TEACHERS' SELF-PERCEIVED ATTITUDES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF INSTRUCTING

ENGLISH LEARNERS IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE

by

Angela Hughes

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

As the population of English learners (ELs) continues to grow, so does the achievement gap between ELs and non-EL peers. Educators must analyze what could be contributing factors to Els' low performance, such as misconceptions about ELs, teachers' attitudes toward teaching ELs, and how teachers perceive themselves as able to instruct ELs effectively. Further research was needed to examine ELs in the general education classroom and teachers' attitudes to determine when and why teachers feel less or more self-efficacy teaching ELs. The purpose of this quantitative study was to analyze 74 general education teachers' sense of self-efficacy for teaching English learners (ELs) and teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs in general education classroom settings in a public school district in middle Tennessee. The participants included a convenience sampling of 24 elementary, 33 middle, and 17 high school teachers from all subject areas. Teachers' scores as measured by the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory and the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers were used to conduct Pearson correlations to explore a possible relationship between teachers' attitudes toward teaching ELs and teachers' self-efficacy toward instructing ELs. The researcher found statistically significant relationships between K-12 teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy of instructing ELs and middle school teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy of instructing ELs. The researcher did not find significant relationships between elementary teachers' or high school teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy of instructing ELs. It was concluded that teachers had positive attitudes toward teaching ELs, and teachers recognized the need for professional development for EL instruction in order to increase teachers' self-efficacy toward instructing ELs.

Keywords: teacher self-efficacy, English learners, teacher attitude

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my Ethan, Jacob, and Isabella. You three are the definition of resilience, and I am so proud of you! I am so blessed to be your mother. Thank you for making life so beautiful and inspiring me to run my race with passion and purpose (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). Now go run your races and finish well!

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I must also thank my parents, Bill and Norma Hughes, for teaching me that some of life's greatest lessons are learned through falling and getting back up. Mom and Dad have always been willing to sacrifice in order to help me achieve. I could not have completed this program without their willingness and my sisters' (Nikki and Jennifer) willingness to watch my kids. I only hope I can be as great of a parent to my kids as Mom and Dad have been to me.

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List of Abbreviations

English learner (EL)

English as a second language (ESL)

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)

World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2017), there are approximately 4.6 million English learners (ELs) in the United States public school system, accounting for approximately 9% of the public school enrollment, and the EL population is expected to increase to 25% by 2025 (Hill, Weston, & Hayes, 2014). According to U.S. Department of Education (2017), the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) has moved the EL population from Title III to Title I, which holds schools equally accountable for EL growth and achievement as other non-EL peers. English learner achievement is more heavily weighted under ESSA toward the accountability ratings teachers, schools, and districts receive than under the previous No Child Left Behind Act or other revisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Recently only a minority of teachers reported that they felt adequately prepared to meet the needs of students who had disabilities or who had limited English language proficiency with diverse cultural backgrounds (Cárdenas-Hagan, 2018; Taie & Goldring, 2017). Teachers' knowledge of second language acquisition, their attitudes towards instructing ELs in general education classrooms, and their perception of their teaching effectiveness to help English language learners perform can have an impact on the supports the ELs receive. This quantitative study was conducted to determine if there is a relationship between the attitudes of teachers' teaching ELs in general education classrooms and teachers' sense of efficacy for instructing ELs. This chapter provides background information for the study, as well as provides the problem, purpose, and significance of the study.

Background

Historical Overview

General education classrooms in American public schools are faced with culturally and linguistically diverse students with different academic needs and backgrounds. Many parts of the United States have experienced demographic shifts within the past 20 years which has impacted the communities' cultures and languages (Samson & Collins, 2012). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2017), there are an estimated 4.6 million English language learners (ELs) or about 9.2% of the total public school population. Current reports estimate approximately 25% of the students attending public schools speak a language other than English as their first language (Samson & Collins, 2012).

The changes in the demographics, culture, and language over the past decades have a direct impact on how public school systems need to adapt teaching methods and strategies to meet the needs of the diverse population. Public school systems and teachers have had to evaluate how effectively teachers are able to help the EL population attain academic achievement. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessment (2015), 68% of fourth grade ELs scored below basic on the reading assessment compared to 27% of fourth grade non-EL students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). An even larger gap occurred with the eighth grade ELs. For the 2015 eighth grade reading assessment, 71% of eighth grade EL students scored below basic, compared to 21% of eighth grade non-EL students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). Kanno and Gromley (2013) found that fewer than 50% of ELs acquire any postsecondary education and less than 15% of ELs receive a bachelor's degree. The achievement gap between the EL population and the non-EL population has caused policymakers to become more concerned with the

academic equity of the EL population. The ESSA is holding public schools more accountable for the EL performance in hopes of closing the achievement gaps and raising the graduation rate (Callahan & Shifrer, 2016). Educators from the general education classroom to administrators at the district offices are now held accountable for EL academic growth and achievement. Mainstream teachers can no longer assume the English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers are solely responsible for ELs' education (Malsbury & Applegate, 2016).

Social Context

For the past 15 years, the EL subgroup has scored below all other groups on the NAEP for the reading assessment (Dragoset et al., 2016). Most educators can predict that reading would be the greatest challenge for students whose first language is a language other than English, but the concern still exists that ELs who are not achieving academic success are at risk for dropping out of school (ED Data Express, 2016). When ELs are at risk for dropping out of school, educators need to reflect on their attitudes toward Els' abilities to learn content in their classrooms, as well as how well they are able to instruct ELs. Rubinstein-Avila and Lee (2014) found that some teachers do not have the appropriate curricula and assessments to teach and assess ELs. Rubinstein-Avila and Lee also found that most teachers have a positive attitude toward teaching ELs, but some teachers have misconceptions about ELs being low performers. These misconceptions of ELs' academic performance could be a result of the lack of professional development teachers receive about instructing ELs. Teachers that only teach one content area are typically not required to take teacher-preparation courses or professional development outside of their area of specialization or minor. These content teachers may not have the training for EL instruction in order to provide the necessary support for the ELs to master the content and attain higher levels of learning in the content areas.

Many times teachers recognize ELs are struggling and need additional supports, but it is often difficult for teachers to distinguish if the difficulty is a result of a lack of language proficiency, a gap in their foundational skills, sociocultural factors, or a learning disability (Kangas, 2014; Orosco, Schonewise, Onís, Klingner, & Hoover, 2016). According to DeMatthews, Edwards, and Nelson (2014), ELs enter the school system academically at risk of failing due to the language barrier. Other ELs may struggle academically because of the cultural differences in instructional practices and educational expectations (Hoover & Erickson, 2015). ELs are acquiring the English language in the general education classroom and simultaneously learning academic material. In an attempt to provide more academic support to ELs, teachers may incorrectly refer ELs for special education services instead of providing the appropriate language supports needed to master the content material.

The number of ELs receiving special education services is often disproportionately represented (Umansky, Thompson, & Diaz, 2017). Depending on the location, some districts have over-identified ELs as needing special education services, and in other districts the number of students needing special education services is under-identified. Identifying students with disabilities is often difficult, but teachers who do not have an understanding of second language acquisition and who do not speak the same native language as the ELs could further complicate correctly identifying whether an EL has a learning disability (DeMatthews et al., 2014). Equity becomes a concern because Hispanic students are more likely to be served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and spend less time in the general education classroom than their non-Hispanic peers (DeMatthews et al., 2014). The EL population has a constitutional right to receive a quality and equitable education, regardless of their educational background or educational needs (Rubinstein-Avila & Lee, 2014). On the contrary, to ensure ELs are receiving

the appropriate supports needed to be successful, the ELs that do have learning disabilities need

to be correctly identified in order to receive the instruction and accommodations needed to

reduce the possibility of failure or dropping out. Teachers attend professional development on

identifying students with special needs, but often the professional development does not take into

consideration the needs of the EL population. The misidentification of ELs could be a result of

unclear policies on how to assess ELs, a lack of teacher knowledge of second language

acquisition, or cultural and environmental factors that affect ELs academically (DeMatthews et

al., 2014). Once the ELs are identified as needing special education services, the ELs stay in the

special education program for a long period of time. During this period of time when the ELs

are receiving the special education services, ELs receive a less rigorous and demanding

educational program and are often segregated from nondisabled peers (Garcia, 2015; Skiba,

Artiles, Kozleski, Losen, & Harry, 2016). As the level of rigor and expectations are lowered for

ELs receiving special education services, so are the possibilities of pursuing postsecondary

opportunities (Skiba et al., 2016).

Second Language Acquisition

A second language learner goes through a process to acquire language proficiency in the

second language. At first, ELs go through a period where they are absorbing the language. The

students may remain silent during this period because they are trying to figure out the language

well enough to speak it. The ELs are also developing confidence in their English during this

period and may try to quietly whisper words and sounds they hear to try to practice their English

(Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2013). In time, the students learn more English and can identify key

words when reading or listening to English. The students still have not learned all the

grammatical structures in the early stages and may not be able to apply grammatical rules when

producing the language. Over the first and second year of second language acquisition, the students learn more grammar and are able to write or speak words correctly in a sentence. With more time and exposure, the students learn the syntactical form of the language and are able to produce the second language productively (Sousa, 2011).

Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS)

Cummins (2008) makes a clear distinction between informal basic language that ELs use to communicate and the academic language ELs need to master in order to be academically successful. Basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) are the basic vocabulary words and phrases used in everyday informal conversation. The ELs experience BICS more often and learn these communicative skills quicker because the words or phrases are repeated and used often. Often a teacher may assume ELs are fluent English speakers because the teacher hears the ELs speaking informally using BICS in the cafeteria or at recess with friends. The ELs do not necessarily know more than basic conversational English. Even if the ELs are fluent in BICS, teachers cannot assume they are proficient in academic language. Teachers need to continue to provide support and specific instructional strategies to help the ELs access the content knowledge and academic vocabulary used in the classroom because many ELs do not have exposure to academic language outside of the academic setting.

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)

Cummins (2008) explains how content knowledge and academic vocabulary mastery is more cognitively demanding to learn and apply, especially for ELs. Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) is more complex language that is necessary to understand in order to successfully demonstrate mastery of academic content. The ELs need exposure to academic vocabulary and opportunities to apply academic vocabulary in order to attain proficiency. When

ELs reach a level of English where they can understand the grammatical structures and vocabulary, they are able to use their English to learn new content. The ELs must rely on their emerging English to capture the academic content of the lessons. For students that do not have background knowledge in the content area, learning rigorous content in English can be very difficult. The ELs depend on teachers to provide learning supports to aid in making sure the ELs are fully understanding what is being taught (Echevarria et al., 2013; Hammond, 2015; Wright, 2015). As the classes, assignments, and state assessments become more rigorous, students need to develop their CALP to successfully execute higher order thinking tasks (Echevarria, et al., 2013). The CALP develops after the ELs have acquired their BICS. For students with a weaker educational background, developing their CALP can take several years (Cummins, 2008; Echevarria, et al., 2013; Hammond, 2015).

Five Hypotheses for Second Language Acquisition

Researchers have different beliefs about how the second language is acquired. Some researchers believe second language instruction should include grammatical forms, vocabulary, pronunciation, and pragmatics (Nassaji, 2016). Other researchers believe second language acquisition is learned through naturalistic exposure, which is similar to students learning their first language, and second language acquisition is dependent on social, cultural, and sociocultural situations. One of the most influential second language acquisition models includes Krashen's (1982) five hypotheses. According to Krashen, the five hypotheses for second language learning are (a) the acquisition-learning hypothesis, (b) the monitor hypothesis, (c) the natural order hypothesis, (d) the input hypothesis, and (e) the affective filter hypothesis. The acquisition-learning hypothesis makes the distinction between acquiring a language as a natural way to communicate through meaningful interaction. Krashen distinguishes language acquisition as a

subconscious process where the EL begins to know the language, in contrast to learning the language where the EL makes a conscious effort to learn about the language (Wright, 2015). When learning a second language, many times an individual focuses on the grammar and rules of the language (Krashen, 1982). According to Krashen, acquiring the language is much more important than learning the language. As the EL begins to learn the grammar rules, the student monitors what the student produces. Krashen discusses that the monitor hypothesis occurs when the student is internally monitoring the grammatical output and accuracy of the language. For this reason, the goal of language learning should be communication and not learning rules.

According to Krashen, while the ELs' ability to monitor and correct language errors is partially due to learning the language, the majority of the EL's language fluency and accuracy comes through language acquisition (Wright, 2015). According to the natural order hypothesis, there are some morphemes ELs will learn earlier than others depending on the structure of the ELs' first language (Krashen, 1982). If the ELs' first language is similar to English, the ELs can transfer their understanding of the function of morphemes easier. On the contrary, students will not comprehend when and why to use certain structures and morphemes until the student is ready. Drilling ELs on grammar is not useful unless the students are at a proficiency level where they can understand why the grammar rules apply in the context of the language (Wright, 2015). The input or comprehension hypothesis is known as the most important because this hypothesis discusses how language emerges when ELs are encouraged to gather knowledge just beyond their current level of competency (Krashen, 1982). Krashen (1985) describes his input hypothesis as $i + 1$, where the "i" represents what the EL understands at the present level of proficiency when hearing or reading the language. The "+1" represents the level just above the

current proficiency level, which can be attained by using previously acquired linguistic

knowledge, knowledge of the world, and the context of the situation.

Krashen (1982) suggests that how much comprehensible input ELs are able to receive is

determined by the ELs' affective filter. The lower the ELs' affective filter, the more receptive

the EL is to the second language. An EL with low self-confidence, or one that is anxious about

being a part of a community that speaks a language other than the ELs' native language, would

have a higher affective filter, which would make comprehensible input for the EL more difficult.

According to the affective filter hypothesis, ELs are more motivated to learn a second language

when they are in a low-anxiety environment (Krashen, 1982). Students learning a second

language must feel comfortable to make mistakes and ask questions when they do not

understand, need clarification, or need confirmation. Teachers need to ensure ELs feel safe and

supported as they progress through the learning acquisition process. Teachers should encourage

ELs to see mistakes as opportunities for growth and not as failures.

Theoretical Framework

The construct of teacher efficacy was derived from Bandura's (1977) social cognitive

theory. According to social cognitive theory, teachers who believe they can be successful when

working with students are more likely to be committed to teaching and are more resilient when

faced with difficult situations or students. Individuals with high self-efficacy are able to set a

path to achieve the goal and follow through until the goal is realized. What teachers believe

about their preparation and abilities to teach effectively can impact how students perform

academically. According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), the teachers' abilities to

encourage student growth, performance, and achievement is teacher self-efficacy. Teachers with

a high sense of efficacy spend time planning and implementing strategies they have learned in

their instruction. Teachers that are confident in their teaching abilities feel more comfortable trying new techniques and methodologies to help students who still have not been able to master the material (Malanson, Jacque, Faux, & Meiri, 2014). Confident teachers recognize that taking risks and trying new things is essential to learning for the teacher and the students. When risks are involved, the possibility of making mistakes and sometimes even failure is implied. Teachers build empathy toward making mistakes and develop resiliency within themselves and the students. Teachers with high teacher efficacy foster high expectations for themselves, which reflects in their planning, goal setting, and evaluating their progress and achievement (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Velthuis, Fisser, & Pieters, 2014). Teachers with a stronger sense of self-efficacy tend to be more psychologically balanced because they find purpose in teaching and are more confident in and proud of their profession (Zee & Komeen, 2016).

The number of students who are labeled ELs is increasing in elementary, middle, and high school. As the number of ELs increases, the achievement gap between ELs and their English-speaking peers also increases. The achievement gap widens as the students move into the upper grades, causing a concern for ELs dropping out of school. Educators from elementary through high school need to analyze how effectively they are able to help the EL population meet their diverse needs and achieve academic success. Teachers who believe their teaching can have an impact on ELs' academic achievement despite environmental factors have a higher sense of teacher efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In order to determine which teachers have a high sense of self-efficacy, this study was conducted to focus on teachers' sense of efficacy for teaching ELs in the general education classroom. Due to the gap widening as the ELs enter in secondary courses, this dissertation sought to determine if there was a difference in teachers'

sense of efficacy among the different school levels of elementary, middle, and high school and among teachers with varying years of experience.

Problem Statement

Demographics in many parts of the United States have changed dramatically and quickly. According to the NAEP, the academic achievement of ELs is lower than the general population or subpopulation (Maxwell, 2014; National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). According to 2014-2015 data, the high school graduation rate for ELs was 65.1% compared to an overall graduation rate of 83% (ED Data Express, 2016). The achievement gaps show that teachers are not providing instruction in such a way that ELs are able to attain the same academic achievement as general education peers (Johnson & Wells, 2017). Teachers may have bias or misconceptions toward certain minority students, especially students who do not speak the same languages as the teachers. Teachers may have limited knowledge about cultural diversity and second language acquisition that may shape their attitudes about ELs, which in turn might shape their perception of how well they are able to effectively instruct ELs.

Many teachers have been in the profession for years and never had ELs in their classrooms until recently. These experienced teachers may not have received or attended training on cultural diversity or instructional strategies to use with ELs (Herrera, Perez, & Escamilla, 2015). Approximately 38% of educators have taken courses for instructing ELs, and less than 3% of educators have a specialization for instructing ELs (Cárdenas-Hagan, 2018; Taie & Goldring, 2017). A possible reason there continues to be an achievement gap between the EL population and the regular education population may be a result of teachers' low sense of efficacy when teaching ELs because they have received such little training on this population (Cárdenas-Hagan, 2018). Some findings in the research do not report a significant relationship

between teacher self-efficacy and student academic achievement in the general education classroom (Klassen & Tze, 2014; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Other studies have been conducted that show a positive relationship between teacher self-efficacy and student performance (Lev, Tatar, & Koslowsky, 2018; Ryan, Kuusinen, & Bedoya-Skoog, 2015; Shim, 2019), but these studies are not specific to EL performance.

Many teachers do not perceive themselves as able to effectively teach ELs (Fenner, 2013; Johnson & Wells, 2017), which could influence teachers' attitudes toward having ELs in their classrooms. Studies have been conducted to determine teacher attitudes toward ELs in content areas or other factors related to student achievement (Huerta, Garza, Jackson & Murukutla, 2019). In order to address the concerns of EL student achievement, studies have been conducted to determine correlations of preservice teachers' attitudes and EL instruction (Kolano & King, 2015; Wessels, Trainin, Reeves, Catalano, & Deng, 2017). There is insufficient research to make a connection between teachers' attitudes toward teaching ELs and teachers' self-efficacy for instructing ELs. According to Geerlings, Thijs, and Verkuyten, (2018), further research is needed to examine multicultural education and teacher characteristics, such as teacher attitudes, to determine when and why teachers feel less or more self-efficacy instructing students of various ethnic and racial groups. The problem addressed in this study was that there is not enough research to determine if teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs in the teachers' general education classrooms have a relationship to teachers' self-efficacy to provide appropriate and effective instruction to ELs in the general education classroom.

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Purpose Statement

The purpose of this correlational study was to determine if there is a relationship between the predictor variable, teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs, and the criterion variable, general education teachers' sense of self-efficacy when teaching ELs. The predictor variable was generally defined as the scores received from the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers (Reeves, 2006). The criterion variable was generally defined as self-efficacy scores received on the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory (Paneque & Barbetta, 2006). The population for the study was K-12 teachers who taught non-EL and EL students in general education classrooms in a middle Tennessee district.

Significance of the Study

This study on teachers' sense of self-efficacy when teaching ELs in the general education classroom provides information from the teachers' attitudes of teaching ELs and teachers' perceived self-efficacy of instructing ELs. Some teachers may have a positive or negative attitude toward instructing ELs influenced by cultural bias, misconceptions, or the teachers' level of understanding of cultural diversity and second language acquisition (Orosco et al., 2016). Many teachers do not feel adequately prepared to teach ELs because the training they received in higher education did not prepare them to teach ELs (Cárdenas-Hagan, 2018; Russell, 2016). Other teachers have received training for teaching ELs, but the training was not aligned to content or federal policy, which left teachers feeling as though they had not received quality training that would benefit their instruction (Cárdenas-Hagan, 2018). Although the achievement gap between ELs and non-ELs is a national concern, only 20 states require teachers to have training on EL instruction (Staehr Fenner, 2014). This dissertation adds research that would

benefit educator preparation programs and professional development programs in deciding if issues in cultural diversity and second language acquisition need to be addressed. If teachers do not have high self-efficacy of teaching ELs, the teachers may not feel comfortable trying different strategies to help the ELs master the content (Zee, Koomen, & de Jong, 2018). The information gained from the dissertation shows teachers' perceived self-efficacy in providing the appropriate scaffolds and instructional strategies to help ELs succeed with the rigorous content. If teachers are not able to provide the necessary instruction to help the ELs attain mastery of rigorous grade level standards or have negative attitudes towards ELs, ELs may be at risk for being identified as having a learning disability. The results from the dissertation identify there is not a need to provide professional development on culturally responsive teaching and bias because the results show positive attitudes toward instructing ELs in the general education classroom. The study helps to determine which grade level (elementary, middle, or high school) of teachers' attitudes affect their self-efficacy. The results also help to determine how much responsibility teachers believe they have toward the ELs' learning and mastery of the content. By analyzing the data of the perceived self-efficacy scores and attitudes of teachers toward instructing ELs, administrators may devise a vision and plan for professional development focusing on EL instruction and achievement to improve the overall school performance (Elfers & Stritikus, 2014).

Research Question

   RQ1: Is there a correlation between teachers' attitudes toward instructing English learners (ELs) and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the EXCEL Teacher Inventory?

Definitions

1. *EL* – An English learner (EL) is a student who is not a native English speaker. The student may be at various levels of English proficiency, but not at the level of a native English speaker (Echevarria et al., 2013).

2. *ESL* – English as a second language (ESL) is instruction provided to students who are learning English as their second or additional language while residing within an English speaking country (Echevarria et al., 2013).

3. *ESSA* – The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 is an education law to ensure all students are receiving an equal and equitable education. ESSA replaced the previous No Child Left Behind Act in December 2015 (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

4. *General Education Teachers* – Teachers in elementary, middle, and high schools who instruct and assess all students in the general education classroom (IRIS Center, 2018).

5. *NAEP* – The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the largest nationally representative assessment for America's students given in various subject areas (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017).

6. *Self-Efficacy* – An individual's perception of his or her ability to influence or impact an outcome (Bandura, 1986).

7. *SIOP* – Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) is a model for implementing sheltered English instruction in the general education classroom that focuses on using content and language objectives (Echevarria et al., 2013).

8. *Teacher Efficacy* – A teacher's belief about his or her effectiveness and ability to aid students in accomplishing instructional goals and achieving academic success (Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

9. *WIDA* – World Class Instructional Design and Assessment is an educational consortium of 37 states that designs and implements proficiency standards. It creates assessments used to measure ELs' proficiency (WIDA, 2017).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

According to the NAEP, the EL population has been scoring lower than any other subpopulation of students since 2012 (Dragoset et al., 2016). Public schools currently have over 4 million ELs in their school systems according to the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics (2017). Demographers predict that by 2025, one in four students in the public school system will speak a language other than English as their first language (Orosco et al., 2016). The increase of ELs in the public school systems has had an impact on schools that may not have had training on EL instruction and may not have the curriculum to support ELs. As the number of ELs continues to increase, educators have to evaluate their effectiveness of instructing and evaluating the EL population. If the specific needs of the ELs are not addressed in the manner that best suits the ELs, the ELs may develop gaps in their learning and perform poorly. Teachers who have not had proper training on instructing ELs or have low self-efficacy of their abilities to teach ELs may confuse learning disabilities with language deficiency during second language acquisition (Cárdenas-Hagan, 2018). The purpose of this dissertation was to determine if there was a relationship between teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs in general education classrooms and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs. The theoretical framework and related literature for the study are included in this chapter.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Albert Bandura's social learning theory (1977) and Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory of self-efficacy. Bandura explains self-efficacy as a person's ability to generate cognitive, social, and behavioral skills to function in the person's environment. Self-efficacy is often attained after testing and acquiring skills while developing

alternate strategies to be successful in diverse environments. Self-efficacy is how the individual perceives he or she will perform in a given situation. A difference exists between an individual's perception of the ability to be successful in a circumstance and the individual actually possessing the skills to be successful in a circumstance. Often a person has a faulty perception of self, whether it is higher or lower than the person's present level of competency. Since the outcome is the result of an act or action, a person anticipates how one will perform and predicts the outcome of a situation based on one's judgment of how one will perform in that given situation. If a person doubts the ability to be successful in a certain circumstance, the person is quick to stop pursuing the desired outcome because the initial efforts do not show hope for success (Bandura, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984). On the contrary, if an individual judges that he or she will be successful in a given situation, the individual will persist until the desired outcome is attained (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). People's beliefs about their abilities shape their behavior, thought patterns, and emotional reactions to different situations (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy can influence individuals to commit and persist in pursuing a goal beyond their current level of achievement or competence despite challenges and setbacks because of their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

Gibson and Dembo (1984) applied Bandura's (1977) theory to the construct of teacher efficacy. Teacher efficacy involves the teacher's self-efficacy beliefs and the outcome expectancy of bringing about positive student changes, regardless of family background, IQ, and school situations (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). According to Gibson and Dembo, teachers with higher efficacy are more likely to have a stronger academic focus in instruction with more time directly spend on instruction, which is related to higher student achievement. Teacher feedback is also related to teacher efficacy because it affects the teacher's behavior and the students'

outcomes. Teachers with higher teacher efficacy are more likely to give meaningful feedback because the teacher believes the feedback will be used to raise student outcomes.

Teacher self-efficacy is based on the teacher's self-perceived level of competence rather than the actual level of competence (Velthuis et al., 2014). Teachers are able to persist through challenges when they have a slightly higher perception of their abilities, which serves to motivate teachers to expend additional effort to use the skills and abilities they actually have (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Novice teachers enter the profession with high self-efficacy because of the passion the teachers have to change students' lives. Novice teachers then realize the assignment is more difficult than expected and are forced to change how they define good teaching to protect themselves from perceiving themselves as failures. Novice teachers often feel uncertain, alienated, unappreciated, and overwhelmed with excessive demands, which also lead to low self-efficacy beliefs (Webb & Ashton, 1986).

Teachers who have been teaching for a number of years may have additional factors to consider when determining their self-efficacy. Experienced teachers have more opportunities to experience success. The more mastery experiences teachers have, the higher their self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1977). On the contrary, teachers with many negative experiences have lower self-efficacy beliefs. Teachers who have years of experience teaching in a school with a positive school climate where they receive positive feedback from evaluations have higher self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Experienced teachers who teach in schools where academic achievement is attained repeatedly have higher teacher self-efficacy. Teachers who have taught the same subject matter to the same age students for multiple years have higher self-efficacy. Experienced teachers who have opportunities to provide feedback for school-based decision

making and build teacher leader capacity have higher self-efficacy beliefs (Moore & Esselman, 1992; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

Schema Theory

Schema are the internal scripts about information and experiences that are stored in the limbic brain. Schema theory explains that background knowledge is stored and organized in an individual's schemata. The schemata are organized according to cultural experiences, values, and concepts. An effective way to help ELs connect to new learning is by activating previously learned knowledge with deep neural pathways and the background knowledge stored in the schemata (Hammond, 2015). Teachers may use visuals, prior lessons, or prior experiences to provide an anchor or point of reference for the students. Teachers applying the schema theory is very beneficial to ELs because ELs are able to understand and retain information once they have wired together the new information to the individual's schemata (Echevarria et al., 2013; Hammond, 2015; Khaiyali, 2014). If there are no schemata, or prior knowledge, teachers will have to build on background knowledge for the ELs to have a foundation on which to place the new knowledge. Once the ELs have a foundation and can connect to the new learning, the ELs' brains are prepared for growth and can engage in more complex thinking to challenge the brain and build capacity to accomplish the higher order tasks on their own (Hammond, 2015).

Sociocultural Theory

Another common learning theory applied to teaching ELs is the sociocultural theory. The sociocultural theory emphasizes speaking and interacting with others in order to learn about the culture, language, and content (Wright, 2015). Sociocultural theory considers how culture shapes a child's thinking and behaviors. Students from another culture learn to pay attention to the social context to understand what might be happening around them. Sociocultural theory

also takes into consideration the ELs' own culture. Students cannot put aside what they believe, how they think, and what they value as a citizen of their culture because that is who they are. The cultural psychology recognizes that "culture cannot be separated and treated as an external factor; culture is everywhere, and it serves to organize all experiences. Mind and culture cannot be separated" (Miller, 2011, p. 174).

The work of psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) became highly influential in the 1990s. Vygotsky explained how students have a zone of proximal development (ZPD) that lies within a metaphorical space where students can attain a higher level of knowledge and achievement with the support of a peer or teacher. The ZPD is how educators determine where ELs are and where they could be if the teacher uses scaffolds to support the students (Barohny, 2016). The support and assistance the peer or teacher provides are referred to as scaffolding. Effective teachers first model what they expect their students to do. Teachers may recognize there are ELs who need additional support to complete an assignment. Some teachers may choose to work with the students in a small group to allow the students an opportunity to work closely with the teacher to ensure comprehension of the assignment. Some teachers might assign a peer to work as a mentor to work with ELs who require a little guidance. Teachers and peers may provide academic conversational scaffolding for content areas by paraphrasing, synthesizing, clarifying, elaborating on ideas, and providing evidence. Teachers do this to provide support, but also to give the student more independence from the teacher. When providing this support, teachers plan to intentionally position opportunities to teach and extend ELs' linguistic and content knowledge (Wright, 2015). The goal is for the ELs to work as independently as possible by providing support if the ELs do not understand enough to advance their learning independently while simultaneously avoiding unnecessary confusion and frustration.

Teachers apply the sociocultural theory when they interact and collaborate with students, while allowing students to learn naturally. Teachers deliberately provide opportunities in the classroom for students to practice socializing and being culturally sensitive to all students' cultures (Hammond, 2015). If ELs do not sense the learning environment is a respectful place, the students' attitudes and emotions will have a negative impact on their achievement. Teachers must ensure the material and curriculum they are teaching is not culturally biased and too difficult for ELs to understand (Wright, 2015). When students are allowed to participate in group activities, students are given the opportunity to learn from one another. In this way, students are acquiring new knowledge and strategies through their school culture. Group activities encourage students to learn socially and academically while shaping the students' worldviews. Sociocultural theory encourages educators to evaluate the process of learning instead of focusing on the outcome. The goal of the teacher according to sociocultural theory is to evaluate where the students are currently and determine how to stretch the students to move them a little beyond their present level of proficiency and thinking. The advanced peer or adult builds on the knowledge by presenting information or an activity slightly above the child's present level of competency. An effective teacher wants to present learning opportunities in such a way that the students are challenged to strive and achieve a higher level of learning and simultaneously gain confidence about their abilities to become successful. The teacher and ELs have a common goal, so the teacher looks at the ELs' actions and thinking when trying to solve a problem, then the teacher determines how to advance the child's thinking (Miller, 2011).

Related Literature

Teacher Self-Efficacy

According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007), teacher self-efficacy is the teacher's belief about the teacher's abilities to encourage student growth, performance, and achievement. Teachers who have low self-efficacy and do not expect to be successful are less likely to put forth effort in preparation and delivery of instruction. Teachers with high self-efficacy, even beyond their current level of competency, will take the time and energy needed to plan and try new strategies because they believe they have a level of control over the students' learning outcomes (Hattie & Zierer, 2018; Zee & Komeen, 2016). Teachers with high self-efficacy are more resilient and willing to take risks by trying new techniques with students because they have the self-belief that they will be able to successfully raise student achievement (Malanson et al., 2014; Velthuis et al., 2014). Teachers with high self-efficacy have higher expectations of themselves and their students, which is often reflected in their goal setting and evaluating of their progress and their students' progress (Velthuis et al., 2014). Teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy tend to find more fulfillment and joy in their teaching because they feel they are able to positively impact student outcomes, which in turn increases the level of efficacy. On the contrary, teachers with low self-efficacy may feel anxiety and frustration because they do not feel they have an impact on student achievement, which further leads to lower self-efficacy (Zee & Komeen, 2016). Teachers with high self-efficacy understand that their instruction will result in higher student outcomes because they have the belief in their abilities to use effective teaching strategies, such as scaffolding, to achieve those higher student outcomes (Zee & Komeen, 2016). The opposite also applies; teachers with low self-efficacy will not try to use certain effective teaching strategies because they do not believe that they will be able to raise student outcomes by

using those certain strategies. Teachers with higher levels of teacher efficacy tend to differentiate and use more diverse instructional strategies (Zee et al., 2018). Teachers with higher self-efficacy may try several different strategies to determine what is most effective with ELs.

With public schools having such diverse populations, there is a need to consider the self-efficacy of teachers who teach these diverse learners. In a study of 26 elementary teachers, teachers self-reported as having low self-efficacy when using culturally responsive instruction (Malo-Juvera, Correll & Cantrell, 2018). It is important to research further the issue of low teacher self-efficacy when teaching populations with high diversity because often these are the populations of students that would benefit the most from teachers who are willing to try different strategies to help them attain academic goals (Malo-Juvera et al., 2018). For teachers who have low self-efficacy toward culturally responsive instruction, teachers may need to spend extra time trying to understand the cultural backgrounds of the students. In a study of 74 preservice teachers, 35 preservice teachers showed positive results in their self-efficacy of teaching ELs after engaging in a semester-long letter writing program with ELs in a public school (Mahalingappa, Hughes, & Polat, 2018).

When conducting a meta-analysis of 43 studies to examine a relationship between teachers' psychological characteristics and teacher effectiveness, small but significant results were found between self-efficacy and evaluated teacher performance (Klassen & Tze, 2014). Teachers may experience periods during the year or when teaching certain content when their levels of self-efficacy may vary (Klassen & Tze, 2014). With experience, teachers will receive more evaluations, and more positive evaluations and experiences will raise self-efficacy. While teachers' self-efficacy is often studied to determine the teachers' self-efficacy of the whole class

collectively, Zee et al. (2018) suggest teachers may have a different self-efficacy when instructing certain students or certain groups of students, such as ELs. Teachers may perceive that they are able to provide effective instruction to a certain group of students such as students needing math intervention but may not have the same teacher self-efficacy with math instruction for ELs with limited English.

Teacher Attitudes

Under the 2015 reauthorization of ESSA, all teachers with ELs are held accountable for providing the supports needed for the ELs to be successful. Teachers are responsible for providing instruction in such a way that ELs are able to master grade-level standards in the core content areas of math, science, social studies, and English language arts (Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, 2015). Teachers have had to change how they teach in order to try to meet the demands of the changing community and the increased rigor in the standards for the subjects they teach. Teachers may feel additional pressure to provide scaffolds to help ELs meet high expectation when the ELs are struggling to learn the language at the same time as learning the rigorous content. Teachers may unintentionally have a negative attitude toward ELs because of the concern of the ELs' abilities to show mastery on the state assessments and how that will impact the teachers' value-added or effectiveness scores (Mellom, Straubhaar, Balderas, Ariail, & Portes, 2018). Teachers' attitudes toward certain ethnic groups, students with culturally diverse backgrounds, or students who speak a language other than English can affect how teachers instruct this population of students, which can impact how these students perform academically (Farrell & Ives, 2015; Glock & Karbach, 2015; Peterson, Rubie-Davies, Osborne, & Sibley, 2016; Strand, 2014).

Teachers may have bias or misconceptions that determine their attitude toward ELs' ability to attain academic achievement. In a recent study, five ESL teachers reported that two main factors affecting ELs' academic performance were ELs speaking their home language too much and ELs' parents not being supportive (Shim, 2019). Teachers who believe these two factors apply to all ELs may have an attitude that ELs cannot reach or exceed high expectations for learning outcomes. Sugimoto, Carter, and Stoehr (2017) found that both preservice and mentor teachers had deficit beliefs about ELs, which affected their attitudes towards the ELs' abilities to reach academic goals and the teachers' own abilities to teach ELs effectively. Peterson et al. (2016) suggests that teachers may have attitudes and stereotypes toward certain ethnic groups because of the level of expectation at which the students achieve is set differently for different ethnic groups. In classrooms where there are students working at multiple levels and varying needs in addition to ethnic-based differences, teachers may allow their attitudes to affect their behavior and instruction (Peterson et al., 2016). According to Hammond (2015), ELs, poor students, and students of color receive instruction that is less challenging, more repetitive, and does not encourage productive struggle. These students are not challenged to synthesize and analyze without the continuous support of the teacher. Because teachers are not allowing opportunities for these students to develop into independent learners, they struggle with rigorous content due to their stunted cognitive growth.

In a study of 553 PreK-12 grade teachers who taught science content, Huerta et al. (2019) found that teachers who spoke more than one language had more positive attitudes towards instructing ELs than monolingual English speaking teachers. The study also reported elementary teachers had more positive attitudes towards ELs than secondary teachers (Huerta et al., 2019). Teachers in this study who had prior training on teaching science to ELs reported more positive

attitudes toward EL instruction than teachers who did not have training that was specific to

teaching ELs in science (Huerta et al., 2019). Consistent with these findings were the results in

another study of secondary teachers' attitudes about EL instruction in which teachers had a more

positive attitude toward instructing ELs after receiving professional development (Song &

Samimy, 2015). Prior to the training, secondary teachers reported that most of the mistakes ELs

made in the content areas were due to language (Song & Samimy, 2015).

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Approximately 28% of school-aged children face dual challenges of being an EL in an

English-language system and coming from lower socio-economic families (Barrow & Markman-

Pithers, 2016). Teachers need to practice culturally responsive teaching in order to ensure that

ELs feel respected and appreciated in the classroom. Teachers need to consider the cultural

background of the ELs to determine if the delivery of instruction, the assignments expected to

complete, and the material covered in the content is appropriate for the ELs for their current level

of understanding (Hoover & Erickson, 2015). Culturally responsive teachers take into account

the background of the students to eliminate possible barriers that could prevent the ELs from

learning the material. Some ELs have not had as much formal schooling and may not understand

how to follow certain directions that may seem implied. Students coming from a refugee

situation that are now in a middle school of 1,000 students where students change classes and

store the supplies in lockers could be overwhelmed in the beginning. A culturally responsive

teacher is sensitive to other factors that could interfere with the ELs learning. The ELs may have

other factors influencing the ELs' academic performance, such as the parents' lack of education

or lack of support for education. Teachers need to be able to identify if other factors are

preventing the ELs from performing in order to determine if the ELs are underachieving as a result of external factors, a lack of language proficiency, or a learning disability.

Teachers who do not have a background in foreign language learning or cross-cultural experiences may experience frustration or difficulty when ELs are working to overcome challenges (Hammond, 2015; Shim, 2019). According to the NCES, approximately 24% of the public school students are Hispanic and 5% are Asian, but the NCES data for the 2015-2016 school year reported over 80% of public school teachers are classified as white/non-Hispanic. Most teachers are a homogenous white population who have not had cross-cultural experiences or spoken a language other than English (Ed-Data, 2015; Mellom et al., 2018). Research suggests that teachers that are fluent in ELs' native language or have a bilingual certification experience are more effective in instruction (Johnson & Wells, 2017). Many general education teachers do not have a personal experience with assimilating to a different culture and language while maintaining the culture and language of their home country in order to communicate and relate to other family members. Teachers who have not had these experiences may not understand the cultural differences and when ELs may be experiencing culture shock. Teachers unknowingly mistake ELs as behavior problems or demand that ELs assimilate to the cultural norms that the teachers know or are most familiar with because that is what the teachers believe to be appropriate (Bal & Trainor, 2016). Students with behavior concerns are often rated as lower achieving than peers who behave more appropriately according to the teachers (Hammond, 2015). Students who may be adjusting to cultural differences need more time to socialize and experience how to interact in the new culture. If teachers limit the opportunities for students to interact with each other, the ELs will struggle even more with learning the social skills necessary to acclimate to the new culture. Students who were born in the United States and have attended

school have had time to learn the routines, procedures, and practices that are necessary to have a productive educational experience in traditional public schools. The ELs who have not attended traditional public schools and may not have been born in the United States will need more time to understand the expectations for educational procedures and practices. These ELs may be entering in grade levels where those expectations are no longer explicitly taught because at those grade levels the expectations for appropriate behavior and practices are assumed. Teachers who do not realize that ELs are learning the culture, as well as the language, may see ELs as rebellious or inferior to their grade level peers because of their behavior. In some instances, ELs are held back from being mainstreamed into general education classrooms because teachers do not believe the particular ELs have learned the behavioral expectations needed for the general education teachers to maintain classroom procedures and practices in the classroom (Hammond, 2015).

Culturally responsive teaching requires teachers to reflect on their position and beliefs. Teachers need to evaluate what biases they may have and recognize how their biases might affect their teaching and ability to relate to ELs (Hammond, 2015). Teachers that have the idea that students must assimilate linguistically and culturally in order to be academically successful because the teachers' language and culture is superior, might have a classroom culture where ELs do not feel comfortable taking risks because the ELs sense they are perceived as being inferior (Duguay, Massoud, Tabaku, Himmel, & Sugarman, 2013). Some teachers do not allow beginning ELs to use translators or bilingual dictionaries because they believe the student should use only English in the classroom. Some teachers may have a belief that a certain ethnic group is lazy or does not have a desire to learn and achieve. These teachers have low expectations of the ELs, and the self-fulfilling prophecy comes true when the ELs do not achieve because they were

never expected to master the content. Teachers must recognize they have experiences and cultural perspectives that shape their beliefs, even if the teachers do not want to make the ELs feel inferior. Teachers need to have training in issues of cultural diversity and identify what beliefs they have that may frustrate or discourage ELs from taking the necessary risks to stretch themselves linguistically and academically. Culturally responsive teachers intentionally address their beliefs to ensure ELs recognize diversity is appreciated in the classroom, and they encourage ELs to challenge themselves by taking risks. These teachers expect ELs to stretch themselves, and these teachers are not surprised when ELs meet high expectations (Hammond, 2015). Secondary teachers could especially benefit from cultural diversity training because secondary teachers typically focus more on content than on how the academic language and ELs' backgrounds may affect how the ELs are able to access the content (Huerta et al., 2019).

Acquiring Language Proficiency

For students acquiring English as a second language, some students may attain proficiency in just a couple of years, while other students may need closer to a decade to attain proficiency. How quickly students are able to acquire language proficiency depends on a variety of factors such as the students' academic background, their ages, and grade levels. In some school districts, ELs may attend a class or classes for ESL, but the majority of the day is spent in the general education classroom. Attending ESL class is helpful for ELs who are trying to learn the basics of English, but ELs do not have the opportunities to have meaningful interactions with English-speaking peers during these classes (Dabach, 2014). As ELs reach a level of proficiency where they are able to comprehend regular core content, the ELs can be placed on consultation in order to mainstream the ELs into the general education classrooms for the full day. Allowing ELs to participate in core instruction for the entire day prevents the possibility of ELs missing

important core instruction, which could delay the ELs' academic progress and even graduation. The opportunity to stay in the general education classroom also alleviates the potential feelings of being inferior or isolated from English-speaking peers due to attending classes with simplified content (Robinson-Cimpian, Thompson, & Umansky, 2016).

Acquiring a second language can take 10 years for some students, although they may be able to function at an intermediate level in less time (Echevarria et al., 2013). Over time the ELs understand the English syntax and are able to apply the rules of the English language. At the time the ELs are able to produce English effectively, they are also able to communicate correctly about the content they have learned over the past months or years when they could not express themselves. Teachers may feel frustrated because they do not see immediate results, but they need to understand that the knowledge they have planted in the ELs will blossom at the right time and under the right conditions. When the ELs feel safe and confident, the students will produce the knowledge. Through this initial period, even if the ELs remain silent, the ELs are developing basic English.

There are ELs classified as long-term ELs who have been in the United States more than seven years but have not yet acquired language proficiency according to state or federal guidelines (Kim & Garcia, 2014). Over 50% of the ELs in secondary schools were born in the United States and are considered long-term ELs. Many of the EL programs in elementary schools are designed to provide support to ELs who have recently arrived in the United States. Although these supports are in place to help ELs acquire language proficiency, the supports can deny ELs opportunities to more rigorous curriculum that is needed to be successful in secondary school. Many ELs attend ESL classes to develop language during the day while other students are receiving core instruction. These ESL courses may be needed in the first years while ELs

acquire the language, but over time the lessons missed from core classes could contribute to ELs falling behind with content information. In addition, if teachers are not providing instruction that promotes higher order thinking and core content, teachers could be contributing to the academic gap. Teachers need to ensure they are providing effective and rigorous academic content and curriculum while ELs are developing language (Kim & Garcia, 2014).

Effective Instruction for ELs

Teachers who strive to provide quality differentiated instruction for all students may be effective with ELs. Loeb, Soland, and Fox (2014) conducted a study based on teachers' value-added gains in a Florida public school district to determine teacher effectiveness. The study found that there was an overlap between teachers who were effective with ELs and non-ELs. Although the correlations were not as strong in reading as they were in math, the results showed teachers who were effective with EL instruction were also effective in non-EL instruction. This study supported findings that teachers who spoke the same home language as ELs and had a bilingual or ESL certification are more effective with ELs than non-ELs (Johnson & Wells, 2017; Loeb et al., 2014).

Another effective strategy teachers can incorporate to ensure ELs are provided opportunities to practice oral language proficiency is through interacting with their peers on tasks in small groups or by using partners to work on assignments (Beers & Probst, 2016; Echevarria et al., 2013). Boyles (2018) describes that providing opportunities for students to discuss complex text teaches students to listen to each other's ways of thinking and allows for questions and discussions that may not occur in whole group settings. The teacher must know the language proficiency and the academic level of the ELs in order to best match the ELs with peers that will provide a learning environment where the ELs feel comfortable to take academic and

language risks (Echevarria et al., 2013). Students who have an intermediate level of English proficiency and feel comfortable interacting with peers in English, can develop their confidence and English proficiency by working in small groups while also working toward mastering rigorous content (Boyles, 2018). Students are given the opportunity to work together to problem solve and analyze authentic literature, but they are also in a position to receive small group direct or indirect instruction if needed.

Baskett (2018) discusses the value of analyzing the metacognitive (learner awareness about learning) and metalinguistic (language learner awareness about language) skills of ELs. Analyzing the metacognition of ELs can provide teachers' insight to the ELs' abilities to argue, analyze, and think critically (Hattie & Zierer, 2018). O'Hara and Pritchard (2016) write about the importance of ELs' metalinguistic abilities to construct language and the words students choose to express themselves. Teachers of ELs should include tasks and assignments that promote critical thinking and include students' reactions to the text, such as having students write a quick reaction to what they are learning. An assignment where students are reacting to informational text helps the ELs develop self-efficacy and think critically about how they can write a response. For students who struggle to write to express their ideas, teachers can provide sentence frames or provide opportunities for students to use oral language. Allowing ELs to orally process and express the information before writing allows the students to receive feedback from peers or the teacher before committing to their statements on paper. By listening to the oral responses, the teacher is better able to assess the students' content knowledge and provide opportunities for the ELs to assess their metalinguistic abilities by expressing their thoughts (Hattie & Zierer, 2018).

Some content subjects, such as science, require more contextualized attention (Echevarría et al., 2013; Lee, Quinn, & Valdés, 2013). In order to understand how to perform an experiment or a task, students must be able to understand the vocabulary in the directions for completing the assignment, as well as the vocabulary associated with the assignment. For some ELs, experiencing the vocabulary is a powerful tool. According to Daniel, Martin-Beltrán, Peercy, and Silverman (2016), ELs gain comprehensible input and develop proficiency through an inquiry-based science teaching approach. English learners who are interested in what they are learning or how they are learning it will be more motivated to take the necessary risks in using English in order to learn the information needed to understand the concepts and vocabulary being studied.

According to Echevarria et al. (2013) teachers need professional development for providing effective sheltered English instruction in order to understand the importance of teaching content at a level the ELs can understand, but challenging the students with English proficiency so the level of English is slightly above the ELs' present level of proficiency. Teachers using sheltered English instruction incorporate the language domains of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in their regular core content lessons to provide ELs the necessary practice to attain English language proficiency. For ELs, teachers must ensure they are using strategies that assess language and content objectives. Determining an EL's proficiency level might be difficult for content teachers. Russell (2016) found experienced teachers were unsure of how to determine ELs' appropriate level of understanding in order to challenge the ELs and provide the appropriate supports to encourage ELs' participation in class. Beginning teachers were more at a loss for determining what supports and how to scaffold in order to meet ELs' academic needs.

In order to assess ELs for language and content, teachers must know the cognitive and language proficiency levels of the students. A teacher should take the time to assess the students in speaking, listening, reading, and writing to determine in which domains they need additional practice. A teacher cannot simply rely on proficiency scores from a previous year. A teacher must intentionally choose to set objectives that will help students gain proficiency and fluency. At the same time, the teacher must also continue to teach content objectives and make the necessary provisions to help students understand the academic concepts (Echevarria et al., 2013).

Effective teachers are intentional about what instructional strategies they use in their classrooms. Instructional strategies are used to ensure students are able to apply new knowledge using higher level thinking tasks. Although basic EL students may have a hard time demonstrating mastery at a higher level, an effective teacher will make accommodations to allow students to create something or draw something to show mastery of the information. For ELs at the intermediate level and above, teachers can include a variety of instructional strategies such as problem-solving, small group instruction, direct and indirect teaching, or reading and analyzing aloud authentic literature (Echevarria et al., 2013). August, Artzi, and Barr (2016) found that teachers that use explicit and direct strategies for teaching vocabulary which include visuals, bilingual definitions, examples, spelling, and discussions about the meanings of the vocabulary words were more effective than teachers who taught vocabulary using brief definitions to apply to embedded text, writing activities, or songs.

With higher academic standards stemming from college and career readiness standards, effective instruction must ensure ELs understand the word meanings and are able to apply the vocabulary to problem-solving situations (Johnson & Wells, 2017). The standards are requiring more reading comprehension and analysis, even with math content. If ELs are comparing

fractions, a teacher would not only need to teach the basic vocabulary of numerator and denominator, but also the vocabulary words and structures for *greater than*, *less than*, and *equal to*. The students would have to use academic discourse to discuss how to apply the structures to the fractions to show the correct comparison. In addition, some state assessments require students to use academic vocabulary to provide evidence to justify their answers and to explain why other answers or strategies may not be correct (Duguay et al., 2013). Teachers must teach ELs the vocabulary needed to understand the word problems and the vocabulary needed to explain the processes for solving the problems. Teachers know that students need more explicit vocabulary instruction but are not always sure how to provide it. According to Duguay, Kenyon, Haynes, August, and Yanosky (2016), general education teachers had received training on providing vocabulary instruction but still needed additional training, instructional tools, and curriculum to provide effective vocabulary instruction for ELs to be successful. Another study of 244 undergraduate students in an elementary education program reported they did not have adequate training to feel confident in teaching ELs (Wessels et al., 2017).

Scaffolding

Oliveira and Athanases (2017) state, "Scaffolding provides entry points to challenging work and approximates larger tasks, parsing them into manageable pieces" (p. 123). The goal of scaffolding is to provide only the necessary supports needed to access new learning with the intention of transferring the responsibility to the student and removing the supports when the student can appropriately access the learning independently. Some supports used for scaffolding are routine such as graphic organizers or recall questions to activate and build on prior knowledge. Oliveira and Athanases (2017) warn that routine scaffolds are helpful but can become a crutch for teachers and students. These routine scaffolds may underestimate and limit

ELs' academic potential. Scaffolding should be personal and context specific, focusing on specific and individual learning goals. The ELs' levels of mastery and readiness need to be constantly assessed to determine what supports are needed to attain goals and what scaffolds need to be removed to allow the ELs to have more responsibility of their learning.

Effective instruction for ELs must provide scaffolding for student development and student autonomy to allow opportunities for ELs to engage in concepts and complex texts (Daniel et al., 2016). Teachers must teach rigorous content in smaller parts or steps while simultaneously helping ELs acquire the academic language needed to comprehend the content. Teachers cannot depend on simplified texts but must provide ELs tasks and opportunities to productively struggle through complex text to reach an adequate conceptual understanding. English learners will comprehend complex text and more advanced vocabulary much earlier than they are able to produce the language using the content and vocabulary in a way the teacher might judge as adequate. Teachers need to allow ELs to express what they have learned in a variety of ways to demonstrate if they have mastered the success criteria for the lesson, such as through drawing graphic organizers or quick writes (Boyles, 2018; Hattie & Zierer, 2018). The ELs may be able to draw the content or act out the vocabulary to demonstrate they have learned the information. Depending on the ELs' educational foundation in the first language, the ELs might be able to transfer the information very quickly into the second language. Some ELs have a weak educational foundation in the first language. For these ELs who are learning content or how to read in the second language without a foundation on which to build, learning the content or skills will be much more difficult and will require much more support for the ELs to achieve content mastery (Echevarria et al., 2013).

Teachers may also use scaffolding when working on reading fluency. By using mentors to work with developing readers, the mentors demonstrate how to read aloud fluently. The struggling readers can practice in a safe environment with someone who can correct mistakes until the struggling reader feels confident enough to read aloud without additional support. At this point, the mentor gradually removes the support to allow the struggling student more independence. Teachers commonly use scaffolding with a mentor when the class is assigned to pair reading partners. The students are paired in a way to help each other with fluency and comprehension. Not only does this form of scaffolding help with reading fluency and comprehension, but it also helps ELs build relationships with peers and provides opportunities for social interaction to practice conversational English. Hattie and Zierer (2018) state, "In peer tutoring too, learning turns out to be a dialogic process in which learners are not just passive consumers of instruction but always also producers of learning" (p. 105).

Teachers can effectively scaffold instruction by listening, prompting, and challenging students' responses. Teachers interact with students and encourage them to think about the topic in different ways. Teachers ask students open-ended questions and require students to also ask thought-provoking questions. Teachers need to challenge students to think about how they will apply the new knowledge to future learning (Hattie & Zierer, 2018). Teachers can build on these questions, provide feedback, or ask students to contribute and exchange information to connect the learning. When teachers encourage students to think differently or to question their understanding, teachers are scaffolding the knowledge and helping students reach their ZPD. By encouraging classroom discussions, ELs are provided opportunities to use academic language with linguistic tools, such as sentence frames, and conceptual tools to deepen their understanding of the topic (Hattie & Zierer, 2018).

Other forms of scaffolding that may be essential for ELs with little English proficiency include verbal scaffolding, procedural scaffolding, and instructional scaffolding (Echevarria et al., 2013). Verbal scaffolding can include teachers giving verbal cues as reminders as to what students need to do. At first, the ELs might need much more explicit directions or instructions to meet the expectations of the teacher. Over time, the ELs might only need a key word as a verbal scaffold. Procedural scaffolding is used to eliminate the possibility of students not being able to follow directions to complete assignments. Teachers may choose to review the steps or have a list of directions for the students to follow to provide additional support for students who struggle to keep up. As the students continue to follow the procedures for completing tasks, the teacher may remove the additional support. Instructional scaffolding is used to help ELs that may require additional help organizing material or visualizing what the end product should look like. Examples of this type of scaffolding are graphic organizers used for prereading or prewriting. Another example of a scaffold would be a concept map which would be used for organizing concepts and vocabulary. Teachers modeling the thinking process and explaining how the success criteria is incorporated in an assignment is an effective scaffolding strategy (Hattie, 2015). This could also include an example of a finished assignment for students to see the expectations of the end product.

Academic Intervention for ELs

Schools need to ensure teachers of ELs are providing appropriate instruction to meet their specific needs and make learning comprehensible for them. Teachers must also ensure ELs are progressing academically along with their English-speaking peer group (Rubin, 2016). When ELs begin to struggle academically, teachers need to collect data on the student to determine if a learning disability could be a possibility. Teachers need to know what data to collect and

analyze when considering ELs, to ensure language is not what is preventing them from being successful. Teachers must determine which screeners or assessments to utilize to establish baseline data (Lakin & Young, 2013, Rubin, 2016; Solari, Petscher, & Folsom, 2014). Then, teachers have to determine how to track the ELs' progress or growth. This may be difficult because ELs may have times where they show huge amounts of growth due to receiving and mastering more English instruction. Teachers often use assessments to monitor reading progress based on reading fluency and decoding, but ELs may not have received enough adequate phonics instruction to perform proficiently on the assessments.

Some teachers, who are not familiar with second language acquisition, provide intervention to ELs for skill development, when the ELs need more time and practice to acquire the English language. Teachers need to ensure the interventions they are providing target the ELs' areas of concern and not make judgments based solely on the results of an assessment designed for native English speakers. Hattie and Zierer (2018) state, "Rushing to interventions, trying some new method, or adopting a new teaching approach without attending to the needs of the students is common and can be destructive" (p. 8). In some schools, the implementation of the interventions is not consistent, in which the student results are as much a reflection of poor implementation of the interventions as it is of the students' progress. The results attained from the interventions and progress monitoring do not reflect the students' mastery of the skills because the method or materials used for interventions may not be appropriate for the students' area of learning difficulty or may not address the students' area of learning difficulty.

With districts using Response to Intervention (RTI), educators should be able to determine through interventions if the intensive strategies used with ELs are helpful before referring the students to special education (Burr, Haas, & Ferriere, 2016; DeMatthews et al.,

2014). The drawback to RTI is that in order to go through Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction, the student needing special education services will be delayed because the process could take up to 16 weeks to acquire all the data points needed before referring the student for special education (Maxwell & Shah, 2012).

Research indicates there is a significant need for ESL teachers, general education teachers, special education teachers, interventionists, and administrators to work together to determine what processes and data will be used to determine if an EL is making adequate process or needs intensive interventions (Chesmore, Ou, & Reynolds, 2016; DeMatthews et al., 2014; Sanatullova-Allison & Robison-Young, 2016). The faculty must work together to analyze the data and plan interventions that are individualized for the ELs' needs. The literature shows that in some schools, not all the ELs' teachers are involved in the data analysis and decision-making meetings. DeMatthews et al. (2014) state, "One special education teacher noted that she rarely worked with ESL teachers and that, typically, ESL teachers were too busy to attend special education eligibility meetings" (p. 32). Educators need to make time to collaborate and discuss the misconceptions and issues arising for ELs being incorrectly identified and not receiving the appropriate services needed to be successful academically.

The goal of RTI is to provide individualized and intensive instruction that focuses on how the teacher can intervene and make the learning more attainable for the students. Hattie and Zierer (2018) state that the focus of RTI should be remediating the needs of the students, and teachers should be monitoring their methods for teaching interventions to ensure their methods are effective. The researchers also stated that to maximize the impact of student remediation, teachers need to diagnose the students' academic ability and motivation to engage in the remediation. Teachers should also have multiple interventions to implement with fidelity to use

with struggling students and the willingness to change interventions when teachers identify that the interventions are not being effective. Teachers should have a way to collaboratively evaluate the impact the interventions are having on the students to determine if the interventions are effectively addressing the different needs of the students and helping the students' progress toward academic proficiency and Tier 1 instruction.

The teacher's ability to teach ELs and to instruct using materials appropriate for the ELs' proficiency levels are important to consider when implementing interventions for ELs (Cárdenas-Hagan, 2018). Some schools use a specific curriculum that targets reading difficulty, in which the curriculum focuses on decoding and fluency. A curriculum used for interventions might consist of fluency reads to determine how many words are read correctly in one minute. For ELs that are fluent readers in their native language, they may learn how to decode but read slowly because they are spending most of the time and energy trying to make meaning of the text. Even if the vocabulary seems simplified, for ELs it may be new and without pictures or scaffolds to make meaning of the text, the ELs are only decoding. Due to the few words read correctly, the ELs may continue to work on decoding because the data reports for the progress monitoring show the ELs are not reading fluently on grade level. Another limitation to using RTI for ELs is if ELs have a disability, the ELs often have to wait 16 weeks to receive all the data needed from Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions (Maxwell & Shah, 2012). On the contrary, if all factors have been considered for ELs, and ELs still have not shown growth through the appropriate intensive interventions, the data can be very informative in determining that the ELs should be referred for special education testing so the students can receive services (Burr et al., 2015; DeMatthews et al., 2014). If an EL has received adequate and effective instruction in the general education classroom, the EL has tested proficient in language, the socioeconomic and

sociocultural situation has been considered, and the EL has received intensive and appropriate

interventions, but still does not show progress, then a learning disability should be considered.

Assessments and Progress Monitoring

Several studies show that teachers need to have a good understanding of how to collect

and analyze data before considering a special education referral for students, especially ELs

(Lakin & Young, 2013; Rubin, 2016; Solari et al., 2014; Umansky et al., 2017). Because many

ELs drop out of school, schools need to ensure the teachers are classifying students correctly and

providing the services that the students need to make learning comprehensible. This includes

ensuring the students are able to progress as their native peers progress (Rubin, 2016). In order

to track the growth of students, including the ELs, teachers must use screeners to gather baseline

information (Lakin & Young, 2013; Rubin, 2016; Solari et al., 2014). This may include tracking

data over a period of years to study how the student is progressing. In the ELs' situations, their

literacy skills should increase rapidly after they have been received more English instruction.

For ELs, teachers need to assess and track language acquisition as well as literacy. If the EL is

not progressing as quickly as other peers, the teacher may need to consider sociocultural and

socioeconomic factors, as well as other environmental factors that may be hindering the student

from making adequate progress.

Lakin and Young (2013) used the California Standards Tests to measure student

achievement in Mathematics and Language Arts for students in grades 2-11. The study found

that it was much more difficult for ELs to reach their academic achievement targets on these

assessments than their native peers. In some cases the growth targets for EL students were

higher because the ELs started with lower scores. Because the scores were so low, it was

expected the ELs would make more growth over the course of the year. This could be viewed as

a limitation because ELs are reaching English proficiency at different levels and different times, making it more difficult to determine how much growth the ELs have experienced throughout the year. After tracking the data to determine if the students are progressing as they should, interventions should be determined and implemented for the students who are not showing adequate progress. Most states are implementing the RTI model to eliminate incorrectly identifying students as needing special education.

Lakin and Young (2013) found that when schools used state assessments for identifying students with possible disabilities, many times ELs would score lower on the assessments than their English-speaking peers. The ELs would make more growth than their peers on benchmarks, but it was difficult to determine if the growth was due to interventions being provided to the ELs or because the ELs were acquiring more of the English language. Solari et al. (2014) found that some schools in Florida used the Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading (FAIR) to determine mastery of literacy components. The FAIR assessed comprehension, text efficiency, and word analysis. The FAIR provided data to guide interventions needed and make predictions on how the students would perform on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment. These assessments were designed for students who were proficient in English. The ELs who were not showing adequate growth were given more intensive interventions, beyond what the students were receiving in whole group instruction.

ELs and Identification for Special Education

According to the Office for Civil Rights (2016), approximately 12% of the EL population is classified as also needing special education services. The national percentage for all students is 10% (Office of Civil Rights, 2016). To ensure ELs are identified correctly, all educators who teach the ELs should be involved in the discussions about whether the ELs should be referred for

special education services, including a specialist that understands second language acquisition (Scott, Boynton Hauerwas, & Brown, 2014). Educators involved in the referral need to ensure that only culturally and linguistically responsive material, based on the ELs' background, culture, and interest, is used for referring the ELs (Hoover & Erickson, 2015). DeMatthews et al. (2014) found that many times the ESL teachers were not involved in the special education eligibility meetings to provide information about what would be most appropriate for the ELs. DeMatthews et al. also found in varying states and districts, some ELs are not allowed to be assessed for special education until a certain time has passed, such as being in a U.S. school for two years. The federal and some state governments do not have specific guidelines for identifying or referring ELs that might have learning disabilities (Scott et al., 2014). In some states, ELs may qualify for needing additional special education services according to the instruments used to assess the ELs, while other states may use different instruments and the ELs would not qualify (Counts, Katsiyannis, & Whitford, 2018). In addition, the process of identifying the ELs is determined by the districts, which leaves room for inconsistencies and possibly misidentifying ELs with learning disabilities. When teachers do not make arrangements to receive input from all educators involved with the ELs, decisions to provide services that do not appropriately address the need could be made because the service could be addressing an issue related to language acquisition (Burr et al., 2015).

A concern that some districts have is that they do not have assessments and services in the ELs' native language (Counts et al., 2018; Morgan et al., 2015). This often causes problems because many of the assessments used to test students' skills and knowledge are only in English. Many of the assessment tools used to assess ELs have not been determined to be valid or reliable (Morgan et al., 2015). Teachers and administrators should discuss what assessments and data

will be used to determine if the ELs qualify, and if the services that will be provided would be appropriate for the ELs' individual needs (Chesmore et al., 2016; DeMatthews, et al., 2014; Sanatullova-Allison & Robison-Young, 2016). The ELs should be assessed in their first language if possible to ensure the results are a valid reflection of the ELs' abilities, not affected by language deficiencies (Sanatullova-Allison & Robison-Young, 2016). Sanatullova-Allison and Robison-Young discuss that assessments such as the Intelligent Quotient (IQ) test are often culturally biased and may not provide a fair evaluation for ELs. Often references are used in the assessments that students from other countries, cultures, races, and socioeconomic statuses would not understand. In this situation, the assessments are testing the ELs' cultural knowledge and assimilation, not the ELs' ability or disability. If the assessments are not in the students' native language, ultimately the assessment will measure the students' language acquisition and not a learning disability.

Misidentification for Special Education

To reverse the trend of misidentifying and misplacing culturally diverse students, teachers need to identify the difference between learning differences in ELs and a special education disability (Hoover & Erickson, 2015). Sanatullova-Allison and Robison-Young (2016) found that a concern for general education teachers was distinguishing between cognitive disabilities and language acquisition. Many districts do not provide professional development for language acquisition, nor do they provide manuals or guides to help teachers determine if students have learning disabilities. Some teachers are too quick to refer a student for special education services, and the ELs may qualify. If the ELs receive the services, but do not really need the services, the ELs are missing opportunities in the general education classroom to develop their English and content knowledge. Students and parents may also become confused

about the special education services the ELs are receiving. This frustration could add additional tension to the ELs' education process and the relationship between the parents and the schools. In some situations, parents may feel the school is discriminating against the ELs due to the language or culture (Morgan et al., 2015). Misidentifying ELs as needing special education services could cause more isolation and create additional learning gaps for the ELs (Chesmore et al., 2016; DeMatthews et al., 2014; Sanatullova-Allison & Robison-Young, 2016).

Identifying if an EL has a learning disability is difficult because educators have to determine if the student is struggling academically due to a learning disability, because of the language barrier, or a combination of both. Educators need to determine if the student is receiving and understanding enough quality instruction to make adequate progress. Teachers need to evaluate how quickly and effectively the student is able to communicate in English through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Educators need to look at the student's culture and background situation to analyze if the student has had enough academic support to perform at the expected level in the United States public school system. Sometimes students from other countries are raised with mindsets that school is not important or valued. Other students may not have financially been able to attend school (Burr et al., 2015).

Several studies have focused on educators misidentifying ELs as needing special education (Chesmore et al., 2016; DeMatthews et al., 2014; Sanatullova-Allison & Robison-Young, 2016; Umansky et al., 2017). DeMatthews et al. (2014) stated that a review of those studies indicates that there is a lack of guidance from the federal level to the school level on how to correctly assess ELs for learning disabilities. Some districts along the border of Mexico and the United States do not consider special education referrals for students in first grade or below because so many of the students are ELs and have a low socioeconomic background.

Disproportionately identifying students was found to be a concern in a study conducted among

36 school districts along the Texas-Mexico border (DeMatthews et al., 2014). The study showed

the higher the population of ELs, the more likely the ELs would be referred for special

education. In part, this was due to districts not having a pre-referral policy, or teachers not

following the district's pre-referral policy. Some districts allowed students to test in their native

language to prevent misidentifying ELs. Some districts did not have special education materials

in Spanish, so this was not an option. Some teachers were misinformed about the process.

DeMatthews et al. (2014) found that some educators firmly believe ELs need a certain amount of

time in school and a certain level of English proficiency before being considered for special

education to ensure the ELs' learning difficulties are a result of a learning disability and not

related to immaturity, traumatic situations, weak academic foundations in their first language, or

language acquisition.

Summary

When comparing how ELs perform on standardized assessments to non-EL peers, ELs

are still not able to make the gains of their non-EL peers (Johnson & Wells, 2017). The national

graduation for ELs remains at a lower rate than non-EL peers (ED Data Express, 2016). If ELs

are not provided the appropriate supports, they could fall further behind and could be

misidentified as needing interventions or special education services. If ELs are misidentified as

needing special education services, they still would not receive the services they need to be

academically successful. Not providing the appropriate instruction in a supportive learning

environment could bring about high retention rates or drop-out rates (Kim & García, 2014).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this study was to compare 74 teachers' attitudes toward teaching ELs and teachers' sense of self-efficacy for teaching English learners (ELs) in a public school district in middle Tennessee via the lens of Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory. This chapter describes the methodology used for this study. The chapter begins by describing the research design for the study and the rationale for choosing the research design. Following the research design, the research questions and the hypotheses are listed. The fourth section discusses the participants and the setting for the study. The instruments for the study are then discussed. After the instruments are described, the researcher explains the procedures followed to conduct the study. Finally, the researcher explains how the data from the study was analyzed.

Design

A correlational design was used for this study to compare general education teachers' self-efficacy for teaching English learners (ELs) and teachers' attitudes toward teaching ELs. Linear regression using Pearson correlations was used in this study with teachers' attitudes as the predictor variable and teachers' self-efficacy scores as the criterion variable. The predictor variable was generally defined as teachers' attitude scores received on the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers (Reeves, 2006). The criterion variable was generally defined as self-efficacy scores received on the EXCEL Teacher Inventory (Paneque & Barbetta, 2006). The correlational research design was the most appropriate design for the study because it measures the degree and direction of the relationship of two or more variables and identifies possible causal factors when considering two or more variables (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007).

Research Question

RQ1: Is there a correlation between teachers' attitudes toward instructing English learners (ELs) and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory?

Null Hypotheses

$H_0 1$: There is no statistically significant correlation between teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory.

$H_0 2$: There is no statistically significant correlation between elementary school teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory.

$H_0 3$: There is no statistically significant correlation between middle school teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the E English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory.

$H_0 4$: There is no statistically significant correlation between high school teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory.

Participants and Setting

The population chosen for the study was a convenience sampling of elementary, middle, and high school general education teachers in a middle-to-lower income county located in middle Tennessee. All participants were from within this one school district. This district was targeted because the school district has 6.3% of its population identified as ELs. The school district had 44,067 students in 47 schools. Twenty-one percent of the students were classified as economically disadvantaged. There were 3,242 general education teachers in the school district (Tennessee Department of Education, 2017a). A general education teacher, as defined for this study's purposes, was a teacher who instructs and assesses all students in general education classes such as content teachers, intervention teachers, music teachers, library teachers, and career and technology teachers (IRIS Center, 2018).

The sample size included 78 teachers from elementary, middle, and high schools from across the district. After four scores were identified as outliers, the data for the four teachers were eliminated. The convenience sampling of 74 teachers included 17 teachers from the high schools, 33 teachers from the middle schools, and 24 teachers from elementary schools. A total of 14 (18.9%) participants had 0-3 years of overall teaching experience, 29 (39.2%) had 4-10 years of overall teaching experience, 22 (29.7%) had 11-20 years of overall teaching experience, and 9 (12.2%) had 25 years or more of overall teaching experience. The sampling included 31 (41.9%) teachers with a bachelors, 41 (55.4%) with a masters, 1 (.01%) with an Ed.S, and 1 (.01%) with a doctorate degree. A total of 26 participants taught English Language Arts, 27 participants taught Math, 21 participants taught Science, 13 participants taught Social Studies, 7 participants taught Intervention classes, 8 participants taught Special Education classes, 6 participants taught ESL classes, 10 participants taught elective classes (Fine Arts, Physical

Education, Career and Technology, etc.…). Forty-five (60.8%) participants had received

training for teaching ELs in general education classrooms, and 29 (39.2%) participants had not

received training for teaching ELs in general education classrooms. This quantitative study

included a sample size of 74 participants, exceeding the minimum requirement of 66 participants

for a medium effect with the statistical power of .70 at the .05 alpha level (Gall et al., 2007).

Instrumentation

One instrument that was used in the study was the first section of the Exceptional

Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory by Paneque and Barbetta

(2006). The EXCEL Teacher Inventory was designed using Bandura's (1977) idea that teachers'

efficacy was specifically related to the teachers' domain. Paneque and Barbetta needed an

instrument to measure teacher efficacy for a study they were conducting for teachers working

with ELs that also had disabilities. Other teacher efficacy scales, such as the Teacher Efficacy

Scale by Gibson and Dembo (1984) or the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale by Tschannen-

Moran and Hoy (2001), did not specifically address the domain of teachers of ELs with

disabilities. The purpose of the EXCEL Teacher Inventory is for teachers to rate their perception

of their abilities to affect student performance. Paneque and Barbetta created the EXCEL

Teacher Inventory to use for their study specifically for teachers who taught ELs that might also

have learning disabilities.

The EXCEL Teacher Inventory used contains two sections. The first section contains the

demographic and background information for the participants. The second section is the survey

containing 20 items for teacher efficacy. According to Paneque and Barbetta (2006), the second

section was based on the Florida Department of Education guidelines for the Performance

Standards for Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages. Section 1 contains 20

teacher self-efficacy items about their abilities to teach ELs including ELs with disabilities. The inventory uses a seven-point Likert scale for teachers to rate themselves. The lowest scores of 1 indicated the teacher felt he or she could do "nothing." The highest scores of a 7 for each item indicated the teacher felt he or she could do "a great deal." The possible scores combined ranged from 20 to 140 points. A score of 20 points would indicate the teacher perceived he or she could do "nothing" in relation to his or her abilities to affect student performance. A scores of 140 would indicate the teacher perceived he or she could do "a great deal" in relation to his or her abilities to affect student performance.

Cronbach's alpha measured the internal consistency reliability of the EXCEL Teacher Inventory. The coefficient alpha was .942, which indicated there was satisfactory reliability. Content validity was established by reviewing the literature to identify the areas of competency for teaching ELs with disabilities, and then creating a table for the development of the areas. A review panel of three experts in the area of EL/bilingual special education and a group of special education teachers determined the face validity. The panel made recommendations, which changed the EXCEL Teacher Inventory. A group of 20 special education teachers and teachers attending graduate courses were also asked to evaluate and make recommendations to improve the inventory (Paneque & Barbetta, 2006).

The researcher used and adapted the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers (Reeves, 2006) as an instrument to determine teachers' attitudes toward teaching English learners in their classes. Cronbach's alpha for the instrument was indicated moderate to moderately high coefficients ($\alpha = .72$ to .86). The survey statements were categorized by teachers' attitudes toward four domains: EL Students, Language, Instructional Strategies, and Support. The reliability coefficients for each domain were EL

Students (.82), Language (.85), Instructional Strategies (.72), and Support (.86). The data from Reeves' pilot study indicated strong validity for the survey (Reeves, 2006; Younce, 2011).

The survey used a four-point Likert scale for teachers to rate their attitude or opinion about 31 statements. Teacher selected which option best described their opinion: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree. The lowest scores of 1 indicated the teacher strongly disagreed with the statement. The highest scores of a 4 for each item indicated the teacher strongly agreed with the statement. The possible scores combined ranged from 31 to 124 points. A score of 31 points would indicate the teacher would not support teaching ELs in a mainstream classroom. A score of 124 would indicate the teacher would strongly support teaching ELs in a mainstream classroom.

Procedures

The researcher requested permission to use two instruments: the EXCEL Teacher Inventory and the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers from the creators of the instruments. The researcher submitted a preliminary request to the district superintendent to conduct research in the district. After receiving preliminary approval from the district to conduct research, the researcher submitted the research proposal application to the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. Once receiving clearance from the IRB, the researcher sent an email to the principals of the high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools explaining the study and asking the principals to forward the email with the survey link to all teachers. The email informed the participants of the instructions, purpose, and anonymity of the data obtained from the survey. The email had the link to the Microsoft Form where the consent form and survey was located. The survey had an additional link at the end for participants to click on when completing the survey to enter the

participants into a drawing to win one of four $75 Amazon gift cards. After the first week, the researcher sent a reminder email to the principals and teachers that the teacher inventory needed to be completed by the end of the week. After the two weeks, the researcher retrieved the data from the survey in Microsoft Forms and exported the data to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The four participants for the drawings were contacted, and the gift cards were delivered. Then the researcher entered the data from the surveys into the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software to analyze the data.

Data Analysis

The researcher used the SPSS software for data analysis. The researcher ran analyses to check for violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and bivariate normal distribution. A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was conducted to determine if the assumptions of normality are met because the sample size was greater than 50. The assumption of normality was met because $p > .05$. Homogeneity of variance was analyzed with a Levene's test. The Levene's test was considered tenable because $p > .05$, meaning the variances were not significantly different. Histograms were run to check for a normal distribution of scores. A Box and Whisker plot was run to check for extreme outliers, linearity, and bivariate normal distribution. A linear regression analysis was conducted utilizing Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients to test the null hypothesis to describe the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables: attitudes of teaching ELs and teachers' self-efficacy scores (Gall et al., 2007).

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

This chapter discusses the findings from the data received from the instrument used for this study. The chapter includes the research questions and the null hypotheses that guided the researcher. The descriptive statistics for the data follow the null hypotheses. Results from the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson's *r*) analysis with scatterplots for each null hypothesis are included.

Research Question

RQ1: Is there a correlation between teachers' attitudes toward instructing English learners (ELs) and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory?

Null Hypotheses

$H_0 1$: There is no statistically significant correlation between teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory.

$H_0 2$: There is no statistically significant correlation between elementary school teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory.

$H_0 3$: There is no statistically significant correlation between middle school teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the

English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of

Teachers and the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory.

H$_0$4: There is no statistically significant correlation between high school teachers'

attitudes toward instructing ELs and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the

English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of

Teachers and the Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive data for the means and standard deviations obtained for the predictor

variable (attitude scores) can be found in Table 1. The mean and standard deviation for the

criterion variables (self-efficacy scores) can be found in Table 2.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Predictor Variable

Attitude	M	SD	n
Elementary	94.042	6.785	24
Middle	87.576	6.960	33
High	90.765	7.267	17
All Levels	90.405	7.437	74

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Criterion Variable

Self-Efficacy Scores	M	SD	n
Elementary	106.583	19.768	24
Middle	97.303	18.016	33
High	100.000	19.647	17
All Levels	100.932	19.148	74

Results

Data Screenings and Assumptions

The instruments were entered into Microsoft Forms, where only completed surveys could be submitted. There were no submitted surveys with missing information. Assumption of normality, independence, normal distribution, and outliers were examined using scatter plots. Histograms were run to check for a normal distribution of scores. A box plot was run to check for extreme outliers. Four outliers (codes 30, 53, 54, and 62) were determined. The information for these four participants was eliminated from the study data and the data set used for the results. The box plot for the data set used in the results is presented in Figure 1. A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was conducted to determine if the assumptions of normality were met because the final population size was 74. The assumption of normality for self-efficacy was $p = .081$. The assumption of normality for attitude was $p = .200$. The assumption of normality was met because $p > .05$. Homogeneity of variance was analyzed with a Levene's test for teachers' attitude, $p = .983$. Homogeneity of variance was analyzed with a Levene's test for teachers' self-efficacy, $p = .903$. The Levene's test was tenable because $p > .05$, meaning the variances were

not significantly different. With the *p* > alpha level set at .05, there were no violations of

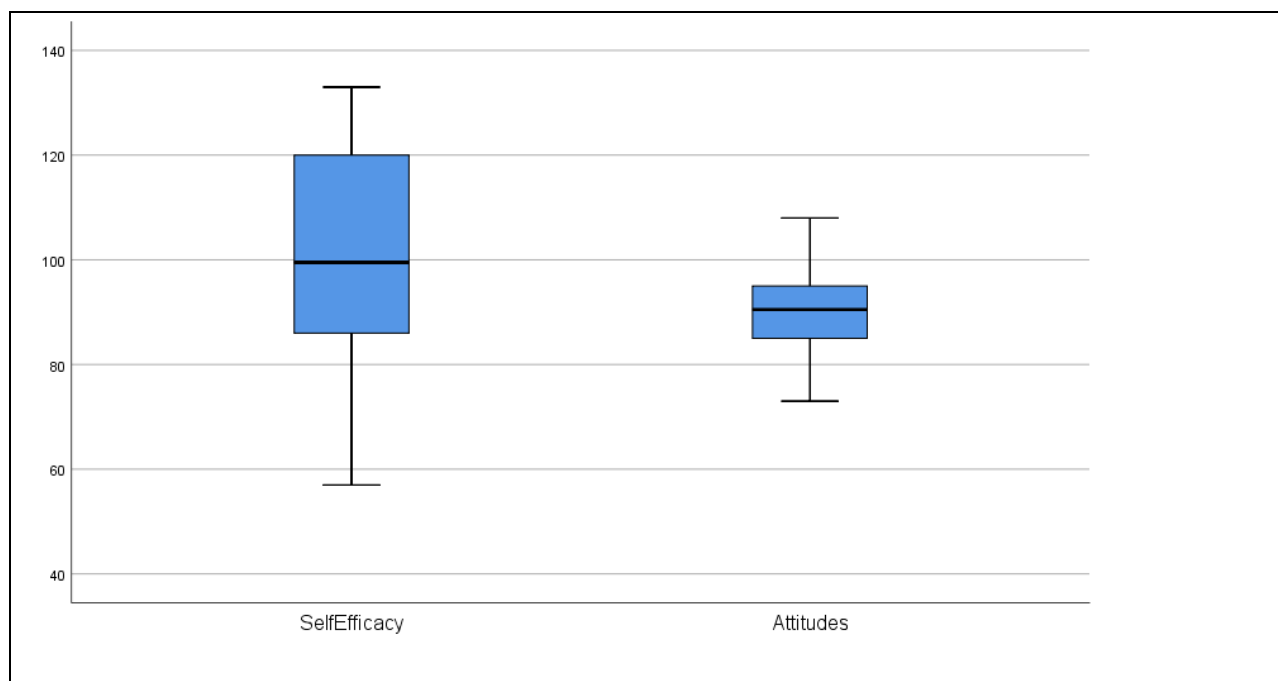normality. The correlations were considered significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

Figure 1. Box Plots of Teachers' Scores Used in Results

Null Hypothesis One

To test hypothesis one, the researcher conducted a linear regression analysis to examine if

there was a significant correlation between teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs and

teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL)

Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the EXCEL Teacher Inventory.

The researcher found a statistically significant relationship between teachers' attitudes and

teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs. The results indicated a positive correlation between

the variables, $r(74) = .489$, $p = .000$. The effect size, ES = .489, indicates a medium effect size

based on Cohen's effect-size index (Warner, 2013). Because the *p* value is less than .05, the

researcher rejected the null hypothesis. See Figure 2 for a scatter plot of teachers' scores of attitudes and self-efficacy for instructing ELs.
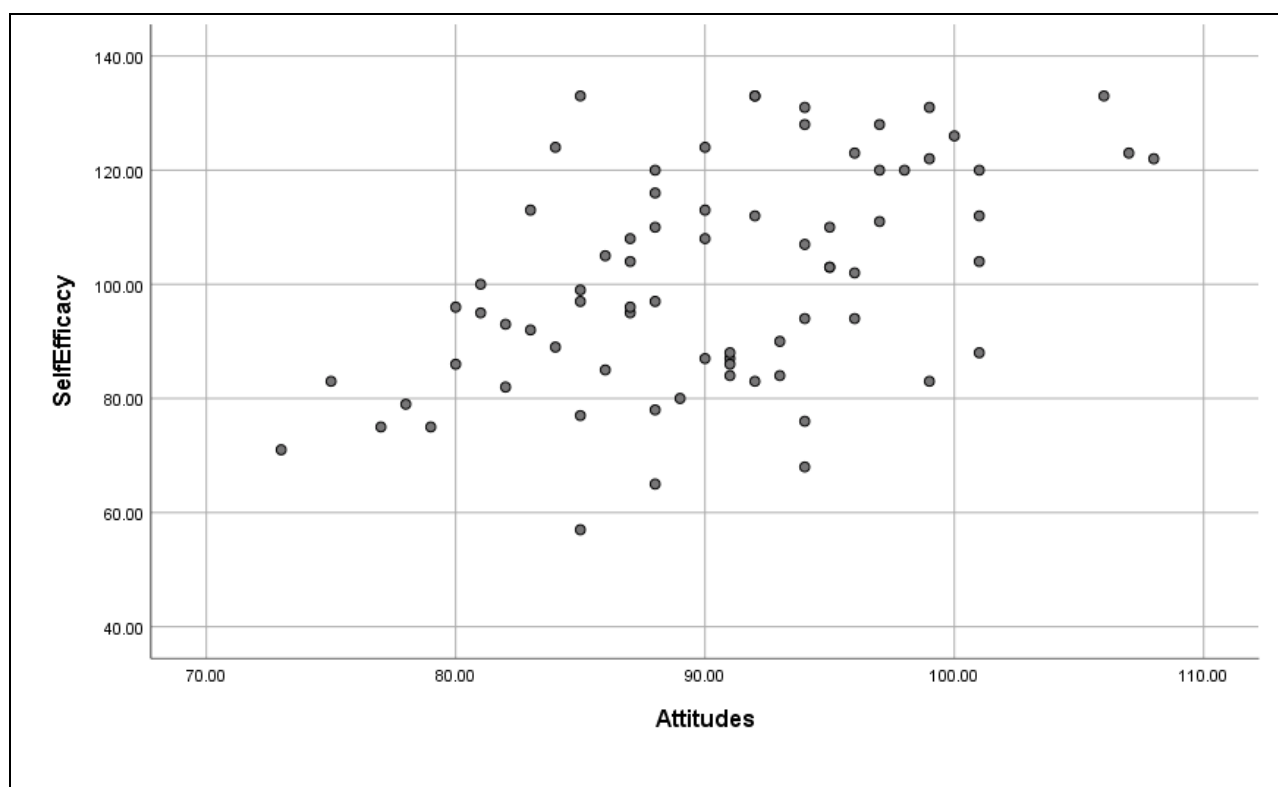

Figure 2. Scatter Plot of Teachers' Attitudes and Self-Efficacy of Instructing ELs

Null Hypothesis Two

To test hypothesis two, the researcher conducted a linear regression analysis to examine if there was a significant correlation between elementary teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the EXCEL Teacher Inventory. The researcher found no statistically significant relationship between elementary teachers' attitudes and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs. The results indicated a positive correlation between the variables, $r(24) = .374, p = .072$. The effect size, ES = .374, indicates a medium effect size based on Cohen's effect-size index (Warner, 2013). Because the p value is

greater than .05, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis. See Figure 3 for scatter plot

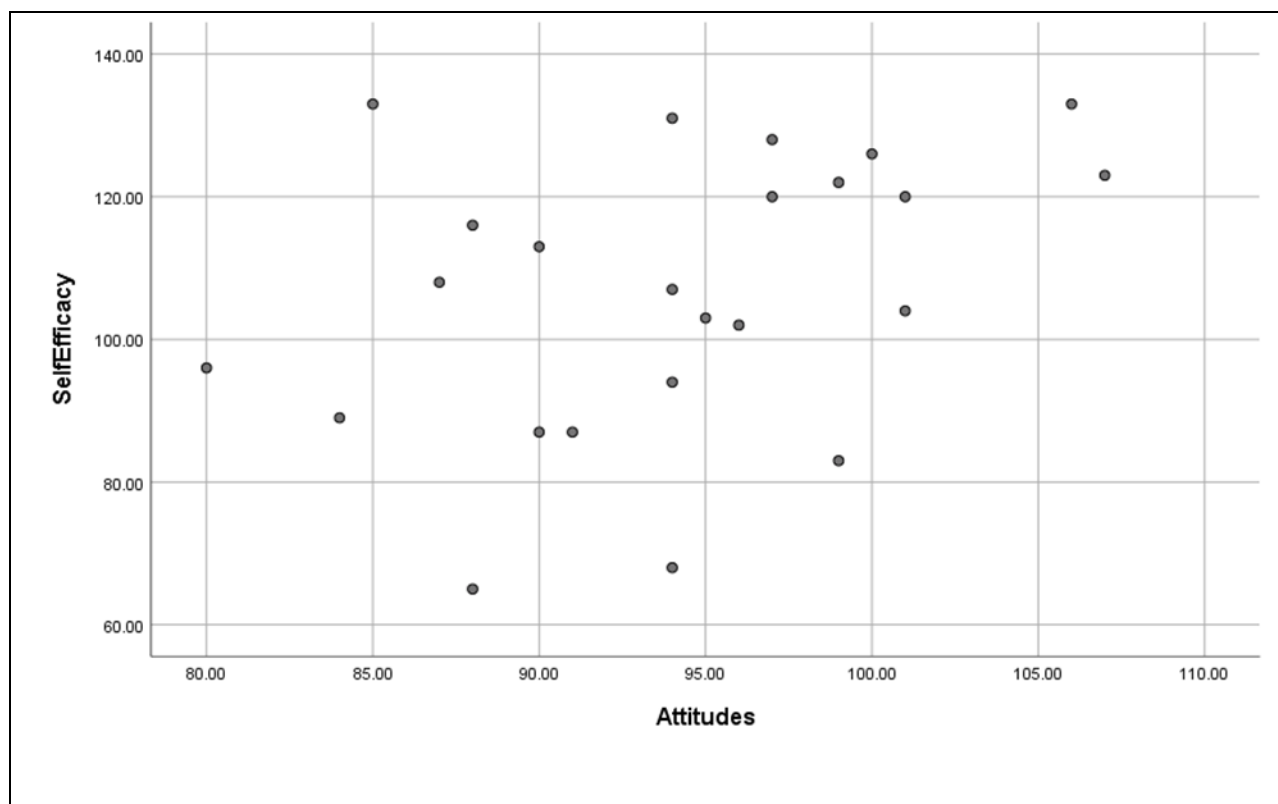of elementary teachers' scores for attitudes and self-efficacy of instructing ELs.

Figure 3. Scatter Plot of Elementary Teachers' Attitudes and Self-Efficacy of Instructing
ELs.

Null Hypothesis Three

To test hypothesis three, the researcher conducted a linear regression analysis to examine

if there was a significant correlation between middle school teachers' attitudes toward instructing

ELs and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown the English-as-a-Second-Language

(ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the EXCEL Teacher

Inventory. The researcher found a statistically significant relationship between middle school

teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy of instructing ELs. The results indicated a positive

correlation between the variables, $r(33) = .553$, $p = .001$. The effect size, ES = .553, indicates a

large effect size based on Cohen's effect-size (Warner, 2013). Because the *p* value is less than

.05, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis. See Figure 4 for scatter plot of middle school
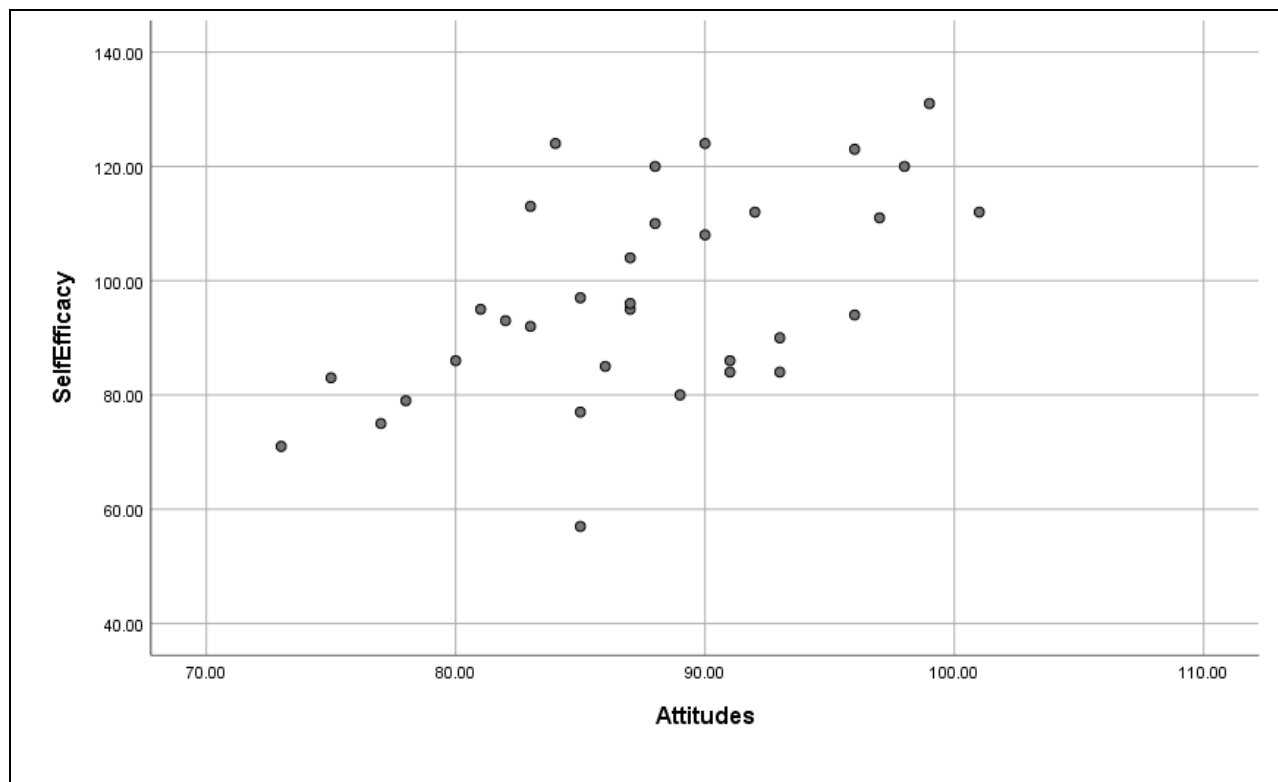
teachers' scores.

Figure 4. Scatter Plot of Middle School Teachers' Attitudes and Self-Efficacy of Instructing ELs

Null Hypothesis Four

To test hypothesis four, the researcher conducted a linear regression to examine if there

was a significant correlation between high school teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs and

teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL)

Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the EXCEL Teacher Inventory.

The researcher found no statistically significant relationship between high school teachers'

attitudes and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs. The results indicated a weak, positive

correlation between the variables, $r(17) = .387$, $p = .124$. The effect size, ES = .387 indicates a

medium effect size. The researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis because the p value is greater than .05. See Figure 5 for scatter plot of high school teachers' scores for attitudes and self-efficacy of instructing ELs.
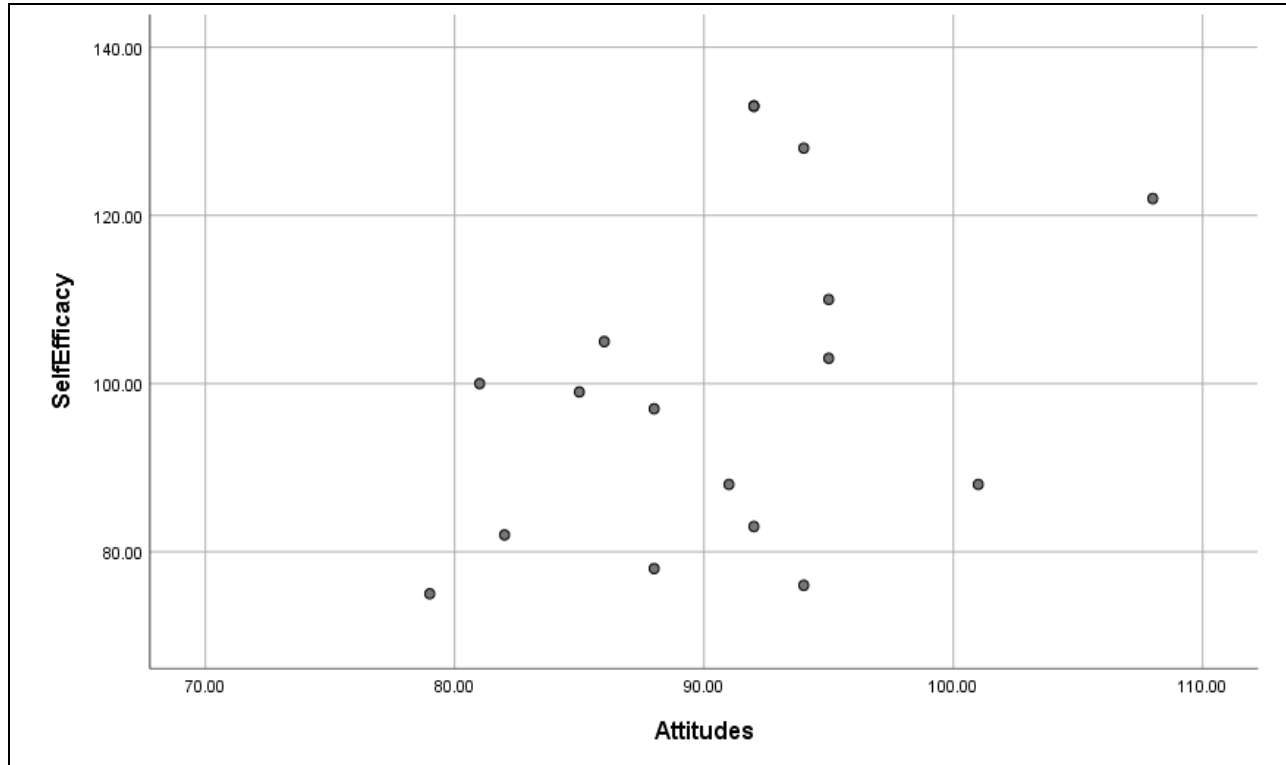

Figure 5. Scatter Plot of High School Teachers' Attitudes and Teachers' Self-Efficacy of Instructing ELs

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

This chapter begins with the discussion section of the study. The discussion section compares the findings from this study with findings from previous studies for teacher self-efficacy, teacher attitudes, and EL instruction. Following the discussion section are the implications from the study and how the findings contribute to the existing body of information for instructing ELs. Then the limitations of the study are explained. Finally, the recommendations for future research are listed.

Discussion

The purpose of this correlational study was to determine if there is a relationship between the predictor variable, teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs, and the criterion variable, general education teachers' sense of self-efficacy when teaching ELs. The researcher used two instruments to determine if there was a correlation between the variables as shown by the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers (Reeves, 2006) and the EXCEL Teacher Inventory (Paneque & Barbetta, 2006). The data from these two instruments was used to answer the guiding research question: Is there a correlation between teachers' attitudes toward instructing English learners (ELs) and teachers' self-efficacy of instructing ELs as shown the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers and the EXCEL Teacher Inventory? The researcher used a linear regression analysis using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient to test the null hypothesis to describe the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables: attitudes of teaching ELs and teachers' self-efficacy scores and to identify possible causal factors (Gall et al., 2007).

Null Hypothesis One

For null hypothesis one, the researcher found a statistically significant relationship between teachers' attitudes of ELs and self-efficacy of instructing ELs. The results from this study support other studies that have been conducted that show a positive relationship between teacher self-efficacy and student performance (Lev et al., 2018; Ryan et al., 2015; Shim, 2014), which could influence teachers' attitudes toward all students including ELs. The findings from this study show that most of the teachers have a positive attitude toward EL inclusion and making the necessary modifications to help ELs achieve. An example statement from the instruments was the statement, "I welcome the inclusion of ELs in my classroom," where 48.6% agreed with the statement and 45.9% strongly agreed with the statement. A positive response like this contradicts the research that teachers may have negative attitudes toward ELs because of the lack of instructional support to help ELs and the potential that ELs may receive lower test scores on state assessments (Mellom et al., 2018).

Null Hypothesis Two

For null hypothesis two, the researcher found no statistically significant relationship between elementary teachers' attitudes of ELs and self-efficacy of instructing ELs. The results of a positive correlation for this analysis of elementary teachers supports the findings from a study of 244 preservice teachers in an elementary education program that reported positive attitudes toward ELs but did not report high levels of confidence to teach ELs (Wessels et al., 2017). Elementary teachers are working with foundational skills for all students and may not identify as many learning gaps resulting from a lack of language proficiency. It may also be that elementary teachers focus much more on reading development and literacy naturally for all students and may not feel much of an additional workload to provide literacy support to ELs

(Peterson et al., 2016). Although elementary teachers may score themselves with higher self-efficacy for teaching content, they may not score themselves as highly when teaching diverse students. The findings in this study correspond to a study of 26 elementary teachers where the teachers scored themselves low on using culturally responsive instruction with ELs (Malo-Juvera et al., 2018).

Null Hypothesis Three

For null hypothesis three, the researcher found a statistically significant relationship between middle school teachers' attitudes of ELs and self-efficacy of instructing ELs. These findings suggest that middle school teachers understand that having ELs in their classroom influences their self-efficacy and possibly student performance. All the middle school teachers in this district teach one content area and focus on students mastering the content area because they feel the pressure to perform on state assessments. The findings in this study contradict the research that teachers might have negative attitudes toward ELs because ELs may perform poorly on state assessments (Farrell & Ives, 2015; Glock & Karbach, 2015; Peterson et al., 2016; Strand, 2014), which in addition would negatively impact teacher evaluation scores (Mellom et al., 2018). These findings could also be contributed to the idea that many ELs are still developing academic language and are still classified as ELs, but many ELs have a high proficiency level in middle school and can participate in class with less EL support (Kim & Garcia, 2014).

Null Hypothesis Four

For null hypothesis four, the researcher found no statistically significant relationship between high school teachers' attitudes of ELs and self-efficacy of instructing ELs. These findings support a study by Huerta et al., (2019) where 553 PreK-12 grade teachers were

surveyed. Secondary teachers had lower mean scores for attitudes toward students with linguistic diversity than elementary teacher, but had higher mean scores for attitude toward teaching pedagogy. In another study by Song and Samim (2015), high school teachers reported that most of the mistakes ELs made in the content areas were due to language. Teachers reported these statements prior to receiving professional development on EL instruction. High school teachers that have not had training for EL instruction may not allow ELs' underperformance to affect their teacher self-efficacy because they believe the underperformance is due to language, but this may not affect their attitude toward ELs. This is especially true in high schools where teachers focus on teaching and developing in the area of the content. High school teachers typically focus more on content rather than academic language and may not understand the importance of ELs attaining language to comprehend and master content (Huerta et al., 2019).

Implications

The findings of this dissertation add to the existing body of knowledge because this study shows that teachers recognize there is need to receive more training for EL instruction. For the statement "I am interested in receiving more training in working with ELs," 53.9% agreed with the statement, and 26.3% strongly agreed with the statement. This is contrary to what Reeves (2006) found among 279 high school teachers, 45% of whom stated they did not want to have additional training for instructing ELs. Rubinstein-Avila and Lee (2014) stated that many teachers feel they do not have the appropriate instructional supports to teach ELs nor the time to meet the demands needed to support ELs or devote additional time to professional development to learn how to meet the needs of ELs. Although the results from the study contradict this statement, in relation to the total number of teachers in the district only a few participants choose

to take the time to complete the survey about EL instruction. This may imply that many teachers do not feel that EL instruction is a priority area of concern.

The findings imply that the participants recognize that in order to help ELs achieve at the level and pace that the guidelines under ESSA are expecting, teachers need more support and training. Even if teachers received training in preservice courses, teachers do not perceive themselves as being adequately trained. Overall, the teachers had positive attitudes toward ELs being in their classrooms. On the instrument used to self-score teacher attitudes, the teachers did score their classes as moving at a slower pace because the ELs were in their classes. These responses were scored as having a negative attitude toward ELs. However, this may not have been a reflection of their attitudes toward ELs as much as a recognition that they needed to allow more instructional time to provide more scaffolding and extended time for ELs to master the material.

This study benefits educator preparation programs and professional development programs in deciding that issues of cultural diversity and EL instruction need to be addressed and support given to teachers who believe their instruction would improve by receiving additional training and support for instructing ELs. Many teachers do not have high self-efficacy for teaching ELs because they have not received adequate training (Fenner, 2013; Johnson & Wells, 2017). The data from this study shows the teachers feel they need additional training. The desire to learn more about EL instruction could be due to teachers feeling they have not received enough appropriate training for instructing ELs, or it could be because teachers recognize that the number of ELs and the varying levels of proficiency and content knowledge in the general education classrooms are going to continue to expand.   As the population of this district continues to grow, so does the population of ELs and number of teachers needed to serve these

students. The district's teachers need to feel confident that they are able to meet the needs of

ELs and teach the rigorous standards in a way where everyone in the class benefits. If there are

already gaps in the ELs' education, having teachers who do not perceive themselves as capable

to provide necessary supports for ELs without lowering the standard of learning for non-ELs will

only create more frustration for teachers and students.

By analyzing the data of the perceived self-efficacy scores and attitudes of teachers

toward instructing ELs, administrators may develop a plan to focus on EL instruction and

achievement to improve the overall school performance (Elfers & Stritikus, 2014). Teachers and

educators realize that even after ELs are proficient enough to exit out of ESL programs, ELs are

still learning content in a second language. The ELs may still struggle with understanding

content because they may still have holes in their foundational understanding of the content.   If

teachers have a positive attitude toward ELs, professional development for instructing ELs

should focus on delivery of instruction instead of cultural diversity and culturally responsive

teaching.

Limitations

There were several possible limitations to the study. First, the study's sample size of 74

was a limitation. Another limitation was possibly that the recruitment email was sent to all

principals in the district but not all principals forwarded the email to their teachers. The

participants represented only the schools who had the email forwarded to them. Because the

researcher works in the district at a participating school, there may have been bias at that school

when teachers responded to the survey.

Most educators use technology regularly, but some teachers may have been unfamiliar

with using Microsoft Forms. Some teachers may not have been able to complete or submit the

survey using Microsoft Forms. The terms or the Likert scale may have been confusing to the participants, but the researcher was not physically present to answer questions or provide clarification if there was confusion.

Recommendations for Future Research

The following are recommendations for future research.

1. Conduct a follow-up study after providing professional development for instructing ELs in the general education classrooms to evaluate if self-efficacy and attitude scores increase.

2. Conduct a study with a larger population of teachers to increase the number of teachers in each school level and the diversity of subject areas taught to determine relationship within subject area groups.

3. Conduct a qualitative study or mixed methods study to include interviews with open-ended questions to provide additional information as to why teachers have more positive attitudes and higher self-efficacy scores.

4. Conduct a correlational study to determine teachers' self-efficacy scores for teaching ELs and EL achievement scores to determine the relationship among teacher self-efficacy and ELs' scores among and within subject areas.

5. Conduct a study for teachers who rate themselves highly in the area of self-efficacy in comparison with teacher evaluation scores for providing differentiated instruction. Including classroom observations is recommended.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

PERMISSIONS TO USE INSTRUMENTS

Dear Dr. Paneque,

May I obtain your permission to use the teachers' inventory entitled Exceptional Children who are English Learners (EXCEL) Teacher Inventory? As a doctoral student at Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA, I wish to conduct a correlational research study to determine if there is a significant relationship between elementary teachers' amount of teaching experience and their self-efficacy of teaching EL students in the general education classrooms in the public schools of Tennessee. I appreciate your attention to this request.

Thank you,

Angela Hughes

Paneque, Oneyda <opaneque@mdc.edu>

Fri 10/26, 6:35 PM

Hi Angela,

Thank you for asking permission to use the EXCEL Inventory for your doctoral research. You can use the inventory to gather data. Please share your findings once you complete your study.

Best of luck to you.

Oneyda Paneque

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Request to use English-as-a-second-language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers

JR

Jenelle Reeves <jreeves2@unl.edu>

|

Wed 1/30, 5:33 PM

Dear Angela,

I'm glad to hear that my research is of interest to you. Yes, you have my permission to use my survey for your own research—and to adapt my survey as needed. Please cite my work where applicable. And, I'd love to hear about your findings when you study is finished.

Best of luck!

Jenelle Reeves

HA

Hughes, Angela

Reply all|

Wed 1/30, 12:59 PM

jreeves2@unl.edu

Dear Dr. Reeves,

May I obtain your permission to use the teacher survey "English-as-a-second-language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers"? As a doctoral student at Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA, I wish to conduct a correlational research study to determine if there is a relationship between general education teachers' attitudes toward instructing ELs and teacher' self-efficacy of teaching ELs in general education classrooms in Tennessee public schools. I appreciate your attention to this request.

Thank you in advance,

Angela Hughes

Appendix B

PARTICIPANT LETTER

Dear Fellow Educator,

You are invited to anonymously participate in a research study entitled Teachers' Self-Perceived Attitudes and Self-Efficacy of Instructing English Learners in Middle Tennessee. The survey that you will complete should take no longer than 30 minutes, and everyone who completes the attached survey has the opportunity to enter a raffle for a chance to win a $75 Amazon gift card. Four winners will be awarded a gift card. The questions pertain to your attitude and self-efficacy of teaching English Learners. You can expect to find the study's results useful to educators, administrators, and professional development coordinators for use in promoting highly qualified teachers as an essential element to improving education.

Directions for completion:

- The researcher will send an email with a Microsoft Forms link. Click on the link to complete a teacher inventory in Microsoft Forms. The teacher inventory should take roughly 30 minutes to complete.

- Upon completing the teacher inventory, submit the teacher inventory.

- Write an email to the researcher stating you have completed the inventory, and your name will be placed in a drawing for 1 of 4, $75 gift cards for Amazon.

- The researcher will place your name in a drawing. When the two-week window closes for submitting the teacher inventory, the researcher and another teacher will draw the names of the winners. The winners will be notified, and the gift cards will be sent to the teachers' schools.

Your willingness to participate is greatly appreciated! The researcher will have the Amazon gift

cards delivered to winners' schools or will establish a mutually agreeable time with the winners

for delivery of the Amazon gift cards.

Appendix C

CONSENT FORM

TEACHERS' SELF-PERCEIVED ATTITUDES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF INSTRUCTING
ENGLISH LEARNERS IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE
Angela Hughes
Liberty University
School of Education

Participants are invited to be in a research study to focus on school teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes of teaching English Learners. The participant was selected as a possible participant because the participant is an elementary, middle, or high school teacher who teaches English Learners. Please read this form and ask any questions the participant may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Angela Hughes, a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a relationship between teachers' attitudes of teaching ELs and teachers' self-efficacy when teaching ELs.

Procedures:
If the participant agrees to be in this study, the researcher ask the participant to do the following things:
1. The researcher will send an email with a Microsoft Forms link and the researcher's email address. Click on a link to complete a teacher inventory in Microsoft Forms. The teacher inventory should take roughly 30 minutes to complete.
2. Upon completing the teacher inventory, submit the teacher inventory.
3. Write an email to the researcher stating the participant has completed the inventory, and the participant's name will be placed in a drawing for 1 of 4, $75 gift cards for Amazon.
4. The researcher will place your name in a drawing. When the two weeks for submitting the teacher inventory comes to a close, the researcher and another teacher will draw the names of the winners. The winners will be notified, and the gift cards will be sent to the teachers' schools or arrangements will be made to deliver the gift cards to the winners.

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

Benefits:
Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. The researcher anticipates that participation in this study will benefit the current body of knowledge available concerning teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes of teaching English Learners in general education classes.

Compensation:
Upon completion of the survey, participants may choose to enter your name into a raffle for a chance to win 1 of 4, $75 Amazon gift cards.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. Participants and the district will be assigned a pseudonym. Surveys will be anonymous. All information gathered during this study will remain confidential and secure. The participant's names will not be available to anyone other than the researcher. All electronic data will be kept on the researcher's password-protected laptop. Electronic data will be stored on a password-protected laptop and may be used in future presentations. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. The results of this study will be published in the form of a dissertation for partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Ed.D. program at Liberty University.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Participation in this study is voluntary. The participants' decision whether or not to participate will not affect the participant's current or future relations with Liberty University. If the participant decides to participate, the participant is free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study:
If the participant chooses to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close the internet browser. The participant's responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher conducting this study is Angela Hughes. The participant may ask any questions. If the participant has questions later, the participant is encouraged to contact Angela Hughes at ahughes22@liberty.edu. The participant may also contact the researcher's faculty chair, Dr. Amy Jones, at ajones17@liberty.edu.

If the participant has any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, the participant is encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if the participant would like a copy of this information for personal records.

Statement of Consent: The participant has read and understood the above information. The participant has asked questions and has received answers. The participant consents to participate in the study.

Appendix D

Dear Angela Hughes,

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

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

> (2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:
>
>> (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;

Please retain this letter for your records. Also, if you are conducting research as part of the requirements for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, this approval letter should be included as an appendix to your completed thesis or dissertation.

Your IRB-approved, stamped consent form is also attached. This form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

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

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

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