, their self-efficacy is a work in progress.

The participants also identified important barriers and facilitators to their teaching self-efficacy. Important facilitators included student progress and self-progress. Many participants described enhanced confidence and self-efficacy when their students made progress academically or had enhanced enjoyment of the material. Other participants described increased confidence in teaching as they viewed their teaching skills progressing. The participants also identified some barriers to their self-efficacy. Specifically, they identified the accountability of the education system, disrespectful students, and the general education system as barriers to their self-efficacy. In this discussion, many participants described feeling poorly because they believed they were doing students a disservice. For example, some participants voiced concerns that they were not adequately preparing the students for life outside the classroom.

SQ1: Participants' Perceptions of their Teacher Preparation Programs

The first sub-research question asked participants about their perceptions of their teacher preparation programs. This discussion is divided into two main sections. The positive aspects of their teacher preparation programs are first presented. This discussion is followed by a description of the drawbacks of teacher preparation programs from the participants' perspectives.

Positive Aspects of Teacher Preparation Programs

The participants were generally favorable towards their teacher preparation programs, identifying four main themes that were positive aspects of their programs. These four themes were: (a) good support and mentorship; (b) gaining confidence in teaching; (c) learning content important for passing the edTPA; and (d) flexibility and convenience. Each of these themes is summarized in Table 5.

Table 5

Positive Aspects of Teacher Preparation Programs

Theme	Participants	Excerpt
Good Support and Mentorship	P3, P8, P9, P10	"My advisors and teachers have been helpful and good to work with. They have all seemed like good people who are always willing to help me through any problems. It seems they truly care about me and my job" (P10).
Gaining Confidence in Teaching	P1, P3, P4	"The program is helping me improve. I am gaining more confidence as a teacher. I started off being thrown into a teaching job with no training, so I am getting up to speed with the experience and classes I have taken. I know that my program has helped me with the special education side of things. I know when I started, I was overwhelmed with students with IEPs. The classes that I have taken it has helped me become more familiar with everything. I feel much more confident helping those students now" (P3).

Learned Content Important For Passing edTPA	P1, P6, P8, P9	"My prep program helped me with edTPA. That was a mountain of work. edTPA was a requirement for me, and I think it was a little over the top, but the program helped me work through it" (P6).
Flexible, Convenient	P1, P2, P4, P9, P10	"My teacher prep program has been great regarding time management. We have moved through the classes as a cohort, which goes pretty quickly. I like the fact that it will not take a long time to finish it all up. The program is well laid out, and it is easy to see how the classes are scheduled. I love the online structure as well" (P4).

Good Support and Mentorship. Four participants (P3, P8, P9, and P10) believed their teacher preparation programs offered good support and mentorship. For example, P3 said, "My mentor, Mr. [redacted name], has helped guide me through my program. I have definitely learned a large amount of things from him." P8 also described their program as having good mentorship and advisors. P8 said, "The program allowed me to gain a valuable mentor. My advisor was very helpful, and I don't think I would have finished without her. She helped me a lot but especially with getting through the Praxis series test." The participants found their programs helpful in providing mentors and advisors.

Two other participants described their programs as having good mentors and advisors. P9 described their program professors as being instrumental in developing good lesson plans. P9 said:

> I had the opportunity throughout the program to build many lesson plans that I still use today. It was beneficial to build the lessons under the guidance of my professors who gave sound feedback. That has helped me throughout this whole process.

For P9, mentorship included important feedback on lesson plans they were implementing in the classroom. P9 viewed their professors' feedback and mentorship as vital to their success. P10 described their mentors as providing much-needed support. They said:

> My advisors and teachers have been helpful and good to work with. They have all seemed like good people who are always willing to help me through any problems. It seems they truly care about me and my job.

The mentors and advisors at the participants' preparation programs provided them with support and mentorship in a variety of ways, including lesson plans, moral support, academic support, and help with certification exams. Moreover, these mentoring relationships increased the self-efficacy of the participating teachers.

Gaining Confidence in Teaching. Three participants believed that their teacher preparation programs helped them gain confidence in their teaching. For example, P1 said, "My program has given me the confidence I need to succeed in my career. As I learn more skills, my confidence with teaching grows." P1 believes that their teacher preparation program has aided them in becoming more confident as a teacher; as they see an enhancement in their skills, they also feel more confident in their teaching ability. P3 also described an increase in confidence, which they attributed to their teacher preparation program. P3 said:

> The program is helping me improve. I am gaining more confidence as a teacher. I started off being thrown into a teaching job with no training, so I am getting up to speed with the experience and classes I have taken. I know that my program has helped me with the special education side of things. I know when I started, I was overwhelmed with students with IEPs. The classes that I have taken it has helped me become more familiar with everything. I feel much more confident helping those students now.

P3 describes being overwhelmed with some aspects of their role as a teacher, especially as it relates to special education students and individual education plans (IEPs). P3 believes that their program directly taught them the materials and skills necessary to succeed as a teacher, which has increased their confidence in the classroom. P4 also describes their program as helping with the special education aspect of teaching. P4 said:

> The program has helped me teach classes that have students from a variety of different cognitive levels. That has helped me a lot with inclusion and things of that sort. Developing reading and science lessons that help all of my students has been a big help. I want to always be sure to teach all of my students and that can be a challenge sometimes with students with disabilities, but my program has been helpful.

For P3 and P4, their programs have helped them gain confidence in different aspects of teaching with which they were at first uncomfortable. Based on participant responses, teacher preparation programs serve as an asset to novice job-embedded teachers.

Learned Content Important for Passing edTPA. Four participants (P1, P6, P8, P9) believed that their teacher preparation programs were critical in teaching the content important for passing the educative Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA). The edTPA is a test developed by researchers at Stanford University to measure teacher candidate effectiveness in the classroom by student learning (Goldhaber et al., 2017). For example, P1 said, “It has prepared me for the edTPA which is great since I will need to finish that up.” Similarly, P6 said, “My prep program helped me with edTPA. That was a mountain of work. edTPA was a requirement for me, and I think it was a little over the top, but the program helped me work through it." For these participants, their teacher preparation programs imparted the necessary knowledge and skills required to pass the edTPA exam to earn their teaching credentials.

P8 and P9 also discussed their programs as being important for learning the material to pass licensing exams. P8 said:

> My prep program helped me with edTPA. That was a mountain of work. edTPA was a requirement for me, and I think it was a little over the top, but the program definitely helped me work through it. The prep program also helped me pass my Praxis test. Everyone thinks the PE Praxis is easy, but I've heard several people talk about how tough it is. Working through the program helped prepare me to pass the necessary Praxis test.

P8 not only describes their program as being critical for passing the edTPA but also for the Praxis exam, which they believed is underestimated. P9 also expressed the notion that their program helped with the edTPA exam. P9 said, "They helped me build my edTPA. That was very strenuous, and my teachers did a lot that was geared toward that." Based on participant responses, the teacher preparation programs for novice job-embedded practitioners were helpful for learning the requisite material and passing the edTPA exam.

Flexible, Convenient. Five participants (P1, P2, P4, P9, P10) described their teacher preparation programs as flexible and convenient. P1 said, "My program has done a great job of being flexible with my teaching and especially my coaching responsibilities. That has been one great aspect." Other participants expressed similar sentiments. For example, P4 said:

> We have moved through the classes as a cohort, and it goes pretty quickly. I like the fact that it will not take a long time to finish it all up. The program is well laid out and it is easy to see how the classes are scheduled. Obviously, I love the online structure as well. I was extremely nervous that I would not be able to handle everything with being in school and starting a new teaching career. The program has a great balance between all of that. I am not saying that it is easy but considering everything I think it is a fair balance.

P2 describes several flexible and convenient aspects of their teacher preparation program. They describe their program as being well-planned in a way that allows the students to move through the program without wasting time. They also spoke about the convenience of learning online, despite early reservations about not being in a traditional classroom setting. P10 also liked the flexibility of the online platform, saying, “The online platform is easy to use to turn classwork in and to read class materials.” One positive aspect of the participants’ teacher preparation programs was the flexibility and convenience of the online programs.

Drawbacks of Teacher Preparation Programs

While the participants highlighted many positive aspects of their teacher preparation programs, they also spoke about some drawbacks of the programs and aspects of their programs that need improvement. Specifically, the participants identified five main areas in need of improvement: (a) updated, relevant content; (b) classroom management techniques; (c) curriculum development courses; (d) increased classroom experience; and (e) rethinking curriculum ordering. These themes are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6

Areas of Improvement for Teacher Preparation Programs

Theme	Participants	Excerpt
Updated, Relevant Content	P1, P2, P6, P8, P9, P10	"I would like more content-specific classes. A lot of the work that I am doing feels like “busy” work, and it does not necessarily transfer over to what I am doing in the classroom currently" (P2).
Classroom Management Techniques	P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9, P10	"I wish there was an entire class on handling kids. A class on classroom management is very much needed. You can have all the knowledge in the world, but if you do not have great control of the room, then it does not matter. Classroom management is tough, but for job-embedded teachers, it is a very tough challenge" (P5).

Curriculum Development Courses	P5, P6	"I would also add curriculum development. I started knowing much about what I was teaching regarding the subject, but developing a laid-out plan was tough for me. You cannot just come in and wing it every day. I need a curriculum to follow and was lost for a while" (P6).
Increased Classroom Experience	P1, P2, P5	“It would be great to get some observations in, so I could learn from good teachers. Especially some teachers that are in my same field. My classes are filled with teachers from various subject areas, and it can be good to get perspective from teachers from other subject areas, but I would love to sit in with at least a couple in the same field” (P2).
Rethink Curriculum Ordering	P1, P3, P8	“The program order is out of whack, in my opinion. I had to study to pass several tests to start teaching and start the program. It is set up backward because the information I needed to pass the test is now covered in the program. That order sequence could be set up differently, for sure. I wish I had learned some of the basics up front, such as lesson plan development, attendance, seating charts, and just some of the basic day-to-day obligations” (P3).

Updated, Relevant Content. Six participants (P1, P2, P6, P8, P9, and P10) identified the need for updated, relevant content in their preparation programs. For example, P1 said,

> Some of the material that has been covered was useful as I have worked through the first couple of years. There has been plenty that has not applied to my career, but I cannot say that about the entire program.

P1 acknowledges that some of the content learned in their program was relevant, while other material was not, suggesting a need for the program to be updated with more relevant content. P2 expressed similar ideas, saying, “I would like more content-specific classes. A lot of the work that I am doing feels like “busy” work, and it does not necessarily transfer over to what I am

doing in the classroom currently." P2 described needing more content-related classes about what they're teaching daily. P6 identified other areas of content development. They said:

> There have been no lessons on developing a syllabus that my school district uses. We also need to learn more intense classroom management strategies and training. Also, we need a class on pacing during lessons at different class lengths.

P6 identified areas in which their preparation program needed improvement. For example, many school districts require teachers to develop a syllabus, a specialized skill, which was not covered in P6's program. P6 also believed that there should be an entire class devoted to classroom management strategies, the subject of the next theme.

Classroom Management Strategies. Seven participants (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9, P10) believed their programs should explicitly include coursework regarding classroom management. For example, P8 said:

> I needed the program to prepare me more for the classroom setting. I was great in the gym and had a lot of confidence in that setting. However, I was teaching Wellness classes that were half in the classroom and half in the gym. I was not ready for the classroom. It was a real struggle for me.

P8, even though they were a physical education teacher, described the need for classroom management skills and strategies, coursework that was largely missing from their preparation program. P9 also identified classroom management strategies as coursework missing from their teacher preparation program. P9 said:

> The day I started teaching, I struggled with classroom management. It was bad! I gave out the directions, and three people were asleep within five minutes. I just didn't know

> what to do. I wish my program had some sort of training that at least prepared you for some classroom management. I was not ready, and it is still a weakness for me.

One area of improvement identified by the participants is the need for updated classroom management content. Covering this topic in preparation programs could help alleviate some of the stressors that novice job-embedded teachers experience with classroom management.

This was a common theme among participants. P2 said, “I am not saying the information is completely useless but my needs, such as classroom management, are not covered enough in my opinion. That is my biggest gripe with the program.” P10 also highlighted the need for a classroom management course, saying:

> It is early within my path, but I struggle with classroom management. I have not had a class that covers classroom management at all. I am a young teacher and I need to improve there the most. I don’t see one in the curriculum, so I hope they cover it as part of another course.

Most of the participants identified needing a course on classroom management strategies and how to effectively manage students in the classroom.

Curriculum Development Courses. Two participants (P5 and P6) believed that their teacher preparation programs needed more intensive courses on curriculum development. For example, P6 said:

> I would also add curriculum development. I started knowing much about what I was teaching regarding the subject, but developing a laid-out plan was tough for me. You cannot just come in and wing it every day. I need a curriculum to follow and was lost for a while.

P6 believes that part of their on-the-job training was the development of a curriculum, highlighting that they did not have an explicit curriculum to follow. They believed that curriculum development is an important part of the teaching process that their preparation program did not cover adequately. P5 also believed they needed to learn curriculum development in their coursework. P5 said:

> I know we have a curriculum to follow, but it's very broad as written. For example, in agriscience, the curriculum tells us to teach the students about "plants." "Plants" is a very broad topic and there's absolutely no guidance on what aspects of the topic to include or not include. It would be great if we had a course that described determining what's important and not important in teaching the curriculum.

Based on their responses, the participants identified that curriculum development may be one aspect of teacher preparation programs needing improvement.

Increased Classroom Experience. Three participants (P1, P2, and P5) believed they needed increased classroom experience in their teacher preparation programs. P1 said, "I also think that it would be beneficial to do more observation of effective teachers. I learn from modeling others, and there has been very little opportunity to do so." P1 further explained that classroom observation of both faculty and peers would have been helpful. They said:

> I definitely need more time to spend with mentors and more experienced teachers from inside the college and outside. It would be great to get some observations in so I could learn from good teachers, especially teachers in my field. My classes are filled with teachers from a variety of subject areas, and it can be good to get perspective from teachers from other subject areas, but I would love to sit in with at least a couple in the same field.

P1 believed they needed increased classroom exposure and experience learning from other teachers. They acknowledged that this experience-based learning was a noticeable course missing from their teacher preparation program. P2 also described wanting more classroom experience. They said, “I think there should be some more support within my classroom. Maybe a mentor teacher or some more observations that are only meant to help me build my skills individually.” P2 also described needing more classroom experience either supervised or observed by a mentor teacher. P6 also believed that their program needed more supervised interactions. They said, “I would add another classroom management class and more opportunities to practice pacing within lessons.” The participants described needing increased classroom experience as practicing teachers and observing other teachers. Allowing observed learning experiences would afford novice job-embedded teachers an opportunity to receive immediate feedback regarding their teaching practices in a supportive academic environment.

Rethink Curriculum Ordering. Three participants (P1, P3, and P8) believed that the curriculum of their teacher preparation programs needed to be reordered to be more suitable for their needs as teachers. P1 said, “I wish they would order the curriculum in the order novice teachers need. I feel like the curriculum was backward in some respects. Instead of learning how to manage a classroom, we learned about school law first.” P1 believed that program ordering should be more reflective of what they do in the classroom. They should learn classroom management and teaching strategies before learning the legal and administrative aspects of teaching. P3 concurred with P1, saying:

> The order of the program is out of whack, in my opinion. I had to study to pass several tests to start teaching and the program. It is set up backward because the information I needed to pass the test is now covered in the program. That order sequence could be set

> up differently, for sure. I wish I would have learned some of the basics up front such as lesson plan development, taking attendance, seating charts, and just some of the basic day-to-day obligations.

The participants highlighted the notion that the program curriculum should be reordered to reflect their needs as novice job-embedded teachers.

Summary of SQ1

SQ1 contained an analysis of the participants' perceptions of their teacher education programs. The participants were generally favorable towards their teacher preparation programs, identifying four main themes that were positive aspects of their programs. These four themes were: (a) good support and mentorship; (b) gaining confidence in teaching; (c) learning content important for passing the edTPA; and (d) flexibility and convenience. The participants generally believed they received good support and mentorship from their professors and program administrators. The material they learned in their coursework was instrumental in gaining confidence in the classroom and passing the edTPA and Praxis exams. Finally, the participants noted that the online program was flexible and convenient, allowing them to balance their multiple obligations.

The participants also highlighted some drawbacks of their teacher preparation programs. Specifically, the participants identified five main areas in need of improvement: (a) updated, relevant content; (b) classroom management techniques; (c) curriculum development courses; (d) increased classroom experience; and (e) rethinking curriculum ordering. The participants believed that their coursework needed to be updated, especially to include classes on curriculum development, classroom management, and how to develop a syllabus. Many participants wanted increased classroom experience, both as student-teachers and as an observer of more experienced

teachers. Finally, some participants believed that their programs needed to rethink the order of the curriculum to include day-to-day topics first in the curriculum and some of the more minute aspects of teaching later.

SQ2: Participants' Perceptions of Their Future as a Teacher

After examining the perceptions of the participants regarding their self-efficacy and the participants' perceptions of their teacher preparation programs, the participants were next asked their perceptions of their future as a teacher. The participants identified three main themes: (a) optimistic; (b) neutral; and (c) pessimistic. Each of these themes is summarized in Table 7.

Table 7

Perceptions of Novice Job-Embedded Teachers' Regarding Their Future

Theme	Participants	Excerpt
Optimistic	P1, P3, P4, P8, P9, P10	"I think my future as a teacher is really bright. I enjoy working with the kids and seeing them grow and develop" (P4).
Neutral	P2, P6	"I like teaching, but it's more work than I thought. I really like the job, and I can see myself making a career out of it. I hope it gets easier as I go along" (P6).
Pessimistic	P7	"Teaching in today's public schools is genuinely hard. Sometimes I never know what I will walk into in my classroom. I don't know if I can sustain this type of intensity for a long period" (P7).

Optimistic

Many of the participants (P1, P3, P4, P8, P9, and P10) expressed optimism concerning their future as a teacher. For example, P1 said, "I'm optimistic about my career as a teacher. I really enjoy it." P3 also expressed optimism regarding their career. They said, "I think I'm going to make a great teacher once I figure out what I'm doing. I love the kids, and it's a really rewarding career." P4 expressed similar sentiments, especially about working with children. P4

said, “I think my future as a teacher is really bright. I enjoy working with the kids and seeing them grow and develop."

Other participants also expressed optimism regarding their future as teachers. P8 said, “Teaching is really fun. I love being with the kids every day, and I’m optimistic that I’ll keep enjoying it.” For P8, their optimism regarding their career derives from the pleasure they experience working with the students. P9 expressed similar thoughts, saying, “I think I’m going to be a great teacher. The kids are exciting, especially when they learn something challenging and light up. I can’t see myself doing anything else.” The job-embedded novice teachers interviewed in this study viewed their prospects of being a teacher as bright and with optimism.

Neutral

Two of the participants (P2 and P6) had neutral thoughts about their future as a teacher. For example, P2 said:

> I’m not sure. I really like teaching, but at the same time, there’s not a lot of gratification in this career. Sometimes it’s a big headache dealing with parents who just don’t understand that their children need to put in the effort.

P2 expressed content with their profession but acknowledged that teaching has many drawbacks. They noted that parents were sometimes a challenging aspect of teaching, which diminished some of the gratification associated with teaching. Similarly, P6 said, “I like teaching, but it's more work than I thought. I like the job, and I can see myself making a career out of it. I hope it gets easier as I go along." In this way, P6 also described teaching as a labor-intensive career that may not be sustainable in the long run. Some participants enjoyed teaching but had concerns regarding the longevity of their teaching careers.

Pessimistic

One participant had a different perspective than the others. P7 was the only participant who expressed pessimism about their future as a teacher. P7 said, “Teaching in today's public schools is genuinely hard. Sometimes I never know what I will walk into in my classroom. I don't know if I can sustain this type of intensity for a long period." P7 acknowledged that teaching is sometimes a thankless profession, highlighting children’s behavioral issues, long hours, poor work-life balance, and a fear of school violence. P7 expanded:

> There are so many school shootings now that sometimes you wonder if your school is going to be the next school. Going to work in fear is not sustainable. Unless something fundamentally changes, allowing teachers, students, and administrators to feel safe at work, I don’t know if (I) can keep doing this in the long run.

One of the job-embedded novice practitioners in this study acknowledged that they had some fear associated with the school climate, especially in public schools.

Summary of SQ2

The novice job-embedded teachers included in this study had mixed opinions about their futures as teachers. Most participants were optimistic about their teaching careers, highlighting their passion for teaching and seeing student improvement. Many expressed optimism that teaching would provide a long, satisfying career. Other participants were neutral, citing the positive aspects of teaching and acknowledging the drawbacks, especially long hours, student behavioral issues, and parental involvement. One participant expressed pessimism regarding their future as a teacher, citing long work hours, lack of work-life balance, and fear of school violence. The participants' perceptions regarding their future as an educator were mixed.

Summary

Chapter 4 included an examination of the research findings of this study. The researcher explored teacher self-efficacy in novice teachers who are job-embedded practitioners. The participants' self-efficacy was evaluated in the essential research question. Most participants described their self-efficacy as a work in progress, noting both positive aspects of their teaching practices and aspects in need of improvement. Many of the participants described being passionate about teaching and working with children. Facilitators and barriers to the self-efficacy of novice job-embedded teachers were also identified. Next, the participants' perceptions of their teacher preparation programs were examined. Many participants noted positive aspects of their programs, including flexibility, convenience, good mentorship, and professors, and help with passing licensing exams. Other participants highlighted the drawbacks of their program, especially in terms of needing courses in classroom management. Finally, as part of sub-research question two, the participants' perceptions of their future as teachers were examined. Most of the participants were optimistic about their future, but some were neutral, and one was pessimistic.

Chapter 5 will include a discussion of the implications of this research by placing these results and findings in the context of academic literature, as well as the study's theoretical foundations. Chapter 5 will also include recommendations for the practice of future job-embedded teachers and recommendations for their teacher preparation programs. Ways in which schools can support their novice job-embedded teachers will also be discussed. Finally, Chapter 5 will include recommendations for future research.

Chapter 5. Discussion, Conclusions and Future Directions

Teacher attrition is a significant problem faced by the public school system in the United States. Approximately 16% of teachers do not return the following school year (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Of those teachers, approximately 18% are lost to retirement, and 67% voluntarily leave (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Many factors influence teachers' intention to leave the profession, including low job satisfaction (Wolomasi et al., 2019), burnout (Pressley, 2021), and financial constraints (Gilpan, 2011). Teacher attrition was further magnified and complicated by the 2020-2023 COVID-19 pandemic, which forced teachers to shift their practice to an online environment (Matthews et al., 2022). One solution to teacher attrition is to support novice job-embedded teachers, who can complete their teaching educational requirements while beginning their careers in the classroom.

The self-efficacy of novice teachers is an important factor that mitigates their attrition. Research suggests that teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to be effective in the classroom (Ozder, 2011) and are more likely to continue in the teaching profession (Yost, 2006) than novice teachers with low self-efficacy. Self-efficacy also mitigates attrition in pre-service teachers (Klassen & Chiu, 2011). Indeed, many pre-service teachers with low confidence quit prior to obtaining their teaching degrees (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). Self-efficacy appears to be a significant factor contributing to a teacher's decision to leave or continue in the profession. However, the factors influencing the self-efficacy of novice job-embedded practitioners are largely unknown. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore teacher self-efficacy in novice teachers who are job-embedded practitioners.

Chapter Five beings with a summary of the findings of this study, presenting the perceptions of novice job-embedded practitioners regarding their self-efficacy and the factors that influence their self-efficacy. This includes a summary of the important facilitators and barriers to the self-efficacy of novice job-embedded teachers, as well as the role of teacher preparation programs. After a summary of the results, the findings of the study are presented in the context of the previous academic literature and within the study's theoretical foundations. Next, implications for practice are discussed, including how to best support novice job-embedded practitioners. Finally, recommendations for novice job-embedded teachers and recommendations on how teacher preparation programs and schools can effectively support this unique population are presented.

Summary of Findings

The essential research question examined the participants' self-efficacy as teachers. Some participants expressed having high self-efficacy as teachers, often describing their self-efficacy in terms of their passion for teaching. However, most participants described their self-efficacy as a work in progress. Some areas of the teaching practice they believed required improvements were classroom management skills and content knowledge. The participants also identified important barriers and facilitators to their teaching self-efficacy. Important facilitators included student progress and self-progress. Many participants described enhanced self-efficacy as both they and their students made progress. The participants also identified some important barriers to their self-efficacy. Specifically, they identified the accountability of the education system, disrespectful students, and the general education system as barriers to their self-efficacy. In this discussion, many participants described feeling poorly because they believed they were doing students a disservice in one respect or another.

Sub-research question 1 analyzed the participants' perceptions of their teacher education programs. The participants generally expressed content with their teacher preparation programs, identifying four main themes that were positive aspects of their programs. The participants believed they received good support and mentorship from their professors and program administrators. The material they learned in their coursework was instrumental in gaining confidence in the classroom and passing the edTPA and Praxis exams. Finally, the participants noted that their online teacher preparation programs were flexible and convenient, allowing them to balance their multiple obligations.

The participants also highlighted some drawbacks of their teacher preparation programs. The participants believed that their coursework needed to be updated, especially to include classes on curriculum development, classroom management, and how to develop a syllabus. Many participants wanted increased classroom experience as student teachers and as an observer of more experienced teachers. Finally, some participants believed that their programs needed to rethink the order of the curriculum to include day-to-day topics first in the curriculum and some of the more minute aspects of teaching later.

Sub-research question 2 investigated the perceptions of novice job-embedded practitioners regarding their futures as teachers. Most participants were optimistic about their teaching careers, highlighting their passion for teaching and seeing student improvement. Many expressed optimism that teaching would provide them with a long, satisfying career. Other participants were neutral, citing the positive aspects of teaching and acknowledging the drawbacks, especially long hours, student behavioral issues, and parental involvement. One participant expressed pessimism regarding their future as a teacher, citing long work hours, lack

of work-life balance, and fear of school violence. Thus, this study's findings suggest that novice job-embedded teachers' perceptions regarding their future as an educator is mixed.

Discussion of Findings

Novice job-embedded professionals are offered a unique opportunity to begin their careers as teachers while studying to attain licensure. However, the literature substantiates that novice job-embedded teachers have unique challenges (Croft, 2010). Not only must they do all the work that traditional teachers do in the classroom and in the hours outside of teaching, but they must also complete rigorous education programs and study for licensing exams. Thus, novice job-embedded teachers can be viewed as professionals with extensive formal training outside of employment hours. However, the rigors of this career path can be overwhelming for some novice job-embedded teachers, with many quitting in their first two years of teaching (Kadel, 2023). Thus, one mechanism to address teacher attrition is to determine how to prevent the attrition of novice job-embedded professionals.

Teacher preparation programs, professional development, and mentoring are protective factors against teacher attrition. Notably, a recent study suggests these factors influence novice teachers' professional identity and job satisfaction (Renbarger & Davis, 2019). The participants in this study believed that they received good mentorship from their teacher preparation programs. Since mentorship is positively associated with teacher self-efficacy (Nikoçeviq-Kurti, 2022), this facet of teacher preparation programs is likely essential for mediating the self-efficacy of novice job-embedded teachers. Many studies also cite professional development as an important factor in mediating job satisfaction and preventing teacher attrition (Lopez & Oliviera, 2020). Teachers whose schools invest in professional development view themselves as being valued (Philipsen et al., 2019). It could be argued that school districts that invest in teacher

preparation pathways for novice job-embedded teachers invest in essential professional development tools. This alone may be an important facet of preventing teacher attrition. Offering a novice job-embedded pathway may help mitigate teacher attrition compared to school districts that do not offer such programs.

Burnout is likely a significant factor affecting teacher self-efficacy in novice job-embedded teachers. Even experienced teachers report working long hours to prepare lessons, grade assessments, and interface with parents outside of classroom hours (Jones et al., 2022). According to the American Time Use Survey (Jones et al., 2022), teachers spend substantial time each week outside of school hours on planning (7 hours), grading student work (5 hours), and extracurricular activities (4 hours). The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated teachers' necessity to work outside of working hours. For example, about 70% of teachers reported spending more time reaching out to students, and 74% reported spending more time than before reaching out to parents (Jones et al., 2022). For novice job-embedded teachers, this situation was likely exacerbated; research suggests that novice teachers spend more time planning lessons and reviewing materials before teaching lessons (Wolff et al., 2021), requiring more time outside of classroom instruction than experienced teachers. Extended work hours contribute to burnout in various professions (Mäkikangas et al., 2021). Thus, burnout could be a significant concern for novice job-embedded teachers.

Self-efficacy is protective against burnout in the teaching profession. For example, Dexter and Wall (2021) conducted a cross-sectional, survey-based study with 46 elementary school teachers in the United States, finding a relationship between reflective functioning and teacher burnout, with teacher self-efficacy mediating this relationship. The authors concluded that reflective teachers view themselves as more self-efficacious, which collectively prevents the

gradual development of burnout (Dexter & Wall, 2021). Finding ways to promote the self-efficacy of novice teachers may decrease the propensity for burnout in this population.

In investigating the factors contributing to the teacher self-efficacy in novice job-embedded professionals, the participants identified important barriers and facilitators of self-efficacy. Many of the participants expressed student progress and mentorship from other teachers and their administrators as positive factors influencing their self-efficacy. This suggests that the self-efficacy of novice job-embedded professionals can be influenced by community self-efficacy. Community self-efficacy is defined as the ability of a group to collectively execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Zaccaro et al., 1995). In the context of educational settings, school community efficacy is the ability of a school to collectively achieve high academic performance (Klassen & Usher, 2010). The participants noted they had increased confidence when they received encouragement from their colleagues and administrators. Thus, community self-efficacy influences novice job-embedded teachers' self-efficacy. This is consistent with a large body of literature that suggests that teacher self-efficacy is enhanced by community self-efficacy (Kelley et al., 2020; Martin & Mulvihill, 2019; Mintez et al., 2013).

Schools can support novice job-embedded teachers by enhancing one of many variables including community self-efficacy, student self-efficacy, and student performance. As seen in this study, community self-efficacy enhanced the self-efficacy of the participants. Enhanced teacher self-efficacy has important implications for students. Research suggests that teachers with high self-efficacy enhance the self-efficacy of their students (Hajovsky et al., 2020; Li & Yang, 2021). The converse also appears to be true: high student self-efficacy enhances teacher self-efficacy (Barton & Dexter, 2020). Teachers with high self-efficacy are also more likely than

teachers with low self-efficacy to have students with high academic achievements (Li & Liu, 2022). Furthermore, the participants in this study identified student achievement as a facilitator of their teacher self-efficacy, congruent with findings in the literature. The reciprocal relationships between community, teacher, and student self-efficacy and student academic performance suggest that when schools target one variable for improvement, all other variables are impacted as well. Thus, schools may enhance teacher self-efficacy directly or indirectly by addressing any factors related to teacher self-efficacy.

Recommendations for Practice

This section includes recommendations based on the findings of the study. First, recommendations for changes to preparation programs for novice job-embedded teachers will be made. Second, recommendations for schools employing job-embedded teachers are discussed. Third, recommendations to job-embedded teachers will be described.

Recommendations for Teacher Preparation Programs

One of the important findings in this study is the participants' perceptions of their teacher preparation programs and how these programs influence their self-efficacy. The participants highlighted several themes as drawbacks. The following recommendations for practice include improving teacher preparation programs based on the areas mentioned by the participants. The participants believed their programs would benefit if:

1. Teacher preparation programs updated classes to include more relevant content. The participants felt like some of their classes were not directly relevant to their positions as job-embedded teachers. A recommendation of this study is for job-embedded pathway programs to evaluate their curriculum and ensure that the most updated information is included in the coursework.

2. Teacher preparation programs should include courses on classroom management techniques. Most participants cited classroom management as an area in which they needed improvement. Many participants vocalized not being ready to manage a classroom and not having the foundational knowledge to do so. Many participants wanted classroom management strategies to be included in their coursework. Another recommendation for job-embedded teacher programs is to include coursework on classroom management skills.
3. Teacher preparation programs should include courses on curriculum development. Novice job-embedded teachers do not have formal training in education and generally do not have formal knowledge of how to develop a curriculum. Many of the participants reported struggling with some aspects of curriculum development and recommended that their preparation programs include coursework on curriculum development.
4. Teacher preparation programs should include supervised classroom practical experiences. Many participants vocalized wanting mentorship or supervised classroom practicals as part of their preparation programs. Despite being job embedded teachers, the participants believed that supervised teaching would afford them the opportunity to get constructive criticism on their content knowledge, classroom management techniques, and overall teaching abilities.
5. Teacher preparation programs should order the curriculum appropriately. Many participants believed that the curriculum in their teacher preparation programs needed to be reordered to include the most urgent and relevant information, such as classroom management, classroom operations and interfacing with parents.

Many of the job-embedded practitioners interviewed in this study reported feeling overwhelmed their first year of teaching by non-teaching aspects of their positions, such as classroom management and interacting with students' parents or guardians. Coursework that could be prioritized at the beginning of job embedded pathway programs are classroom management, communication skills for interfacing with students and their parents, and subject content material they will be responsible for teaching in the first months of class.

Recommendations for Schools Employing Job-Embedded Teachers

In this section, several recommendations for schools employing job-embedded teachers are described. First, it is important to institute mentorship programs for job-embedded teachers. The participants in this study reported being overwhelmed during their first year of teaching, and they valued their mentors. One way to support job-embedded teachers is to pair them with a mentor who can guide them through the initial stages of teaching. Second, it is important to employ mechanisms to enhance the self-efficacy of job-embedded teachers. Self-efficacy not only enhances teachers' performance, but it is also protective against burnout and job dissatisfaction. Offering support, praise and constructive criticism can positively influence a novice teacher's job performance and can improve their perceived self-efficacy.

Another recommendation for states and school districts is to explore other pathways for these novice job-embedded practitioners to obtain their licenses. The participants in this study reported having to work long hours to prepare for lessons, while studying for their coursework and preparing for licensing exams. Alternative pathways to licensure may be available, and should be explored, especially if they allow for better work-life balance in novice job-embedded practitioners.

Recommendations for Novice Job-Embedded Teachers

This study investigated facilitators and barriers to the teacher self-efficacy in novice job-embedded practitioners. Based on the results of this study, there are several recommendations for novice job-embedded teachers. First, novice job-embedded teachers should find a classroom management course or training, either through their college or school of employment. Furthermore, such training should be attended multiple times throughout the first two years of teaching. Enhancing classroom management skills of novice teachers increases their self-efficacy (Sciuchetti & Yssel, 2019). Second, novice teachers should find a mentor at their college and within their school of employment. Having mentors is protective for burnout (Woo et al., 2019), and mentorship has been shown to enhance teacher self-efficacy (Ma et al., 2021).

The choice of a college for a novice job-embedded teacher's preparation program is paramount. A program should be chosen based on its ability to prepare an individual for their job and not just the easiest route. The college should also have a flexible schedule that allows for the completion of all employment-related work outside of classroom teaching times, while still allowing the student teacher to have work-life balance. Finally, job embedded teachers should explore their college's class schedule and explore multiple options to allow the individual to maximize their program's benefit. Some classes that may be beneficial to take earlier in the program are: (a) classroom management training, (b) lesson plan building, (c) curriculum development and (d) teaching strategies. These are all essential skills necessary for a teacher's first year in the classroom.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study had some limitations. First, a limitation of the study is that it was conducted in four school districts in one southeastern state. Therefore, the findings of this study may be

particular to the local cultural environment of the region under investigation. An area of future research could be investigating the perceptions of novice job-embedded teachers in different states with similar job-embedded pathway programs. It may be the case that some states have requirements for job-embedded teachers. Furthermore, some colleges may organize their programs in ways that are optimal, perhaps by prioritizing coursework in teaching strategies and classroom management.

The study was delimited to novice job-embedded practitioners working in rural school districts in Tennessee. The perceptions of novice job-embedded practitioners regarding self-efficacy are largely absent from the literature, necessitating qualitative studies into the perceptions of this demographic. This study adds an important set of their perceptions to the body of knowledge, namely the perceptions of novice job-embedded teachers working in rural southeastern public schools. Future research should examine the perceptions of teachers working in urban school districts, inner city schools, Title I schools, and private schools. Self-efficacy may also differ based on a teacher's age, gender, martial statuses, and ethnicity. Therefore, another avenue of future research is to explore teacher self-efficacy in novice job-embedded teachers of different ages, genders, marital statuses, and ethnic backgrounds. Comparing the perceptions of different novice job-embedded teachers will allow for a more holistic perspective of the phenomenon of novice job-embedded teacher self-efficacy.

Another area of future research is to compare job-embedded teacher programs in different states. Examination of program websites, even in universities within the same state, suggests that programs can vary widely. It would be interesting to examine the differences between teacher preparation programs and correlate those differences with individuals' job performance and self-

efficacy. This may lead to the identification of programmatic facets that facilitate the success of novice job-embedded teachers.

Summary

Chapter 5 presents the interpretation and discussion of data related to the lived experiences of novice job-embedded teachers regarding self-efficacy. The framework of Bandura's social cognitive theory was used to guide the process. Ten novice job-embedded teachers working in rural, public-school districts in Tennessee were interviewed. Participants were asked questions regarding their self-efficacy as teachers, identifying important facilitators and barriers to self-efficacy. The participants discussed the role of their teacher preparation programs in mediating their self-efficacy. The participants highlighted important programmatic factors that promoted their self-efficacy, including support from faculty and mentors. The participants also discussed some drawbacks of their programs, noting that the curriculum needed to be updated and courses on classroom management needed to be included. The participants also described their futures as teachers, with some participants being optimistic about their careers in education and other participants were either neutral or pessimistic, with some trepidation regarding school climates. Analysis of the data led to recommendations for practice. Recommendations for teacher preparation programs, for schools employing novice job-embedded teachers and these professionals themselves were described. The chapter concluded with a discussion of future research directions, which include understanding the lived experiences of novice job-embedded teachers in other types of schools and in other regions of the United States.

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VITA

SHAY MICHAEL SHANNON

Education:	Ph.D. School Leadership, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee, 2023
	Ed.S. Instructional Leadership, Tennessee Tech University, Cookville, Tennessee, 2020
	M.A. Education with an Emphasis in Physical Education, Union University, Jackson, Tennessee, 2011
	B.A. Physical Education and Health & Drivers Education with Licensure, Martin Methodist College, Pulaski, Tennessee, 2009
	A.A., Education, Columbia State Community College, Columbia, Tennessee, 2006
Professional Experience:	Teacher and Graduation Coach, Harriman High School; 2015-2023
	Teacher, West Carroll Jr./Sr. High school, 2009-2015
	Teacher, Columbia Central High School, 2008