

THE ROLE OF ELEMENTARY TEACHER EXPERIENCE ON CLASSROOM
MANAGEMENT SELF-EFFICACY: A CAUSAL COMPARATIVE STUDY

by

Emily Dixon

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative causal-comparative study sought to determine if there was a difference in self-efficacy with classroom management between different levels of experience among teachers: pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career. Classroom management is an aspect of education that many teachers have famously struggled with, resulting in an increasing number of teachers leaving the field. Strong classroom management self-efficacy among teachers results in higher confidence levels for managing disruptions and unwanted behavior within the classroom. For this study, 166 participants were drawn from a convenience sample of elementary, public, and charter school teachers and pre-service teacher candidates from universities within the state of Utah. The Efficacy in Classroom Management subscale of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale was used to assess the strength of self-efficacy for teachers with different experience levels. An ANOVA tested if a difference in classroom management self-efficacy could be attributed to teachers with different classroom experience levels. The results of this study showed a statistically significant difference between the self-efficacy scores of novice teachers and late-career teachers. The data did not reveal a statistically significant difference between the self-efficacy scores of pre-service and mid-career teachers. This suggests that teaching experience may have some impact on self-efficacy, but other factors likely play a more significant role in determining skill in classroom management. Recommendations for future research are made, including doing a longitudinal study, different methods of data collection, or including other variables such as teacher motivation, burnout, and job satisfaction.

Keywords: self-efficacy, classroom management, pre-service, novice, mid-career, late-career

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The purpose of this causal-comparative quantitative research study is to determine if a difference in self-efficacy of classroom management exists between groups of Utah elementary teachers with varying levels of teaching experience. Chapter One provides a historical background of the topic as well as its impact, theoretical background, and social context. The problem statement examines current literature, the problem statement is provided, and the significance of the study is investigated. The research question and a list of key terms along with their definitions are also provided.

Background

Classroom behavior problems have been identified in research as a principal source of stress and burnout for teachers (Braun et al., 2022; Garwood et al., 2018; Leutner, 2014) that has only been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic (Pressley et al., 2021; Santamaría et al., 2021). Additionally, dozens of studies have connected teachers' classroom management practices to students' academic success and engagement (Korpersoek et al., 2016). However, even with these researched factors demonstrating the importance of classroom management, teachers continue to be challenged with classroom management as it is often not communicated consistently in teacher preparation programs (Kwok, 2017). Identifying teachers' different experience levels and the effect on teachers' self-perceived confidence in classroom management can help identify how classroom management techniques can be strengthened at the different stages of a teacher's career (Lazarides et al., 2020).

Historical Overview

Classroom management techniques have developed since the beginning of the 20th century. Schools were intended to prepare children for life as an adult, “transforming the child from a little savage into a creature of law and order” (Bagley, 1907, p. 35). Bagley (1907) identified the role of the teacher as the governing figure in the classroom, persistent in stopping undesired behavior, using means such as corporal punishment. Over the next several years, classroom management developed a distinctive identity as a separate subfield of education. By the 1950s, greater emphasis was placed on school-level administrative management. Brown (1952) exemplified the mindset of the time in his book, *Managing the Classroom: The Teacher’s Part in School Administration*. In his book, he stressed the importance of enforcing administrative issues such as high standards in grooming and dress for students, yet also introduced progressive, student-centered principles as well (Brown, 1952). Classroom management techniques continued to develop as behavioral research emerged, introducing concepts such as teacher praise, rewards, and negative reinforcement, drawing upon theories from well-known theorists such as Skinner (1953), Bandura (1969), and Meichenbaum (1977). Contemporary behavior theorists continue to develop on these concepts, introducing techniques such as “token reinforcement programs, earned points credit systems, praise and approval, modeling, programmed instruction, self-specification of contingencies, self-reinforcement, establishment of clear rules and directions, and shaping through successive approximations” (Brophy, 2006, p. 27). Additionally, greater emphasis

continues to be placed on self-reflection and meditation as forms of behavior modification (Brophy, 2006).

Society-at-Large

Students are much less likely to participate in misbehavior when teachers are more able to manage disruptive behavior, maintain teacher-student relationships and communication, apply teaching strategies to promote motivation and apply and enforce classroom rules (Kayikci, 2009). Children with disobedient behavior can fall behind academically due to discipline practices, whereas students who exhibit appropriate behavior in school can benefit from academic instruction. Teachers that show successful management techniques demonstrate an improvement in student attentiveness and responsiveness, leading to more time in class as well as exposure to quality instructional time (Bradshaw, 2020). Therefore, teachers' classroom management techniques are directly connected to student behavior and academic achievement (Allen, 2010).

Different experience levels of teachers influence how teachers can interpret different classroom events (Wolff et al., 2017). However, classroom management has been considered by administrators, teachers, and pre-service teachers to be a critical skill for teachers to master (Stroughton, 2007). Previous research has shown distinctions between novice teachers and their more experienced colleagues, with practiced teachers likely having greater knowledge about the subject matter they teach, as well as having different attitudes about students, with many of these characteristics being tied to greater teacher effectiveness (Palmer et al., 2005).

Theoretical Framework

Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory suggests the importance of an individual's opinions of their competencies as a determinant of a positive result. To have high levels of achievement with students, they need to see themselves as an effective teacher and have high levels of confidence in their teaching abilities (Kagan, 1992). A critical predictor of teacher persistence and determination is a teacher's self-efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura, 1986; Emmer & Hickman, 1991). Additionally, teachers who have weaker self-efficacy and confidence are more vulnerable to demanding classrooms, utilizing less successful approaches to cope with stress than when compared with confident teachers (Parkay et al, 1988). Bandura (1977) proposes that there are four sources of self-efficacy, one of which is mastery experiences. He states that those who have more mastery experiences may be more confident and have stronger self-efficacy. Those who are most confident in their abilities are the most effective in classroom management techniques (Evan & Tribble, 1986).

Problem Statement

In the OECD 2019 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), teachers were asked about the strength of their self-efficacy in relation to their teaching experience. This survey found that teachers with stronger self-efficacy were also teachers who had more teaching experience (Schleicher, 2018). More specifically, research has also found that teachers with stronger self-efficacy in their classroom management techniques led classrooms with a better classroom environment (Bulut & Topdemir, 2018). However, some

studies have conflicting results. Lazarides et al. (2020) investigated how teachers' self-efficacy correlated with their experience from beginning teachers to mid-career teachers. They hypothesized that classroom management confidence would be less stable for teachers in their early careers. However, their research found that this was not supported. Classroom management self-efficacy did not depend on teaching experience and did not differ significantly between early career and mid-career teachers. This result is inconsistent with other research performed on the same topic. These studies are comparable to the current study, and the conflicting conclusions support the need for additional research to be done. Furthermore, research has investigated self-efficacy for groups of teachers, but the groups have only been specified into two categories, such as novice and experienced teachers (Potter, 2021). The current literature is not specific about the population, and there currently are not any studies that group teachers into four groups according to their teaching experience: pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers. The problem is the inconsistent results of the literature about whether teaching experience is correlated with teachers' self-efficacy in classroom management techniques as well as the lack of precision in defining the teachers.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this causal-comparative quantitative research study is to determine if there is a difference in self-perceived self-efficacy with classroom management between pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers. The independent variable of this study is the different experience levels of elementary teachers within the state of Utah, categorized

as pre-service (within practicum, student teaching, field experience, etc), novice (less than five years of experience), mid-career (six to eighteen years of experience), and late-career (nineteen or more years of experience) teachers. The dependent variable comprises the strength of self-efficacy as measured by the Efficacy in Classroom Management subscale of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) in classroom management techniques of the teachers within this population. A stratified sample of teachers with varying levels of teaching experience is drawn from this population.

Significance of the Study

Many teachers struggle with classroom management issues (Wolff et al., 2021), resulting in an increasing number of teachers leaving the field (Beck, Lunsman, Garza, 2020). In order to retain teachers, classroom management techniques must be investigated to identify what is causing low levels of confidence with managing problems within the classroom. Identifying the cause of weak self-efficacy can lead to improved instruction in preservice teaching programs in universities (Toran, 2019). Suppose a teacher's levels of experience are found to be directly correlated with their self-efficacy with classroom management. In that case, universities can implement more field work, exposing pre-service teachers to more experience within the classroom, increasing their confidence to manage unwanted behaviors (Fackler et al., 2021). Due to the contrasting evidence within the literature, more research is needed to determine if a difference in experience levels can lead to stronger self-efficacy among teachers.

Exploring classroom management influences teachers and their careers, but it can also positively benefit the students. Misbehavior within the classroom is a source of time wasted that negatively interferes with students' opportunities to learn (Lopes et al., 2017). By further developing understanding about teachers' self-efficacy with classroom management, implications can be suggested, and professional development opportunities can be used (Poulou et al., 2019), leading to stronger self-efficacy and more instructional time (Bradshaw, 2020). Moreover, the current emphasis on culturally responsive teaching (Stembridge, 2019) and equity (Maynard & Weinstein, 2019) suggests that educators have a unique influence on the academic, social, and emotional development of students. However, teachers must believe in their ability to manage an orderly classroom that concretizes an achievement ethos.

Research Question

RQ: Is there a difference in classroom management self-efficacy scores among pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers in Utah?

Definitions

1. *Classroom management:* the actions a teacher takes to establish “order, engage students, or elicit their cooperation” (Emmer & Stough, 2001, p. 103).
2. *Late-career teacher:* an experienced teacher having nineteen or more years of teaching experience (Weignburgh, 2020).
3. *Mid-career teacher:* a teacher having six to eighteen years of teaching experience (Huberman, 1995).

4. *Novice teacher*: a teacher having five or fewer years of teaching experience at the time of the survey (Lacireno-Paquet et al., 2012).
5. *Pre-service teacher*: a student in a teacher education program organized around coursework in a university and professional experience (practicum, teaching practice, field experience, etc.) (Nguyen, 2019).
6. *Self-efficacy*: a person's judgement of his/her capability to successfully perform a behavior required to produce certain results (Bandura, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

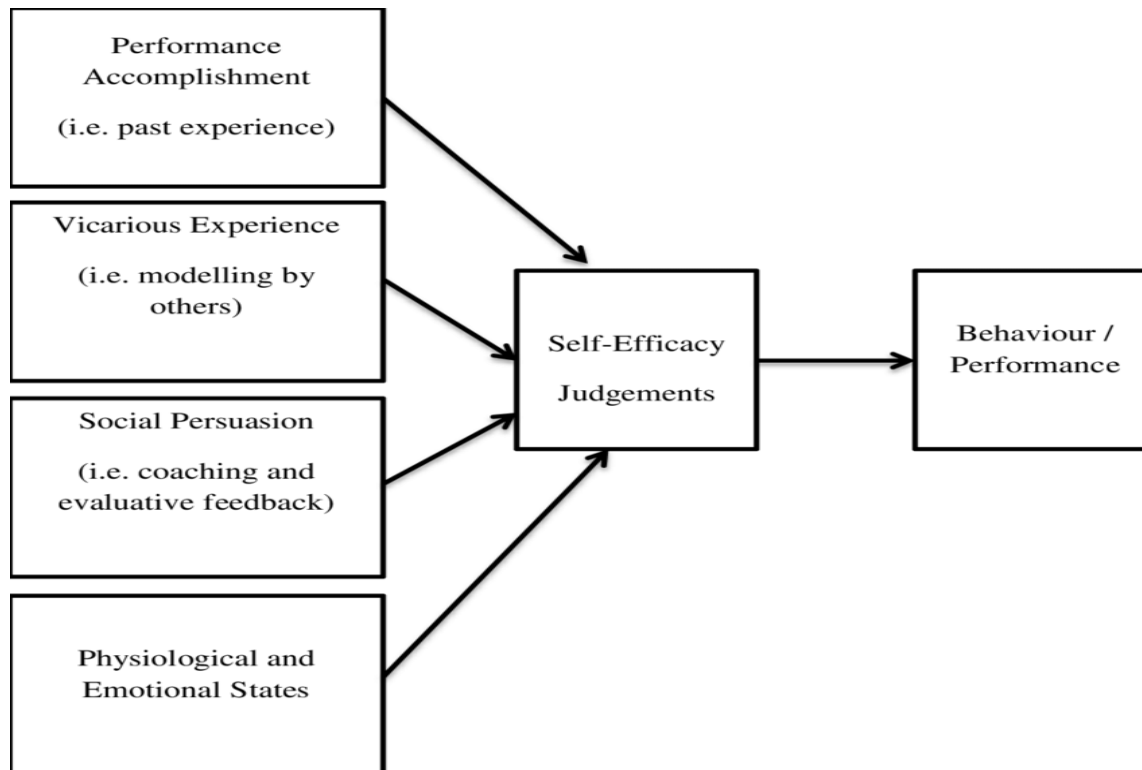
Overview

Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1997) provides the theoretical lens for the current study. Chapter two will present the history, sources, landmark studies, and recent research related to self-efficacy. The theoretical framework section will also critically analyze recent research germane to self-efficacy theory. Application of self-efficacy, primarily through education, is provided. Chapter two will also synthesize literature related to the other variables in this study, linking the current scholarship to research conducted on classroom management and its various aspects and self-efficacy of teachers with different experience levels. A gap in the literature is presented, which the current study seeks to fill.

Theoretical Framework

Figure 1

Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1986)



Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory

Self-efficacy is a person's belief about their aptitude or ability to affect an outcome on a task or event (Bandura, 1977; Maddux, 2012). Bandura (1977) stated that self-efficacy determines "whether coping behavior will be initiated, how much effort will be expended, and how long it will be sustained in the face of obstacles and aversive experiences" (p. 191). Individuals with stronger self-efficacy can be more flexible when complications arise, come up with solutions for these problems, and persist to complete or overcome the obstacle. Self-efficacy is also defined as "people's belief about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives" (Bandura, 1994, p. 72).

Self-efficacy has an impact on how people think, act, and feel. Weak self-efficacy has been found to be associated with helplessness, anxiety, and depression. Similarly, individuals with low self-confidence may attribute this to negative thoughts about themselves and their achievements (Watson, 1985). Not only are feelings influenced by self-efficacy, but positive metacognitive processes are associated with a strong sense of competence and can influence academic performance (Schwarzer, 2014). Motivation and taking action are also connected to self-efficacy. The amount of self-efficacy an individual has can improve or hinder motivation. Self-efficacy affects a person's choice to engage in more complex tasks, where the individual set themselves more ambitious goals and follows through with their goals (Wolf et al., 2018).

Thoughts precede actions, and individuals expect positive or negative results based upon the strength of their self-efficacy. When a goal has been set, individuals with stronger self-efficacy are more likely to devote more effort to a particular task and persevere longer than those with weaker self-efficacy. Those individuals with positive thoughts about themselves and their abilities are able to recover from setbacks quickly and preserve commitment to their goals (Schwarzer, 2014).

Bandura's self-efficacy theory plays a role in his social learning theory, which is the idea that, not only do environmental factors (such as classroom layout and classroom climate) affect learning and behavior, but cognitive factors have an influence on these variables as well (Bandura, 1977). Throughout the research performed, self-efficacy has been found to

improve job performance and decrease job burnout. Individuals with stronger self-efficacy and more confidence set higher goals for themselves and feel a sense of accomplishment when completing tasks (Shoji et al., 2015). Those with weaker self-efficacy and less confidence are also more likely to experience depression and anxiety (Shoji et al., 2015; Van Diemen et al., 2017).

History

Self-efficacy was born from the social learning theory, created by the Canadian psychologist, Albert Bandura. Bandura first became well-known in 1961 with his Bobo doll experiment, which suggested that modeling played a key role in why children exhibited certain behaviors. This experiment led to Bandura's revolutionary article and book about the social learning theory, where he first described self-efficacy. The social learning theory describes how behavior is learned and how self-efficacy is directly related to behavioral modification. Bandura further described the self-efficacy theory in his article "Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change" in *Psychological Review*. Since then, several theories of self-efficacy have emerged. In the past forty-five years, the self-efficacy theory has been researched and assessed within medicine, psychology, education, and organizational management (Jiao et al., 2020).

Sources of Self-Efficacy

There are four different sources of self-efficacy: enactive mastery experiences, vicarious

experiences, verbal persuasions (and similar types of social influences), and emotional arousal. According to Bandura (1977), individuals develop their self-efficacy beliefs by construing experiences based upon these four sources of self-efficacy. The intensity of experiences based on these sources is not as critical as how the experiences are interpreted and perceived.

The first source of self-efficacy is mastery of experiences. This is the awareness and perception that a person has of a specific task. If an individual fails or succeeds at a specific task, they will assume that they will fail or succeed on a task that is similar to the one they already experienced. A robust sense of efficacy involves experience in overcoming difficulties through determination and effort. Mastery experience is considered to be the most effective source of efficacy information since it can provide authentic evidence if an individual can muster what it takes to accomplish their goals (Bandura, 1977; Pajares et al., 2007). The degree to which individuals adjust their efficacy based upon mastery of experiences depends on several different factors in each varying circumstance. Individuals may change their efficacy based upon how capable they think they are before they start the task, how difficult they perceive the task to be, the amount of effort put into the task, the amount of external aid, the circumstances or setting under which the task is performed, the past failures or successes of similar tasks, and the way the individual remembers the task performed (Bandura, 1977).

The second source of self-efficacy is vicarious experiences. This comes from observing others performing a task. Individuals are susceptible to having their self-efficacy influenced

by vicarious experiences when they are unsure about their own competencies or if the other sources of self-efficacy contradict one another (if what they experience is different from verbal feedback being given). When an individual has an example of a person performing a task effectively, they are more likely to have stronger self-efficacy – particularly if the role model has stronger self-efficacy. A person's self-efficacy is influenced by vicarious experiences, especially when the model is similar or slightly higher in ability to the individual (Bandura, 1977).

Social persuasion is the third source of self-efficacy. This is the verbal feedback received from others when completing a task. When the feedback given highlights the individual's capabilities, especially in the early stages of a task, the individual's efficacy increases. The effectiveness of social persuasion on a person's perceived efficacy depends on who the persuader is and what experience or authority they have. The confidence of the persuader in their feedback also influences the effectiveness of social persuasion. Social persuasion may not be as influential as the other sources, especially if the individual is confident in their own self-appraisals. This means they likely will place less emphasis and importance on the feedback of others and will value their own feedback more (Bandura, 1977).

Finally, emotional arousal--how the individual feels about their own emotional state—is essential to understanding self-efficacy. Individuals who struggle with anxiety or depression may have a difficult time feeling large amounts of self-efficacy. Bandura (1977) suggests that high-performance arousal is usually a sign of low self-efficacy, while strong

efficacy is related to low-performance arousal. The intensity of emotional arousal can influence an individual's self-efficacy and how the arousal is perceived. For example, emotional arousal may be energizing for high achievers, while the arousal may be debilitating for low achievers (Bandura, 1977).

Although just one source of self-efficacy may affect an individual, the more combinations of the factors there are, the stronger the individual's self-efficacy. Each source's effect on an individual differs based on the circumstances and the individual; however, mastery of experiences and vicarious experiences are considered to be the most influential sources of self-efficacy. These four sources, alone or combined, contribute to a person's self-efficacy and their judgments about themselves. This, in turn, affects their behavior and performance on a task (Bandura, 1977).

Landmark Research Studies

After introducing self-efficacy theory in 1977, Bandura continued to publish works on the self-efficacy theory. In 1986, Bandura published his book, *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*, where he expanded on his original social learning theory and created the social cognitive theory. This theory emphasized how cognitive functions play a role in performing behaviors and how individuals don't merely react to environmental stimuli but actively try to interpret information. According to Bandura's social cognitive theory, people are proactive, self-regulating, and self-reflective. They can contribute to and change their life circumstances. Self-efficacy is one of the driving motivators for people to make those changes (Bandura, 1986).

In 1996, Bandura explained the role self-efficacy plays in his social cognitive theory. In this article, Bandura claimed that self-efficacy does not merely reflect a person's idea of their actions; instead, it is also grounded in individual inferences from diverse sources of information. How an individual perceives their self-efficacy affects performance, separate from the individual's actual aptitudes. For example, beliefs about oneself that were prompted in an experiment led to behavior change. Bandura states that self-efficacy is considered to encourage different functioning processes such as cognitive processes, motivation, effect, and selection of environments (Bandura, 1996).

Another key study in the development of the self-efficacy theory is the distinction that McCarthy and Newcomb (1992) place on self-efficacy in terms of monitoring thoughts or in terms of literal performance. In several circumstances, individuals may feel capable of controlling themselves by regulating their emotions, whereas in other circumstances, they may feel capable of changing the demanding situations instrumentally. McCarthy and Newcomb (1992) studied a large sample to find that certain problems were influenced by controlling thoughts, while other problems – more social issues such as dating, leadership, and assertiveness – were influenced solely by behavioral control dimensions. This study inspired further research on self-regulation and how individuals' beliefs and behaviors independently control their own self-inspection.

Skinner's (1995) book *Perceived Control: Motivation, Coping, and Development* studies competence motivation and how children perceive how much control they have and

connect it to self-efficacy. According to Skinner, self-efficacy is related more to how individuals feel about what they are capable of rather than what they anticipate the outcome will be. She postulates that what individuals, especially children, perceive they are capable of is the cause of their failure or success. Skinner's work showed that a need for control over environments may be instinctive and may motivate individuals across their life span.

Armitage & Conner (2001) investigated the difference between perceived control and perceived behavioral control. They found that perceived behavioral control and self-efficacy accounted for the same amounts of variance in intentions. However, perceived control accounted for a much smaller amount of the variance in intentions. This demonstrated that control cognitions, including self-efficacy, can predict an individual's plans to participate in certain behaviors.

Critical Analysis

Several research studies have disputed that what individuals think they can do (or their self-efficacy rating) is different from their capability (self-efficacy). Instead, their self-efficacy rating reflects what they are motivated to do (Williams & Rhodes, 2016). Kirsch (1995) discusses the difference between two meanings of *can do*:

Consider your answers to the following questions: Could you eat a live worm? Could you laugh out loud during the middle of a funeral? Could you kill a baby kitten? I assume you would answer at least some of these questions negatively. Why? Do you lack the conviction that you can successfully execute these behaviors? Do you lack the "capability to organize and execute" these actions [(Bandura, 1986, p. 391)]?

Perhaps you lack the “capabilities to exercise control” over these events [Bandura, 1989, p. 1175)]. I expect that none of these reasons explain your low self-efficacy ratings. More likely you are “unable to do these things because doing so would evoke extreme disgust, embarrassment, guilt, or shame. Clearly, when you say you cannot do these things, you mean something different than when you say you cannot solve a difficult calculus problem, lift a 300-pound weight, or successfully execute the job requirements of an astronaut. (p. 338-339)

Therefore, it is important to understand which *can do* is reflected in an individual’s answers to a self-perceived self-efficacy assessment. An individual may say they “can do” a task, but it is uncertain if that actually reflects their perceived capability or if it reflects their motivation to do that task. Bandura’s self-efficacy scales are formatted in a *can do* design. However, many research studies that use the self-efficacy theory would be better off using a format that measures a participants’ *confidence in performing a task* or *performing a task*.

Instruments that use this language would be better suited to distinguish the difference between perceived capability and the participant’s motivation.

Recent Research

Research is still being done on the self-efficacy theory. Peura et al. (2021) argue that most research on the sources of self-efficacy is done in cross-sectional research. The authors perform a longitudinal study to identify the trajectories of change in reading self-efficacy among primary school students over 11 months. They found that higher levels of four

sources (mastery of experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and psychological arousal) were connected to higher positive self-efficacy trajectories. This recent research considers the variability of self-efficacy and the importance of monitoring self-efficacy over time. Self-efficacy research is also continuing to develop for specific populations in specific fields. Kim et al. (2021) study if self-efficacy has an effect and its effect on students of color in the STEM fields. The results of this study found that self-efficacy does affect this population and centers around the importance of interpersonal relationships with others, adding to our socio-cultural understanding of self-efficacy.

New technology has also contributed to our understanding of the self-efficacy theory. Stojanovic et al. (2021) studied what role self-efficacy plays in intentional habit-making using a habit-building app they created. They found that self-efficacy strengthens the habit but does not decrease motivational interference (distractibility, task switching, bad mood, etc.). This research helps to build our understanding of self-efficacy and how it relates to automaticity in developing habits.

Application

Since its conception, the self-efficacy theory has been used to advance research in many various fields. Within the medical field, the self-efficacy theory has been used to study its effect on diverse areas such as depression (Stephan et al., 2016), breastfeeding (Wu et al., 2014;

Brockway et al., 2020), patient symptoms and outcomes (Hoffman, 2013), exercise goals (Jung & Brawley, 2011; Rodgers et al., 2014), posttraumatic recovery (Benight, & Bandura, 2004), and chronic disease management (Ritter & Lorig, 2014). The self-efficacy theory has also been used in fields such as career choice counseling, with the results finding that self-efficacy affects career choices, performance, persistence, and expectations within different fields (Betz, 2004). This concept has also been applied to clinical, educational, social, developmental, health, and personality psychology (Conner & Norman, 2005).

Self-Efficacy in Education

Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy established a foundation for opportunities for educational leaders to construct procedures that acquire stronger self-efficacy to promote student success. Since Bandura's influential article, research has continued to support the connection between students' academic self-efficacy and their success. This research has shown that students with stronger self-efficacy participate in assignments that promote the advancement of their knowledge, skills, and abilities in those areas, exercise effort despite running into difficulty and persevere longer at challenging tasks (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Schunk, 1991).

Additionally, besides the influence that self-efficacy can have on the quantity of effort, students with stronger self-efficacy also yield greater effort, using more extraordinary cognitive processing strategies than their counterparts (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Artino, 2012). Students with more confidence and stronger self-efficacy are more motivated to learn and believe that they can perform well on the new skills presented to them (Gegenfurtner et

al., 2013). Hacket et al. (1992) discovered that self-efficacy was a greater predictor of a student's GPA than their interest, outcome expectations, and stress, strain, and coping for a population of 197 undergraduate students.

A student's self-efficacy is greatly influenced by the classroom and school environment (Marinak & Gambrell, 2010). Researchers have studied the potential for literacy improvement through creating structures related to Bandura's sources of self-efficacy that encourage students to have stronger self-efficacy, such as modeling, mastery experiences, allowing student agency, and adjusted feedback (Ortlieb & Schatz, 2020; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). Fencil and Scheel (2005) investigated the effect that different teaching strategies have on the strength of students' self-efficacy in an undergraduate physics course. They stated, "It is exciting to note that the teaching strategies used in the classroom can and do make a difference to students' self-efficacy. What is more, the size of the effect that teaching strategies have on self-efficacy is meaningful" (p. 22-23). Specific strategies that they found to improve self-efficacy include question and answer, collaborative learning, electronic applications, and conceptual problem assignments. Bandura (1994) also discussed how when students work together in cooperative learning structures, they tend to have a more optimistic view of what they are capable of and what they can achieve academically. Students have higher achievement, motivation, and self-efficacy when instructed by teachers who have strong self-efficacy (Huang, 2012).

Self-efficacy has a positive effect on teachers as well as students. Teacher self-efficacy is "the extent to which the teacher believes he or she can affect performance" (Berman et al.,

1977). Delivering successful, inclusive instruction (Siwatu et al., 2016), building proper and applicable assessments (Kelley et al., 2015), and having effective classroom management procedures (Siwatu et al., 2015) are all aspects included in teacher self-efficacy. Teachers rely on Bandura's (1977) sources of self-efficacy: mastery, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological cues when in the classroom. This helps them to make evaluations about their ability to react appropriately during instruction, assessment, and classroom management (Hajovsky et al., 2019). As teachers engage with students in the classroom through mastery experiences, they are better able to adjust their self-efficacy based upon feedback and successful or unsuccessful endeavors.

Bandura's self-efficacy theory has been emphasized in education due to findings that teachers with stronger self-efficacy put forward more effort, commitment, persistence, as well as have healthier feelings towards students and more enthusiasm (Flores, 2015; Lotter et al., 2018; Menon & Sadler, 2016). Teachers with stronger self-efficacy and confidence in their teaching are empowered by the idea that they have control within their classroom beyond the influence of the situation or environment.

Bandura's self-efficacy model has affected the field of education by enabling teachers to believe that they can make a positive impact on their students. A teacher's self-efficacy is "a judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated" (Tschannen-Moran &

Hoy, 2001, p. 783). A teacher who believes in their own capabilities and sees the challenge as something they can overcome is much more likely to do so (Fives, 2003). Teacher self-efficacy not only reduces job burnout by increasing a teacher's commitment to education and their own teaching performance, while teachers with weaker self-efficacy often change their choice of profession (Klassen & Tze, 2014).

Academic Self-Efficacy in Recent Research

Wilson, Woolfson, and Durkin (2020) identified that not only do mastery experiences act as a source of self-efficacy, but school climate can also play a role in teachers' self-efficacy. This research builds on the current understanding of how self-efficacy is fostered and the influence a school's environment can have. Pre-service teachers' self-efficacy has also been in recent research. Berg and Smith (2018) investigated the self-efficacy of 75 pre-service teachers before their practicum capstone and after. The purpose of this study was to identify the effect of the capstone on the strength of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy. The results indicated that the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy increased from pre- to post-practicum. Similar studies have also found pre-service teachers' self-efficacy to increase after having mastery experiences through exposure in the field (Fitzgerald, 2020; Pytash & Hylton, 2021; Weber & Greiner, 2019).

While these studies focused on mastery experiences being the source of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy, El-Abd and Chaaban (2020) studied the effect that vicarious experiences have on the strength of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy. This mixed-methods study investigated the strength of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy before observing in-

service teachers managing a classroom and after their observations. Unlike the studies investigating mastery experiences as a source of self-efficacy, vicarious experiences were not found to significantly affect the strength of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy. All participants of this study expressed a desire for additional mastery experiences in developing their self-efficacy with classroom management.

Novice teachers' self-efficacy has also been investigated in recent research. George, Richardson, and Watt (2018) researched how teachers' self-efficacy changes during the first five years of their careers. Self-efficacy was found to improve as teachers gained more experience within the first five years of their careers. Professional development was also found to have a slight positive effect on teachers' self-efficacy, which may also impact the increasing strength of the self-efficacy of novice teachers throughout their first five years (Yang, 2019; 2020).

Recent research on the strength of the self-efficacy of mid-career and late-career teachers is limited. Lazarides, Watt, and Richardson (2020) found that length of teaching experience did not significantly impact teachers' self-efficacy of classroom management techniques from novice to mid-career teachers. They suggest that self-efficacy of classroom management may have already been established during teacher education. Late-career teachers were found to have similar motivation levels to mid-career teachers, and while motivation levels are the highest for pre-service and novice teachers, burnout and abandoning the field of education was most common among novice teachers (Ponnock et al., 2018). Although recent research in teacher self-efficacy addresses the individual experience

levels (pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career), few studies investigate how teacher self-efficacy changes throughout multiple levels of experience. There are no studies that examine the difference in self-efficacy between all four experience levels.

Self-Efficacy & the Current Study

The current study seeks to determine if there is a difference between the classroom management self-efficacy of pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers in Utah. Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) has advanced the field of education by studying how teachers are affected by various strengths of self-efficacy and how this can improve their teaching performance. Specifically, research has been done on self-efficacy in teachers' classroom management techniques and their role in their classroom management implementation. However, self-efficacy research does not investigate the different experience levels of teachers and how their self-efficacy in classroom management techniques may differ.

The current study may advance the theory of self-efficacy by helping to identify what may influence the strength of self-efficacy teachers feel. This study focuses on four different teaching experience levels: pre-service (within practicum, student teaching, field experience, etc), novice (less than five years of experience), mid-career (six to eighteen years of experience), and late-career (nineteen or more years of experience) teachers. By studying the varying levels of experience of teachers and the strength of those teachers' self-efficacy, years of experience could be found to positively influence the confidence a teacher feels in their

classroom management techniques. The current literature establishes understanding of the research done in the field of classroom management self-efficacy.

Related Literature

Classroom Management

The act of teaching is a spur-of-the-moment series of events. A teacher can prepare what they will say, what activities will be performed, and the desired learning outcomes, but the spontaneous nature of each teaching event may bring a situation that different teachers react differently to. How teachers react to these unprompted, unstructured moments is a large factor in classroom management (Wolff et al., 2021). Classroom management is an expansive topic that includes several aspects, such as managing instruction as well as dealing with the misbehaviors of students (Egeberg et al., 2016). In *The Handbook of Classroom Management*, classroom management is defined as follows:

Actions teachers take to create an environment that supports and facilitates both academic and social-emotional learning... it not only seeks to establish and sustain an orderly environment so students can engage in meaningful academic learning, it also aims to enhance students' social and moral growth. (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006, p. 4)

Classroom management is an abstract concept that many teachers are continuously attempting to master and yet may not know what an effectively managed classroom actually looks like or how to practice successful management. Many believe that just because teaching is taking place, learning is happening. This notion is challenged by misbehaving students, a poor classroom environment, and other disruptions. These misbehaviors and

disruptions include a wide range of behaviors such as talking out of turn, irritating classmates, defiance with the teacher, avoiding work, and inattention during instructional time. Lopes et al. (2017) states, “Often teachers attribute these classroom misbehaviors to students’ lack of interest in school contents, to wrong educational politics, to school and society permissiveness about misbehavior and violence, and most of all, to poor parenting” (p. 470). No matter the amount of experience they have, most teachers agree that classroom management is one of the make-or-breaks of teaching (Whitaker et al., 2019).

Although there are a vast number of classroom management resources available for educators, research is still being done on the best forms of classroom management and how to provide the most effective classroom management professional development for teachers (Hirsch et al., 2019; Wilkinson et al., 2021). Several studies have investigated the effectiveness of education programs in preparing pre-service teachers for handling classroom management issues, with many of these studies discovering that teacher preparation programs are insufficient training for pre-service teachers (Adams et al., 2020; Flower et al., 2016; Gilmour et al., 2018; Kwok, 2020). Only 20 to 50% of universities sampled had classes for pre-service teachers on classroom management, with only about half of those requiring teachers in the program to take these classes (Kwok, 2020). Within those preparation programs, it was also found that pre-service teachers were taught general management strategies more than explicit skills and tactics for increasing or decreasing behaviors (Flower et al., 2016). Furthermore, Freeman et al. (2013) found that “special education program policy is more explicit than general education policy, and alternative track policy tend[s] to

be less comprehensive” (p. 116). This lack of classroom management training leads the pre-service teachers to feel unprepared to enter the general education classroom.

However, teachers within their first year of teaching feel confident in managing a classroom and on their influence as a teacher (Aus et al., 2017). Teachers beyond their first year reported significantly different results. Novice teachers within their first five years reported negative feelings and opinions associated with classroom management. These opinions extend to feeling anxious and strained, feeling like additional support is crucial, and several novice teachers even think about leaving the school (Sezer, 2017).

Not only does classroom management involve dealing with misbehaving students, but the classroom management umbrella also covers creating a cohesive classroom environment and community, as well as establishing routines and procedures efficient enough to get some instructional time into the school day (Hunt et al., 2018;2019). Additionally, there are dozens of different strategies for managing the classroom, but strategies also differ depending on the variety of students in the classroom. Special education or multicultural students have specific needs and strategies based upon those necessities (Lindbert et al., 2014; Shepherd & Linn, 2015). This causes teachers and administrators to spend countless hours dealing with student misbehavior, which takes time away from teaching and student learning. This time loss is a significant cause of teachers leaving the field and student lack of achievement (Rivkin & Schiman, 2015). Teacher burnout is frequently interconnected with student misbehavior (Osher et al., 2010). Likewise, the National Council on Teacher Quality reported that 40% of new teachers do not feel sufficiently ready to deal with discipline issues in the classroom and

that teachers regularly identify classroom management as a “top problem” (Greenburg et al., 2014).

Classroom disruptions are not a new issue, and behavior management is not a recent development. The findings of several prominent theorists from the twentieth century laid the groundwork for modern classroom management. B.F Skinner is known as the father of operant conditioning, which proposed that consequences of actions may either reinforce or weaken behavior (Skinner, 1938). Thomas Gordon postulated that conflicts could be fixed through positive relationships (Gordon, 2003), while Lee and Marlene Canter believed that the classroom environment was primarily responsible for student compliance (Canter & Canter, 2001). Additionally, Kounin’s theory of management focused on specific strategies teachers could use to engage students, build trust, and manage misbehavior. Kounin believed that a teacher’s “with-it-ness,” or the capability to know what is happening in the classroom at all times, is what allows teachers to be successful in addressing behavioral concerns while still guiding learning (Kounin, 1970).

Research within the past few years has also added to our understanding of classroom management. Recent research has looked at teacher perspectives of classroom management and student perspectives as well. Scherzinger & Wettstein (2018) used a multimethod approach to find that teachers, students, and external observers view teacher-student relationships and classroom disruptions differently. Recent research on classroom management also spells how pre-service teachers’ ideas and awareness evolve from deploying

discipline strategies to using proactive, flexible classroom management strategies (Glock & Pit-Ten, 2021; Gokalp & Can, 2021).

With technology advancing, using technology to promote classroom management and classroom management in virtual classrooms has also evolved in recent research. Virtual classrooms still use classroom management to create a sense of classroom community to increase student satisfaction (Kavaryici, 2021). Additionally, many teachers are using gamification and technology to promote classroom management (Mora, 2020). In recent years, behavior management has shifted from simply dealing with student misbehavior, to an assortment of instructional practices such as building strong teacher-student relationships, creating meaningful learning activities that engage students, as well as fostering enthusiasm and motivation to complete learning tasks (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015; Korpershoek et al., 2016; Marzano et al., 2001).

A student's engagement during instruction, motivation to complete tasks, and reductions in behavioral problems are directly correlated with a teacher's ability to implement effective classroom organization techniques – especially among elementary-aged children (McClelland et al., 2017). Children who exhibit challenging behavior benefit from teachers who set high expectations for the child's behavior, facilitate engaging educational experiences, create and maintain procedures, encourage positive behavior, and decrease the amount of time spent on transitioning between activities (Vitello et al., 2012). Disruptive behaviors are minimized when the teacher gives clear expectations, decreasing the need for students to ask clarifying

questions (Skiba et al., 2016). This not only lessens disruptive behavior, but setting clear expectations, rules, and routines can also increase on-task behavior (Lopes et al., 2017).

Effectively managing classrooms requires constant mindfulness and responsiveness, recognizing where attention should be spent, and familiarity with acting and reacting when situations arise (Wolff et al., 2021).

Student Engagement & Motivation

Heo and Han (2018) found that autonomous and self-directed students in their learning show higher levels of motivation and higher levels of academic success. Recent literature has confirmed that students' motivation plays a critical role in their academic achievement as well as being the most significant predictor as to whether students will drop out of school (Rump et al., 2017; Gordeeva et al., 2018). Increasing student engagement also maintains positive, on-task behavior in classrooms. Children who are engaged in exciting and challenging learning material are more motivated, thus minimizing disruptive behavior (Aloe et al., 2014).

Additionally, student engagement has also been linked to success in academics (Rump et al., 2017; Voisin & Elsaesser, 2016) as well as enrollment in college (Wang & Peck, 2013).

Research has shown that engagement is directly related to classroom factors such as behavior management (Bottiana et al., 2019; Larson et al., 2020). A 2020 study identified a correlation between classroom management and high school students' self-perceived engagement. The study found that when the teacher supported positive behavior, students reported having significantly higher levels of engagement (Larson et al., 2020).

Classroom Disruptions

Classroom disruptions are defined as disturbances to the teaching-learning process originating from students, outside interferences, or even the teacher (Scherzinger et al., 2019). In the case of students, this can come in the form of speaking out, interrupting the teacher, failing to comply with instructions, or in more extreme cases, harassment or threatening. In a recent survey, the National Center for Educational Statistics (2018) found that 43% of teachers in public schools around the United States felt that students misbehaving hindered their instruction during the 2015-2016 school year. Teachers who cannot implement effective classroom management techniques struggle to have an organized, orderly class, thus spending more time dealing with misbehaving students than actually delivering instruction (Lopes et al., 2017).

One of the main reasons teachers feel incompetent and why many teachers leave the profession is students who cause problems with challenging behavior, regardless of the reasons students resist (Evans et al., 2019; Gibbs & Miller, 2014; de Ruiter, Poorthuis, & Koomen, 2019). Not only do misbehaving students negatively affect teachers, but it also impacts the classroom environment and the learning of the misbehaving student, and often, the other students in the class (Hernandez & Seem, 2004). Different classroom management approaches address the different forms of misconduct a student may execute. Often teachers respond with the same type of behavior, interrupting the misconduct by making the student leave the classroom or implementing a consequence (Roache & Lewis, 2011). Often, a deficiency of perceived self-efficacy to deal with these behaviors means that even more over-

corrective and punitive strategies are used (Allday, 2011; Orejudo et al., 2020). Teachers who respond in a ridiculing or shaming way can also similarly damage the learning and negatively affect the teacher-student relationship. Both aggressive and nonaggressive can extend over long periods, leading to emotional exhaustion and poor relationships if not handled with effective classroom management strategies (Scherzinger et al., 2019).

Teacher-Student Relationships

In a 2016 study, the quality of teacher-student relationships between kindergarten to third grade students was analyzed. Mejia and Hoglund (2016) found that when a teacher perceived a child as demonstrating disruptive behavior, the teacher viewed the relationship in a more negative light. They also found that the quality of the teacher-student relationship was directly correlated with child adjustment problems, demonstrating the importance of positive teacher-student relationships. Not only do children demonstrate lower levels of disruptive behavior and better social-emotional levels when higher quality teacher-student relationships are present, but a student's academics can also be positively influenced (Sutherland et al., 2018; Williford et al., 2017). When children feel a sense of belonging through positive teacher-student relationships, they are more likely to concentrate on learning experiences (Soydan et al., 2018; Levin & Nolan, 2013).

More specifically, children with positive relationships with their teachers have been found to have improvements in math, reading, social-emotional abilities, as well as demonstrate more self-control (Landry et al., 2017). Cash et al. (2019) found that students

with higher quality teacher-student relationships “exhibited greater language and literacy skill after one year and even greater gains after the second year of high-quality instructional support” (p. 75). This exhibits the connection between positive teacher-student relationships and the academic outcomes of students. Positive teacher-student relationships support students’ academic achievements and minimize aggressive behavior in students and encourage prosocial student behavior (Obsuth et al., 2017). A positive teacher-student relationship has even been found to be beneficial to teacher’s health (Wubbels et al., 2006).

Self-Efficacy in Classroom Management

Recent literature in self-efficacy has shown that healthy teacher self-efficacy is related to increased job satisfaction for teachers, more instructional support for students, and positive student outcomes through increased motivational levels of students and their achievement levels (Zee & Koomen, 2016). Several current studies have also shown the relationship between stronger self-efficacy between teachers and positive student academic outcomes (Kim & Seo, 2018; Talsma et al., 2018).

Research has also found self-efficacy to affect teacher burnout rates and whether new teachers feel prepared to enter their own classroom (Flower et al., 2017; Korpershoek et al., 2016). Teachers who have recently graduated often feel ill-equipped and unprepared to begin their careers in the classroom, and this weaker self-efficacy can lead to teachers leaving the field (Page & Jones, 2018; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

The current literature demonstrates the importance of positive classroom management, although teachers often feel unprepared and insecure in their management abilities (Butler & Monda-Amaya, 2016; Hepburn & Beamish, 2019; Skiba et al., 2016). In fact, classroom management has been found to be one of the most common anxieties new teachers face (He & Cooper, 2011; Lew & Nelson, 2016). These low confidence levels lead to increased teacher burnout (Aloe, Amo, and Shanahan, 2014; Main & Hammond, 2008), while higher self-efficacy with teachers has directly correlated to increased job satisfaction (Chiu, 2010). Although stronger self-efficacy has been found to decrease teacher burnout and increase student achievement, most elementary teachers feel unconfident about their ability to manage a classroom (Soydan et al., 2018).

Several factors contribute to teachers' classroom management self-efficacy, including teaching resources and grade level taught (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007; Walker & Shea, 1998; Warren, 2002). Other factors such as school setting can influence self-efficacy as well. Teachers who work in suburban settings report higher classroom management self-efficacy than those in rural or urban schools (Shoulders & Krei, 2016; Siwatu, 2011). Experience has also been found to affect teachers' classroom management self-efficacy due to teachers having time to adapt and implement classroom management techniques and use trial and error to resolve classroom management issues (Potter, 2021).

Teacher preparation programs recognize the crucial role managing a classroom plays for teachers and how vital it is to include it within a teacher preparation program (Stough & Montague, 2015); however, these programs are frequently considered to lack real-world

significance, spending more time on theories and less on practicality (Hepburn & Beamish, 2019).

Teacher Experience

Past studies demonstrate that the amount of experience a teacher has is related to the quality of instruction. Teachers with more experience are able to concentrate on critical classroom problems and spotlight solutions to these problems (Hagger & McIntyre, 2000; Unal & Unal, 2012). New teachers are inclined to be timid in making spur-of-the-moment decisions and unable to adapt to new situations (Kerrins & Cushing, 2000). While one characteristic experienced teachers bring to the table that new teachers lack is the ability to deal with new, unpredictable situations (Carter et al., 1988; Doyle, 1986). Because novice teachers lack experience, they have had less practice dealing with situations that come up and guiding curriculum towards the desired academic results (Winterbottom et al., 2008).

Teacher Experience & Classroom Management

Multiple studies have examined the relationship between classroom management techniques and how much experience a teacher has. A 2018 qualitative study investigated the concerns that novice teachers experience regarding instructional quality and classroom management. This longitudinal case study involved four novice teachers and used interviews, questionnaires, and focus groups over two years to gather data about the participants' concerns. The research found that the main concern of the teachers in their first year of teaching was related to classroom management and discipline of children. The teachers often

reported feeling frustrated and vulnerable, with their first year being surprisingly demanding and challenging (Zhukova, 2018).

Teachers with more experience “tend to focus less on disruptive student behavior than novices, partially because they can prevent disruptions by recognizing behavioral and event cues early on and adjust their teaching activities accordingly and partially because they are more concerned with learning consequences than misbehavior” (Wolff et al., 2021, p. 136).

Between 1987-1988, most of America’s teachers had substantial experience, with only 17% being beginning teachers with five or fewer years of experience. However, by 2008, more than one-quarter of the nation’s teachers had five or fewer years of experience in the classroom (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010). While some research supports the conclusion that teachers with more experience are more effective than beginning or novice teachers (Carter et al., 1988; Winterbottom et al., 2008; Wolff et al., 2021), other research supports the concept that there aren’t any significant gains for teachers who have taught twenty years versus teachers who have taught five years (Aaronson et al., 2007). A 2017 longitudinal study found that “a typical or average teacher with many years of experience is necessarily far more effective than a typical teacher with fewer years” (Ladd & Sorensen, 2017, p. 268)

Voss et al. (2017) investigate novice teachers’ classroom management and emotional exhaustion during the first two years of their careers. The study found that teachers were much more emotionally exhausted in their first year of teaching than in their second year. The study also found that behavior management knowledge was significantly higher in

participants who had to teach more lessons in their pre-service education, solidifying the concept that more experience in teaching is positively associated with effective classroom management techniques. In contrast, a recent 2020 study researched the quality of instruction for 80 teachers within three categories: 0-3 years of experience, 4-5 years of experience, and more than 5 years of experience. Teachers were observed using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to assess the teachers' quality of instruction. The teachers were observed for qualities such as positive classroom climate, classroom management, quality of instructional support (such as feedback quality and language modeling), and teacher productivity.

Interestingly, no correlation was found between quality of instruction and teaching experience. In fact, the group of teachers with 4-5 years of experience demonstrated significantly lower scores in the observations' behavior management and productivity areas (Graham et al., 2020). One limitation to this study is that it does not categorize teachers with more than five years of experience into mid-career and late-career teachers. Additionally, in relation to previously mentioned literature, the contrary nature of this study demonstrates the need for further research on the effect that teaching experience has on classroom management techniques.

One possible explanation for the conflicting results of these studies comes from Girardet's (2017) article *Why Do Some Teachers Change and Others Don't?*. This systematic review of 24 studies found that several other factors besides years of experience could lead to other success with classroom management. According to Girardet, the reason some teachers'

management improves and others do not is due to practices such as “reflecting on prior beliefs, studying alternative practices, enacting those practices, and reflecting on action in a collaborative learning environment” (p. 3).

Self-Efficacy of Teachers of Varying Experience Levels

Classroom management has been considered to be the main influence for novice teachers and their confidence in teaching and is found to be one of the more intimidating undertakings a new teacher faces (Chaaban & Du, 2017; Eisenman et al., 2015; Lopes et al., 2017; Moe et al., 2010). Pre-service teachers have also seldom shown strong self-efficacy in classroom management (Aloe et al., 2014; Sivri & Balci, 2015). However, some earlier studies establish a diminishing strength of self-efficacy for teachers between the experience of pre-service and novice (Watt & Richardson, 2010), this is sometimes recognized as “reality shock,” where the pre-service teacher’s preconceived notions of classroom management contrast with their experiences as a novice teacher. George, Richardson, and Watt (2018) found that teachers generally stabilize their self-efficacy around their sixth year of teaching.

Potter (2021) investigated the self-perceived self-efficacy of elementary general music teachers of two experience levels: novice and experienced. While identifying that several, varying factors contribute to self-efficacy, the data found that experienced teachers had significantly stronger self-efficacy than novice teachers. Potter (2021) states that this could be due to several factors, such as experienced teachers having more time to develop skills on how to manage difficult behaviors and more time to observe and mirror other teachers’ classroom management styles. The participants themselves identified that their years of

experience did influence how much self-efficacy they had. Limitations of this study include that it did not account for the diverse settings participants came from, which could have also influenced the perceived self-efficacy of the music teachers. It also divided the teachers into two separate experience level groups, while the current study seeks to break down experience level into smaller subgroups.

Morris, Usher, and Chen (2017) performed a critical review of the literature to identify the sources of teacher self-efficacy. One central insight gained from this review was that several methodological weaknesses had prevented a well-defined understanding of how teachers form self-efficacy. However, they did find that experienced teachers are more likely to be effective and in their teaching responsibilities, which may reinforce a feeling of self-efficacy for these more experienced teachers.

Bulut & Topdemir (2018) investigated elementary school math teachers' beliefs about their own classroom management. They surveyed 370 math teachers and found that positive self-efficacy beliefs affect the classroom environment, but they also found that self-efficacy increases with teaching experience. However, a conflicting study reveals findings of the opposite nature. Lazarides et al. (2020) used a longitudinal design to investigate 395 primary and secondary school teachers and their classroom management self-efficacy concerning their career experience. This study followed participants from positions as pre-service teachers until mid-career teachers. Using the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), the self-efficacy of teachers' classroom management techniques was investigated. They found that "stability did not depend on the length of teaching experience,

nor significantly differ between early to mid-career than from completing teacher education until early career” (p. 9). While both of these studies are similar to the proposed study, the conflicting results of the study demonstrate the need for further research to be done on the subject. Additionally, neither study investigated late-career teachers and their self-perceived strength of self-efficacy with classroom management.

Although many studies have been done on classroom management, teacher experience, self-efficacy, and the combination of all three, there are still gaps in the literature as these topics are still developing. Many studies discuss the relationship between classroom management and teachers of different experience levels (Carter et al., 1988; Ladd & Sorensen, 2017; Voss, 2017; Winterbottom et al., 2008; Wolff et al., 2021). However, there is not research that narrows down the population of each group into pre-service teachers, novice teachers, mid-career teachers, and late-career teachers. This will help to identify precisely how many years of experience are needed to affect self-perceived self-efficacy in classroom management for teachers if a connection exists at all.

The current literature also includes several studies on the effect that teaching experience has on teachers' self-efficacy (Bulut & Topdemir, 2018; Lazarides et al., 2020; Potter, 2021). However, some studies have found that teaching experience does impact levels of classroom management self-efficacy, while others have the opposite findings. The inconsistent results of these studies demonstrate the need for additional research to be completed on this topic. The current literature also does not cover different experience levels of teachers, and what difference causes a variation in the self-perceived self-efficacy of

classroom management techniques for these teachers. The current study seeks to identify the different experience levels of teachers and how these experience levels may change the classroom management self-efficacy of these teachers. The current study seeks to fill gaps that the current literature has addressed.

Summary

Bandura's self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977, 1997) provides a durable, reliable, and valid framework for understanding variation in outcome differences across a wide range of human behavior, actions, and professions. In short, the theory posits that those who are more confident about their ability to take the necessary steps to accomplish a task have a higher probability of doing so than those who cannot perceive the pathways to the task or who do not have the expectation of success. Some researchers (Lopez et al., 2019) have pointed out that weaknesses of self-efficacy, including how it does not explain the totality of human behavior as comprehensively as other constructs such as hope theory (as one example). Nonetheless, self-efficacy is about seeing a pathway through a difficulty toward accomplishing a goal and the general feeling that one can take the steps necessary to get there. Specifically, for teachers, stronger self-efficacy leads to higher academic results in students, less burnout for teachers, and more persistence and effort when difficulties arise (Flores, 2015; Lotter et al., 2018; Menon & Sadler, 2016; Slavin, 2018).

Discussions of self-efficacy underscore effective classroom management practices. For teachers—and students—no real learning is possible without an engaged classroom with all individuals committed to a shared understanding of the learning task at hand. Classroom

management includes positively influencing student engagement and motivation, minimizing classroom disruptions, as well as developing positive teacher-student relationships (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015; Korpershoek et al., 2016; Marzano et al., 2001). Effective management has been found to improve student's academic achievements, social-emotional health, as well as positively impact teachers (Larson, Pas, & Bottiani, 2020; Levin & Nolan, 2013; Soydan et al., 2018; Sutherland et al., 2018; Williford et al., 2017). However, research is also clear that positive, effective classroom management is less about authoritarian compliance than it is about collaborative engagement and community building (Kohn, 2006, 2021; Safir & Dugan, 2021). Self-efficacy is required for teachers to be vulnerable and authentic while also leading in a way that influences students to engage with the lesson and respond to the teacher (Safir & Dugan, 2021).

The current literature also explored teachers' experience levels with classroom management while focusing on how years of experience can influence self-efficacy in this all-important educational skill. Gaps in the current empirical research literature include non-specific groups with experience levels of teachers and conflicting results as to whether teaching experience affects classroom management self-efficacy or whether skill in this essential teaching behavior is due to other factors. The current study seeks to fill these gaps.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

This chapter discusses the study's design, which is a quantitative causal-comparative design, along with the rationale for this design. The research question is restated, and the

null hypothesis is presented. The population, sample size, and procedure are discussed, and the participants' demographics are provided. The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) is described and justified, and the procedures used to perform this research study appear as necessary actions to complete the proposed research. Finally, chapter three concludes with an overview of ANOVA as the correct statistical analysis tool to test the study's hypothesis.

Design

For this study, a quantitative causal-comparative design was used. In a quantitative causal-comparative design, researchers attempt to determine the consequences of distinctions that exist between a group of participants (Gall et al., 2007). A causal-comparative research study involves identifying a problem within a phenomenon. In the current study, teachers' classroom management self-efficacy is the phenomenon, and the problem are the differences between high and low scores of efficacy. Next, a sample of individuals to be studied needs to be determined. Causal comparative research studies work best when the selected groups are the same with some variables. If there are too many differences between the groups of participants, there may be too many variables involved in the results. This is why elementary teachers from Utah were chosen as the participants for the current study. They are within the same geological area and teaching approximately the same age of students.

The purpose of this causal-comparative quantitative research study was to determine if there was a difference in self-perceived strength of self-efficacy with classroom management between pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers. A causal-

comparative design is appropriate for this design since a causal-comparative study seeks to determine the consequences of differences that already exist between groups of people (Gall et al., 2007). The number of years a teacher has and his or her self-efficacy strength were two variables that were not manipulated. The independent variable of this study was the different experience levels among elementary teachers within the state of Utah, categorized as pre-service (within practicum, student teaching, field experience, etc), novice (less than five years of experience), mid-career (six to eighteen years of experience), and late-career (nineteen or more years of experience). The dependent variable is the self-efficacy strength teachers within this population score on the Efficacy in Classroom Management subscale of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Long Form instrument (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). This instrument uses a Likert-type scale which is an ordinal variable that involves ranking responses in order of preference or strength. A statistical significance in a self-efficacy outcome among teachers with different experience levels is what was investigated, which is the purpose of a causal-comparative design. Participants were limited to teachers within Utah since researchers performing a causal-comparative design should attempt to control as many other variables as possible and because of convenience, which although not an ideal sampling strategy, is allowed and permissible (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

Research Question

RQ: Is there a difference in classroom management self-efficacy scores among pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers in Utah?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis for this study is:

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference in the classroom management self-efficacy score of Utah elementary teachers who have different years of experience (pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career) as measured by the Efficacy in Classroom Management subscale of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale.

Participants and Setting

For this study, 166 participants were drawn from a stratified sample of elementary public and charter school teachers and pre-service teacher candidates from universities within the state of Utah. The participants had different levels of experience corresponding to the independent variable levels for this study: pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers.

Gall et al. (2007) state that for an analysis of variance (ANOVA), the minimum sample size for four groups should be 144 participants, assuming a medium effect size, statistical power of .7, and .05 alpha level (p. 145). Assuming some teachers were not going to complete the survey, 2,829 teachers received the survey. The sample came from elementary schools (grades K-6) across northern Utah as well as pre-service teachers from universities in northern Utah. The sample of participants consisted of 17 pre-service teachers, 34 novice teachers (less than five years of experience), 82 mid-career teachers (five to eighteen years of experience), and 33 late-career teachers (eighteen or more years of experience) for a total of 166 participants. The participants were selected based on the teachers' willingness to participate in the survey.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was the Efficacy in Classroom Management subscale of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale Long Form (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale was developed to measure teacher efficacy within two forms—a long form (24 items) and a short form (12 items). Both forms have good reliability and validity (Nie et al., 2012). The long form is a 24-item, 9-point Likert-type scale used to measure teachers' self-efficacy with classroom management, instructional practices, and student engagement (See Appendix A for the instrument). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) recommend using the long form when assessing pre-service teachers' self-efficacy because the factor structure is often less distinct for pre-service teachers. Therefore, the long form of this instrument was used because pre-service teachers were among the participants.

The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale is based on Bandura's self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977) and was developed to determine the perceived self-efficacy of teachers' classroom management techniques as well as teachers' efficacy in student engagement and instructional strategies. This instrument aims to measure perceived classroom management, instructional practices, and student engagement. The scale is divided into 24 items, measuring on a scale from 1-9, with a total score of 216 points. The higher the points, the higher the levels of perceived self-efficacy. The scale ranges from 1 (not at all) to 9 (a great deal). It consists of items such as, "How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?" and "How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Participants were asked their number of years

in teaching so they could be grouped into preservice, novice, mid-career, or late-career teacher categories. The instrument took about 20 minutes to complete. The survey was scored by the researcher.

This instrument has an overall Cronbach's alpha reliability score of .88 (Nie et al., 2012), demonstrating an acceptable validity and internal consistency. The Efficacy in Classroom Management subscale was used, which has a Cronbach's alpha reliability score of .90, which is a high level of reliability (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) also provide evidence for the validity of this instrument by finding positive correlations with other measures of personal teaching efficacy.

Several academic research studies have used this instrument (Cao & Nietfeld, 2005; Cheung, 2006; Fives et al., 2007; Holzberger & Prestele, 2021; Lu et al., 2021). Participants were given as much time as needed to complete the survey. The instrument was sent to participants in an email via SurveyMonkey (See Appendix D for instrument and instruction). Permission was granted to use the Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy scale.

Procedures

IRB approval was established before implementing the research study. (See Appendix E for IRB approval). The researcher reached out through email to the dean of teacher preparation programs for pre-service teachers participating in the study or to the university's IRB department, informing them of the study and asked for permission to include their school in the study. Formal permissions were requested via email and granted (See Appendix B & C for permissions and consent forms). Teachers' emails are public domain posted on

individual schools' websites. Next, teachers and pre-service teachers were contacted via email and informed of the study (See Appendix C). After permissions were granted, teachers and pre-service teachers were asked if they would be willing to participate in the study (See Appendix C for teacher consent form). After proper permissions were granted, the survey was sent to potential participants and administered through SurveyMonkey (See Appendix D for the final survey). Teachers were given four weeks to complete the survey. After the initial two weeks, the researcher sent a follow-up email to potential participants reminding them to consider participating. Results from the survey were sorted according to the participants' experience level and years of teaching (pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career). The results of the teachers' answers to the questions on SurveyMonkey were analyzed.

Data Analysis

Research professionals recommend using variance analysis when more than two groups are being assessed within an independent variable and when the dependent variable is continuous, such as the scores of teachers' self-perceived self-efficacy (Gall et al., 2007). ANOVA allows the researcher to determine if a difference in the dependent variable occurs across any of the independent variable groups. This study sought to determine if a difference exists between different groups of participants (educators with different levels of career experience) on a particular dependent variable (self-efficacy in classroom management). The ANOVA test seeks to determine if a difference in classroom management self-efficacy can be attributed to teachers with different classroom experience levels. Given that the null

hypothesis was rejected, post-hoc analysis was needed to conclude where differences occurred and within which groups. ANOVA is “a statistical procedure that compares the amount of between-groups variance in individuals’ scores with the amount of within-groups variance” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 318). ANOVA results indicate if there is more of a difference between groups on a specific variable compared to difference within groups. In effect, ANOVA is a signal-to-noise ratio: Does the difference between groups (signal or real difference) indicate a larger effect than the difference within groups (noise or error)? If so, then a statistically significant difference exists somewhere in the general linear model, with post-hoc analysis allowing the researcher to see where the differences occur if they do.

Data screening examined ANOVA’s assumptions: normality, homogeneity of variances, and independence (Field, 2018). Histograms, box-and-whisker plots, and the Shapiro-Wilks test assessed normality and included testing for outliers. For equal variance assessment, Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variance was used. Finally, independence was established by the study’s inherent design given that the levels of the independent variable did not overlap and they were mutually exclusive (Field, 2018). An analysis of the alpha level (p), set to .05, determined if the null hypothesis could be rejected. Partial eta squared (η^2) was used to evaluate the effect size ($p = 0.05$) for an ANOVA test, with a small effect size as $\eta^2 = 0.01$, a medium effect size as $\eta^2 = 0.07$, and a large effect size as $\eta^2 = 0.14$ (Gall, et al., 2007, Field, 2018).

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this causal-comparative quantitative research study was to determine if there is a difference in self-perceived self-efficacy with classroom management between pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers. The independent variable of this study was the different experience levels of elementary teachers within the state of Utah, categorized as pre-service (within practicum, student teaching, field experience, etc), novice (less than five years of experience), mid-career (six to eighteen years of experience), and late-career (nineteen or more years of experience) teachers. The dependent variable comprised the strength of self-efficacy as measured by the Efficacy in Classroom Management subscale of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) in classroom management techniques of the teachers within this population. A One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis. This Findings Section includes the research question, null hypothesis, data screening, descriptive statistics, assumption testing, and results.

Research Question

RQ: Is there a difference in classroom management self-efficacy scores of pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers in Utah?

Null Hypothesis

H₀: There is no statistically significant difference in the classroom management self-efficacy score of Utah elementary teachers who have different years of experience (pre-

service, novice, mid-career, and late-career) as measured by the Efficacy in Classroom Management subscale of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were obtained on the dependent variable (classroom management self-efficacy score) for each group. The sample consisted of 166 participants. A total sum of scores from the Efficacy in Classroom Management subscale of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale was added for each participant. Only questions 3, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, and 21 were analyzed because those are the questions on the Efficacy in Classroom Management subscale. Each question ranged from 1-9, with 7 total questions. The sum of scores could range from 7 to 63. A high score of 63 means that the participant had a high self-efficacy of classroom management whereas a low score of 7 means that the participant had a poor self-efficacy of classroom management. Descriptive statistics can be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Years		<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Pre-service Teachers	Average Self-Efficacy	17	7.34	.889
	Valid <i>N</i> (listwise)	17		
Novice Teachers	Average Self-Efficacy	34	7.23	.839
	Valid <i>N</i> (listwise)	34		
Mid-Career Teachers	Average Self-Efficacy	82	7.46	.92
	Valid <i>N</i> (listwise)	82		

Late Career Teachers	Average Self-Efficacy	33	7.88	.824
	Valid <i>N</i> (listwise)	33		

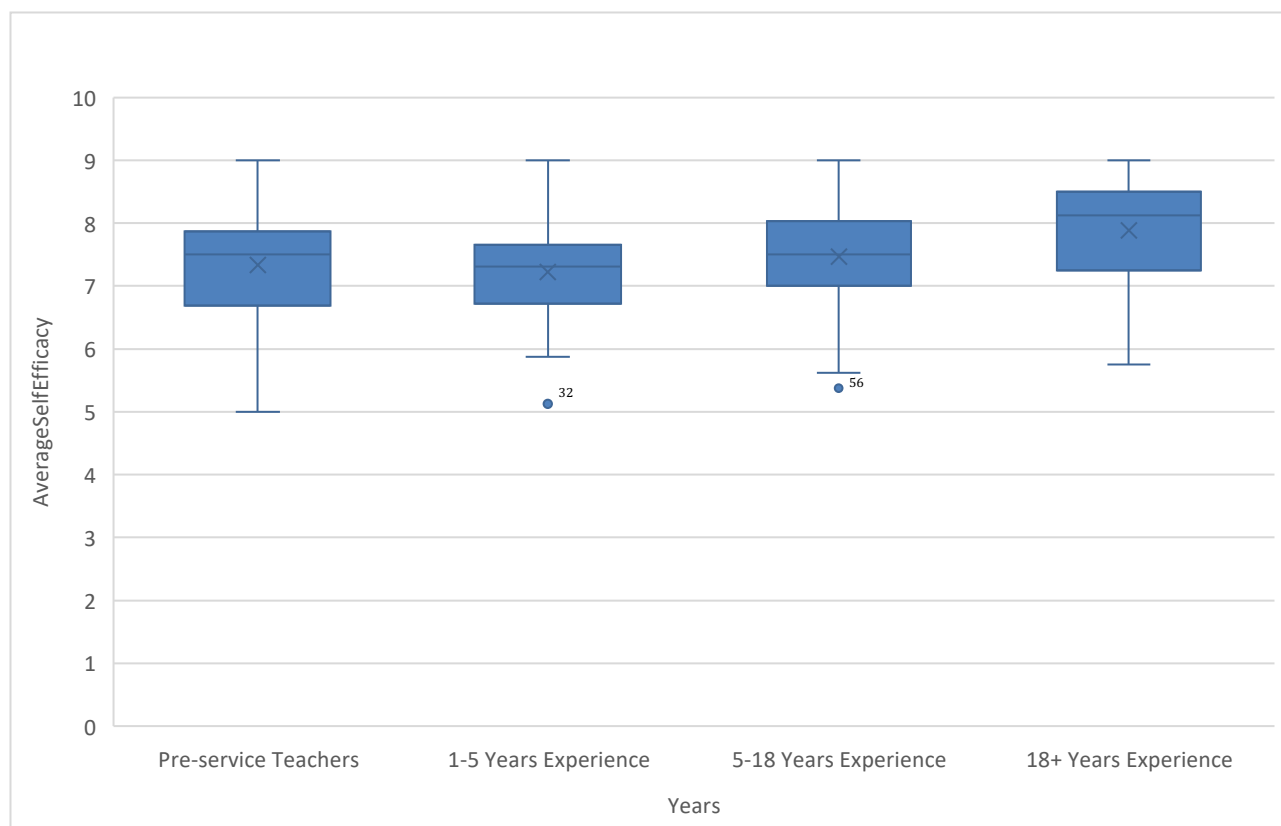
Results

Data screening

Data screening was conducted on each group's dependent variable. The researcher sorted the data on each variable and scanned for inconsistencies. No data errors or inconsistencies were identified. Box and whiskers plots were used to detect outliers on each dependent variable. Two outliers (data points 32 and 56) were found and denoted on the box and whisker plot. The researcher converted the data points to a z-score, which fell within +3 and -3 standard deviations of the sample mean (Warner, 2013, p. 153). Thus, the data points were not considered an extreme score and was maintained in the data set. See Figure 2 for box and whisker plots.

Figure 2

Box and whisker plots (dependent)



Assumptions

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the null hypothesis. The ANOVA requires that the assumption of normality be met. Normality was examined using Shapiro-Wilks test and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used due to the larger dataset (more than 50). The Shapiro-Wilks was also provided to provide a more thorough assessment of normality. The assumption of normality was met for pre-service, novice, and late-career teachers ($p < .05$). The assumption of normality was not met for mid-career teachers; however, ANOVA is robust against violations of normality (Field, 2018), and it can be overly sensitive to minor deviations that do not affect the accuracy of data analysis (Field, 2018; Gay & Airasian, 2003). See Table 2 for Tests of Normality.

Table 2*Tests of Normality*

	Years	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	<i>df</i>	Sig.	Statistic	<i>df</i>	Sig.
Average Self-Efficacy	Pre-service Teachers	.160	17	.200*	.938	17	.292
	Novice Teachers	.083	34	.200*	.986	34	.923
	Mid-Career Teachers	.089	82	.162	.968	82	.040
	Late Career Teachers	.157	33	.038	.936	33	.051

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Assumption of Homogeneity of Variance

The ANOVA requires that the assumption of homogeneity of variance be met. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was examined using the Levene's test. No violation was found where $p = .93$. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was met.

Results for Null Hypothesis

An ANOVA was used to determine if there was a significant difference in self-efficacy of teachers' classroom management skills within the different groups of teacher experience. The independent variable was years of experience and the dependent variable was self-efficacy of classroom management. The null hypothesis was rejected at a 95% confidence level where $F(3, 162) = 3.369$, $p = .02$. Partial eta squared equaled .059 ($\eta_p^2 = .059$). The effect size was medium. Because the null was rejected, post hoc analysis was required. A Tukey test was performed to compare all possible pairs of group means among the different experience levels. Based on this test, it was found that teachers with 1-5 years of experience ($M = 7.23$, $SD = .84$) scored significantly lower on the self-efficacy scale than teachers with 18+ years of

experience ($M = 7.88$, $SD = .82$). No other differences in self-efficacy between groups was statistically significant. See Table 3 for Multiple Comparisons of Groups.

Table 3

Multiple Comparisons of Groups

Dependent Variable: Average Self-Efficacy

Tukey HSD

(I) Years	(J) Years	Mean Difference (I-J)	SE	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Pre-service Teachers	Novice Teachers	.1103	.26205	.975	-.5700	.7906
	Mid-Career Teachers	-.1252	.23510	.951	-.7355	.4851
	Late-Career Teachers	-.5443	.26338	.168	-1.2280	.1394
Novice Teachers	Pre-service Teachers	-.1103	.26205	.975	-.7906	.5700
	Mid-Career Teachers	-.2355	.17995	.559	-.7026	.2317
	Late-Career Teachers	-.6546*	.21558	.015	-1.2143	-.0950
Mid-Career Teachers	Pre-service Teachers	.1252	.23510	.951	-.4851	.7355
	Novice Teachers	.2355	.17995	.559	-.2317	.7026
	Late-Career Teachers	-.4192	.18187	.101	-.8913	.0529
Late-Career Teachers	Pre-service Teachers	.5443	.26338	.168	-.1394	1.2280
	Novice Teachers	.6546*	.21558	.015	.0950	1.2143
	Mid-Career Teachers	.4192	.18187	.101	-.0529	.8913

Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .778.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

This chapter draws conclusions based on the tests performed. A discussion is provided that examines the research question in the light of the results of the data as well as previous literature reviewed. The practical and theoretical implication of the study's findings are examined to identify the significance and potential real-world applications of the study's results. The limitations of the study are discussed and the effects of these limitations are examined. Finally, suggestions for future research are provided to support further research of the topic.

Discussion

The purpose of this causal-comparative quantitative research study is to determine if there is a difference in self-perceived strength of self-efficacy with classroom management between pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers. The current study analyzed the data collected from the survey and compared the self-efficacy scores of the four groups of teachers to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the self-perceived self-efficacy of classroom management of the four groups.

The research question was: Is there a difference in classroom management self-efficacy of pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career elementary teachers in Utah? The null hypothesis was that there is no statistically significant difference in the classroom management self-efficacy score of Utah elementary teachers who have different years of

experience (pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career) as measured by the Efficacy in Classroom Management subscale of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The results of this study show a statistically significant difference between the classroom management self-efficacy scores of novice teachers and late-career teachers, indicating that the null hypothesis can be rejected. However, the smaller effect size ($\eta^2 = .059$) suggests that while the years of experience of a teacher does have an effect, it is not a large effect. The data also shows that there is not a statistically significant difference between the self-efficacy scores of pre-service and mid-career teachers. This suggests that the experience of a teacher is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition to have a high self-perceived self-efficacy with classroom management techniques.

The results of the present study are consistent with the theoretical framework of Bandura's self-efficacy theory. According to Bandura, self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform a specific task or achieve a specific goal (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy beliefs influence an individual's motivation, effort, and persistence in achieving their goals. The present study found that the self-perceived strength of self-efficacy with classroom management was examined among pre-service, novice, mid-career and late-career teachers. The study found a small difference in self-perceived strength of self-efficacy with classroom management between novice and late-career teachers, with late-career teachers reporting slightly higher self-perceived strength of self-efficacy with classroom management compared to novice teachers. These results are consistent with Bandura's self-efficacy theory, which suggests that self-efficacy beliefs can change over time as a result of an individual's

experiences and accomplishments (Bandura, 1997). In this case, it can be inferred that the accumulation of knowledge, skills, and strategies that teachers gain through their years of experience, may lead to the development of a more realistic view of their own ability to manage a classroom, which in turn, may contribute to a higher self-perceived strength of self-efficacy with classroom management among late-career teachers. Additionally, Bandura's theory suggests that self-efficacy beliefs can also be influenced by social factors, such as the support and encouragement of others. These other social factors mentioned by Bandura could be added variables that could have affected the self-efficacy of the other groups of teachers, demonstrating that experience is not the only influence of a teacher's self-efficacy.

The present study found that there is a medium effect size between novice teachers and late-career teachers in terms of self-perceived strength of self-efficacy with classroom management. This finding is consistent with some of the current literature, which suggests that teaching experience may have an impact on classroom management self-efficacy (Bulut & Topdemir, 2018; Potter, 2021). These studies suggest that teachers with more experience may have more opportunities to develop and apply their classroom management skills, leading to a higher level of self-efficacy in this area. Secondly, experienced teachers may have developed a deeper understanding of the complexities of classroom management and may be better able to anticipate and respond to challenges that arise in the classroom. They may also have developed a greater sense of confidence in their ability to manage their classroom effectively. The literature that supports this premise suggests that this increase in

self-efficacy may be related to the development of a wide range of skills and strategies, including effective communication and discipline techniques, as well as the ability to create a positive classroom culture. Additionally, the literature is also consistent with the present study that experienced teachers may have a better understanding of the complexities of classroom management and may be better able to anticipate and respond to challenges that arise in the classroom (Carter et al., 1988; Winterbottom et al., 2008; Wolff et al., 2021).

In contrast, some of the current literature found that there is no correlation between experience of a teacher and their self-perceived self-efficacy in classroom management (Girardet, 2017, Lazarides et al., 2020). These studies point out that this may be due to the fact that other factors, such as teacher training, professional development, and personal characteristics, also playing a role in determining a teacher's skill in classroom management. These studies suggest that the relationship between teaching experience and classroom management self-efficacy may be more complex than a simple linear relationship, with other factors such as burnout, turnover, and stress also being a factor. The smaller effect size of the present study, as well as the fact that there were no other statistically significant differences between the other groups of teachers, suggests that teaching experience may have some impact on self-efficacy, but other factors likely play a more significant role in determining skill in classroom management, which is consistent with these studies.

Implications

The findings of the current study suggest that teaching experience plays a small role in the self-perceived strength of self-efficacy with classroom management. The difference in self-

efficacy between novice teachers and late-career teachers may be due to the accumulation of knowledge, skills, and strategies that teachers gain through years of experience. Late-career teachers also have had more time to develop the knowledge and skill set that is needed to have a more realistic view of their own ability to manage a classroom. The current study provides insight into how self-efficacy with classroom management changes over the course of a teaching career, which could help identify areas where professional development could be targeted to improve self-efficacy. The results of this study could also help with teacher retention and well-being. The fact that self-efficacy of classroom management improves between the early years of a teacher's career and the later years demonstrates the need for novice teachers to be provided with additional support with classroom management. Giving novice teachers increased resources to help them improve their classroom management could improve the comfort of novice teachers in the classroom, leading to higher retention of novice teachers. As Bandura (1977) discussed, vicarious experiences are one of the sources of self-efficacy. Bandura found that a person's self-efficacy is influenced by vicarious experiences, especially when the model is similar or slightly higher in ability to the individual. Thus, a resource that could prove beneficial for novice teachers' classroom management self-efficacy is pairing them with late-career teachers in a mentorship program. This could provide them with guidance, support, collaboration, and modeling from a teacher with a higher self-efficacy of classroom management techniques, helping them improve their own.

The fact that the data did not show a statistical difference between pre-service and mid-career teachers' self-perceived self-efficacy could also suggest that professional development in classroom management training should continue to be provided, even for teachers who have been in the profession for a number of years. This could also suggest that administrators should not

focus on the length of teaching experience as an indicator of a teacher's ability to manage a classroom.

Limitations

There are several limitations to the present study that could potentially be a threat to the validity of the study. The first is that the data of this study was self-reported, which may be subject to bias and inaccuracies. Teachers may not accurately report their own levels of self-efficacy and there is a chance of social desirability bias where they may report a more advantageous view of themselves. This is a threat to the internal validity as it can bias the results and affect the accuracy of the data. The limited sample size and population is also a threat to external validity as it limits the generalizability of the findings of the larger population of teachers. A limited number of pre-service teachers completed the survey, while a large number of mid-career teachers finished the entire survey. The current study was limited by the number of participants that were willing to participate in the survey. Every teacher who completed the survey was included as a participant, regardless of how many other teachers completed the survey in their experience group. Another limitation is the limited focus of the study. The current study only focuses on the self-perceived self-efficacy of classroom management and may not take into account other factors that can affect self-efficacy such as personal background, school demographics, etc. This can lead to a narrow understanding of self-efficacy of classroom management and may not provide a complete picture of the situation. This makes it difficult to generalize the findings to other populations and variables and makes it difficult to make cause-and-effect statements and recommendations. Finally, there are some limitations to the causal-comparative research design. One of the main limitations of causal-comparative research design is that the researcher cannot manipulate the independent variable or control for extraneous

variables. This lack of control can limit the researcher's ability to draw causal conclusions.

Additionally, the causal-comparative design is a retrospective design that compares groups that have already been exposed to different conditions. As a result, it can be challenging to establish a clear cause-and effect relationship between the variables.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. A longitudinal study can be performed that tracks the development of self-efficacy over time for pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers to gain a better understanding of how self-perceived self-efficacy changes with experience.
2. Future research could include having an even number of participants across groups and a larger sample size, which could help improve the internal validity of the study, as well as increase the precision and the ability of the study to detect small differences between groups.
3. A different study design, such as a mixed-methods design could be used to help combat the causal-comparative design limitations as well as complement the current study. Gathering data using interviews, observations, or focus groups could help to further the understanding of the other variables involved in self-perceived self-efficacy of classroom management of elementary teachers of varying experience levels.
4. The relationship between self-efficacy of classroom management and other variables such as teacher motivation, burnout, or job satisfaction could be studied to help gain a better understanding of the phenomenon and its effects on the teaching profession.

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APPENDIX A

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale¹ (long form)

Teacher Beliefs	How much can you do?									
	Nothing	Very Little	Some Influence	Quite A Bit	A Great Deal					
Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below. Your answers are confidential.										
1. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
2. How much can you do to help your students think critically?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
3. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
4. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
5. To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
6. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
7. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students ?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
8. How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
9. How much can you do to help your students value learning?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
10. How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
11. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
12. How much can you do to foster student creativity?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
13. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
14. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
15. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
16. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
17. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
18. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
19. How well can you keep a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
20. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
21. How well can you respond to defiant students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
22. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
23. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
24. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	

Permission not needed if using for non-commercial purposes.

APPENDIX B

Permission Request Form

Dear [Recipient]:

As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to find if there is a difference between the classroom management self-efficacy of teachers with varying experience levels, and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older and must currently be teaching at a Utah elementary school OR enrolled in an elementary education program at a Utah university. Participants, if willing, will be asked to take a brief, online survey to identify their classroom management self-efficacy. It should take approximately 20 minutes to complete the survey. Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

To participate, please [\[click here\]](#)

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey. The consent document contains additional information about my research. After you have read the consent form, please click the button to proceed to the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Sincerely,

Emily Dixon
Doctoral Candidate

Recruitment Follow-Up

Dear [Recipient]:

As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. Two weeks ago, an email was sent to you inviting you to participate in a research study. This follow-up email is being sent to remind you complete the survey if you would like to participate and have not already done so. The deadline for participation is [Date].

Participants, if willing, will be asked to take a brief survey to identify their classroom management self-efficacy. It should take approximately 20 minutes to complete the survey. Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

To participate, please [\[click here\]](#)

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey. The consent document contains additional information about my research. After you have read the consent form, please click the button to proceed to the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Sincerely,

Emily Dixon
Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX C

Consent

Title of the Project: The Role of Elementary Teacher Experience on Classroom Management Self-Efficacy: A Causal Comparative Study

Principal Investigator: Emily Dixon, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older and either currently enrolled in an elementary teaching program at a Utah university or currently teaching in a Utah elementary school. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of this causal-comparative quantitative research study is to determine if there is a difference in self-perceived self-efficacy with classroom management between pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers. The independent variable of this study is the different experience levels of elementary teachers within the state of Utah, categorized as pre-service, novice, mid-career, and late-career teachers. The dependent variable comprises the strength of self-efficacy as measured by the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) in classroom management techniques of the teachers within this population.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

1. Complete an online survey, which may take up to 20 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from participating in this study.

Benefits to society include an increased understanding on variables that may account for classroom management self-efficacy. This could lead to further implications on how to improve teacher preparation programs in universities as well as professional development within elementary schools.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

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

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be anonymous.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Emily Dixon. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Jeffery Savage.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

APPENDIX D

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

Are you 18 years of age or older?

Yes

No

Next

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

Are you currently teaching at a Utah elementary school OR are you currently a student in an elementary teacher program at a Utah university?

Yes

No

Prev

Next

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

Consent

Title of the Project: The Role of Elementary Teacher Experience on Classroom Management Self-Efficacy: A Causal Comparative Study

Principal Investigator: Emily Dixon, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

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If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at [REDACTED].

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Your Consent

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Prev

Next

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy

How many years of K-6 teaching experience do you have?

- I am a pre-service teacher enrolled in an elementary education program
- 1-5 years
- 5-18 years
- 18+ years

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How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?

Nothing Very Little Some Influence Quite A Bit A Great Deal

How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?

Nothing Very Little Some Influence Quite A Bit A Great Deal

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