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SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL BELIEFS AND COMPETENCIES OF HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS IN A HIGH NEED DISTRICT: RELATIONSHIP WITH TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY

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SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING BELIEFS AND COMPETENCIES OF HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS IN A HIGH NEED DISTRICT: RELATIONSHIP WITH TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY

By
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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this manuscript to my mother, Sandra Goodman, a phenomenal educator in her own right. She has provided me endless opportunities in my life - personal and professional.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my appreciation to my chair, Dr. Carmelo Callueng for his guidance and help throughout this research. The expertise and wisdom that I have gained are things that I will utilize within my current and future professional endeavors. I feel prepared to take on any challenge that may come my way and continue to make an impact on the world of educational research.

To my committee members, thank you for your continued reassurance that I was on the correct path and to continue pushing myself in every way possible.

I would like to share this accomplishment with all my past, current and future colleagues. You have all provided me the constant praise and gratitude for putting our students at the forefront of what we do and pushing me to fight for change in the educational environment for our teachers. Special acknowledge to Alyssa Krisanda for your continued praise and comfort that we would make it to the end of this process together. You have shown me that some days may be dark and difficult but with "family" by your side you will never lose hope of your dreams.

I would like to thank the love of my life, David, for his unwavering love and support through this process. He stayed by my side as I battled cancer and reminded me that my dreams were within my reach. Even through the late nights and a few tears, your continued reassurance and encouragement pushed me through to the end.

Abstract

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Carmelo Callueng, Ph.D.

Social-emotional learning (SEL) research has focused more on SEL programming and outcomes in students, and little is known about SEL in teachers especially among high school teachers. This cross-sectional quantitative research study was undertaken to gather baseline information about SEL among 240 high school teachers from a high need district with the following hypotheses: 1) teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies significantly vary by years of teaching, educational attainment, and professional development, 2) teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies of school significantly vary by classroom setting, school type, and grade level teaching. and school type, and 3) teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies significantly influence self-efficacy.

Salient findings indicated that SEL beliefs and competencies of teachers varied by educational attainment and professional development. Moreover, SEL competencies but not beliefs differed by years of teaching experience. These findings confirmed hypothesis #1. In addition, teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies varied by classroom setting and school type, but not grade level teaching. Such findings partially supported hypothesis #2. Finally, findings indicated that beyond demographic characteristics and school factors, SEL beliefs and competencies significantly influenced teachers' self-efficacy. Thus, hypothesis #3 was confirmed. Findings were discussed in light of scientific literature. Recommendations and limitations were presented.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Adolescence is a critical period of development that is characterized by storm and stress, and susceptible to mental problems that could seriously affect the adjustment and performance of a student in and out of the school environment (Lee et al., 2020). It is during this developmental period when teenagers can be particularly vulnerable to negative effects of stress and struggle with learning (Lee et al., 2020). Data from the National Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicate that 9.7% of teens had attempted suicide, 35% had felt sad or hopeless, 58% had used alcohol in the last month, and 22% had used marijuana (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2016). Even more so in the present times, the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic has confronted schools with unprecedented challenges such as quickly shift classes to an online format, provide equitable access for all students, support teachers' and students' educational needs, and make plans for the future with uncertainty (Lee et al., 2020). Social distancing and school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic can worsen existing mental health problems in adolescents and increase the risk of future mental health issues (Calderon, 2020). A loss of routine for many students, social isolation, and feelings of loneliness increases the risk of mental illness and there can be further exposure of abuse and violence to adolescents at risk of developing mental health problems (Lee et al., 2020).

Mental health problems in the schools not only affect individual students but also can impact the teachers and the learning experience within the school environment. As adolescents gain independence, their interactions with people outside of their families become increasingly important. Mental health awareness is an important issue for all educators, who are often the first line of defense for their students as educational

professionals have recognized the impact of mental health on learning and achievement (Fagherazzi et al., 2020). For child and adolescent mental health, socioeconomic deprivation is recognized in many societies as one of the highest risk factors for mental health and social maladjustment (Patel et al., 2008). Another clear risk factor for mental health is stress, which has been estimated to affect approximately one in five children ages 9 to 17 years (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2010). Different stressors can cause mental health challenges for anyone and can cause acute symptoms to appear for people who may experience preexisting mental health challenges (Calderon, 2020).

Mental health problems in adolescents are associated with school drop-out, drug use and abuse, and academic difficulties (Greenberg et al., 2003). If these problems are not addressed, adolescents are at risk for compromised physical and mental health in their adulthood (Farrington & Loeber, 2000). There have been studies of peer experiences in relation to mental health and some demographic variables have emerged in their relation to social behavior and mental health (Greenberg et al., 2003). Relevant demographic variables do not just include gender but also grade level, socioeconomic status (SES), and ethnicity. Regarding SES effects, Amone-P'Olak and colleagues (2009) reported more mental health problems among youth from lower SES backgrounds. Although life satisfaction is similar across racial and ethnic groups, there is still a struggle for students in regard to mental health (Huebner, et al., 2006). The role of school in addressing mental health of adolescents continues to change, including the national curriculum and policies that show a commitment to educating the whole child (Riekie, Aldridge & Afari, 2017). With the continued efforts of educators to keep students in good health and academically

achieving, there is a need to better understand factors that can promote positive mental health.

Social Emotional Learning as a Resource

Educators, students, and parents would not deny the importance of the fundamentals of reading and math, but learning key social and emotional skills within the educational environment is critical given the social challenges that students and teachers face within the real world. Social-emotional learning (SEL) is an increasingly well-known concept that represents the area of school-based prevention and intervention efforts. SEL was first introduced in 1994 by the Fetzer group as a conceptual framework and term for schools to address the mental health needs of students (Elias et al., 1997). The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (2003) defined SEL as the process by which individuals acquire knowledge and skills to help navigate through life's challenges. SEL primary skills include self-awareness, social awareness, recognition and self-regulation of emotions, relationships, empathy, and responsible decision making (Lopes & Salovey, 2004). There have been a variety of documented programs that can support the inclusion these skills such as Second Step (Frey, et al., 2000), PATHS (Nigg, et al., 1999), and Strong Kids (Merrell, 2010).

For decades' education has focused on the importance of positive youth development and good character values (e.g., honesty, respect, friendship), producing limited impact on student behavior and achievement (Cohen, 2006). To improve educational programming, CASEL (2018) recommended that schools create comprehensive, systematic pedagogical efforts of social, emotional, ethical, and cognitive learning that will promote the effectiveness and foster progress of SEL primary skills

through empirical and theoretical research programs. SEL is often used as an umbrella term that denotes a coordinated system and optimal framework to increase the likelihood that students learn to the best of their ability, improve academic performance and social skills, and decrease emotional stress (Elias, 2009). Research has suggested that the best instructional practice integrates SEL and traditional academic content to increase analytical thinking, student discussion, conflict resolution and problem solving (Zins, et al., 2007). This allows the classroom to become an opportunity for students to try out and develop social skills that elicit caring and support (Elias, 2009).

Social Emotional Learning and Legislation

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) that President Obama signed into law on December 10, 2015 gives states much more control in the use of federal funding through programs such as Title I and Title IV. Moreover, a growing number of states are using this new flexibility to strengthen SEL-related policies and programs (CASEL, 2013). The increased freedom provided by ESSA allows states and districts to focus more attention on the social and emotional development of students, which has often been considered the "missing piece of America's education system" (Gayl, 2018). The Act amends the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require highly qualified teachers to have preparation in the understanding, use, and development of social and emotional learning programming (CASEL, 2016). With the law in effect, both experienced and new teachers may or may not feel prepared to address the social emotional needs of students if they personally are not connected to the social-emotional competencies (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). The explicit teaching of SEL competencies is no longer considered an optional add-on, but rather an expectation (Bell, et al., 2017).

Although personal development is important, there is a need to look at the context in developing and applying teachers' social and emotional competencies. Research has demonstrated that the degree to which teachers can demonstrate social and emotional competencies depends on the individual's developmental period and life context (NJDOE, 2019). State research has shown significant links among SEL, student outcomes, and school performance and more recently, there has been strong evidence that our nation's teachers need support to embrace SEL within their classrooms (Sklad, et al., 2012). In New Jersey schools, SEL approach organically can help in promoting young people's academic success, engagement, good behavior, problem-solving abilities, health, and well-being while also preventing a variety of problems that plague a variety of schools such as truancy, drugs, bullying, and violence (New Jersey Department of Education, 2019).

The New Jersey Department of Education has been promoting SEL to enhance the building of a positive school climate and the healthy development of young people. School climate surveys have been adopted to address the need for change within the local public schools. New Jersey recognizes the importance of fostering positive learning environments for all students and, beginning in 2011, has required all schools to develop, foster, and maintain positive school climates through the adoption of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (NJDOE, 2011). In a 2015 study, it was found that social and emotional competencies are important for student success later in life. They found that teachers' positive ratings of students' social competence in kindergarten predicted students' chances of both high school and college graduation, as well as full-time employment by age 25 (Jones, Greenberg, & Crowley, 2015). The ratings also predicted

students' involvement with police before adulthood, being arrested, and the need for receiving government assistance. Well-developed social and emotional competencies help students meet the demands of more rigorous college and career readiness standards, as well as instructional shifts related to those standards. The standards are asking you and students to think outside the box, and they require students to interact in new ways with content, with each other, and with their own learning. In 2014, the New Jersey Department of Education brought together stakeholders from across the state to form a working group to research and recommend essential social and emotional competencies for New Jersey students and whereas, SEL supports a positive school climate, reduces barriers to learning, increases school connectedness, and is critical to success in school and life (NJDOE, 2019). Schools who embed and teach SEL skills across all subject areas facilitate students' academic success and social development and therefore, the Commissioner of Education and the New Jersey State Board of Education recommend school districts implement the *New Jersey Social and Emotional Learning Competencies* to promote safe, supportive, and challenging learning environments.

Teachers and Social Emotional Learning

Teachers are constantly on the forefront of battle with legislators, administrators, and parents regarding the practices they engage in when molding the future leaders of the world. Even more important is where the responsibility and accountability for teaching lies in terms of not only the educational outcomes but the behaviors and social preparedness for the real world (Solbrekke & Sugrue, 2014). The challenges of the current environment have placed greater demands on students to be successful socially and academically, while faced with the ever-changing society around them. Studies have

indicated that those children who live in situations of poverty, family dysfunction, abuse, and adverse living conditions are at a greater heightened risk for a bleak outcome (Doll & Lyon, 1998) and have not developed their understanding of their social emotional learning that impacts the learning environment (Weissberg, 2020).

Evaluating the practicality and feasibility of the outcomes of SEL interventions programs is critical if they are to succeed in the school setting and if teachers are able to implement them with fidelity. Teachers need to feel confident in their abilities to implement an SEL program and also have the skills and resources to convey the program as intended. More often than not teachers are frequently asked to implement a variety of new curricula expertly but often do not receive adequate training or support to do so. Stokes and Baer (1997) shared the idea of a "train-and-hope" method that may be used but ultimately does not provide the comprehensive support teachers need to improve their instructional skills and consequently affect students' skills in targeted areas. It is strongly recommended that teachers receive constructive feedback regarding their performance (CASEL, 2015) as well as regular support and assistance. Teachers would benefit from support from qualified professionals. The more collaborative the relationship is there is a lower resistance to implementing the program and a greater chance the program will be implemented as intended and efficacy can be determined (Greenberg et al., 2003).

Children and youth in our society today are faced with considerable challenges that can jeopardize their chances for success and positive development in their future endeavors (Oberle, Domitrovich, Meyers, & Weissberg, 2016). Different factors can impact students' abilities to succeed such as environmental conditions, economic situations, home factors and even nationwide pandemics. All students can benefit from

SEL, but teachers know that building social and emotional competence is especially important for students and even more so for those with disabilities (Bryan, 1997). However, teachers are the engine that drives social and emotional learning, but their own social-emotional competence and well-being strongly influence their students (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Classrooms can provide an opportunity for teacher-child relationships of support and deep learning. They also can promote positive social and emotional development among students. Unfortunately, the demands of the job could become too much. When teachers poorly manage the social and emotional demands of teaching, students' academic achievement and behavior can suffer (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). SEL involves implementing practices and policies that help students and adults acquire and apply knowledge skills and attitudes that enhance personal development, relationships, ethical behavior and effective productive work (Taylor et al. 2017). Research on teachers' beliefs and instructional practices of SEL contributes to higher grades and improved behavior of students. In turn, teachers benefit from improved relationships and more productive learning environments (Elias, 2019). Developing a strong social and emotional competence can improve upon adversity and attain better outcomes in school and in life.

In a national survey conducted by Bridgeland, Bruce, and Hariharan (2013) a majority of the teachers indicated that social and emotional skills are teachable, and that promoting social emotional competencies can have positive effects on attendance, graduation and overall academic performance. They also believed that social and emotional skills could be embedded in the state educational standards, but feel they need for further training of effective implementation SEL. More importantly teachers reported

their lack of knowledge, having more stress, limited efficacy in teaching and SEL competencies and beliefs as well as providing effective instructional practices that support student SEL (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Research shows effective implementation of SEL involves training, but more importantly is the teacher's beliefs and self-efficacy to ensure better outcomes (Domitrovich et al., 2017). Teacher self-efficacy in their ability to succeed reflects in their confidence, motivation and behaviors when implementing SEL competencies in the classroom (Bandura, 1997).

Problem Statement

According to Rutledge and colleagues (2015), there is minimal curriculum and instructional basis on SEL for high school students compared to relatively abundant SEL resources for elementary students. In addition, little is known about teacher characteristics in relation to SEL especially among high school teachers. Learning in schools is a social process, in which both adults and students benefit from environments that cultivate and encourage their social emotional well-being (Rutledge, et al., 2015). By providing research on the social emotional learning of high school teachers, one can grasp a better understanding of the needs of the students they teach as well as their ability to teach cohesive lessons that incorporate SEL skills.

Purpose Statement

Regardless of teaching style and school environment, we know that the intentional and explicit weaving of SEL into the fabric of our everyday classrooms and life is critical for teachers and students (Rowell, 2020). Teachers can integrate SEL into the classroom in accordance with their current academic curriculum, separate it or place it within their overall classroom philosophy. The purpose of this study was to explore the teacher and

SEL in a highly diverse school district. Primarily, it examined teacher characteristics in the context of SEL programming in schools through the lens of Bandura's social-cognitive theory (SCT). The study's main independent variables were SEL competencies and beliefs of teachers, while the dependent variable was self-efficacy. A cross-sectional quantitative research design was utilized to gather information from which to draw conclusions and implications that can contribute to applied knowledge about SEL in high school teachers.

Research Questions

The study was designed to seek answers to the following questions:

1. How do teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies vary by demographics?
    a. years of teaching
    b. Educational Attainment
    c. Professional development in SEL
2. How do teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies vary by school characteristics?
    a. Classroom setting (general education versus special education),
    b. School type (public schools versus charter schools)
    C. Grade level teaching (single grade versus multiple grades)
3. How do teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies influence self-efficacy?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided this study.

1. Teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies significantly vary by years of teaching, educational attainment, and professional development.

2. Teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies of school significantly vary by classroom setting, school type, and grade level teaching. and school type.
3. Teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies significantly influence self-efficacy.

Conceptual Framework

Teachers play a critical role in integrating SEL competencies into traditional academic lessons. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) shared the idea that teachers' self-efficacy can be influential in the educational process, directly impacting teacher decisions and has continued to research extensively on the impact. Self-efficacy is defined as a person's belief in their capabilities to perform or exercise influence over events in their lives (Bandura, 1977). According to Bandura (1989), self-efficacy has the most influential control over a person's actions and that self-efficacy beliefs sway thoughts and emotions that could impact a person's perceived locus of control. These beliefs occur in specific teaching situations impacted by the teachers' awareness of their own capability or incapability (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007).

There are factors that can influence and change the direction of how SEL is understood and implemented. Personal and school factors are key aspects that will be examined in this study. Teachers are the primary implementers of social-emotional learning (SEL) programs. Their competencies and beliefs about SEL likely influence program delivery, evaluation, and outcomes. Because teachers are the primary deliverers of SEL programming, their attitudes about and support for SEL can affect the adoption, sustainability, and impact of such programs (Bowden, Lanning, Pippin, & Tanner, 2003). Teacher beliefs and capabilities are key indicators of their perceptions and judgments, which, in turn, affect their teaching practices (Pajares, 1992). Teacher confidence has

been linked to teacher attitudes regarding both the importance of and the difficulty associated with implementing innovative programs (Guskey, 1988). Teachers can be committed to developing their abilities to integrate SEL into their classrooms through professional development. Moreover, professional development can significantly increase the likelihood of implementing a new school program with fidelity (McCormick, Steckler, & McLeroy, 1995). In fact, a commitment to SEL professional development from all stakeholders in the school, including the endorsement of a shared vision by school staff and administrators, is necessary for programmatic success (Brackett et al., 2010).

Teachers' commitment to learning about SEL likely influences their ability both to implement SEL programming and to model the skills it promotes in children. Another factor that can affect teachers' program adherence is their belief about the importance of SEL for student success (Buchanan, Gueldner, Tran, & Merrell, 2009). Among the many barriers to students' academic difficulties is acknowledging the crucial role of SEL (Ragozzino, et al., 2003). Teachers who consider the development of students' social and emotional competencies to be as important as subjects such as English language arts and math are likely to devote time to integrating SEL into their daily practices (Pajares, 1992). More so, the extent to which teachers feel that their school culture supports SEL programming may influence the impact of that programming.

In this study, Bandura's social-cognitive theory (SCT) provides a comprehensive anchor to explain the possible link of teachers' social-emotional competencies and beliefs with their self-efficacy. SCT identifies personal, behavioral and environmental factors that influence people's behaviors. Bandura (2004) used the model to promote healthy

behavior adoption and disease prevention. When looking at the social cognitive theory in regard to this study, the researcher is examining at variables that relate to personal factors (i.e., teaching experience, educational attainment, and SEL professional development), behavioral (i.e., commitment, care, and culture of SEL) and environmental (i.e., subjects taught, classroom setting, and school type). SEL competencies are a significant part of the study which relates to the teachers' personal and behavioral aspects of the teaching. Personal factors, including beliefs of personal efficacy play a central role in personal change (Bandura, 1986). Teachers in the high school setting received their certification in a specific subject area and typically only see their students for a smaller portion of the day in comparison to the elementary and/or middle school students. Even more, teachers in the high school setting may be limited in their professional development in regard to SEL that may have an impact on their classroom environment. Teachers have to believe in their power to enact change within their classroom environment; not just for teaching but for connections with the academics themselves. More so, social cognitive theory can provide the construct that measures an individual's perceived ability to overcome challenges and deficits that may influence their behaviors (Bandura, 2001). If teachers are able to identify the challenges that they face in the academic environment, they also have to be prepared for what the student is experiencing. Environmental factors can influence behavior and that is the concern with how and to what extent others help to facilitate and influence an individual's engagement in different behaviors (Bandura, 2004). Teachers teach specific subjects and typically work only with general education and/or special education students. This can have an impact on what the teachers know and understand about SEL that can create misbehaviors in their classroom. School can be a unique

environmental setting where social interactions can be influenced by the associations that the teachers and the students create. Within this study specifically the teachers can work either in a charter school, public comprehensive high school, or a magnet public school all which can have different ways of using SEL skills or in teaching SEL skills.

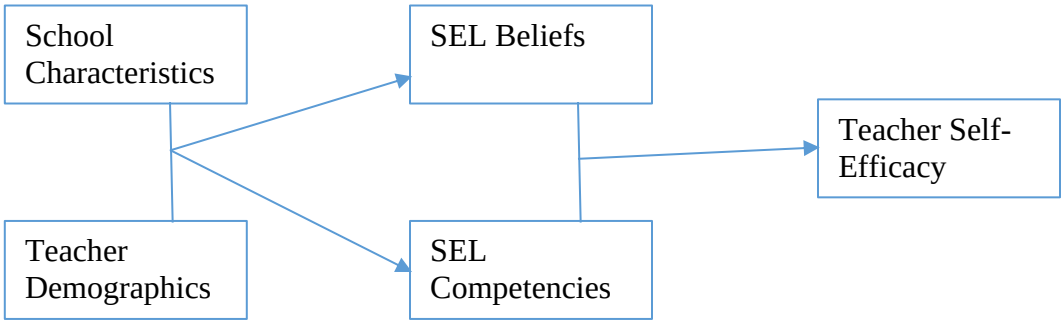
Dam and Volman (2007) expressed the necessary components of schooling that include students learning how to regulate personal emotions and to positively interact with others. The researcher is looking to see if the teacher is ready and understanding of their own SEL beliefs, competencies, and self-efficacy in order to make the changes or see the distractible behaviors that impact their classroom. Bandura (2004) went on to express the idea that social cognitive theory encompassed environmental barriers ranging from personal to social and even structural. Working to reduce the number of barriers is critical and teachers could serve as a gateway to improvement of behaviors and implementation of SEL. The outside influences may have an impact on the classroom's environment and how the teacher expresses the material to all students accordingly.

Moving forward, self-efficacy, outcome expectations, social support and other barriers are constructs that can play a crucial role in the facilitation of behavioral change (Bandura, 2001); however, the primary focus of social cognitive theory is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is not a measure of the teacher’s level of competence, although self-efficacy may correlate with competence (Teti & Gelfand, 1991). Variables may play a crucial role in mediating a teacher’s self-efficacy such as intrinsic interest (Ryan & Deci, 2000), leadership (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015) and school climate (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). However, Bandura (1989) reminds us that self-efficacy beliefs correspond with anticipated outcomes and the contextual supports that facilitate or interfere with the

success of those outcomes. This is important because within this study, the researcher is not exploring teacher competence or student outcomes.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework within the Research Study Based on Social-Cognitive Theory



Definition of Terms

In this study, a number of terms are relevant to be defined.

- Social-emotional learning (SEL). The process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set positive goals, feel empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL, 2018).
  - Social-emotional learning beliefs: Perceptions and judgements that can affect teaching practices and implementation of SEL programming (Pajares, 1992). In this study, social-emotional learning beliefs will be measured using The Teacher Self-Belief Scale by Brackett and colleagues (2012) that includes the dimensions of comfort, commitment, and culture.

- Comfort. Teacher's sense of confidence in delivering SEL instruction (Brackett, et al., 2012).
- Commitment. The teachers' desire to learning about and teaching SEL (Brackett, et al, 2012).
- Culture. Teacher's attitude regarding support for schoolwide SEL programming (Brackett, et al., 2012).

- Social-emotional competencies. Comprise of self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, social awareness, and relationship skills that people can develop to benefit different areas such as health, relationships, school, and work (CASEL, 2011). In this study, social emotional competencies will be measured using Social-Emotional Competence Teacher Rating Scale (SECTRS) developed by Smetana (2020).
    - Self-awareness. Teacher's ability to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts (CASEL, 2018). This includes capacities to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose.
    - Self-management. Ability of a teacher to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations (CASEL, 2018). This includes the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress,

and feel motivation and agency to accomplish personal and collective goals.

- Responsible decision-making. Teacher's abilities to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations (CASEL, 2018). This includes the capacity to consider ethical standards and safety concerns, and to evaluate the benefits and consequences of various actions for personal, social, and collective well-being.
- Social awareness: Teacher's abilities to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts (CASEL, 2018). This includes the capacities to feel compassion for others, understand broader historical and social norms for behavior in different settings, and recognize family, school, and community resources and support.
- Relationship skills. Teacher's abilities to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups (CASEL, 2018). This includes the capacities to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve and negotiate conflict constructively, navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed.

- Teacher self-efficacy. A teacher's belief in his or her own capability to prompt student engagement and learning, even when students are difficult or unmotivated (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). In this study, teacher self-efficacy will be measured using the Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy (2001).

Significance of the Study

Difficult social interactions with students are reported to be among the main stressors for teachers. Although social competence has been suggested to represent a key resource for teacher transition into the classroom, it does not have as much empirical research especially when working with high school teachers. Apart from the evidence of the effectiveness of interventions to promote social competence, there have been empirical findings concerning the development of social competence in adulthood and particularly in which prospective teachers are lacking (Aldrup, Carstensen, Koller, & Klusmann, 2020). There is a strong relevance of social and emotional competencies among teachers and has been described in different pro social classroom models. Jennings and Greenberg (2009) proposed that a positive effect of social competence on the establishment of positive teacher student relationships, effective classroom management, students' psychosocial development as well as teachers' occupational well-being. Social competence would most likely be located within the teachers' personal characteristics and can have an impact on learning opportunities within the teacher preparation and related to core content classrooms.

The results of this study can be used to inform practice, policy and research of social emotional learning within high schools. With the identification of self-efficacy and

SEL competencies having an impact on beliefs, integration and instruction practices, educational organizations may be able to more effectively plan for the involvement of an SEL curricula that increases student productivity. Even more so this research may prompt the understanding of SEL competencies and their importance within the high school teacher and student population.

Practice

With greater accountability of teachers being a focus of NCLB and ESSA, this study may first be used to drive teachers to take other measures to develop professionally and increase their perceived self-efficacy through reflective practice and support from their own understanding of SEL competencies. Second, this study may be used by local, regional, and national stakeholders to persuade educational organizations to understand the limitations of the teachers in their understanding of SEL and how to implement a program within a high school population. The findings may also be used to inform educators about the importance of SEL within the high school teacher population.

Policy

First, the findings from this study may be used to advocate for policies regarding the professional development and importance of high school teachers and implementation of an SEL program in high schools. The evidence may be used to revamp teacher-mentor programs as well as pre-service internships to address factors of self-efficacy as well as understand SEL competencies and how they impact the students in which educators teach. Secondly, as this study examines the SEL competencies and self-efficacy of high school teachers' beliefs, integration, and instruction of SEL, findings may also be used to advocate for increased funding of programs that develop teachers' SEL competencies and

self-efficacy that in turn can create a program of SEL within high schools. Findings may also be used to increase collaboration between teachers and stakeholders on the future of SEL high school programming.

Research

First, the findings from this study can be used to influence future research on other facets that significantly impact teachers' self-efficacy and SEL competencies. Second, the results from this study could be used to further research in the idea for the need for high school SEL programs and professional development for teachers to support the students within their specific content area. Lastly, this study can be used to influence research that can change SEL policies and practices that are currently in place for teachers and students.

Limitations of the Study

Like any research study that utilizes surveys, this study has a number of limitations that need to be addressed to guarantee results that are both reliable and valid. New Jersey has over 100 school districts and the best way to collect information from a sample of high school teachers within a specific school district would be through an online self-report survey platform. To ensure a sufficient response rate for this study, a few precautions were taken into account. First, the researcher was able to gain support through formal board approval by the Superintendent and board of education of the high need district for distribution of the survey and data collection, including independent charter schools. This strategy provided the researcher an opportunity to reach out to all high school teachers to participate in the survey openly and willingly.

Another major limitation of survey research is low response rate which in turn can restrict the research from obtaining the high enough sample size for validation of the research survey. Attempts to overcome this problem fell into two categories that included techniques to persuade more participants through providing incentives, making connections with the different high school teams, and talking at professional development days. Moving forward, a significant limitation of survey research lies in the creation of the survey itself. This shortcoming is addressed in this study by using well-developed and validated measures utilized in previous studies. Moreover, the survey consisted of closed-ended questions for demographic information, and Likert-type format for measures of teachers' SEL beliefs, competencies, and self-efficacy in a clear format overall.

Other limitations that were taken into consideration included the respondents that did not complete the questionnaire themselves, as well as the difficulty reading and/or interpreting the questions that were being asked within the survey questionnaire. This study utilized an electronic survey platform as opposed to a face-to-face or structured interviews which would have been more time consuming and difficult to complete. The use of a self-reporting response system, such as Rowan Qualtrics, was useful for the prospective participants own time given their busy schedule. Even though all questions were required to be answered within the survey, participants had the ability to start and then finish the survey later if they choose to. However, this did provide the researcher with incomplete survey responses that were later eliminated during the data preparation process.

Overview of the Dissertation

This study is comprised of five chapters. Chapter 1 provides the introduction and background of SEL as the topic of investigation. It also describes the purpose of the research, significance, research questions, hypotheses, and limitations. Chapter 2 covers a detailed review of the literature, including a discussion of pertinent theoretical and empirical information about SEL. By reviewing the literature, the researcher can assess how the current study can impact current and future SEL programs within high school settings. Relevant literature provided the purpose and direction to the current study. Chapter 3 describes the study's methodology. In particular, quantitative approach is discussed in light of the goals of the study as well as other parameters to consider in implementing the study. Chapter 4 reports the overall findings of the study. Write-up of the findings for each research question is backed up with tables summarizing the statistical findings. In discussing the pertinent findings, the researcher attempts to explain how the study's findings can leverage existing empirical information about SEL in teachers. Finally, Chapter 5 provides the study's conclusions, methodological limitations, and recommendations for further research on SEL in teachers.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction to Social Emotional Learning

Promoting social and emotional competencies—including the abilities to understand and manage emotions, achieve positive goals, show caring and concern for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions—are important for success at school and in life (Weissberg, 2019). The purpose of this literature review expands upon the teaching social-emotional competencies and beliefs in addition to teacher efficacy of high school teachers within a high needs school district. The literature presented provides a framework for identifying the issues surrounding high school teachers, SEL, and teacher efficacy, beliefs, and competencies. When determining how students learn and in what environment, it is critical as educators that social emotional well-being of all students be a priority. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which both children and adults acquire and effectively apply these same skills, learning to understand and use emotions wisely, set positive goals, establish and maintain positive relationships and engage in responsible decision making (Stillman et al., 2018). Understanding what SEL can is help in understanding the need for research and its effects on students and teachers. Some key principles are highlighted in the literature in order to promote successful and sustainable practice of SEL at schools.

Educational Changes Related to SEL

Policymakers increasingly recognize that social and emotional development plays a critical role in students' ability to learn and are enacting policies to encourage the integration of social and emotional learning (SEL) into school curricula (Ryberg, et al.,

2020). Increased bullying, violence, and lack of student engagement (Zhang, et al., 2016) in schools has provided the impetus for increased policy intended to foster positive social skills and decrease behavior problems. The field of SEL emerged formally some 25 years ago and over the past few years, the evidence accumulated from basic and applied research (Durlak, et al., 2011) has prompted practitioners, researchers, and policymakers to advocate for the adoption of such programs for pre-K–12 students in school and out of school settings (Stipp, 2019). The purpose and mission of the Collaborating States Initiative (CSI) launched in 2016, is to work with states and school districts to help ensure that preschool to high school students is fully prepared – academically, social, and emotionally – to succeed in school, at work, and in life (CASEL, 2020). Districts are increasingly focused on college and career readiness standards, which place a premium on SEL competencies such as working with diverse teams, problem-solving, active student engagement, and honest self-reflection about one's strengths and weaknesses (CASEL, 2018). Beyond policies that call for specific focus on SEL or character education, 37 states include elements of SEL (such as healthy relationships, interpersonal communication, or self-esteem) as part of regulations governing health education standards and thirty-eight states also include mental and emotional health in their standards, which typically includes helping students better understand their emotions which is a key component of SEL (Ryberg, et al., 2020). A systematic review of 213 school based SEL programs involving 270,034 kindergartens through high school students showed that, compared to control groups, SEL participants demonstrated significantly improved social and emotional skills and these effects have been consistent

across all grade levels and school demographics, in urban, suburban, and rural areas (Durlak, et al., 2011).

Although school districts and state policymakers may be hesitant about SEL integration, research shows it is a rewarding investment for both students and teachers. As we know economic benefits can often influence and drive educational policy, it is important to consider how integration of SEL will impact the school districts (Fowler, 2013). The economic findings show that SEL benefits exceed the cost of programming by considerable amounts. Belfield et al., (2015) expressed that even minimal investment in SEL programs generated significant returns which could translate into future economic earnings and reduced societal costs. If we think about it more concretely, we know that taxpayer money is used for educational programming. SEL programming has shown an increase in student overall health and decreased student involvement in the criminal justice system by being able to reduce the high school drop-out rate and improve student public mental health services (Belfield et al., 2015). It should be noted that economic recuperation is not a large consideration when integrating an SEL programming and can create an obstacle in terms of policymaker's acceptance of findings and previous research conducted (Crowley, et al., 2012).

If we look at SEL on the other hand, we can see the support that is becoming increasingly important within the educational environment and that is the public support. The PDK Poll (2019) expressed the respondents' rate as most important for public schools to provide to students in need that include an after school program at 92% and mental health services at 87%. It also went on to state the importance of schools helping students to develop interpersonal skills such as being cooperative, respectful, and

persistent at solving problems (82%). Eighty-seven percent also support schools providing mental health services to students who can't get this help somewhere else, and 79% support offering general health services in such cases (PDK, 2019). Zin (2001) shared that although Americans are far more likely to see the development of interpersonal skills as an important indicator of school quality, just 39% are confident that standardized tests can measure these skills and that 84% say schools should assess students on their interpersonal skills, and 66% say schools should be held accountable for these test results as well as for academic skill results.

SEL and High Schools

Social and emotional learning is a deeply engraved topic within the educational environment. First, most social and emotional learning components are conducted in the elementary and middle school settings. Being able to develop the joy of learning through various educational formats will impact and allow students to have meaningful construct concepts of themselves and build relationships in contexts that involve real-world problems respectfully (Mesfin, et al., 2018). The high school years are a particularly important time for students to develop not only their algebra skills but also their abilities to manage their emotions and that is because teenagers are dealing with a combustible mix of issues (Prothero, 2020). High school teachers work to prepare their students to become a young generation with personality, independence, creativity, and motivation to adapt to changes in their lives and this can be linked to the strategy of social and emotional learning competencies (Kurniawan & Farozin, 2019).

Research on social and emotional programs for young adolescent learners have shown that a 'skills and drills' approach is far less effective than focusing on mindsets

and classroom climate (Yeager, 2018). Having a social and emotional learning program significantly improves students social and emotional skills as well as their academic behavior and performance due to the development of learning guidance and counseling programs specifically to high school age students (Durlak, 2016). With the limited research within the high school and teachers, social and emotional learning provides an opportunity for change and research to be created. High school teachers in particular are prepared to teach specific content curriculum courses. Most teachers acknowledge that social and emotional skills are important and recognize the role that schools have to develop these competencies in students but also teachers have reported a lack of confidence in knowing what and how to teach these skills (Main, 2018). There can also be a reluctance of teachers in incorporating the teaching of social and emotional skills in the classroom as well as the challenge of creating time and space in an already crowded curriculum (Newman & Dusenbury, 2015).

Being able to enrich the school climate through purposeful student-teacher interactions is important and the research shares in agreement that SEL is a vital component in our pedagogies because of its capacity to enrich students' lives in and outside of school (Marlatt, 2020). As high school teachers we have the ability to influence young people's outcomes in many ways and determine whether SEL development can occur, implement the curriculum and produce the values that cultivate meaningful relationships (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Schools have a responsibility to invest in helping their teachers learn about SEL (Marlatt, 2020). Teachers' own competencies shape the nature of their relationships with students and there needs to be a

way to optimize teachers' classroom performance and their ability to promote SEL in their students and build upon the SEL competencies (Schonert-Reichl, 2017).

Teacher emotions are critically important for determining the quality of the classroom climate. Positive teacher emotions result in more effective teaching (Barnes & McCallops, 2019). A study of high school teachers found that 46 percent suffered excessive daytime sleepiness and 51 percent had poor sleep quality and in term a lower motivation to connect with students within their own SEL competencies (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). High school teachers often see their students for shorter periods of time than the elementary or even middle school teachers. High school teaching schedules can vary from a block format to semester format in which teachers and students only interact for 4 months or only 40 minutes a day (Murray & Malmgren, 2005). Being able to build upon a teacher's SEL competencies is important in the time that they have with the students they teach. The fidelity with which teachers implement SEL programs has been associated with a number of teacher beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions (Schonert-Reichl, 2017).

Teachers Instructional Practices in Relation to SEL

Many different approaches can be considered and utilized to engage in the learning process with the use of teachers in varying grade levels. Successful classrooms that integrate SEL show positive outcomes in student interactions in academic classes, intentionally developing SEL competencies in conjunction with content knowledge and academic skills (Osher & Kendziora, 2010). The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine suggest that adults can foster positive development settings by providing eight components: physical and psychological safety, appropriate structure, opportunities

to belong, positive social norms, support for efficacy and mattering, opportunities for skills building, integration of family school and community efforts, and nurturance and support (Hurd & Deutsch, 2017).

There is a need for SEL approaches to be integrated and embedded in ways that are both deep and wide (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Alignment ensures that gains made early on do not gradually disappear as children progress through the grade levels (Miller, Connolly, & Maguire, 2013). A whole school approach involves making sure that skills taught to both teachers and to students are used in daily interactions (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Given that teachers are generally comfortable searching for useful teaching practices online, it was evident to agencies, organizations, and the federal government that free online databases of evidence-based practices and programs might be a considerable benefit to educators (Barnes & McCallops, 2009). The 2015 CASEL Guide for middle and high school levels includes nine select programs, plus five programs CASEL describes as complementary and one promising program. Teachers may feel that a SEL program is an add-on. A common concern for teachers is the competition for time and space in crowded school curricula (Barry, Clarke, & Dowling, 2017).

Through modelling and using incidental teaching practices, tutors embedded at least five social and emotional competencies within their weekly tutorials over the duration of the programs (Capella & Hwang, 2018; Kieffer, & Yates, 2018). This approach provided an authentic learning experience as well as the modelling of suitable strategies that could be applied into teacher's future practice. It has been said that 'primary teachers love their students and that high school teachers love their subject', implying that high school teachers historically have not considered the need to cater for

the developmental characteristics of all the students they teach (Elias, 2019). However, for some soon to be high school teachers there was a growing mindfulness that, in many instances, students' 'anxiety' towards particular subjects may be supported through embedding social and emotional curriculum in their daily classroom practice (Cohen, 2006). Courses would benefit teachers' awareness of and confidence to embed social and emotional competencies within their daily practice rather than being an add-on to an already crowded curriculum (Elias, 2019). Teachers can talk the talk and set the tone of the classroom and clearly model how to embed a range of competencies in their teaching without distracting from the core content to be taught (Collie, et al., 2012).

SEL Programs

There is growing evidence that offering young people the opportunity to learn social and emotional skills can improve academic performance and their mental health (Panayiotou, Humphrey, & Wigelsworth, 2019). When classrooms integrate SEL it can show positive outcomes in student interactions in academic classes, and purposely developing SEL competencies in conjunction with the content and academic skills provided by the teachers (Osher & Kendzior, 2010). Durlak (2016) expressed that competency implemented in schools have been linked to students' ability to regulate emotions, problem solve and communicate and even decrease conflict. This can in turn change the overall dynamics of the classroom environment. As teachers and leaders, we know that communication is an important part of the learning environment. Schools can provide the opportunity for listening, dialoguing, and reflectivity that will help prepare them for the future (Burroughs & Barkauskas, 2017).

Evidence-based SEL programs have been integrated into the curricula of many schools (Greenberg, Domitrovich, & Bumbarger, 2001), and SEL implementation guidelines and learning standards are being developed in the United States and abroad (http://www.casel.org/standards/learning.php). As the field of SEL expands, it is critical to identify the contexts within which programs can have the greatest impact. Several variables have emerged as critical to effective implementation, with teachers being one crucial feature (Graczyk, et al., 2006). There are limited studies that primarily focus on high school teachers and there is a lack of research that sheds light on the SEL competencies within high school classrooms. SEE Learning curriculum expands on traditional social emotional learning (SEL) frameworks (Newmann & Dusenbury., 2015) by drawing on the latest research pertaining to attention training, the cultivation of compassion for self and others, resilience skills based on trauma-informed care, systems thinking, and ethical discernment. This curriculum provided insight into the complexity of SEL with the high school setting specifically on the teachers' ability to integrate, implement and belief in the SEL competencies (Borden, 2019).

According to the research on several senior high school guidance and counseling administrative tools, it can be seen that there is no guidance and counseling program based on SEL in senior high school and the existing programs have not been developed through a series of systematic processes, planning, design, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up, however, guidance and counseling programs in senior high school have been prepared based on needs assessment (Farozin & Kurniawan, 2019). Other studies support the use of SEL interventions in schools to promote healthy development. In comparison to controls, students participating in SEL programs showed significant

growth in social and emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance (Cramer & Castro-Olvio, 2016). Research focused on bullying prevention also shows support for the use of SEL interventions in schools. Conduct Problem Prevention Research (2010) evaluated the long-term effects of Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS), a multiyear SEL program for students in a variety of grade levels and locations (Burroughs & Barkauskas, 2017).

Other approaches can increase the teachers' ability to connect with the students and the SEL competencies of themselves and their teaching. A capability approach is intended to maximize agency and can be used to describe the extent to which individuals are able to use limited resources to build a satisfying and enjoyable life (Stella & Corry, 2017). Even more so positive youth development (PYD) focuses on enhancing young people's strengths, establishing engaging and supportive contexts, and providing opportunities for bidirectional, constructive youth-context interactions (Taylor, et al., 2017). Facilitating communication between teachers and students, and between students themselves, collaborative learning activities and easy access resources that encourage self-paced learning will fall upon the teachers to incorporate through academic courses (Mesnif, et al., 2018).

SEL Impact in High Needs Schools

When looking at SEL, location of the SEL programming can have an impact not just by the grade level itself but the students and teachers it is servicing. SEL instruction which encourages students to come prepared for class, motivates them to exert more effort, supports them working cooperatively with each other, and reinforces class participation can affect educational outcomes such as students' attendance, completion of

homework, and academic knowledge and achievement (Zins et al., 2001). It was argued that for SEL to adequately serve those from underserved communities—and promote the optimal developmental outcomes for all children, youth, and adults—it must cultivate in them the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required for critical examination and collaborative action to address root causes of inequities (Jagers, Rivas-Drake, & Williams, 2019). Despite having sound academic programs and competent teachers and administrators, the SEL component can distinguish the effective schools from the ineffective schools (Dolev & Lesham, 2016).

For youth of color, low-income youth and immigrant youth, the prevailing social arrangements can induce more stress, stereotype threat, alienation, institutional mistrust and disengagement, which undermine success in school and hamper young people assuming constructive roles in family, workplace, and community contexts (Tuck & Yang, 2011). Existing educational and economic inequities are being reproduced. It is necessary to consider a form of SEL that transfers individuals, interactions and institutions in ways that support human development and function for young people and adults regardless of circumstances or background (Jagers, et al., 2018). Children of marriages that end in divorce and children of single mothers are more likely to be poor, have emotional and behavioral problems, fail to achieve academically, get pregnant, abuse drugs and alcohol, get in trouble with the law, and may be sexually and physically abused (Tuck & Yang, 2011). Furthermore, in low-income communities the role of teachers is particularly important because effective teacher practice heavily facilitates children's learning despite limited instructional materials and weak parental support (Lee & Zuilkowski, 2015). An understanding of teachers' SEL practices is also critical

because children living in low-income communities are affected by childhood adversity related to poverty and disease, which can negatively impact their performance in school and in adulthood (Winthrop & Kirk, 2008). These children are in great need of teachers' SEL support to develop adaptive behavior strategies to cope with toxic stress in life (Bower & Carroll, 2015). However, there is little information on how an SEL policy has been translated into practice, especially at the teacher level (Lee, Yang, & Simmons Zuilkowski, 2019). Other research has gone one to say that there is little to no evidence-based interventions to promote social competence or prevent problem behaviors that have been tested in settings closely similar to one's own and this is particularly the case for low-income urban settings (Elias, 2019). Elias (2019) went on to state that it is essential to begin with "best practice" and then study its application in one's own context and make the necessary refinements so that its effectiveness is optimized, and it reaches as many relevant subgroups of the population as possible.

Social Emotional Learning and Competencies

Over the last few decades, research related to SEL has grown as educators face numerous challenges in and out of the classroom in terms of preparing students to be positive and successful in career and beyond. A surge in SEL research over the past few decades has begun to illuminate what works in SEL program design and implementation for yielding positive student and school outcomes as well as documented the impact of social and emotional learning on student outcomes used rigorous, randomized controlled experiments and tested a specific program (Kennedy, Barnettt, Hernandez, Schares, Tran, Choi & Murakami, 2019). A number of research projects have been conducted as the interest in youth development proposals are created to battle student detachment, mental

health issues and disruptive behaviors that impact academic performance (Benson, 2006). Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process by which children and adults learn to understand and manage emotions, maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (O'Conner et al, 2017). Evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programs, when implemented effectively lead to measurable and potentially long-lasting improvement in many areas of children's lives (Greenberg, et al., 2017). Although school success is most often associated with academic milestones, there is increasing evidence that social-emotional competencies in the form of self-management, self-awareness, problem solving and relationship skills operate alongside and in conjunction with cognitive skills to facilitate school and life success (Low, Smolkowski, & Cook, 2016).

SEL Competencies

The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) identifies five interrelated competencies as central to social and emotional learning (CASEL, 2012). The five core competency clusters have been identified to support student cognitive and affective success: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (Denham & Brown, 2010). The first competency is self- awareness which is explained by CASEL (2020) as the ability to know what one feels, accurately assessing one's interests and strengths, and maintaining a well-grounded sense of self-confidence. The second competency is self-management, which is explained by CASEL (2020) as the ability to regulate one's emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and motivate oneself to persevere in overcoming obstacles, setting and monitoring progress toward the achievement of personal and academic goals, and expressing emotions appropriately. The third

competency is social awareness, which is explained by CASEL (2020) as the ability to be able to take the perspective of and empathize with others, recognizing and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences. The fourth competency is relationship skills which is explained by CASEL (2020) as the ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships on the basis of cooperation and resistance to inappropriate social pressure, as well as preventing, managing, and constructively resolving interpersonal conflict and seeking help when needed. The fifth and final competency is responsible decision making which is explained by CASEL (2020) as the ability to make decisions based on a consideration of all relevant factors, including applicable ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms as well as the likely consequences of taking alternative courses of action and respect for others.

Influence of Competencies

Research shows that to successfully promote SEL, it is not enough to enhance teachers' knowledge of SEL alone and that teachers with high school emotional competence organize their classrooms and provide emotional instructional support in ways that are associated with a high-quality classroom climate (Ferreira, Martinsone, & Talic, 2020). With the use of the competencies determined by CASEL (2018) they provide the foundation for forming student goals and beliefs, interactions with their peers and a student's efficacy to make an impact on the world around them. The idea that learning in schools is a social process in which both adults and students benefit from environments can cultivate and encourage their social emotional well-being (Rutledge et al, 2015).

Demographics and SEL Competencies

School settings, such as after-school programs and community organizations as well as school locations, are natural sites for social and emotional learning interventions (Hurd & Deutsch, 2017). Being able to identify key aspects of the school demographics may impact what SEL competencies are learned, taught or shared. Early SEL programs sprang from reformers' concerns about children's safety and socialization (Catalano, 2004). In large cities with growing immigrant populations and crowded housing, many working-class and low-income children utilize school and community environments more often and a need for safe spaces where children could engage (Rhodes, Grossman, & Resch, 2000). The programs they built varied greatly and local stakeholders developed their own aims and policies within them, yet they shared common goals (Catalano, 2004). In the history of after-school programming, Robert Halpern identified the early goals of the field as protecting and caring for children; giving children opportunities to play, frequently as a means to promote SEL-related skills (Hurd & Deutsch, 2017).

Social emotional competencies can be both protective and promotive and are important to the development of healthy coping and problem-solving skills (Ekllund et al, 2018). These programs are typically delivered in school settings and therefore it is ideal to look at the location and environment of the schools so that these competencies can foster skills that help students within the entire developmental process (Wallender et al, 2020). There has been evidence that provides support for integrating SEL programs into schools in order to promote the development of positive social and emotional skills, increased academic engagement, improved behavior and protection for at-risk youth (Thayer et al., 2019) which is needed within all school settings at all levels. Many

evidence-based SEL programs have been developed and implemented in schools, ranging from whole-class programs to targeted programs for at-risk children or those with deficits or schools that are limited on resources to support the social emotional skills of their students (Carroll et al., 2020). Adoption and support of SEL programs are largely due to a growing evidence base that demonstrates the important benefits of SEL programs on the development of social emotional skills, academic functioning, mental health, and overall health and wellbeing of students (Dowling et al., 2019) in any school location.

SEL Beliefs of Teachers

The focus of SEL is on nurturing the social and emotional awareness and skills of students (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2003), including the ability to recognize and manage their emotions, set and achieve positive goals, demonstrate caring and concern for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle interpersonal situations effectively (Payton et al., 2008). Practice and research involving SEL has grown substantially in the past decade in response to educators, policy makers, and the public who have argued that schools should be teaching students more than just academic skills (Durlak et al., 2011).

Specific SEL Beliefs

Social emotional learning can be measured in a variety of ways and being able to look at these beliefs are important in making gains in social emotional learning. The three beliefs that will be focused on within this study are comfort, commitment and culture. Brackett, Reyes, Rivers, Elbertson and Salovey (2012) refer to comfort, culture and commitment to teachers within SEL. Teachers who consider the development of students' social and emotional competencies to be as important as such as English Language Arts

and math are likely to devote time to integrating SEL into their daily practices (Pajares, 1992).

SEL beliefs provide an understanding of how confident teachers feel in terms of social emotional learning skills and lessons that are taught within their classrooms (Collie et. al, 2015) Teachers have varying beliefs that may moderate the extent to which an SEL program is delivered as intended by program developers and has the intended impact on students (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). Unfortunately, there are few published assessment tools measuring teachers' beliefs about SEL. After a thorough review of the literature, five studies were identified where assessing teachers' beliefs about SEL was mentioned. Four of the existing measures made inferences about teachers' SEL beliefs, for example, by assessing the following: how teachers apply SEL strategies in the classroom as part of program implementation (Hussey & Flannery, 2007), what skills and abilities they believe are important for students to learn (Kowalski, Pretti-Frontczak, & Johnson, 2001), or what they consider to be essential priorities in education (Bunting, 1984). The fifth study published a questionnaire designed to assess teachers' attitudes about one specific SEL intervention (Schultz et al., 2010). Being able to show the support for SEL is important and can affect the sustainability of any new educational program. Hussey and Flannery (2007) expressed that teacher beliefs are key indicators of their perception and judgements which in turn can affect their teaching practices and confidence is a key basis for delivery. A teachers' attitude can come into play with an SEL program. Moreover, teachers' abilities and skills can come into play. Kowalski, Pretti-Frontczak and Johnson (2001) used the research that indicates that teachers understand that social-emotional competence is important in providing developmentally appropriate lessons

within a language, literacy and early math skills. But limited was stated in regard to high school teachers specifically. However, Bunting (1984) showed the concept of beliefs range between knowledge, thinking, perceptions, expectations and or attitudes and that use of validated instruments can assess traditional and progressive beliefs about education. Knowing the extensive amount of beliefs that one can compare it is important as a researcher to consider the setting, participants and overall arching goal which in this case focuses specifically with high school teachers. There is limited research in this specific area.

Teachers' Beliefs and Efficacy

Although many preschools through high school teachers—as well as college faculty and administrators, employers, parents, and students themselves—understand the potential benefits of cultivating social and emotional development, few have the time or support to enable students to build social and emotional competencies (Garner, Bender & Fedor, 2018). Teachers' beliefs about their own teaching efficacy, or about whether they receive adequate support influence the fidelity with which they implement SEL programs in the classroom (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Understanding where teachers stand in regard to their own personal well-being is important to take into account when looking at implementing a SEL program. Teachers' self-efficacy (i.e., their confidence in their ability to improve students' social and emotional competencies) was high in terms of promoting SEL competencies however ninety percent of those that answered high were elementary and middle school teachers and that it is even more difficult with special education students (PDK Poll, 2018). Some limits can be identified. Many teachers have expressed a belief that factors beyond their control had a greater influence on students'

SEL than they did and that pressure to improve students' academic achievement made it difficult to focus on SEL (Wyness & Lang, 2016). In a poll by CASEL, teachers expressed substantial support for improving students' social and emotional skills but also said that the training lagged within this area, schools do not prioritize it, and that many schools only use a broad approach (CASEL, 2018). Even more pressing was that high school teachers expressed the most dismay about SEL emphasis (CASEL, 2018).

For many teachers their sense of preparedness and practice teaching and SEL competencies is related to their self-efficacy (Buchanan, et al., 2009). It is part of the teacher's life to create, develop and organize their content, student experiences and materials that have differentiation based on teachers' conceptualization and perception of their beliefs (Brackett, et al., 2012). Being able to align the content, needs of students', and teachers' beliefs is an on-going concept within the educational classroom and decisions will be altered based on what educational environment one is observing. Brackett et al. (2012) expressed that teacher who connect their beliefs and values with their teaching processes and practices may have more positive child outcomes. Studies have been conducted that look at the teachers social and emotional functioning that impacted the classroom. One such study showed the findings of teachers perceived emotional ability significantly influencing their practices, the level of student emotional support, and quality of SEL instruction and organization within the classroom (Brown, Jones, LaRusso, & Aber, 2010). Change can be seen within the classroom that may be brought together by the conceptualization of how teachers' beliefs and perceptions influence their instructional process and practices (Durlak et al., 2011).

Teaching social-emotional competencies within the academic content is intended to promote prosocial behavior and increase academic achievement (Durlak et al. 2011). Teachers' instructional practices and overall student outcomes can be affected by teacher self-efficacy and their capability within the SEL curriculum. Collie et al. (2011) suggested that teachers with high teaching efficacy create quality classrooms, engage students, and manage behaviors with the ability to plan and implement their instructional strategies. Teachers' perceptions of their abilities are critical and go along with their actual strategies already in place (Brown, et al., 2010).

In providing teachers with the foundational skills and instructional practices within SEL may increase teacher efficacy and in turn impact student achievement. But does this mean that some teacher's self-efficacy is actually higher than maybe one has observed or even that they understand themselves. Being prepared to teach students goes beyond just a willingness to teach and maybe even more importantly possessing the attitudes, skills and attributes to meet the educational needs of adolescent students. There is a growing understanding of more effective forms of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment strategies that can engage and motivate young adolescents, however the challenge for teachers is to be prepared in the way that they address the philosophical issues around a particular age group and in turn support the development of teachers' capacity to support the development of students' social and emotional competencies as well as their own (Main, 2018). Jennings and Greenberg (2009) continued to express that a teachers' ability to manage their own social and emotional competencies and sense of well-being is seen as critical to establishing a safe and supportive classroom environment. Schonert-Reichl et al. (2017) stated in the research that teachers share a pressing need for

more practices and more support when implementing SEL in content instruction and with varying student populations.

SEL and Teachers

SEL does not just cultivate a student's needs for emotional well-being but also that of the teachers' own social and emotional skills. In order to develop supportive relationships with students, teachers must also be socially and emotionally competent, handling stressful situations with emotional regulation and awareness, and modeling for students' appropriate relationship and social skills (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Dolev and Leshem (2016) expressed that teacher must be caring leaders, but they cannot be experts on all aspects of social emotional strategies, beliefs and competencies. Significant opportunities to present instruction and create classroom environments that improve student interactions, relationships and develop CASEL SEL competencies can be seen within our educational environments. State, district, and school leaders should consider making SEL a priority. Doing so would entail implementing policies, standards, and guidance that support teachers and administrators to integrate SEL with academic instruction (Woolfolk & Hoy, 2014)

Teachers Role in Relation to SEL

According to a 2007 report from the National Commission on teaching and America's Future, teacher turnover costs the United States up to $7 billion a year, and the highest turnover occurs in low-performing, high poverty schools with a high percentage of minority students (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). The majority of teachers acknowledge that in their school reality, despite the implicit appreciation of their purpose, the absence of a national curriculum guidance on social emotional development made the approach of

each school unstable and largely depend on their own interests and motivations (Ferreira, Martinsone, & Talic, 2020). There has been increased adoption of social-emotional learning programming in schools and correspondingly increasing emphasis on rigorous evaluations of their impacts and CASEL outlines 19 elementary programs that have explicit instruction in SEL that are evidence based and delivered in the classroom setting (Low, Smolkowski, & Cook, 2016). When teachers are trained in the behavioral and emotional factors that influence teaching and learning in the classroom, they feel better equipped to propose and implement classroom management strategies that deter students' aggressive behaviors and promote a positive learning climate (Shonert-Reichl, 2017).

Despite much recent interest in SEL research for students, very little research has been completed to see if SEL has any positive outcomes for teachers (Collie, et al., 2011). Teachers can also foster skills through their own interpersonal and instructional interactions with students throughout the school day and educators own social-emotional competence and pedagogical skills influence classroom and school climate as well as student behavior (Greenberg, et al., 2017). Jennings and Greenberg (2009) proposed that SEL is related to teacher social-emotional competence and well-being. Teacher support affects student achievement in significant ways and when teachers are willing to establish relationships with students, learn about students' individual needs and strengths and provide support and encouragement students are likely to have strong motivation, engage in learning activities and achieve academic success (Brown et al., 2010). Teachers are the engine that drives social and emotional learning programs and practices in schools and classrooms, and their own social-emotional competence and well-being strongly influence their students (Schonert-Reichl, 2017).

Research in higher education populations demonstrates that social and emotional adjustment is associated with positive academic outcomes, including academic performance and retention as well as social and emotional skills extend beyond academic contexts and outcomes such as success in work, positive interpersonal relationships, and better mental health and overall well-being (Elemi, 2020). Teachers don't just need to know how to explicitly teach social and emotional skills: they also need the knowledge, dispositions, and skills for creating a safe, caring supportive and responsive school and classroom community and enhancement of teachers' knowledge of SEL alone is not enough (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). High quality teacher preparation and in-service professional learning related to SEL should include such elements as the theoretical knowledge and pedagogical strategies essential to teaching ESL, the development of teachers own personal and social competencies, and supportive feedback from those around them (Garner, Bender, & Fedor, 2018). If teachers do not accurately understand their own social-emotional well-being and how teachers influence students' SEL we can never fully know how to promote SEL in the classroom (Schonert-Reichl, 2017).

Social Emotional Learning in General Education and Special Education Teachers

Social and emotional skills, like academic skills are built over time and can be combined to address increasingly complex situations. Research overall has shown little comparison between the SEL competencies of general education versus special education teachers in their ability to implement SEL within their classrooms especially at a high school level. The coping and greater independence skills required of high school students are built on earlier foundations, hence it is necessary to address these skills at each grade level (Weissberg & Greenberg 1997). Lack of confidence in the ability to positively

implement an SEL program has been exhibited. One possible explanation for this lack of confidence is that teachers may not have adequate knowledge and understanding of the physiological, neurological, psychological, and emotional impact of enduring poverty and also is that teachers may not have adequate skills in implementing adaptations, interventions, or calming techniques that may help students perform better academically regardless of placement or certification (Stipp, 2019).

Research indicates that educators who establish firm boundaries, foster warm personal relationships in the classroom, and enable students to have an impact on their environment strengthen students' attachment to school, their interest in learning, their ability to refrain from self-destructive behavior, and their positive attitude (Soloman et al., 1992). Furthermore, an emotional attachment to teachers, peers, and school is a vital link to academic success (Solomon et al. 1992). Teachers' professional vision is characterized by teachers' ability to notice relevant events in a classroom and interpret these events based on professional knowledge (Seidel & Stürmer, 2014). Teacher knowledge—such as content, pedagogical-content, and pedagogical-psychological knowledge—shapes professional vision because it affects the direction of the attention processes (Blömeke et al., 2015). Pre-service education and teaching programs highlight the importance of the SEL curriculum and confidence that it will impact the learning environment (Soloman et al., 1992).

Teaching Experience

Years of experience may have an impact on the understanding of personal social and emotional learning as well as what skills a teacher may produce within their classroom. Research by Berliner (1991) revealed that expert teachers are better able to

distribute their attention equally across all students while teaching and to move more smoothly from one event to the next than novices. Novice teachers by comparison are more likely to follow salient events or student cues erratically, moving from the perceiving written notes about their lesson plans to observing students in the classrooms and then the black board or other media outlets (McIntyre et al., 2017). Besides the ability to distribute attention equally, teachers are also able to focus on those cues and events that are relevant to further learning (Berliner, 1991). Since their professional knowledge is organized based on typical events, schemata, and routines, being able to recognize specific events that are deterring the learning environment become more readily understood (Borko et al., 2008). However, beginner teachers are not as prepared in their understanding of student behaviors and cues that impact the learning environment and may struggle to make the initial understanding and changes for academic success (McIntyre et al., 2017).

Moreover, expert teachers' knowledge of classrooms is richer and more accessible than that of beginner teachers, allowing them to quickly process complex information, represent problems flexibility and recognize meaningful patterns amidst the complexity of problems (Wolff, Jarodzka, & Boshuizen, 2017). Beginner teachers need time to develop and automatize their management routines so they can move beyond simply dealing with classroom problems and devote cognitive resources to understanding why and how classroom problems arise (Bower & Carroll, 2015). On the one hand, teachers face immediate, fast-paced, on-the-spot classroom complexities, which cause difficulties for all teachers but more readily those that are new to the profession (Borkeo et al, 2008). Teachers who have more experience or years of teaching have the benefit of

experience and knowledge gathered over time in order to face such complexities insightfully and effectively (Seidel, et al., 2020). Considering the persistent difficulty that classroom management presents to teachers, SEL can become a more integral part of the learning community regardless of age or grade (Dolev & Leshem, 2016).

Content Area

Teachers' commitment to the SEL subject was lower than for other subjects, such as English and mathematics, which were tested in a primary school setting and with national assessments (Chirwa & Naidoo, 2014). Each content area has common core standards linked to the curriculum and educational experience. Mathematical concepts can completely confound you such as proofs in high school geometry, but social-emotional skills such as perseverance, hope, optimism, and even something as simple as asking for help will come in handy at this time (Zakrzewski, 2014). Creating a caring and safe classroom can build respect among the teachers and the students. Emotions can run high when students try to defend their point – which can all too often lead to hurt feelings and educators need to teach students how to transform "you're wrong" into "from my perspective" (Chirwa & Naidoo, 2014). Language arts standards give teachers the opportunity to incorporate mini-lessons of emotions, communication, relationships, and other social-emotional skills directly into their language arts curriculum (Zakrzewski, 2014). Each content area can provide an opportunity to increase SEL competencies and learning acquisition. Chirwa and Naidoo (2014) go on to express that no standard and no SEL program can replace a teacher's enthusiasm and passion for the curricula being taught and the truly gifted educators are those who care for their students and go the extra mile to help them find their unique and purposeful place within it regardless of content

area. There is limited research in terms of social emotional learning and specific content areas that are taught by teachers and therefore this research study can provide future content for improved performance.

Professional Development in SEL

Being able to provide professional development in terms of SEL could be beneficial to a variety of teachers in a variety of settings. Teachers with greater institutional support for SEL, such as professional training and administrative encouragement, have shown a greater understanding of SEL and importance versus those with less training (Ransford, et al., 2009). It has been argued that little attention has been given to the importance of adults being social-emotional learners themselves (Cohen & Sandy, 2003). Teachers are rarely provided with opportunities to engage in the development of their own emotional competencies (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Yet, teachers are supposed to impact the SEL of the students in which they teach. When teachers have sufficient SEL resources, they were more effective in modifying lessons and extending SEL support to curricular activities and other school routines (Cervone & Cushman, 2015). The literature on SEL for schools makes clear that training teachers to understand the impact of trauma and provide and SEL supports is but one piece of a larger picture (Stipp, 2019).

Cultivating the SEL competencies of the teachers and students is a priority within the education environment. We also point to programs and practices that hold promise for cultivating these competencies and the importance of adult professional development in making these efforts maximally effective for diverse children and youth (Jagers, Rivas-Drake, & Williams, 2019). Many effective SEL interventions include training or

professional development for teachers and some also emphasize building teachers' own SEL skills (McClelland, et al., 2017). Even more so there needs to be a presence of targeted support for both teachers and children and that is where most programs include professional development for educators as well as classroom curriculum (Hirokazu, 2015). Research has shown that for the next generation of SEL instruction that it must include increased precision in constructs and associated measures within a developmental progression with a better understanding of the nature and process for training and professional development of educators that leads to high quality implementation (Jagers, Rivas-Drake, & Williams, 2019).

Mental health needs to be considered within schools that include starting counseling centers that offer not just the opportunity to counsel but also to implement regular mental health training programs for school staff, students and parents as well as material on mental health. Despite the emergence of a large number of school-based programs that foster positive mental health, there is growing concern about the effective implementation of such programs (Adelman & Taylor, 2000). Moreover, Domitrovich and Greenberg (2000) raised concerns regarding the lack of studies reporting the relationship between the quality of implementation of mental health promotion initiatives and student outcomes.

SEL Outcomes in High School

Social-emotional learning is becoming increasingly more important within the educational environment. It is beneficial to have research to support this increase within the cognitive aspects of the classroom. There is quite a bit of research that reveals the positive outcomes associated with fostering SEL competencies that range from improved

behavior to increased academic grades and test scores (Taylor, et al., 2017). Continued research may benefit from teachers providing their own understanding of their SEL competencies within the high school curriculum (Shonert-Reichl, et al., 2017). When we start recognizing that how we form our habits, judgments and beliefs are ways of making decisions about our lives, we realize that our happiness is at stake if we fail to approach them without thinking clearly about what could happen in the future. SEL programs at selected schools are starting the work of helping students construct happier lives, and administrators and teachers can build on this momentum when they incorporate instruction in decision-making strategies into these blocks of time (Hardgrove & Lenowitz, 2019). If we help students hone an awareness of their daily opportunities to make decisions, they will be more likely to engage in the kind of self-questioning that helps them select options that will enhance their quality of life, which should be the ultimate goal of their education (Schonert-Reichl, et al., 2017). These competencies are thought to facilitate students' academic performance, positive social behaviors, and social relationships during the school years; reduce behavior problems and psychological distress and help to prepare young people to succeed in college, work, family, and society (Jones & Kahn, 2017). Scholars and advocates believe that SEL programming is likely to have both immediate and longer-term benefits for young people, both in school and later life. (Duncan et. al, 2017).

SEL in a Post Pandemic World

Well before the COVID-19 pandemic, a report from the National Commission on Social, Emotional, & Academic Development challenged all educators to fulfill an amazing calling: to foster in children the knowledge, skills, and character that enable

children to make better lives in a better country (Yang, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified risk factors in terms of social and emotional skills faced by educators (Green & Bettini, 2020). Before the pandemic, an emerging body of research showed that educators' beliefs about their social and emotional learning competencies are associated with their classroom management effectiveness and their students' learning and social–emotional well-being (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). As we look past this global pandemic, researchers and policy makers have begun to call for leveraging SEL to support teaching, learning, and care for students and educators (Schlund & Weissberg, 2021). Richard (2020) shared the importance of encouraging educators to use robust planning tools grounded in self-reflection to increase knowledge and awareness of compassion and empathy to identify and implement self-care strategies into the daily routine for promoting resilience and maintain a healthy work–life balance, as well as stay connected to others that are supportive. As key players in school-based mental health prevention and intervention, school psychologists could help educators develop and implement the above strategies to reduce their compassion and empathy by providing professional development opportunities and consultation support as the educational world faces a new future after a global pandemic (Yang, 2021). Although the pandemic makes this work urgent, SEL will always be necessary. There will always be new educators and students to support and both new and ongoing societal problems to address — racial injustice chief among them (Robinson, 2005). According to a CRPE review, only 31% of schools mentioned building social and emotional skills in reopening plans for fall 2020; only 7% mentioned tracking students' social and emotional outcomes (CRPE, 2021). However, the teachers were not mentioned in the study.

Synthesis

Already, thousands of schools within and outside the United States have implemented SEL programs (Humphrey, 2013), and many U.S. state departments of education have issued, or are in the process of issuing, standards for the development of specific SEL skills at each grade level (Newman & Dusenbury, 2015). So, too, have many federal, state, and local policy makers become willing to provide funding support for SEL programs (Shonert-Reichl, et al., 2017). Durlak et al. (2011) synthesized their findings from studies of 213 school based universal SEL programs, including outcomes data for more than 270,00 students from kindergarten through high school which has pushed for continued research by educators and policymakers to make changes. Major findings from research completed indicated that SEL programs managed by teachers and other school staff consistently yielded positive results, and it highlighted the role of careful program implementation in ensuring positive student outcomes (Mahoney, et al., 2019).

Continued research into the implementation, wide-scale dissemination, continual monitoring, improvement, and sustainability of SEL programs will be beneficial in demonstrating their initial value (Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). For example, how can we increase the capacity of schools to conduct SEL programs? And how can we best align educational policies and funding so that more schools are able to offer SEL programs? Or what can we do to continue to support our teachers in implementation of SEL programs within their classrooms? In effect, we need to create better synergy among researchers, practitioners, and policy makers (Wiglesworth, et al., 2016). Doing so will require multiple stakeholders working together to ensure that as many students as

possible benefit from well-conceptualized and well-implemented SEL programs (Schonert-Reichel, et al., 2017). Amid unprecedented public health and educational crisis, we have little empirical understanding of how educators' teaching experiences, especially in terms of their self-efficacy, interact with their social-emotional competencies and how that can influence their current teaching placement (Yang, 2021). Moreover studies have found that educators who are socially aware are more likely to recognize and understand their students, colleagues, and family members' emotions and more likely to understand others' perspectives that may differ from their own (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Two years and a significance global crisis, the need is more urgent than ever to understand SEL and the justification for ignoring it in the professional learning community nonexistent (Bouffard 2021).

When researchers synthesized results from hundreds of existing studies in the area of SEL, they found that those who participated and worked within SEL programs saw greater gains in SEL competencies and academic performance relative to those who did not participate (Durlak et. al, 2011). Teacher emotions are critically important for determining the quality of the classroom environment and ability to recognize SEL needs (Garner, Bender, & Fedor, 2018). Positive teacher emotions result in more effective teaching (Davis, 2003), where negative teacher emotions can interfere with the motivation for teaching (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Teacher job satisfaction and success in the classroom (Brackett et al. 2010) is one aspect but some researchers have been unable to achieve change in teachers' ability to recognize students' social-emotional difficulties even after receiving training in SEL content alone (Moor et al., 2007). Jennings et. al. (2017) shared that with training that is focused on teachers' emotional

competence and relationship building skills can improve teachers' emotional regulation ability, mindfulness and the quality of their interactions with their students.

Chapter 3

Methods

Research Design

The researcher's motivation to embark on this study was to gather baseline information on teachers' understanding of SEL that can serve as basis for future SEL programming. With this in mind, the researcher used a cross-sectional quantitative approach to primarily examine SEL competencies, beliefs, and self-efficacy of high school teachers. Quantitative research is a scientific investigation that includes both experimental and non-experimental methods that are concerned with the development and testing of hypotheses and the generation of models and theories to explain behavior (Hoy & Adams, 2016). In this study, a non-experimental method was utilized as there was no attempt to manipulate the primary variables and randomization was not required in the selection of participants.

In implementing the quantitative design, the researcher conducted a quite extensive review of scientific literature to develop relevant research questions and correspondingly formulate testable hypotheses. Following this, a survey questionnaire was assembled that primarily included scales to measure SEL beliefs, competencies, and self-efficacy of teachers. These scales were primarily chosen based on sufficient evidence of validity and reliability as informed by the literature. Since reliability of scores is required in a quantitative study, internal consistency of each scale used in the study was calculated with the data collected in the study. Scale items were in likert-type format that can yield scores in a continuous measurement scale. In addition, items in the demographic survey followed a multiple-choice response format. Options were later

coded using numbers to resemble either a categorical (e.g., gender) or ordinal (educational attainment) scale of measurement.

In collecting the data, a cross-sectional design was employed wherein the researcher invited all prospective high school teachers in a high need metropolitan district located in the southern area of a northeast state. Using Qualtrics as an online survey platform, a multi-part survey was answered by the target participants within a specific period, from mid-October to mid-December 2021. After the survey was terminated, data were organized and cleaned for statistical analysis via IBM SPSS v. 28.

Setting

This study was conducted in co-educational high schools of a highly diverse metropolitan district located in the southern area of a northeast state with a student population of 4,959 students (Public School Review, 2021). The public high schools within the school district have a graduation rate of 67% which is less than the New Jersey average of 91% (Public School Review, 2021). The school district is comprised of varying schools with two early childhood learning centers, eight family schools (i.e., Pre-K to 8 grades), one middle school, and 10 high schools that are listed as either comprehensive public or charter schools. This study covered the 10 high schools located throughout the district. The high school demographics included the location, size, and school type (i.e., charter schools, public magnet, and public comprehensive schools). Most of the schools were built in the early to mid-1900s whereas the charter schools were built in the later 1900s and early 2000's. Charter schools require an application process as well as following a charter board of education. There are five charter schools that were used within this study. Public magnet schools also require an application process but fall

under the district board of education. There were 3 magnet schools used within this study. Comprehensive schools have open enrollment to all high school students living within the highly diverse metropolitan district. There are two comprehensive schools that participated in this study.

In terms of overall students' demographics This study was conducted in a high need district therefore it is important to have a baseline of the student population that our teachers were serving. Based on public school review (2021) the pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade school district has a student population of 7,935 students at a 99% minority rate. Currently, the high school student population shows 1% Asian, 45% Hispanic, 53% Black, and 1% White. There are very few students listed in the Hawaiian, multiple races and American Indian. By participating in the Federal Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act program, the school district under study is currently offering free meals to students attending any of the district's 26 schools (School Report Card, 2020). Per the New Jersey Department of Special Education (2020) there are 1,175 students enrolled in special education within this school district.

Participants

The participants in this study were drawn from over 400 high school teachers in the entire school district. Teachers were invited to participate in the study through the assistance of the administration, as well as district emails and contacts from the Board of Education. Profile of participants is displayed in Table 1 that includes both teacher demographics and school characteristics for the 240 participants who consented to complete the survey.

Profile of Participant by Teacher Demographics

Years of Teaching. Years of teaching was based upon the total years of teaching regardless of district in which a teacher has worked. There was an even distribution of participants years of teaching as 25.80% have 11 to 15 years, 24.20% with 5 to 10 years, 20.80% with more than 20 years, and 17.50% with 16 to 20 years of teaching. Only 11.70% of the participants had less than five years of teaching experience.

Gender. Gender distribution of participants included almost two-thirds of females (60.80%) and a little more than a third of males (36.70%). One participant identified himself/herself as cisgender (.40%) and the remaining five participants did not indicate their gender (2.10%).

Race/Ethnicity. Nearly half of the participants were Caucasians/Whites (42.10%) and about a third were African American/Black (30.40%). Hispanic made up approximately one-fifth (18.80%) of the participants, while the remaining few participants identified themselves belonging to other (5.80%) or did not disclose their race/ethnicity (2.90%). This is similar to the teacher demographics for high school teachers as reported on the school district report card for the 2019-2020 school year (46.10%).

Age. Majority of the participants' ages ranged from 31 to 50 years (60.61%), and slightly more than one-fifth have ages from 51 to above 60 years (22.50%). Younger teachers with ages ranging from 21 to 30 years were a minority (11.00%).

Educational Attainment. Majority of the participants' completed bachelor's degree/bachelor's degree plus some credits (63.30%), while approximately one-third has

master's degree/master's degree plus some credits. Very few of the participants have doctoral degrees (1.30%).

Profile of Participants by School Characteristics

School Type. Distribution of participants by school type showed that close to half were from comprehensive schools (40.80%), a little more than a third from charter schools (35.80%), and nearly a fourth from public magnet (23.30%).

Classroom Setting. Majority of the participants identified themselves as general education teachers (78.30%) and relatively few were special education teachers (21.70%). Special education teachers included in the sample were assigned in self-contained classrooms (52%), in-class resource (42%), and pull-out resource (8%).

Grade Level Teaching Assignment. Nearly three-fourths of the participants were teaching multiple grade levels (73.30%) and the remaining one-fourth were assigned in a single grade level (26.70%).

Content Area. Distribution of participants by content areas of teaching appeared to be relatively even: social studies (15.80%), mathematics (15.40%), career and technical (13.80%), science (12.50%), English (12.30%), and special areas (11.30%).

Table 1

Participants Demographics

Variable	Category	*n*	*%*
Gender	Male	88	36.70
	Female	146	60.80
	Cis gender	1	0.40

Variable	Category	*n*	*%*
	Did not indicate	5	2.10
Age (in years)	21 to 25	3	1.30
	26 to 30	23	9.60
	31 to 50	38	15.80
	36 to 40	48	20.00
	41 to 45	32	13.30
	46 to 50	36	15.00
	51 to 55	24	10.00
	56 to 60	17	7.10
	Above 60	13	5.40
	Did not indicate	6	2.50
Race/ethnicity	African America/Black	73	30.40
	Hispanic	45	18.80
	White/Caucasian	101	42.10
	Other	14	5.80
	Did not indicate	7	2.90
Years of teaching	Less than 5	28	11.70
	5 to 10	58	24.20
	11 to 15	62	25.80
	16 to 20	42	17.50
	Above 20	50	20.80
Educational attainment	Bachelor's degree/Bachelor's degree plus some credits	152	63.30

Variable	Category	*n*	*%*
	Master's degree/Master's degree plus some credits	73	31.30
	Ph.D./Ed.D.	3	1.30
	Did not indicate	10	4.20
Grade level	Single grade	64	26.70
	9^{th}	27	11.30
	10^{th}	18	7.50
	11^{th}	12	5.00
	12^{th}	7	2.90
	Multiple grades	176	73.30
School type	Comprehensive	98	40.80
	Magnet	56	23.30
	Charter	86	35.80
Classroom setting	General education	188	78.30
	Special education	52	21.00
Content area	English	32	12.30
	Mathematics	37	15.40
	Science	30	12.50
	Social Studies	38	15.80
	Special Area	27	11.30
	Career and Technical	23	13.80
	Multiple Subjects	43	17.9

Sampling Purpose

In this study, the researcher employed a non-probability sampling wherein random selection was not feasible in selecting high school teachers as participants. Non-probability sampling was deemed appropriate since this study was intended to gather baseline information about SEL among high school teachers in a specific district that the researcher is familiar with. In deciding for this sampling design, the researcher acknowledged the possibility of a greater chance of sampling error and the odds of the sample size not adequate enough to represent the population of high school teachers in the school district considered in this study.

Validity and Bias of Sampling

The researcher took into consideration a non-probability sampling method that specifically included convenience and snowball techniques. Even though cluster sampling is useful in quantitative research, this study benefited from a method in educational studies known as non-probability sampling because the researcher was able to use key demographic characteristics and avoid noncertified teachers as prospective participants. The researcher was able to control the sample by using only high school teachers that are employed within the same school district and within targeted high school environment. After participants were informed about the study, they freely decided to participate or not by completing an informed consent.

Instrumentation

To collect information needed to answer the research questions advanced in this study, the researcher used several instruments. Using a published instrument to meet the purpose of the study could be done by adding specific questions that are relevant to the

research content or amending the text in items to make them relevant to the participants (Roni, Merge, & Morris, 2020). The researcher developed a survey questionnaire that included three validated measures such as the Teacher Self-Belief Scale by Brackett et al. (2012), Social-Emotional Competence Teacher Rating Scale by Smetana (2020), and Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale by Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy (2001). In addition, a demographic survey was included to gather information about personal and school characteristics as well as professional development in SEL.

Teacher Self-Belief Scale

The researcher utilized The Teacher Self-Belief Scale by Brackett et al. (2012) to assess key aspects of the teachers' beliefs related to SEL in terms of comfort, commitment, and culture. Comfort items assess teachers' sense of confidence in SEL. Commitment items assess the desire to participate in SEL training and teaching, and culture items assess schoolwide support in SEL implementation. The scale was composed of 12 items that were answered on a five-point likert scale, including strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, and strongly agree.

Validity. Validity of the Teacher Self-Belief Scale was supported through construct and criterion-related validation procedures. Construct validity was determined by factor analysis that demonstrated significant intercorrelations among the scales as follows: comfort and commitment as $r(448) = .21$, commitment and culture $r(448) = .23$, and comfort and culture as $r(448) = .36$. The concurrent validity provided the extent to which the domains of the scales tapped into different constructs, the hypothesis for each domain would be related to different teacher and school characteristics, including teacher efficacy and perception of administration support (Brackett, Reyes, Rivers, Elbertson, &

Salovey, 2012). An Adaptive Efficacy Scale (Search Institute, 2006) measures teachers' beliefs in their ability to modify their methods as needed to have a positive effect on student achievement and has shown concurrent validity evidence in terms of SEL beliefs. The use of RULER by Brackett et al. (2012) looked to examine the correlations between the three SEL beliefs scales and responses can be compared throughout the year. Predictive validity was utilized to determine whether the scale was predictive of the quality implementation of SEL (Brackett et al., 2012). Previous research has shown support of SEL beliefs and assessing the validity of such programs in support of SEL.

Reliability. Internal consistency as evidence of reliability of the Teacher Self-Belief Scale has been assessed using Cronbach alpha. Results indicated consistently strong reliability across subscales such as $\alpha = .86$ for comfort, $\alpha = .93$ for commitment, *and* $\alpha = .84$ for culture (Brackett et al., 2012). For this study, reliability of scores on the Teacher Self -Belief Scale was estimated using the Cronbach alpha, indicating consistently strong reliability across the subscales such as a=.84 for comfort, $\alpha = .78$ for commitment, $\alpha = .77$ for culture, and $\alpha = .77$ for overall.

Social-Emotional Competence Teacher Rating Scale (SECTRS)

SEL competencies were assessed through a 5-point scale. This information focused on the five competencies as described by CASEL as Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship skills, and decision-making skills. Each area of competencies has been defined and clearly understood within the research. Specifically, The Role of Teachers' Social Emotional Competencies Scale by Smetana (2020) is made up of items measuring each SEL competency in reference to the role of the teacher. Number of items for each competency include nine for self-awareness, 10 for

self-management, eight for social awareness, eight for relationship skills, and nine for decision-making skills. Items are answered using a five-point scale such as always, sometimes, not sure, rarely, and never.

Validity. Smetana (2020) derived the item content of the SECTRS from the CASEL Sustainable School-Wide Social and Emotional Learning Implementation Guide and Toolkit (Devaney et al., 2006). Items were further subjected to content review by a panel of experts. Feedback from experts was used to revise the items. For example, item revision included specific teacher behavior or attitude for easier understanding. This process provided some evidence of the SECTRS's content validity. Moreover, Smetana (2020) conducted an exploratory factor analysis using the data from 1,121 students as part of her dissertation to establish a construct validity evidence of the SECTRS. EFA results identified five factors with eigenvalues of more than one and in each factor, items with loadings of .40 or higher were selected.

Validation of the SECTRS. Since Smetana (2020) only examined the construct validity of the SECTRS in a sample of students, a primary contribution of this study was to extend the validity evidence of SECTRS with a sample of teachers. As such, the validation of the SECTRS in this study involved two phases: item-total correlation and exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Item-total correlation was conducted for each subscale of the SETRCS to determine which items can account for an adequate variance of the hypothesized construct that a subscale measures. Items with item-total correlation of at least .40 were considered "acceptable" as they account for a sufficient variance (16%) of the construct measured by a subscale. As reported in Appendix I, 29 out of 43 SECTRS items had item-total correlation of .40 and above. Surprisingly, all the 10 items measuring

self-management subscale had below .40 item-total correlation. Hence, the 29 items were assessing only four of the SEL skills hypothesized to be measured by the SETRCS. The number of items accepted by SEL skills are as follows: eight for self-awareness, seven for social awareness, six for relationship skills, and eight for responsible decision-making. See Appendix K for the results of the item-total correlation of SECTRS items.

In the second and final phase of the validation process, data on the 29 items were subjected to EFA to determine a viable latent structure of the SECTRS. Maximum likelihood factor extraction was used as the data were approximating normal distribution (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999). The scree plot and eigenvalue greater than 1.0 were the criteria used to determine the number of underlying factors that can be extracted from an EFA solution. Since the hypothesized SECTRS factors were assumed to be correlated, the Promax rotation was utilized to obtain a simple structure of the items. To retain items on a specific factor, a factor loading of ≥.40 on the relevant factor and less than .40 on all other factors was set as criteria (Netemeyer, Bearden, & Sharma, 2003). Items that cross-loaded on more than one factor or with loadings below .40 were deleted.

Results of the initial EFA indicated that Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .96, suggesting that the data were appropriate for factor analysis (Gorsuch, 1997). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant [$\chi^2(406) = 4630.96$, $p = .000$], indicating that correlation matrix was considered an identity matrix. Based on the scree plot and eigenvalues, three factors can be extracted from the 29 items that accounted a total explained variance of 58.69% in social-emotional learning competencies as measured by the SECTRS. Factor 1 has an eigenvalue of 9.06 with an

explained variance of 50.05%. Factor 2 has an eigenvalue of 1.36 with a variance of 4.69%, and factor 3 has an eigenvalue of 1.5 with a variance of 3.95%.

Findings of the Promax rotation showed that there were 19 items that uniquely converged on factor 1, with loadings ranging from .45 to .91. Distribution of these items by their intended subscales was as follows: two on self-awareness, seven on social awareness, six on relationship skills, and four on responsible decision-making. One item measuring responsible decision-making cross-loaded on factor 3. Six items measuring self-awareness uniquely loaded on factor 2, with loadings ranging from .44 to .90. Two items loaded on factor 3, with one item cross-loading on factor 1. There were two items measuring responsible decision-making that had below .40 loading on any of the factors. Considering the guidelines on retaining items mentioned previously, 17 items in factor 1 and six items in factor 2 were retained. Only one item was retained in factor 3 but since at least 3 items would be needed for a factor to be psychometrically strong, factor 3 was eventually dropped. Two items on self-awareness that originally loaded on factor 1 were also eliminated because they were not theoretically related to the rest of the items describing social skills (i.e., social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making). Additionally, one item that cross-loaded on factors 1 and 3 was dropped. In summary, out of the 29 items subjected to initial EFA, 23 items were retained and six were eliminated.

An EFA was performed again on the 23 items to determine the final structure of the revised SECTRS. Results of the final EFA using maximum likelihood extraction and Promax as rotation procedure indicated a stable two factor model with a total explained variance of 54.76%. Factor 1 with eigenvalue of 14.51 and a variance of 50.05 was

composed of 17 items with loadings ranging from .44 to .88. Factor 1 was named as social skills subscale since the content of the 17 items is related to social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. On the other hand, factor 2 with eigenvalue of 1.36 and a variance of 4.69% was made up of the remaining six items with loadings ranging from .42 to .92. All the six items were describing self-awareness and thus, factor 2 was labeled as self-awareness subscale. Social skills and self-awareness subscales of the revised SECTRS were highly correlated at r = .79. Thus, it is suggested that a single broad indicator of SEL competencies can be reported when using SECTRS. Detailed results of the initial and final EFA solutions can be found in Appendix Table K1 and Table K2.

Reliability. Smetana (2020) reported the reliability of the SECTRS through Cronbach alpha using student data. Findings indicated strong internal consistency of items within each scale, including self-awareness (α =.77), self-management (α =.88), social awareness (α =.89), relationship skills (α =.80), and decision making (α =.75). For this study, reliability of scores of teachers on the revised SECTRS was estimated by using Cronbach alpha, indicating consistently strong reliability by subscales and total: α =.95 for self-awareness, α =.78 for social skills, and α =.79 for SEL competencies total.

Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale

The short form of the Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale created by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) was designed to gain a better understanding of the activities that create difficulties for teachers in school. The scale is composed of 12 items assessing teacher perceptions in the areas of instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. Items were answered using a likert-type response

format on a sliding scale with options of nothing, very little, some influence, quite a bit, and a great deal.

Validity. Discriminant validity of the Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) was examined using a survey of work alienation because alienation was presumed to be conceptually distinct and negatively related to teacher efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2012). They also examined construct validity employing EFA principal-axis factoring with varying rotation of the different items that showed a 58% of the variance in the respondents' scores. It was concluded that a possibility of an even more parsimonious scale would be viable. Concurrent validity was established by assessing the correlation of the Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale with other existing measures (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2012).

Reliability. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2012) reported the initial evidence of reliability of the Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy using Cronbach alpha. Resulting coefficients across subscales were strong: student engagement (α=.81), instructional strategies (α=.86) and management (α =.86). For this study, reliability of scores on the Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale was also estimated using Cronbach alpha, indicating consistently strong reliability across all the subscales such as α=.81 for student engagement, α =.86 for instructional strategies, α =.86 for management, and α =.87 for overall.

Demographic Survey

The demographic survey provided the researcher with key background information of participants related to personal characteristics, school factors, and

professional development in SEL. The survey was made up of two sections: teacher demographics and professional development.

Teacher Demographics. Within this section are questions pertaining to personal characteristics of teachers such as age, gender, years of teaching, and educational attainment. It also includes questions related to school factors such as school type, classroom setting, grade level teaching, and content area of teaching. The researcher ensured content validity of teacher demographic questions by including only items relevant for the study and referring to other academic sources like dissertations and journal articles.

Professional Development. This section included questions that are intended to assess professional development of teachers related to SEL at the pre-service and in-service levels. At each level, the first question asked if teachers received training related to SEL. If teachers indicated that they participated in training at either level, they were prompted to answer follow-up questions pertaining to adequacy of training, training methods/strategies used, and satisfaction with training received. All questions were stated in close-ended manner and required either a single or multiple response.

The questions assessing professional development were adopted from the McGraw-Hill 2018 Social-Emotional Survey Report (Morning Consult, 2018) and Philippe's dissertation (2017). The McGraw-Hill 2018 Social-Emotional Survey Report is a summary document of a national survey on SEL implementation in schools. The survey was conducted by Morning Consult on September 6-18, 2018, and involved 1,140 teachers, administrators, and parents. Philippe's dissertation is an evaluation of teachers' capacity of teachers in Illinois to provide SEL instruction. The researcher and her

dissertation committee chair believed that these two authoritative sources on SEL programming in schools provided the target questions on program development in SEL for the purpose of this study. To this end, content domain of the questions on program development in SEL is considered to be relevant and thus, achieving content validity.

Data Analysis

The purpose of analyzing data was to make decisions on whether to confirm or not confirm the hypotheses advanced in this study. The first step in the data analysis process was to export the SPSS version of the data from Qualtrics. Following this, the researcher cleaned the data file by deleting participants' personal information (e.g., email address) and IP addresses of their computer network. Then, participants were assigned identification codes. Variables were inspected to make sure that all possible responses in each variable are numerically coded correctly. Moreover, answers on any negatively worded items in the rating scales used in the study were reverse coded.

After cleaning the data, the researcher ran both descriptive and multivariate statistical procedures to generate variable profiles and decide on the study's hypotheses. In terms of descriptive statistics, the researcher utilized frequency and percentages, means, and standard deviations to describe and summarize the teachers' responses on demographic characteristics, professional development, and the primary variables of the study. Skewness and kurtosis were calculated to determine whether scores in the SEL beliefs, competencies, and self-efficacy met normality assumptions.

To address the first and second hypotheses, between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted separately for each demographic characteristic and school factor to determine significant differences or variations in SEL competencies and beliefs

in terms of total and subscale scores. For example, ANOVA was conducted to investigate SEL competencies of teachers with and without professional development in SEL.

To decide on the third hypothesis that postulated the influence of SEL competencies and beliefs on teachers' self-efficacy, a three-step multiple regression was conducted. In step 1, demographic and school covariates were considered as predictors of self-efficacy. SEL beliefs total scores was added as predictor in Step 2, and SEL competencies was entered in Step 3. In deciding for the three hypotheses, *p*-value equal or less than .05 of the calculated statistical coefficients indicated a confirmation or acceptance of the hypothesis.

Role of the Researcher

As a quantitative researcher, it is important to measure tangible and invisible phenomena using numeric data, which the researcher can analyze in order to draw meaningful and maybe novel conclusions (Allen, 2017). Through this study, the researcher utilized a quantitative data collection process to generate an understanding that can confirm or not confirm the hypothesis. The researcher involved a particular group of people, that is, high school teachers within a diverse metropolitan area. The role of the researcher consisted of upholding ethical standards and using the data accordingly. The researcher was sure to collect informed consent forms and use de-identifiable data that protect the rights of the participants. The researcher collected information that can hopefully impact future research.

Limitations of the Methodology

Despite the newfound emphasis on SEL, there are often insufficient measures to assess student and teacher progress as well as evaluate program impacts on SEL-related

constructs (Anderson, Their, & Pitts, 2017). More so, a major reason for the shortage is that most measures take the form of surveys which can suffer from self-report bias, contextual variability, respondent disengagement, and other factors that undermine inferences educators wish to make (Duckworth & Yeager, 2015). A major limitation to this approach can be that self-report bias is especially problematic and results when participants are unwilling to accurately appraise themselves constructively. Another limitation of this methodology can be linked to participants having different implicit standards for how they interpret a specific construct which can cause skewed comparisons across the participants. Quantitative data collection does not allow for more in-depth understanding of the construct and without providing focus groups or interviews, the researcher may not receive more in-depth understanding of why the participants selected the answers as they were recorded.

Ethical Considerations

Careful consideration was required of ethical issues related to the topic of SEL. Most researchers are motivated to do research in order to solve problems and in some way improve the world that they participate within. However, it is important to take into consideration the process that the researcher utilized within this given study to protect the participants and collect data in accordance with ethical practices in research.

This study was submitted for approval by the Rowan University Institutional Review Board. This provided the concrete purpose for the study and clearly identified the reasoning for the research before data were to be collected. First and foremost, the participants are human beings that have feelings and emotions, and not merely research subjects. Therefore, the researcher accorded them respect and understanding through

informed consent that detailed the entire research study. While this study was aimed to gain a better understanding of the social and emotional well-being and self-efficacy high school teachers, their feelings were considered important. During the data collection, the researcher worked to minimize the intrusiveness of the study during the teachers' work time. When working with a sensitive topic such as social and emotional learning, it can be difficult for teachers to feel safe when responding to the survey. Informed consent was gathered first before teachers even began the survey. Particular care was given to maintain the confidentiality of teachers' identities throughout the data management and final writing of the report where no identifying information was utilized, submitted or released. Data were collected anonymously and protected in a secure, digital environment that only the researcher can access. The study was fully explained to the participants, their participation was completely voluntary, and that they were informed to withdraw from the study at any time.

Overview of Methodology

Through quantitative research approach, the researcher was able to examine if there were significant differences in the SEL beliefs and competencies of teachers by various demographics and school characteristics, and determine whether SEL beliefs and competencies significantly influence teachers' self-efficacy. Being that there is limited research on SEL with teachers, this research study may impact future research that would be pertinent to improving SEL in high school teachers. The quantitative approach provided the necessary baseline information that was needed for the future SEL programming in school district under study. Without baseline data, it can be difficult to determine goals as well as plan for the resources and activities of a viable SEL program.

Previous research has shown a correlation with SEL and elementary school teachers but it is much more limited within high school setting. Quantitative research provided the clear data that can be shared with administrative teams and can support the impact of SEL within higher educational environment. Qualitative research is used more when the researcher has no idea what to expect. However, in this case, the researcher is familiar with the district and the lack of social emotional learning programs that has been seen within the high school placements is evident. The researcher was able to define the problem and was looking to develop an approach to the problem but gaining the general perspective of SEL beliefs and competencies and teachers was most relevant.

Moving forward, the quantitative research approach provided the researcher with more control over how the data was going to be collected and gain a better perspective. Being that the researcher is informed of the limited knowledge about SEL in high school teachers, this study would provide the key aspects to the forefront before incorporating the overall idea of SEL in high schools.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Discussion

Chapter IV includes an analysis of the collected data along with an explanation of the findings that answer the study's three research questions. Data from this study provide information that could be used to inform educators, teacher preparation programs, and future researchers related to teachers' SEL competence, beliefs, and self-efficacy. The chapter begins with a review of the survey instrumentation and administration, and followed by a description of the data analysis. Next, detailed findings are presented by research questions with supporting statistical results in tables. The chapter concludes with a discussion of salient findings supporting the hypotheses in light of the scientific literature on SEL.

As stated in Chapter 1, the study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do SEL beliefs and competencies vary by teacher demographics?
    a. years of teaching
    b. Educational Attainment
    c. Professional development in SEL
2. How do SEL beliefs and competencies vary by school characteristics?
    a. Classroom setting
    b. School type
    C. Grade level teaching
3. How do social-emotional learning beliefs and competencies influence teacher self-efficacy?

In accord to the research questions stated, the following hypotheses were postulated:

1. Teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies significantly vary by years of teaching, educational attainment, and professional development.
2. Teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies of school significantly vary by classroom setting, school type, and grade level teaching.
3. Teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies significantly influence self-efficacy.

Review of Survey Instrumentation and Survey Administration

The study used a multi-part online survey questionnaire distributed to almost 400 high school teachers within a single school district that included public and charter high schools. There survey questionnaire was organized into six parts: Part I: informed consent, Part II: demographics, Part III: professional development, Part IV: SEL beliefs, Part V: SEL competencies (questions broken into different sections for each competency: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making skills), and Part VI: teacher self-efficacy. A total of 267 teachers accessed the online survey and completed the consent form. Also, some participants indicated that they would like to receive a 45- minute of professional development as incentive in completing the survey.

Collection Process

Prior to data collection, the researcher submitted the dissertation proposal for review and approval by the Rowan University Institutional Review Board. Once approved, the survey was sent to the union representative of the school district (i.e., Urban School District) and all charter high school principals. Upon receipt of

endorsement of the survey by the union representative and charter high school principals, the researcher sent out the survey link to all high school teachers via email addresses provided by the technology department of the school district. Next, the researcher utilized the district webpages and did in-person school visits to further solicit teachers' participation in the survey, emphasizing the benefits of the information generated in the study to the district's stakeholders, including students, teachers, administrators, and parents. Weekly reminder was sent out automatically to the participants to increase response rate. Survey was terminated after two months it was open on Qualtrics. Then, the data file was exported to the SPSS v. 28 for statistical analysis.

Data Preparation

Missing Data. After the data file was downloaded from Qualtrics onto SPSS v.28, each data entry was reviewed for partial or missing responses. Out of 267 teachers who accessed the survey, eight teachers declined to participate in the survey and were eventually deleted in the data file. Additional 19 teachers who consented to participate only answered the demographic section of the survey and left the three rating scales not answered. Hence, the researcher decided to remove these teachers with incomplete responses from the data file. The final data file included 240 teachers with complete survey responses.

Statistical Analysis. The purpose of statistical data analysis was to employ robust procedures on the data in order to summarize the findings and make inferences on the hypotheses. The researcher was cognizant of the research questions, hypotheses, and scale of measurement of the study variables in determining appropriate statistical tools

for data analysis. As a result, descriptive and inferential statistical procedures were utilized for data analysis.

Specifically, descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to describe and summarize the teachers' responses on demographic characteristics, professional development, and the primary variables of the study. Skewness and kurtosis were calculated to determine whether scores in the SEL beliefs, competencies, and self-efficacy met normality assumptions. To address the first and second hypotheses, between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted separately for each demographic characteristic and school factor to determine significant differences or variations in SEL competencies and beliefs in terms of total and subscale scores. To decide on the third hypothesis that postulated the influence of SEL competencies and beliefs on teachers' self-efficacy, a three-step multiple regression was conducted. In deciding for the three hypotheses, *p*-value equal or less than .05 of the calculated statistical coefficients indicated a confirmation or acceptance of the hypothesis.

Results

Preliminary Results of the Professional Development on SEL

Professional development in SEL of teachers was inquired in this study. Information on professional development in SEL included pre-service training, in-service training, and overall adequacy and satisfaction on professional development. In terms of SEL pre-service training, a little more than three-fourths (77.10%) of the teachers indicated not receiving training and less than one-fourth (22.90%) of the teachers stated receiving SEL training. Within the subgroup of teachers that received pre-service

training, the following types of SEL professional development activities were noted: assigned readings (11.70%), workshop (8.80%), course lectures (7.50%), entire course (2.90%), assignments/projects (2.90%), other (2.50%), research experience (2.10%), and student teaching (1.30%). Furthermore, these teachers rated the adequacy of their pre-service training in SEL on a seven-point response scale, ranging from completely inadequate to completely adequate. Overall adequacy resulted to a mean = 4.49 and *SD* = 1.30, suggesting a "s*omewhat adequate*" professional development in SEL.

In terms of in-service training, more than half (60.80%) of the teachers indicated not participating while more than one-third (39.30%) not participating in SEL professional development. Within the subgroup of teachers that participated in-service training, the following types of SEL training were noted: school sponsored in-services (23.30%), workshop (in-person or online) (22.10%), professional learning community (8.30%), personal reading (5.80%), collaboration/consultation (2.90%) and others (0.80%). Overall adequacy resulted to a mean = 4.39 and *SD* = 1.20, suggesting a "s*omewhat adequate*" professional development in SEL. Also, satisfaction of in-service training was rated using a seven-point response scale, ranging from completely dissatisfied to completely satisfied. Overall satisfaction rating was leaning on the "*neutral*", with a mean = 3.55 and *SD* = 1.26. Table 2 presents a detailed results on professional development in SEL.

Table 2

Professional Development in SEL

Variable	Category	*n*	*%*
SEL pre-services training	Yes	55	22.90
	No	185	77.10
Types of SEL pre-services training	Assigned reading	28	11.70
	Workshop	21	8.80
	Course lectures	18	7.50
	Entire course	7	2.90
	Assignments/projects	7	2.90
	Research experience	5	2.10
	Student teaching	3	1.30
	Other	6	2.50
Adequacy of SEL pre-service instruction (*M=4.49; SD=1.30)*	Mostly inadequate	5	2.10
	Somewhat inadequate	6	2.50
	Neutral	16	6.70
	Somewhat adequate	16	6.70
	Mostly adequate	9	3.80
	Completely adequate	3	1.30
SEL in-service professional development	Yes	94	39.30
	No	146	60.80
Types of SEL addressed during in-service professional development	School sponsored in services (online or in person)	56	23.30
	Workshop (online or in person	53	22.10

Variable	Category	*n*	*%*
	Professional Learning Community	20	8.30
	Personal reading	14	5.80
	Consultation/collaboration with agency or institution	7	2.90
	Other	2	0.80
Adequacy of SEL in-service professional development (*M=4.39;SD=1.20)*	Mostly inadequate	9	3.80
	Somewhat inadequate	13	5.40
	Neutral	18	7.50
	Somewhat adequate	42	17.50
	Mostly adequate	10.	4.20
	Completely adequate	2	0.80
Satisfaction of SEL professional development (*M=3.55; SD=1.26)*	Completely dissatisfied	9	3.80
	Mostly dissatisfied	42	17.50
	Somewhat dissatisfied	62	25.80
	Neutral	83	34.60
	Somewhat satisfied	27	11.30
	Mostly satisfied	13	5.40
	Completely satisfied	4	1.70

Primary Findings

This section presents the statistical findings on the variations in SEL beliefs and competencies by teacher demographics and school factors. Moreover, results on the influence of SEL beliefs and competencies on teacher self-efficacy are reported. Results are organized by research questions, and within each research question are tables summarizing the statistical output with accompanying write-up that highlight significant findings.

Research Question #1: Variations in SEL Beliefs and Competencies by Teacher Demographics

Influence of demographic variables as possible determinants of SEL beliefs and competencies were analyzed through series of one-way between-groups ANOVA. Demographic variables included years of teaching, educational attainment, pre-service professional development in SEL, and in-service professional development in SEL. ANOVA for each demographic variable examined three components of SEL competencies (i.e., total, self-awareness skills, and social skills) and four components of SEL beliefs (i.e., total, comfort subscale, commitment subscale, and culture subscale).

Years of Teaching. Mean differences in teachers' SEL competencies total [F (4, 235) = 3.11, $p \leq .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .05$] and social skills [F(4, 235) = 3.22, $p \leq .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .05$] were found to be significant across years of teaching subgroups. Pairwise comparisons indicated that teachers with more than 21 years of teaching had higher levels of SEL competencies total and social skills compared to their peers with less than five years or those with 11-15 years of teaching. On the other hand, self-awareness skills were found to be similar across years of teaching subgroups [F (4, 235) = 2.25, p >.05].

No significant mean differences were indicated on teachers' SEL beliefs total across years of teaching subgroups [F (4, 235) = 1.12, p >.05]. Similarly, mean differences in comfort subscale [F (4, 235) = .73, p >.05], commitment subscale [F(4, 235) = 1.40, p >.05], and culture subscale [F(4, 235) = 1.46, p >.05] were not significant across years of teaching subgroups. Summary of ANOVA results are reported in Table 3.

Table 3

SEL Beliefs and Competencies by Years of Teaching

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*P*	*Partial η2*
Self-Awareness	Under 5	3.95	0.49			
	5 to 10	4.00	0.54			
	11 to 15	3.94	0.60			
	16 to 20	4.12	0.48			
	21+	4.3	0.48	2.25	>0.05	
Social Skills	Under 5	4.15	0.65			
	5 to 10	4.22	0.61			
	11 to 15	4.17	0.60	3.22	<0.05	0.05 small
	16 to 20	4.30	0.54			
	21+	4.44	0.54			
SEL Competencies Total	Under 5	4.05	0.54			
	5 to 10	4.11	0.56			
	11 to 15	4.06	0.54	3.11	<0.05	0.05 small
	16 to 20	4.20	0.48			

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*		
	21+	4.37	0.48		
Comfort	Under 5	3.19	0.72		
	5 to 10	3.29	0.73		
	11 to 15	3.36	0.73	0.73	>0.05
	16 to 20	3.48	0.83		
	21+	3.30	0.67		
Commitment	Under 5	3.99	0.64		
	5 to 10	3.93	0.62		
	11 to 15	4.08	0.53	1.40	>0.05
	16 to 20	4.19	0.48		
	21+	4.05	0.54		
Culture	Under 5	3.40	0.55		
	5 to 10	3.15	0.75		
	11 to 15	3.11	0.58	1.46	>0.05
	16 to 20	3.26	0.77		
	21+	3.35	0.60		
SEL beliefs total	Under 5	3.53	0.42		
	5 to 10	3.46	0.52		
	11 to 15	3.52	0.39	1.12	>0.05
	16 to 20	3.64	0.44		
	21+	3.56	0.40		

Note. Partial η2= .01-.05 (small); .06-13 (medium); .14 and above (large)

Educational Attainment. Mean differences in teachers' SEL competencies total [*F* (4, 235) = 35.33, *p* <.001, Partial η^2 = .32], self-awareness skills [*F* (4, 235) = 20.27, *p* <.001, Partial η^2 = .21], and social skills [*F*(4, 235) = 42.24, *p* < .001, Partial η^2 = .36] were found to be significant across educational attainment subgroups. Pairwise comparisons indicated that compared to teachers who completed bachelor's degree only, those who completed bachelor's plus, master's, or master's plus/doctoral degrees had higher levels of SEL competencies total, self-awareness skills, and social skills. Similarly, mean differences in teachers' SEL beliefs total [*F* (4, 235) = 4.67, *p* <.001, Partial η^2 = .06], comfort subscale [*F* (4, 235) = 3.63, *p* < .01, Partial η^2 = .05], and commitment subscale [*F*(4, 235) = 2.85, *p* < .05, Partial η^2 = .04] were found to be significant across educational attainment subgroups. Pairwise comparisons indicated that compared to teachers who completed bachelor's degree only, those who completed bachelor's plus, master's, or master's plus/doctoral degrees had more positive attitudes related to SEL, including higher sense of confidence and desire to participate in SEL training and teaching. However, mean differences in culture subscale were found to be similar across educational attainment subgroups [*F* (4, 235) = .79, *p* >.05]. Table 4 displays the ANOVA summary results.

Table 4

SEL Beliefs and Competencies by Degree Attainment

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*P*	*Partial η2*
Self-Awareness	Bachelor's	4.04	0.43	20.27	<0.001	0.21 (large)
	Bachelor's +	4.25	0.50			

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*			
	Master's	4.46	0.64			
	Master's+/ Doctoral	4.70	0.40			
Social Skills	Bachelor's	3.72	0.51			
	Bachelor's +	4.11	0.52			
	Master's	4.47	0.41	42.24	<0.001	0.36 (large)
	Master's+/ Doctoral	4.55	0.41			
SEL competencies total	Bachelor's	3.88	0.44			
	Bachelor's +	4.18	0.49			
	Master's	4.47	0.46	35.33	<0.001	0.32 (large)
	Master's+/ Doctoral	4.62	0.37			
Comfort	Bachelor's	3.17	0.69			
	Bachelor's +	3.50	0.70			
	Master's	3.51	0.74	3.63	<0.01	0.05 (small)
	Master's+/ Doctoral	3.42	0.80			
Commitment	Bachelor's	3.94	0.51			
	Bachelor's +	4.14	0.51			
	Master's	4.20	0.62	2.85	<0.05	0.04 (small)
	Master's+/ Doctoral	4.10	0.66			
Culture	Bachelor's	3.18	0.54			
	Bachelor's +	3.21	0.61			
	Master's	3.37	0.79	0.79	>0.05	
	Master's+/ Doctoral	3.24	0.90			

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*P*	*Partial η2*
SEL beliefs total	Bachelor's	3.43	0.42			
	Bachelor's +	3.61	0.38			
	Master's	3.70	0.47			
	Master's+/ Doctoral	3.59	0.46	4.67	<0.001	0.06 (medium)

Note. Partial η2= .01-.05 (small); .06-13 (medium); .14 and above (large)

Pre-Service Professional Development in SEL. Mean differences in SEL competencies total [*F (*1, 238) = 10.91, $p < .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .02$] and social skills [*F(*1, 238) = 17.54, $p < .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .07$] were found to be significant between teachers who participated and not participated in SEL pre-service training. Pairwise comparisons showed that teachers who participated in SEL pre-service training had higher levels of SEL competencies total and social skills than their peers who did not participate. On the contrary, no significant mean difference were found on self-awareness skills between teachers who participated and not participated in SEL pre-service training [*F(*1, 238) = 3.77, $p > .05$].

Likewise, mean differences in SEL beliefs total [*F (*1, 238) = 40.48, $p < .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .12$], comfort subscale [*F(*1, 238) = 31.40, $p < .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .12$], commitment subscale [*F (*1, 238) = 5.88, $p < .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .02$], and culture subscale [*F(*1, 238) = 17.79, $p < .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .04$] were all found to be significant between teachers who participated and not participated in SEL pre-service training. Pairwise comparisons showed that compared to teachers who did not participate in SEL pre-service training, those who participated had more positive attitude on SEL, including

higher sense of confidence, desire to participate in SEL training and teaching, and support in schoolwide SEL implementation. ANOVA summary results displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

SEL Beliefs and Competencies by Pre-Service Professional Development in SEL

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*P*	*Partial η2*
Self-Awareness	Yes	4.38	0.51	3.77	>0.05	
	No	4.22	0.54			
Social Skills	Yes	4.34	0.54	17.54	<0.001	0.07 (medium)
	No	3.97	0.59			
SEL competencies total	Yes	4.36	0.50	10.91	<0.001	0.02 (small)
	No	4.10	0.53			
Comfort	Yes	3.81	0.60	31.40	<0.001	0.12 (medium)
	No	3.21	0.55			
Commitment	Yes	4.22	0.60	5.88	<0.05	0.02 (small)
	No	4.01	0.55			
Culture	Yes	3.57	0.68	17.79	<0.001	0.04 (small)
	No	3.15	0.64			
SEL beliefs total	Yes	3.87	0.47	40.48	<0.001	0.12 (medium)
	No	3.46	0.40			

Note. Partial η2= .01-.05 (small); .06-13 (medium); .14 and above (large)

In-Service Professional Development in SEL. Mean differences in SEL competencies total [F (1, 238) = 9.67, $p < .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .04$], self-awareness skills [F (1, 238) = 5.66, $p < .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .02$], and social skills [F(1, 238) = 9.85 $p < .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .04$] were found to be significant between teachers who participated and not participated in SEL in-service training. Pairwise comparisons showed that teachers who participated in in-service training had higher levels of SEL competencies total, self-awareness skills, and social skills than their peers who did not participate.

Similarly, mean differences in SEL beliefs total [F (1, 238) = 26.37, $p < .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .10$], comfort subscale [F(1, 238) = 22.63, $p < .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .03$], commitment subscale [F (1, 238) = 6.71, $p < .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .03$], and culture subscale [F(1, 238) = 7.33, $p < .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .03$] were all found to be significant between teachers who participated and not participated in SEL in-service training. Pairwise comparisons showed that compared to teachers who did not participate in in-service training, those who participated had more positive attitude on SEL, including higher sense of confidence, desire to participate in SEL training and teaching, and support in schoolwide SEL implementation. Table 6 summarizes the ANOVA results.

Table 6

SEL Beliefs and Competencies by In-Service Professional Development in SEL

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*P*	*Partial η2*
Self-Awareness	Yes	4.36	0.49	5.66	<0.05	0.02 (small)
	No	4.19	0.56			
Social Skills	Yes	4.21	0.56			

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*			
	No	3.96	0.60	9.85	<0.001	0.04 (small)
SEL competencies total	Yes	4.24	0.53	9.67	<0.001	0.04 (small)
	No	4.01	0.57			
Comfort	Yes	3.62	0.72	22.63	<0.001	0.03 (small)
	No	3.18	0.70			
Commitment	Yes	4.17	0.51	6.71	<0.05	0.03 (small)
	No	3.98	0.59			
Culture	Yes	3.39	0.65	7.33	<0.001	0.03 (small)
	No	3.15	0.67			
SEL beliefs total	Yes	3.73	0.43	26.37	<0.001	0.10 (medium)
	No	3.44	0.43			

Note. Partial η2= .01-.05 (small); .06-13 (medium); .14 and above (large)

Research Question #2: Variations in SEL Beliefs and Competencies by School Characteristics

Influence of school characteristics as possible determinants of teachers' SEL beliefs and SEL competencies were analyzed through series of one-way between-groups ANOVA. School factors included classroom setting, grade level teaching, and school type. ANOVA for each school characteristic examined three components of SEL competencies (i.e., total, self-awareness skills, and social skills) and four components of SEL beliefs (i.e., total, comfort subscale, commitment subscale, and culture subscale).

Classroom Setting. Mean differences in SEL competencies total [F (1, 238) = 13.52, $p < .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .01$], self-awareness skills [F (1, 238) = 5.97, $p \leq .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .02$], and social skills [F (1, 238) = 19.18, $p \leq .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .08$] between general education and special education teachers were significant. Pairwise comparisons indicated that compared to general education teachers, special education teachers were found to have consistently higher levels of SEL competencies total, self-awareness skills, and social skills.

Mean differences in SEL beliefs total [F (1, 238) = 7.59, $p \leq .01$, Partial $\eta^2 = .03$], comfort subscale [F (1, 238) = 5.78, $p \leq .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .02$], commitment subscale [F (1, 238) = 5.01, $p \leq .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .02$] between general education and special education teachers were significant. Pairwise comparisons showed that compared to general education teachers, special education teachers were found to have more positive attitudes on SEL, including higher sense of confidence and desire to participate in SEL training and teaching. However, mean difference in culture subscale [F (1, 238) = .97, $p \geq .05$] between general education and special education teachers was not significant. ANOVA summary results are reported in Table 7.

Table 7

SEL Beliefs and Competencies by Classroom Setting

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*P*	*Partial η2*
Self-Awareness	General education	4.22	0.05	5.97	<0.05	0.02 (small)
	Special education	4.42	0.50			

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*P*	*Partial η2*
Social Skills	General education	3.97	0.59	19.18	<0.001	0.08 (medium)
	Special education	4.37	0.52			
SEL competencies Total	General education	4.09	0.53	13.52	<0.05	0.01 (small)
	Special education	4.39	0.49			
Comfort	General education	3.29	0.72	5.78	<0.05	0.02 (small)
	Special education	3.57	0.78			
Commitment	General education	4.01	0.56	5.01	<0.05	0.02 (small)
	Special education	4.21	0.58			
Culture	General education	3.22	0.66	0.97	>0.05	
	Special education	3.33	0.72			
SEL beliefs total	General education	3.51	0.45	7.59	<0.01	0.03 (small)
	Special education	3.80	0.43			

Note. Partial η2= .01-.05 (small); .06-13 (medium); .14 and above (large)

Grade Level Teaching. Mean differences in SEL competencies total [*F* (1, 238) = .02, *p* ≥.05], self-awareness skills [*F* (1, 238) = .52, *p* ≥.05], and social skills [*F* (1, 238) = .85, *p* ≥.05] between teachers teaching multiple grade and single grade levels were not significant. Likewise, mean differences in SEL beliefs total [*F* (1, 238) = 1.80, *p* ≥.05], comfort subscale, [*F* (1, 238) = .29, *p* ≥.05], commitment subscale [*F* (1, 238) = .35, *p*

≥.05], and culture subscale [F (1, 238) = 2.61, p ≥.05] between teachers teaching multiple grade and single grade levels were not significant. Table 8 summarizes the ANOVA results.

Table 8

SEL Beliefs and Competencies by Grade Level Teaching

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*P*	*Partial η2*
Self-Awareness	Single	4.22	0.54	0.52	>0.05	
	Multiple	4.28	0.50			
Social Skills	Single	4.12	0.59	0.85	>0.05	
	Multiple	4.04	0.52			
SEL competencies Total	Single	4.17	0.57	0.02	>0.05	
	Multiple	4.16	0.52			
Comfort	Single	3.33	0.72	0.29	>0.05	
	Multiple	3.37	0.78			
Commitment	Single	4.02	0.56	0.35	>0.05	
	Multiple	4.07	0.58			
Culture	Single	3.13	0.66	2.61	>0.05	
	Multiple	3.29	0.72			
SEL beliefs total	Single	3.49	0.45	1.80	>0.05	
	Multiple	3.57	0.43			

School Type. Mean differences in SEL competencies total [F (2, 237) = 13.87, $p \leq .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .11$], self-awareness skills [F (2, 237) = 6.30, $p \leq .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .05$] and social skills [F (2, 237) = 20.33, $p \leq .001$, Partial $\eta^2 = .15$] among teachers in comprehensive, magnet, and charter schools were significant. Pairwise comparisons revealed that compared to teachers in charter schools, teachers in comprehensive and magnet schools were found to have consistently higher levels of SEL competencies total, self-awareness skills, and social skills.

Mean differences in SEL beliefs total [F (2, 237) = 1.44, $p > .05$] and comfort subscale [F (2, 237) = 2.50, $p > .05$] among teachers in comprehensive, magnet, and charter schools were not significant. On the other hand, mean differences in commitment subscale [F (2, 237) = 4.23, $p \leq .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .03$] and culture subscale [F (2, 237) = 3.54, $p \leq .05$, Partial $\eta^2 = .03$] were significant. Pairwise comparisons revealed that compared to teachers in charter schools, teachers in comprehensive and magnet schools were found to have higher desire to participate in SEL training and teaching as well as support in schoolwide SEL implementation. Table 9 reports the ANOVA results.

Table 9

SEL Beliefs and Competencies by School Type

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*P*	*Partial η2*
Self-Awareness	Comprehensive	4.29	0.61			
	Magnet	4.43	0.48	6.30	<0.001	0.05 (small)
	Charter	4.11	0.45			
Social skills	Comprehensive	4.20	0.60			

Variable	Subgroup	*M*	*SD*			
	Magnet	4.27	0.51	20.33	<0.001	0.15 (large)
	Charter	3.76	0.52			
SEL competencies Total	Comprehensive	4.25	0.56			
	Magnet	4.35	0.47	13.87	<0.001	0.11 (medium)
	Charter	3.93	0.46			
Comfort	Comprehensive	3.38	0.85			
	Magnet	3.50	0.70	2.50	>0.05	
	Charter	3.22	0.60			
Commitment	Comprehensive	4.17	0.61			
	Magnet	4.97	0.51	4.23	<0.05	0.03 (small)
	Charter	3.93	0.52			
Culture	Comprehensive	3.17	0.72			
	Magnet	3.33	0.73	3.54	<0.05	0.03 (small)
	Charter	3.35	0.54			
SEL beliefs total	Comprehensive	3.55	0.49			
	Magnet	3.63	0.47	1.44	>0.05	
	Charter	3.50	0.39			

Note. Partial η2= .01-.05 (small); .06-13 (medium); .14 and above (large)

Research Question #3: Influence of SEL Beliefs and Competencies on Teacher Self-Efficacy

Bivariate Correlation. As a preliminary step to multiple regression analysis, bivariate correlation was calculated using Pearson *r* to determine possible teacher demographics and school factors that significantly correlate with self-efficacy and thus, to be considered as covariates in the multiple regression analysis. In like manner, correlation of SEL beliefs and competencies with self-efficacy were calculated. As reported in Table 10, the demographics of years of teaching (r = .22), highest degree earned (r = .17), and in-service professional development in SEL (r = -.15) were significantly related to self-efficacy, with small magnitude. It suggests that teachers with more years of teaching, educational background beyond bachelor's degree, and participated in SEL in-service training had higher levels of self-efficacy. Pre-service professional development in SEL was not related to self-efficacy (r =.02).

In addition, school characteristics such as classroom setting (r = .15) and grade level teaching (r = .15) were found to be significantly related to teachers' self-efficacy, with small magnitude. This implies that teachers teaching in special education classroom and multiple grades had higher levels of self-efficacy. School type was not related to self-efficacy (r = -.01).

SEL competencies total was significantly correlated with self-efficacy (r = .28), with small magnitude; implying that as SEL competencies are enhanced, teachers become more optimistic of their abilities to overcome challenges in teaching related to instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. Specific SEL competencies such as self-awareness and social skills were also significantly related to

self-efficacy; however, these two SEL competencies highly overlap (r = .79) and were dropped from multiple regression analysis due to multicollinearity with SEL competencies total.

SEL beliefs total (r = .27), comfort subscale (r= .25), and commitment subscale (r = .22) were significantly related to teachers' self-efficacy, with small magnitude. This indicates that as teachers develop more positive attitudes about SEL including sense of confidence and desire to participate in SEL training and teaching, they become more optimistic of their abilities to overcome challenges in teaching related to instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. Culture subscale was not significantly related to self-efficacy (r = .01). Because SEL beliefs total is a broader index of teachers' SEL beliefs that encompasses all three subscales of comfort, commitment, and culture; the individual subscales as predictors were dropped from multiple regression analysis.

Table 10

Pearson Correlation of Demographic Variables, SEL Competencies, SEL Beliefs with Teaching Self-Efficacy

Variable	*r*	P	Magnitude
Years of teaching	.22**	<0.01	Small
Grade level	.15*	<0.05	Small
Highest degree earned	.17**	<0.01	Small
School type	-0.01	>0.05	
Pre-services professional development	0.02	>0.05	

Variable	*r*	P	Magnitude
In-service professional development	-0.15	<0.05	Small
Classroom setting	.15	<0.05	Small
SEL competencies	.28	<0.01	Small
SEL beliefs-comfort	.25	<0.01	Small
SEL beliefs-commitment	.22	<0.01	Small
SEL beliefs-culture	.01	>0.05	
SEL beliefs-total	.27	<0.01	Small

Note. Pearson r= ≥ .10 = small; ≥ .30 = moderate; ≥ .50 = large

Multiple Regression Analysis. Based on the results of the bivariate correlation analysis, teacher demographics such as years of teaching, educational attainment, and in-service professional development in SEL; as well as school factors such as grade level teaching and classroom setting were considered as covariates in the multiple regression analysis. These covariates, together with SEL beliefs and competencies, served as predictors of teachers' self-efficacy.

Multiple regression analysis was conducted in sequential steps to determine the relative contribution of the covariates, SEL beliefs, and SEL competencies on self-efficacy of teachers. In step 1 of the regression equation, demographic characteristics such as years of teaching, grade level teaching, educational attainment, in-service professional development on SEL, and classroom setting were entered into the equation. In step 2, SEL beliefs was added to the equation. Finally, in step 3, SEL competencies was added to the equation. To determine possible multicollinearity, indices of tolerance

(TOL) and variance inflation factor (VIF) from the regression analysis were referred to. In general, the values of VIF that exceed 10 are often regarded as indicating multicollinearity, but in weaker models values above 2.5 may be a cause for concern whereas TOL levels should be below .10 (O'Brian, 2007). No multicollinearity was noted in the analysis, with TOLs ranging from .77 to .94, and VIFs ranging from 1.06 to 1.30).

As summarized in Table 11, results of the regression analysis indicated that in Step 1, teacher demographics and school factors collectively explained approximately 12% (ΔR^2 = .12, ΔF (4, 235) = 6.13, $p \leq .001$) of the variance in self-efficacy. Years of teaching (β = .20, t = 3.10, $p \leq .01$), grade level teaching (β = .13, t = 2.16, $p \leq .05$), and in-service professional development in SEL (β = -.17, t = - 2.68, $p \leq .01$) significantly influence teachers' self-efficacy. This implies that teachers with more years of teaching, those teaching in multiple grade levels, and participated in-service professional development in SEL are more likely to become optimistic of their abilities to overcome challenges in teaching related to instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement.

In Step 2, the addition of SEL beliefs accounted for a 3% increase in the variance of self-efficacy (ΔR^2 = .03, ΔF (6, 233) = 7.79, $p \leq .01$). SEL beliefs (β = .19, t = 2.79, $p \leq .01$) significantly influenced self-efficacy in that, teachers who have more positive attitudes about SEL are more likely to become optimistic in their abilities to overcome challenges in teaching related to instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. Years of teaching (β = .19, t = 3.01, $p \leq .01$) and grade level teaching (β = 12, t = 1.93, $p \leq .05$) remained to significantly influence self-efficacy at Step 2.

In Step 3, the addition of SEL competencies accounted for a minimal 1% increase in the variance of self-efficacy (ΔR^2 = .01, ΔF (7, 232) = 3.81, $p \leq .05$). SEL competencies (β = .15, t = 1.95, $p \leq .05$) significantly influenced self-efficacy, suggesting that as teachers enhanced their SEL competencies, they are more likely to become optimistic of their abilities to overcome challenges in teaching related to instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. Years of teaching (β = .17, t = 2.75, $p \leq .01$) and grade level teaching (β = .13, t = 2.13, $p \leq .05$) remained to significantly influence self-efficacy at Step 3.

Table 11

Multiple Regression of Teaching Self-Efficacy

Predictor	*Adj R2*	*ΔR2*	*B*	*SE B*	β	*t*	*F*	*P*
Step 1	0.10	0.12					6.13	<0.001
Intercept			6.39	0.28		22.67		<0.001
Years of teaching			0.11	0.04	0.20	3.10		<0.01
Grade level			0.23	0.11	0.13	2.16		<0.05
Highest degree earned			0.06	0.04	0.11	1.63		>0.05
In-service professional development			-0.25	0.10	-0.17	-2.68		<0.01
Classroom setting			0.16	0.12	0.09	1.34		>0.05

Predictor	*Adj R2*	*ΔR2*	*B*	*SE B*	β	*t*	*F*	*P*
Step 2	0.12	0.03					7.79	<0.01
Intercept			5.29	0.48		10.95		<0.01
Years of teaching			0.11	0.04	0.19	3.01		<0.01
Grade level			0.20	0.10	0.12	1.93		<0.05
Highest degree earned			0.04	0.04	0.07	1.03		>0.05
In-service professional development			-0.16	0.10	-0.11	-1.63		>0.05
Classroom setting			0.12	0.12	0.07	1.02		>0.05
SEL beliefs			0.31	0.11	0.19	2.79		<0.01
Predictor	*Adj R2*	*ΔR2*	*B*	*SE B*	β	*t*	*F*	*P*
Step 3	0.13	0.01					3.81	<0.05
Intercept			4.81	0.54		8.90		<0.001
Years of teaching			0.10	0.04	0.17	2.75		<0.01
Grade level			0.22	0.10	0.13	2.13		<0.05
Highest degree earned			0.01	0.04	0.01	0.15		>0.05
In-service professional development			-0.14	0.10	-0.10	-1.40		>0.05
Classroom setting			0.09	0.12	0.05	0.77		>0.05

Predictor	*Adj R2*	*ΔR2*	*B*	*SE B*	β	*t*	*F*	*P*
SEL beliefs total			0.23	0.12	0.14	1.88		>0.05
SEL competencies total			0.21	0.11	0.15	1.95		<0.05

Discussion

Social-emotional skills can be possible explanation for why some teachers are able to successfully manage the multitude of classroom responsibilities in addition to providing engaging lessons and minimizing classroom management issues (Smetana, 2020). This study intended to extend research on SEL in teachers, specifically attempting to provide an understanding of the teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies. (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Previous research shows that while there are systems in place for addressing student social and emotional well-being, the need to address teachers' SEL beliefs and competence is equally valuable (Anderson, 2021). The lack of teachers' SEL skills can lead to other issues that can impact the learning environment and exiting the teaching profession (Batchelor, 2021). Salient findings previously presented in this chapter are further explained in light of existing empirical studies on SEL.

SEL Beliefs, Competencies and Teacher Demographics

The first aim of this study was to explore the variations in teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies by the demographic characteristics. General findings indicated that SEL beliefs and competencies of teachers varied by educational attainment and professional development, both pre- and in-service. Moreover, SEL competencies but not beliefs differed by years of teaching experience. With these findings, the hypothesis that

teachers' SEL competencies and beliefs of teachers vary by years of teaching, educational attainment, and professional development was confirmed.

Current literature has highlighted the influence demographic factors on SEL competencies and beliefs of teachers. The awareness teachers on their SEL competence allows them to recognize their own emotions and coping strategies (Caspary, 2021). Batchelor (2021) emphasized the need for teachers to develop their SEL competencies so that they are able to help develop these skills with their students. Related to teaching experience, Webster-Stratton, Reid, and Stoolmiller (2007) indicated that teachers with more years of teaching experience were found to have higher levels of social competence and emotional self-regulation compared to teachers with fewer years of teaching. Furthermore, teachers that had more years of teaching utilized a variety of classroom interventions and were more satisfied in implementing SEL programs (Zhang, et al., 2020). In contrast, beginning teachers do not find themselves in workplaces that are organized to support their learning and more importantly embrace their understanding of themselves as teachers to produce a high classroom learning environment (Johnson & Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004).

Even more so when looking at mental health and social skills of teachers, teaching experience was a significant moderator in the relationship between mental health and their personal social skills (Blad, 2016). Previous research has found that burnout was more likely to be found in beginning or mid-career than late-career educators (Robinson, 2005). Consistent with this plausibility, research has found that teachers with lower compassion and higher burnout were more likely to report their intentions to leave the field of education (Christian-Brandt, Santacrose, & Barnett, 2020). Overall, the current

study provided further support that SEL competencies can be enhanced as teachers stay longer in the profession.

Although teachers are required to become certified in a specific content area within the high school education system, teachers are not expected to further their academic credentials. However, teachers' may consider expanding their academic knowledge in specified content area through pursuit of higher degrees or post graduate education. Huss-Keeler (2020) demonstrated that pursuing higher degrees had both perceived personal and professional value for practitioners, which may have potential implications for current and future practice in serving future students. Consistent with this is the idea that teachers who have a higher degree of attainment are likely to display higher levels SEL competencies within the educational environment (Batchelor, 2021). The findings of the current study confirmed such observation that teachers with higher academic attainment are more likely to strengthen their SEL competencies and beliefs.

Professional development is a critical aspect of the teaching profession. Professional development opportunities for teachers can provide support within their own classrooms as well as improved interactions between students and other school professionals (Reeves & Mare, 2017). Teachers receive very little support for their own social emotional competence and beliefs as it relates to their professional responsibilities (Greenberg, Brown, & Abenavoli, 2016). Many teachers could benefit from ongoing support and professional development to develop and implement their social-emotional competencies in the classroom (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). Professional development opportunities can also be improved through other mechanisms such as university–district partnerships, online training, development of internal capacity among senior teachers and

counselors to provide peer coaching, and through the use of professional learning communities organized for SEL lesson study and data analysis (Shonert-Reichl, Hanson-Peterson, & Hymel, 2015).

Findings in this study indicated that teachers who participated in some forms of professional development related to SEL reported higher levels of SEL understanding and competencies. Anderson (2021) suggested that schools provide quality and interactive training on SEL for teachers. Such training would allow teachers to develop methods and strategies for practicing these SEL skills with their students (Anderson, 2021). The overarching goal is for these practices to become a natural part of the teachers' beliefs and value systems. Previous findings have shown a connection between professional development and knowledgeable teachers that encourage positive child development based upon receiving on-going support for emotional and behavioral learning (Lieberman & Wilkins, 2006). Stipp (2019) expressed that through pre- and post-course responses, interviews, and focus group discussions; teachers reported that professional development helped them to become better prepared and more confident in their SEL abilities. More recently, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of social-emotional competencies to students' learning and academic achievement (Anderson, 2021). However, there has been a neglect of emotional well-being on the part of the teachers, and little is known about the impact of training aimed at developing teachers' emotional intelligence and their practice (Dolev & Leshem, 2016). To have effective instructors, we cannot just rely on pre-service training programs or employment as well as recruitment mechanisms, but in the age of information bombardment, teachers need to be able to adapt to continuous change through adaptation

and continuous learning, thus developing teachers' personal and professional knowledge (O'Rourke, 2021). It was also found that a teacher's own evaluation and reflection on their performance both personally and professionally are the important factors that develop highly effective teachers in and out of the classroom (Mashhadlou & Izadpanah, 2021). If we expect teachers to be knowledgeable, skillful, and fluid in their classroom integration of social, behavioral, and academic competencies, it is essential for teachers to reflect on their own social and emotional competencies (O'Rourke, 2021). In addition, a growing number of studies have suggested that teachers' personal competencies and more specifically emotional intelligence (EI), are particularly important for teaching effectiveness (Dolev & Leshem, 2016).

SEL Beliefs, Competencies and School Characteristics

The second aim of this study was to explore the variations in teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies by the school characteristics. General findings indicated that SEL beliefs and competencies of teachers varied by classroom setting and school type, but not grade level teaching. Hence, the hypothesis that teachers' *SEL competencies and beliefs of teachers vary by classroom setting, school type, and grade level teaching* was partially supported.

Highly effective high school teachers hold beliefs about adolescent development that enable them to normalize typical adolescent behaviors (Gojkovic & Tsakiris, 2007). When teachers assume that most high school students may have moments when they express intense emotions, challenge adult authority, and exhibit immature, unskillful, or inappropriate behaviors; they are ready to respond with calm, firm, and caring support (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997). Most importantly, teachers who appreciate the enormous

variations in evolution timetables among adolescents accept and even celebrate the distinctive nature of teenagers and are better prepared to depersonalize conflictual situations (Gojkovic & Tsakiris, 2007).

This study found that compared to general education teachers, special education teachers have higher levels of competencies and more favorable attitudes about SEL. Related to this, research has indicated that general education teachers have not had sufficient training and/or support that can translate into effective successful teaching with special education students. Besides that, increased demands in teaching have created a sense of hopelessness and frustration among special education teachers in regard to meeting the social and emotional needs of students (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000). General education teachers feel that they are not equipped to deal with the diverse needs of the students that have been placed in their classroom. General education teachers felt that they rely too heavily on special education teachers for guidance on procedural strategies with regard to delivering instruction that was effective and in line with the requirements of the special education students' IEP and emotional needs (Berkovits, Eisenhower, & Blacker, 2017). SEL programs are designed to be universal; however, it may be more beneficial for teachers in special education classroom to support students' needs. In addition, SEL programs can aid in adaptations to ensure that students' skills are being targeted (Berkovits, Eisenhower, & Blacher, 2017).

In terms of school type, this study found that compared to teachers in charter schools, teachers in comprehensive and magnate schools have higher levels of SEL competences and more positive attitudes on SEL. The charter school movement offered a second means to protect teacher professionalism, though some may argue that charter

schools fail to empower teachers related to personal and professional emotions since few charter teachers have union representation (Cheng, Maranto & Danish, 2021). Previous research evaluating Michigan charter schools (Horn & Miron, 2000) found that the practices and procedures in curriculum, instruction, operations, and governance claimed as innovative by charter schools, were often found in local traditional public schools or were well- known practices and procedures among educators. Compared to teachers in traditional public schools, teachers in charter schools report greater influence over academic standards and curriculum but limited in their ability to connect socially and emotionally (Podgursky, 2008). Preston, Goldring, Berends, & Cannata (2012) explained that recruiting teachers based on the idea that a charter school has a turbulent environment, showed difficulty attracting teachers and may be less likely to innovate and try new ways of improving student success both academically and socially.

Other research findings may shed light to the significant differences in SEL beliefs and competencies of teachers from public and charter schools. Charter school teaching may lack the directive of student connections specifically, if a teacher can influence what is happening in the classroom (Miron & Nelson, 2000). Bifulco and Ladd (2005) found higher levels of school autonomy in charter schools, such as influence over school policies whereas traditional public schools have higher student connections and classroom development. Teachers in charter schools report greater influence over academic standards and curriculum compared to their counterparts in traditional public schools (Podgursky, 2008). Whereas Cannata (2011) found that charter school teachers are more likely than their peers at traditional public schools to indicate difficulties with overall personal development and understanding of student needs.

Yet, this study found that teaching either a single or multiple grade levels did not influence teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies. Stipp (2019) explained that SEL influences teachers' experiences at school and in classrooms in ways that are not dissimilar to school climate and therefore the grade level does not appear to have an impact on SEL beliefs and competencies. Such observation is supported by Coelho and colleagues (2015) who found out that 7th-, 8th- and 9th-grade students did not differ in SEL related skills such as social awareness, self-control, social isolation, and social anxiety.

SEL Beliefs, Competencies and Teacher Self-Efficacy

The third and final aim of this study was to examine the influence of teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies on their self-efficacy. Findings indicated that beyond the demographic characteristics and school factors as covariates, SEL beliefs and competencies were significantly related to teachers' self-efficacy. Thus, this study confirmed the hypothesis that *teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies significantly influence their self-efficacy*.

Teachers' own social and emotional skills are vital to teaching and need to be cultivated early in their teaching preparation and supported throughout their career (Jones et al., 2013). Ample research has shown that teachers' perceptions of school climate is a key predictor of teachers' sense of stress, teaching efficacy, and job satisfaction (De Nobile & McCormick, 2008; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). Such understanding is necessary because emerging research has highlighted important relationships among teacher outcomes with perceptions of individuals experiences within the learning environment (Zee & Kooman, 2016).

Of high value to this study is the idea of positive association between teaching self-efficacy and educators level of SEL competencies (Yang, 2021). An emerging body of research showed that educators' perceptions of their SEL competencies are associated with classroom management effectiveness and SEL well-being (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Consequently, teachers report a higher sense of efficacy to implement SEL practices (Shook, Wilson & Weiss, 2020). Such finding is corollary to the social-cognitive theory of Bandura (1986) stating that people with strong self-efficacy focus on their progress and eventual mastery whereas, people with limited self-efficacy focus on their weakness.

Chapter 5

Limitations, Recommendations and Conclusions

Teaching social and emotional skills alongside or embedded within the traditional academic curriculum is intended to foster thoughtful, socially responsible thoughts and actions among students (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2011). The focus of previous research has been targeted mostly on student outcomes, whereas in this study, SEL is viewed on the lens of teachers- more specifically high school teachers. SEL has the potential to influence outcomes for the teachers and more research is needed in this area (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). All schools should prioritize deliberate, sequential, evidence based SEL for students and training for staff as well as; remembering that educators need to put their own oxygen masks before taking care of others (Phillippe, 2017). This study has uncovered interesting insights into high school teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies in relation to their self-efficacy.

Limitations

Study limitations can exist due to constraints on the research design or possibly the methodology that may impact the overall findings of the study (Gardner, Wong, & Ratcliffe, 2020). For a researcher, identifying the limitations can provide a clear understanding of the research findings. The first limitation of this study was that the research was conducted in a single high nee district in a metropolitan area. The results that were yielded could have been encompassing and generalizable if other school districts were involved, within or out of the state. Another limitation could be linked to limited research focused on SEL in high school teachers as opposed to elementary and preschool teachers. When there is little empirical knowledge on a specific topic, one may

need to develop a new research typology and provide an important opportunity to identify literature gaps as well as present the need for future development in the area of study (Durlak et al., 2011). Even though this research was pertinent to establish baseline understanding of teachers on SEL, it was not focused on SEL programs and their implementation especially in secondary schools. Lastly, this study employed a quantitative approach and relied on the use of a single survey instrument for data gathering. Although the measures of SEL beliefs and competencies as well as self-efficacy demonstrated adequate evidence of validity and reliability, interpretation of findings may be limited to the item content included in each measure. For example, based on EFA results, the SECTRS used in this study covered only items assessing four of the five SEL competencies. Item describing self-management skills of teachers had lower factor loadings and thus, were not included in the final version of the SECTRS.

Recommendations

More research needs to be done on how to aid in understanding SEL in high school teachers. Considering the salient findings yielded in this study, the researcher has provided the following recommendations for educators and future research.

The following recommendations are addressed to educational practitioners, including teachers, building and district administrators and other staff within the high school setting.

1. Administrators can provide ongoing, embedded professional development on SEL. The results of this research project identified that high school teachers who received professional development in SEL had more favorable beliefs and higher levels of

competencies on SEL. By providing continued in-service professional development in SEL may increase teachers' understanding and practices for effective SEL programming.

2. Higher education institutions can effectively prepare teaching candidates to apply social-emotional competencies in the classroom. New Jersey does provide SEL modules for teachers to implement topics in their classrooms; however, these modules do not mean that all colleges and universities thoroughly embed social-emotional competencies throughout their programs before teachers begin teaching (NJDOE, 2021). Incorporating SEL into pre-service teacher education programs reinforces the notion that SEL training is pivotal for all teachers, not simply an “add on” (Stipp, 2019).

The following recommendations relate to future research on SEL, including suggested changes and enhancement of SEL programs that are specifically targeted for high school educators and students.

1. The present study involved only one specific high need district with a high teacher turnover rate. Replicating this study in other school districts would be beneficial to leverage and generalize the results in high school teachers. Furthermore, collecting data from multiple districts will not only provide evidence on the consistency of high school teachers’ SEL beliefs and competencies but will also reinforce the urgent need of SEL programs in high schools.

2. In extending the baseline results on teachers’ SEL beliefs and competencies known from this study, future research can focus on exploring some supports provided to teachers in implementing SEL programs across content areas and curricula.

3. Related to developing SEL curriculum in special education classrooms, school leaders and teachers can work collaboratively to leverage SEL competencies by

engaging, empowering, and educating all students, especially those students with disabilities as well as those who are underserved and left behind by the mainstream educational system (Lieber, Tissiere, & Bialek, 2017). In particular, future research can be conducted on SEL practices and programming in special education classrooms with consideration of pertinent variables such teaching placements (i.e., single versus co-teaching) and teacher setting (i.e., self-contained versus in-class resource or pull our resource).

4. This study reported interesting findings on SEL understanding of teachers from charter schools. With very few SEL research within charter schools, more studies are needed especially so that the number charter schools has been increasing in some school districts. SEL research can be addressed in terms of professional development, practices and programming, outcomes in students and teachers, and family involvement.

5. To address the shortcoming of using a single research approach (i.e., quantitative design) employed in this study, it is suggested that future research can consider the use of mixed methods to further investigate teachers understanding of SEL. Mixed methods can provide a holistic view and deeper understanding of SEL from diverse methodological lenses. Alongside the quantitative approach introduced in this study, a qualitative stance can be added with data collected through in-depth interview or focus group discussion. Qualitative data could be valuable in providing rich descriptions about SEL practices, explore unexpected answers more clearly, bring to light more about the views that teachers may have wanted to expand upon, and giving a different voice to their SEL beliefs, skills, and experiences.

6. It may be interesting to extend this study by exploring SEL beliefs and competencies of individuals from other professions. In this strand of SEL research, future studies can link SEL beliefs and competencies within the context of the motivational process, job resources, support from others, job control, and performance feedback. SEL in professionals can also be examined within the context of health impairment process, specifically to determine the role of SEL beliefs and competencies in high job demands that require more effort and drain individuals' energy that can bring about exhaustion and increased health problems.

Conclusions

Using the social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 2004) as theoretical backdrop, this study offered empirical insights on teachers' understanding of SEL that hopefully can strengthen the few research on SEL in high school settings. Overall, this study highlighted the influence of teaching experience, educational attainment, and professional development on SEL beliefs and competencies of teachers, Moreover, classroom setting and school type were school factors that significantly differentiated teachers' SEL beliefs and competencies. On the other hand, grade level teaching, either in single or multiple grades, did not discriminate SEL beliefs and competencies. In relation to teachers perception of their abilities to cope with classroom challenges, the study confirmed that SEL beliefs and competencies were significant predictors of their self-efficacy.

It is vitally important that teachers become aware of their own emotional realities and biases since they are the backbone of the education system (Raizada, 2014). A key idea was that of Jennings and Greenberg's (2009) model of the prosocial classroom, which explained that contextual factors influence teachers' social–emotional competence

and well-being. As teachers, it is important to not only have the academic skills and strategies to bring in the classroom but having a broad and stable understanding of SEL can amplify personal resources to support social-emotional well-being students and not just their academic success. When teachers make academic lessons more personal and relatable, students may be more inclined to participate and may be less likely to mentally check out during their subjects (Schonert-Reichel, 2017). Higher SEL beliefs and competencies can foster a sense of empathy, self-awareness, and feelings of being safe. Teachers modeling SEL competencies in the classroom environment may impact students' sense of self and relationship with others, both presently and in the future. More importantly, SEL needs to be present in schools so that students can develop their own emotional intelligence. Gordana (2021) shared that SEL enables students and teachers to realize their potentials by seeking opportunities, applying and sharpening their skills, meeting new people through collaboration, and achieving their personal and academic goals. One may argue that teachers' beliefs about SEL may influence their SEL competence and well-being and the majority of the findings from this research supports this argument.

When teachers through their actions and classroom planning, systematically nurture the cognitive, social, and emotional competencies of students; they can grow young people who are happier, healthier, and academically engaged in their day-to-day schooling and life in general (Lieber, Tissiere, & Bialek, 2017). Katz, Mahfouz, and Ramos (2020) expressed that if a teacher does not believe that he or she is competent in teaching SEL, then this can impact his/her overall teaching performance. SEL is sometimes considered the "missing piece" in education because it represents a part of

learning that is indistinguishably tied to school growth and positive student performance, yet it has not been explicitly addressed or given much attention until recently (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2017). More so, teachers' beliefs about and deep understanding of the developmental milestones in adolescents shape the learning environment; thereby, influencing their capacity to reach and teach every student who shows up at the classroom door (Lieber, Tissier, & Bialek, 2017). Having this awareness enables teachers to confer respect and dignity to each student; as well as accept and appreciate development and cultural differences, and incorporate diverse voices and resources in the classroom (Bridgeland, Bruce, & Hariharan, 2013). Even more precedent is that high school teachers who strongly value principles of youth development are likely to support every student's personal, social, and academic development (American Institutes for Research, 2015). A teacher's willingness to grow directly next to their students is a powerful educational tool. When teachers are committed to modeling, teaching, practicing, and assessing their SEL competencies, they are strengthening their capacities to make these skills useful in their everyday experiences and as vital aspect of their teacher persona (Lieber, Tissier, & Bialek, 2017). Teaching SEL from kindergarten through high school can be emotionally reassuring to teachers such that coping mechanisms could be in place when students need them (Anderson, 2021). SEL beliefs and competencies for teachers is essential for success in the academic learning environment (Caspary, 2020). Research shows that SEL programs are available and often used in the schools for students, but SEL may be equally important to teachers competence and well-being (Selman, 2003).

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Appendix A

Board Approval to Conduct Research

Katrina T. McCombs, M.A.Ed., MPA
State District Superintendent

CAMDEN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
1033 Cambridge Street, Camden, NJ 08105
Main 856-966-2000 □ Fax 856-966-2139
website: www.camden.k12.nj.us

September 1, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter certifies that the dissertation of High School Teachers' Social Emotional Competence, Beliefs and Self-Efficacy in a High Need District by Deborah Goodman was approved at the August 24, 2021 Board Meeting. Attached are the approved August 24th Agenda Items in which this dissertation research has been approved. Please reach out with continued questions or concerns.

CERTIFICATION SIGNATURE

Katrina T. McCombs, M.A.Ed., MPA
State District Superintendent

KTM:tdb

Appendix B

Approval for Use of the Social-Emotional Competency Teacher Rating Scale

Kristin Smetana <smetanak@rbhs208.net> Mon, Aug 9, 4:21 PM
To: Riverside Brookfield High School Contact Form for Kristin Smetana <goodma79@students.rowan.edu>

Deborah,

Yes, you have my permission to use the SEL competency scale. If I can help you in any way, don't hesitate to ask.

Best of luck to you in your studies,
Kristin

Kristin Smetana, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent
Riverside Brookfield High School
(708) 442- 7500

On Mon, Aug 9, 2021 at 2:58 PM Riverside Brookfield High School Contact Form for Kristin Smetana <automailer@edlio.com> wrote:

From: Deborah Goodman <goodma79@students.rowan.edu>
To: Kristin Smetana
Subject: Use of SEL Competency Scale

Good afternoon,

My name is Deborah Goodman and I am currently in the dissertation phase of my Educational Doctorate from Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. I am looking to complete my dissertation on High School Teachers' Social Emotional Competencies, Beliefs and Self-Efficacy in a High Need School District.

I am asking for permission to utilize your SEL competency scale as you utilized within your Dissertation Paper in 2020? I would like to use the questions in relation to SEL and specific to high school teachers. I will not be focusing on the well-being questions.

Thank you so much for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Deborah Goodman
Ed.D Candidate
M.A. Educational Learning and Supervision

This email was automatically sent by IP address 2601:83:8101:4a70:dcfb:16fc:9707:9170 (computer id: 0.9029991530595902) on Monday, August 9, 2021 at 02:58 PM US/Central timezone.

This user has been authenticated with the following credentials from google: display name: Deborah Goodman; email: goodma79@students.rowan.edu; ID: undefined.

Appendix C

Approval to Use the Teachers' SEL Belief Scale

Use of SEL Beliefs Scale
2 messages

Goodman, Deborah <goodma79@students.rowan.edu>
To: marc.brackett@yale.edu
Mon, Aug 9, 2021 at 3:52 PM

Good afternoon,

My name is Deborah Goodman and I am currently in the dissertation phase of my Educational Doctorate at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. I am looking to complete my research on High School Teachers' Social Emotional Competencies, Beliefs and Self-Efficacy in a High Needs District.

I am asking for permission to utilize your SEL Belief Scale questions within my survey of the teachers within my district? The questions were retrieved from the paper:

Assessing Teachers' Beliefs About Social and Emotional Learning

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely
Deborah Goodman
Ed.D Candidate
M.A. Educational Leadership and Supervision

YCEI Research <yceiresearch@yale.edu>
To: "goodma79@students.rowan.edu" <goodma79@students.rowan.edu>
Thu, Aug 12, 2021 at 9:34 AM

Good morning Deborah,

Attached is the SEL Teacher Beliefs Scale for your use. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to reach back out.

Sincerely,

The YCEI Research Team

Appendix D

Approval to Use the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale

William & Mary
School of Education

MEGAN TSCHANNEN-MORAN, PHD
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

August 10, 2021

Deborah,

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

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

Please use the following as the proper citation:

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

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

All the best,

Megan Tschannen-Moran
William & Mary School of Education

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

Appendix E

Electronic Informed Consent Form

ELECTRONIC INFORMED CONSENT (ADULTS)
KEY INFORMATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

TITLE OF STUDY: High School Teachers' Social Emotional Competence, Beliefs, and Self-Efficacy in a High Needs District
Principal Investigator: Dr. Carmelo Callueng
Co-Investigator: Ms. Deborah Goodman

You are being asked to take part in a research study. The purpose of this quantitative research study is to investigate high school teachers' social-emotional learning competence, beliefs and self-efficacy. By providing research on the social emotional learning of high school teachers, one can grasp a better understanding of the needs of the students they teach as well as their ability to teach cohesive lessons that incorporate SEL skills.

If you agree, you will be asked to take an online survey that would take roughly 10 to 15 minutes to complete. You will also be asked a variety of demographic information in relation to your current position within the district and questions regarding perceptions associated with teaching. The benefits to this research are that it can provide an understanding of social-emotional learning beliefs, competences and self-efficacy of teachers and whether there is a need for implementation of programming for SEL skills in high school. Participation is completely voluntary. It is up to you to decide if you would like to participate.

The risks associated with this study are similar to what you may encounter in everyday life and include survey fatigue and limited time to complete. You are not expected to receive any direct benefits from participating in this study. However, you may indirectly benefit by learning more about social emotional learning competencies and beliefs and your personal teacher self-efficacy skills.

If you are interested in participating, please carefully review the informed consent form on the next screen. This consent form is part of an informed consent process for a research study, and it will provide you with more detailed information that will help you decide whether you wish to volunteer for this research study. It is important that you take your time to make your decision. You may share this consent form with a family member or anyone else before agreeing to participate in the study.

If you have questions at any time, you should feel free to ask the study team and should expect to be given answers that you completely understand. The study team will answer any question you might have before volunteering to take part in this study. You can also request that the study team read the consent form to you over the phone.

Name: Deborah Goodman
Email Address: Goodma79@students.rowan.edu

Appendix F

SEL Beliefs, SEL Competencies and Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey

High School Teachers' Social Emotional Learning Beliefs, Competencies and Self-Efficacy

Part 1- Demographics: Identify School Location (school in which you currently work at):

[redacted] High School

- Woodrow Wilson
- Dr. Charles E. Brimm Medical Arts High School
- [redacted] Big Picture Learning Academy
- LEAP High School
- KIPP Norcross High School
- Freedom Prep Academy
- Urban Promise
- [redacted] Academy Charter High School

Q2 Years of Teaching (Number of Years regardless of district)

_____

Q3 Identify if General or Special Education Teacher

- General Education
- Special Education

Skip to: Q3A if identify if General or Special Education Teacher = Special Education
Skip to: Q4 if identify if General or Special Education Teacher = General Education

Q3A Identify Student Population

- Self-Contained Specific Learning
- Self-Contained Autism
- Self-Contained Severe
- Self-Contained Moderate/Cognitive
- Self-Contained Multiple Disabilities
- Self-Contained Bi-lingual
- In-class resource
- Pull out resource

Q4 Content area in which you teach

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Special area (i.e., art; physical education, computers)
- CTE (i.e., ROTC, cosmetology, business administration, coding, welding, home economics, etc.
- Special education – multiple subjects

Q5 Grade Level

- Freshman
- Sophomores
- Juniors
- Seniors
- Multiple Grade levels

Q6 Highest level of degree attained

- Bachelor's degree
- Bachelor's degree plus some credits
- Master's degree
- Master's degree plus some credits
- Ph. D/ Ed. D
- Prefer not to say

Q7 Gender

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Non-conforming
- Cis gender
- Transgender
- Gender fluid

- Not listed
- Prefer not to say

Q8 Race/ethnicity

- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- American Indian/Native Alaskan
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Asian/Asian American
- Middle Eastern
- White/Caucasian
- Other
- Multiple ethnicities
- Prefer not to say

Q9 Age at time of participation in survey

- 21 to 25 years
- 26 to 30 years
- 36 to 40 years
- 41 to 45 years
- 46 to 50 years
- 51 to 55 years
- 55 to 60 years

- Above 60 years
- Prefer not to say

Q10 Part 2 – As best you can recall, was social-emotional learning (SEL) addressed during your PRE-SERVICE training?

- Yes
- No

Skip to: Q13 if Part 2 – As best as you can recall, was SEL addressed during your PRE-SERVICE training? = No

Q11 How was social-emotional learning (SEL) addressed during your pre-service training (select all that apply)?

- Entire course
- Course lectures
- Assigned readings
- Assignments/Projects
- Workshop
- Student teaching or another field experience
- Research experience
- Other

Q12 How adequate or inadequate do you feel your pre-service program prepared you to provide social-emotional learning (SEL) instruction to the students you serve?

- Completely inadequate
- Mostly inadequate
- Somewhat inadequate
- Neutral
- Somewhat adequate

- Mostly adequate
- Completely adequate

Q13 Have you received IN-SERVICE professional development regarding social-emotional learning (SEL)?

- Yes
- No

Skip to: Q16 if have you received IN-SERVICE training regarding SEL? = No

Q14 How was SEL addressed during your in-service professional development (Select all that apply)?

- School sponsored in-service training (in-person or online)
- Workshops/seminar/didactics (in-person or online)
- Collaboration with colleagues (such as through a professional learning community)
- Consultation/collaboration with external agency or university
- Personal reading/research
- Other

Q15 How adequate or inadequate do you feel in-service professional development has prepared you teach social-emotional learning (SEL) to the students you serve?

- Completely inadequate
- Mostly inadequate
- Somewhat inadequate
- Neutral
- Somewhat adequate
- Somewhat adequate

- Mostly adequate
- Completely adequate

Q16 Rate your overall satisfaction regarding your current level of professional development regarding social-emotional learning (SEL).

- Completely dissatisfied
- Mostly dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat satisfied
- Mostly satisfied
- Completely satisfied

Q17 Part 3: Please reading the following definition: Social and Emotional Learning refers to the development of skills related to recognizing and managing emotions, developing care and concern for others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions and handling challenging situations constructively. With this definition in mind, please read the following statements and think about how true each is for YOU. Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. Your responses to this survey are confidential!

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel confident in my ability to provide instruction on social and emotional learning	○	○	○	○	○
I am comfortable providing instruction on social and emotional skills to my students	○	○	○	○	○
Taking care of my students' social and emotional needs comes naturally to me	○	○	○	○	○
Informal lessons in social and emotional learning are part of my regular teaching practice	○	○	○	○	○
I would like to attend a workshop to learn how to develop my students' social and emotional skills	○	○	○	○	○
I want to improve my ability to teach social and emotional skills to students	○	○	○	○	○
All teachers should receive training on how to teach social and emotional skills to students	○	○	○	○	○
My principal creates an environment that promotes social and emotional learning for our students.	○	○	○	○	○

The culture in my school supports the development of children's social and emotional skills	○	○	○	○	○
My principal does encourage the teaching of social and emotional skills to students	○	○	○	○	○
My school expects teachers to address children's social and emotional needs	○	○	○	○	○

Q18 Part 4: For the following items, please indicate the degree to which you agree with each statement.

	Always	Sometimes	Not sure	Rarely	Never
I am able to admit my mistakes to the class	○	○	○	○	○
I recognize the link between my emotions and what I think, do, and say in the classroom	○	○	○	○	○
When I receive negative feedback about myself from others, I do not get angry or defensive	○	○	○	○	○
I welcome feedback about my performance from all members of my school community	○	○	○	○	○
I welcome students' questions	○	○	○	○	○
I reflect upon my teaching and learn from my experiences	○	○	○	○	○
If I do not know the answer to a question, I will be honest with the students.	○	○	○	○	○
I feel confident in my ability to teach the content	○	○	○	○	○
I accurately know my strengths and limitations as a teacher	○	○	○	○	○

Q19 Part 5: For the following items, please indicate the degree to which you agree with each statement.

	Always	Sometimes	Not Sure	Rarely	Never
If I am in a bad mood, I do not let it affect my teaching	○	○	○	○	○
I stay calm and clear headed in the classroom under high stress situations	○	○	○	○	○
I can juggle multiple demands in the classroom without losing focus or energy	○	○	○	○	○
My mood impacts my students' experiences in class.	○	○	○	○	○
I approach situations in a positive way	○	○	○	○	○
When I am teaching, my mood can change suddenly	○	○	○	○	○
When I am in a bad mood, I take it out on my students	○	○	○	○	○
I become easily flustered when multiple things are occurring in class.	○	○	○	○	○
I am easily annoyed with the students in my class	○	○	○	○	○
I set measurable, challenging attainable goals each year	○	○	○	○	○

Q20 Part 6: For the following items, please indicate the degree to which you agree with each statement.

	Always	Sometimes	Not Sure	Rarely	Never
I actively listen to my students	○	○	○	○	○
I try to understand students' perspectives	○	○	○	○	○
I learn about my students' backgrounds and interests	○	○	○	○	○
I have a hard time relating to my students' interests	○	○	○	○	○
I am capable of acknowledging differences in students' learning styles, capabilities, and special needs	○	○	○	○	○
I try to understand how students feel and think	○	○	○	○	○
I feel sorry for students who can't find a partner or a group of students to work with	○	○	○	○	○
I foster an emotionally safe environment for my students	○	○	○	○	○

Q 21 Part 7: For the following items, please indicate the degree to which you agree with each statement.

	Always	Sometimes	Not Sure	Rarely	Never
I use negative reinforcement in my classroom	○	○	○	○	○
I share personal experiences where and when appropriate	○	○	○	○	○
When students argue or disagree, I try to help them resolve their conflict	○	○	○	○	○
I acknowledge students when they do a good job	○	○	○	○	○
I care about each of my students	○	○	○	○	○
I expect all students to be successful in my class	○	○	○	○	○
Students seek me out for advice or comfort when they are upset	○	○	○	○	○
I do not know personal information about each of my students	○	○	○	○	○

Q22 Part 8: For the following items, please indicate the degree to which you agree with each statement.

	Always	Sometimes	Not Sure	Rarely	Never
If I have a problem, I try to think about different possible ways of solving it	○	○	○	○	○
When I make a decision, I think about what might happen afterwards	○	○	○	○	○
I ask for help from another teacher or my supervisor when I need it	○	○	○	○	○
I tend to think before acting	○	○	○	○	○
I seek input from my students before making a decision	○	○	○	○	○
After making a decision, I change my mind	○	○	○	○	○
I explain my rationale for making a decision with my students	○	○	○	○	○
I make decisions without thinking about possible consequences	○	○	○	○	○
Students are typically upset by my decisions	○	○	○	○	○

Q 23 Part 9: Please indicate your opinion about each of the questions below by dragging an interactive slider that represents the degree on the continuum from (1) “None at all” to (9) “A Great Deal.” This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create challenges for teachers. Your answers are confidential. Please respond to each f the questions by considering the combination of your current ability, resources, and opportunity to do each of the following in your present position.

	Nothing Very little Some influence Quite a bit Great deal 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	
How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork?	
How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in schoolwork?	
How much can you do to help your students value learning?	
To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	
How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	
How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	
How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	
How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	
To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation for example when students are confused?	
How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	
How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	

Q24 Thank you for participation in this survey. Do you wish to receive a professional development certificate for participating in this survey?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Skip To: Q25 If Thank you for participation in this survey. Do you wish to receive a professional development cer... = Yes

Skip To: End of Survey If Thank you for participation in this survey. Do you wish to receive a professional development cer... = No

Q25 Please enter your name and email address

Name _____

Email Address _____

Appendix G

Approval from the Institutional Review Board

DHHS Federal Wide Assurance Identifier: FWA00007111
IRB Chairperson: Dr. Ane Johnson
IRB Director: Eric Gregory
Effective Date: September 13, 2021

Notice of Approval - Initial

Study ID: PRO-2021-534
Title: High School Teachers' Social Emotional Competence, Beliefs and Self-Efficacy in a High Needs District
Principal Investigator: Carmelo Callueng
Study Coordinator: Deborah Goodman
Co-Investigator(s): Deborah Goodman
Sponsor: Department Funded

Submission Type: Initial
Submission Status: Approved

Approval Date: September 13, 2021
Expiration Date: September 12, 2022
Approval Cycle: 12 months
Continuation Review Required: Yes
Closure Required: Yes

Review Type: Expedited
Expedited Category: 7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Pregnant Women, Human Fetus, and Neonates Code: N/A
Pediatric/Children Code: N/A
Prisoner(s) – Biomedical or Behavioral: N/A

ALL APPROVED INVESTIGATOR(S) MUST COMPLY WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. Conduct the research in accordance with the protocol, applicable laws and regulations, and the principles of research ethics as set forth in the Belmont Report.

2a. Continuing Review: Approval is valid until the protocol expiration date shown above. To avoid lapses in approval, submit a continuation application at least eight weeks before the study expiration date.

2b. Progress Report: Approval is valid until the protocol expiration date shown above. To avoid lapses, an annual progress report is required at least 21 days prior to the expiration date.

3a. Expiration of IRB Approval: If IRB approval expires, effective the date of expiration and until the continuing review approval is issued: All research activities must stop unless the IRB finds that it is in the best interest of individual subjects to continue. (This determination shall be based on a separate written request from the PI to the IRB.) No new subjects may be enrolled, and no samples/charts/surveys may be collected, reviewed, and/or analyzed.

3b. Human Subjects Research Training: Proper training in the conduct of human subjects' research must be current and not expired. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator and the investigator to complete training when expired. Any modifications and renewals will not be approved until training is not expired and current.

4. Amendments/Modifications/Revisions: If you wish to change any aspect of this study after the approval date mentioned in this letter, including but not limited to, study procedures, consent form(s), investigators, advertisements, the protocol document, investigator drug brochure, or accrual goals, you are required to obtain IRB review and approval prior to implementation of these changes unless necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects. This policy is also applicable to progress reports.

5. Unanticipated Problems: Unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or others must be reported to the IRB Office
(45 CFR 46, 21 CFR 312, 812) as required, in the appropriate time as specified in the attachment online
at: https://research.rowan.edu/officeofresearch/compliance/irb/index.html

6. Protocol Deviations and Violations: Deviations from/violations of
the approved study protocol must be reported to the IRB Office (45 CFR 46, 21 CFR 312, 812) as required, in the appropriate time as specified in the attachment online at: https://research.rowan.edu/officeofresearch/compliance/irb/index.html

7. Consent/Assent: The IRB has reviewed and approved the consent and/or assent process, waiver and/or alteration described in this protocol as required by 45 CFR 46 and 21 CFR 50, 56, (if FDA regulated research). Only the versions of

the documents included in the approved process may be used to document informed consent and/or assent of study subjects; each subject must receive a copy of the approved form(s); and a copy of each signed form must be filed in a secure place in the subject's medical/patient/research record.
8. Completion of Study: Notify the IRB when your study has been completed or stopped for any reason. Neither study closure by the sponsor nor the investigator removes the obligation for submission of timely continuing review application, progress report or final report.
9. The Investigator(s) did not participate in the review, discussion, or vote of this protocol.
10. Research protocol and study documentation and instruments is approved as of the Approval Date on this letter. All final approved versions of the study documentation, including but not limited to the protocol, advertisements and recruitment instruments, pre-screening instruments, surveys, interviews, scripts, data collection documents, all manner of consent forms, and all other documentation attached to this submission are approved for final use by the investigators up to the expiration date listed above (Expiration Date) in this letter.
11. Letter Comments: There are no additional comments.

Appendix H

Participants by Special Education Classification Setting

Table H1

Participants by Special Education Classification Setting

Classification Setting	N	%
Self-contained - specified learning disabled	9	3.8
Self-contained autism	4	1.7
Self-contained severe learning disabled	4	1.7
Self-contained Moderate/Cognitive Disabled	6	2.5
Self-contained multiple disabilities	2	0.8
Self-contained bilingual	2	0.8
In-class resource	21	8.8
Pull-out resource	4	1.7

Appendix I

Descriptive Statistics and Item-Total Correlation of the SECTRS

Table I1

Descriptive Statistics and Item-Total Correlation of the SECTRS

Subscale	*M*	*SD*	Item-total correlation	Decision
Self-Awareness				
Admit my mistakes to the class	4.25	0.7	0.7	Accept
Recognize the link between my emotions and my actions	4.09	0.74	0.63	Accept
Negative feedback does not make me angry or defensive	3.55	0.91	0.25	Not Accept
Welcome feedback	4.1	0.74	0.53	Accept
Welcome students' questions	4.54	0.58	0.71	Accept
Reflect/learn from experiences	4.3	0.68	0.58	Accept
Honest if don't know the answer	4.03	0.95	0.75	Accept
Confident in teaching the content	4.23	0.73	0.72	Accept
Know strengths and limitations	4.18	0.69	0.68	Accept
Self-management				
Bad moods don't affect teaching	2.50	1.01	0.04	Not Accept
Stay calm under high stress	2.13	0.79	-0.07	Not Accept
Juggle multiple demands	2.09	0.75	-0.07	Not Accept
Mood impacts my students' experience in class	2.95	1.08	0.31	Not Accept
Positively approach situations	1.78	0.70	0.07	Not Accept

Subscale	*M*	*SD*	Item-total correlation	Decision
Take bad mood out on students	4.06	0.83	-0.00	Not Accept
Flustered when multiple things are occurring in class	3.31	0.99	0.10	Not Accept
Easily annoyed with students	3.53	0.99	0.02	Not Accept
Set measurable goals each year	1.78	0.72	-0.03	Not Accept
Social awareness				
Actively listen to my students	4.5	0.52	0.78	Accept
Understand students' perspectives	4.39	0.59	0.73	Accept
Learn about my students' background and interests.	4.22	0.79	0.66	Accept
Can't relate to my students' interests.	3.05	1.03	0.41	Accept
Acknowledge differences in students' learning styles/needs	4.08	0.81	0.76	Accept
Know how students' feel/think	4.13	0.8	0.77	Accept
Feel sorry for students with no partner/group to work with	3.77	1.01	0.45	Accept
Foster an emotionally safe environment for my students	4.3	0.71	0.77	Accept
Relationship skills				
Use negative reinforcement	3.71	1.03	0.28	Not Accept
Share personal experiences where and when appropriate.	3.8	0.96	0.56	Accept
Try to help students' resolve their conflict	3.9	0.9	0.72	Accept

Subscale	*M*	*SD*	Item-total correlation	Decision
Care about each of my students.	4.52	0.54	0.72	Accept
Expect all students to be successful	4.39	0.64	0.61	Accept
Students seek me out for advice or comfort when they are upset.	3.62	0.99	0.71	Accept
Don't know personal information about each of my students'	3.23	0.93	0.34	Not Accept
Responsible decision-making				
Think about different possible ways of solving a problem	4.16	0.7	0.68	Accept
When I make a decision, think about what might happen afterwards	4.06	0.8	0.72	Accept
Think before acting	4	0.8	0.71	Accept
I tend to think before acting.	4.03	0.75	0.55	Accept
Seek input from students'	2.53	0.92	0.51	Accept
Change mind after a decision	3.2	0.89	-0.12	Not Accept
Explain rationale for decision with my students	3.51	1.01	0.52	Accept
Make decisions without thinking about possible consequences	3.52	0.95	0.5	Accept
Students are typically upset by my decisions	3.2	0.99	0.48	Accept

Appendix J

Codes for Demographic Information

Table J1

Codes for Demographic Information

Demographic	Nominal Variable and Code
School Location	1 = Comprehensive 1
	2 = Comprehensive 2
	3 = Magnet 1
	4 = Magnet 2
	5 = Manage 3
	6 = Charter 1
	7 = Charter 2
	8 = Charter 3
	9 = Charter 4
	10 = Charter 5
Years of teaching	1 = 1 or less
	2 = 2 to 4
	3 = 5 to 10
	4 = 11 to 15
	5 = 16 to 20
	6 = 21+
Teacher type	1 = General Education
	2 = Special Education

Demographic	Nominal Variable and Code
	0 = In-class resource 1 = Pull out resource 2 = Self-contained SLD 3 = Self-contained autism 4 = Self-contained severe 5 = Self-contained moderate/cognitive 6 = Self-contained multiple disabilities 7 = Self-contained bi-lingual
Content area	1 = single grade 2 = English 3 = Mathematics 4 = Science 5 = Social studies 6 = Special Areas 7 = CTE
	8 = Multiple subjects
Grade level	1 = 9^{th} 2 =10^{th} 3 = 11^{th} 4 = 12^{th} 5 = multiple grades
Highest degree attained	0 = Prefer not to answer

Demographic	Nominal Variable and Code
	1 = Bachelor's degree
	2 – Bachelor's degree plus some credits
	3 = Master's degree
	4 = Master's degree plus some credits
	5 = Doctoral degree
Gender	0 = Prefer not to answer
	1 = Male
	2 = Female
	3 = Non-binary
	4 = Non-conforming
	5 = Gender fluid
	6 = Transgender
	7 = Cis gender
	8 = Not listed
Race	0 = Prefer not to answer
	1 = Black/African American
	2 = Hispanic/Latino
	3 = American Indian/Alaskan Native
	4 = Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
	5 = Asian/Asian American
	6 = Middle Eastern
	7 = White/Caucasian

Demographic	Nominal Variable and Code
	8 = Other 9 = Multiple ethnicities

Appendix K

Factor Loadings of the SECTRS Items: Initial Factor Analysis

Table K1

Factor Loadings of the SECTRS Items: Initial Factor Analysis

Subscale/Item	Pattern Matrix			Structure Matrix		
Self-Awareness	1	2	3	1	2	3
Part 4 1		0.65		0.63	0.74	0.51
Part 4 3		0.44				
Part 4 4		0.42		0.49	0.54	
Part 4 5		0.56		0.67	0.74	0.42
Part 4 6	0.50			0.68	0.61	0.46
Part 4 7	0.50			0.81	0.77	0.59
Part 4 8		0.90		0.63	0.83	
Part 4 9		0.62		0.65	0.74	0.43
Social Skills	1	2	3	1	2	3
Part 6 1	0.71			0.82	0.72	0.52
Part 6 2	0.58			0.79	0.70	0.60
Part 6 3	0.73			0.74	0.57	0.53
Part 6 5	0.58			0.80	0.73	0.58
Part 6 6	0.66			0.80	0.68	0.59
Part 6 7	0.45			0.51	0.40	
Part 6 8	0.88			0.83	0.66	0.54
Part 7 2	0.64			0.69	0.58	0.45

Subscale/Item	Pattern Matrix			Structure Matrix		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Part 7 3	0.91			0.85	0.65	0.55
Social Skills	1	2	3	1	2	3
Part 7 4	0.90			0.84	0.64	0.57
Part 7 5	0.77			0.79	0.63	0.54
Part 7 6	0.64			0.63	0.50	0.43
Part 7 7	0.90			0.75	0.53	0.52
Part 8 1	0.40		0.44	0.68	0.54	0.70
Part 8 2			0.94	0.73	0.62	1.00
Part 8 3	0.72			0.78	0.60	0.62
Part 8 4				0.54	0.50	0.49
Part 8 5	0.73			0.60	0.43	
Part 8 7	0.57			0.68	0.57	0.50
Part 8: Q8				0.50	0.46	0.43
Part 8: Q9	0.53			0.47		

Appendix K

Factor Loadings of the SECTRS Items: Final Factor Analysis

Table K2

Factor Loadings of the SECTRS Items: Final Factor Analysis

Subscale/Item	Pattern Matrix		Structure Matrix	
Self-Awareness	*1	**2	*1	**2
Part 4 1		0.71	0.6	0.75
Part 4 4		0.42	0.47	0.53
Part 4 5		0.64	0.64	0.75
Part 4 8		0.97	0.58	0.83
Part 4 9		0.67	0.62	0.74
Social Skills	*1	**2	*1	**2
Part 6 1	0.53		0.8	0.76
Part 6 2	0.57		0.78	0.72
Part 6 3	0.68		0.74	0.61
Part 6 5	0.52		0.79	0.76
Part 6 6	0.64		0.8	0.71
Part 6 7	0.47		0.51	0.42
Part 6 8	0.72		0.82	0.7
Part 7 2	0.54		0.68	0.6
Part 7 3	0.79		0.84	0.68
Part 7 4	0.81		0.84	0.67
Part 7 5	0.7		0.78	0.66

Subscale/Item	Pattern Matrix		Structure Matrix	
Self-Awareness	*1	**2	*1	**2
Part 7 6	0.57		0.63	0.52
Social Skills	*1	**2	*1	**2
Part 7 7	0.86		0.76	0.55
Part 8 1	0.69		0.7	0.56
Part 8 2	0.69		0.75	0.62
Part 8 3	0.78		0.79	0.62
Part 8 5	0.67		0.61	0.46
Part 8 7	0.58		0.68	0.58

Note. *Factor 1: Social Skills; **Factor 2: Self-Awareness Skills