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Value-Added Model (VAM) Component of Teacher Evaluation and Job Satisfaction, Efficacy, and Retention: Perspectives of Secondary Teachers of Historically Low-Scoring Students and Recommendations for Alternative Student Performance Measurements

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and Retention: Perspectives of Secondary Teachers of Historically Low-Scoring Students and

Recommendations for Alternative Student Performance Measurements

by

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Value-Added Model (VAM) Component of Teacher Evaluation and Job Satisfaction, Efficacy, and Retention: Perspectives of Secondary Teachers of Historically Low-Scoring Students and Recommendations for Alternative Student Performance Measurements

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my father, George Martin Sr., my strongest supporter, who has lifted me and helped me become the best person I can be. I express extreme gratitude to my friends who have encouraged me to continue through a journey that took a long road in my life to come to fruition. My eternal gratitude to Kathleen "Casey" Suddarth for endless hours of encouragement, support, and love.

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Abstract

This qualitative study aimed to research the perspectives of four teachers who teach low-scoring populations of students traditionally. The research questions focused on job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and retention in education about Value-Added Model scores in their evaluations. The secondary purpose was for the teachers to recommend authentic assessment of student growth which is weighted 33% of teacher evaluations. I conducted a series of three open-ended interviews with each of the four participants. The interviews were designed to allow rich data to be collected.

The significant findings have been discovered using the constant comparative method. The analysis revealed that the teacher's perceptions of VAM scores were not in their control, nor did the teachers understand how the score is calculated; however, it was a stress point in the teaching environment.

The recommendations for alternative measurement of student achievement had a common thread of a baseline assessment and a learning gain assessment of the students the teachers directly taught. The emerging themes concluded that the evaluating administrator had more impact on job satisfaction and self-efficacy than VAM scores. The research questions drove the study, and the analysis discovered trends and emerging themes.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This research aimed to help the educational community and political leaders understand how mandating students' achievement scores, specifically secondary teachers of historically low-scoring students, impacts teachers ' self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention in the teaching profession. In Florida, Value-Added Measurements scores are part of the teachers' formal evaluations to satisfy the federal requirement that student achievement is part of the teachers' performance appraisal.

Student achievement attached to teacher evaluations was implemented by legislation in 2011; the Student Success Act became a Florida law that requires teachers accountable for student achievement (2011). In 2017 HB, 7069 amended S. 1012.34, F.S. and made the use of Value-Added Measurements (VAM) optional; however, VAM scores are still widely used across Florida districts (Florida Senate. Assemb, 2017).

My interest in this research study was from a previous leadership role as a principal change agent. In their fourth year of holding the state rating Needs Improvement, I took over a 90-90 school, and I had to figure out ways to improve student achievement in traditionally at-risk populations of students. A 90-90 school has 90% or more students eligible for free and reduced lunch, 90% or more racial-ethnic minority enrollment (Kearney et al., 2012). The school's goal was to have 90% or higher third-grade students meeting or exceeding academic standards.

I noticed when I arrived that teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction were very low. I realized that the teacher morale, in general, was low. It was my job to create a climate in which teachers could flourish and be effective instructional leaders in their classroom, which ultimately impacted student achievement and was an essential process to ensure student

achievement. The result was that within two years of my arrival, the faculty, staff, leadership, and stakeholders in education accomplished the goal of increasing student achievement and getting the school off the list.

The teachers had tried so hard to help their students succeed; it did not show in students' test scores despite all their efforts. The teachers were the key to student success. I had to rebuild teachers' trust and perception of their self-efficacy. The teachers needed tools to impact their students' achievement directly. Many teachers perceived low self-efficacy and low job satisfaction due to failing to increase student achievement for four consecutive years. We used data to drive instruction and implemented research-based reading programs. When the teachers started seeing their students succeed, they exhibited positive self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

When the VAM scores became mandatory for part of a teacher's evaluation, I saw the frustration in teachers who received inconsistent evaluation ratings from year-to-year based mainly on student and not teacher performance. I also saw highly effective teachers in the classroom be rated lower than highly effective on their evaluations. I wondered if this trend was a widespread problem or just localized to the one specific school I had been principal. This experience led me to the topic for this dissertation.

This study aimed to give a voice to the population of teachers who teach student groups that have been historically low-achieving students. This qualitative study collected data to understand the VAM scores' impact on teacher job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and retention. The objective was to inform the educational community and political leaders to understand VAM's effect on teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction, ultimately impacting teacher retention. The secondary aim was to find viable recommendations for alternative growth model instruments used in collective bargaining between the unions and school districts in Florida.

Background and Related Literature

Historically, federal and state legislative acts started in the Elementary and Secondary School Education Act (ESSEA) in 1965. The goal was to provide equity in education to all schools and students. The No Child Left Behind Act led to teachers being compulsorily required to be in the field to teach a subject. Through a long line of legislative acts, the federal control over the states became a stronger force. The federal education money was tied to teacher requirements to be held teachers accountable for student growth. Through the years, the requirements for teachers to be accountable for students' academic growth and achievement.

In 2002, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) put some of the most robust requirements on high stakes testing for students and educator accountability for student growth. Decisions have been made about teachers' tenure and employment. Illinois State Board of Education uses teacher-selected assessments (Illinois State Board of Education, 2015). The student assessment can be but is not limited to portfolios, labs, or performances. Similar acts in different states lead to a high attrition rate in teachers (Pullin, 2013). Schools' and teacher effectiveness and was being evaluated by testing of students.

In 2009, the Race to the Top (RTT) initiative emphasized high-stakes testing and making a value judgment on schools and individual educators. In 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed. ESSA relinquished some federal control of money back to the states. Some districts created assessments to show students' growth linked to student performance. The districts were required to submit a plan to the Florida Department of Education. Some districts elected to stay with the VAM scores for 33% of the teachers' formal evaluation scores.

In 2011, Student Success Act was passed (SSA). SSA directly tied Value-Added Models and mandated that 33% of a teacher's evaluation be derived from their VAM score. The roll-out of the value-added model has met resistance in the courts. There were concerns that only one-third of teachers received a VAM score directly, and the other two-thirds did not receive a score based on standardized student exam scores. "Advocates for VAM assert that it can promote accountability and improve teaching and learning" (Harris, 2011).

In 2017, HB 7069 amended S. 101234, F.S., which made Value-Added Measurements in teacher evaluations optional for school districts in the State of Florida (Florida Senate. Assemb, 2017). They could develop another evaluation model and submit it to the Florida Department of Education for approval. Refer to Table 1 for the breakdown of districts and the last date they submitted a plan to the Florida Department of Education.

Teachers of traditionally low-scoring students experienced inconsistencies in evaluations yearly; this group was also being rated lower than their colleges, who did not have a direct VAM score based on a standardized test. The previous research fails to research the impact on this specific group of teachers about self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention in the teaching field.

Problem Statement

With more government grants requiring educational agencies at state and district levels to comply with student growth as part of a teacher's evaluation to receive funding, the districts were more pressured to comply with Race to the Top legislation (2009). The law mandates left school districts looking for models to measure students' growth. Croft et al.'s (2018) study found the following:

Particularly in response to the Race to the Top grant competition and the federal

government's granting of waivers from some provisions of the No Child Left Behind

Act, most states ultimately enacted legislation to incorporate measures of student growth

(e.g., value-added methods, schoolwide growth, or student learning objectives) into

teacher evaluations. (p. P1001)

In 2011, The State of Florida initially selected the Value-Added Model (VAM) to satisfy

this mandate created by the Race to the Top Act (2009) to receive federal funds. The Florida

Department of Education gave districts the option of creating their student growth model, and

the districts had to submit their plan. Florida district continues to use the VAM scores for

student growth, although they are not explicitly mandated at this time.

VAM was designed to compare teachers' students' achievement with peers of students

with similar backgrounds. The VAM score calculation is a statistical formula to evaluate student

success and is attached to teacher effectiveness scoring on formal evaluations (Harrison &

Cohen-Vogel 2012).

The literature review revealed little prior research to address this specific population of

teachers regarding the perception of self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention. The deficit in

earlier research does not examine the real-world validity of the VAM score evaluations. It

lacked data on the consequences of teacher job satisfaction, perception of self-efficacy, and

retention (Jurado et al., 2019).

Purpose Statement

The teachers of historically low-achieving populations of students' voices need to be

heard and understood. To date, the VAM scores tied to teacher evaluations lacks previous

research on teachers' job satisfaction and perception of self-efficacy and retention. This

population of teachers is under pressure to make sure their students perform well on standardized tests.

Legislators make laws that hold teachers accountable for students' test scores without considering the impact of teacher perceptions on self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention in education. In 2017, S.B., 736 amended S. 1012.34, F.S., which made VAM scores no longer legislatively mandated, but most Florida school districts continued to use VAM scores in teacher evaluations (see Table 1).

Research Questions

From the perspective of secondary teachers of historically low-scoring student populations:

1. How do these teachers view VAM evaluation's effects on their job satisfaction?

2. How do they view VAM evaluation's effects on their self-efficacy?

3. How does these teachers' perception of self-efficacy and job satisfaction affect their intentions to remain in the teaching profession?

4. What are some viable alternatives to using VAM scores in teacher evaluations that accurately represent teacher impact on student achievement in the classroom?

Overview of Theoretical Framework

The two components of the theoretical framework are the interpretative paradigm and grounded theory. The interpretive paradigm aimed to understand situations in the world from subjective experiences from teachers who are living in the experience. The research study was focused on seeking meaning versus measurement in this paradigm (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The Grounded theory theoretical framework was utilized because I wanted to analyze data and develop theories after the data was collected (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I was looking to

construct themes and categories of what the data revealed. The research questions were the driving force behind the data collection.

Significance of the Research

The significance of this research was to understand and increase the awareness of educational and political leaders. The teachers of historically low-achieving students' voices need to be heard and understood. This study aimed to understand VAM scores tied to teacher evaluations and the impact of self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention. The current body of research lacks focus and study in this area. So, the research questions drive the study in grounded theory; and help educational leaders understand the impact of VAM scores on teachers. The goal was to make academic recommendations to teachers' bargaining units to discuss viable negotiations for valid assessments in teachers' evaluations.

Crucial informants served as ongoing member checking sources (Livari, 2018). In the process of member checking, community members and key informants understand the researcher's positioning and intent and interact more intensely as trust increases. I ensured accountability by combining member checking activities, returning results, and dissemination. This process had the potential to offer researchers an alignment to a mutual and respectful approach.

Member checking was a vital research tool to verify data accuracy once the researcher had completed the data collection and analysis (Bradshaw, 2001; Chandler et al., 2015; Harper & Cole, 2012). Member checking was one of the three factors in triangulation for validity in this study as a reiterative aspect. Member checking was used in this study to validate the accuracy of the collected data through interviews. The interviewee was asked to ensure the data accurately reflected their answers and story. I asked open-ended questions that prompted the interviewee to

share their experiences and reflective questioning (Sherwood et al., 2018). Cross-verifying and

signifying that the essential informers will promote careful and reflective practices (Harper &

Cole, 2012; Sherwood et al., 2018).

Definitions

The following definitions are a fundamental part of the study:

- Confirmability provides a degree of neutrality in the research findings, keeping the

  researcher's bias out of the study.

- Dependability provides the framework for consistency and repeatable research findings

  (Guba, 1981).

- Empirical research is a research method to study how phenomena are observed and

  measured rather than studying a hypothesis or a theory.

- Grounded theory is research in which the analysis and development of theories happen

  after the data is collected (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

- Job satisfaction is the feeling that a teacher is a valued school member. The

  environment, leadership, culture, pay compensation, and all factors influence a positive

  sense towards the work environment.

- Member checking encompasses that the researcher returns the interviews' facts to the

  participant to clarify the data collection's accuracy (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Padgett,

  2009).

- Retention is the intent to return to teaching the following year.

- Self-efficacy is the power to do what a teacher needs to do in their classroom to deliver

  quality instruction for all students.

- Transferability means that social situations with a similar population could apply to others. Transferability is external validity, for which the finding of one study can help future research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

- VAM is the Value-Added Model, which takes student achievement data and puts it into a statistical formula variance to account for at-risk populations.

Design of the Study

This research study is qualitative with Zoom interviews (due to COVID 19 restrictions). Four teachers were selected as the target participants. The interviews were conducted three times with each participant. Each interview has semi-structured questions and leaves an open-ended question for the interviewee to express their real perceptions during the interview. Journaling of nonverbal behavior and member checking for verbal conversation helped triangulate validity. "Conducting three interviews with each participant over time will also enhance the study's validity by establishing trust and allowing the interviewee the opportunity to reflect on how their perceptions impact their everyday lives" (Seidman, 2013, p.20).

Participants

Secondary teachers of traditionally low-scoring populations were the focus of this study. The participants consented to participate in this study. I recruited participants with a trusting relationship with teachers of traditionally low-scoring students. A snowball sampling was the methodology for the recruitment of additional participants. Current participants recommended a co-worker who met the criteria for the study.

This study had a small participant size due to the need to research in-depth data and the situation at great lengths. The limited number of participants allowed the participants to express their self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and thoughts on whether they intend to stay or leave the

education profession on a deeper level. The interviewee shared their thoughts on what student

assessment would be a tangible indicator of teacher effectiveness in the classroom. Open-ended

interviews explored how this impacts them as professionals and how these variables influence

them personally if there was a connection.

Data Analysis

The constant comparative method was used to analyze the data in the study. This process

included both inductive and deductive analysis of qualitative data. The first step used a process

of inductive reasoning, also referred to as open coding, creating categorization of the data or

axial coding. Themes emerged as each transcript was looked at independently of one another.

The analysis facilitated links between data across similar interviews for each participant and

formed a structure of experiences.

The second analysis used deductive analysis and comparative analysis. This process

uncovered shared experiences and emergent themes. The categorized data and the number of

occurrences in the same category were examined, analyzed, and emergent themes, also known

as selective coding.

Comparative analysis allows for the assessment of multiple conjunctural causations,

which implies that (1) most often, it is a combination of conditions that generate an

outcome; (2) several different varieties of conditions may produce the same outcome;

and (3) a given condition may have a different impact on the outcome depending on the

context. Hence, comparative analysis implements a context-specific notion of causality.

This allowance for greater causal complexity also implies that a causal condition may

have opposite effects, depending on the context. As a result, by using comparative

analysis, the researcher is urged not to specify a single causal model that fits the data

best (the standard practice using statistical techniques) but instead to determine the

number and character of the different causal models that exist among comparable cases.

(Ragin 1987, p.167)

This theory used questions about a process over time. I used the constant comparative

analysis method to analyze the data collected via recordings and notes. The goal was to look for

emergent themes and use inductive and deductive analysis to interpret the data subjectively.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba stated that trustworthy research should be transferable, confirmable,

and dependable. The three components must be present for a credible research study (1985).

Transferability relates the research to similar groups and provides a basis for future research.

Confirmability is an attempt to keep the researcher's bias out of the study. Confirmability can

be strengthened by taking a self-assessment of the researcher's feelings about the study.

Dependability is when a checks and balance system is utilized to verify that the researcher

accurately captured the data. Member checking serves as an outside audit. All three

recommendations for trustworthy and credible studies from Lincoln and Guba's

recommendations will be transparent (1985).

Credibility

It is challenging to establish credibility and trustworthiness in qualitative research.

Research on a social situation is sometimes subjective, and researcher bias can be a factor to

consider. Therefore, triangulation showed that the research findings are credible.

The three triangulation components are member checking, using a series of interviews,

and journaling—the most credible way to create credibility. Qualitative research contains

triangulation of data collection. This study uses multiple strategies to gather data (Padgett, 2009).

Organization of the Study

This chapter began with an introduction that described the need for research on secondary teachers of traditionally low-performing students and the perception of VAM scores related to self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention. Next, the chapter included the problem, research purpose, significance, and research questions. The flow of the study had the study's essential definitions, design, participants, theoretical framework, methodology, data analysis, trustworthiness, and credibility. Chapter one ended with an organization of the study and a summary. Chapter two includes a literature review; Chapter three explains the methodology and research design, leading into Chapter four, the study results, Chapter five suggestions and discussion of the data and analysis, and implications for future studies.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this study was twofold. The first was to give a voice to teachers of traditionally low-scoring populations to express their perceptions of job satisfaction, self-efficacy in their role as teachers, and retention. The second purpose was to find viable recommendations for districts to use in teacher evaluations that accurately measure teacher impact on students learning in the classroom. The results of this study will give teachers' unions scholarly research and data to bargain with Florida's school districts with recommendations for linking student achievement to teacher evaluations. The latter is also the significance of the study. The finding of this study gives a voice to teachers and unions at the bargaining table for teacher evaluations with school districts that are still using the VAM scores for teachers' evaluations.

Chapter 2: Review of The Literature

The literature review focused on the teachers of traditionally low-scoring populations, which addressed the psychological constructs of self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention in education. The literature review documented that the legislation's slow evolution to hold teachers accountable for student achievement and academic growth over time. The federal acts and initiatives are as follows: Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 (ESA), No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top (RTT), Student Success Act (SSA), and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The Florida H.B. 7069 made VAM scores in evaluations optional in 2017. In this chapter, legislation is discussed first, followed by a review of the psychological constructs examined in the study (Florida Senate. Assemb, 2017).

Legislation

Initially, the legislation set the criteria for teachers. Through each legislative act in the chronological timeline, the federal government required that states submit plans for Federal Approval. The plan included each state's learning standards and evaluation plan. Not all states had the same standards, and some states had their districts write their own evaluation plan. The chronological progress of legislation ultimately held teachers accountable for student achievement and was mandated to be part of the teacher evaluation system.

The legislative shift of accountability and specifically in the State of Florida, Value-Added Measurements were mandated for all school districts to use per S. 1012.34 in 2011; however, In 2017, F.S. 7069 was passed and signed off by the governor, made the use of VAM scores optional in the State of Florida. Retention in this context is the intent to return to the teaching profession the following year (Florida Senate. Assemb, 2017). The National

Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) data documents that 50% of new teachers leave the teaching in the first five years (1996).

In Florida, teacher evaluations incorporate performance pay and student achievement as part of the evaluation process. The Federal Government's legislative acts and initiatives have evolved to include student achievement as a mathematical factor in formal evaluation for teachers. Historically, the government has passed acts directly linked to large grants and federal oversight of state and school districts; the intent was to encourage school districts to tie student performance to teachers' evaluations.

The measure outlined in the legislation has put increasingly more demands on teachers by mandating evaluations and performance pay directly associated with student achievement. Historically, there has been a shift of control over teachers by the historical legislative acts passed at federal and state levels.

The trend in educational politics has increased over time to become a federalist approach. A federalist approach to education is distributing power between federal, state, and local governments. Federalism includes accountability from a higher authority, but it allows each state and district to try different problem-solving approaches (Pelsue, 2017). One area is legislation that mandates the federal government students' performance on high stakes testing to teachers' evaluations. Student achievement must be part of teacher performance evaluations. (Pelsue, 2017). The federal legislations have allocated federal educational money to accountable systems requiring, in turn, the school districts to have to agree to receive funds.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act 1965

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, first signed by President Johnson, began educational legislation. This authorization took place after the

reconstruction after World War I and after the great depression. The government went into deficit spending, and all non-disabled men were to join in the war effort. The number of men who joined the war effort created a full-time working economy that helped to end the great depression. This act was a federal commitment to help schools become equitable in resources and provide the same opportunities for all students. Some scholars described ESEA as the "three R's – race, religion and Reds (federal control)." (Moffit, 2016, p.359) ESEA provided initial federal funding of one million dollars, 10% of schools' budgets. The aim was to increase quality and equality in all schools. De jure segregation was no longer in effect at this time; many schools had higher proportions of students whose families lived in poverty.

ESEA provided funding to strengthen schools' libraries, state departments of education, and educational research. Authorization of this Act gave further funds to help with bilingual and special education. Title funds out of ESEA targeted poverty and segregation. This legislation caused high political and financial costs, which led to backlash. (Moffitt 2016) ESEA provided schools with 10% of their funding at the time. In 2007, this law expired. The Republican Party in the house tried to have ESEA reauthorized, but their efforts were unsuccessful. The Democrats were conservative; some members saw ESEA as a radical act. The conservative legislators disagreed with ESEA, and despite numerous attempts to get it passed, ESEA was no longer in effect. (Schimmel, 2015)

The federal government created title funds to address the needs of target populations of conventionally low-scoring students. These title funds impacted teachers in a multitude of ways.

The ESEA act started many more actions and initiatives that tightened federal control of teachers.

ESEA was the preliminary precursor to teacher evaluations, teacher preparation programs, certification, and state licensing, providing teachers professional development to identify students' needs, specifically ELL, low-socioeconomic, and special needs students. The states had to submit their plans to the Federal Government for approval. ESEA was a direct federal mandate if schools were going to receive federal funding. Public schools heavily relied on federal funding, so most states complied with the requirements. (ESEA, 1965).

Race to the Top

In 2009, President Obama prioritized education at the federal level when introducing The Race to the Top (RTT) Act. RTT was part of the reauthorization of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Students' test scores were being tied to performance pay for teachers.

RTT emphasized incorporating student achievement results in teacher evaluation scores and, in turn, was to determine performance pay incentives for teachers. There were four major reform strategies: (1) adopting more rigorous standards, (2) Recruiting and retaining highly effective teachers and principals. (3) reforming low-performing schools, and (4) building data systems that measure student success. (RTT, 2010)

This research focuses on teacher evaluation systems. RTT mandated that all states implement a reformed teacher evaluation system. The more the states complied with the mandate, the more Race to the Top funds they received. The federal government provides 11.31% of the total budget for Florida Schools (Florida Department of Education, 2020). The

states rely on federal funds to operate, most elected to implement the specified teacher evaluation system.

Through the RTT initiative, there was a mandate that teachers must be accountable for their students' test scores. Some states used the Value-Added model, originally designed to measure test scores' growth with those students with similar backgrounds and socioeconomic status. Suppose students' test scores did not show improvement over time or proficiency.

If student scores were not acceptable over time, teachers' professional files could be permanently flagged, or they could often result in loss of merit pay, tenure, or continuing teaching contracts. Being held accountable for student growth via the VAM model became so taxing on teachers that they subsequently filed lawsuits. The claims were that VAM violated the teachers' constitutional rights; by 2015, there were 15 reported suites in the state and federal courts (Sawcheck, 2015).

Both RTT and NCLB promoted charter schools and school choice. RTT had one more focus on creating more rigorous math and science standards. RTT led to the development of Common Core Standards. Funding was allocated specifically for schools to develop teacher and principal evaluation systems. Innovation was at the forefront of this grant.

The State of Florida Department of Education and a state-wide committee reformed teacher and principal evaluations by incorporating a Value-Added rating to their performance rating on formal evaluations. Florida educators' challenge was performance pay for teachers, which created challenges for the reform efforts. The second concern was whether teachers would receive proper training on the common core standards (2020).

The plan was to administer standardized tests in every grade K-12, including art, music, and physical education. In addition to the reform efforts, In March 2011, a law was enacted that

removed new teachers' opportunity to obtain tenure; teachers hired after 2014 would be paid strictly by the evaluation rather than degree or experience (Center for American Progress).

The initial intent of value-added models was to compare a teacher's students' achievement with peers of students with similar backgrounds (low socioeconomic status, ELL, Special Education). The models have had many lawsuits claiming that they are biased and not equitable for teacher evaluations (Close et al., 2018).

No Child Left Behind

The federal government passed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2011. This act tied K-12 funding to federal oversight for states and districts and, in turn, reduced their autonomy. If a state or school district applied for the grant, the school district or state would answer the federal government for oversight.

NCLB relied heavily on testing as an indicator of success. The federal mandate would require that subgroups perform better, such as the following: Gender, Racial and Ethnic, Students with Limited English Proficiency, Students with Disabilities, Economically Disadvantaged, and Migrant Students (Riddle et al., 2012). Some states planned to incorporate indicators in the performance index that went beyond student achievement or attainment, such as teacher and principal effectiveness (Riddle et al., 2012).

The plan was for educators to bring all students to the proficiency level on state tests. NCLB set a timeline for 100% of all students scoring proficient in reading and math by 2014. The federal government left the responsibility of defining proficiency levels to the states (Goodboy & Kline, 2017).

Annual yearly progress (AYP) was a measurement system for evaluating the success of the schools. School grades were issued in ratings of A, B, C, D, and F. Schools had to report

standardized test scores for the whole student population and subgroups as defined above. Grade levels three, eight, and ninth through twelfth, the school had standardized test scores for the entire student population and subgroups as described above. School grades were a mechanism to see if schools were making progress. If a school did not make AYP for two years in a row, it was subject to stringent increasing severe sanctions.

These sanctions increased over time, which resulted in a loss of local control. School districts were required to allow students to transfer from a "D" or "F" school to a better-performing school in the same system. Schools not making Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) three years in a row were required to offer free tutoring. Schools that failed to make AYP over four years are subject to closing, turning into charter schools, taking them over, state intervention. After four consecutive years of not making AYP, a school had three options: closing the school, taking over by the state, or opening a charter school.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) also implemented the concept of highly qualified teachers. Teachers must be in their field of certification and not teach classes outside of their certification areas. NCLB also required teachers to have a bachelor's degree and state certification. NCLB has been a push to ensure quality instruction for students.

Under NCLB, states and districts would have to compete for grant funds tied to student testing. This federal legislation aimed to close the achievement gaps between low-performing and high-performing students (Heise, 2017). was considered educational federalism (Wong, 2008). The federalist approach leaves room for state and local entities to problem-solve and develop their approach to implementing change.

In 2011, it became evident that many schools would not meet the 2014 goal of 100% proficiency. President Obama in 2011 brought in waivers for schools that were not making

AYP. The president was meeting resistance in reauthorizing NCLB. There were concerns if a new president took office; there was no guarantee that his successor would continue the waivers.

The Secretary of Education, Arnie Duncan, predicted that 82% of schools would fail to make AYP in 2011. In reality, it ended up being more than 50% of schools that did not make AYP (McNeil, 2011). The legislative house did not reauthorize NCLB. NCLB's goal is to have all students meet or exceed grade-level achievement on standardized math and reading tests. The fact was that it was unobtainable for many schools (McNeil, 2011).

NCLB has impacted teachers' feelings about job satisfaction and the intent to stay in the profession as defined as retention. Grissom et al. researched the No Child Left Behind's effects on Teachers and Their Work Environments (2014). The research reports documented increased feelings of performance pressure due to NCLB. Performance pressure led to the unintended consequence of teacher burnout (Hill & Barth, 2004). Some teachers felt they were being held accountable for factors they could not control (Hefling, 2012).

Student Success Act

The Student Success Act (SSA) was passed in 2013 (S.B. 736) and created the Florida teacher evaluation process mandate. The act mandates that the Value-Added models be part of teacher evaluations (Harrison & Cohen-Vogel 2012). The Value-Added model aims to compare teachers' students' achievement with peers of students with similar backgrounds. In Florida, the VAM score is 50% of the teacher's formal evaluation (Garver, 2020). The VAM score is incorporated into evaluating student success and is attached to teacher effectiveness scoring on formal evaluations.

Every Student Succeeds Act

In 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) came into effect. This legislation replaced No Child Left Behind (NCLB) rather than reauthorization. ESSA reversed the power structure, giving more autonomy to the states and parents' right to make educational choices for their children.

> The growing demand for charter schools, school voucher programs, tax credit programs, and homeschooling—independently and collectively—suggests that families have an almost unquenchable thirst for a more outstanding agency regarding decisions about their children's education. To be sure, many scholars note the growth of school choice in the education context. (Heise, 2017, p. 1862)

The big difference between NCLB and ESSA is that ESSA gives states more latitude in annual test deployment. ESSA relieves conditions for states from Federal Consequences set forth by NCLB (Heise, 2017). Teachers are held accountable for student performance as part of the evaluation formula.

According to previous research, teachers felt demoralized if they did not receive the highly effective or effective rating on their teacher evaluations. However, the research gap is that there is little research on how the teachers view their sense of self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention in the teaching profession. Teachers feel that the evaluation process is a negative spotlight in teaching deficiencies rather than promoting professional growth (Whitley et al., 2015; Santoro, 2018). In turn, teachers' morale teaching deficiencies challenge school-based leaders to lead teachers. Districts and states have adopted this process on various mathematical equations. The initial 2013 Student Success Act stated that school districts mandatorily count the VAM score at 50% of the teacher evaluation equation. The percent of teachers' accountability went from 50% to 33% by the Student Success Act in 2015. Every Student

Succeeds Act (2015) no longer mandated student testing tied to teacher evaluations. This act left the decision to the individual states. VAM scores were tied with the new rule of about 2.4% in the lower categories of teacher effectiveness. (Postal, 2015). This data showed a dramatic increase in teachers receiving effective and highly effective. Teachers received a Value-added model score in Florida after the mandate was left to the individual states.

This evaluation system is a significant concern for all teachers who teach at-risk populations for not receiving a highly effective teacher appraisal rating. The law states that teachers should be held accountable for student achievement; it must be part of the Florida State Senate's evaluation process (Florida State Senate, 2011). The highly effective designation also impacts teacher incentive pay (TIP). Teachers who score in one of the top two categories receive a one-time payment of $1200.00 in salary in a district in North Florida. So, performance pay is a factor in the equation (Springer & Gardner, 2010).

House Bill 7069

In 2017, House Bill 7069 (H.B. 7069) that amended S. 1012.34, F.S., made the use of VAM scores optional for personnel evaluations optional. H.B. 7069 was the legislation that gave back accountability to the districts for student growth. The Florida District schools had to submit a plan to the Florida Department of Education outlining their selection of teacher evaluation criteria regarding student growth. House Bill 7069 passed in both the Senate and the house and was approved by the governor on 06/15/2017 to take effect July 1, 2017 (H.B. 7069) (Florida Senate. Assemb, 2017).

Legislative Explanations

Legislative mandates moved from giving districts autonomy to stricter and tighter control of federal funds and mandates for districts to comply with to receive financing for

school systems. The federal grants incrementally evolved to hold the teacher accountable for student growth and achievement.

The Shift of Accountability

The public-school system has transitioned to hold both students accountable by requiring them to pass high-stakes tests for graduation and teachers responsible for high-stakes testing students' success. The Value-Added Model (VAM) is a statistical formula intended to gauge a teacher's contributions to students' success on standardized tests (Pivovarova et al., 2016; Amerin-Beardsley & Holloway, 2017). VAM scores are a calculation of statistical data and not accurate teacher contributions toward student achievement. The question generated from Chetty et al.'s study was a reference to VAM scores' statistical representation; was student achievement causation or correlation to teachers' contributions to student success (2014).

School systems use different teacher accountability strategies; this study focused on the Value-Added Measurement System, no longer a federal mandate in Florida teachers' evaluations. This study interviewed teachers who teach at-risk students, impacted the VAM score's morale on teacher evaluations, and impacted school-based leadership.

Valued-Added Model Eliminated

Since 2017, the Value-Added Model was no longer mandated by law for Florida teachers' evaluations. The literature review unveiled teacher efficacy and job satisfaction (Allodi and Fischbein, 2012). Still, the connection between the two variables and Value-Added Scores on teacher evaluations was under-researched. The legislature mandated that VAM was no longer required by law in 2018. However, out of 67 districts, only 60 districts have an Approved Instructional Performance Evaluation by the Florida Department of Education. Seven

district plans were not available online at the Florida Department of Education or district websites.

Nineteen districts have not changed their evaluation plans since the law was passed to allow districts not to use VAM scores in 2017. Some plans date back to the 2015-2016 school year and are still in place. Out of the 41 districts that have changed their plans since 2018, only four districts are not using some form of VAM scores to date on their teacher evaluations.

The school union representative told me that the Instructional Performance Evaluation negotiations occur between the district leadership team and the teachers' bargaining unit once every five years in our district. The plans written in the 2015-2016 school year have not been modified and are six years old. There is a need to provide research data to bargaining units to assist districts in developing a valid, equitable plan for all teachers and an accurate indicator of students' growth. Please refer to Table 1 to clearly explain the data report above.

Table 1

Florida DOE Approved Instructional Performance Evaluations Systems

Plan Date Submitted	Using VAM scores	Not Using VAM Scores	Total of Schools
2015-2016	16	0	16
2016-2017	3	0	3
2017-2018	6	0	6
2018-2019	14	1	15
2019-2020	5	0	5
2020-2021	11	3	14
No date	1	0	1

Table 1 (continued).

Total:	56	4	60

Note: Data collected from "Approved Instructional Performance Evaluation Systems

Directory" from Florida Department of Education website

http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/performance-evaluation/instructional.stml. Sixty out of sixty-

seven districts have their plans available online.

Value-Added Model

Value-added models take test data and statistically evaluate the test scores of students. The

test scores are usually calculated from the previous school year to the current year. The formula has

built-in variances to measure student growth and achievement to account for the different student

populations. The teacher effect is a cause-and-effect relationship on student learning, and the result

is an increase in test scores over time.

This model correlates the teacher effectiveness on a student over time. McCaffrey et al.

(2004) have studied the correlation among VAM systems and show how some models can be

longitudinal. VAM means that research looks at the individual students to show change over some

time. VAM uses correlation research rather than a cause-and-effect study. According to McCaffrey

et al. (2004), two significant classifications of VAMs are the learning path model and covariate

adjustment model. In the learning path model, student data on standardized tests become variables

in a statistical calculation.

The complex formula for holding teachers accountable for student achievement is 33% of

the teachers' evaluations. The variable attempts to factor in human factors that are not controllable.

The covariate adjustment model looks at the current year's test scores as the outcome and the

previous year's test scores as the conditioning variable. The assumption is that a teacher with

average effectiveness will impact student achievement as their peers at the same level. Projection targets are a calculation for the growth that should occur, and teachers are rated positively or negatively based on their students' gains or losses on standardized tests.

The Florida Value-Added Model implemented for Florida teachers is a covariate adjustment model. The covariate model includes two prior test scores as predictor variables (except in grade 4, where only one predictor is available). A set of measured characteristics for students, with teachers and schools, treated as random effects. The model is an error-in-variables regression to account for the measurement error in the predictor variables used. The same predictor variables used in the model are the same across all reading and math grades (Lockwood & McCaffrey, 2014).

Psychological Constructs

The three psychological constructs examined in this study were job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and retention in the field. The relationship of these three psychological factors was to investigate the impact of VAM scores of each aspect. Due to the low retention rate of teachers who teach special education, math, and science, I wanted to explore if this population of teachers had the impact of VAM as part of their job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and decision to leave the field in education.

Job Satisfaction

Researchers have defined job satisfaction in many ways. Mincu (2015) described job satisfaction as "A positive frame of mind reflected by the employees' opinions regarding work or the climate of his workplace" (p.165). Job satisfaction is a forecaster for turnover and retention (Dicke et al., 2012; Judge et al., 2020). This research was conducted to investigate the factors that affect perceptions of job satisfaction. High job satisfaction directly correlates with high self-efficacy in teachers, positively impacting student achievement (Allodi & Fischbein,

2012). Job satisfaction is attributed to are pay, promotion, opportunities, co-workers, supervision, and the environment; Judge et al. (2020) identified the attributes that influence job satisfaction in their research. For this study's purpose, I blended the two definitions defined in the context of teachers' job satisfaction.

Three Factors for Misery in a Job.

According to Lencioni, the most significant job satisfaction comes from leaders who manage their employees effectively. Three main factors that decrease job satisfaction are anonymity, irrelevance, and "immeasurement." Immeasurement is a term created by Lencioni (2007). If the three factors are in place, they lead to a miserable workplace and miserable employees.

Anonymity is the first factor that leads to dissatisfaction. People need to feel that they are seen and connected to the organization's leadership. If people do not feel like the administration sees them for who they are, it is impossible to have high job satisfaction. Therefore, it is more difficult to leave a job when there is a connection with the management, and you are highly valued as an individual (Lencioni, 2007).

Irrelevance is "…the feeling that what you do has no impact on the lives of others" (Lencioni, 2007, p. 132). Employees need to be needed and reminded of it often. Management must look into who and how the employees help others understand what is required in their job. There needs to be a link between work and the fulfillment of another person.

"Immeasurement" is the third factor in a miserable job. If employees can measure their progress, they will gain a greater sense of personal responsibility and job satisfaction. "The key to establishing effective measures for a job lies in identifying those areas an employee can directly influence, and then ensuring that the specific measurements are connected to the person

or people they are meant to serve" (Lencioni, 2007, p236). The VAM scores are a statistical calculation of students' achievement scores. Teachers feel like they are not in control of the statistical calculation that makes up their VAM score. Teachers do not entirely understand how the VAM statistical formula is calculated or a fair measurement of success (Pressley et al., 2018). The cost of misery or lack of job satisfaction due to "immeasurement" is high and, in turn, leads to a higher turnover rate, less productivity, and less job satisfaction (Lencioni, 2007).

Self-Efficacy

Hajovsky, Chestnut, and Jensen define self-efficacy as beliefs, generally defined as the belief in one's own ability to initiate and maintain the course of action needed to produce an anticipated outcome (2020). Bandura referred to self-efficacy as contextually situated confidence (Bandura 1997a). Self-efficacy also includes the confidence and the ability to master their craft and provide quality individualized instruction for all students. Self-efficacy is the individual teacher's belief that they can do their job effectively and impact student achievement and learning (Bandura, 1995).

Bandura is a leading researcher who defines self-efficacy based on his social cognitive theory. The four components are steps to achieve a task. "(1) A memory of past tasks success or failure, (2) goal-directed, (3) verbal persuasion, and (4) emotional state" (1997b, p.4). Previous research indicates that teachers who have a high perception of self-efficacy are more satisfied with their jobs, ultimately resulting in longer retention (Edgar et al., 2011).

Self-Efficacy is the ability to engage in relevant tasks to their profession. The engagement may include differentiating instruction, providing instructional adaptions for special needs students, engaging in culturally responsive and diverse linguistic backgrounds (Bandura et al., 2001). Self-efficacy consists of the perception of having the power to obtain the

desired effects through personal actions and efforts. Hence, teacher self-efficacy is the perceived ability to engage students, favoring their learning and motivation and managing the classroom. Self-efficacy is important for teachers when a task is difficult, for example, working with disruptive, unmotivated, or disengaged students (Tshannen-Morgan & Hoy, 2001).

When teachers have positive self-efficacy, it is beneficial for student outcomes. For instance, previous research has linked self-efficacy to behavioral, emotional, and cognitive student engagement (VanUden et al., 2014). When teachers have reduced job stress and increased job satisfaction (Troesch & Bauer, 2017), there is a significant increase in teacher retention (Wang et al., 2015).

According to Bandura (1982), self-efficacy beliefs have been through a process of enactive attainment, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, physiological and emotional states. Researchers have defined enactive attainment as mastery experience as the most crucial factor determining self-efficacy. Bandura also points out that teachers who have successful experiences raise self-efficacy, while failure lowers self-efficacy beliefs.

Therefore, affective experiences may serve as sources of information about one's performance and consequently shape one's self-efficacy beliefs. More precisely, feelings of anxiety or tension while performing a specific task may be viewed by an individual as a sign of lack of capability and control in each situation, resulting in lower self-efficacy beliefs.

On the contrary, positive affective experiences may favor the perception of successfully managing the situation, thus enhancing higher self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1995). Emotions and other affective experiences can serve as a filter determining which efficacy evidence may be perceived as positive or negative and how it is interpreted. Self-efficacy beliefs are influenced by making mood-congruent thoughts more available.

Mood-Congruent Memory is defined by VandenBos (2007) as the following:

Relating to consistency or an agreement between a particular expressed feeling and the

general emotional context within which it occurs. Thus, crying at a time of sadness or

personal distress is viewed as mood-congruent. For this reason, it is easier to remember

events when a person is in the same state of mind as when the memory was stored. (p.

365)

Mood-congruent thoughts are true; experimental evidence shows that experimental

emotional conditions with positive and negative moods are linked to college students' positive

and negative academic self-efficacy levels. This research suggests that practical experiences can

serve as a forerunner of self-efficacy. (Medrano et al., 2016)

However, self-efficacy beliefs can also influence firm self-efficacy beliefs and increase

positive affective experiences through the perception of managing challenging situations. In

contrast, low self-efficacy may lead an individual to perceive goals as less attainable, increasing

negative affective experiences (Pajares, 1996). Previous research points to the direct

relationship between self-efficacy and emotions. This research confirms the positive association

of self-efficacy with positive emotions and the negative association with negative emotions

(Buric et al., 2019; Buric & Frenzel, 2020).

Retention/Attrition

Teaching is associated with great intensity of stress and strain (Dicke et al., 2020;

Dupriez et al., 2016). Research shows that three out of ten teachers leave the teaching

profession within the first five years (Chang, 2009; Gallant & Riley, 2017; Ingersoll, 2012;

Jalongo & Heider, 2006, Ronfeldt et al., 2013). Previous research indicates that teacher

certification areas are related to teacher turnover. The three areas are science, math, and special

education teachers. There is a lack of research targeting these three certifications and VAM models for teachers' perception of self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention. Teacher attrition is a critical factor affecting school effectiveness. Teachers who leave the teaching profession directly impact student achievement and school success (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019).

Teachers are asked if they plan on returning the next school year. The teachers fill out a survey to let the administration know their intent to return to their school. High teacher turnover rates make educational changes within a school or district challenges.

Summary

The psychological constraints of job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and retention in the field were the primary attributes examined in this research. The relationship between the psychological constructs and VAM scores in teacher evaluations was studied. The data collected on the psychological constructs were studied and analyzed to determine the impact on teachers.

Chapter Summary

The funnel effect is evident as the progression of the timeline of legislative acts affects teachers' accountability for student growth. The federal government set aside ESEA funds with a categorical designation for the professional development of teachers. This act continued to be every five years until the reauthorized No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001. NCLB established the criteria for teachers to hold 4-year degrees, obtain teacher certification, and be considered highly qualified in their teaching field. A highly qualified definition is that a teacher has a four-year degree, holds a teaching certificate or license, and passes a certification exam in their area. This highly qualified mandate was required by states to receive federal funding to be accountable. The desired outcome was to increase student achievement in education.

The next legislative mandate tied to federal funding was Race to the Top (RTT). This legislation required states to reform the teacher evaluation process. RTT was the first-time student achievement mandate to be part of the teacher evaluation process. Some states used the VAM system, and others used a variety of evaluation systems. RTT is the first trend towards holding teachers accountable for student achievement on standardized tests. In 2011, the federal mandate included student achievement in teacher evaluations and counted 50% of the teacher evaluation formula.

Historically, 2011 was the first time VAM was mandated to formally evaluate teachers in states receiving federal funding. This process met legal challenges in both states in the federal court system. However, in the past, states chose to determine student achievement. VAM required states to receive federal funding to be used in evaluating teachers. RTT legislation reduced the percent of teacher evaluations from 50% to 33% of the total score. This legislation was in effect from 2011-2016.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) met successful reauthorization with revisions in December 2015. The federal oversight no longer mandated that VAM scores are mandatorily used in teacher evaluations. The states can select their student growth model linking student achievement to its evaluation system and submit it to the federal government. Florida elected to use VAM scores in teacher evaluations until 2017, HB 7069 amended S. 101234, F.S., which made Value-Added Measurements in teacher evaluations optional for school districts in Florida. The districts were required to submit their Professional Evaluation Plan to the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) for approval (Florida Senate. Assemb, 2017).

Chapter 3: **Methodology**

Data collection emerged through three qualitative interviews with each of the participants containing open-ended questions; the participants in this study are teachers of at-risk students and have had experiences with VAM scores in their evaluations. The research focused on how VAM scores relate to job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and retention in the teaching profession. The secondary goal of this research was to get the teacher's input into what would be a valid, reliable, and equitable instrument to measure student growth for all teachers.

The first step of data analysis was inductive. Thomas (2006) defines the purpose for inductive analysis as:

The purposes for using an inductive approach are to (a) condense raw textual data into a brief, summary format; (b) establish clear links between the evaluation or research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data; and (c) develop a framework of the underlying structure of experiences or processes that are evident in the raw data." (p.1)

Each transcription was analyzed independently of others. The transcript has been coded using a categorical and theme-based system. Each category was broken down into sub-categories. Significant categories emerged through this data analysis process.

Research Questions

From the perspective of secondary teachers of historically low-scoring student populations:

1. How do these teachers view VAM evaluation's effects on their job satisfaction?

2. How do they view VAM evaluation's effects on their self-efficacy?

3. How does these teachers' perception of self-efficacy and job satisfaction affect their intentions to remain in the teaching profession?

4. What are viable alternatives to using VAM scores in teacher evaluations that accurately represent teacher impact on student achievement in the classroom?

Research Paradigm

Jurdio et al. (2015) defined a paradigm as a "set of interrelated assumptions about the social world, which provides a philosophical and conceptual framework for the world's organized study"(p 14). This study looked at the construct of the interpretative paradigm that analyzes qualitative data to explain a social situation that is going on in the world. This chapter aims to discuss the design expectations and the design strategies for the research study.

The interpretive paradigm served as the framework for this study. The interpretive paradigm dealt with understanding the world from subjective experiences from participants. The research study aimed to seek meaning versus measurement in this paradigm. Teachers' perspectives can differ in the same situation based on their experiences, perception of self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention. This research collected qualitative data to analyze for comparative data rather than cause and effect results. In turn, this process gave the teachers of traditionally low-scoring populations a voice. The ability to express their perceptions about VAM scores in their evaluation has affected the teaching careers.

Background and Role of Researcher

Through my journey in education for over 20 years, I have been fortunate to have a diverse background of experiences. I have a Biology Education Bachelor's degree from the University of North Florida and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Jacksonville

University. I started as a medical magnet teacher in Duval County. I went to Nassau County as a Biology and Chemistry teacher. After obtaining my master's degree, I became the Assistant Principal of Palm Avenue Exceptional Center for two years. I was privileged to become the Principal of Blackshear Elementary. The school was a fourth-year needs improvement school at the time. Through the efforts of a progressive superintendent, faculty, and staff, we got them off the need's improvement list. The school has not returned to the list since 2003.

I moved back to Florida and became the Principal of SIATech Charter High for five years. It was a start-up charter school with a fantastic administration and support system. I opened two new schools in two years for them. I built a great relationship with the district Charter School Coordinator. I made a reputation for doing things the right way, always complying with rules, deadlines, and being ethical in all decisions for students.

I was honored when the district liaison asked if I would be interested in taking the position of Charter School Coordinator. I was looking for a way to grow professionally, and an opportunity came up at the Clay County School District. For five years, I was the ESOL, charter school, and virtual school coordinator. I left there and went abroad. I served two years in Beijing, China, as the Secondary Director of an international school.

I accepted a position as Deputy Head of schools for an international school in Bangkok, Thailand. I was honored to serve as the Western Consultant for Educational Reform in Thailand. I also was asked to develop a class for Political Science doctoral students as they could not pass the language proficiency exam for graduation. The former Prime Minister of Thailand owned the Shinawatra University. The government accepted the course, and I enjoyed teaching it for a year.

The next opportunity was to accept the position of Head of Schools for an international school corporation in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. I loved the culture and people. I was called home by my aging father, and I accepted a position as a teacher of Robotics, Electrical, and science at the high school level. This position allows me to be at home in the United States to spend more time with my aging father and finish my dissertation.

The diverse educational background presents me with a grounded theory lens. As part of my evaluation, I have been on both the leadership evaluation side of teachers and a teacher who received a VAM score for student growth. The diversity of experiences provides me with a balance between my role as an administrator and a teacher. Being on both sides of the situation helps me reduce researcher bias.

Organization of the Study

This chapter began with an introduction that described the need for research on secondary teachers of traditionally low-performing students and the perception of VAM scores related to self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention. Next, the chapter included the problem, research purpose, significance, and research questions. The flow of the study had the study's essential definitions, design, participants, theoretical framework, methodology, data analysis, trustworthiness, and credibility. Chapter one ended with an organization of the study and a summary. Chapter two includes a literature review; Chapter three explains the methodology and research design, leading into Chapter four, the study results; chapter five discusses the data and analysis, and implications for future studies and emergent categories.

The second analysis step is the comparative analysis using the deductive system.

The theoretical propositions derived from a literature review serve as its departure point in qualitative deductive research, informing how the data is collected. In the data

analysis, the researcher uses the propositions to determine if the literature explains the case being investigated. (Pearse, 2019, p.143)

I performed data analysis and looked for emergent themes and shared experiences. The triangulation of data validated this study through acceptable practices. I used acceptable practices, including collecting data by journaling, member checking, and multiple interviews over time. The data collection from three methods maintains the validity and accuracy of data collected through interviews over time.

Context

I interviewed four teachers who taught low-achieving students in math, science, or special education in this study traditionally. Those three subject areas were selected because they have the highest attrition rate in education. The same teachers are assigned a VAM score for their students and teach low-achieving students traditionally. The participants participated in three semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions.

Research Methodology

The interpretive paradigm dealt with understanding the world from subjective experiences from participants. The research study aimed to seek meaning versus measurement in this paradigm. This study's methodology utilized constant comparative analysis, including inductive and deductive data analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Pseudonyms and descriptive information were associated with each interview transcript. The participants were asked to pick their pseudonyms to maintain anonymity. The descriptive information includes gender, age, and years in the teaching profession.

The first step to an inductive analysis of the data is reading one interview and making notes in the margins. The notes include possible themes, keywords, intuitions, ideas, and

questions. The comments provide the opportunity to ask follow-up questions in future interviews that may need more information. The researcher may need more information to learn more about the interviewee's thoughts, and the following interview contained additional questions.

The goal was to make sense of the data by combining, reducing, and deciphering what the participants said. These methods help construct the meaning of the data collected. Lincoln and Guba's research implies that data analysis should be heuristic. Heuristic means that the data is relevant to the study and should help the reader to think past the data (1985). Each piece of data should be interpreted as it stands alone. The goal is to get to the common themes and construct meaning and interpretation of the data collected based on the research questions.

The most appropriate method for this study is the constant comparative method. The constant comparative analysis examines one piece of data independently and looks for recurring consistencies in the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The data was broken down into bits and assigned to a category. Categories can be sub-divided in a rigorous analysis in which tentative findings are corroborated, adjusted, and reconfigured.

Data Collection

Each one of the four teachers in the study was interviewed three times. The researcher recorded the interviews via Zoom meeting. The Zoom Account and computer were each password protected. The interviewer took notes during the interview in a notebook. Notes and transcripts are stored in a secured google document. The document was shared with each interviewee from whom the data was transcribed for member checking. No other participants viewed any other participant's transcripts. The data is being maintained with strict security

measures. At the end of the study, the recordings and notebook entries will be shredded and erased.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by transcribing the Zoom recording, Coding, categories and themes emerged, data assemblage, re-coding, and final analysis. Each step in the process was carried out with attention to detail and using all three data sources. The data sources include transcripts, journaling, and multiple interviews over time.

Transcription

I transcribed the Zoom recordings after each interview. The recordings were played repeatedly until every word was on paper. The transcript was then sent to the corresponding participant for member checking and transparency in research methodology.

Coding

I initially coded one interview at a time. Then the first round of interview documents was analyzed across the four participants. Observations and queries were noted in the margins. The second and third rounds of interviews were also coded independently and then analyzed the responses of the four participants.

The data was coded using open coding or axial coding, referred to as analytical coding (Strauss, 2015; Thornberg & Charmez, 2014). Analytical coding goes beyond descriptive coding; it comes from evaluation and consideration of meaning (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). During this process, reoccurring patterns are to be examined, and reoccurring trends to be analyzed.

According to Merriam and Tisdell, the coding must be directly tied to the research's purpose, the framework's lens. According to Merriam and Tisdell, the coding must be directly

connected to the research's purpose; the framework's lens, which is grounded theory, must be used to analyze the data (2016). The coding of data focused on patterns that emerge (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). After carefully using the processes of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to analyze the data. I analyzed data for main themes that emerged, made specific sub-categories are logical for the central theme. The constant comparative method was used with open coding. The researcher's bias should be reflected upon every step in this study.

The second coding stage was to look for similar codes to develop themes. The third set of interviews was coded and analyzed using the same method for the first and second-round interviews. NVIVO computer software has been used to code the data and the text related to the coding. Participant responses were coded with one word-initially. The codes were grouped into categories. The Themes were compared to the research questions, and emergent themes started to develop.

Categorization

After each interview, data were coded using categories and main themes; I analyzed the interviews across the other participant interviews for commonalities. Common themes and overlap of participant answers were explored. Categories come from codes that came from one or more sources. The sources include me, participants outside the study that parallels the current research, and research with the same grounded theory framework. The categories were aligned to the research study questions, relevant to the research, restricted that the data only fits into one category, and sensitive to the study's context.

The codes were classified into categories; the categories were grouped into themes. NVIVO qualitative software was used to create categories and arrange codes under each category. The software program calculated how many comments were under each category.

Themes emerged based on the categories and research questions. The themes derived from the research questions were self-efficacy, Job Satisfaction, Retention in the Field, and Recommendations for VAM alternatives. Some themes unexpectantly emerged through this process. The unexpected emergence of themes was: Distrust for Leadership, Subjective Evaluations, Teachers Understanding of Value-Added Measurements, and Alternative Teacher Certification, and Student Dynamics.

Data Assemblage

Initially, there were 56 categories coded. The goal was to analyze the data further to narrow down the results to 25 categories. After the themes and the categories were established, the specific participant's comments in each area matched the appropriate topic. I used multiple poster boards with color coding for each of the four participants and large sticky tabs for the comments. I used these boards to analyze the data. This method was a visual way to analyze and synthesize categories and themes.

Re-coding

After re-reading the research questions, the categories were re-analyzed to determine any overlap. Some categories were combined after they were re-analyzed. Some codes made more sense in other places and moved to new categories. I moved some of the comments to other areas where they made the most sense. The final total of categories was twenty-five.

Final Analysis

After coding the data, the next step was to analyze the data. I re-read the research questions, analyzed the categories, and categorized the data based on the research questions. A few comments were moved to an emerging theme category. See Figure 1 for the process flow

used with the constant comparative method. The figure shows the process of open coding, axial coding, and selective code processes. The researcher's analysis and interpretation for synthesis, analysis, and development of categories and themes to address the research questions (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Please refer to Figure 1 for clarity in how the coding process was used in this research analysis.

Data Coding and Analysis Process

I constructed codes at the time the transcript was read. My comments and notes were recorded. Observations and queries were notated in the margins. The data was coded with open coding or axial coding, referred to as analytical coding (Strauss, 2015.; Thornberg & Charmez, 2014). Analytical coding goes beyond descriptive coding; it comes from evaluation and consideration of meaning (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). During this process, reoccurring patterns were examined, and trends were analyzed.

According to Merriam and Tisdell, the coding must be directly tied to the research's purpose; the framework's lens, which is grounded theory, must be used to analyze the data (2016). The coding of data focused on patterns that emerge (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Data analysis began with open coding, axial coding, and selective coding were used to analyze the data. I analyzed data for main themes that emerged, making specific sub-categories logical for the central theme—the constant comparative method used with open coding. The researcher's bias should be reflected upon every step in this study.

After each interview, data were coded using categories and main themes; I analyzed the interviews across the other participant interviews for commonalities. Common themes and overlap of participant answers were explored. Categories come from codes that came from one or more sources. The sources include me, participants outside the study that parallels the current

research, and research with the same grounded theory framework. The categories were aligned

to the research study questions, relevant to the research, restricted that the data only fits into one

category, and sensitive to the study's context.

The categories were limited to 25-30 categories and narrowed down through intensive

data analysis. The comprehensive analysis examined and identified the number of people who

share the same category or theme (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). "A descriptive narrative allowed the

participants to explain what I was thinking and develop theories (Merriam & Tisdell., p 215)."

The descriptive narrative requires me to think about the data and develop a theory. The

descriptive narrative explains the relationship of the data to social situations.

I used relationship charts to show the overlap and interrelationships between participants'

categories and themes. Each story was treated as a whole, and the parts have interpreted the

relationship. The research analysis is complete, with the researchers having a minimum of

enlightening data and unable to assign new categories. This strategy is one way to ensure

reliability in the study. Please refer to Figure 1 for the constant comparative analysis process I

used to analyze the data.

Figure 1

Constant Comparative Analysis
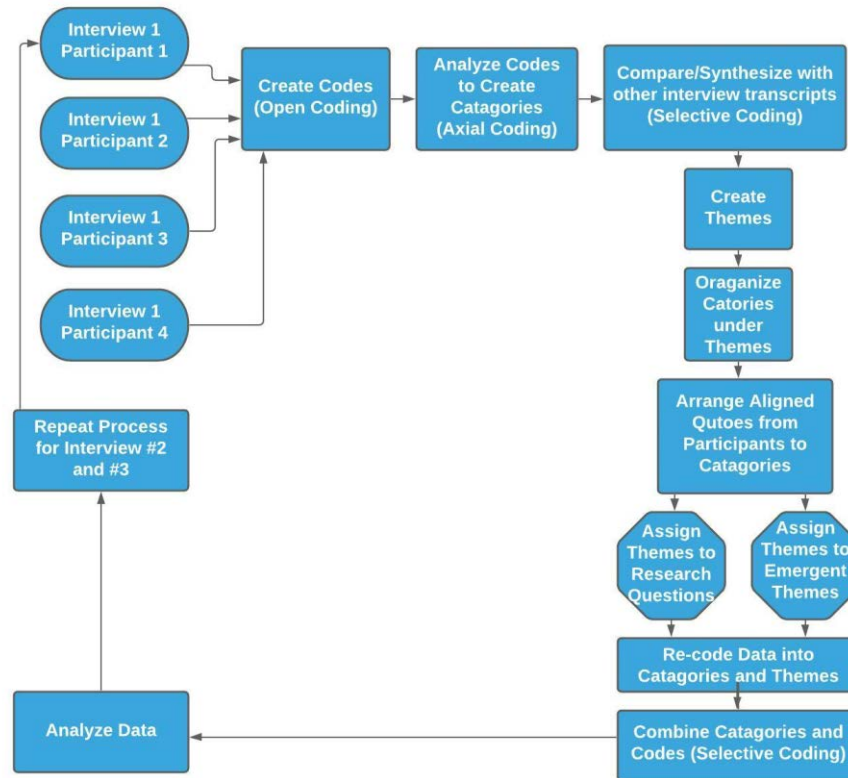
Note. Figure 1 is the breakdown of the process of the constant comparative method used to analyze the data.

Chapter Summary

The interpretive paradigm served as the framework for this study. The interpretive paradigm deals with understanding the world from subjective experiences from participants. The research study aimed to seek meaning versus measurement of this paradigm.

This study's methodology included inductive and deductive data analysis (Merriam & Tisdale, 2006). Pseudonyms and descriptive information were associated with each interview transcript.

Data analysis was constructed as the transcript was read and coded into categories; comment notes were recorded. Observations and queries were notated in the margins. The data was coded with open, axial, and selective coding.

I interviewed the four participants who teach the same target population of low-achieving students. The same teachers are assigned a VAM score for their students and teach low-achieving students.

This study aimed to determine how teachers who teach traditionally low achieving students are impacted by directly having a VAM score. The teachers shared their personal experiences, and the data were analyzed inductively and deductively. The lens through which this study was conducted was grounded theory; the research questions drove the investigation. The reporting used the descriptive methodology to give detailed descriptions of the teachers in the study.

Chapter 4: Results

The intention of this study was twofold. The first goal was to identify teachers'

perceptions of how VAM scores affected the psychological constructs, including their self-

efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention in the teaching profession. The second goal was to ask

teachers to give their professional recommendations for alternative student growth measures

which are valid, reliable, and equitable for all teachers. Recommendations are meant to provide

teachers' bargaining units (Teachers' Unions) valid research to present at teacher evaluation

negotiations with the districts. The goal is to bring the fact that Since 2017, The State of Florida

no longer required VAM scores in teacher evaluations.

Background of Study

Before I collected the data, each participant signed an informed consent letter; after they

gave consent, I gave them a thank you letter and a synopsis of my doctoral research project. I

informed each participant that I would record their interviews through Zoom meetings. The

recording would be transcribed word for word. The transcript would be sent back to them for

member checking to ensure they were accurate and represented what they said. Nothing would

be published until the participants approved it.

I used pseudonyms, and the districts and schools were not identified to protect

confidentiality. The participants were asked to choose their pseudonyms to protect their

identities. All measures were put in place to protect the teachers who participated in the study.

Throughout the three interviews, I started documenting the teachers' journeys in

education, and through the interview process, I narrowed the focus to my research questions. I

also asked demographic questions, subject areas taught, and student populations they served to

get the full story of their journeys.

After each interview, I allowed the participants to share anything they felt was relevant to the research questions or their experiences and perceptions. The interviews were designed to be semi-structured. The semi-structured interviews enabled the participants to share their deep feelings about their perceptions.

Participants

Dawn

Dawn is a 46-year-old female teacher who has been teaching for four years. She started her career later in life after raising three children. Her two sons graduated high school in 2021 and went into the military. Her youngest child is currently in middle school. Dawn supplements her income by working as a contractor for building websites and graphic design.

Her master's degree is in Environmental Science, and she completed the alternative teacher certification program. Dawn has been employed at the same school all four years. She has been assigned to teach different subjects every year. Dawn reported that she had to fight to teach AP students. Dawn says that her working relationship with her colleagues is strained.

Dawn has concerns that her department's lack of teamwork and support systems has led her to feel disconnected from the school. Last year, she felt she might need to find another school to find a more conducive climate for collaboration and teamwork. Her long-term goal is to teach college-level students in high school AP classes and possibly teach college one day at the university level.

Coach

Coach is a 26-year-old female teacher who has been teaching for four years. She started out wanting to become a veterinarian. She took many science courses and fell in love with science. She decided she would like to teach science. Her journey started as an environmental

educator in North Carolina at a Christian Science camp with elementary and middle school students. She had an excellent experience teaching, and this experience cemented that she wanted to become a science teacher. She moved back to Florida with a degree in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation from the University of Florida.

Coach applied for jobs in education but was told she would need classroom experience. So, she started as an assistant for Emotionally Behaviorally Disturbed students (EBD) in Exceptional Student Education (ESE) elementary class. Coach decided she did not want to work with elementary students; however, she learned that structure is fundamental in classroom management. The experience as an Exceptional Student Education (ESE) assistant helped her decide she wanted to work with high school students.

Coach was interviewed by a principal who was willing to take a chance on her because of her degree. The principal told her that she thought Coach would be a good fit for an Environmental Science Inclusion position. Inclusion classes have all ESES students and no mainstream students in the class. Her ESE background as an ESE assistant helped her understand the structure and the student population. She finished her teaching certification credentials through a local college alternative certification program.

Andrew

Andrew is a 64-year-old male teacher. Andrew has been in teaching for 22 years. He started in a rural community, then a beach community, then an inner-city, and finally the last 12 years at another school with changing dynamics. The population of students began as a middle to upper-class socioeconomic status. The dynamics changed over the years with neighborhoods building section 8 housing for low-income families. More one-parent families moved into the section 8 housing and a higher number of single-parent families.

Andrew started his teaching career aspiring to teach higher-level physics. He only taught one year in Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Physics in his current school, then standard physics and math for college readiness. Andrew feels he can help the lower quartile students (low achieving) in math for college readiness to pass the math exam required for graduation.

Now he feels like he is pigeonholed into teaching this class, and he cannot reach his goal to teach subject matter, which is has a passion for teaching Research supports his feeling of anonymity (Lecioni, 2007). Anonymity is defined that no matter what the teacher does, the administration does not feel like the administration even notices him.

Over the past 12 years, Andrew has encountered struggles with leadership. He did not receive an effective or highly effective evaluation for the first eight years. He was placed on a Professional Development Plan by his administrator. The administration never developed a formalized plan.

Teachers were eligible to receive the Best and Brightest Money if they received a highly effective evaluation and scored a minimum required score on the SAT they took in high school. Not receiving a highly effective evaluation cost him $7,000 bonuses for many years. Three years ago, Andrew received his first highly effective evaluation, and he was finally able to receive the bonus.

Andrew has a bachelor's degree in Biology from Mercer University, and he took his alternative teacher certification at Carson-Newman University in Tennessee. He is a father of a non-verbal autistic son who is 14 years old. Andrew reports chronically feeling tired, negative, and exhausted. Andrew feels like everything he does to help students succeed is not recognized

by the administration. This negative emotion and sense of hopelessness are directly aligned with negative life satisfaction (Caprara et al., 2001).

Flint

Flint is a 55-year-old female who is in her fourth year of teaching. Flint started as a hairdresser. Flint went back to school to pursue horticulture, lawn maintenance, and landscaping. Her ultimate dream goal in life was to become a master gardener. After a significant accident, she could not physically continue to follow her dream. She spoke to her professors, and they recommended that she consider teaching since she loves science. Flint's bachelor's degree is in Business, her master's degree is in science. She took the Middle Grades Science Exam as recommended by a certification specialist. The specialist told her that she could get a job anywhere due to the shortage of teachers with the Middle Grades Certification. During this time, she worked on her master's degree in Science Education and completed her Educator Preparation Institute (EPI) program through her district for alternative teacher certification.

Flint's first teaching high school Biology experience was challenging for her to excel in the position. Due to lack of support by the school or district, she said the following:

I was overwhelmed. The school gave me a mentor. He told me you would write standards on the board, objectives, and write two other words. You can fill them out as you lesson plan. Over here, you can do a word wall. I had no idea what a word wall was.

Flint's administrator arranged for her to watch a few other teachers teach in hopes that she would pick up some best teaching practices. Biology is a high-pressure position with VAM scores and school grades. Just before Christmas break, she was let go by the administration. The

administration made it a resignation rather than a termination when Flint agreed to sign the paperwork.

Flint sought work over the holidays. She and was hired in a position of a co-teacher. As a co-teacher, she was embraced by an assistant principal. She reported that the assistant principal "took her under her wing and taught me how to plan."

According to Flint, co-teaching roles were not clearly defined by the administration. and they "tended to step on each other's toes." She felt a lack of support in this position. On May 28th, she was called into the principal's office and was informed she would not be rehired due to budget cuts. She contacted the union representative, and her search revealed she was let go because of her performance. She worked on her master's degree in Science Education and completed her Educator Preparation Institute (EPI) program through her district.

The following year she was hired at the high school from which she graduated." It was a specialized school, so I thought I would have higher-level students." She was teaching Biology and had a rough start to the school year. Out of 150 students, only five students scored level 3 (on grade level) and above in reading and math scores. Levels 1 and 2 students (below grade level) are not considered to have mastered the skills and standards for graduation, and this comprised the other 145 students she taught.

According to Flint ", She (the Vice Principal who took her under her wing) focused only on the positives." The other administrators she worked for always, according to Flint, "tore me up." The new Vise Principal recognized that she had all the low-level students. She provided opportunities for brainstorming and problem-solving. "COVID happened, and I did not get EOC scores that year. I was hired back the next year".

VAM Impact on Self-Efficacy

The teachers had multiple impacts on the perception of VAM scores on their self-efficacy. The administration used VAM scores to give leadership roles and favor teachers whose students scored high on exams that directly impacted VAM scores and school grades. Some felt that they had no control over the scores and found other ways to measure their success in the classroom so that psychologically they could continue to feel like they had positive self-efficacy. One of the participants explained a lack of self-confidence as a means to blame herself and a history of interactions with administrators who dragged their sense of self-efficacy down to an all-time low. The data indicated that leadership had more of an impact on the teachers' sense of self-efficacy.

The teachers communicated some discouraging factors when they felt that the leadership favors specific teachers. Dawn stated that "I see accolades being given to the favorites." "When administrators visit the school, they want to see the star, science classes. They do not visit mine." "It makes me feel like I am not doing a good job." This experience reduced me to feel like "I am a warm body filling a spot, I feel I am qualified, and I guess my scores are not what the administration wants them to be." The favorites are those teachers whose high student scores, in turn, translate into high VAM scores for teacher evaluators. The feeling that Dawn was experiencing were tied into feeling like she was autonomous (Lecioni, 2007).

Flint stated:

In my first year, I had no confidence in myself. I kept blaming myself even though people around me were like I had to share it. I encountered administrators who tore me down. No matter what I tried, it was not enough. If I thought I made a good test, the administrator would tell me everything wrong with the test. The threat of poor evaluation due to low student test scores was always hanging over my head.

Andrew felt like "you have literally no power to change how they affect you (administration). You either deal with it or leave." Andrew reported that stress was caused by not having control over evaluations, and he felt that he suffered medical conditions in response to the pressure. He is the sole supporter of his family and did not have any other options but to keep reporting to work to do the best he could do.

Coach felt that her self-efficacy comes in small steps with her students making progress, considering their physical and mental challenges. "Some of my kids have memory issues. They can remember information verbally. Not because they do not know the material, but they freak out when they have to read." Their reading level is at a fifth-grade level but know the material orally versus written." Coach's validation of self-efficacy by student engagement is substantiated by previous research conducted by Tschannen and Hoy (2001).

Figure 2

The Three Themes of Perception of Self-Efficacy
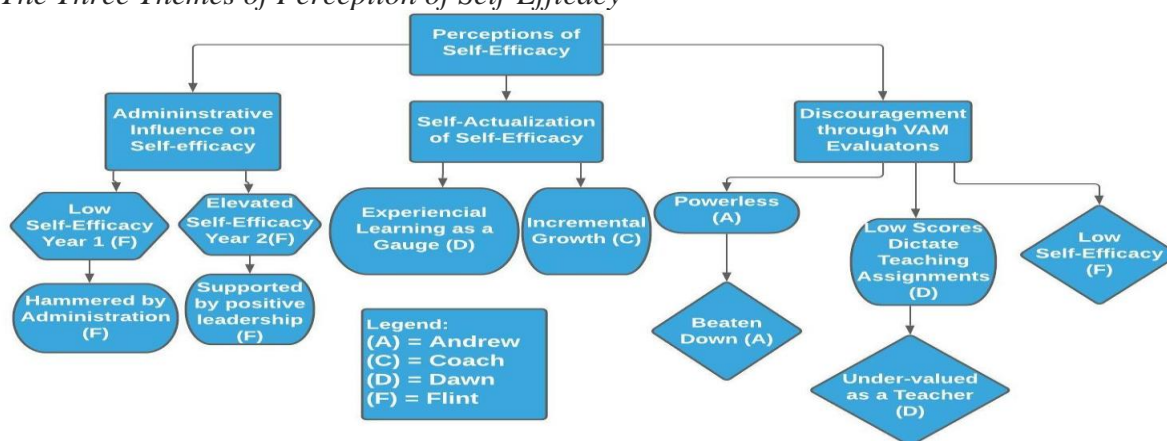
Note. Figure 2 illustrates the three main themes and subcategories of the self-efficacy data.

VAM Impact on Job Satisfaction

Perceptions of job satisfaction were broken down into multiple themes, which are as follows: positive and negative aspects, frustrations, goals to make the workplace better, and job-satisfaction requirements for each participant. Some of the themes were shared by all the participants, and some only held others

All four candidates felt that time off was a positive factor in teaching. Dawn stated that "Recuperation in the summer, school hours are great, and Christmas and Thanksgiving break allows me to spend precious time with my children. As a single mom, I really like this work schedule". This finding amounted to the same sentiment about time off for the other three candidates.

With COVID and so many people losing their jobs, education was one of the safer professions to be employed and keep your job. Andrew said, "The fact that I was able to keep my job during the recession. I did not care about my VAM scores because I was one of the fortunate people who remain employed."

Job satisfaction is also associated with teaching the subjects that the teacher has a passion in their heart to teach. Dawn states that if she can teach AP classes, she will stay teaching in the high school arena. Andrew was passionate about teaching higher-level physics, but his VAM scores were too low and were never allowed to teach higher-level physics after the first year.

Flint was placed teaching Environmental Science next year in hopes to teach her passion for Biology the following year. Environmental science does not have a required end-of-course exam required for graduation as Biology does. Coach is very vested in a positive attitude and mental health concerns for students, which she feels contributes to her job satisfaction.

Coach is passionate about her subject matter and the students she prefers to teach. If the teachers were not allowed to teach their chosen subject, they saw the administration as demoting them in their jobs. The teachers feel that the student scores were driving some of the administrators' decisions. It was a common theme that the teachers felt ineffective in the class they taught because they were demoted student scores on tests.

The teacher salary has a negative impact on job satisfaction. Coach has to work two jobs to pay her bills. She is single and cannot make it on one salary only. Andrew is the sole supporter of his family, and he struggles with making ends meet. He has a special needs child that requires his undivided attention during the summer, and he cannot get a supplemental job. If Andrew were in a different situation, he would have found a second job.

Andrew cannot afford to put his wife and child on his insurance policy since the premium is so high, and he could not afford his bills without that money in his check. He could not support his family's basic needs of housing and food.

Dawn supplements her income by doing online graphic design and web building. Flint increases her income by driving for Instacart and working in grocery stores during the summer. All four participants do not feel the salary is enough to survive and supplement their income. The teachers all appreciate the time off work that teaching allows them to spend with their families; however, the salary is negative for their job satisfaction. The teachers equated job satisfaction with teaching the classes they love to teach.

Figure 3

VAM Impact on Job Satisfaction
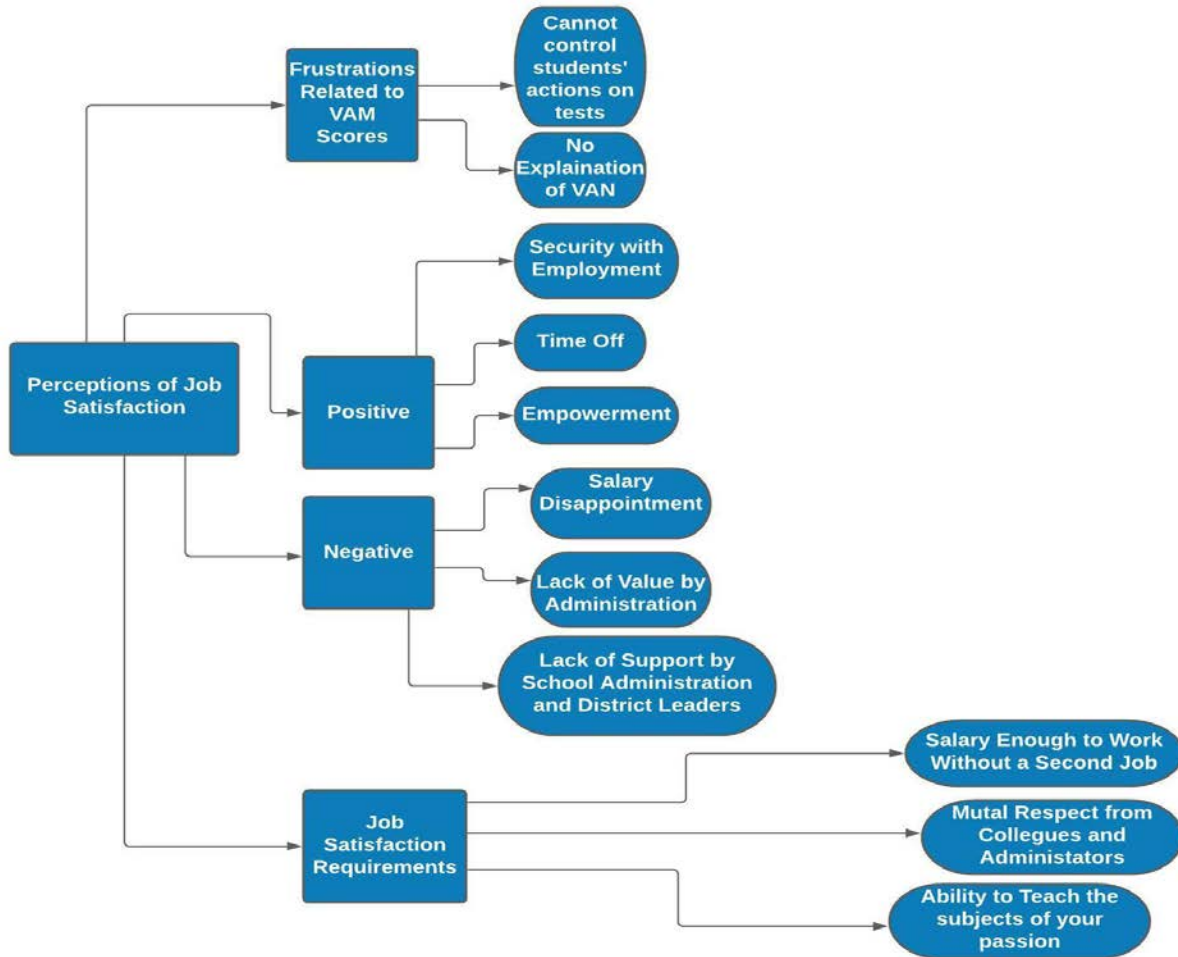
Note. Figure 3 represents the breakdown of the data collected about Perceptions of Job

Satisfaction.

VAM Impact Retention in the Field

Dawn stated reasons to leave the profession. "Last year, I started to look for other

schools because of the climate here. I do not feel a sense of belonging with my co-workers".

The climate was more of a reason to leave the school, but not the profession.

Some of the coping mechanisms of the teachers emerged in future goals to move on to their future career goals. Dawn would like to teach higher-level classes or college courses to challenge her mind further. She does not want to deal with the misbehaviors and feels that the higher-level students or college students will not present those distractions. She refers to her own educational experience, and students were respectful of teachers and did as they were required to do. Students were focused on their education and more serious about their education.

Flint feels she must work in education for at least ten years to receive the federal student loan forgiveness of her student loans total over $80,000. She used some of the money to live and some for education. So, it is a financial decision to get out of debt for her.

Andrew feels that the stress and family concerns are too much for him to stay in education much longer. Andrew has the unsettling feeling that he is just going to a job and not appreciated for his efforts. Over the last three years, the administration team has moved his classroom further away from the main building. He equates this with the administrations' lack of caring for what he does in the classroom.

Coach does not feel VAM scores will hinder her from staying in the educational profession. She is a younger teacher and feels she will be okay if teachers have some choices, liberties, and voices. One of the liberties she discussed is that there is no dress code for teachers in schools. Coach feels that the voice of the teachers is through the union bargaining unit team with the district.

The reasons stated by the teachers to leave the field of education within the four teachers are experiences with negative leadership, to pursue other educational goals; the impact of VAM scores did not seem to be a significant aspect in the decision to stay or leave the field of

education. All four teachers give other reasons for considering leaving their position as a

teacher. Retention in the field did not seem to be impacted by VAM scores directly.

Figure 4

Perceptions of Retention in the Field
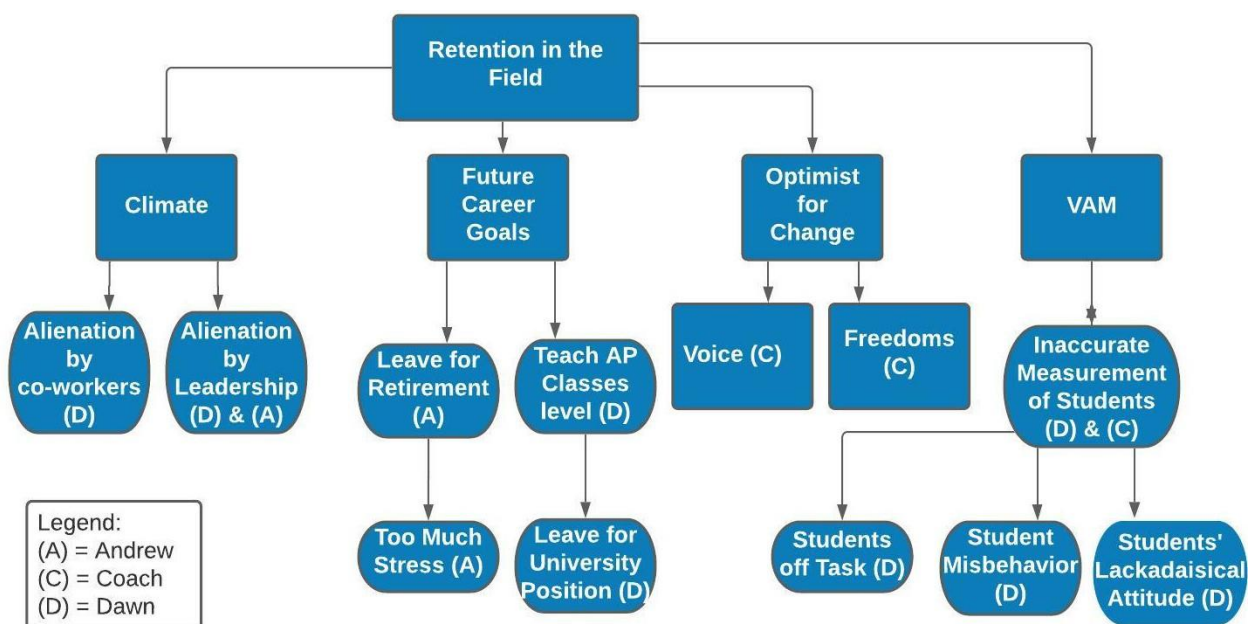
Note. Figure 3 reflects the four categories and themes that support them.

Recommendations for Alternative Student Growth Measurements

After reviewing sixty Professional Evaluation Plans out of 67 Florida School Districts

available online, fifty-six districts are still using VAM or some form of a combined VAM score

for teacher evaluations. All the teachers agreed that a baseline assessment should be aligned

with what they teach their students. There was distrust for a district-made assessment. And they

all advocated that teachers and stakeholders should be involved in the development process.

All four teachers felt that having a baseline assessment should be administered at the

beginning of the year. All four participants preferred teacher-made assessments. That way, the

teachers could assess what they are teaching specifically to the students they are teaching.

All four candidates did not favor District-made assessments. The district-made assessments are not able to be viewed by all teachers. Dawn felt that favoritism was given unfairly to one teacher who was allowed to view the assessment, and no other teachers were allowed to view it. Only one teacher in the science department was allowed to view the test at the district level. That gave one teacher an advantage over his fellow teachers to prepare his students.

The teachers are given standards to teach but are not privileged to see the test. So, the teachers in this study are blindly teaching to standards. The teachers do not know what area to focus on with their students but for other reasons. Coach felt it was like "Teaching blindly." Andrew said it was "like teaching in the dark."

All the teachers felt that a fair, transparent assessment should be developed, reevaluated regularly, and adjusted as necessary. The suggestions were to look at the four districts that were not using VAM and see what they are doing and is a fair measurement of student growth attached to teachers' impact on students.

Emerging Themes

Through data analysis, three predominant themes emerged out of the data collected. The themes were as follows: Alternative Teacher Certification support systems in schools, Distrust for District and School Leadership, and Misplaced Students in classes. All four teachers shared these four themes in the study. Each participant was affected by the four themes at some point and time in the teachers' careers.

Alternative Teacher Certification

The first emergent theme that developed was Alternative Teacher Certification programs. All four of the participants began teaching as alternative education teachers. They did

not graduate from an educational program and did not complete an internship that a teacher for a semester supervised. The participants completed an educator certification program while they were teaching.

Coach was the only teacher who worked in the classroom for a year as an ESE assistant before teaching. She was told by hiring principals in a few interviews for teaching positions that she had no classroom experience. The one principal she interviewed with suggested an ESE assistant position. Coach experienced classroom strategies and techniques in action.

She reported that it was tough to work in her elementary environment. She was hit by students daily. She learned that "structure is a fundamental key element in the classroom setting, or everything falls apart." "The classrooms around us did not. The structure is everything."

Flint said:

I got my temporary certification because I was a career change teacher. I was given a key, and this is your room. It was a vast blank classroom. I was just like, okay. What do I do next? I was lost. I felt that there was very little support for a new teacher. I completed my IP Program while I was teaching. I learned how to lesson plan a little too late in the year.

Andrew completed his alternative certification program while employed teaching through a university program. He shared his struggles trying to teach with very little support from the district and school. Andrew expressed that he would be better equipped if Andrew knew how to lesson plan before he began teaching.

Distrust of Leadership

I broke down the theme of Distrust for Leadership into three subcategories. The sub-categories were favoritism by leadership, lack of follow-through, and punitive class assignments based on student performance scores. The sub-categories were a substantial factor in the teachers' lives.

Favoritism by the administration was a point of contention for both Coach and Andrew. They both felt that their peers received advantages based on student scores. Dawn felt she was looked down upon by the administration because of her students' low-test scores. She also felt that teachers who had higher-scoring students were put in leadership positions, such as department heads, and afforded opportunities to view the exams when the rest of the teachers were not allowed to view them. This appearance of favoritism has created distrust for leadership.

All four candidates expressed an administrative lack of follow-through. The teachers all had different scenarios, but the common theme was the lack of follow-up by their administrator. The lack of follow-through by the administration had left them all with less job satisfaction and self-efficacy when they were going through the evaluation process.

Coach did not see her administrator in her classroom at all after the first nine weeks. She was observed for 20 minutes for her formal evaluation. She went for a brief follow-up conference to sign and date forms. She felt it was not essential, and the administrator did not spend any time with her. She felt the process was just a "Check off" for the administrator to complete.

Dawn experienced one administrator who asked her to critically self-reflect on her teaching performance and input the evaluation process. The following year's evaluation was totally different. Dawn's next administrator did not ask for input. She went by what the previous

evaluation said and did not garner information from Dawn. She felt the process was not a valid indicator of her performance.

Andrew felt a previous administrator unfairly targeted him. He felt it was a personal versus a professional issue. He was put on a Professional Development Plan, and there was never a plan to assess if he was making progress. He felt nothing he did would help him without a valid measurement instrument. No measurable goals were provided to judge if he was making strides in the positive direction.

Flint endured a tough start to a career in teaching. She was a brand-new teacher who was placed on a Professional Development Plan before she had her formal classroom evaluation. She was not given feedback at her first job and subsequently was released from her position before Christmas break. This situation instilled a distrust for leadership until she met one administrator who changed her belief system and really helped her understand how to teach students effectively.

The teachers shared the feeling of punitive teaching placements in classes for the following year. Andrew felt he was "pigeonholed into teaching remedial math to students who came into his class with a fifth or sixth-grade math level." He thought it was a direct correlation to unfair evaluations and leadership.

Dawn never knew how her students scored at the end of the year. If she was assigned to teach in Environmental Science, she felt demoted. Dawn felt her scores must have been okay if she was allowed to teach higher-level students. It was a guessing game with no input of what she would teach the following year. Dawn's administrator told her class assignment for the following year before the summer break. She spent all summer planning her classes. When Dawn arrived for pre-planning, she was told she was no longer teaching the promised classes. She felt that all her work was for nothing, and she felt distrust for her leadership.

Flint was not allowed to teach Biology again since that class has a required end-of-course exam course for graduation and counts heavily for school grades. She was assigned to teach Environmental Science, where she felt as if the administrator was saying, you will do less harm to our school this way.

All the scenarios have a common thread which led to mistrust of administrators and evaluations. Each of the teachers felt signaled out and isolated. This distrust for leadership left them feeling empty and less job satisfaction and self-efficacy in their classroom.

Students Misplaced in Classes

Students have been assigned to the classes that they did not qualify to enter. Parent requests for exceptions take precedence over teacher recommendations. Dawn knew that some of her students were below reading and math levels for the class. So, standardized testing would be a challenge. Those misplaced students would directly impact her VAM scores. Administrative scheduling decisions put her at a disadvantage for her evaluation VAM scores.

. Coach reported that last year, at the end of the first semester, all her higher-level pupils were removed from her class, and lower-level students were placed in her class. Andrew feels he is stacked with lower-level students and will never get out of teaching this population of students if he stays at his school. They both thought it was like the deck of cards was stacked against them. Dawn knew she also had misplaced students in honors classes that did not have the pre-requisites to take the course.

Andrew had a similar situation to Dawn's. One year he taught Geometry his recount of the concern regarding VAM scores is as follows:

over one-third of my students did not pass Algebra 1 the prior year. Well, you wind up teaching Algebra 1 first in the school year. That year my Geometry End-of-Course

Exam (EOC) results were only 50% passing rate. If we took out the kids that did not

pass Algebra I, the pass rate went up to 77.7%. However, the administration did not

care, and the formula for VAM could not be locally controlled. Forty-seven students

were assigned to my Geometry class that did not pass the Algebra EOC. The following

year they tested the Algebra EOC. Those 47 students assigned to me in Geometry the

previous year all passed Algebra I exam the following year. Students are required to pass

this exam for graduation purposes. The administration gave me no credit for those

students passing the Algebra I EOC.

Flint also encountered classes in her current school. Out of 150 students, only five were

at grade level or above in math and reading levels. Flint felt that the cards were stacked against

her. Dawn knew her VAM scores would negatively reflect her misplaced students. She talked to

her administrator and was told that next year would be different. The low-achieving students

would be equally distributed amongst teachers. She is optimistic that this will happen. That is

challenging for scheduling and administration to achieve a high school schedule with so many

components and factors.

Summary

All four teachers started as alternative certification teachers. They all reported feeling

comfortable with their subject matter but not knowing how to lesson plan or manage a

classroom until after they began their employment in education. The significant consensus was

that they wish they would have been better prepared to walk into the classroom teacher role.

The teachers felt at a disadvantage in most of their evaluations. The consensus was that

the evaluating administrator could make or break a teacher. Some administrators took the

evaluation process as another task; however, others used it for punitive measures against teachers.

A general theme was distrust of both district and school-based leadership. Favoritism was a common thread in this emerging theme. Only one teacher in the school was allowed to view the district-created endo of course exam; who was also friends outside of work with the district administrator who created the exam. No other teachers could view the test, so they felt they were teaching blindly. School-based leadership showed favoritism to specific teachers, and those teachers got all the accolades and special privileges to serve in leadership roles for their departments.

A common problem for teachers was that the underachieving students were not equally distributed. Students were also misplaced in classes without the pre-requisite requirements. The teachers were held accountable for student achievement with a high population of students below grade level in math and reading. The teachers viewed it as a disadvantage towards their VAM evaluation scores.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Recommendations

Discussion

After careful analysis of the data, some themes emerged, and some evolved in response to the research questions. The discussion section includes the teachers' understanding of VAM scores and VAM's impact on the three psychological constructs, including job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and retention in the field. The recommendations section contains future research recommendations, policy implications, and implications for practice.

Teachers' Understanding of VAM

Andrew seemed to have the most experience with the VAM score. Andrew's understanding is as follows:

When the district rolled it out, the teachers were told it was a value-added measurement. What did you add to the students' growth? If they do not have a way to test your students directly, you are assigned a generic one based on what the school is doing. The value-added system has a businessman trying to calculate the worth of teacher contributions to student growth on standardized tests. It is like trying to evaluate teachers by the number of widgets they produce. Andrew's perception was that teachers do not get to select the materials they use or the level of student they teach. It was a way of trying to corporatize schools, make them like a business.

Andrew's concern is, "if you do nothing, you will get the same score as those who work hard every day. It is like riding on the coattails of those doing their job. It is unethical and immoral to evaluate a teacher on something they have no control over."

Dawn had no idea how her scores were calculated, and it was never explained to her. Dawn stated, "I feel like they expect us to control them (Students) like robots. We can type a

formula into a computer, and it makes the student act a certain way when we had no control over it." Dawn reported that she never received information on her End of Course (EOC) scores, and she had no clue how VAM scores were calculated.

Dawn felt like VAM scores and student achievement scores were used to decide teacher placements in specific courses with high-stakes tests to teach the following year. She felt demoted because her scores must not have been high enough. Favoritism then came into play with the teachers who had high student achievement results, and they were put into leadership roles such as department chair. The position is not rotated to give others a chance for leadership roles. Coach had no idea how the VAM scores were calculated. Coach stated the following:

It pops up on my evaluation. I have had no one explain it to me or its purpose. I think it is based on English language skills. I teach environmental science, but my VAM score comes from English language skills.

Flint does not know how VAM is calculated. She has taught below grade-level students. The following was her understanding of VAM:

I got lucky with Corona Virus Disease (COVID), or I would have been worried about my VAM score for my evaluation. My administrator told me that 25% improvement needed to be made by my students on the district-made assessment. It was not clear if all students were required to improve by 25% or 25% of my students needed to improve a level.

If a person can measure their progress, this contributes to greater job satisfaction and personal responsibility. "The key to establishing effective measures for a job lies in identifying those areas an employee can directly influence, and then ensuring that the specific measurements are connected to the person or people they are meant to serve" (Lencioni, 2007,

p236). The VAM scores are a statistical calculation of students' achievement scores. Teachers feel like they are not in control of the statistical calculation that makes up their VAM score. Teachers do not understand how the VAM statistical formula is calculated or a fair measurement of success (Pressley et al., 2018). The inability to measure success can ultimately lead to low job satisfaction and a higher job turnover rate (Carver-Thomas and Daly-Hammond, 2019).

One of the most significant findings of this study is that all four teachers did not understand how VAM was calculated or how they could control their scores on their evaluations. The teachers felt that it was part of their evaluation that they could not directly impact. Two teachers reported feeling "lucky" about their scores because of the Corona Virus and how the school went online half the year. VAM scores were not calculated for teacher evaluations.

However, all four teachers were willing to be accountable for student achievement as long as there were clear and concise objectives and goals to monitor their progress with their students. The four teachers wanted the opportunity to have an honest chance with transparency to impact their students' student achievement directly. Dawn said, "Tell me what to teach, give me autonomy and I will do my job and help my students rise to the occasion."

Coach said some of her students had had a traumatic brain injury, so she would like to use weekly verbal assessments to be an accurate indicator of student learning in her classroom. Andrew also felt that he could self-monitor his students' progress if he had measurable goals. Andrew also felt that one assessment was not enough to determine the impact on learning he has in his classroom. All four teachers want to support their students' achievements with a clearly defined set of measures. The teachers have no problem being held accountable for student

achievement in their evaluations, but they just want a fair shot to have their students accomplish the learning in their classrooms. The teachers do not feel that VAM scores give them a reasonable opportunity to provide students with an accurate indicator of success.

VAM impact on Job Satisfaction

Evaluations based on VAM scores have impacted two out of four teachers negatively. The other two do not measure their success by their evaluations but by their students' experiences and growth. Previous research indicates that teachers base their job satisfaction on their students.

All of the teachers in the study have had the fortitude to endure circumstances beyond their control. Their coping mechanism seems to immerse themselves in their students and do not worry about VAM scores since they all feel it is nothing they can control in their job. The most significant finding is that none of the teachers understood how VAM was calculated and had no control over it. The significant result was that job satisfaction was split between the teachers feeling that VAM impacted their job satisfaction and the leadership also played a more substantial role.

VAM Impact on Self-Efficacy

All four teachers seem to be resilient. They have all reported times where they felt they were not good enough for their administration to recognize their work. This theme appears to be transient and not consistently apparent. They each have had doubts over their self-efficacy, but this seems to be based on leadership rather than VAM scores on their evaluations.

Self-Efficacy seemed to grow over time with the alternative certification teachers in this study. As they became better prepared to be confident in their positions, their self-efficacy rose along the way. The self-efficacy was impacted more by administrations decisions and leadership

class assignments. There is a strong link between administration and self-efficacy rather than the VAM score impact on self-efficacy.

VAM Impact on Retention/Attrition

Math, science, and special education teachers are the population of teachers with the highest attrition rate in the teaching profession, according to (Carver-Thomas and Daly-Hammond, 2019). Increased job satisfaction and self-efficacy lead to longer teacher retention in the field. Andrew is the only participant who wants to leave the profession because of VAM scores and how his administration treats him. The other two teachers have obligations that require them to keep teaching. Flint has a large amount of student debt and plans on working. Coach is early in her career and feels that the positives outweigh the negatives, and she will stay in the profession if teachers have a voice. Dawn aspires to teach Advanced Placement students at the high school level or move on to a university teaching position in the future.

Three out of four participants have different motivations to stay in the field, VAM is frustrating, and they feel they cannot control their VAM scores. Still, the teachers are not considering leaving the field because of the impact of VAM on retention. The VAM score does not appear to be a significant factor in attrition for these four teachers.

Recommendations

Future research, policy, and practice are discussed in this section. This study was conducted since there was not much research about the impact of VAM scores on teachers and how they perceive their careers. This study initiates the research community to delve deeper into the topic and provides a basis for future research, policy, and practice.

Recommendations for Future Research

The implications for further research come from the emerging themes developed through analyzing the data. The four primary emerging themes are implications for future research on Evaluating Administrators, Distrust of Leadership, VAM, Alternative Measures to VAM, and how misplaced students could be equitably dispersed among teachers.

Due to the nature of qualitative research; however, it gives teachers a voice to tell their stories and how VAM scores impacted them. Qualitative studies explain the social context of a subjective data experience. The likelihood of my role in education may contribute to a type of bias in the analysis and interpretation of data.

The participants were math, special education, and science teachers with populations of traditionally low-scoring students. These three positions have the highest teacher attrition rate (Carver-Thomas and Daly-Hammond, 2019). This population of participants is teachers who receive a direct VAM score for their students. The recommendation for further research would be to conduct quantitative research across multiple schools and districts, which will give additional insight to find out if the findings can be generalized to larger populations.

1. After carefully analyzing the participants' transcripts, one substantial piece is missing in this research study. The role of the administrator as an evaluator would require further research to determine the connection between VAM scores, job satisfaction, and self-efficacy in the classroom.

2. The second recommendation for further research is alternative VAM measurement that is valid, reliable, and equitable for all teachers. A study of the few districts that have changed their plans to eliminate VAM scores from the teacher evaluations would be a target research study that may provide insight. The alternatives should be developed by teachers

working together to come up with valid instruments. Research conducted should be carried out with transparency.

3. Teacher retention rates should be studied in math, special education, and science teachers (Carver-Thomas and Daly-Hammond, 2019).

4. Future research should be conducted on scheduling students with teachers equitably. Spread out the higher achieving students and the lower-achieving students amongst teachers. This research could create a balance and equity amongst teachers and student achievement scores.

5. Further research on support systems for new teachers is recommended. Based on these teachers' comments and experiences, a common thread asked for more help at their initial teaching position.

Implications for Policy

Close et al. (2020) study best describes the following five steps for creating a comprehensive system for evaluating and supporting effective teaching. These five steps are complete criteria when state policymakers make legislation. The recommendations were based on findings from the analyses and survey information for lawmakers to develop educational legislation.

1. Take advantage of decreased federal control by formulating revised assessment policies informed by the viewpoints of as many stakeholders as feasible. Such informed revision can help remedy earlier weaknesses, promote effective implementation, stress correct interpretation, and yield formative information. (p. 4)

They are creating a body of stakeholders to help develop benefits and policies that can be implemented with transparency, validity, and equity for all teachers. This process yields a

higher thought process and gives the stakeholder a say in what will happen in their schools and careers (Close et al., 2020, p. 4).

2. Ensure that teacher evaluation systems rely on a balanced system of multiple measures without excessive weight assigned to anyone.

3. Emphasize data valuable as formative feedback in state systems, so that specific weaknesses in student learning can be identified, targeted, and used to inform teachers' professional development. (p. 4)

The keyword here is a formative assessment for identifying weaknesses in student learning; this, in turn, helps the educator specifically address the areas for student growth. Professional development is crucial to implementing change and closing achievement gaps for students. Teachers need the tools to best help their student's growth, and professional development is the key to success (Close et al., 2020, p. 4).

4. Mandate ongoing research and evaluation of state assessment systems and ensure adequate resources to support assessment.

5. Set goals for reducing proficiency gaps and outline procedures for developing strategies to reduce gaps once identified effectively. Finding which interventions work best to reduce proficiency gaps will take some experimentation. Have a procedure in place to develop these interventions. (p. 4)

When VAM was introduced in Florida, a professional development process was in place to educate teachers on the evaluation system. However, VAM scores are vague and misapplied to teacher evaluations and, professional developments need to be mindful of new teachers.

Once an assessment system is in place, it needs to be a living process. Leaders and stakeholders must look at the process regularly to determine the effectiveness of the strategies.

It is like the engineering process. You build a prototype (an educational approach); try it and see if it works for your intended purpose. If not, re-design and retry with your goal driving your analysis and investigation. This policy reform should be a fluid model targeting achievement gaps with obtainable student growth (Close et al., 2020, p. 4).

Implications for Practice

In addition to implications for policy, the findings of this research have implications for practice to inform teachers' unions to negotiate for teacher evaluations to use alternative measurements to VAM because they have been made optional for teacher evaluations since HB 7069 in 2017 (Florida Senate. Assemb, 2017). Examples of alternative measurements of student assessment can be similar to Illinois' 2015 evaluation plan.

> The teacher sets student learning goals of what a student should be able to do at the end
> of a specific time. The goal may include one big idea. A bid idea integrates multiple
> content standards and links units of instruction together. An assessment, evaluation, and
> scoring procedures support and measure the learning goal. Assessments may include but
> are not limited to authentic and performance-based assessments (e.g., portfolios,
> performances, lab activities, etc.).

> The state provides training for all teachers in this process and shares templates available

by subject and grade level. Illinois's plan allows teachers to select the assessment. Thus, giving more autonomy back to the teachers.

> The current four Florida school districts that have moved entirely away from using

VAM scores in teacher evaluations provide some insight into alternative measurements that have moved entirely away from using VAM scores in teacher evaluations give insight into alternative measurements of student growth currently in place. The four districts that have

moved away from using VAM scores as part of teacher evaluations are Lake County in 2018-2019, Manatee, Nassau, and Duval Counties in 2020-2021.

The four counties that moved away from using VAM scores selected the following evaluation process: Lake County Schools uses a combination of state assessments for core academic teachers, for example, the PERT, FSA, EOC's, and AP Exams. For students with disabilities, the teacher's evaluation score is based on the IEP goals. Elective teacher's student assessment is the FSA ELA, PERT ELA/Math, and PSAT/Math. All tests count 35% of the teacher evaluation formula. The Danielson Evaluation Model is being used for the observation part of the evaluation (Lake County School Board, 2020).

Manatee County is using the NGSSS. FSAA for core academics, AP uses ACT and PERT scores and SAT scores. Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses are assessed by Algebra I re-take, ACT Math, SAT Math, and PSAT math. CTE industry certifications are assessed on CAPE Industry Certification results. Manatee uses the Danielson Evaluation Model (School District of Manatee County, 2020).

Nassau County School District uses a combination of teacher-developed tests, Industry Certification Exam for CTE students, and dual enrollment examinations for student growth. Nassau County School District is using the Marzano Focused Teacher Evaluation Model. The Marzano Focused Teacher Evaluation's purpose is outlined in the Instructional Personnel Evaluation System. (School District of Nassau County, 2020)

According to Nassau County School district, 2020, the following describes the model they use for teacher evaluations:

This model is for teachers to increase their student learning gains year to year incrementally. It is designed to help teachers successfully implement the state content

standards, close the achievement gap for students, and support all students in achieving

mastery of the standards through classroom-based evidence.

Duval County Public Schools is the one district that does not specify what each subject area

teacher will be held accountable for student gains or growth. The teacher documents student

gains. Examples of the instruments the teaches can use include pre and post-assessments,

student portfolios, assessment classroom profile log/chart, student work samples, projects,

running records, standardized tests, criterion tests, and teacher-made tests.

Duval County Public School also uses the Danielson Evaluation Model. The Danielson

Model has four domains: planning and preparation, classroom environment, and instructional

and professional responsibilities. The evaluation covers 22 components and 76 elements

(Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Twenty-two districts use this instrument out of 60 that were

available online.

The implications for practice will directly impact teachers will no longer need to worry

about VAM scores in their evaluations. They will have clear and transparent methods of

gauging student growth which is one-third of their evaluation score. With clear goals

established that the teachers can directly impact; and give input into the assessment

development, this will create more positive self-efficacy and job satisfaction for teachers. They

are ultimately resulting in retention in the field of education longer.

Changing the VAM to a more authentic assessment of students may help teachers reduce

their stress levels. The four teachers in this study conveyed the stress associated with not

controlling the VAM score. The feeling of having control over a formula will empower the

teachers and create a better teaching and learning environment for students.

Chapter Summary

As far as the psychological factors are concerned, self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention in the field, it seems VAM has played a part in causing teachers stress. Still, they all felt that VAM scores were not something they could control over time. It was a formula that they did not understand or improve. The teachers seemed to create coping mechanisms to determine self-efficacy and alternative ways to achieve job satisfaction. The emerging theme that impacted all four teachers more than VAM scores in their evaluations was the role of the evaluating administrator and the leadership team that had a significant impact on their sense of self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

The four teachers were more than willing to be held accountable for student learning. They just wanted a transparent system for linking student achievement to their evaluations. They were not looking to avoid accountability; the teachers just wanted to know clear expectations through goals and objectives to adequately prepare their students with the knowledge they need to be successful.

There needs to be a transparent outcome to using alternative growth models in teacher evaluations that are fair, in control of the teachers, directly derived from the students they teach. Out of 60 districts in Florida, 56 use some form of VAM and or a hybrid model with different requirements for different teachers. Developing the measurements should involve the stakeholders and be a balanced system, not relying on one indicator of success but multiple.

The system should be a living system, meaning that it should be evaluated every year and adjusted to ensure authenticity, validity, and actual measurement of student growth and achievement. This factor should be something the teacher can directly control and have the ability to excel in delivering quality instruction to their students and be directly responsible for the student growth and achievement.

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MEMORANDUM

DATE:	May 18, 2021
TO:	Ms. Maureen Martin
VIA:	Dr. Linda Skrla Leadership, School Counseling & Sport Management
FROM:	Dr. Jennifer Wesely, Chairperson On behalf of the UNF Institutional Review Board
RE:	Declaration of Exempt Status for IRB#1536346-1 "Effects of the Value-Added Model (VAM) Component of Teacher Evaluation on Job Satisfaction, Efficacy and Retention: Perspectives of Secondary Teachers of Historically Low-Scoring Students"

UNF IRB Number: 1536346-1
Exemption Date: 05-18-2021
Processed on behalf of UNF's IRB EE-3.

Your above-referenced study was reviewed on behalf of the UNF Institutional Review Board and has been declared "Exempt" under category 2(iii). A "limited IRB review" was conducted to confirm the safeguards in place are sufficient to protect subjects' privacy and to maintain confidentiality of the data.

Please be advised that any subject complaints, unanticipated problems, or adverse events that occur are to be reported to the IRB as soon as practicable, but no later than 3 business days following the occurrence. Please use the Event Report Form to submit information about such events.

While the exempt status is effective for the life of the study, any substantive changes must be submitted to the IRB for prospective review. In some circumstances, changes to the protocol may result in alteration of the IRB review classification.

To submit an amendment to your exempt protocol, please complete an Amendment Request Document and upload it along with any updated materials affected by the changes via a new package in IRBNet. For additional guidance on submitting an amendment, please contact the IRB administrator.

Upon completion of this study, please submit a Closing Report Form as a new package in IRBNet. Please maintain copies of all research-related materials for a minimum of 3 years following study

closure. These records include the IRB-approved protocol, approval memo, questionnaires, survey instruments, consent forms, and all IRB correspondence.

Should you have questions regarding this determination, please contact the Research Integrity unit of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs by emailing IRB@unf.edu or calling (904) 620-2455.

UNF IRB Number: 1536346-1
Exemption Date: 05-18-2021
Processed on behalf of UNF's IRB ƐƐ-ꞵ.

Appendix B: Informed Consent Document

Hello, my name is Maureen Martin, and I am a doctoral student at the University of North Florida. I am conducting a research study on Effects of the Value-Added Model (VAM) Component of Teacher Evaluation on Job Satisfaction, Efficacy and Retention: Perspectives of Secondary Teachers of Historically Low-Scoring Students.

This study aims to give teachers of historically low-achieving students a voice to be heard and understood. To date, the VAM scores tied to teacher evaluations lacks research on teachers' job satisfaction and perception of self-efficacy and retention. So, the grounded theory drives the study to qualitative study to analyze the data collected through interviews. Themes will emerge from the data analysis. Legislators make laws that hold teachers accountable for students' test scores without considering the impact of teacher perceptions on self-efficacy and job satisfaction (S.B.,736). VAM scores are no longer legislatively mandated, but Florida continues to use VAM scores in teacher evaluations. This group of teachers needs to have a voice in legislation that could impact retention in the teaching profession.

The benefits of this study are twofold. The first is to give a voice to teachers of at-risk populations and their perception of job satisfaction, self-efficacy in their role as teachers, and retention. The second purpose is to find viable options for districts to use in teacher evaluations that accurately measure teacher impact on students learning in the classroom. This study will give teachers' unions scholarly research and data to bargain with Florida's school districts with options for linking student achievement to teacher evaluations. The latter is also the significance of the study. The finding of this study will give a voice to teachers and unions at the bargaining table for teacher evaluations with school districts that are still using the VAM scores for teachers' evaluations.

In this study, research will be conducted through three interviews. If you participate in my project, you will participate in three interviews. I expect that participation in this study will take about no longer than 3 hours total of your time. Your responses will be anonymous and confidential. Only the researcher will have access to your answers.

Although there are no direct benefits to or compensation for participating in this study, others may benefit from the information we learn from this study's results. Additionally, there are no foreseeable risks for taking part in this project. Participation is voluntary, and there are no penalties for deciding not to participate, skipping questions, or withdrawing your involvement. You may choose not to participate in this research without negatively impacting your relationship with your school administration.

If you have any questions or concerns about this project, please contact me. I will give you a copy of this form to keep for your records.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or if you would like to contact someone about a research-related injury, please contact the UNF Institutional Review board's chair by calling (904) 620-2498 or emailing irb@unf.edu. Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

Maureen Martin   Dr. Linda Skrla
Phone: Phone:
Email: Email: l.skrla@unf.edu

I _____(print name) attest that I am at least 18 years of age and agree to take part in this research study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C: Letter to Participant

Dear Participant,

I want to thank you for participating in my doctoral study at the University of North Florida. Participating in this study is strictly voluntary. If you choose to participate and change your mind, you may leave the study at any time throughout this process. The intent is not to harm anyone, and your identity will be protected. Participants will be identified with pseudonyms used in the publication of this study, and you will not be identifiable in any way. The Internal Review Board sets the research standards, and research participants' identities must be kept anonymous.

There will be a series of three interviews that will last no longer than 60 minutes. The interviews will either be conducted in person or via Zoom meeting. I will ask you questions about your teaching at-risk students and how VAM scores have played a part in your formal evaluation process. Each interview will be recorded and transcribed to keep the anonymity safe by having the researcher transcribe and code the information collected. I will then send you a reflection to ensure I have captured the information you convey during the interview process. You will need to make sure I have captured the essence of your interview, and let me know if I have missed anything.

This study is designed to answer four questions. How do secondary teachers of historically low-scoring populations view VAM evaluation's effects on their job satisfaction? How do teachers of secondary historically low-scoring populations of students view VAM evaluation's effects on their self-efficacy? How does teachers' perception of self-efficacy and job satisfaction contribute to teacher retention? What are some viable alternatives to using VAM scores in teacher evaluations that would represent teacher impact on student achievement in the

classroom; for recommendations in the teacher evaluation negotiations between the Florida school districts and the unions?

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call me at 904-343-8618 or email me at mamartin01@outlook.com. I would like to thank you for volunteering to participate in this research study from the bottom of my heart.

Sincerely,

Maureen Martin

Appendix D: Interview Instrument

Script for Interview Number one

This interview is designed to explore the teacher's history in education. I will ask prompting and probing questions to ascertain the professional experience of each teacher.

Question 1: Can you please share when you first decided to become a teacher with me?

    Prompts: Why did you want to become a teacher?

                What are some of the goals you set for yourself as a teacher?

                Are any of your family members teachers?

Question 2: Please share with me your experience in education?

    Prompts: How long have you been a teacher?

                What populations of students have you taught?

Question 3: Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience being a teacher?

    Prompts: What are you passionate about in education?

Question 4: Can you share with me any experiences you have had with the formal evaluation process?

Question 5: Is there any other thing related to your education experience you would like to share?

Script for Interview Number two

This interview focuses on VAM scores concerning the teacher's formal evaluation.

Question 1: Would you please share your understanding of how VAM scores with me?

      Prompts: How have VAM scores impacted you personally and or professionally?

                         Do you feel like it is an accurate indicator of what you do in your classroom?

                         Please share with me your evaluation status for the last few years.

                         Do you feel the scores of your evaluations are consistent?

Question 2: Are you directly teaching the population of students whose student achievement counts toward your evaluation?

Question 3: Do you know and understand how your evaluation score is calculated?

Question 4: Please tell me about your interaction with your evaluating administrator over the last few years.

Question 5: Is there anything else you would like to share regarding your experiences with your evaluations?

Script for Interview Number three

The third interview will focus on the research questions. The areas to collect data are self-efficacy, job satisfaction, retention, and other viable instruments to measure student achievement and the classroom's causal relationship.

Question 1: Can you please share your definition of self-efficacy?

      Prompt: How do you feel about your self-efficacy in your classroom?

                      How do you view VAM evaluation's effects on your self-efficacy?

Question 3: Can you please share your ideas on job satisfaction with me?

      Prompt: What are the essential factors related to your ideal positive job satisfaction?

Question 4: How long do you think you will stay in the teaching profession?

      Prompt: How do you feel that self-efficacy and job satisfaction will contribute to you staying in the field of education?
How do you feel that self-efficacy and job satisfaction will contribute to you staying in the field of education?
What factors contribute to staying or leaving the teaching profession?
Was there ever a time you considered leaving the profession? If so, what factors contributed to your thoughts?
Did VAM scores play a role in your decision-making process?

Question 5: What do you feel would be a viable instrument to use in place of VAM scores for teacher evaluations?

Prompt: Do you know of any other options for holding teachers accountable for student learning?

Question 6: Is there anything else you would like to share with me based on your experiences in education related to VAM?

Maureen Martin

Email:

EDUCATION:

- 2019-2021   University of North Florida   **Educational Leadership, Doctoral Candidate**
- 1995-1997   Jacksonville University   **MA Educational Leadership**
- 1992-1994   University of North Florida   **BA Biology Education**
- 1985-1990   Florida Community College   **AS Dental Hygiene, AA General Emergency Medical Technician**

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

- 1995-2000 Fernandina Beach High School, Fernandina Beach, Florida
  Physics, Chemistry, Biology

- 1994-1995 Andrew Jackson High School
  Chemistry and Medical Magnet Students

- 2017-current Clay County Public Schools
  Robotics Engineering, Electrical Apprenticeship, Physics

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION:

- Notary, Remote Online Notary, Notary Signing Agent 2020
- (ITTO) International Teacher Training Organization TEFEL Certification, Business English, TESOL Technology, Dialogue Drill, Lesson Planning, Information Gap, Role Play, Total Physical Response, Early Production, Focused Listening, Language Expression, Life Skills Reading, Narrative Reading, Problem Solving
- IMAC Language School teaching practicum
- ESOL Endorsement
- Florida Teaching Credential for Principal, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Physical Education
- Eligible for ESE certification through Subject Area Exam

PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE:

2016-2017 *Berkley International Schools*
Head of Schools
- Responsible for all operations

2015-2016 *Da Vinci International School*
Deputy Head of Schools
- Responsible for all operations

2013-2015 *Shinawatra International University*
Lecturer and Doctoral Student
- Special Projects Coordinator
- Lecturer
- Western Consultant for the Council for Educational Reform

2011-2013 *Tsinghua International School*
Secondary Director
- Responsible for scheduling students, discipline, substitute coverage schedules
- Liaison between the parents and the school, academic probation conferences
- Daily operations of the school

2011-2011 *Traveling and Volunteering Abroad*
- ITTO Language Internship 2013
  Volunteer Tutor for secondary school students
- Guadalajara, Mexico
  One-on-one lessons with secondary
  school students Building a school
  project

2006-2011 Clay County Public Schools
SUPERVISOR ESOL, CHARTER SCHOOLS, AND VIRTUAL SCHOOLS
- Taught ESOL professional development courses and conducted classroom observations for effective teaching strategies
- Completed needs assessment across the district for ELL students
- Implemented a library outreach program for English as Second Language Learner's program
- ESOL Professional Development Curriculum Writer
- Redesigned and aligned ESOL professional development classes to state standards (300 hours)
- Designed and taught ESOL classes for practical application based in the classroom for effective teaching strategies for ELL students
- Developed and wrote a reverse crosswalk practicum for Reading Endorsed Teachers
- Title III ESOL and Immigrant Grant writer and manager
- Order academic materials and implement new programs for ELL students
- Manage all aspects of grant documentation, including generating, processing, and tracking purchase orders for $750,000 of grants.
- Developed board policy and systematic process for charter school applicants
- Full-Time Virtual Instruction Program Principal
- Coached and mentored teachers
- Monitor and evaluate student and teacher progress
- Parent resource and contact
- Performed all aspects of counseling and certified graduation requirements
- Hire virtual school staff
- Scheduled progress monitoring exams for Reading
- (FCAT) Florida Comprehensive Achievement testing

- (FTE) Full-Time Equivalent funding reporting, data entry, and student schedules

2005-2006 *Duval County Public Schools* Jacksonville, FL

COORDINATOR OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

- Coordinate charter school application process.
- Conduct compliance and quarterly review visits
- Assist Charter schools with issues
- Conducted monthly charter school principal meetings

2003-2005 *School for Integrated Academics and Technology Charter (SIATECH) Gainesville* & Jacksonville, FL

SITE LEADER/PRINCIPAL

- Coached and mentored teachers
- Launched two brand new schools within two years.
- Developed partnership with Job Corps (Department of Labor) and was in charge of recruitment and retention of students who had already dropped out of high school
- Obtained SACS accreditation for both schools within one year of inception
- Liaison between the school district, Florida Department of Education, Department of Labor, and SIATech board members
- Monitored compliance issues and FTE funding, including purchase order processing and followed up
- Daily School operations and working with students

2002-2003 *Blackshear Elementary School* Blackshear, GA

PRINCIPAL

- Coached and mentored teachers
- Educational change agent leader for a faculty and staff of 150 people and 1200 students in grades K-5.
- Collaborated data-driven decisions and successfully led the school to increase academic achievement in a lower socioeconomic school (89% free and reduced lunches).
- Created a community of learners and teachers who facilitated the removal of this school from the fourth-year needs improvement list (equivalent to a school in the restructuring phase of No Child Left Behind).

2000-2002 *Palm Avenue Exceptional Student Center* Jacksonville, FL

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

- Responsibilities included data entry, scheduling, (FTE) Full Time Equivalent Funding, (ESE) Exceptional Student Education Audits for 300 highly involved students
- Discipline, crisis management, and daily operations
- Bus Coordinator
- Other duties as assigned by the principal

POST-SECONDARY TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

- 2013-2015   Tsinghua University associated with Tsinghua International School
- Professional Development for Faculty and Staff
- 2013-2014   ITTO Language School

- Taught adult students' English language at all levels from beginner to advanced
- Performed a Directed Internship for TEFEL/TOFEL Certification
- 2007-2010   Clay County Professional Development Curriculum writer and instructor
- Taught and designed hybrid BlackBoard courses for teachers across the district
- 1997-2000 Concord Career Institute (Part-Time Adjunct)
- Respiratory Therapy Teacher how to administer and read EKG's (Electrocardiograms)
- Computer Technology teacher to respiratory therapy students

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Excellent with student and teacher support
- Strength in Communication skills and lesson delivery
- Data-Driven Leader
- The ability to develop teams and create an environment conducive to increasing student achievement