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# An Ethnographic Investigation into the Influence of Bandura's Four Psychological Sources of Information on Mid-Career Elementary Teachers' Self-Efficacy

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# An Ethnographic Investigation into the Influence of Bandura's Four Psychological Sources of Information on Mid-Career Elementary Teachers' Self-Efficacy

A Dissertation by

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# DEDICATION

*"Imagine with all your mind,*

*believe with all your heart,*

*achieve with all your might."*

*-unknown*

This dissertation is dedicated to my children Cristian Herrera and Olivia Herrera, and to my nieces and nephews, Alyssa, Sabrina, Nicholas and Guillermo.

Cristian and Olivia, I hope that by me achieving my dream, you learn that with hard work and determination everything is possible. I am so proud to be your mom and I can't wait to see you both achieve your goals and live your dreams. I love you.

ABSTRACT

An Ethnographic Investigation into the Influence of Bandura's Four Psychological Sources of Information on Mid-Career Elementary Teachers' Self-Efficacy

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this ethnographic investigation was to examine and describe the experiences that impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs based on Bandura's four psychological sources of information.

**Methodology:** An ethnographic research design was utilized in this study to collect data from 15 mid-career elementary school teachers in Riverside County, which is located in southern California. A semi-structured interview protocol was utilized to gather the rich accounts of situations that impacted the self-efficacy beliefs of participants.

**Findings:** From the examination of data collected from the 15 ethnographic one-on-one interviews, the following findings emerged: (a) Teachers feel validated from positive input; (b) Teachers are more reflective after failed teaching experiences; (c) Teachers' sense of personal accomplishment diminishes when uncomfortable with the academic content; (d) Teachers suffer from emotional exhaustion when other adults are involved; (e) Teachers develop confidence when observing a trusted colleague; (f) Teachers grow professionally when they participate in collaborative lesson study; (g) The positive relationships teachers establish refuel their energy to persist in the field; (h) Teachers feel motivated to improve when observing other teachers' successes or failures; (i) Teachers feel a sense of worth when the light bulb goes on for the kids; (j) Teachers feel disconnected from negative input; (k) Teachers develop a deep understanding of how students learn; (l) Teachers experience a sense of joy when they know they have impacted students.

**Conclusions:** The results of this study are meant to inform educational leaders, educators, and researchers of the significance of developing high levels of teacher efficacy beliefs in order to ensure the well-being of mid-career teachers and in this way, ensuring that they stay committed to the teaching profession.

**Recommendation:** A recommendation for future research is the conduction of a longitudinal study that follows teachers from the early-career stage to the late-career stage in order to expand the understanding of how teacher self-efficacy changes throughout the years.

# PREFACE

Upon conducting research in the area of developing professional learning opportunities for teachers, three doctoral students found commonality in where the research was leading. While originally researching professional development needs in different areas such as dual immersion, reflective practices, and the implementation of professional development, all three doctoral students found that research within those contexts indicated a need for further study in the area of the development of teacher self-efficacy. In particular, the research demonstrated a need for the utilization of more qualitative methods to better understand how teacher self-efficacy was impacted. Additionally, the research indicated a need to look at how self-efficacy is maintained or how it changes over the course of teachers' careers. This resulted in the researchers forming a thematic team with the purpose of exploring the development of teacher self-efficacy within a particular teacher career stage. The studies focus on determining the experiences that influence teachers' self-efficacy within each particular career stages. The thematic team worked together to co-design the qualitative study, including the purpose statement, research questions, definitions, interview questions, and protocols to ensure thematic consistency.

The term “peer researchers” is utilized throughout all three studies to describe the three individuals conducting this thematic study. The peer researchers each studied public elementary school teachers in the following career stages. Erica Jenson focused on early-career teachers who are in the first seven years of teaching. I focused on mid-career teachers who have 8-23 years of teaching experience. Ginger Prewitt focused on late-career teachers with 24 years or more of teaching experience.

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# CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

It is the beginning of Mia's eleventh year of teaching. Feelings of anxiety and fear overwhelm her due to the uncertainty of what this year may bring. She remembers a time when the start of a new school year brought with it excitement and new possibilities, instead of the negative feelings that overwhelm her. So much has changed since she started teaching, not only professionally, but also in her personal life. The demands of being a mother and a wife along with the demands she faces at work, are really challenging her efficacy beliefs in herself. Mia does not feel that she can truly make a difference in her students' lives and most of the time she just feels tired and stressed. Lately, she always feels rushed and like she is not doing enough as a teacher and as a mother. She feels disconnected and burned out.

From the time she was in elementary school herself, Mia's dream was to become a teacher. She was the first person in her family to attend and graduate from college. Her accomplishment made her feel very proud of herself and she truly believed that she had the power to make a difference in her students' lives. She has experience teaching a variety of lower and upper grades. She has always enjoyed her profession and considers herself a lifelong learner. Mia currently teaches third grade at the same school in which she stared as a new teacher. The school is a multi-track, year-round elementary school that has a student population of about 1,300 students. Maintaining a good working relationship with her colleagues is very important to her and she values the opportunity to work with some of her closest friends.

Mia made a quick and easy transition to the adoption of the Common Core Standards. She collaborated with colleagues to make the necessary changes to their

outdated curriculum in order to ensure that her students accessed the skills noted in the new standards. However, during the last school year the school district piloted new language arts curriculum that is now being implemented district wide. Mia has taken the time to look through the curriculum and plan with her partner, but even with that she has not had the mastery experiences with it to make her feel efficacious in her classroom. On the contrary, she feels inadequate and lacking the knowledge to be an effective teacher. In the past, colleagues sought out Mia for teaching advice and activity ideas, which she was always ready to provide. Now she does not feel like she has the knowledge and experience to provide that help. She feels the stress to grasp the new curriculum fast in order to provide the support needed to her colleagues. Long days and weekends are spent learning the new curriculum instead of spent with her family. She feels guilty about neglecting the time with her children and husband. This causes her anxiety and stress. This physiological arousal is having a negative effect on Mia's efficacy beliefs.

While the school district provided a few days of curriculum training during the last school year, Mia feels that those trainings were not enough. She learns best in professional development session in which she can witness lessons being modeled, not just a page by page walk though of the text books. She is lacking the vicarious experiences that will help her build her efficacy beliefs. In the first few years of teaching, Mia attended many professional development sessions in various subjects that the school district offered. She found that after attending the sessions, she was able to return to her classroom with confidence to implement what she had learned. Many of the presenters at the professional development sessions were teachers on special assignment that provided extra support in the classrooms. Mia made good use of them and under their supervision

planned a few lessons. Their positive verbal input helped Mia believe in her ability as a teacher.

Now Mia feels lost and frustrated with what she interprets as lack of support. All the negative physiological arousal is affecting her self-efficacy beliefs. This causes her to question her abilities as a teacher. She no longer finds joy in her profession, she has stopped implementing the great student collaboration strategies she knew worked so well, and no longer desires to help plan and implement the different family involvement events she looked forward to every year. Mia is burned out and unsatisfied with her profession. She knows that she still has many years to go before she retires, but she cannot see how she is going to survive feeling this way much longer.

The teaching profession has changed over the last few decades. Teachers are now feeling pressure and stress that have little to do with the direct teaching aspect of their profession and more to do with matters such as demands of standardized tests, educational reforms, and the added layers of bureaucracy (Darling-Hammond, 2012). According to the Metlife Teacher Survey (2012), teacher satisfaction reached its lowest point in the 25 years. About half of all teachers in the country leave the profession at some point during the first five years of teaching (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).
Many studies have been conducted to determine the correlation between teacher satisfaction and the factors that play a role in said levels of satisfaction. Researchers have found that a number of those factors are linked to student achievement (Caprara, Barbranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006; Knoblauch & Woolfolk Hoy, 2008; M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Teachers feel a sense of pride and satisfaction when their students perform well or when they feel that what they are doing is actually

making a difference in their students' lives. In addition, there are also intrinsic factors that contribute to the way a teacher feels about their chosen profession. Teachers that feel adequately prepared to perform the tasks needed in the classroom have a high sense of teacher self-efficacy (TSE) (M. Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Furthermore, teachers with high self-efficacy succumb to the negative effects of stress at lower rates of self-efficacy (A. Bandura, 1997). Teachers with low self-efficacy feel more stress and have a poor view of their capabilities as teachers. They feel that what they do in the classroom will not have a significant impact on their students. This kind of mentality can lead to teacher burnout and lack of motivation (Hildebrandt & Eom, 2011).

A National Education Association (NEA) report states that while much is said and done about recruiting new teachers into the profession, equally as important is retaining the teachers that are in the classroom now (National Education Association [NEA], 2002-2017). This requires providing them with the adequate preparation, ongoing professional development support, and leadership. Teachers need specific support and trainings in order to develop high levels of self-efficacy in their classrooms (Swackhammer, Koellner, Basile, & Kimbrough, 2009).

## Background

Many studies have been conducted on the topic of self-efficacy in the past several decades (Aloe, Amo, & Shanahan, 2014; A. Bandura, 1993; C. D. Bruce & Ross, 2008; Fives, 2003; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; R. M. Klassen & Chiu, 2011; Labone, 2004; M. Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001; M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, 1998; A. Woolfolk Hoy & Burke Spero, 2005). Research on this topic has been

conducted in relation to many contexts and in different fields, mainly utilizing quantitative methods (R. M. Klassen, Tze, Betts, & Gordon, 2011; Labone, 2004). Educational researchers found that when the specific role of the classroom teacher, a specific type of self-efficacy, called TSE emerged.

**Social Cognitive Theory**

According to A. Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory, self-efficacy can be defined as the belief a person has about their capability to perform a certain task or behavior. A. D. Stajkovic and Luthans (2002), define self-efficacy as "an individual's belief (confidence) about his or her capabilities to execute a specific task within a given context" (p. 130). Narrowing down the definition of self-efficacy further, TSE can be defined as the belief a teacher has that he or she can impact their students' learning, regardless of the types of students they have in their classes (Zee & Koomen, 2016). When teachers have these positive beliefs in their capabilities to impact the learning of their students they feel empowered and act in a positive ways by prompting and sustaining skills, motivation, and the effort needed to reach their desired goals (A. Bandura, 1997; Zee & Koomen, 2016).

A key component of A. Bandura's (1997, 2001) social cognitive theory framework is the idea of a triadic reciprocal causation system or reciprocal determinism (F. Pajares, 1996). Reciprocal determinism is made up of three variables that must be considered when it comes to learning. Behavior, environmental factors, and personal factors are the three variables that A. Bandura believed to cause learning to take place (as cited in F. Pajares, 1995). In other words, a person's behavior is influenced by both environmental and personal factors.

In addition, five basic human capabilities are identified as the central idea of social cognitive theory. The five basic human capabilities are symbolizing, forethought, vicarious learning, self-regulating, and self-reflection. Self-efficacy is closely connected to two of the basic human capabilities, self-regulation and reflection (A. Bandura, 1997; A. D. Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

**Types of Self-Efficacy**

TSE is defined as the teacher's beliefs of his or her aptitudes to produce desired outcomes in regards to student achievement and student learning (Armor, 1976; A. Bandura, 1977; Zee & Koomen, 2016). The idea of TSE was born from a study conducted by RAND researchers in 1976. Utilizing Rotter's Locus of Control theory (1966), a two-item scale was designed to measure TSE. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with two statements provided to them and the sum of both items were titled and identified as TSE (Ross, 1994; M. Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

Furthermore, the two statements used by the RAND researchers to measure TSE also birthed two other terms to describe the types of teaching efficacy a teacher displayed. The first term is general teacher efficacy (GTE) which refers to a teacher's belief that teachers in general can impact student achievement. The second term, personal teacher efficacy (PTE), refers to the teacher's belief that they as an individual can teach and motivate their students regardless of external factors (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Teachers with high levels of PTE are confident in their teaching abilities and believe they can sidestep any factors that may get in the way of student learning (M. Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

In addition, a third type of efficacy exists which involves a collective shared belief in the capability to reach given levels of achievement. When a group of teachers work together to develop their belief systems as a whole, collective efficacy is born (A. Bandura, 1994, 1997). Because an individual teachers' self-efficacy cannot be separated from the collective group's efficacy beliefs, collective efficacy has similar impact on teacher performance. Based on social cognitive theory belief, collective efficacy is a significant component in determining a group's motivation and performance (A. D. Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

**TSE Scales**

In the search to learn more about the influence of self-efficacy, many instruments to measure it have been created over the last few decades. Because self-efficacy is so context specific, these scales can vary greatly from one another (A. Bandura, 1986). However, all these scales of teachers' self-efficacy have advanced greatly from the original two items on the RAND survey (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993).

The first instrument to measure self-efficacy was designed by P. Ashton and Webb (1986), and was utilized by RAND researchers as a data collecting tool for their Title III projects. It was through this study that the correlation between teacher efficacy and student achievement was discovered (Pigge & Marso, 1994). The second scale created by Gibson and Dembo (1984), was a 30 item scale that was designed to differentiate between teaching efficacy and personal efficacy, two features identified by RAND researchers.

Since then many more scales have been created to measure self-efficacy in different facets such as TSE (A. Bandura, 1993), mathematic problem-solving self-

efficacy (F. Pajares & Miller, 1994) and self-efficacy and learning (Schunk, 1996). More recent and more frequently used scales to measure TSE immerged from the College of Education at The Ohio State University. The *Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES)* consists of 52 teacher specific items, 23 of which were originally from A. Bandura's 30 item unpublished scale. In addition, the *Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)* contains 24 items (M. Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

**Sources of Self-Efficacy**

Bandura (1977) has identified four features that he believes supports the development of teacher efficacy beliefs. The four identified sources are mastery experience, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and psychological arousal. Reviewing Bandura's work supports a deeper understanding of the factors that may influence self-efficacy beliefs (A. Woolfolk Hoy & Burke Spero, 2005).

The first process is mastery experience and it refers to a person's perception of previous experiences and the perceived results from those experiences. This factor is the most influential of the four sources of self-efficacy information because it has to do with direct performance of the individual. Nevertheless, an important consideration is that the outcome of said performance is not as important as how the individual psychologically processes the information regarding his or her performance (A. D. Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). If a teacher perceives his or her performance of a certain teaching task as successful, then his or her self-efficacy level concerning that task will be high and in the future this teacher will be more willing to perform that task again.

The second process, vicarious experience, refers to building self-efficacy and learning by observing others perform a certain task. This type of experience is very

important for teachers. They can learn from watching other teachers' model lessons and professions specific tasks (Labone, 2004). For pre-service teachers, this would take place during the student teaching phase of their education. They would get to work alongside a master teacher and have the opportunity to observe modeled lessons. In addition, in-service teachers would also benefit from this type of experience especially with the transition to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). CCSS is new to in-service teachers and many of them may have low self-efficacy in regards to planning and delivering lessons, but after the opportunity to observe a modeled lesson, their self-efficacy in related tasks may change.

Furthermore, the belief that an individual's self-efficacy can be influenced by encouragement or discouragement from others is called verbal persuasion. A. Bandura (1997) believed that in order for verbal persuasion to take place the feedback had to come from a significant other or a person whose opinion mattered to the individual being influenced. In order for verbal persuasion to improve or increase self-efficacy the individual being influence must already believe that he or she possesses the skills necessary for the task at hand (A. D. Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

Lastly, physiological arousal is the feelings of enthusiasm or anxiety that influence the expectation of future success or failure (A. Bandura, 1977). A person suffering from anxiety or depression may have low self-efficacy and believe that certain tasks are more difficult than they truly are. Conversely, a person with high self-efficacy will have the clarity to approach any situation in a calm manner and with problem solving skills at hand.

## Impact of TSE

Self-efficacy is believed to play a huge role on the attitude a teacher has about his or her profession. Research has shown that a teacher's behavior in the classroom is related to their judgment of self-efficacy. A. D. Stajkovic and Luthans (1998), suggest that self-efficacy has a significant influence on work motivation. Teachers with high self-efficacy invest more time in planning and organizing their lessons (Allinder, 1994). These teachers are also more enthusiastic about trying new teaching methods that can assist in meeting the needs of their students (T. R. Guskey, 1988). In addition, teachers with high efficacy are more resilient and are more likely to persist when things do not go as they planned (P. Ashton & Webb, 1986). Furthermore, they are less critical of their students and devote more time working with struggling students (Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

TSE also has a vast impact on student self-efficacy and student achievement. Researchers have found that a teacher's self-efficacy can influence students' self-efficacy because when a teacher has high self-efficacy beliefs he or she is more likely to try new teaching strategies and to find ways to motivate her students (A. Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Bouffard Bouchard, 1990; Lent, Brown, & Larkin, 1986). Consequently, students with high self-efficacy are more academically motivated, display effective self-regulatory strategies, and show more academic persistence (Lent, Brown, & Larkin, 1986; F. Pajares, 1996).

## Self-Efficacy and Mid-Career Teachers

The research on whether or not TSE is stable over time is mixed. According to some researchers, teacher's self-efficacy can increase through experience and adequate

professional development (Denham & Michael, 1981). A. Bandura (1997) postulates that TSE, once established, will remain the same throughout a teacher's career. Yet, other researchers argue that there is a lack of evidence that verifies that TSE changes or remains the same throughout the course of their career (M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). In their study of 1,430 teachers, Hoy and A. E. Woolfolk (1993) found that teachers' self-efficacy does fluctuate throughout a teacher's career. The findings revealed that in the areas of teaching strategies, leadership in the classroom and ability to engage students, TSE improved up to the middle of their career and then declined after about 23 years of service.

A later study conducted by M. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2007), concluded that since experience teachers gathered a wealth of mastery experiences, contextual factors had an insignificant role in their self-efficacy judgment. This study compared the self-efficacy beliefs of 255 novice and experienced teachers. Although, researchers only considered two of the four sources of self-efficacy as identified by A. Bandura (1986, 1997). This suggests that mastery experience do impact TSE.

## Statement of the Research Problem

Our nation is in the middle of a crisis of teacher shortage that has been building up over the last few years. This crisis has been cause by a number of circumstances including growing student population, early retirements, fewer graduating teacher candidates, and teacher attrition (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Watson, 2017). It was expected that in the 2016-2017 school year, California alone would have an estimated 23,000 new teachers (Watson, 2017). While many efforts are being made to attract new

teacher candidates into the profession, the same effort must be made in terms of retaining and supporting mid-career teachers.

Past quantitative studies have shown a positive correlation between TSE and teachers' willingness to remain in the profession (Norton, 2013). Teacher's with high self-efficacy invest more time in lesson preparation and are more enthusiastic about trying new teaching strategies (Allinder, 1994; T. R. Guskey, 1988). In addition, they are more resilient and more likely to persist even when things do not turnout the way the planned (P. Ashton & Webb, 1986). On the other hand, Zee and Koomsen (2016), found that low levels of self-efficacy can lead to teacher burn out, emotional exhaustion and stress. The consequences of teacher's work-associated stress and burn out can lead to the decision to leave the profession (Aloe et al., 2014).

The effects of said consequences have both monetary and student achievement impact for school districts. Watson (2017), explains that due to teacher attrition and mobility, districts and school sites are forced to spend founds trying to recreate staff cohesiveness that is lost due to teacher attrition resulting in billions of dollars spent yearly. Furthermore, the movement of teachers, whether it be due to leaving the profession or moving to what is considered a better school, is now being recognized as one of the factors creating the student achievement gap. Inversely, much of the past quantitative data has found that teachers with high self-efficacy have a positive influence on student self-efficacy and student achievement (A. Bandura & Chunk, 1981; Bufford Bouchard, 1990; Lent, Brown, & Larkin, 1984).

R. M. Klassen and Chiu (2011), suggest that further studies should focus on mid and late-career teacher motivation beliefs since it has been an area that they feel has been

neglected. They also add that little is known about the connection between self-efficacy, job related stress, or the impact of years of experience on TSE. Because research done in the field of TSE has been quantitative, there is a need to tell the stories behind the perceived self-efficacy of mid-career teachers. Labone (2004), recommends that researchers consider qualitative methodologies in order to examine the development of TSE beliefs.

## Purpose Statement

The purpose of this ethnographic investigation was to examine and describe the experiences that impact mid-career elementary TSE beliefs based on A. Bandura's (1977) four psychological sources of information (mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological arousal).

## Research Questions

The following research questions were utilized to gather the data necessary for this ethnographic study:

1. How do mastery experiences impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
2. How does verbal persuasion impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
3. How do vicarious experience impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
4. How does physiological arousal impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?

## Significance of the Study

The findings of this research are intended to provide the education community with valuable information that can be utilized to develop TSE and to ensure teacher well-being. One way to prevent further teacher attrition and help improve the national teacher shortage is by understanding and supporting the needs of in-service teachers. It is important that great efforts are made to sustain teachers in the profession because not only does it save the nation a large amount of educational funds, it also impacts student achievement (Watson, 2017). This study aims to tell the story of events that impact teachers' self-efficacy and how that has helped form their self-efficacy beliefs.

Maintaining teachers in the classroom and supporting the development of their TSE will not only have a positive impact on the previously mentioned teacher shortage problem but it will also aid with teacher job satisfaction and motivation. Principals, professional developers, and district superintendents need to understand how TSE is developed in order to help teachers develop high levels of TSE. Through this knowledge educational leaders will be able to provide teachers with the adequate support and resources they need to cultivate high levels of TSE in their classrooms. In addition, new professional development and coaching programs can be developed to meet the needs of teachers in order to develop positive TSE (Swackhamer, Koellner, Baisle, & Kimbrough, 2009). These type of programs may reduce teacher stress and raise teacher job satisfaction, which are two other distresses of the teaching profession (Zee & Koomen, 2016).

Another benefit of this research is that the information gathered may have the potential to change the way teachers are being evaluated. Human resource directors and

school administrators can modify the focus of teacher evaluations to include feedback that develops positive self-efficacy. Jackson (2014), writes that selecting the correct kind of feedback can make a big difference in motivating and inspiring teachers to improve their practice.

Lastly, this study will provide qualitative data in the area of mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy. Researchers have suggested that this population and topic need further qualitative investigation (R. M. Klassen & Chiu, 2011; Labone, 2004). Educational leaders and teachers will benefit from the data collected from this study regarding the factors that impact TSE beliefs.

## Definitions

Definitions of terms that are relevant to this study are provided in this section.

*Collective self-efficacy.* The beliefs a group shares regarding their capabilities to reach their goals and accomplish desired tasks (A. Bandura, 1986).

*Early-career teachers.* Teachers with 0-7 years of experience. Early-career teachers are in the learning and survival stages of their careers as they are developing their professional identities and are gaining understanding of how to impact students. These teachers typically have a high level of commitment to the profession (Day & Gu, 2007; Huberman, 1989; White, 2008).

*General teacher efficacy.* An individual teacher's beliefs that the teacher population as a whole can impact student outcomes (Ross, 1994).

*Late-career teachers.* Teachers with 24 or more years of experience. Late-career teachers are often comfortable with their role and how they conduct their classrooms. Some experience disengagement as this is the level they typically reach retirement

age. Their professional identities can be challenged by changes required in this phase, but they typically have a strong desire to fulfill their professional duty before retiring (Day & Gu, 2007; Huberman, 1989; White, 2008).

*Mastery experiences.* The instances in which an individual is actually able to perform a difficult task with success (A. Bandura, 1997; M. Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009)

*Mid-career teachers.* Teachers with 8-23 years of experience. Mid-career teachers have reached a stabilization phase of their career and are more likely to experiment with new strategies and become reflective on their teaching practices. They have a defined sense of professional identity and are likely to work on maintaining balance between their professional and personal lives (Huberman, 1989; Day & Gu, 2007; White, 2008).

*Physiological arousal.* An individual's emotional state when presented with performing a specific task (A. Bandura, 1977; M. Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009).

*Social cognitive theory.* A theoretical framework that suggests that an individual's achievement depends upon the interactions between the individual's behaviors, personal factors and environment (A. Bandura, 1986).

*Social learning theory.* Theoretical framework that suggest that individuals learn primarily from observation of model activities or behavior (J. B. Rotter, 1966).

*Teacher self-efficacy.* An individual teacher's beliefs in his or her personal ability to perform a specific teaching task within various contexts and how those tasks impact student learning (A. Bandura, 1986).

*Verbal persuasion.* The instances in which others provide an individual with verbal encouragement about their capability to perform a given task (A. Bandura, 1977; M. Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009).

*Vicarious experiences.* The instances in which an individual makes judgments about their own abilities after observing someone similar to themselves perform a difficult task with success (A. Bandura, 1977; M. Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009).

## Delimitations

Delimitations are boundaries that are placed on a study at the discretion of the researcher (Roberts, 2010). In the 2015-2016 school year there were 10,453 public schools in the state of California (CDE, 2016). Delimiting this study to public elementary schools in California, reduced the number of schools to 5,858. In order to delimit the study even further, the thematic peer researchers chose to limit the study sample to public elementary schools in Riverside County, further reducing the number of schools to 315.

In the 2015-2016 school year, there were 295,025 public school teachers in California (CDE, 2016). Delimiting the study to public elementary teachers in California reduced the number of teachers to 144,073. In order to delimit the study even further, the researcher chose to limit the study sample to public elementary teachers in Riverside county with 8-23 years of teaching experiences.

## Organization of the Study

This study is organized in five distinct chapters. Chapter I contains an introduction to the study, the background information, and the statement of the problem. Furthermore, it presents the significance of the problem, definitions, and delimitations of

the study. Chapter II provides a literature review, which consists of the theoretical background of self-efficacy, the development of TSE, the outcomes of TSE, and the influences of TSE beliefs. Chapter III presents the methodology employed for this study, along with the population, sample, and instrumentation design. Chapter IV presents and analysis of the data collected along with the findings. Chapter V provides a summary of the study along with the conclusion based on the analysis of the data collected, recommended implication for actions, and recommendations for future research.

# CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter contains the review of literature as it pertains to teacher efficacy. It begins with the history of the theoretical background of Rotter's Social Learning Theory and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. It continues to review the four processes of the Social Cognitive Theory, which are a very important component of this study. In addition, information on the various types of teacher efficacy is also included in this chapter, as are the different scales utilized over the years to measure TSE under the umbrella of Social Leaning Theory and Social Cognitive Theory. Furthermore, information on the outcomes of TSE, including outcomes for teachers, outcomes for students, and how self-efficacy can be impacted are also provided in this chapter. Lastly, the various stages of a teacher's career conclude the literature review of this chapter.

## Theoretical Background

The concept of self-efficacy was first introduced in the 1970s. Self-efficacy is a psychological construct that resulted from the combined research of Social Learning Theory and the Social Cognitive Theory. In an effort to expand the research on Social Learning Theory, Albert Bandura (1977) presented the Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the interaction of cognitive, behavioral, personal, and environmental factors interacting in order to determine a person's motivation and behavior. A. Bandura initiated the research that lead to the construct of self-efficacy. Since then, researchers have studied self-efficacy in various situations, such as academic self-efficacy, student self-efficacy, and TSE, to name a few.

### Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory is a theoretical framework that suggest that individuals

learn primarily from observation of model activities or behavior (J. B. Rotter, 1966). This theory came about in the 1960s when psychologists were trying to combine two different ideas. One idea focused on the development of reinforced theories as related to behaviors and the other focused on the cognitive theories as related to behavior. According to J. B. Rotter (1966), four variables are the foundation of social learning theory:

- Behaviors
- Expectancies
- Reinforcement
- Psychological situations

Social learning theory claims that if a behavior is reinforced, the possibility of that behavior happening again is higher (J. B. Rotter, 1966; 1975). In addition, social leaning theory states that, "when an organism perceives two situations as similar, then his expectancies for a particular kind of reinforcement, or a class of reinforcement, will generalize from one situation to another" (J. B. Rotter, 1975, p. 57). This means that if a behavior is reinforced, not only will the likelihood of it reoccurring be higher, but an individual may also link that experience to similar situations, which will in turn increase the likelihood of such situation occurring again.

**Locus of control.** J. B. Rotter (1975), developed the locus of control theory which explains individual's beliefs regarding the degree to which a person is able to control the outcomes of events that take place in their lives. The idea of locus of control developed from the continuous research conducted on social leaning theory. Through his ongoing research, J. B. Rotter (1966) found that there were two kinds of general

expectancies. One of these expectancies had to do with the nature of reinforcement such as achievement, dependency, and social approval. The second kind of general expectancy had to do with the varying of the reinforcements involving situations in which problem solving and decisions making was necessary (J. B. Rotter, 1975). It was determined that the two expectancies, external and internal control, had varying loci of control.

**External/internal control.** External locus of control is, "when a reinforcement is perceived by the subject as following some action of his own but not being entirely contingent upon his actions" (J. B. Rotter, 1966, p. 1). Individuals that operate from an external locus of control tend to be inert because they feel that they have little to no control over the events that happen in their lives. They believe that events occur as a result of reasons out of their control such as luck, chance, or fate. Expectancy outcomes are usually low in such situations due to the individual's beliefs that the outcome is out of his or her control. Internal locus of control refers to a person's believes that an outcome is dependent upon his or her behavior. Individuals that operate from an internal locus of control belief that they have control over the outcome of events that happen in their lives. Expectancy outcomes are higher in situations where internal locus of control is involved due to the individual's belief that his or her behavior can control the outcome of the situation.

## Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory immerged from the work of a Stanford based psychologist named Albert Bandura. This theory suggests that an individual's achievement depends upon the interactions between the individual's behaviors, personal factors, and

environment (A. Bandura, 1986; F. Pajares, 1996). The causation model of triadic reciprocal determinism is applied to demonstrate the ways in which behavior, personal factors (cognition), and environmental factors interact and influence each other (see Figure 1). The three sources are not equal in strengths and one is not always stronger than another, but with time one of the source will exert its influence and trigger reciprocal influences.

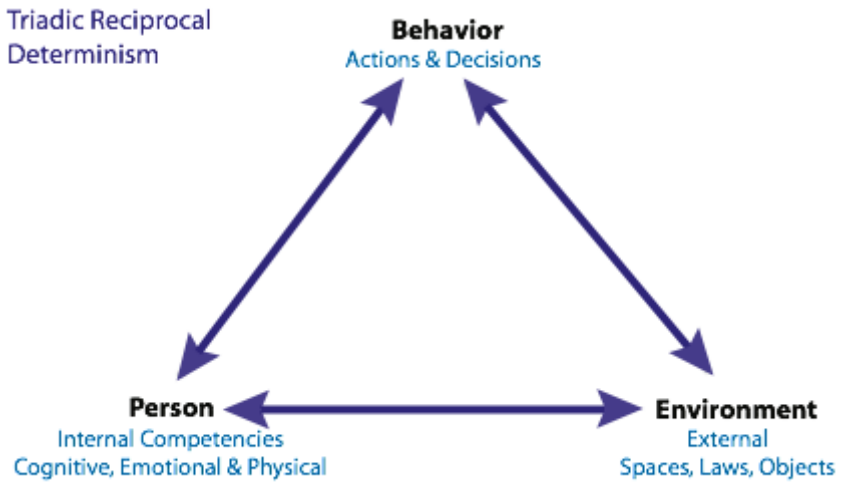


*Figure 1.* Bandura's Triadic Reciprocal Determinism Model. Adapted from "Overcoming Obstacles to Avoid," by B. Miller, 2010, *Learning Solutions Magazine, 14*, 1-7. Retrieved from http://www.leanirngsolutionsmag.com/articles/474 /overcoming-obsttacles-to-avoid-/print

Social cognitive theory also suggests that individuals are self-developing, self-regulating, self-reflecting and proactive, not just shaped by inner forces or environments (A. Bandura, 1986). A. Bandura (1977), postulates that an individual's behavior is the result of a combination of outcome expectancies and the individual's efficacy expectations. J. B. Rotter's (1966) outcome expectancies focus on how an individual's behavior can affect the outcomes while A. Bandura's (1977) efficacy expectations focuses on whether or not an individual believes that he is capable of executing a certain

behavior or task. When a person is able to execute said behaviors or tasks with the desired outcome this results in the development of their personal efficacy. According to A. Bandura (1993), personal efficacy is develop from the following four processes: cognitive ability, motivation, affective process, and selection.

**Four processes.** A. Bandura (1991) states that, "The cognitive determinants is indexed by self-belief or efficacy, personal goal setting, and quality of analytical thinking" (p. 267). He adds that an important belief system is that of ability. While some individuals believe that ability is a skill that can be learned and are willing to seek ways to expand their knowledge and competencies, others believe that it is more of an inherent capacity. An individual's perception of their ability to execute a task is one of the cognitive processes that has an effect on a person's efficacy expectations.

The four major processes involved in the development of personal efficacy are cognitive abilities, motivation, affective processes, and selection. Cognitive abilities refer to an individual's believed ability to carry out a task. These abilities can be affected by an individual's beliefs regarding the extent to which their environment is controlled. Experiences vary from individual to individual based on their cognitive processing of information. The next major process is motivation, which is believed to play a key role in the ability to self-regulate (A. Bandura, 1991). Individuals motivate themselves in various ways such as forming beliefs about their capabilities and by setting goals for themselves. Outcome expectancy is a key factor of motivation (A. Bandura, 1993). People are more likely to perform a task if they are motivated by a positive outcome. The affective process is, "the emotional mediator of self-efficacy belief" (A. Bandura, 1993, p. 132). A person's belief in their capabilities contributes into the level of stress and

depression they experience. Individuals who believe in their ability to overcome perceived threats or to control their environment, are usually not affected by negative thought patters. On the other hand, individuals who believe that they cannot overcome perceived threats or have little to no control over their environment, experience high levels of anxiety arousal. Stress, anxiety, and fear are all emotional factors that have a negative effect on an individual's efficacy expectations. The last major process is the process of selection which also plays a major role in an individual's efficacy expectations. Individuals have the ability to select the activities and environments they wish to partake in. An individual's personal efficacy beliefs can shape the paths their life takes. By choosing or avoiding certain tasks or activities, an individual is cultivating different skills, interest, and social experiences that determine their life course (A. Bandura, 1993).

**Development of Self-efficacy**

A. Bandura (1977) introduced the concept of self-efficacy in his social cognitive theory. He postulated that self-efficacy was the primary motivational force that influenced an individual's actions. Self-efficacy is defined as, "the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce outcome" (A. Bandura, 1977, p. 193). Self-efficacy differs from other concepts of self in that it is task specific and it operates from the individual's perception rather than the individual's true ability (R. D. Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004; M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Self-efficacy beliefs develop from triadic reciprocal determinism. Environmental influences, personal factors, and behaviors all play a role in the development of an individual's self-efficacy. According to A. Bandura (1977), four sources of information also factor into

the development of self-efficacy. The four sources are mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal.

**Sources of Self-Efficacy Beliefs**

The development of an individual's self-efficacy emerges from four sources of information. A. Bandura (1977) suggests that individual's process information concerning their capabilities in different ways and that based on those perceptions they make choices and regulate their behavior accordingly. Self-efficacy beliefs are formed through the process of selecting, filtering, and weighing information gathered form the four sources of information. The four sources of efficacy-shaping information identified by A. Bandura are mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal.

**Mastery experiences.** Of the four sources of self-efficacy information, mastery experiences has the most powerful influence over self-efficacy beliefs (A. Bandura, 1977). The term mastery experiences refers to the perception that a task or behavior has been executed in a successful manner, therefore, raising efficacy beliefs and contributing to the expectation that the performance will be successfully executed in the future (R. D. Goddard et al., 2004). Having successful experiences provides an individual with evidence about his or her ability to perform the same task in a successful way in the future. M. Tschannen-Moran and McMaster (2009) add that as an individual has mastery experiences in different tasks, the more likely they will be to take risks in similar situations. In contrast, if an experience does not produce the desired outcome or the experience is perceived as a failure, the individual may avoid the task or any similar task

in the future. The individual will transfer their self-efficacy beliefs from one task or situation to other similar ones.

**Vicarious experiences.** The second source of self-efficacy information are vicarious experiences. This refers to an individual observing others successfully execute a task and then transferring the feelings of success to form self-efficacy beliefs about themselves (A. Bandura, 1977). When an individual with whom the observer identifies with executes a task successfully, the efficacy belief of the individual is likely to be high, and when the task is executed poorly, the individual's efficacy belief is likely to be low (R. D. Goddard et al., 2004). In these types of experiences, an individual must rely on others to develop self-efficacy beliefs.

**Verbal persuasion.** The third source of self-efficacy information is verbal persuasion. This refers to the voiced support of the people around an individual, such as friends and colleagues (A. Bandura, 1997). The praise of the people around an individual has the ability to develop high efficacy beliefs. However, A. Bandura (1977) suggests that just as with the mastery experiences and vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion can also have a positive or negative effect on an individual's self-efficacy beliefs. Verbal persuasion is most influential when it is combined with one of the other sources of self-efficacy information and when a trusted individual gives it (Palmer, 2011).

**Physiological arousal.** The fourth source of self-efficacy information is physiological arousal. This refers to an individual's physical response to a task or situation. "The level of arousal, either of anxiety or excitement, adds to individual's perception of self-capability or competence" (R. D. Goddard et al., 2004, p. 6). High levels of arousal in an individual often occur in situations that are perceived as

threatening, this combination can result in low self-efficacy beliefs (M. Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). Physiological arousal, like verbal persuasion is most influential when one of the other sources of self-efficacy information accompany it.

## Teacher Efficacy

The concept of teacher efficacy was born in the 1970s from a study by the RAND organization (Armor et al., 1976), and according to Gibson and Dembo (1984) it, "has been identified as a variable accounting for individual differences in teaching effectiveness" (p. 589). Teacher efficacy has been defined in various ways over the past few decades due to the evolution of its construct. A few examples of definitions are, "the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance" (Berman, 1977 p. 137), or as defined by M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy (1998), the beliefs a teacher has about their ability to plan and execute a task to reach a desired goal. In more recent years researchers such as Dellinger, Bobbet, Oliver, & Ellet (2008) add that GTE and TSE are two different notions and because of that, they should be defined independently.

### GTE

GTE is interconnected to the locus of control theory and outcome expectancies (J. B. Rotter, 1966). GTE focuses mainly on the teachers as a group, rather than the teachers as an individuals. M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) explain that GTE refers to a teacher's beliefs about the possibility of teachers as a whole having the ability to influence student learning regardless of external factors. To determine the levels of GTE the focus is on the desired outcome of student engagement and student learning.

## TSE

While GTE is connected to J. B. Rotter's (1966) locus of control, TSE developed from A. Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. TSE focuses on efficacy expectations and refers to an individual teacher's beliefs in their own ability to perform a specific teaching task (Fives, 2003). According to Knoblauch and Woolfolk Hoy (2008), strong evidence exists indicating that a teacher's beliefs, "regarding their teaching capabilities have a powerful influence on their teaching effectiveness" (p. 166). M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) add that in forming efficacy beliefs, teachers analyze the teaching task or the situation and then take into consideration their personal capabilities to perform the task (1998).

## Collective Teacher Efficacy

Collective teacher efficacy is the shared perception of the school's faculty about their capability to work together in a productive and effective way to promote student learning (A. Bandura, 1993, 1997; R. Goddard, 2002). Collective teacher efficacy varies from school to school. A. Bandura (1993) asserts that there are factors that affect collective teacher efficacy, such as student social economics status and leadership. TSE and collective teacher efficacy care believed to be interrelated. Schools that are considered to have high levels of collective teacher efficacy set high expectations for student achievement and teachers are encouraged to do what it takes to support their students in reaching academic success. Accordingly, when teachers take responsibility for their part as a member of the faculty to impact students' success, they are then more likely to transfer those beliefs to their practices in their own classroom (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010).

## Context of TSE

TSE has been described as a situation-specific construct. Due to this, researchers stress that the context of the teaching task is of great importance to an individual's efficacy beliefs (A. Bandura, 1997; Labone, 2004; Tshannen-Moran, Wookfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Although Labone (2004) maintained that this topic hasn't been research adequately, other researchers suggest that factors such as content knowledge, school leadership, school culture, and high rates of behavior problems all play a role in TSE beliefs (Enochs, Riggs, & Ellis, 1993; Fives, 2003; Pas, Bradshaw, & Hershfeldt, 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; M. Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002)

### Years of Experience

A. Bandura (1997) postulates that once established, self-efficacy beliefs remain stable. However, M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) argue that not enough evidence exists to supports or opposes A. Bandura's hypothesis. Various studies conducted over the last few decades produced varied results regarding the relationship between years of experience and TSE. For example, one study found negative connections between teachers' years of experience and TSE (Ghaith & Yaghi, 1997). In a study in 2005, A. Woolfolk Hoy and Burke Spero (2005) found a rise in TSE during student teaching, then a decline at the conclusion of the first year teaching (2005). R. M. Klassen and Chiu (2011), found that a nonlinear relationship exists between years of teaching experience and TSE. They also found that TSE increased in the first 23 years of experience and declined in the years after that. It is important to mention that some of these studies may have had potential limitations, such as sample size and the grouping of the participants based on years of experience.

**Content Knowledge**

A teacher's level of education had been linked to an individual's TSE (Fives, 2003). Teachers with higher levels of education have higher TSE. Swackhammer, Basile, and Kimbrough (2009) add that professional development or any further education, grows a teachers' understanding of their craft and therefore can influence the teacher's perceived capabilities which in turn affects their TSE beliefs. It is reasonable to believe that the more education or training a teacher has the more efficacious they would be. However, teaching is not only about having the necessary skills to deliver lessons to students, it also involves having the needed content knowledge to deliver an effective and successful lesson. Swackhamer, Basile, and Kimbrough (2009) found that, "Increasing the level of content knowledge and demonstrating teaching methods appropriate for conveying this knowledge to a diverse group of students, contributed to an increase in the levels of outcome efficacy" (p. 74). In addition, studies have shown that content courses that focus on how teaching the content have impacted TSE on pre-service teachers (Palmer, 2011).

**Classroom Management**

According to researchers, classroom management is an area in which many teacher feel unprepared. This can lead to a negative effect on self-efficacy beliefs (Melnick & Meister, 2008). According to M. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy (2001) the context of classroom management is a sub-component of TSE and it is defined as the level to which a teacher feels that they have the ability to gain and maintain the attention of their students, as well as dealing with disruptions and misbehaving students (Emmer, 1990). Classroom management is one of the most important responsibilities a

teacher has (Brophy, 1988; O'Neill & Stephenson, 2011). Without this skill, teachers would be unable to deliver the required lessons, allow positive interaction, or enhance student achievement. A teacher must be able to skillfully execute the required lessons as well as make decisions regarding student behavior in order to run an effective classroom. Teachers that doubt their behavior management abilities are less likely to deal with behavior situations appropriately. According to O'Neill and Stephenson (2011), teachers with low TSE in the area of classroom management are more vulnerable and less likely to deal with a situation appropriately when dealing with misbehavior in the classroom. Conversely, teachers with high TSE in this area tend to implement effective behavior management methods and have less disruptions, which creates a positive classroom environment for all students (Dicke, Marsh, Parker, Schmeck, & Leutner, 2014).

**School Variables**

The school setting is one of the most influential variables that affects TSE. The experiences a teacher has in the school setting play an important role in the development of TSE beliefs. Although there are a multitude of school variables that can impact TSE, resent research has focused on the impact of school culture, leadership, student demographics, and resources available (Pas, Bradshaw, & Hershfeldt, 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; M. Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002).

**Culture.** The culture of a school can have a significant effect on an individual's TSE (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). The culture of a school is dependent upon various school site factors. However, one of the most important factors is that of a staff that gets along and forms healthy and friendly relationships with one another. Teachers that get along are then able to work together and respects the contribution that each member of the team

makes. Friendly interaction among staff members lead the way to creating a positive collective self-efficacy belief, which also has a positive effect in TSE (De Neve, Devos, & Tuytens, 2015).

**Leadership.** Leadership refers to the management and support offered to school staff by the principal or the assistant principal. Various studies have found that when the school leaders are involved in school issues, such as development of a constant behavior management system, efficacy beliefs among staff members are higher (Hipp, 1997; McCoach & Colbert, 2010). In addition, Tschnnen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) affirm that teachers have reported that having their principal's support has a positive effect on TSE. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that a good perception of school leadership can be associated with higher TSE (Pas & Bradshaw, 2012).

## Measurement of TSE

From the beginning of the construct of self-efficacy, researchers have tried to measure self-efficacy in various contexts. With time, the concept evolved into various terms specifying the relationship of self-efficacy and a particular context, such as teacher efficacy. In order to create a full literature review of the construct, a history of the tools utilized to measure efficacy as it pertains to teachers must be included.

The concept of TSE was born from two separate theories in research, J. B. Rotter's (1966) locus of control theory and A. Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory. As the constructs have evolved, so have the tools designed to measure teacher efficacy. In an effort to organize the historical development of the construct of teacher efficacy and its measures, the information is outlined based on its foundation, either J. B. Rotter's (1966) social learning theory or A. Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory.

## Social Learning Theory Measurements

The first tools developed to measure teacher efficacy were created utilizing J. B. Rotter's (1966) outcome expectancies and social learning theory as framework in the 1970s. Additionally, the term *teacher efficacy* originated from a RAND study in 1976 that included two items in a survey that reflected J. B. Rotter's (1966) locus of control theory.

The measures developed under J. B. Rotter's (1966) work include a couple of items from the RAND (as cited in Armor et al., 1976) studies, the Teacher Locus of Control (TLC) Scale (J. S. Rose & Medway, 1981), and the Responsibility for Student Achievement (RSA) Scale (T. R. Guskey, 1981).

**RAND.** The RAND researchers created a long teacher survey to investigate the teacher characteristics that had a greater impact on student achievement in reading (Armor, 1976; Berman, 1977). Two of the items on the survey were created utilizing J. B. Rotter's work (1966) and attempted to determine the teachers' perception of the amount of control they believed they had over student outcomes (Fives, 2003). The two created items assessed the beliefs teachers had in regards to what had a greater impact on student achievement, themselves or outside forces. Teachers were asked to gauge the extent to which they felt their actions affected student achievement and the extent to which other factors, such as students' home environment, affected student achievement. Teachers with external locus of control agreed with the first of the two items, which stated that they believed that student's motivation and performance depended on their home environment and that teachers really could not do much to overcome that (M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). The second item stated that if the

individual teacher put effort into the task of getting through to his or her students that he or she could achieve it, regardless of external circumstances. Teachers that agreed with the second item had internal locus of control. The conclusion from the first item lead to what is known as GTE and the conclusion from the second items lead to what is known as person teacher efficacy (M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998).

**TLC.** After the RAND study, researchers J. S. Rose and Medway (1981) decided that a more in depth form of the measurement of TSE was necessary. For that reason they developed the TLC Scale. The TLC Scale contained 28 forced choice items that presented elementary school teachers with a scenario. Teachers were then provided with two choices from which to choose as responses to the scenario. Based on the chosen response, it was indicated whether the teacher attributed student achievement to forces within their control or forces beyond their control.

**RSA.** During the time that J. S. Rose and Medway (1981) developed the TLC Scale, T. R. Guskey (1981) was simultaneously developing the RSA Scale. According to Fives (2003), "Guskey's scale measured the amount of responsibility for student learning a teacher felt in general, as well as two subscale scores, which reflected the degree of responsibility felt for student success and student failure" (p. 6). The RSA Scale consisted of a 30-item assessment that offered teachers a scenario and two different responses from which to choose. They were then asked to give each of the options a percentage; however when added up, the sum of both responses must equal 100%. T. R. Guskey found a positive correlation between teacher efficacy and teacher responsibility for student success. In addition, the RSA Scale also determined that teachers had higher levels of efficacy for positive outcomes. This means that teachers had higher efficacy

beliefs in regards to effecting outcome in a positive way as oppose to preventing negative outcomes from occurring (M. Tschannen-Moran, Wolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998).

## Social Cognitive Theory Measurements

From A. Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory, a second line of teacher efficacy measures immerged. It was in social cognitive theory that the term self-efficacy was introduced as the main force behind an individual's actions. The measurements developed under A. Bandura's (1977) work include the Ashton Vignettes (P. Ashton, Buhr, & Crocker, 1984), Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES) (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), and Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) (M. Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001).

**Ashton Vignettes.** P. Ashton, Buhr, and Crocker (1984) created an assessment in which a series of vignettes describing situations that were common to the practices of teachers were utilized. Two sets of vignettes were created, the first set focused on outcome expectancy and the second set related to the individual's personal ability. The assessment contained 15 vignettes, which reflected teachers' beliefs about teaching in general as well as their beliefs about their personal abilities. Teachers were then asked to assess the extent to which they felt they could perform in each of the provided situations on a scale ranging from "extremely ineffective" to "extremely effective" (Fives, 2003). While the findings from this scale did allow for the exploration of teachers' perception of themselves, it failed to make any connection between perception and practice (Fives, 2003).

**TES.** The next measure, developed by Gibson and Dembo (1984), was the TES. The scale consisted of 30 items and was later narrowed down to a 16-item, 6 point Likert scale (Soodak & Podell, 1993). Researchers combined the framework of the RAND

items and A. Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory with the purpose of assessing outcome expectancies and self-efficacy expectations (Fives, 2003). According to M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) the TES has been utilized to confirm that teacher efficacy consists of general and PTE. However, Dellinger et al. (2008) speculate that there are continuous concerns arising from the use of the TES. The main concerns that arose in regards to the instrument were the interpretation of the measure and the meaning and understanding of the efficacy construct (Fives, 2006).

**TSES.** Utilizing previous research in the field, M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) created a new model of teacher efficacy that was rooted in A. Bandura's (1997, 1986, 1997) self-efficacy theory. The model depicts the circular process though which self-efficacy beliefs are developed, evaluated, and practiced (see Figure 2). Utilizing this new model, M. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy (2001) suggested a new assessment for teacher efficacy in which both parts of teacher efficacy were considered. According to Fives (2003), "these researchers developed a measure of teacher efficacy that assessed critical tasks associated with teaching in the domains of engagement, classroom management, and instructional practices" (p. 18). The TSES contained 24 items in which teachers were asked their opinion on different statements using a 9-point Likert scale ranging from "nothing" to "a great deal." In the following years, a shorter version of the TSES was developed to assess levels of self-efficacy in teachers; the shorter version consisted of 12 items. Although the TSES addressed many of the concerns researchers had about previous measures, there are still a few concerns regarding the TSES.

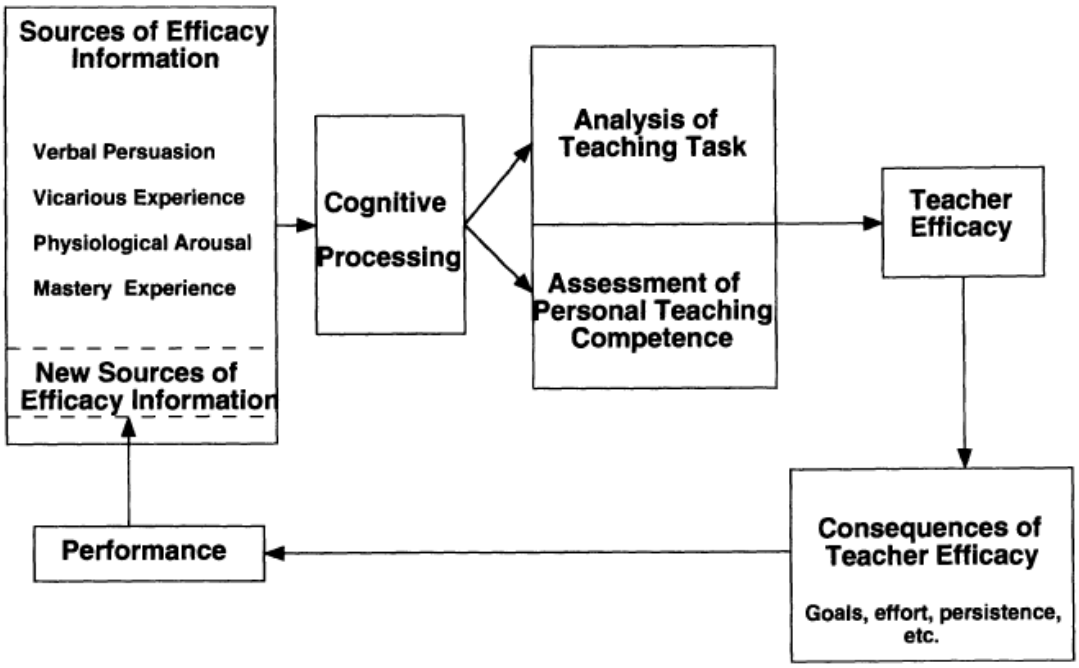


*Figure 2.* The cyclical nature of teacher efficacy. Adapted from "Teacher Efficacy: Its Meaning and Measure," by M. Tschannen-Moran, A. Woolfolk-Hoy, and W. K. Hoy, 1998, p. 288. *Review of Educational Research, 68*(2), 202-248.

## Outcomes of TSE

TSE affects many aspect of education. The efficacy level of a teacher affects not only the teacher but also students and other staff members. Researchers postulate that TSE is connected to both student factors such as student achievement and student motivation and teacher factors, such as job commitment and job satisfaction (Caprara et al., 2006). A. E. Woolfolk (1998) adds that based on the self-efficacy theory, teachers with high TSE tend to work harder and persist longer, even with difficult students because they believe in themselves and in their students.

### Outcomes for the Teacher

According to A. E. Woolfolk (1998) teachers that have high self-efficacy are optimistic and mentally and physically healthy. Therefore, they tend to be more motivated to have and achieve high expectations. These teachers experience positive

outcomes. On the other hand, teachers with low self-efficacy are more likely to feel exhausted and lack personal accomplishment (Aloe et al., 2014). These feelings can lead to teacher burnout and lack of job satisfaction. According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010), occupational stress associated with teaching has a negative impact on teachers with low TSE at a startling rate.

High TSE promotes a strong commitment to the profession and healthy relationships with colleagues and parents. These individuals believe that all parties are working together to attain a common goal. They perceive the whole school system as a capable team (Caprara et al., 2003). In addition, teachers with strong TSE display skilled levels of planning and organization, are more likely to utilize new teaching methods with the intent to meet the need of all their students, and are more likely to have a positive impact on their students' achievement (Allinder, 1994; P. Ashton & Webb, 1986; T. R. Guskey, 1988; M. Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Caprara, Barbranelli, Steca, and Malone, (2006), state that, "Teachers with high levels of self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to be able to create the conditions and to promote the interpersonal networks that nourish and sustain their work satisfaction" (p. 485).

**Outcome for the Student**

TSE has been recognized as a very significant attribute of effective teaching and has been linked to student outcomes (M. Tschannen-Moran, Wookfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998; Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Students of teachers who have high levels of efficacy outperform students of teachers with low levels of efficacy. TSE is not the main cause of student achievement, rather it is a mediator of student achievement (C. D. Bruce, Esmonde, Ross, Dookie, & Beatty, 2010). Because teachers with high TSE are more

likely to try different pedagogical practices to reach all students and are more persistent in working with low students, their students usually have better achievement. These teachers also promote personal development, responsibility, and enthusiasm for learning in their students (Caprara et al., 2006). Furthermore, students of efficacious teachers often develop high sense of efficacy themselves due to the influence of their teacher, their encouragements, and their praises.

**Impacting TSE**

Many factors play a role in a TSE beliefs. Said factors may have a different effect on an individual's TSE at different stages of their career. A. Bandura (1986) explains that self-efficacy is developed when an individual experiences success and that it is broken down when an individual experiences failure. He also adds that the most critical time in the development of TSE is in the first years of teaching. Furthermore, researchers believe that it is in the early career stages, that self-efficacy is the most malleable and that it becomes more established as the individual gains experience (M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, 2007). This supports the idea that TSE beliefs do change over time based on the experience teachers have (Wyatt, 2014).

Another factor that has proven to have a positive impact on TSE beliefs is professional learning opportunities (Day & Gu, 2007; R. M. Klassen & Tze, 2014; M. Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). Professional learning allows teachers to grow in their craft, to master the content matter and learn new strategies to reach their students. According to Palmer (2011) strengthening the content knowledge of a teacher in a particular subject can have a positive effect on TSE beliefs. A. Bandura's (1977) cognitive learning theory suggest that there are four sources of efficacy information. A

plethora of sources suggests that professional learning touches upon the four sources of efficacy information identified by A. Bandura (C. D. Bruce & Ross, 2008; Fives, 2003; Palmer, 2011; M. Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). For example, mastery experiences occur when a teacher has the opportunity to practice and successfully execute a strategy or skill learned during a professional development session. An example of vicarious experience can occur when an individual identifies with the presenter and transfers over the TSE beliefs of the presenter to him or herself. A presenter's verbal motivation or encouragement can function as verbal persuasion and have an effect on the individual's TSE beliefs. Lastly, when a teacher feels supported and believes in his or her capabilities, they are less likely to feel anxious or nervous, therefore having an impact on the individual's physiological arousal.

## Career Stages

A great deal of research has been conducted regarding the career stages of teachers and their development. Researcher have developed various models and terms to describe the various stages of teachers' careers (Day et al., 2006; Fessler & Christensen, 1992; Huberman, 1989; Leithwood, 1992; Sikes, Measor, & Woods, 1985; Steffy, 2000). The phases or stages identified by researchers include key characteristics that describe the professional development of teachers.

Sikes, Measor and Woods (1985) developed a model of the teacher career cycle. Their model was based on studies and it consisted of five aged based career stages that have nothing to do with years of experience. The stages identified by the developers of the model were:

- Ages 21-28

- Ages 28-33
- Ages 30-40
- Ages 40-50/55
- Ages 50/55 (Sikes et al., 1985).

Fessler and Christensen (1992) developed an eight stage model of the teacher career cycle that differs from Sikes et al. (1985) model in that it is not age based. However, this model also fails to identify the number of years of experience in each stage. The researchers claim that it is difficult to truly determine what stage a teacher may be in without an in-depth analysis. They add that teachers do not necessarily move into these stages in a linear manner, that the movement through the stages is more dynamic. The stages identified by Fessler and Christensen (1992) are:

- Preservice
- Induction
- Competency building
- Enthusiastic and growth
- Career frustration
- Career stability
- Career wind-down
- Career exit

The same year, Leithwood (1992) also developed a teacher career cycle model. This model, just like the previous two, does not address the stage a teacher falls in based on years of experience. Rather, the focus of the stages is on how they affect teacher development. The stages of Leithwood's model are:

- Launching the career
- Stabilizing
- Encountering new challenges and concerns
- Reaching a professional plateau
- Preparing for retirement

Steffy (2000) developed a teacher career model based on collected testimonies and case studies. The stages they identified were:

- Novice
- Apprentice
- Professional
- Expert
- Distinguished
- Emeritus (Steffy, 2000).

They claim that the movement through the stages is not linear and that teachers may move back and forth between stages during their career. These researchers also add that it is possible for a teacher to skips stage all together or that he or she remains in a particular stage for years.

Huberman's (1989) teacher career cycle is similar to a Steffy's (2000) and Fessler and Christensen's (1992) in that it is not a linear cycle. The researcher explains that teachers may skip stages or move back and forth between stages depending the experiences they have in their career. Hubberman's seven stages are:

- Career entry
- Stabilization

- Experimentation and diversification
- Reassessment
- Serenity and relational distance
- Conservatism
- Disengagement

One of the most recent teacher career cycle developed was created by Day and Gu (2007). These researcher postulate that teachers' career can be divided into six, experienced based phases, which they call professional life phases. The six professional life phases are listed in detail below:

1. *Professional life phase 0-3 years: Learning which builds identity and classroom competence.* Teachers have a high level of commitment to their profession. They are developing their professional identities and classroom competence. The experiences these teachers have can either increase or reduce their TSE.
2. *Professional life phase 4-7 years: Developing professional identity*. Teachers in this phase begin to take on additional responsibilities outside of the classroom that may have a negative effect on their teaching effectiveness due to added stress.
3. *Professional life phase 8-15 years: Defining work-life balance.* The TSE of the teachers in this phase is affected by the struggles of trying to balance a professional and a personal life.
4. *Professional life phase 16-23 years: Managing work-life tension.* Although teachers in this phase have a more clear sense of professional identity, they

continue to struggle with the demands of personal/family and professional demands. Their ability to stay motivated, committed and effective is challenged.

5. *Professional life phase 24-30 years: Adjusting to change.* Teachers in this phase face new demands of the educational system, career stagnation that may have negative effect on their morale, professional identity, and their commitment.
6. *Professional life phase 31+: Sustaining commitment.* Teachers in this phase get the most satisfaction from the progress their students make as well as the relationships they have with their students. These teachers have a desire to continue to learn in order to provide their students with effective instruction. However, a big concern for this group of teachers is ill health.

## Summary of Research

Many factors impact the development of self-efficacy (F. Pajares, 1995). TSE beliefs influence the actions of teachers in and outside their classrooms. When teachers truly believe in their practice and in their capability to make a difference, students also work harder. While researchers in the last few decades have created tools to measure efficacy in various contexts, there are still some concerns with the measures. A. Bandura's (1977) four psychological sources of information depict how TSE can be developed. Understanding how the four sources work along with comprehension about what teachers are experiencing based on their career stages, can really bring light to what is needed to help support teachers. High levels of TSE have a huge impact on both teachers and students.

# CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

## Overview

The previous chapters provided detailed information pertaining to the study presented. Chapter I provided an introduction to the study as well as the background to the research. The statement of the research problem, the purpose statement, significance of the problem, definitions, and delimitations are also included in Chapter I. Chapter II provided a synthesis of literature pertaining to teacher efficacy and touched upon the lack of literature regarding the experiences that influence mid-career TSE based on A. Bandura's (1977) four sources of information. Chapter III presents the methodology employed by the researcher to conduct the study. This chapter also reviews the purpose statement, research questions, research design, population, sample, instrumentation, data collection and data analysis. In addition, the information necessary to replicate this study and the steps utilized to increase reliability and validity are also included in this chapter.

An ethnographic approach was chosen for this study based on the nature of the purpose statement and research questions. This study is also one of three in a thematic study where the other two researchers focused on examining the experiences that early-career and late-career teachers had that impacted their self-efficacy beliefs. The researcher of this study contributed by focusing on mid-career teachers.

## Purpose Statement

The purpose of this ethnographic investigation was to examine and describe the experiences that impact mid-career elementary TSE beliefs based on A. Bandura's (1977) four psychological sources of information (mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological arousal).

## Research Questions

The following research questions were utilized to gather the data necessary for this ethnographic study:

1. How do mastery experiences impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
2. How does verbal persuasion impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
3. How do vicarious experience impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
4. How does physiological arousal impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?

## Research Design

Over the last several decades, there have been numerous studies conducted to measure TSE utilizing quantitative data collection procedures (M. Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009; M. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998; Wyatt, 2014). These quantitative data collection procedures included using surveys to assess a teacher's locus of control, their responsibility for student achievement, and teachers' sense of self-efficacy (P. Ashton et al., 1984; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; T. R. Guskey, 1981; J. S. Rose & Medway, 1981). While these methods provided valuable data that has supported the understanding of TSE, there continues to be a lack of qualitative studies that take an in-depth look at what shapes TSE beliefs (R. M. Klassen, et al., 2011).

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences that influence TSE beliefs a qualitative inquiry approach was used to gather data for this study. Unlike

quantitative studies, there is no attempt to manipulate or control the behavior or the setting of the study. Instead, qualitative research seeks to examine behavior as it occurs naturally. The context of the situation in which the behavior occurs is also important to understanding the behavior. A qualitative researcher will gather this information directly through observations or interviews. These observations and interviews are geared toward getting a better understanding of the perspective of the participants from their own point of view. Descriptions of what has been observed and learned through interviews is recorded in detail so that an accurate picture of the behavior can be obtained (Van Maanen, 2011).

Five designs of qualitative research are described by McMillan and Schumacher (2010) as various ways in which to examine trends and themes through analysis and discussion. These include (a) ethnography, (b) phenomenology, (c) case study, (d) grounded theory, and (e) critical studies. Each of these were considered by the researchers in relation to the purpose of this study. While phenomenology was a close choice, it was not a fit for this study because phenomenology focuses on understanding the perspective of the participants' lived experiences regarding a certain phenomenon. A case study examines a single person, object, case, or organization and this study required multiple participants. A critical studies approach was also excluded due to the fact that the study does not focus on a certain society or a social institution. Ethnography is described as a qualitative process that focuses on an interpretation of a culture and commonly utilizes interviews, fieldwork, and artifacts to elucidate findings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The subject and population of an ethnographic study are situated in real-life contexts. An ethnographic research design uses an interview protocol to gather

the rich narrative descriptions from the participants' perspective. Because the purpose of this study is to examine experiences in context from participants, ethnography is the most appropriate research design.

Spradley (1979) describes an ethnographer as one who goes deeper to determine the meaning behind the cultural behavior. A main tool utilized in ethnographic, qualitative research is that of one-on-one, semi-structured interviews of participants (Patten, 2014). Such a structure will allow for the possibility of in-depth information to be elucidated, which is the purpose of this study. The ethnographic, semi-structured interview designed for this study was based on the features provided by the seminal work of Spradley in order to develop a comfortable setting and establish open-ended questions so participants could provide rich accounts of situations that impacted self-efficacy. A semi-structured interview is comprised of open-response questions that allow the participants to explain their lived experiences. Semi-structured interviews also allow the researcher to ask subsequent questions that are guided by the participants' responses so that a deeper understanding of the lived experiences being studied can be gained.

After determining the research design, it is recommended that a study utilizes a theoretical framework through which to filter information collected within an ethnographic study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013). In order to discover the themes of the participants' lived experiences a theoretical framework was chosen. The theoretical framework is an important part of the research design as it serves to support who will be included in the study and to support the description of the themes that are discovered (Baxter & Jack, 2008). While it is still up to the researcher to determine the relationships between the discovered themes and how

they answer the research questions, the framework provides the researcher the opportunity to begin to see the relationships between the proposed constructs.

Following the extensive literature review regarding TSE, reviewing several interpretations of models based upon A. Bandura's (1977) four sources of psychological information, and discussing options with the thematic team, a framework based upon A. Bandura's original, seminal work was chosen. The literature shows an agreement that these four sources will provide answers to possible questions posed by a qualitatively designed study. Figure 3 shows the four areas from which people create their judgements according to A. Bandura. This model from his seminal work was used as the lens from which to code and analyze data from interviews of participants.

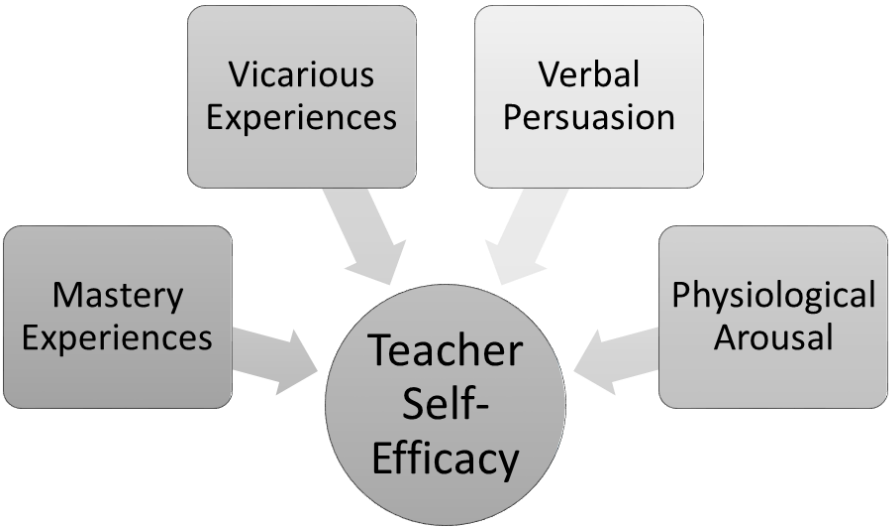


*Figure 3.* Badura's Sources of Self-Efficacy. Adapted from "Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change," by A. Bandura (1977). *Psychological Review, 84*(2), 191-215.

**Population**

Population is defined as, "a group of individuals or events from which a sample is drawn and to which results can be generalized" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010. p.

5). The study examines public school teachers in the state of California. According to the California Department of Education (2016), there were a total of 352,599 teachers in the state of California in the 2015-2016 school year, the most recent year statistics were available. While all three peer researchers studied teachers as part of the thematic process, the researchers determined the population would be divided further based on teacher career stages because the literature demonstrated a variance in how years of experience impact self-efficacy (Kitching, Morgan, & O'Leary, 2009).

Day and Gu (2007) suggest that teachers' professional lives span six different phases. The six career stages presented are:

1. 0-3 years: Learning which builds identity and classroom competence
2. 4-7 years: Developing professional identity
3. 8-15 years: Defining work-life balance
4. 16-23 years: Managing work-life tensions
5. 24-30 years: Adjusting to change
6. 31+ years: Sustaining commitment (Day & Gu, 2007, pp. 434-437).

For the purposes of this study, the peer researchers combined two phases of career development for each study. Teachers with 0-7 years of experience are labeled early-career teachers, teachers with 8-23 years of experience are labeled mid-career teachers, and those with 24 or more years are labeled late-career teachers. The population for this study is 198,713 mid-career teachers in the state of California.

**Target Population**

To further define the population, a target population was identified. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) define a target population as one that meets specific criteria or

conditions from the research context. There are currently 58 counties in the state of California (CDE, 2016). Riverside County, located in southern California, is made up of 23 distinct school districts (Riverside County Office of Education [RCOE], 2017) and is a good representation of the state of California as a whole. Therefore, the target population for this study is 13,342 mid-career teachers in Riverside County.

## Sample

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) define sample as the "group of individuals from whom data are collected" (p. 129). The sample for this study included 15 participants that were mid-career elementary teachers in public education from any of the 23 distinct school districts in Riverside County, which is located in southern California. There are a total of 18,359 elementary, middle, and high school teachers in Riverside County (CDE, 2016). Specific statistics on numbers of elementary teachers are not available. For this study early-career public elementary teachers with 0-7 years of teaching experience who met the following criteria were considered for the sample:

- Worked as an elementary school teacher for 0-7 years.
- Was serving in a Riverside County elementary school at that time.
- Was willing to be interviewed in person, at a location determined by the interviewee for approximately an hour in October through December, 2017.

The sample for this study was 15 public elementary teachers from Riverside County, California.

The thematic peer researchers utilized a sponsor to make initial contact with district and school administrators in Riverside County. The peer researchers contacted the district and school administrators directly via email to inform them of the purpose of

the study and gain their support in seeking out participants (Appendix A). The district and school administrators provided names and email addresses of several teachers who might be willing to participate in the research study. Once a selection of early-career public elementary school teachers in Riverside County were identified following initial contact through the district and school administrators, teachers were contacted by the researcher directly via email (Appendix B).

Convenience sampling, which is a procedure used based on the accessibility of available participants, was the strategy utilized by the thematic peer group to best illuminate the broad experiences teachers have in relation to career stage (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The researcher was able to secure a similar number of participants from six different districts based on responses of those willing to participate. Because of this, it was not necessary to employ a stratified random sampling approach. Stratified random sampling is when subjects are chosen randomly from a predetermined group (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). As a result, the study contains data from 15 participants.

## Instrumentation

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) define qualitative research instrumentation as that which the researcher utilizes in terms of techniques or measures to collect information. Such instruments include interviews, observations, tests, and surveys. For the purposes of this study, the researcher was considered the primary instrument in the collection of qualitative data. The fact that the researcher conducted the one-on-one interviews with the participants can be considered problematic since it is believed that it can influence the collection of data due to biases the researcher may have (Pezalla,

Pettigrew & Miller-Day, 2012). However, measures were taken to make sure such biases didn't affect the outcome of the study. Patton (2015) notes that a researcher who constructs quality interview questions that are directly tied to the research questions attains trustworthiness and legitimacy. The goal and role of the researcher in a qualitative study is to tell the narrative that directly answers the research questions posed.

**Interview Questions**

Following the data collection methods for qualitative research, interviews were the primary method of data collection in this research project. The questions for this research project were developed in conjunction with the thematic peer researchers (Appendix C). Using A. Bandura's (1977) theoretic framework of the four sources of self-efficacy information as a starting point, the peer researchers drafted questions so that the necessary information could be elicited. Questions were drafted within each of the four areas, along with potential follow-up questions to ensure stories shared contained enough data to answer the research questions. Further, the questions were constructed so that a follow-up question would ask for an opposite experience to the initial story. For example, if the first shared experience elicited a positive or successful response, the follow-up question would ask for a less-successful experience. This was done in order to fully understand the experiences from the teachers' perception.

**Expert Panel.** To support the peer researchers in developing interview questions, a panel of experts were established. Criteria was developed by the peer researchers to determine the expert panel. The criteria included participants who have:

- Experience constructing and conducting qualitative interviews.
- Participated in efficacy research.

- At least 10 years of experience in the field of education.
- A doctoral degree from an accredited university.
- Provides instruction in graduate coursework for an accredited university.

The expert panel was comprised of three individuals who met three of the five criteria. All three hold educational doctorates and were well-versed with the qualitative research process and the requirements for a study that is valid and reliable. Additionally, the first panel member was a published author who presents on efficacy and is president and founder of Convening Conversations, Inc. The second panel member was the superintendent of a large southern California school district, has served as dissertation chair on several dissertations on the topic of efficacy, and is a doctoral professor at an accredited university. The third panel member was a retired public school administrator with extensive experience in elementary education as both a classroom teacher and school site administrator who has also been an instructor at an accredited university.

Each member of the expert panel received the interview questions via email. The expert panel reviewed the questions independently of each other and sent their approval, comments, and concerns back to the researcher. The comments for each question were tracked and changes were made. Once all of the required changes were made, the interview questions were sent back to the expert panel for final approval. Any questions that did not get approval from all three expert panel members were removed.

**Validity**

Valid instrumentation measures what it was designed to measure (Patten, 2014). In qualitative research validity is achieved when there is mutual meaning between the participants and the researcher after drawing comparisons on the phenomena being

studied (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In order to ensure that there is agreement between the researcher and the participants on the events that occurred and the meanings of those events, researchers can employ a variety of strategies, thus increasing the validity of the research. Due to the fact that the researcher was the primary instrument in collecting the interview data the following strategies were utilized:

1. The interview questions were developed and refined in conjunction with the peer researchers. The expert panel validated the appropriateness of the questions in relation to the research questions.
2. In preparation for the interview process, the peer researchers conducted pilot interviews under the supervision of an expert in the field of qualitative interviewing. This expert holds a doctoral degree, has been an associate superintendent of Educational Services in a large, urban school district in southern California and serves as a cohort mentor to doctoral students at an accredited university. These pilot interviews gave the researcher the opportunity to get comfortable with conducting an open-ended interview and asking appropriate follow-up questions to ensure that all necessary data was collected to answer the research questions. Pilot interviews were recorded on video and sent to the interview expert. The expert was able to validate the researcher's interview skills by giving specific feedback regarding the establishment of rapport through tone, body language, and the overall feel of the interview.
3. During the interviews, a recording device was used to record participants' responses verbatim. These recordings were transcribed both by the researcher

and by a transcription service. A copy of the transcription was sent to the corresponding participant. In order to validate each participant's response, member checking was employed. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010) member checking is allowing participants to review their information for accuracy. Each participant was able to check the accuracy of the recorded information from their interview, thus increasing the validity of the experiences documented as part of this study.

**Reliability**

When a measurement yields consistent results it is said to be reliable (Patten, 2014). There are two tasks that support the reliability of a research project. First, another researcher can replicate the steps taken to conduct the research. Second, the examination of the data from both researchers is dependable (Golafshani, 2003).

The peer researchers worked together to review the data multiple times before developing a preliminary list of patterns, codes, and themes. The data was viewed through the lens of A. Bandura's (1977) theoretical framework and the four psychological sources of information. The sources include mastery experiences, verbal persuasions, vicarious experiences, and physiological arousal. The four sources of information include:

- Internal reliability of data: According to Patton (2015) triangulation of qualitative sources occurs when data sources within the same method are checked for consistency. When conducting qualitative fieldwork, it is expected that researchers use triangulation to overcome potential biases from single-method or single-observer data collection (Patton, 2015). He continues

by stating that, “a common misconception about triangulation involves thinking that the purpose is to demonstrate that different data sources or inquiry approaches yield essentially the same result. The point is to test for such consistency” (p. 661). In this study, the internal reliability was strengthened by comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information that was gathered from multiple interviewees. Throughout the interview, the researcher considered what artifacts might be collected to support information shared by participants to triangulate information gathered by the interviews.

- External reliability of data: When conducting quantitative studies, the researcher is seeking to establish a set of rules in which external reliability of measurements are imperative. Qualitative research seeks to understand perceptions and as a result, qualitative inquiries do not typically require external reliability. Because the essence of engaging in qualitative research is to understand the perceptions of the people that live in the world, there is no benchmark for external reliability in qualitative research (Merriam, 1995). What is more important in qualitative studies is that the results of the study match the collected data, which is done through the triangulation process.
- Intercoder reliability: According to Lombard, Snyder-Duch, and Bracken (2002), intercoder reliability occurs when independent coders reach the same conclusion after evaluating a piece of collected data. The validity of data interpretations in qualitative research are determined in part to properly established intercoder reliability. If multiple researchers were to have

elevated levels of disagreement regarding the coding of data, the reliability of the research could be compromised. To establish intercoder reliability in this study the peer researchers worked together. After the primary researcher completed her initial coding and interpretation of the data, one of the peer researchers was asked to code approximately ten percent of data coded by the primary researcher. The data to be re-coded was chosen at random. Lombard et al. (2010) state that a minimum of 90% agreement is desirable, however 80% agreement is considered acceptable for quality intercoder reliability.

## Data Collection

In order to examine and describe the experiences that impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs based on A. Bandura's (1977) four psychological sources of information, the researcher engaged in an ethnographic investigation. Therefore, the researcher primarily utilized semi-structured interviews as the method by which to collect this data. The data collection for this study began in October of 2017 after the completion of The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research for protecting human research participants (Appendix D) and final approval from the Brandman University Institutional Review Board (BUIRB) was received (Appendix E).

### Data Collection Procedures

The data collection procedures employed by the researcher are detailed in this section to allow the opportunity for the study to be replicated.

**Interviews.** Spradley (1979) states that "an ethnographer seeks out ordinary people with ordinary knowledge and builds on their common experience" (p. 25). An

ethnographer uses interviews as their primary method for gathering the knowledge of the people being studied. He continues on to say that in-depth interviewing is actually the result of developing rapport and eliciting information from the participants. The following steps were taken to obtain participants to be interviewed and during the interview process to establish rapport and elicit information from the participants:

1. The thematic peer researchers utilized a sponsor to make initial contact with district and school administrators in Riverside County.
2. Once the initial contact with district and school administrators was made through the sponsor, the peer researchers contacted the district and school administrators directly via email to inform of the purpose of the study and gain their support in seeking out participants.
3. The district and school administrators provided names and email addresses of several teachers who may be willing to participate in the research study.
4. Initial communication between the researcher and the potential participants was made via email. This email included the purpose of the study and an invitation to participate and a copy of the bill of rights (Appendix F).
5. A follow-up phone call or email was made to responding potential participants based on their preferred mode of communication. During the phone conversation the researcher provided further information regarding the participant's rights and how their privacy would be protected. The researcher also reiterated the objectives of the research project and let the participants know how much of their time would need to be committed to the study.

6. The researcher asked the participants to secure an interview location that would be comfortable and nonthreatening to the participant. The interview date, time, and location was confirmed at this time.
7. At the time of each scheduled interview, the researcher began by reviewing the purpose of the study with the interviewee. The interviewee was also informed of their right to stop and/or take a break during any portion of the interview.
8. The researcher provided time for the interviewee to ask questions in relation to the study and answered all questions.
9. The informed consent form (Appendix G) which was approved by the researcher's home institution, Brandman University, was reviewed by the researcher and the interviewee signed.
10. The interview blocks were scheduled for one hour. Each interview began with the scripted questions designed in conjunction with the peer researchers and approved by the expert panel. The semi-structured format of the interview allowed the researcher to have flexibility in asking follow-up questions. The interviews were recorded using an electronic audio recording device. A secondary audio recording device was used as a back-up.
11. At the conclusion of the interview, the researcher thanked the interviewee for their participation. The researcher explained that the contents of the recorded interview would be transcribed in a timely manner. The researcher continued by explaining that the transcriptions would be sent to the participant for their review to ensure that all recorded and transcribed information was accurate.

12. The researcher personally transcribed or utilized a transcription service for each interview. Each interview transcription was reviewed by the researcher and then sent as a copy to each interviewee to check for accuracy.

**Artifacts.** During each interview conducted, the researcher considered potential artifacts that might be collected from each interviewee. Examples of potential artifacts include emails, reflective journals, grade-level or school agendas, meeting minutes, and notes. At the conclusion of the interview, the researcher determined that no such artifacts of the participants were noted.

**Ethical Considerations**

The researcher utilized all means necessary to protect participants of this study, guard data, and minimize any risk. To begin, this study was approved by BUIRB. All participants interviewed participated with written informed consent. To ensure protection of identity of participants, specific steps were taken. No personally identifiable information was referenced. Each participating interviewee was assigned a letter (e.g. Participant A) in lieu of name. All interviews were recorded on an audio file that was kept on a password protected computer that only the researcher accessed. The audio recording and transcripts were downloaded into a digital storage device and where locked in a file cabinet for the duration of the study. Throughout the study, only the peer researchers had access to the transcripts. All documentation will be destroyed after five years of the completion of the study.

At the onset of the study, all participants were provided an informational letter describing the purpose of the study along with the participant bill of rights. At the conclusion of data collection, participants were provided transcripts of the interview

unless specifically requested not to receive. Participants were provided time to review their transcript and submit final feedback and endorsement of information before data analysis.

## Data Analysis

The process that best supports data analysis in qualitative research is an inductive analysis. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) define inductive analysis as "the process through which qualitative researchers synthesize and make meaning from the data, starting with specific data and ending with categories and patterns" (p. 367). The steps that the researcher followed to analyze the data after the data was prepared were:

1. Code the data
2. Describe the data
3. Categorize the data
4. Develop patterns

The coding of collected data from the interviews was ongoing throughout the study.

### Coding Process

Each interview was conducted individually and recorded. After the interview, the researcher transcribed the interview into written transcripts. All of the data was reviewed multiple times in conjunction with the peer researchers to sort out initial impressions. Preliminary codes and themes were discussed and were compared to see if any duplicates existed (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Once the coding system had been refined with the input of the peer researchers, the interview transcriptions were

uploaded into NVivo. NVivo is a computer software program that supports that analysis of large amounts of qualitative data.

The steps followed for the coding of the data included:

1. The codes were scanned for preliminary themes. A. Bandura's (1977) theoretical framework of the sources of self-efficacy that guided this study led to the primary themes of mastery experiences, verbal persuasions, vicarious experiences, and physiological arousal being identified.
2. The frequency of each code was calculated. Using the computer software NVivo supported the identification of the frequency with which each code appeared. As codes began to grow in frequency, the strength of the emergent themes increased.
3. The themes and frequencies were analyzed. The researcher, along with the peer researchers, began to review the themes and frequencies to ensure an accurate and reliable interpretation of the experiences that impact mid-career elementary TSE beliefs.

The themes were determined based on A. Bandura's (1977) four sources of efficacy information. Responses from interviews were analyzed and then categorized into the corresponding, identified themes of mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal. The responses in each theme were totaled based on single occurrences within each theme or if the experience transpired in conjunction with another source. These were totaled and compared in relation to the research questions.

## Limitations

According to Roberts (2010) limitations are the features of a study that may narrow the generalizability of the study. The limitations acknowledged by the researcher include the inherent bias of the researcher as the main instrument of the study, the self-reported nature of the collected data, and the small sample size. Following are the three limitations identified in this study and how they were addressed:

- The researcher was the main instrument of the study, allowing for potential bias in the development of the research instruments. To minimize the potential effects of this limitation, the researcher worked in conjunction with peer researchers to design the interview questions and an expert panel was consulted. Additionally, the data was triangulated within the study and across the peer researchers' studies.
- The data was collected via interviews and was reported by the interviewees thus limiting the data collected to self-reports of the experiences of the interviewees. The researcher took many precautions to establish rapport with each interviewee before conducting the actual interview. The researcher conducted pilot interviews under the supervision of the member of the expert panel and received feedback on tone and body language during the interview. The researcher was trained in Cognitive Coaching, providing her with the necessary skills to elicit information from interviewees in relaxed and accurate manner.
- The sample size of this study was another limitation. The 15 selected participants came from three different districts in Riverside County. This may

affect the generalizability of the study to other counties. The researcher did employ maximum variation sampling techniques to ensure the widest range of participants was selected.

## Summary

This chapter provided information about the methodology used in this ethnographic study in such detail that it may be replicated. The data collection and data analysis of this study are also described in this chapter. The purpose of this study was to examine and describe what experiences impact mid-career elementary TSE beliefs based on A. Bandura's (1977) four psychological sources of information. The following chapter will outline the results of the findings of this study.

# CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

## Overview

Chapter I provided an introduction to the study as well as the background to the research. The statement of the research problem, the purpose statement, significance of the problem, definitions, and delimitations are also included in Chapter I. Chapter II provided a synthesis of literature pertaining to TSE and touched upon the lack of literature regarding the experiences that influence mid-career teachers' self-efficacy based on A. Bandura's (1977) four sources of information. Chapter III presents the methodology employed by the researcher to conduct the study. It also reviews the purpose statement, research questions, research design, population, sample, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. In addition, the information necessary to replicate this study and the steps utilized to increase reliability and validity are also included in Chapter III. This chapter presents a description of the participants involved in the study, the research method utilized, the data collection processes, and the summary analysis of the research data.

## Purpose Statement

The purpose of this ethnographic investigation was to examine and describe the experiences that impact mid-career elementary TSE beliefs based on A. Bandura's (1977) four psychological sources of information (mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological arousal).

## Research Questions

The following research questions were utilized to gather the data necessary for this ethnographic study:

1. How do mastery experiences impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
2. How does verbal persuasion impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
3. How do vicarious experience impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
4. How does physiological arousal impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?

## Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences that influence mid-career TSE beliefs an ethnographic approach was used to gather data for this study. Because the purpose of this study was to examine experiences in context from participants, ethnography was the most appropriate research design. An interview protocol was utilized to gather the rich narrative descriptions from the participants' perspective. The use of semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to ask open-response questions that permitted the participants to share their perspective of lived experiences that impacted their self-efficacy. Semi-structured interviews also allow the researcher to ask subsequent questions that were guided by the participants' responses so that a deeper understanding of the lived experiences being studied can be gained.

It is recommended that a theoretical framework through which to filter information collected within an ethnographic study be utilized (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2013). The theoretical framework of Albert Bandura's (1997) four sources of psychological information was chosen by the thematic

team to be utilized as a method to filter the information gathered from the semi-structured interviews. Based on the literature review regarding TSE, the chosen framework would help answer questions brought upon by a qualitative study.

## Population

Population is defined as, "a group of individuals or events from which a sample is drawn and to which results can be generalized" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010. p. 5). The study examined public school teachers in the state of California. According to the California Department of Education (2016), there were a total of 352,599 teachers in the state of California in the 2015-2016 school year, the most recent year statistics were available. While all three peer researchers studied teachers as part of the thematic process, the researchers determined the population would be divided further based on teacher career stages because the literature demonstrated a variance in how years of experience impact self-efficacy (Kitching et al., 2009).

Day and Gu (2007) suggest that teachers' professional lives span six different phases. The six career stages presented are:

1. 0-3 years: Learning which builds identity and classroom competence
2. 4-7 years: Developing professional identity
3. 8-15 years: Defining work-life balance
4. 16-23 years: Managing work-life tensions
5. 24-30 years: Adjusting to change
6. 31+ years: Sustaining commitment (pp. 343-437).

For the purposes of this study, the peer researchers combined two phases of career development for each study. Teachers with 0-7 years of experience are labeled early-

career teachers, teachers with 8-23 years of experience are labeled mid-career teachers, and those with 24 or more years are labeled late-career teachers. The population for this study is 198,713 mid-career teachers in the state of California.

To further define the population, a target population was identified. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) define a target population as one that meets specific criteria or conditions from the research context. There are currently 58 counties in the state of California (CDE, 2016). Riverside County, located in southern California, is made up of 23 distinct school districts (RCOE, 2017) and is a good representation of the state of California as a whole. Therefore, the target population for this study is 13,342 mid-career teachers in Riverside County.

## Sample

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) define sample as the "group of individuals from whom data are collected" (p. 129). The sample for this study included 15 participants that were mid-career elementary teachers in public education from 10 different schools across six of the 23 school districts in Riverside County. The 15 participants were identified with help of district and school administrators. All participants were mid-career teachers with 8-23 years of experience who were serving in a Riverside County public elementary school at the time the research was conducted.

## Demographic Data

The data gathered for this study was collected from the 15 participants during the one-on-one interviews conducted by the researcher. The sample consists of participants that represent a variety of school districts, schools, grade levels taught, and positions held by mid-career teachers in Riverside County, California. Participants were assigned a

letter as identification, starting with the letter A and ending with O. The participating school districts were also assigned a letter stating with Z and ending in U as identification. The 10 participating schools were assigned a number starting with one and ending with 10 to avoid confusion. Table 1 provides detailed demographic data of each participant.

Table 1

*Description of the Sample*

| Participant | Grade Level | Year of Service | District | School |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Participant A | Instructional Coach | Year 12 | District U | School 1 |
| Participant B | 1st Grade | Year 20 | District U | School 1 |
| Participant C | 3rd Grade | Year 14 | District U | School 2 |
| Participant D | 3rd Grade | Year 20 | District V | School 3 |
| Participant E | 5th Grade | Year 19 | District V | School 4 |
| Participant F | Literacy Coach | Year 16 | District V | School 4 |
| Participant G | 1st Grade | Year 20 | District V | School 4 |
| Participant H | 3rd Grade | Year 14 | District W | School 5 |
| Participant I | Instructional Coach (ELD) | Year 13 | District W | School 5 |
| Participant J | 2nd Grade | Year 20 | District X | School 6 |
| Participant K | 1st – 3rd Grade Special Education | Year 8 | District X | School 7 |
| Participant L | 1st Grade | Year 8 | District X | School 7 |
| Participant M | 2nd Grade | Year 18 | District W | School 8 |
| Participant N | 4th Grade | Year 13 | District Y | School 9 |
| Participant O | 4th Grade | Year 11 | District Z | School 10 |

## Presentation and Analysis of Data

Data collection for this study took place from October 25, 2017 through December 13, 2017. The finding presented in this chapter were gathered through the one-on-one semi-structured interviews conducted of fifteen mid-career teachers. The interviews took place in person during a single meeting with each participant with the goal of gaining a greater insight into the experiences that mid-career teachers have that impact their TSE.

### Development of Themes and Frequencies

All interviews were audio recorded with the permission of the participants. The audio recording of each interview was then transcribed into a written document by the researcher. Each participant then verified the corresponding transcript. Once all 15 interviews were transcribed and verified, the researcher, along with the peer researchers, scanned the data to identify a preliminary list of themes. The peer researchers generated a list of 29 preliminary themes. The researcher uploaded the preliminary themes in to NVivo in order to start the formal data coding process. After all interviews were coded according to the preliminary themes, the peer researchers determined the criteria for significance of frequencies. It was determined by all three peer researchers that in order for a theme to be considered significant to the study it needed to meet the criteria of having a minimum frequency of ten over a minimum of five sources. After the qualifying criteria was applied, the number of themes was reduced from 29 to 12. Table 2 presents the 12 themes along with the frequency count gathered from the data analysis.

Table 2

*Themes and Frequencies*

| Themes | Sources (of 15 total) | References |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Teachers feel validated from positive input | 13 | 25 |
| 2. Teachers are more reflective after failed teaching experiences | 13 | 22 |
| 3. Teachers' sense of personal accomplishment diminishes when uncomfortable with the academic content | 11 | 20 |
| 4. Teachers suffer from emotional exhaustion when other adults, such as peers, administrators, or parents are involved in their professional responsibilities | 10 | 20 |
| 5. Teachers develop confidence when observing a trusted colleague | 10 | 19 |
| 6. Teachers grow professionally when they participate in collaborative lesson study | 10 | 17 |
| 7. The positive relationships teachers establish in their work place refuel their energy to persist in the field | 11 | 15 |
| 8. Teachers feel motivated to improve when observing other teachers' successes or failures | 12 | 14 |
| 9. Teachers feel a sense of worth when the light bulb goes on for their students | 10 | 14 |
| 10. Teachers feel disconnected when provided with negative input | 11 | 13 |
| 11. Teachers develop a deep understanding of how students learn | 9 | 10 |
| 12. Teachers experience a sense of joy when they know they have impacted students | 7 | 10 |
| | Total | 199 |

The theoretical framework of Albert Bandura's (1977), four sources of information that impact self-efficacy was utilized to further analyze the collected data. A. Bandura asserts that individuals screen information through the sources of mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal. Table 3 presents the researchers data alignment to A. Bandura's four sources of information that impact self-efficacy beliefs.

Table 3

*Themes and Theoretical Framework*

| Bandura's Four Sources of Self-Efficacy Beliefs | Theme |
|---|---|
| Mastery Experiences:<br>The instances in which an individual is actually able to perform a difficult teaching task with success | 2, 3, 11 |
| Verbal Persuasion:<br>The instances in which others provide an individual with verbal encouragement about their capability to perform a given task | 1, 10 |
| Vicarious Experiences:<br>The instances in which an individual makes judgments about their own abilities after observing someone similar to themselves perform a difficult task with success | 5, 6, 8 |
| Physiological Arousal:<br>An individual's emotional state when presented with performing a specific task | 4, 7, 9, 12 |

The findings of the study are presented in this segment as they relate to A. Bandura's (1977) four sources of information that impact self-efficacy along with a quick overview of the research questions. This section also presents participant experiences and their perception of how the shared experiences impacted their TSE.

## Mastery Experiences

The term mastery experiences refers to the perception that a task or behavior has been executed in a successful manner, therefore, raising efficacy beliefs and contributing to the expectation that the performance will be successfully executed again in the future (R. D. Goddard et al., 2004). Having successful experiences provides an individual with evidence about his or her ability to perform the same task in a successful way in the future; on the other hand, a performance perceived as unsuccessful may weaken an individual's self-efficacy belief. A. Bandura (1997) states that self-efficacy is determined by how an individual perceives and processes the performance of a given task.

**Research question 1**. The first research question of this study focused on mastery experiences and it asked: *How do mastery experiences impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?* The following three themes emerged from the data related to mastery experiences:

- Teachers are more reflective after failed teaching experiences.
- Teachers' sense of personal accomplishment diminished when uncomfortable with the academic content.
- Teachers develop a deep understanding of how students learn.

***Theme 2: Teachers are more reflective after failed teaching experiences***. The first research question for this study examines how mastery experiences impact the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers. One of the themes that emerged from the data that points to teachers use of mastery experiences is that teachers are more reflective after failed teaching experiences. With 22 frequencies from 13 sources, this theme was the second most frequently reported theme. Participants mentioned instances

relating to the planning of lessons, lesson delivery, teaching strategies, and assessment results that made them feel unsuccessful. With the many changes that occur from year to year in education, such as classroom dynamics, new curriculum adoption, students' needs, and the implementation of new teaching strategies, just to name a few, mid-career elementary teachers still have failed teaching experiences and feel unsure about their practice, even after years of teaching. Engaging in reflective practices is an important tool for mid-career elementary teachers because through these practices they are able to develop skills they need to cope with the challenges they face in the classroom. By engaging in reflective practices teachers are able to develop confidence in their ability to problems solve and which helps build their self-efficacy beliefs.

Participant N spoke about her uncertainties as a mid-career teacher and about the feelings she experiences when she is not successful at a teaching task. As a new teacher, she believed that with experience, she would feel more confident in her practice; however, that has not been the case. She stated that even after years of teaching she still has moments of insecurity and doubt. Participant N stated,

> When I wasn't successful, it makes me feel ... I start to second-guess myself, and I think ... I know in the beginning of teaching, I thought 'Oh, as I teach longer I'll feel more confident, I'll have more understanding of what I'm doing,' and in essence, I don't feel that way.

Many of the participants quickly followed the shared failed teaching experience with a reflection and a need to fix the problem, to make the failed teaching task a success. Teachers felt that just because a lesson or an activity was not successful the first time, it did not mean it was a lost cause. Thirteen of the 15 participants mentioned that they

engaged in reflective practices to find a way to make sure students understood the content taught in the failed lesson. Reflecting about the failed experience led mid-career teachers to solutions that avoided the same negative outcome. In speaking about her students Participant C shared,

> The lessons that they didn't get drive me to figure out how can I get them to get it. I feel like the ones where they don't get what I want them to get impacts me more just because I want them to get it. I'm like, 'What can I do different? How can I make it work?'

Even after having success with certain lessons in previous years, due to the different classroom dynamics and the changing needs of students, those same lessons do not always have the same positive outcome in the years to follow. Teachers perceive failed teaching experiences as a personal failure that they need to rectify. Participant D shared that while working in collaboration with her grade level team they had to reflect on a failed lesson that had previously been successful. She perceived the failed teaching experience as one that was more impactful than the positive teaching experience she had shared earlier.

> I think the mistake absolutely made probably the most impact because we've been successful with that lesson in years past. And we know classes are different and kids are different, and we've talked about that, too, but ... I think it was more the failure behind something we thought was going to be amazing as teachers, and we came together as a team and it was like, 'Oh my gosh.' It was hard to admit that we didn't do something well, and to then turn that into yourself and say, 'I didn't

do that well. My students didn't get that. We need to find a way to fix it.' (Participant D)

Furthermore, teachers find value and growth in being able to reflect on a failed teaching experience. They are able to persevere through what they perceive as failure and they are able to overcome the challenging situation while increasing their commitment to the teaching profession. Participant B stated, "*I really think that actually that reflection piece of when things go wrong actually empowers me more because I get to learn from it and build on it and move forward*."

Being reflective after failed teaching experiences allows teachers to rectify what did not work. It allows them the opportunity to try again using a different approach, which then leads to a positive mastery experience. The ability to problem solve and cope with failure through reflection leads to the development of self-efficacy beliefs that builds resiliency in mid-career elementary teachers (see Table 4).

Table 4

*Frequency of Mastery Experiences: Theme 2*

| Theme | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers are more reflective after failed teaching experiences | 13 | 22 |

***Theme 3: Teachers' sense of personal accomplishment diminishes when uncomfortable with the academic content***. The next theme that emerged from the first research question that examines how mastery experiences impact the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers is that teachers' sense of personal accomplishment diminishes when uncomfortable with the academic content. Teachers shared mastery experiences regarding their discomfort with certain content areas, the use of new technology as part of instruction, the implementation of new curriculum, and how

they believe it affect their self-efficacy. Swackhamer et al. (2009), found that high levels of content knowledge contribute to a teacher's self-efficacy beliefs. The more a teacher knows about the content area, the more confident they are teaching it, this knowledge contributes to the development of self-efficacy. Eleven of the 15 participants of this study referenced this theme 20 times. Participant A shared that most of her failed teaching experiences, even as a mid-career elementary teacher, are in the content area of math and she believes that it is due to her discomfort with the content area. She stated that, "*A lot of the time my failed lessons would probably be with math. That's not my stronger subject, so I feel like that's probably why it's less successful*" (Participant A)

Participant H spoke about the struggles of implementing the Common Core Standards. Most mid-career elementary teachers began their teaching careers implementing the '97 Content Standards and with the recent adoption of the Common Core standards, which have an emphasis on conceptual understanding and problem solving, changes in classroom instruction are needed. This means that mid-career elementary teachers along with late-career elementary teachers have had to learn and implement new teaching strategies, which in some cases diminish their sense of accomplishment. Participant H expressed,

> I think probably the more difficult things have ... more recently have been like with the change in the standards and just teaching things in the depth of the Common Core. You have to teach things differently and show all the steps. I'm just thinking about math. It's been really, really difficult.

She then added a bit about the discomfort she feels regarding incorporating technology into her math lessons.

> Pretty much anytime we have a training on using some new technology is usually when I feel like overwhelmed because one, I'm kind of okay with technology, I'm not great. There's a math program that we were trained on, but I never felt like I could use that program myself. (Participant H)

In both statements, the participant refers to math as the content area of discomfort, her discomfort with math also diminishes her sense of personal accomplishment in the implementation of the Common Core standards and the use of new technology in her classroom. Swackhammer, Basile, and Kimbrough (2009) found that professional development or any further education, grows a teachers' understanding of their craft and therefore can influence the teacher's perceived capabilities which in turn affects their TSE beliefs. It is reasonable to believe that the more education or training a teacher has in a particular content area, the more efficacious they would be (see Table 5).

Table 5

*Frequency of Mastery Experiences: Theme 3*

| Theme | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers' sense of personal accomplishment diminishes when uncomfortable with the academic content | 11 | 20 |

***Theme 11: Teachers develop a deep understanding of how students learn.*** The last theme that emerged from the first research question that examines the impact mastery experiences have on mid-career TSE was that teachers develop a deep understanding of how students learn. When asked to share mastery experiences in which they felt successful, nine of the 15 participants referred specifically to developing a deeper understanding of how students learn. The experiences shared by teachers vary in grade levels, content area, and educational classification (i.e. general education, special

education). The deep understanding of how students learn was shared in the form of lesson design, lesson delivery, teaching strategies, observations, and professional development. Over time, through mastery experiences mid-career elementary teachers are able to gain a better understanding of how students learn because they are able to identify strategies that help students achieve academic success. Participant K shared an instance in which her lesson design and delivery made her feel successful and helped her develop a deeper understanding of how students learn. Through her adjectives lesson she was able to witness the success of her second grade students. That mastery experience supported the development of this teacher's self-efficacy because she developed a deep understanding of how students learn. Participant K illustrated this by stating:

> I would say that most of the time when I'm feeling successful, I can see that I was able to really deliver a good lesson, that the kids are engaged in my whole group lesson first and that they're engaged with each other in either creating the adjective ideas, like which words are adjectives. Then we did a sort with adjectives and nouns and verbs and they could figure out which one was the adjective. Seeing the sentences that they were able to create afterwards and they underlined the adjectives ... that made me feel successful. It makes me happy that I was able to create a lesson that helped them truly learn.

Participant J, who is a special education teacher, spoke about establishing routines in her classroom. These routines have helped her develop a deeper understanding of how her students learn and have allowed her the opportunity to challenge her students. These mastery experiences have allowed this teacher to understand the needs of her students and have impacted her self-efficacy beliefs.

> I think, generally, my calendar time goes well for me, I think, what works well because I have a different kind of population in here. They work well with repetition, but I think it's one where it has the routine, but then I push them to learn new skills. Because we're working on it on a consistent way on a daily basis, it works well for them. (Participant J)

Teachers shared that throughout the years they have been able to develop techniques that have enable them to teach students difficult content. They shared that after witnessing students struggle to comprehend or grasp specific skills, they had to figure out a way to make learning possible by developing a deeper understanding of how students learn. Participant M shared an example of a technique she developed after years of witnessing her fifth grade students struggle with the concept of place value. She shared that with this strategy she has been able to help her fifth grade students succeed in learning place value with larger numbers.

> And I used to have students in fifth grade who would struggle with math, specifically with when you get millions, billions, and they would have trouble with that. So I made this little thing up, and I called it the monkey chart, and we said, 'On the monkey bars today.' So on, ones, the, thousands, millions, billions, trillions. And so then I got them to see that you're only reading three numbers ever at a time, and every time you see the comma, that means tell me what group you're in. And it was really successful. (Participant M)

Participants also mentioned that another way that they have been able to develop a deep understanding of how students learn has been through professional development. Participant E shared that as an early-career elementary teacher she had the opportunity to

take part in valuable professional development that influenced her understanding of how students learn. After participating in staff development and successfully implementing the strategies in her classroom, she was able to gather a deeper understanding of how students learn and in turn, developed high self-efficacy beliefs.

> My first year, we started with how to do a read aloud. Like a good, legitimate read aloud with mild talk and all that stuff. Every staff meeting every week was staff development and then every short day staff development. There was always like modeled and so I would write down questions that they asked. What kind of questions did they ask and try and take that back in. And for the longest time that's what I wanted to do was be a literacy coach. I always felt smarter. I liked that kind of good staff development because I felt like it helped me be better at my practice it helped me truly understand how kids learn. (Participants E)

Through years of mastery experiences, mid-career elementary teachers are able to gain a deep understanding of how students learn that allows them the flexibility needed to make adjustments for their students. These teachers understand that students have different needs and have the knowledge to meet those needs (Table 6).

Table 6

*Frequency of Mastery Experiences: Theme 11*

| Themes | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers develop a deep understanding of how students learn | 9 | 10 |

**Verbal Persuasion**

The source of verbal persuasion refers to the voiced support of the people around an individual, such as friends and colleagues (A. Bandura, 1997). The praise of the people around an individual has the ability to help teachers develop high-efficacy beliefs.

Positive verbal persuasion can serve individuals with validation or assurance of a job well done. However, A. Bandura (1977) suggests that just as with the mastery experiences and vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion can also have a positive or negative effect on an individual's self-efficacy beliefs. In other words, just as a praise can be a validation of a well-executed task, negative verbal persuasion such as criticism can have the opposite effect and lower self-efficacy beliefs.

**Research question 2.** The second research question in this study was specific to verbal persuasion and asked: *How does verbal persuasion impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?* The following two themes emerged as the two strongest regarding verbal persuasion:

- Teachers feel validated from positive feedback.
- Teachers feel disconnected from negative input.

***Theme 1: Teachers feel validated from positive feedback***. A. Bandura (1977) identified four sources of self-efficacy beliefs. The second research question examines the impact verbal persuasion has in the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers. The first theme to emerge from this sub-question is that teachers feel validated from positive feedback. This was the most referred to theme of the study. Of the 15 participants, 13 of them mentioned that they felt validated from positive feedback with a frequency of 25 times. As participants spoke to this theme, they mentioned various sources of feedback. Teachers spoke about getting positive feedback from administrators, peers, and parents and about the impact it has on their TSE. Participants shared that receiving positive feedback from administrators really impacts their self-efficacy because it makes them feel confident in the work they are doing. Positive

feedback from administrators reenergizes teachers and it motivates them to continue in the profession. Tschnnen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) affirm that teachers have reported that having their principal's support has a positive effect on TSE. Participant A shared an instance in which the positive feedback she received from her principal impacted her TSE in a new position as an instructional coach by stating:

> She said, 'The teacher that you've been working with just had her observation lesson and she did amazing. It was the best lesson I've ever seen.' She goes, 'And I could see parts of you in her lesson, but she made it her own, and it was clear that you had been working with her, that you had gone in and done a demonstration lesson with her, and you'd really been supporting her.' That made me feel really, finally, like, okay, maybe I can do this job. It's like a little booster of confidence. It made me excited to continue in my job.

Positive feedback from peers is a strong source of validation for teachers as well. Teachers reported that receiving positive feedback from peers makes them feel validated and it reassures them that they are doing a good job. Furthermore, it makes them feel proud of their work and as if they have something to contribute to those around them. In many cases their colleagues and grade level peers are the people they work closest with on a daily basis and feeling validated by them has a constructive impact on TSE.

Participant H shared,

> Probably the experience that I come across the most, that makes me feel capable, is ... it's come from my colleagues and my grade level team, they tell me that I do a good job and that they really like my support and that I really understand the standards well. I study them, and if they're not sure what they mean they'll come

> and ask, 'Hey, I know you kind of understand what the standard means a little bit more or how we're supposed to teach it.' They're kind of complimenting me, but at the same time I get to use what they're complimenting me about to help them kind of thing.

Another influential source of positive feedback that impact TSE derives from parents. Participant O spoke about a time when the positive feedback from parents made her feel validated.

> Feedback from the parents. I mean, the parents actually wanted me again, and it felt good that the parents are appreciating me and the kids are appreciating me and want me. That was, it made the year. I had a wonderful year last year. The parents were amazing. They wanted me to actually go to fifth grade with their kids for the next year.

Feeling validated or reassured impacts the way teachers feels about their profession. Receiving positive feedback from administrators, peers, students, or parents builds self-efficacy beliefs in teachers that helps them avoid feeling stressed, burned out or unsatisfied with the job. Positive feedback contributes to the resiliency a teacher develops in the teaching profession (see Table 7).

Table 7

*Frequency of Verbal Persuasion: Theme 1*

| Theme | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers feel validated from positive feedback | 13 | 25 |

***Theme 10: Teachers feel disconnected when provided with negative verbal input***. Verbal persuasion is another of the four sources of self-efficacy beliefs.

The second research question examined the impact verbal persuasion has on the TSE of mid-career elementary teachers.

One of the themes that emerged from the question was that teachers feel disconnected when provided with negative input. Just as positive feedback has the potential to make a teacher feel validated, negative input can have the opposite effect. Furthermore, similar to positive feedback coming from various sources, so can negative input. Receiving negative input causes mid-career elementary teachers to feel cut off from the support they need from their administrators, peers, and parents. These negative feelings can lead a teacher to feel burned out which consequently results in them leaving the profession. Participant M shared an experience after an informal observation conducted by her principal. She described how the negative input she received left her feeling disillusioned and unsupported by her administrator. The observation took place during the implementation of a new teaching strategy, which the participant shared, she was already feeling challenged by.

> So as she came in and this one was not a schedule run or anything, and I said, 'Alright, since we have two groups, let's arrange it,' and I was getting the students into two groups and just making sure that they were ready. And then in her notes, it was like, 'Well, you had one student who went to the pencil sharpener two times. You had another student who went to the sink and got a wet paper towel for her forehead.' And I'm like, 'Are you kidding?' And it was like word for word, every ... and I'm like, 'Really?' And I just thought that was kind of, to me a bit on the nitpicky side. And I thought if this is supposed to be building my confidence, it's not. I'm new at trying this, so it's not going to be perfect. I

thought, I'm not going to feel safe trying new things, because I see that you're going to nitpick every little part of it. (Participant M)

Participant H shared that as a new teacher she asked her grade level peers for advice on how to support struggling students and instead of receiving the assistance she asked for, she was met with negative input. She stated that for some time after the incident, she just stopped asking for support from her peers and she began to feel isolated. She added that the experience left her feeling attacked and that she really did not enjoy her job that year.

> I had come to my team and I said, 'I need help. I don't know what to do because they're [referring to the student] so far behind.' Usually we're pulling a group, but it's like a third of my class. Someone on my team said, 'Well, now it's finally time for you to learn how to be a real teacher.' That has, at least, sort of stuck in my brain a little bit because I asked for help it was turned around on me instead of, 'Oh yeah, sure, here's some ideas.' I was like a newer teacher then. It was a teacher who had been there awhile that said that to me, 'You've been spoiled for years. It's time for you to learn how to be a real teacher.' I was just like, 'That's not going to help me. I just kind of need some help.' Then for a while I was like, 'Well, I guess I'm not going to ask.' (Participant H)

Lastly, participant C spoke about a time when the negative input from a parent left her questioning what she had done wrong. She shared that she was a very structured teacher but that she tried her best to provide each student with what they needed. She stated that the child of this parent had made significant growth in her classroom however, his parent still decided to remove the student from her class. Even after the student was

removed from her class, he still came by her classroom to visit. She stated that the incident, along with the feedback from the parent, had a negative impact on her self-efficacy beliefs.

> Definitely parent input. Sometimes our parents think it's personal. We're attacking their child, and they take it out on you. A few years ago, I had a parent request me for her child. She kept telling me, 'He needs structure. He needs your structure.' I'm a very structured teacher. 'He needs structure. I need him in your room.' But by November, apparently I was giving too much structure, we had meetings and she told me some not so nice things and by November she had complained at the district office. So then that was almost a challenge on me, it left me questioning. 'What did I do wrong?' And so that was hard coming from a parent. That was hard for me. (Participant M)

Negative feedback has a negative effect on a teacher's self-efficacy beliefs. It has the potential to make individuals lower their standards and not try new things. Such feedback leads to anxiety, stress, teacher burn out, lack of job satisfaction and distrust, as was the case for Participant M (see Table 8).

Table 8

*Frequency of Verbal Persuasion: Theme 10*

| Theme | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers feel disconnected when provided with negative input. | 11 | 13 |

**Vicarious Experiences**

According to A. Bandura (1977) the term vicarious experiences refers to an individual observing others successfully execute a task and then transferring the feelings of success to form self-efficacy beliefs about themselves. When it comes to vicarious

experiences an individual must rely on others to develop self-efficacy beliefs about themselves. They must identify with the person being observed and then transfer the self-efficacy beliefs on to themselves. R. D. Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy (2004) add that when an individual with whom the observer identifies with executes a task successfully, the efficacy belief of the individual is likely to be high, and when the task is executed poorly, the individual's efficacy belief is likely to be low.

**Research question 3**. The third research question asked: *How do vicarious experiences impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?* The following three themes emerged from the data related to vicarious experiences:

- Teachers develop confidence when observing a trusted colleague.
- Teachers grow professionally when they participate in collaborative lesson study.
- Teachers feel motivated to improve when observing other teachers' successes or failures.

***Theme 5: Teachers develop confidence when observing a trusted colleague***. Another of A. Bandura's (1977) four sources of self-efficacy beliefs is vicarious experiences. The third research question of this study examined the impact vicarious experiences had on the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers. A theme that emerged from the research question was that teachers develop confidence when observing a trusted colleague. Teachers are long life learners and from the start of their teacher education, they are required to complete observation hours and to students teach in a classroom with an experienced teacher as a model. They learn vicariously through observation and it continues throughout their careers through professional development

and observing modeled lessons. Ten participants of the 15, mentioned that observing trusted colleagues during modeled lessons or professional development helped them develop confidence in their own abilities. These observations served as a TSE booster for participants, and through these observations the teachers were able to gauge what they needed to adjust in their lessons, teachers were able to gain a new perspective, and they served as models for early-career teachers. Participant A shared that after observing a lesson in a colleague's classroom, she felt confident that she would succeed in her own lesson. Through this vicarious experience, she was able to develop high levels of self-efficacy that led to her success in her demonstration lessons. Participant A stated,

> Seeing her lesson made me realize, okay, I can do this. I just have to scale back what I would have done with my own students in third grade. It was good to see it in action so that I could just pick out the pieces that I would want to use in my demonstration lesson.

Participant K shared that having the opportunity to observe her Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) coach as an early-career teacher helped her develop confidence. She considered herself a visual learner so she believed that having the opportunity to observe lessons was beneficial for her TSE. The opportunity to observe a trusted BTSA coach allowed Participant K to transfer the teaching skills her coach utilized to herself. The transfer of the skills through the vicarious experience led to confidence building, which then lead to increased self-efficacy beliefs. Participant K stated the following:

> I would say the most impacted I was when I was doing BTSA, I was like a beginning teacher and had my BTSA teacher model lessons and stuff like that.

> I'm very much a visual learner. It was good for me to see lessons modeled the way that she would do it, because then I could totally model myself into what she was doing.

With the implementation of new curriculum, mid-career elementary teachers can feel at a loss and insecure in their practice. Such changes can cause teachers to question their abilities and require support from trusted colleagues to positively impact their TSE. Participant L shared an experience in which she and her grade level peers required the support of an instructional coach, which she referred to as TSA, to help them understand how the new English Language Arts curriculum was to be implemented. This vicarious experience has a positive impact on Participant L and her grade level. It allowed them to have clarity and to develop the confidence in their ability to teach the curriculum correctly.

> It was our TSA, it was all the meta-cognitive strategies and we were just at a loss. We were trying to teach everything and we didn't understand how it could be 10 minutes or 15 or mini lesson, and how you fit it all in a day and so she came and modeled a lesson for us. She was like 'oh bring a book and bring a sticky and like find a long e word and stick it in there when you read.' It was literally like one minute, and we were stretching it into like 15 and I think we all, especially me, I needed to see it. I thought I couldn't, there's no way, I was too overwhelmed. There's no way I can do everything in this TE. And she was like 'It's not a TE, it's a framework' and so just watching her `model fired me up, fired my whole team up. And not only did we start to copy what she did and how she did it, we started copying each other. (Participant L)

Through the practice of observing a trusted colleague teach, teachers are able to transfer skills to themselves from the person they are observing. They are able to develop self-efficacy beliefs because they identify with their colleague and believe that if their colleague can be successful then so can they.

Table 9

*Frequency of Vicarious Experiences: Theme 5*

| Theme | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers develop confidence when observing a trusted colleague | 10 | 19 |

***Theme 6: Teachers grow professionally when they participate in collaborative lesson study***. Another theme that emerged from the examination of the research question that asked how vicarious experiences impacts the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers was that teachers grow professionally when they participate in collaborative lesson studies. Professional growth is a benefit of collaboration among teachers. TSE is impacted when teachers are able to work together in a productive and effective way to promote student learning. When they are able to work together there is a common goal and each member of the team is able to share their strengths. Each member of the team has strengths that make the team stronger. Teachers that participate in collaborative lesson studies develop high TSE beliefs that in turn impact their students. When teachers take responsibility for their part as a member of the faculty to impact students' success, they are then more likely to transfer those beliefs to their practices in their own classroom (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2001). Of the 15 participants, 10 mentioned taking part in collaboration with peers with a frequency of 17 times. Participant N stated that during collaboration time she had the opportunity to talk to colleagues about strategies and lessons that had been effective in their classrooms. She added that they

support each other and provide each other with constructive feedback that helps them grow professionally.

> So when we have our PLCs yes, we definitely collaborate and we talk about what works, what doesn't work and we try to do it across all areas. Like in math, social studies, science depending on where we are. But definitely we have support, we support each other and we always share best practices. So if there's something somebody's doing well, we share it. If there's something that didn't work out, we share it and we ask for feedback, like what do you think I should do next time? (Participant N)

During the interview with Participant O, she spoke about the success she and her grade level colleagues found when they were given the opportunity to collaborate and plan lessons together. She goes on to compare the experience from last year to the current school year and the impact it has made in her classroom not having had had that same opportunity this school year. Furthermore, she shares that being able to collaborate with her colleagues made them feel successful as teachers. Accordingly, such feelings of success promote the development of self-efficacy beliefs.

> In our district we have the units and the units are written to help guide our teaching. So I know specifically last year, fourth grade the 100 units and we sat down as a team and we were given the time by our principal to really dig deep and create the content that we were using in the standards and really going deep and tearing them apart and ripping them apart, making sure we understood it. So we felt very successful in that piece because we had everything planned out and we've noticed that this year the units have completely changed and we haven't

been given that time to really plan it as deep. So I almost feel like last year I was being a little bit more successful because I was given that time and that support from the principal and also the time with my grade level to really go into those units really deep. Supporting each other was what led to success with our kids because we were able to come back and really reflect on what we were doing. (Participant O)

Participant D added that she constantly takes part in lesson studies and that in doing so she has the opportunity to learn. She believes that even if the lesson is not great, there is always growth because she can learn from the mistakes of the teachers teaching the lesson.

I take part in lesson studies, and you always learn new things from watching people, and you don't see that nearly enough. So, even the worst lesson, well, not only do you learn what not to do, but there's always something you can take that will help with, that I can use in my own teaching. (Participant D)

The ability to participate in collaborative lesson studies helps teachers build trust with colleagues, which consequently, allows teachers to feel safe to try new things and to learn from others. It also provides teachers the opportunity to share their strengths with the rest of the team and to feel as though they are contributing. Collaboration, teamwork, contribution, common goals, and trust are all components that impact self-efficacy beliefs.

Table 10

*Frequency of Vicarious Experiences: Theme 6*

| Theme | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers grow professionally when they participate in collaborative lesson studies | 10 | 17 |

***Theme 8: Teachers feel motivated to improve when observed other teachers' successes or failures***. The third research question examined the impact that vicarious experiences had on the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers. This theme addresses the motivation teachers experience when observing other teachers successes or failures when performing teaching tasks. Vicarious experiences have the potential to raise or diminish self-efficacy beliefs based on the perspective of the observer. Twelve of the 15 participants made comments regarding this theme with a frequency of 14. Participants shared that partaking in observations of peers teaching motivated them to do better. Participant A expressed that observing a colleague's amazing lesson motivated her to want to be a better teacher and even though she felt like she might never be as great as the teacher she was observing, she felt motivated to live up to that expectation. "*I think that I was more impacted by feeling like she's amazing and my lessons are never this great, like I want to live up to that*" (Participant A).

Participant D added that she learns from observing other teachers teach and that she feels the desire to improve as a teacher after observing a successful lesson. During the observations, she looks for ways in which she can improve her practice and feels motivated to implement new strategies in her classroom. Participant D stated,

> I know there's some observations where I think, 'I so need to do better on this, that's one of the areas I really need to improve.' And, usually it just kind of fuels my desire to improve more. You learn and get motivated by what you observed. It's almost like you're already making the plan to how you're going to do it, and it makes you feel good because you think, 'aw, I can't do it that way.' And you got it.

Participant M shared that as an early-career elementary teacher she had the opportunity to observe lessons in various classrooms that impacted her in positive ways. However, she recalled a lesson that even though she perceived as a failed classroom management job, it impacted her in a positive way. She said that from that observation she learned what she did not want her classroom to be like. She was motivated to create a positive, safe, and nurturing classroom for her students. Participant M stated,

> Everything was kind of ... the kids were like, they were in perfect little rows, nobody was moving. And I mean it was like ... it was the feeling of, I thought those little kids look like they're afraid to move. That's not how I want it to be. And I think hers was a language arts lesson of some kind. And I don't know if it was nouns or verbs or whatever, but those little kids, they were like, they looked scared. And I thought, that's not how it should be ... I mean they are controlled, they're not running around, but they looked almost too scared, they weren't even learning.

When teachers feel motivated to improve after observing successful or failed teaching tasks they develop confidence. The confidence is attained from the motivation they feel. They feel as though they are capable of improving their skills and performing teaching tasks successfully, which in turn impacts their self-efficacy beliefs.

Table 11

*Frequency of Vicarious Experiences: Theme 8*

| Theme | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers feel motivated to improve when observing other teachers' successes or failures | 12 | 14 |

**Physiological Arousal**

The fourth source of self-efficacy beliefs is physiological arousal; this refers to an individual's physical response to a task or situation. It is believed that the level of an individual's physiological arousal can add to that individual's perception of competence (R. D. Goddard et al., 2004). In an uncomfortable or stressful situation an individual can experience high levels of arousal and in turn not be successful in performing a given task, therefore that experience can result in low self-efficacy beliefs.

**Research question 4**. The fourth and final research question of this study asked: *How does physiological arousal impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?* The following four themes emerged from the data gathered:

- Teachers suffer from emotional exhaustion when other adults are involved.
- The positive relationships teachers establish refuel their energy to persist in the field.
- Teachers feel a sense of worth when the light bulb goes on for the kids.
- Teachers experience a sense of joy when they know they have impacted students.

***Theme 4: Teachers suffer from emotional exhaustion when other adults, such as peers, administrators, or parents are involved in their professional responsibilities***. Psychological arousal is another of A. Bandura's (1977) four sources of self-efficacy beliefs. Participant A spoke about what she experiences when she is being observed by an administrator and how that impacts her lessons and in turn her TSE. She mentioned that she feels unsure in her teaching abilities and insecure about her lessons during observations. Furthermore, she shared that the physiological arousal

she experiences cause her to go through an entire lesson without the awareness of what she is saying.

> When you're being observed by your administrator. I think that when I get nervous, I don't process what I'm saying. It's just like words just flow out of my mouth. I'll go through a whole hour lesson and then be done and go, 'I have no idea what I even did.' It's that heightened sense of whatever it is. I just can't focus. Like raised heartbeat, sweating, and not really even being able to be in the moment. I feel like that affects the lesson, clearly, because I don't even know what I'm saying. (Participant A)

Participant O shared about a time when she experienced conflict with teachers on her grade level and about the physiological arousal she experienced and the effect it had on her. One of the five second grade teachers on her team had to be moved to sixth grade the following school year and everyone thought it would be her since she came from sixth grade the year prior. The decision was not hers to make and yet she had to deal with the animosity of the other teachers. She shared that the situation had her on an emotional rollercoaster and that it truly affected her mood.

> She took it out on me because they all felt that it should've been me. Um, so just the emotional roller coaster of dealing with other people's opinions and attitudes and perspectives on things and what they assume versus what actually happened because I had nothing to do with that choice. Those choices and decisions come from the principal, you know. Um, but that was also very emotional, I felt sad and angry at the same time, we worked so well together. And then everybody assumed, you know. It was just very hard to deal with. (Participant O)

Experiencing stress, anxiety, fear, sadness, or any other negative feeling due to the involvement of adults can cause teachers to feel burned out. Dealings with adults that cause teachers to experience negative physiological arousal put teachers in a negative state of mind that leaves them feeling incapable. Observations, peer conflict, or dealing with upset parents causes teachers to experience physiological arousal that impacts their self-efficacy beliefs in a negative way (see Table 12).

Table 12

*Frequency of Physiological Arousal: Theme 4*

| Theme | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers suffer from emotional exhaustion when other adults, such as peers, administrators, or parents are involved in their professional responsibilities | 10 | 20 |

***Theme 7: The positive relationships teachers establish in their work place refuel their energy to persist in the field***. The following theme also emerged from the data gathered from the fourth research question, which examined the impact physiological arousal had on the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers; the positive relationships teachers establish in their work place refuel their energy to persist in the field. Building positive relationships has an effect on how teachers feel about the professions. Important factors that influence the development of self-efficacy are the healthy, friendly relationships that form when a staff gets along with one another. Friendly interactions among staff members lead the way to creating positive self-efficacy beliefs (De Neve et al., 2015). Participants of this study referenced this theme 15 times. They talked about relationships they built with students, peers, and administrators. These relationships provided them with the support, guidance, and understanding needed to persist in the field. Participant O shared two different experiences related to

physiological arousal that impacted her self- efficacy. When asked which of the two physiological experiences she shared impacted her the most, Participant O stated that at this stage in her career she values the happy moments she has with her students and getting to know them better stating,

> The negative one was very impactful, like if you had asked me that that year that would've been the most impactful for sure. But now that I've been teaching since then, it's not as impactful as the happier moments that I have with my students now. I like getting to know them and I like seeing them happy. So, the happier ones definitely overcome that negative experience that I had that year.

Participant N shared an instance in which an observation did not go as planned, but due to the relationship she had with her administrator the situation was not as stressful or as negative as it could have been. A second observation was scheduled and the first observation was forgotten. In this case, this relationship provided the teacher with understanding from her principal and also developed trust.

> He called me into his office and he says, you know, I haven't even typed it up [observation paperwork], but honestly I don't know if you want me to type it up. And I said, no, I said, I, I acknowledge it was, I know it was. He's not one that's going to be like, yeah, that was the formal one because you know how there is one formal and informal. So he came back another day and he says, you know what, I'm just going to come in and do an informal and then we'll do the formal one once when we move into the new school. And I think that sounds great. So he already came in the other day and it was awesome because when he came here the

kids were doing something great. So I thought, 'Oh, good redemption.' (Participant N)

Participant C spoke about the relationship she has with her principal. She shared that she feels safe to go to her principal to ask for feedback and guidance. This relationship has built a level of trust that is beneficial for her. This teacher feels supported by her administrator and knows that her administrator believes in her. This relationship will help her continue to grow as a teacher and will provide her with the support to persist in the field. Participant C declared that,

> I can even go to her and say, 'How was this today?' Or, 'I saw that you came in for this, what do you think of that?' And she'll be very honest with me and then I can actually take that and reflect and, 'How can I make it better for my students?'

Relational capacity is a big component of building self-efficacy. Through relationships teachers learn, feel supported, build trust, and contribute to the growth of others. All are factors that support the development of self-efficacy beliefs (see Table 13).

Table 13

*Frequencies of Physiological Arousal: Theme 7*

| Theme | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| The positive relationships teachers establish in their work place refuel their energy to persist in the field | 11 | 15 |

***Theme 9: Teachers fee a sense of worth when the light bulb goes on for their students***. The last research question examined the physiological arousal impact the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers. One of the themes that emerged from the data gathered was that teachers feel a sense of worth when the light

bulb goes on for their students. When asked about instances in which they experienced physiological arousal 10 of the 15 participants shared that they are impacted when students learn, when they understand the concept being taught. Self-efficacy is closely connected to student achievement, therefore, contributing to the academic achievement of students impacts TSE.

Participant O shared that she found a way to motivate her students to read and to improve their reading level by helping them set personal reading goals. As they reach their goals she challenges them to set a higher goal, they become motivated and really work at raising their reading levels. She stated that these experiences make her feel good and that they motivate her to challenge her students more. Participant O stated, "*I think the positivity with the kids and them wanting more and when the light bulb going on, it makes me feel good, it pushes me more. I reflect on it. I go, OK, this worked, it was good*."

Participant A spoke about the feeling she experiences when her students are able to make connections and learn from a read aloud. This teacher shared that she is able to see the learning taking place from the look in her students' eyes. She stated that they are enthusiastic and engaged and that she loves it.

> I love that. I really like it when they get it. You could see their eyes lighting up, they're making connections, even though it was just a read aloud fiction book, they were going, 'hey, wait, that's because of this!' And they're making more connections, and I love that. (Participant A)

Participant F shared a similar situation about her students learning during a collaboration activities. She added that her students learning translates to her feeling

successful and that when they are not learning she feels like she needs to make changes in her teaching.

> Seeing all their little light bulbs go on by learning from each other. When I see the kids learning I feel successful if the kids are learning and they can show me that they're learning in different ways. If they're not growing, then I don't feel successful. I feel like there's something I need to change in my teaching. (Participant F)

Knowing that they are helping students learn makes teachers feel a sense of worth. Essentially, the teaching profession's main goal is to help students learn, therefore, when learning is taking place and the light bulb goes on for students, teachers feel like they have succeeded and that impacts their self-efficacy beliefs.

Table 14

*Frequencies of Physiological Arousal: Theme 9*

| Theme | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers feel a sense of worth when the light bulb goes on for their students | 10 | 14 |

***Theme 12: Teachers experience a sense of joy when they know they have impacted students***. A. Bandura's (1977) theoretical framework names four sources of self-efficacy beliefs. Physiological arousal is the focus of the fourth research question that examines the impact it has on the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers. One of the themes that emerged from the data collected was that teachers experience a sense of joy when they know they have impacted students. Feeling happy or content about the influence a teacher has on students, effects TSE beliefs. Feelings of joy prevent teachers from feeling burned out or depressed about their profession, on the contrary, they motivate teachers to persist in the profession.

Participant O, who is a fourth grade teacher, described an instance in which she had the opportunity to visit different classroom at her school site. She recalled visiting the sixth grade classroom in which many of her previous students were in and being impressed by the work they doing. She said this experience helped realize that she really has an impact on her students, she felt as though she contributed to their ability to do the work. She said that in order for the sixth grade students to compete the work they were doing, they had to utilize skills she taught them when they were in her class. Participant O stated,

> So that really helped me and I wish every teacher had that opportunity to do that because it is an eye-opener and it's like, uh, it makes you feel like you're being successful, it makes you feel proud. That what you're doing in your classroom is really making a difference.

Participant E shared that to her, teaching students to make good behavioral choices is part of the profession. She finds joy in the impact she has on her students emotionally. Such instances make her feel successful and she feels as though she made an impact in their life, because they are learning life skills.

> I think that teaching is not just academic, it's positively affecting kids emotionally too and so when you see a behavior problem making positive changes, it makes you feel like, 'Okay I get this. This is awesome.' Like they did something good today and I somehow helped make that happen. (Participant E)

For Participant G, the sense of joy came from helping one of her first grade students read syllables. She shared that the students had been having trouble blending CVC words and that she broke the words down to syllables. Making the small

adjustment made a huge difference for her students. The teacher expressed experiencing happiness and excitement that the change had worked for one of her students and seeing the growth her student made helped her realize that she is able to make a difference.

> And so as soon as she got it, I was so happy and so excited for her and proud that she had made that growth. I was just ... very happy, very excited that it worked. Seeing her grow, that she could do it, that I was able to make a difference.

Impacting students leads to teachers experiencing positive feelings that supports the development of strong self-efficacy beliefs. Teachers feel as though they succeeded in doing their job and therefore these experiences positively impact their self-efficacy beliefs. When individuals know that they have made a difference, that they have a positive effect on others, or that they have contributed to the growth of others, they feel happy and accomplished; they experience feelings that promote the development of self-efficacy beliefs.

Table 15

*Frequencies of Physiological Arousal: Theme 12*

| Theme | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Teachers experience a sense of joy when they know they have impacted students | 7 | 10 |

## Summary

Chapter IV has provided a detailed review of the study's purpose statement, research questions, and methodology, which includes the data collection processes, population and sample. Furthermore, this chapter also presents a comprehensive analysis of the findings developed from the data collected from the stories and experiences shared by participants during the 15 interviews. This study was designed to answer four research questions utilizing an ethnographic investigation model. Twelve themes

emerged from the data collected that aligned with theoretical framework that was chosen for the study, namely, A. Bandura's (1977) four sources of information that impact self-efficacy.

The following chapter, Chapter V, presents a final summary of the study, which includes major findings and conclusions that resulted from the analyzed data. The implications for action, recommendations for further research and concluding remarks are also included in the final chapter.

# CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter I provided an introduction to the study as well as the background to the research. The statement of the research problem, the purpose statement, significance of the problem, definitions, and delimitations are also included in Chapter I. Chapter II provided a synthesis of literature pertaining to teacher efficacy and provided insight regarding A. Bandura's (1977) four sources of efficacy information. The methodology employed by the researcher to conduct the study was presented in Chapter III. It also contained a review of the purpose statement, research questions, research design, population, sample, instrumentation, data collection and data analysis. A description of the participants of this study and an analysis of the data collected to describe the experiences that impacted the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career teachers are presented in Chapter IV. Chapter V presents the major findings, conclusion, and implications for action. Furthermore, recommendations for future research and the researcher's reflection can be also be found in this chapter.

## Purpose

The purpose of this ethnographic investigation was to examine and describe the experiences that impact mid-career elementary TSE beliefs based on A. Bandura's (1977) four psychological sources of information (mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological arousal).

## Research Questions

The following research questions were utilized to gather the data necessary for this ethnographic study:

1. How do mastery experiences impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
2. How does verbal persuasion impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
3. How do vicarious experience impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?
4. How does physiological arousal impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?

## Methodology

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences that influence mid-career elementary TSE beliefs an ethnographic approach was used to gather data for this study. An interview protocol was utilized to gather the rich narrative descriptions from the participants' perspective. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to ask open-response questions that permitted the participants to share their perspective of lived experiences that impacted their self-efficacy. Semi-structured interviews also provided the opportunity for the researcher to ask subsequent questions that are guided by the participants' responses so that a deeper understanding of the lived experiences being studied can be gained.

## Population

The population for this study is mid-career teachers in the state of California. While all three peer researchers studied teachers as part of the thematic process, the researchers determined the population would be divided further based on teacher career

stages because the literature demonstrated a variance in how years of experience impact self-efficacy (Kitching et al., 2009).

Day and Gu (2007) suggest that teachers' professional lives span six different phases. The six career stages presented are:

1. 0-3 years: learning which builds identity and classroom competence
2. 4-7 years: developing professional identity
3. 8-15 years: defining work-life balance
4. 16-23 years: managing work-life tensions
5. 24-30 years: adjusting to change
6. 31+: sustaining commitment (pp. 434-437).

For the purposes of this study, the peer researchers combined two phases of career development for each study. Teachers with 0-7 years of experience are labeled early-career teachers, teachers with 8-23 years of experience are labeled mid-career teachers, and those with 24 or more years are labeled late-career teachers. The population for this study is 198,713 mid-career teachers in the state of California.

There are currently 58 counties in the state of California (CDE, 2016). Riverside County, located in southern California, is made up of 23 distinct school districts (RCOE, 2017) and is a good representation of the state of California as a whole. Therefore, the target population for this study is 13,342 mid-career teachers in Riverside County.

## Sample

The sample for this study included 15 participants that were mid-career elementary teachers in public education from 10 different schools across six of the 23 school districts in Riverside County. The 15 participants were identified with help of

district and school administrators. All participants were teachers with 8-23 years of experience who were serving in a Riverside County public elementary school at the time the research was conducted.

## Major Findings

The main purpose of this study was to examine and describe the experiences of mid-career elementary teachers that have had an impact on their TSE beliefs. During the data collection process, the researcher was able to conduct in-person interviews of the participants. Through these interviews, participants were able to share their experiences and tell their stories about mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological arousal. The shared stories of participants began to paint a picture for the researcher that allowed for the impact these experiences have on TSE to emerge. The following assertions were made by the researcher after the completion of the data collection process.

### Research Question 1: How do Mastery Experiences Impact Mid-Career Elementary Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs?

Mastery experiences are one of A. Bandura's (1977) four psychological sources of information. A. Bandura believed that the four psychological sources of information have the greatest impact on the development of a teachers self-efficacy beliefs because this type of experience provides individuals with information about their own abilities to perform a difficult teaching task successfully. When teachers perform a difficult teaching task with success, they will transfer their self-efficacy beliefs from that task to other similar tasks. A failed mastery experience can have the opposite effect on self-efficacy beliefs.

**Finding 1: Teachers are more reflective after failed teaching experiences.**

One of the themes that emerged from the data that points to teachers use of mastery experiences is that teachers are more reflective after failed teaching experiences. Participants mentioned instances relating to the planning of lessons, lesson delivery, teaching strategies, and assessment results that made them feel unsuccessful. Engaging in reflective practices is an important tool for mid-career elementary teachers because through such practices they are able to cope with the challenges they face in the classroom and they are able to find solutions to failed teaching experiences. Reflective practices allow teachers to feel confident in their ability to problems solve and help them develop high self-efficacy beliefs needed to feel accomplished and to persist in the profession.

**Finding 2: Teachers' sense of personal accomplishment diminishes when uncomfortable with the academic content**. The next theme that emerged from the first research question that examines how mastery experiences impact the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers is that teachers' sense of personal accomplishment diminishes when uncomfortable with the academic content. Teachers shared mastery experiences regarding their discomfort with certain content areas, the use of new technology as part of instruction, the implementation of new curriculum, and trying new teaching strategies. Even after years of teaching, mid-career elementary teachers still face the same struggles of feeling uncomfortable with certain content as they did when they were early-career teachers. The more a teacher knows about the content area, the more confident they are teaching it. This knowledge contributes to the development of self-efficacy. By having mastery experiences that result from teaching

uncomfortable academic content areas, teachers will develop TSE beliefs which in turn builds their confidence resulting in a greater commitment to the field.

**Finding 3: Teachers develop a deep understanding of how students learn.**

The last theme that emerged from the first research question that examines the impact mastery experiences have on mid-career TSE was that teachers develop a deep understanding of how students learn. The deep understanding of how students learn was shared in the form of lesson design, lesson delivery, teaching strategies, observations, and professional development. Over time, through mastery experiences mid-career teachers are able to get a better understanding of how students learn because they are able to identify strategies that help students achieve academic success. Student achievement is linked to teacher-self efficacy beliefs, therefore when teachers have a deep understanding of how students learn they are able to implement effective strategies that result in high student achievement, thus impacting their self-efficacy beliefs in a way that will support their willingness to remain in the profession.

**Research Question 2: How does Verbal Persuasion Impact Mid-Career Elementary Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs?**

Verbal persuasion refers to the feedback an individual receives verbally from the people around them, such as friends, colleagues, and peers. The praise of the people around an individual has the ability to develop high-efficacy beliefs. Positive verbal persuasion can serve individuals with validation or assurance of a job well done. However, just as with mastery experiences, negative verbal persuasion such as criticism can have the opposite affect and lower self-efficacy beliefs.

**Finding 4: Teachers feel validated from positive feedback.** The first theme to emerge from this question is that teachers feel validated from positive feedback. As participants spoke to this theme, they mentioned various sources of feedback. Teachers spoke about getting positive feedback from administrators, peers, and parents and about the impact it has on their TSE. Participants shared that receiving positive feedback from administrators really impacts their self-efficacy because it makes them feel confident in the work they are doing. Such feedback leads to job satisfaction and teacher well-being that supports teacher persistence in the field.

**Finding 5: Teachers feel disconnected when provided with negative input.** Another theme that emerged from Research Question 2 was that teachers feel disconnected when provided with negative input. Just as positive feedback has the potential to make a teacher feel validated, negative input has the opposite effect. A teacher's TSE is also affected by negative feedback. Furthermore, just as positive feedback can derive from various sources, so can negative input. Receiving negative input causes teachers to feel cut off from the support they should get from administrators, peers, and parents. These negative feelings can lead a teacher to feel burned out resulting in them leaving the profession.

**Research Question 3: How do Vicarious Experiences Impact Mid-Career Elementary Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs?**

The term vicarious experiences refers to an individual observing others successfully execute a task and then transferring the feelings of success to form self-efficacy beliefs about themselves. When it comes to vicarious experiences an individual must rely on others to develop self-efficacy beliefs about themselves. They must identify

with the person being observed and then transfer the self-efficacy beliefs on to themselves.

**Finding 6: Teachers develop confidence when observing a trusted colleague.** The third research question of this study examined the impact vicarious experiences had on the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers. A theme that emerged from the research question was that teachers develop confidence when observing a trusted colleague. Participants mentioned that observing trusted colleagues during modeled lessons or professional development helped them develop confidence in their own abilities. These observations served as a TSE booster for participants, through them they were able to gage what they needed to adjust in their lessons and they were able to gain a new perspective.

**Finding 7: Teachers grow professionally when they participate in collaborative lesson study.** Another theme that emerged from the examination of the research question that asked how vicarious experiences impacts the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers was that teachers grow professionally when they participate in collaborative lesson studies. When teachers are able to work together there is a common goal and each member of the team is able to share their strengths; each member of the team has strengths that make the team stronger. Participants shared that during collaboration time they have the opportunity to talk to colleagues about strategies and lessons that have been effective in their classrooms and that they support each by providing constructive feedback that helps them grow professionally. The support teachers provide each other while participating in lesson studies provides the vicarious experiences to positively impact their TSE beliefs.

**Finding 8: Teachers feel motivated to improve when observing other teachers' successes or failures.** This theme addresses the motivation teachers experience when observing other teachers successes or failures when performing teaching tasks. Vicarious experiences have the potential to raise or diminish self-efficacy beliefs based on the perspective of the observer. Participants shared that partaking in observations of peers teaching, motivated them to do better. They mentioned that having the opportunity to observe colleagues teaching, regardless of the success or challenges of the lesson, still motivated them to improve their practice as teachers. The motivation teachers feel from these vicarious experiences provides them with the drive to continue in the profession.

**Research Question 4: How does Physiological Arousal Impact Mid-Career Elementary Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs?**

The fourth source of self-efficacy beliefs is physiological arousal; this refers to an individual's physical response to a task or situation. Physiological arousal can be positive or negative depending on the perception of the individual. In an uncomfortable or stressful situation an individual can experience high levels of arousal and in turn, not be successful in performing a given task. Therefore that experience can result in low self-efficacy beliefs.

**Finding 9: Teachers suffer from emotional exhaustion when other adults, such as peers, administrators, or parents are involved in their professional responsibilities.** The fourth research question examined the impact physiological arousal had on the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers. One of the themes that emerged from the data gathered was that teachers suffer from

emotional exhaustion when other adults, such as peers, administrators, or parents are involved in their professional responsibilities. According to the data, teachers experience physiological arousal that gets in the way of their teaching performance. Participants shared that they suffer from stress, anxiety, and/or nervousness in situations where other adults are involved, such as observations, parent conferences, parent information nights, or conflict with peers. The previously mentioned feelings have the potential to make teachers feel burned-out and unhappy about the teaching profession. Finding ways to help teachers overcome the negative physiological arousal caused by the presence of adults in their classroom will contribute to their emotional well-being thus keeping them committed to the profession.

**Finding 10: The positive relationships teachers establish in their work place refuel their energy to persist in the field.** Building positive relationships has an effect on how teachers feel about the professions. One of the most important factors to the development of self-efficacy is that of a staff that gets along and forms healthy, friendly relationships with one another. Participants shared stories about relationships they built with students, peers, and administrators. It was mentioned that the positive relationships they build outweigh the negative experiences they encounter. These relationships provided teachers with the support, guidance, and understanding needed to persist in the field.

**Finding 11: Teachers feel a sense of worth when the light bulb goes on for their students.** One of the themes that emerged from the data gathered regarding physiological arousal was that teachers feel a sense of worth when the light bulb goes on for the kids. When asked about instances in which they experienced physiological

arousal 10 of the 15 participants shared that they are impacted when students learn, when they understand the concept being taught. Participants commented that they love to watch their students learn, it makes them feel motivated to challenges their students more and that it makes them feel good. Self-efficacy is closely connected to student achievement, therefore, contributing to the academic achievement of students impacts TSE beliefs in a positive way and provides teachers with reassurance of a job well done and the motivation to persist in the field.

**Finding 12: Teachers experience a sense of joy when they know they have impacted students.** Another of the themes that emerged from the data collected was that teachers experience a sense of joy when they know they have impacted students. Feeling happy or content about the impact a teacher has on students, impacts TSE beliefs. Feelings of joy prevents teachers from feeling burned out or depressed about their profession, on the contrary, these feelings motivate teachers to persist in the profession. Participants of this study shared experiences in which they had the opportunity to visit the classrooms of previous students and were able to see them doing well academically. These teachers had the opportunity to see previous students apply skills they were taught in the participant's class in prior years. Participants also shared that previous students that are now in high school have come back to visit their elementary school teachers to share with them how they are doing.

## Unexpected Findings

Three unexpected findings emerged from the data collected for this study.

**Unexpected Finding 1**

The first being that, while prior research assured that mastery experiences are the most influential of the four sources of information of self-efficacy, participants in this study shared stories of physiological arousal more frequently. Teachers shared stories regarding the joy and happiness they feel from watching students learn and from being able to impact the growth of others. They also shared that building positive relationships with peers and administrators makes them feel supported and valued. While some negative physiological arousal stories were also shared, it was the frequency and impact of the positive experiences shared that were surprising to the researcher.

**Unexpected Finding 2**

The second unexpected finding emerged from the mastery experiences shared by participants. When participants spoke about failed mastery experiences, they explained that when teaching tasks did not work out as planned they engaged in reflective practices to try to figure out what went wrong and to find a way to succeed in the teachings task the next time. Some participants mentioned that they sometimes engage in a reflection practice during a lesson that is not going as planned to try to salvage it. What was unexpected to the researcher was that not one participant mentioned engaging in reflective practices after having a successful lesson. If teachers learned to reflect on successful teaching tasks, they would find value in discovering what strategies worked for their students and why. Critical reflection on successful teaching tasks and lessons would probably serve to minimize the number of failed mastery experiences.

**Unexpected Finding 3**

A third unexpected finding from this study was that each of the four sources of self-efficacy information rarely exists in complete isolation. Throughout the coding of the data it became apparent that the source of self-efficacy information often occur in conjunction with one another. Because the constriction on this study was to examine the impact of each individual source, it was not possible to deeply explore the interconnectedness of these sources.

## Conclusions

Several conclusions were gathered based on the research findings regarding how mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological arousal impact the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career teachers.

**Conclusion 1: Teachers Must Develop Collective Teacher Efficacy in Order to Provide and Receive Collegial Support.**

Based on the finding that the positive relationships teachers establish in their work place refuel their energy to persist in the field it can be concluded that teachers must develop collective teacher efficacy in order to provided and receive collegial support. Participants of this study shared that the relationships they built with students, peers, and administrators, provided them with the support, guidance, and understanding needed to persist in the field. Being part of a team that is interconnected and trusting has many benefits for mid-career teachers. At a point in their career when many teachers begin to experience the signs of burnout, it is vital that they have the support of their colleagues to remain committed to the professions. Park, Henkin, and Egley (2005), assert that teacher teams that build trust provide social support and intrinsic organizational rewards that

encourage members to persist in the field. Furthermore, they have the potential to boost the self-efficacy beliefs of the members and enhance student outcomes.

**Conclusion 2: Ongoing Engagement in Reflective Practices Improves TSE Beliefs**

The finding that teachers are more reflective after failed teaching experiences leads to the conclusion that ongoing engagement in reflective practices improves TSE beliefs. Yaffe (2010) describes three levels of reflection: (a) technical, (b) practical, and (c) critical reflection. Because teaching is a complex and demanding profession, it requires individuals to continue to grow professionally. Participants of this study commented that engaging in critical reflective practices after failed teaching experiences allowed them to analyze the situation and to find ways to refine lesson delivery. Engaging in critical reflection allows teachers to understand the "why" behind failed teaching experiences.

**Conclusion 3: Districts Need a Model School Where Best Practices are Generated and Showcased to Support Teachers in Feeling More Accomplished**

Elementary school teachers are required to teach multiple content areas such as reading, writing, math, and social studies. Such requirement, can lead to teachers feeling unprepared and uncomfortable teaching certain subject areas. Participants of this study shared that their discomfort with certain content areas has contributed to failed teaching experiences. When teacher's perception of teaching a certain content area are low, having the opportunity to observe modeled lessons contributes to the development of self-efficacy. Based on the findings that teachers' sense of personal accomplishment diminishes when uncomfortable with the academic content, it can be concluded that

districts need a model school where best practices are generated and showcased to support teachers in feeling more accomplished.

**Conclusion 4: Teacher Evaluation Systems Need to Incorporate Elements of Bandura's Four Sources of Self-Efficacy**

Based on the collective findings that teachers feel disconnected from negative input on evaluations and feedback from administrators and peers and that teachers feel validated from positive input from administrators and peers it can be concluded that positive feedback builds self-efficacy beliefs and that the teacher evaluation systems need to incorporate elements of A. Bandura's (1977) four psychological sources of information. Teachers that participated in this study recounted experiences in which they received input from administrators and peers and how that input affected their TSE. Incorporating A. Bandura's four psychological sources of information into the evaluation system places an emphasis on the development of TSE and promotes professional growth for teachers.

**Conclusion 5: Teachers Develop Self-Efficacy Beliefs When They Contribute to the Learning of Others**

Based on the findings that teachers develop a deep understanding of how students learn and teachers feel a sense of worth when the light bulb goes on for the kids it can be concluded that teachers develop self-efficacy beliefs when they contribute to the learning of others. Student achievement is a strong factor in the development of TSE because teachers view student performance as an indicator of their effectiveness. T. R. Guskey (1981), found a correlation between TSE and teacher responsibilities for student success.

The participants of this study not only mentioned contributing to the academic growth of their students, but also contributing to the professional growth of their peers.

**Conclusion 6: Teachers Rely on Each Other to Grow in Their Profession**

The collective findings that teachers feel motivated to improve when observing other teachers' successes or failures and teachers develop confidence when observing a trusted colleague and teachers grow professionally when they participate in collaborative lesson study lead to the conclusion that teachers rely on each other to grow in their profession. Participants of this study shared that taking part in various forms of collaboration and observation impacted their self-efficacy beliefs. The participants were able to learn new instructional strategies, improve the implementation of strategies they already use, and collaborate in lesson design.

**Conclusion 7: A Systematic Approach is needed in Order for Teachers to Receive Feedback from Current and Past Students**

The physiological arousal a teacher experiences impacts their self-efficacy beliefs. Both positive physiological arousal, such as excitement and joy, and negative physiological arousal, such as stress and frustration, impact TSE. Participants of this study shared various experiences in which the physiological arousal they experienced in their classrooms affected their lesson delivery as well as the way they responded to inappropriate student behavior. The finding that teachers experience a sense of joy when they know they have impacted students leads to the conclusion that a systematic approach is needed in order for teachers to receive feedback from current and past students.

## Implications for Action

Based on the data collected and the conclusion drawn from the data, the researcher has composed six implications for action. The purpose of the recommendations is to provide guidance in the development of TSE beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers. They are directed to those who have the potential to impact TSE beliefs and toward those who have the potential to implement them at district or school site level. Implementation of these recommendations is likely to assist in the development of TSE beliefs and contribute to teacher's wellbeing.

### Implication for Action 1: Administrator Induction Programs Must Include Coaching on Relationship Building and Conflict Resolution

Based on the conclusion that teachers must develop collective teacher efficacy in order to provide and receive collegial support is recommended that administrator induction programs provide new administrators with coaching on relationship building and conflict resolution. With relationship building and conflict management tools, school administrators will assist teachers in building trusting and meaningful relationships that lead to the development of collective teacher efficacy. Collective teacher efficacy contributes not only to the professional growth of individual teachers, but also to the social emotional wellbeing teachers need in order to persist in the field.

### Implication for Action 2: Once a Month Teachers Record a Lesson of a Specific Teaching Strategy and Review Multiple Times to Provide a Different Reflection Focus Every Time

Reflection is a powerful strategy used by many for professional and personal growth. Based on the conclusions made by the researcher it is recommended that

districts require teachers to record a lesson of a specific teaching strategy and to watch the recording at least three times to provide a different reflection focus every time. Furthermore, it is recommended that teachers engage in the aforementioned practice once a month to promote professional growth on both the successes and failures of a given lesson. Participants of this study only spoke of engaging in reflective practices in connection to failed teaching experiences. In order to develop TSE beliefs through mastery experiences, teachers must engage in a critical reflection of both successful and failed tasks.

**Implication for Action 3: School Districts Establish a Demonstration Elementary School that Provides Teachers Exemplar Models on Routine Site Visits and Cross-School Collaboration with Mentor Teachers**

Due to the fact that elementary school teachers are required to teach multiple subjects throughout the day, many suffer from a lack of confidence in certain subject areas. The lack of confidence leads to diminished TSE, which then leads to failed teaching experiences. In order to mitigate the effects of experiences that negatively impact mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, it is recommended that districts form a Demonstration Elementary School that will provide teachers with exemplar models and input from all four sources of self-efficacy information. Furthermore, teachers from schools within the district routinely take part in site visits as well as cross-school collaboration. Districts should consider the following steps during the development and implementation of their Demonstration Elementary School:

- Choose an existing school within the district or county to become the Demonstration Elementary School.

- Provide intensive training and coaching to teachers in order to develop their self-efficacy beliefs.
- Include a Teacher on Special Assignment to fulfill a coaching role.
- Provide teachers with the opportunity to test new strategies, observe results, share insights with peers, and adjust implementation.
- Allow teachers to develop a sense of accomplishment from being part of an environment where they are able to reach their full potential.
- Allow teachers to develop a sense of accomplishment from seeing their students perform beyond their expectations.

**Implication for Action 4: Higher Education Develops Curriculum that Trains Future Administrators to Evaluate Teachers Using the Four Sources of Self-Efficacy as a Framework.**

Based on the qualitative data reported in this study, the input teachers receive from administrators on evaluations affects the self-efficacy beliefs of teachers. In order to foster the growth and development of TSE, the teacher evaluation system needs to incorporate A. Bandura's (1977) four psychological sourced of information. It is recommended that higher education incorporate curriculum that trains future administrators to evaluate teachers using A. Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy as a framework. The evaluative feedback must be immediate and specific. It must address mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal.

**Implication for Action 5: Teacher Preparation Programs Seek out Highly Efficacious Mid-Career Teachers to Co-Teach with New Teachers to Share Their Knowledge for One School Year**

The data collected in this study revealed that mid-career elementary teachers develop self-efficacy beliefs when they contribute to the learning of others. To continue the development of TSE beliefs in both efficacious teachers and new teachers with the development of TSE, it is recommended that teacher preparation programs seek out highly efficacious mid-career teachers to co-teach and share their knowledge with early-career teachers for the entirety of a school year. The following criteria should be followed to identify highly efficacious teachers:

- Teachers should apply or be recommended by administrators or peers.
- A TSE survey will be given to every candidate.
- Candidates must demonstrate lesson rigor based on CCSS standards through various observations.
- Candidate's student data must demonstrate student growth.
- Current and past student input must be considered.

Once highly efficacious teachers are identified, they should be provided intensive coaching on TSE and A. Bandura's (1977) four physiological sources of information. These teachers must be able to provide their co-teacher the opportunity to develop TSE through mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal.

**Implication 6: Teachers Create a Task Force Composed of Students from Various Grade Levels to Create a Student Survey that Provides Feedback Regarding their Educational Experience**

TSE beliefs are impacted by the physiological arousal teachers feel from various sources. From the data collected from this study it was found that teachers experience a

sense of joy when they know they have impacted students. In order to support the development of TSE it is recommended that teachers create a task force composed of students from various grade levels to create a student survey that focuses on gathering feedback from students regarding their overall educational experience. The purpose of the survey is to provide elementary school teachers with feedback from current and past students. The conduction of the survey needs to be an ongoing process that takes place not only during the current year a student is in a teachers class, but also in years to follow, such as when the student exits elementary school, exiting middle school and so on. The implementation of this process has the potential to cultivate high levels of TSE through validation and job satisfaction.

## Recommendations for Further Research

Based on findings of this study, the researcher recommends further research in the following areas to expand in the understanding and knowledge of how TSE beliefs are impacted.

- The purpose of this study was to examine and describe the experiences that impacted the self-efficacy beliefs of mid-career elementary teachers based on all four sources of information, therefore it is recommended that similar studies are conducted that have a concentration on a single source of self-efficacy information. The results of such studies can later be combined to provide a more comprehensive analysis of how each of the four sources of self-efficacy information impact teachers' self-efficacy beliefs.

- In addition to exploring each source separately, it is recommended that a study be conducted to determine which combination of sources of self-efficacy information have the greatest impact on TSE.
- An ethnographic approach was employed to collect data for this study. Based on the approach chosen for this study, it is recommended that a future study employ a mixed methods approach that utilizes the results of a scale that measures the TSE and correlates those results to the experiences of participants. Such a study would provide a deeper insight on how the participants' experiences impact their precise level of TSE.
- This study focused solely on the experiences of mid-career elementary teachers and data was gathered from a one-time interview. In order to get a better understanding of how the self-efficacy beliefs of a teacher change over time, it is recommended that a longitudinal study be conducted where a teacher is followed from early-career stage to mid-career stage to late-career stage.
- The current study examines and describes the experiences of mid-career elementary teachers that impact their self-efficacy beliefs. Participants of this study shared a variety of stories regarding the impact school administrators had on their self-efficacy beliefs, in order to further examine the correlation between administrator's knowledge of TSE and the level of TSE of the teachers that work with that administrator further research is recommended.
- Since the focus of the current study was elementary teachers, it recommended that further qualitative research is examines and describes the experiences that

impact secondary school teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, based on A. Bandura's (1977) four sources of self-efficacy information.

- The topic of collective teacher efficacy was touched upon in the current study, but not deeply examined. It is recommended that a similar ethnographic investigation be conducted to examine and describe the experiences that impact the collective teacher efficacy of a group.
- The current study examined and described the experiences that impact TSE beliefs, however, it did not take into consideration the personal knowledge participants had of TSE. A recommendation for future study is to examine whether or not a correlation exists between teacher knowledge of TSE and the four sources of self-efficacy information and how that impacts teachers' self-efficacy beliefs.
- It is recommended that a comparative analysis of this study along with those of the peer researchers be conducted in order to explore the similarities and differences found amongst the three different career stages determined in these studies.

## Concluding Remarks and Reflections

While searching for a dissertation topic that would answer the questions my peer researcher and I had about why some teachers quickly implemented what they learned in professional development and why others did not, we embarked in a journey that took us from implementation of professional development, to the topic of reflection, and finally to the discovery of TSE. We discovered that TSE was really the answer to a multitude of unanswered questions about how and why teachers do the things they do. Initially we

planned to research professional development in different capacities since the three of us have experience as classroom teachers and professional developers. However, once the topic of TSE was discovered, all three of us were very excited about potentially having the answer to our question. We concluded that it was best to examine the experiences that teachers had over the courses of their careers. It was decided that Erica Jenson would focus on early-career elementary teachers, I would focus on mid-career elementary teachers, and Ginger Prewitt would focus on late-career elementary teachers.

Because of the research my peer researchers and I have done throughout this journey I have learned that Mia, the fictional mid-career elementary teacher introduced in Chapter I, is in dire need of support that can rebuild her self-efficacy beliefs. The career and personal life demands are overwhelming her and making her stressed out. The lack of mastery and vicarious experiences in the implementation of new curriculum have taken a toll on Mia's once high TSE beliefs. I believe that if Mia was aware of what self-efficacy is and of the impact it has on an individual, she would be able to understand her needs and feelings. Most importantly, I believe that if Mia's principal had an awareness of what TSE is, he or she would understand what Mia is going through and would be able to provide her the support and experiences needed to develop her self-efficacy beliefs.

As an elementary school teacher, I have learned so much about myself and about self-efficacy beliefs through this process. I have learned that when I find myself feeling insecure or struggling with the implementation of new curriculum or a new instructional practice, I am able to understand why I feel that way and take action in order to develop my self-efficacy beliefs where I am lacking. Being aware of my own TSE beliefs has allowed me to ask my peers and administration for support and guidance when I need it.

It has also helped me provide support for my peers to assist in the development of their self-efficacy beliefs.

I believe that as a future administrator the knowledge I have acquired from this research will allow me to support my teachers in the development of TSE. I will have the knowledge to be able to provide my teachers with plenty of vicarious experience to ensure that they experiences a variety if mastery experiences. Furthermore, I will know the importance of positive verbal persuasion in the evaluation process and I will work diligently to assist my staff in building collective efficacy and positive relationships so that they know they are supported and valued.

Additionally, the information I have learned through this process has granted me the ability to support my own children and my students in the development of their self-efficacy beliefs. Even though the research conducted in this study was focused on TSE, self-efficacy is a belief in every individual. Because of the awareness I now have of self-efficacy; I can provide them with the vicarious experiences and positive verbal persuasion they need to build self-efficacy beliefs. I can also provide them with the support they need to have successful mastery experiences.

Overall, we know that teaching is a demanding and ever changing profession that can many times cause teachers to feel stressed out, overwhelmed and burned out. All those negative feelings play a part in teacher attrition and lack of job satisfaction. With the awareness of TSE and the factors that impact it, educational leaders will have the knowledge to help develop the teachers' efficacy beliefs of teachers. The cultivation of high TSE beliefs is a fundamental factor in the success of schools and classrooms. It is time that educational leaders become aware the significance of self-efficacy and of the

impact it has on teachers in order to provide existing teachers with the support they need to persevere, stay committed to the teaching profession, and to once again find joy in teaching.

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APPENDIX A

**Email to School and District Administrators Requesting Participants**

To: School and District Administrators in Riverside County
From: Mayra Herrera, Erica Jenson, Ginger Prewitt
<mherrer5@mail.brandman.edu;
ejenson@mailbrandman.edu; gprewitt@mail.brandman.edu>
Subject: Dissertation Research on Elementary Teachers' Self-Efficacy

To Whom It May Concern:

Our names are Mayra Herrera, Erica Jenson, and Ginger Prewitt. We are doctoral students at Brandman University, part of the Chapman University System. We are a thematic research team working on a study focusing on teacher self-efficacy beliefs. The results from our study has the potential to help school administrators support the well-being of their teachers and provide professional development that improves their teacher self-efficacy. The purpose of our study is to examine and describe the experiences of elementary teachers in Riverside County that impact teacher self-efficacy beliefs based on Bandura's four psychological sources of information. This qualitative ethnographic investigation will require us to interview teachers in various career stages for approximately one hour. The career stages we are researching are:

1. Beginning-career teachers: 0-7 years of experience
2. Mid-career teachers: 8-23 years of experience
3. Late-career teachers: 24+ years of experience

It was shared that you would be an ideal person to assist us with identifying potential participants for our study. Might it be possible to set up a short phone call to explain the scope of our study so you can determine who might be willing participants? We are also available to meet with you if your schedule allows.

Sincerely,

Mayra Herrera, Erica Jenson, and Ginger Prewitt
Brandman University Doctoral Candidates

APPENDIX B

**Email to Potential Study Participants**

To: Elementary Teacher in Riverside County
From: Mayra Herrera, Brandman University Doctoral Candidate
Subject: Invitation for Participation in Dissertation Research on Teacher Self-Efficacy

Dear Teacher,

My name is Mayra Herrera and I am a doctoral student at Brandman University, part of the Chapman University System. I am part of a thematic research team working on a study focusing on teacher self-efficacy beliefs. Teacher self-efficacy beliefs are an individual teacher's beliefs in his or her personal ability to perform a specific teaching task within various contexts and how those tasks impact student learning. Your name was provided us as someone who might be willing to participate. Your wealth of knowledge and experience on this topic will help future teachers, so I hope you will consider participating in this study. Participation will take place in a one hour interview, which will occur at a location that is comfortable for you.

The information gained from your interview will be confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. Please review the attached informed consent before making your decision.

If you have any questions about the study before deciding to participate, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you decide that you would like to participate, please e-mail me at (email address) with the phone number and time that is best to reach you.
Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Mayra Herrera
Brandman University Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX C

## Interview Questions

Thank you for helping me with my study. Today, I am going to be asking you about different experiences from your teaching career because the purpose of my study is to investigate how teacher self-efficacy is influenced. Teacher self-efficacy is an individual teacher's beliefs in his or her personal ability to perform a specific teaching task within various contexts and how those tasks impact student learning. So, today's questions are going to ask you to share your teaching experiences and perceptions about your own teacher self-efficacy. Are you ready to begin?

**Mastery Experiences.** The experiences or situations in which a teacher is able to perform a difficult teaching task with success. The following questions will ask you about your own teaching mastery experiences:

1. What might be a teaching experience in which you were able to perform the necessary tasks successfully? (What happened? When did it happen? Who supported you in this effort? What are some factors that lead to your feeling successful?)
2. What might be a teaching experience that was less successful? (What happened? When did it happen? Who should have supported you in this effort? What are some factors that lead to your feeling unsuccessful?)
3. Which mastery experience do you feel impacted your self-efficacy more and why?

**Verbal Persuasion.** The instances in which others provide a teacher with verbal encouragement about their capability to perform a given teaching task. The following questions will ask you about your own verbal persuasion experiences as a teacher:

4. What might be an experience where you received verbal input from colleagues, parents, students, or administrators, etc. that impacted your efficacy? (How did this impact your self-efficacy? What happened? When did it happen?)
5. What might be another experience you have had with verbal persuasion that impacted your teacher self-efficacy differently? In what ways did that impact your self-efficacy?
6. Which verbal input experience do you feel impacted your self-efficacy more and why?

**Vicarious Experiences.** The instances in which a teacher makes judgments about their own teaching abilities after observing someone similar to themselves perform a difficult teaching task with success. The following questions will ask you about your vicarious experiences as a teacher:

7. What might be an observation you have had through professional development, modelled teaching, etc. that influenced your perception of being able to perform the task yourself. (What specifically was modelled or taught during the professional development? Who provided the modelled moment or professional development? In what ways did this impact your self-efficacy?)
8. What might be another experience that impacted your teacher self-efficacy differently? In what ways did that impact your teacher self-efficacy?
9. Which vicarious experience do you feel impacted your self-efficacy more and why?

**Physiological Arousal.** A teacher's emotional or physical state when presented with performing a specific teaching task. The following questions will ask you about situations in which your physical and/or emotional state was impacted:

10. What might be a situation in which your physical state or emotions impacted your ability to perform a teaching task? What were your specific physical or emotional reactions (i.e. heart rate, nervousness, joy, etc.). (What happened? Who was involved? When did it happen? Where did the situation occur? In what ways did this impact your self-efficacy?)
11. What might be a situation in which you had an opposite physical or emotional state. (What happened? Who was involved? When did it happen? Where did the situation occur? In what ways did this impact your self-efficacy?)
12. Which physiological arousal experience do you feel impacted your teacher self-efficacy more and why?

APPENDIX D

**Protecting Human Research Participants Certificate**

**Certificate of Completion**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Mayra Herrera** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 05/18/2016.

Certification Number: 2077197.

APPENDIX E

## Brandman University Internal Board Approval

BRANDMAN University Chapman University System



**BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**

**IRB Application Action – Approval**

Date: 9/26/17

Name of Investigator/Researcher: Mayra Herrera

Faculty or Student ID Number: B00486037

Title of Research Project:

An ethnographic investigation into the influence of Bandura's four psychological sources of information on mid-career elementary teachers' self-efficacy

Project Type: ☑ New ☐ Continuation ☐ Resubmission

Category that applies to your research:

☑ Doctoral Dissertation EdD
☐ DNP Clinical Project
☐ Masters' Thesis
☐ Course Project
☐ Faculty Professional/Academic Research
☐ Other:

Funded: ☑ No ☐ Yes

[Funding Agency; Type of Funding; Grant Number]

Project Duration (cannot exceed 1 year): 6 months

Principal Investigator's Address: 12832 Clemson Drive Eastvale, CA. 92880

Email Address: mherrer5@mail.brandman.edu Telephone Number: 310.383.5195

Faculty Advisor/Sponsor/Chair Name: Dr. Tamerin Capellino

Email Address: capellin@brandman.edu Telephone Number: 951.285.0982

Category of Review:

☐ Exempt Review ☑ Expedited Review ☐ Standard Review

☑ I have completed the NIH Certification and included a copy with this proposal

☐ NIH Certificate currently on file in the office of the IRB Chair or Department Office

Signature of Principal Investigator: Mayra Herrera Digitally signed by Mayra Herrera Date: 2017.09.26 11:15:22 -07'00' Date: 9/26/17

Signature of Faculty Advisor/ Sponsor/Dissertation Chair: Tamerin Capellino Digitally signed by Tamerin Capellino Date: 2017.09.26 14:28:09 -07'00' Date: 9/26/17

**BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**
**IRB APPLICATION ACTION – APPROVAL**
***COMPLETED BY BUIRB***

**IRB ACTION/APPROVAL**

**Name of Investigator/Researcher:** Mayra Herrera

☐ Returned without review. Insufficient detail to adequately assess risks, protections and benefits.

☐ Approved/Certified as Exempt form IRB Review.

☑ Approved as submitted.

☐ Approved, contingent on minor revisions (see attached)

☐ Requires significant modifications of the protocol before approval. Research must resubmit with modifications (see attached)

☐ Researcher must contact IRB member and discuss revisions to research proposal and protocol.

**Level of Risk:** ☐ No Risk ☑ Minimal Risk ☐ More than Minimal Risk

IRB Comments:

**IRB Reviewer:** Michael Moodian

**Telephone:** _____ **Email:** _____

**BUIRB Chair:** Doug DeVore **Date:** 10/06/17

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**REVISED IRB Application** ☐ Approved ☐ Returned

**Name:** _____

**Telephone:** _____ **Email:** _____ **Date:** _____

**BUIRB Chair:** _____

APPENDIX F

## Participant Bill of Rights

BRANDMAN University Chapman University System

### BRANDMAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

#### Research Participant's Bill of Rights

Any person who is requested to consent to participate as a subject in an experiment, or who is requested to consent on behalf of another, has the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is attempting to discover.
2. To be told what will happen in the study and whether any of the procedures, drugs or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice.
3. To be told about the risks, side effects or discomforts of the things that may happen to him/her.
4. To be told if he/she can expect any benefit from participating and, if so, what the benefits might be.
5. To be told what other choices he/she has and how they may be better or worse than being in the study.
6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study.
7. To be told what sort of medical treatment is available if any complications arise.
8. To refuse to participate at all before or after the study is started without any adverse effects.
9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form.
10. To be free of pressures when considering whether he/she wishes to agree to be in the study.

If at any time you have questions regarding a research study, you should ask the researchers to answer them. You also may contact the Brandman University Institutional Review Board, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. The Brandman University Institutional Review Board may be contacted either by telephoning the Office of Academic Affairs at (949) 341-9937 or by writing to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA, 92618.

Brandman University IRB Adopted November 2013

APPENDIX G

## Informed Consent

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

INFORMATION ABOUT: An Ethnographic Investigation Using Bandura's Four Sources of Information of Late-Career Teachers' Self-Efficacy.

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Mayra Herrera

PURPOSE OF STUDY: You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Mayra Herrera, a doctoral student from Brandman University. The purpose of this ethnographic investigation is to examine and describe the experiences impact teacher self-efficacy beliefs based on Bandura's four psychological sources of information. This study will add to the existing literature about teacher self-efficacy by providing an in-depth examination of the factors that influence teacher self-efficacy as perceived by elementary school teachers. School administrators will gain a deeper understanding of the factors that influence teacher self-efficacy that will allow them to better support the growth and development of teacher self-efficacy.

By participating in this study, I agree to participate in a one on one interview. The one on one interview will last approximately 60 minutes and will be conducted in person.
I understand that:

a) There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. I understand that the Investigators will protect my confidentiality by keeping the identifying codes and research materials in a locked file drawer that is available only to the researchers.

b) The possible benefit of this study to me is that my input may help add to the research regarding experiences that impact elementary teacher self-efficacy beliefs based on Bandura's four psychological sources of information. The findings will be available to me at the conclusion of the study. I understand that I will not be compensated for my participation.

c) If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Mayra Herrera at mherrer5@mail.brandman.edu.

d) My participation in this research study is voluntary. I may decide to not participate in the study and I can withdraw at any time. I can also decide not to answer particular questions during the interview if I so choose. I understand that I may refuse to participate or may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. In addition, the Investigator may stop the study at any time.

e) No information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form and the "Research Participant's Bill of Rights." I have read the above and understand it and hereby consent to the procedure(s) set forth.

_____

Signature of Participant or Responsible Party

_____

Signature of Principal Investigator

_____

Date BUIRB Written Informed Consent