2022

Occupational Therapy Educators' Self-Efficacy to Teach in a Blended Curriculum

Inti Marazita
Walden University

Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Inti Marazita

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Amy Adcock, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Colleen Paeplow, Committee Member, Education Faculty
Dr. Kenneth McGrew, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2022

Abstract

Occupational Therapy Educators' Self-Efficacy to Teach in a Blended Curriculum

by

Inti Marazita

MA, Boston University, 2007

BS, Kean University, 1997

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Education

Walden University

August 2022

Abstract

In recent years, occupational therapy education has been evolving due to educational trends such as blended learning. Blended learning is a combination of both synchronous and asynchronous learning that occurs online as well as in a brick-and-mortar setting. Little is known regarding occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum. It is essential to understand the self-efficacy of these educators, especially related to their skills and capabilities to teach in such an innovative format. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the perceptions of occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy teaching in a blended curriculum. The research question for this study focused on how occupational therapy educators view their self-efficacy regarding teaching effectively in a blended curriculum. The conceptual framework for this study was Bandura's self-efficacy theory. Ten occupational therapy educators who were currently teaching in a blended curriculum were interviewed for this study. Descriptive and in vivo coding were used to analyze the data. Results revealed that personal agency, professional development and mentorship, feedback from colleagues and students, and using coping strategies to manage frustration contributed to an enhanced perception of self-efficacy in occupational therapy educators. This study can facilitate positive social change by informing university administrators and leadership on how to best support faculty teaching future occupational therapy practitioners using a blended curriculum by providing structured professional development and mentoring programs focusing on pedagogy, learning management systems, and educational technology tools.

Occupational Therapy Educators' Self-Efficacy to Teach in a Blended Curriculum

by

Inti Marazita

MA, Boston University, 2007

BS, Kean University, 1997

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Education

Walden University

August 2022

Dedication

I dedicate this to my daughter Skylar and husband Marco, who have given me endless support throughout this journey. This labor of love is just as much yours as it is mine. To my mother Holanda, my sister Luci, and my brother Shyri thank you for always believing in me and supporting me throughout life. To my father Teddy, who is no longer on this earth and who instilled his love of education in each of his children, he would be so proud. Finally, to all the occupational therapy educators who strive to do the very best to serve and teach their students to move our profession forward.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

In recent years, occupational therapy education has been evolving due to educational trends such as blended learning. Blended learning is a combination of both synchronous and asynchronous learning that occurs online as well as portions of the learning occurring in a brick-and-mortar setting (Christensen Institute, 2020). As a result, there has been an increase in occupational therapy programs that include blended learning in their curriculum (Belarmino & Bhle-Lampe, 2019). As more occupational therapy programs design their curriculum to include blended learning, it is essential to understand occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy related to their skills and capabilities to teach in such an innovative format. Yoo (2016) discussed that teacher quality and sustainability are closely correlated with higher self-efficacy. Occupational therapy educators who have high self-efficacy teaching in a blended format can better prepare occupational therapy students to become competent clinicians who can provide quality care to those who require occupational therapy services.

Chapter 1 begins with a discussion on the background, problem statement, the purpose of the study, and the research question that was studied—followed by a discussion on the conceptual framework, the nature of the study, and definitions of critical concepts and variables. Finally, Chapter 1 concludes with a discussion on assumptions made regarding the phenomenon, scope and delimitations, limitations, and the significance of this study to the field of occupational therapy.

Background

Occupational therapy education has been influenced not only by the demands of an ever-changing healthcare system but also by the influences of educational trends. However, occupational therapy instructors do not receive formal instruction to teach in the higher education arena (Cabatan et al., 2019). As a result, most occupational therapists who transition from the clinic to the academic environment have little knowledge regarding teaching in higher education and educational pedagogies and have a limited background in educational technology tools (Lockhart-Keene & Potvin, 2018). As such, occupational therapy educators acquire and construct their academic acumen through their experiences while teaching occupational therapy students. The impact of this process on instructor self-efficacy is the focus of this study.

Current research discusses the importance of teachers perceived self-efficacy regarding their teaching capabilities in a blended/hybrid format. Teacher self-efficacy can be closely related to student success and higher student outcomes (Gurley, 2018; Martini et al., 2019). Recent research on self-efficacy and teaching in a blended environment has been of a quantitative nature. These studies have focused on determining whether variables such as years of teaching online, technology acceptance, and professional development influence self-efficacy in a blended/hybrid format (Howe et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2019; Yildiz & Erdem, 2018). Although research of this type is essential, there is a gap in the literature to fully understand an educator's perspective regarding their experiences teaching in a blended environment and experiencing self-efficacy. A gap in the occupational therapy literature exists regarding occupational therapy educators' self-

efficacy for teaching, particularly in a blended curriculum (Cabatan et al., 2019; Cocca et al., 2018).

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA, 2018) published the *Occupational Therapy Education Research Agenda*. This agenda urges the occupational therapy profession to add to the body of literature regarding pedagogies, learning theories, innovative instructional methods, and faculty development resources to ensure the quality and future of occupational therapy education. As more and more occupational therapy programs add blended learning to the curriculum, it is imperative to examine occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy in a blended environment. Eichelberger and Leong (2019) reported that technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge influence a faculty's belief about their ability to teach effectively online. Examining the perceptions of occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum adds to the body of knowledge within the occupational therapy field and helps to understand how to best foster self-efficacy amongst educators who teach in a blended format.

<h3 style="text-align:center">Problem Statement</h3>

Little is known regarding occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum. This limited understanding of faculty's self-efficacy can impact teaching performance and effectiveness (Cocca et al., 2018). According to Luongo (2018) and Yildiz and Erdem (2018), an instructor's lack of motivation and understanding of their self-perceived capabilities can impact the ability to teach in a blended environment. Cabatan et al. (2020) discussed the need for further exploration regarding an occupational

therapy educator's values and abilities to understand how to support occupational therapy educators to meet the academic environment's demands. Therefore, examining occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy can provide insight on how occupational therapy faculty view their capabilities in order to teach effectively in this innovative format.

A lack of understanding regarding one's capabilities can impact an instructor's self-efficacy and decrease teaching performance in a blended environment (Luongo, 2018; Yildiz & Erdem, 2018). Occupational therapy educators are clinicians who are not formally prepared in educational learning theories or teaching strategies, and as such, their self-efficacy may be negatively influenced (Cabatan et al., 2019; Cocca et al., 2018). Examining occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy can provide an understanding of how occupational therapy faculty view their capabilities in order to teach effectively in this innovative format.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine occupational therapy educators' perceptions of their self-efficacy in teaching in a blended curriculum. Occupational therapists who were currently teaching in a blended curriculum for 1 year or more were invited to participate in the study. Individual interviews were held to gather participants' insights and perceptions of their self-efficacy in teaching in a blended learning environment.

Research Question

The following research question was studied:

RQ: How do occupational therapy educators view their self-efficacy regarding teaching effectively in a blended curriculum?

Conceptual Framework

The self-efficacy theory by Bandura (1977) was used as the conceptual framework to guide this study. In 1977, Bandura stated that an individual's "expectations of perceived personal efficacy are derived from four principal sources of information: performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological states" (p. 191). Examining occupational therapists' perceptions who enter academia or teach in a blended environment regarding their performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological states provided insight into how to best support and nurture occupational therapy educators. The self-efficacy theory served as the lens to view occupational therapy educators' abilities based on personal constructs and beliefs regarding teaching in a blended/hybrid environment. Examining the perceptions of occupational therapy faculty's self-efficacy regarding their abilities to teach in a blended format informed the profession of occupational therapy on how to best prepare, support, and motivate occupational therapy educators to teach in a blended environment effectively.

Nature of Study

Within this study, I utilized a basic qualitative methodology to gain insight into occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum. The intent of a basic qualitative approach was to bring awareness to perceptions regarding a phenomenon (Caelli et al., 2003). Patton (2015) stated the core question of a basic

qualitative approach is to discover "the practical consequences and useful applications of what we can learn about the issue or problem" (p. 99). The focus of this study was not to understand the lived experience of occupational therapy educators and their self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum but to gain insight and examine how self-efficacy was shaped and supported in order to teach in a blended curriculum.

Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) provided the theoretical structure to identify and examine how faculty view their teaching capabilities in a blended environment. Individual semistructured interviews with ten occupational therapy educators currently teaching in a blended curriculum were conducted. Using qualitative analysis helped identify common themes and concepts regarding occupational therapy educators' views about their capabilities and skills, enhancing their self-efficacy to teach in a blended environment.

Definitions

The following are operational definitions used in this study to avoid confusion and offer clarity to the study.

Blended learning: is a combination of both synchronous and asynchronous learning that occurs online as well as portions of the learning occurring in a brick-and-mortar setting (Christensen Institute, 2020).

Occupational therapy: an allied health profession that uses occupations or meaningful activities in the recovery process of a person that may have an acquired injury, disability, and/or trauma (AOTA, 2020).

Occupational therapy educator: an occupational therapist who teaches in an occupational therapy educational program in higher education.

Occupational therapy program: for the purposes of this study, the occupational therapy program refers to a graduate-level occupational therapy educational program.

Self-efficacy: "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3).

Teacher self-efficacy: "[a]measure of a person's self-efficacy in the specific context of teaching" (Corry & Stella, 2018, p. 2).

Assumptions

There were several assumptions regarding this study. The first assumption was that occupational therapy educators were willing to share their perspectives and experiences regarding teaching in a blended program. The second was that occupational therapy educators were honest about their perceptions of self-efficacy regarding teaching in a blended curriculum. Having honest and collective experiences shed light on self-efficacy in how to promote it in occupational therapy educators. A final assumption was that occupational therapy educators had the time to engage in virtual interviews.

Scope and Delimitations

This study's scope centered around the phenomenon being studied and the review of the literature. The focus was on occupational therapy educators teaching in a blended curriculum and their self-efficacy teaching in this innovative format. A delimitation for this study included occupational therapy faculty who teach or have taught in a blended curriculum. A second delimitation was the context in which occupational therapy

educational programs with blended curricula are sponsored. Bandura (1977) discussed that a person's self-efficacy is influenced by the context in which they experience success or failure. Therefore, understanding how the context influenced self-efficacy in occupational therapy educators who teach in a blended curriculum was essential.

Other delimitations included not having a required number of years as an occupational therapy faculty in academia. However, it was important to have various levels of experience to fully appreciate and understand the occupational therapy faculty's self-efficacy. For example, a novice occupational therapy educator and an experienced occupational therapy educator teaching in a blended program for several years have different perspectives regarding their self-efficacy. Last, virtual interviews were conducted to reduce location restrictions and address the current circumstances regarding COVID-19. In addition, virtual interviews made it easier for faculty to participate in the study.

Limitations

This study's limitations were recruiting enough occupational therapy faculty teaching in a blended curriculum. However, 10 participants volunteered to be in the study, and data saturation was noted after the fourth participant. In addition, findings by Guest et al. (2006) discussed that six to 12 interviews appear to meet saturation. Therefore, the number of participants for this study fell within this range. However, the sample size may limit the transferability of the study.

Another limitation of the study was the setting in which the participants were recruited. The participants were recruited from four campuses across the university,

except for my home campus, to avoid conflicts of interest between the participants and myself. However, this may have limited participation of faculty who could have offered varying insights into teaching in a blended curriculum.

To ensure the study's trustworthiness, various qualitative practices were used and applied to ensure that the data and data analysis was objective and reliable (Fusch et al., 2018). To overcome bias in the study, I provided a thick description of the phenomenon, identified a clear interview protocol, and cross-referenced the interviewees' responses (Fusch et al., 2018; Roller & Lavrakas, 2018). Ensuring the saturation of the literature and cross-referencing the data with past results mitigated bias and increased the study's trustworthiness (Fusch et al., 2018). Another technique that was applied was member checking. Member checking is having the participants review their transcripts from the interview to ensure that the information provided was correct. The participants reviewed the transcripts to ensure that the information provided was accurate; this increased the overall trustworthiness of the study.

Significance

In 2018, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) revised the accreditation standards to meet the healthcare and educational environments' current demands. Of particular interest was the addition of a new standard that required occupational therapy programs to prepare students to work in the academic setting. The results from this study provided insight into how occupational therapy educators viewed their self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum and how occupational therapy clinicians can prepare for the academic environment. Having this

understanding may influence how occupational therapy programs can potentially design their curriculum to meet the demands of current educational trends, such as blended learning. Therefore, understanding how occupational therapists view their capacity to teach in a blended environment can positively impact the way students learn and apply concepts delivered in a blended format (Cocca et al., 2018; Corry & Stella, 2018; Yoo, 2018). In addition, the study addressed the gap in the literature by providing faculty, university directors, and administrators with strategies to best support and foster occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended environment.

The results from this study have the potential to lead to a positive social change by providing guidance to administrators and directors on how to best prepare and support occupational therapy faculty to teach in a blended curriculum. In addition, the study's findings are significant because it has answered the call of AOTA's (2018) research agenda: to add to the body of knowledge regarding innovative pedagogies and their uses. Finally, this study is most important because of the meaningful social change brought about when students grow into competent entry-level occupational therapists. Having talented therapists that can make a difference in the clients they care for and make a difference within the communities they serve can be viewed as true social change.

Summary

In recent years, the number of occupational therapy programs incorporating blended learning in their curriculum has increased. Currently, there are approximately 144 out of 460 accredited occupational therapy educational programs that have elements of blended learning within their curriculum (ACOTE, 2022). It is imperative that

occupational therapy educators' perceptions regarding their self-efficacy to teach in such an innovative format is examined. The results from this study identified ways to support the fostering of self-efficacy in occupational therapy educators. Chapter 1 provided an overview of the problem, the purpose of the study, and discussed the gap in the literature regarding occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy teaching in a blended curriculum. Chapter 1 concluded with a discussion of the study's significance to the field of occupational therapy and the potential for social change.

Chapter 2 will provide a review and synthesis of the current literature on occupational therapy faculty teaching in a blended learning environment and their self-efficacy in teaching in this innovative format. Bandura's self-efficacy theory will be used as the conceptual framework for the study and the lens to view, examine, and understand occupational therapy faculty's self-efficacy when teaching in a blended curriculum.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In recent years, educational programs in occupational therapy have begun incorporating some aspects of their curriculum online (Belarmino & Bahle-Lampe, 2019). Given this increase in online and blended learning, it was crucial to understand the educators' self-efficacy, particularly that of occupational therapy educators teaching in a blended curriculum (Cocca et al., 2018). Yoo (2016) discussed the importance for further research regarding educators and self-efficacy as it influences student performance. Currently, little is known regarding occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum. Thus, this qualitative study aimed to examine the perceptions of occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum.

This chapter discusses the strategies used to locate the literature, including keywords and search engines. It then examines the conceptual framework that grounded the study and served as the lens to examine occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum. This is followed by themes and concepts from the literature review regarding self-efficacy, blended learning, and occupational therapy educators. Finally, Chapter 2 concludes with a review of the gap in the literature regarding occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum, along with a summary of significant findings within the literature.

Literature Strategy Search

The Walden library was utilized to locate the literature for this study. The following databases and search engines were used to locate literature that focused on self-efficacy and teaching in a blended curriculum: CIHNAL, Google Scholar, ERIC, and

Education Source. The keywords used were *occupational therapy, self-efficacy, teacher preparedness, faculty development, online learning, blended learning,* and *hybrid learning*. Most of the literature was obtained from ERIC, Google Scholar, and Education Sources. It is important to note that when the keyword *occupational therapy* was used in combination with *self-efficacy* and *blended learning*, very little if any literature was generated. As a result, I had to broaden the search terms to include the terms *teacher preparedness, faculty development, online learning,* and *hybrid learning*. On the other hand, a total of 65 articles were generated. Forty-one articles focusing on self-efficacy and blended learning and 10 occupational therapy articles focusing on teaching and learning were reviewed for this study. Although two occupational therapy articles focused on adapting to the academic environment, these articles did not address self-efficacy directly. Last, peer-reviewed journals were limited to a 5-year timeframe to obtain the most relevant evidence to explain the phenomenon being studied.

Conceptual Framework

Bandura's self-efficacy theory was used to view and examine occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy regarding teaching in a blended curriculum (1977). Bandura's self-efficacy theory grounded the study by understanding the various concepts that shape self-efficacy. This increased understanding of the multiple concepts provided a more focused lens to examine occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy who teach in a blended curriculum.

The theory of self-efficacy explains an individual's beliefs regarding their capabilities in performing activities or tasks. Individuals who have higher self-efficacy

tend to be more persistent and engage in opportunities regardless of the risks. Higher self-efficacy in an individual usually results in positive and better outcomes when partaking in current or new tasks (Bandura, 1977). Bandura also claimed that self-efficacy is closely linked to external experiences and outcomes. If the person experiences success and is rewarded for their achievement, their self-efficacy will be greater. These positive experiences shape the individual and give the individual a greater sense of their capabilities and reinforce positive self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Bandura also discussed that an individual who experiences failure would usually attribute the failure to having low capabilities, resulting in decreased self-efficacy.

Examining occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy as it relates to blended learning is imperative because occupational therapy educators do not receive formal training to be teachers. Yoo (2018) stated, "there is a need for the continued scholarly interest in teacher efficacy because it provides important information, which deals with teacher quality and sustainability" (p. 85). Occupational therapy educators' experiences were viewed through the self-efficacy theory to understand occupational therapy educators' experiences and ensure the quality and sustainability of teaching in a blended curriculum. This examination shed light on occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy and its impact on the teaching and learning process within a blended learning environment.

Efficacy Expectation

Teaching and learning do not occur in isolation, and as such, it was vital to understand the concepts which shape and influence a person's self-efficacy. Bandura

(1977) stated, "expectations of personal efficacy are based on four major sources of information: performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological states" (p. 195). These significant sources can impact and influence occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy. This study intended to gain insight into how occupational therapy educators' performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological states influence and shape their teaching self-efficacy. The knowledge gained from this study provides the occupational therapy educator the ability to identify how to best prepare to teach in a blended curriculum, thus gaining a greater sense of self-efficacy which may lead to a more significant impact on student learning outcomes.

Studying these four sources of self-efficacy provided valuable insight into how an occupational therapy educator potentially constructs their self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum. Cooper et al. (2020) revealed that teachers who have higher teaching self-efficacy believe that they can make a difference in student learning and performance. Understanding how performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological states shape an educator's self-efficacy can assist in developing experiences that can lead to gaining a greater sense of confidence and belief in one's capabilities to teach in a blended learning environment.

Performance Accomplishments

To fully understand the theory of self-efficacy, one must look at the four sources that encompass self-efficacy. As an occupational therapy educator, performance accomplishments can become essential in building self-efficacy related to teaching in a

blended curriculum. Performance accomplishments are based on the individual's ability

to master experiences (Bandura, 1977). Having a sense of repeated success with tasks

enhances the individual's self-efficacy and gives the individual the ability to face new

challenges. The greater the achievements, the higher the sense of self-efficacy and the

greater the chances of taking new opportunities and challenges. Cabatan et al. (2020)

discussed that part of being a successful occupational therapy educator was the ability to

adapt and cope with the demands of the academic environment. The insight gained into

an occupational therapy educator's performance accomplishment regarding teaching in a

blended environment provided valuable information on encouraging and fostering self-

efficacy.

Providing opportunities in which an occupational therapy educator can participate

in to improve and enhance their skills and capabilities to teach in a blended environment

can lead to a greater sense of self-efficacy. Cooper et al. (2020) found that having pre-

service teachers create and teach an online module led to pre-service teachers having a

higher sense of self-efficacy. Having pre-service teachers create and teach an online

module is reflective of participant modeling. Participant modeling is creating a safe

environment so the individual can experience success over a period of time without

feeling inadequate about their capabilities and performance (Bandura, 1977). Providing

opportunities for occupational therapy educators to engage in experiences that allow

participant modeling with a focus on teaching in a blended format can foster and nurture

self-efficacy. Just as an individual who experiences multiple successes has a greater sense

of self-efficacy, it is essential to mention that experiencing failure over a period of time

can decrease someone's overall self-efficacy. Experiencing failure without success might impact how an individual may approach future tasks and challenges, such as teaching in a blended environment. Providing opportunities like the one described by Cooper et al. (2020) can provide a positive experience for occupational therapy educators, resulting in greater self-efficacy regarding teaching in a blended environment.

Occupational therapy educators are unique because they do not have a formal teaching background but have clinical knowledge that they bring into the educational arena (Lockhart-Keene & Potvin, 2018). Providing opportunities for occupational therapy educators to engage in participant modeling can lead to having a greater sense of performance accomplishments. Weston's (2018) study revealed that participating in a clinical instructor program focused on pedagogy, instructional strategies, and preparing to be a clinical instructor-led to an enhanced sense of self-efficacy. Designing opportunities for occupational therapy educators to teach in a blended curriculum, such as the one described in Weston's study, could foster and support an occupational therapy educator's self-efficacy to teach in a blended environment.

Vicarious Experience

A second source that can influence an individual's sense of self-efficacy is vicarious experience. Vicarious experience is having the opportunity to observe others performing a similar task. Observing others allows the individual to see how others persist and are successful with a task. It also gives the observer the ability to watch an individual overcome failure to complete a task or activity (Bandura, 1977). According to Dickerson (2016), modeling can be helpful when the individual has had little experience

and may lack confidence in their skills. For example, observing experienced educators teaching in a blended environment may benefit occupational therapy educators who are just transitioning to this innovative teaching style. Bandura argued that using models who are similar regarding the person and the situation is much more influential than those models who are different. For example, using models of similar background and experience would be beneficial when using this source of self-efficacy.

Verbal Persuasion

Verbal persuasion can be described as feedback provided to individuals regarding their performance with a particular task. For example, occupational therapy educators can receive feedback from direct supervisors, colleagues, and the students they teach. Verbal persuasion enhances an individual's self-efficacy regarding their performance with a particular task. Bandura (1977) argued that verbal persuasion alone is not enough to foment and sustain self-efficacy but can contribute to and influence a person's view regarding their performance. It is essential to keep in mind that for verbal persuasion to be meaningful to the individual, the person providing the feedback must be seen as an expert.

When is verbal persuasion influential on an individual's self-efficacy? A study by Barton and Dexter (2020) revealed that verbal persuasion was valuable in the beginning stages of learning a new task. Occupational therapy educators who are new to blended learning may benefit from verbal persuasion early in their academic journey. Verbal persuasion can lay the foundation for building upon a sense of efficacy for teaching in a blended learning environment. It is important to emphasize that verbal persuasion is not

as influential a source of self-efficacy as is performance accomplishments and vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1997). Although verbal persuasion alone is not as significant as the other sources of self-efficacy, it is essential to emphasize that meaningful and constructive feedback can enhance an occupational therapy educator's sense of efficacy for teaching in a blended learning environment.

Emotional Arousal

Emotional arousal can influence a person's sense of efficacy and impact the person's ability to persist and overcome challenges. Emotional arousal refers to how a person can manage, handle, and overcome challenges (Bandura, 1977). For example, an anxious or nervous individual teaching in a blended format may feel insecure and may not have the coping ability to persist and overcome feelings of insecurity. According to Morris et al. (2017), emotional arousal is the least studied of the four sources of self-efficacy and could be challenging to understand its full impact on an individual's self-efficacy. Much of this is because emotional arousal is personal to the individual and may be perceived differently. In their study, Yada et al. (2019) noted that emotional arousal appeared not directly to have an impact on the individuals' self-efficacy but "rather mediates self-efficacy through cognitive processes" (p. 21). Occupational therapy educators bring prior knowledge and experience regarding clinical expertise; it would be interesting to see how previous coping strategies (emotional arousal) may influence occupational educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended learning environment.

Self-Efficacy and Education

Self-efficacy continues to be studied in the higher education arena because of the impact on student learning and achievement. However, most of the studies focus on students' self-efficacy as opposed to the educators and their perceived self-efficacy to teach specifically in a blended learning environment. These studies are essential because they provide information regarding how students learn, perceive teaching, and shed light on students' academic success (Gurley, 2018; Martini et al., 2019). Having this foundational knowledge about how students learn can provide the foundation for how to best support and facilitate an educator's self-efficacy. Yoo (2018) encouraged further studies examining self-efficacy and teachers because teachers with higher self-efficacy have been closely linked to having students with greater academic outcomes and success. Jonker et al. (2018) discussed that an educator's perceived self-efficacy could influence their ability to adapt and change, such as teaching in a blended curriculum. Examining an occupational therapy educator's perceived self-efficacy and their capabilities to teach in a blended learning environment could inform how to best support these educators and how to enhance their self-efficacy further and make a positive impact on student learning outcomes.

The following section is a review of the key factors associated with blended learning, self-efficacy, and occupational therapy educators. This literature review served as the backdrop and offered context to the continuing importance of studying self-efficacy as it relates to teaching in a blended environment and its impact on occupational therapy educators' capabilities to teach in a blended curriculum.

Literature Review Related to Key Factors

The following is a review of the literature pertaining to self-efficacy and higher education, occupational therapy education, and blended learning. As blended learning continues to grow within the higher education landscape, it becomes imperative to study occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy as it pertains to teaching in a blended curriculum. Reviewing the current literature will inform this researcher on what has been studied regarding the phenomenon. In addition, having a thorough understanding of the existing literature will serve as the foundation to examine occupational therapy educators' views on their self-beliefs, skills, and capabilities regarding their self-efficacy and teaching in a blended curriculum.

The literature review is divided into three main areas. Blended learning in higher education, occupational therapy education, and blended learning and occupational therapy education. These main areas help organize the evidence from the literature and provide the backdrop needed to view the key factors related to examining the self-efficacy of occupational therapy educators teaching in a blended curriculum. Examining the views of occupational therapy educators as it relates to their self-efficacy and teaching in a blended learning format can offer potential solutions on how to best foster and enhance their self-efficacy when teaching in a blended curriculum.

Blended Learning in the Higher Education Landscape

Blended learning continues to grow in the higher education sector each year. Advances in technology and its impact on education have influenced curriculum and course design. One such example is blended learning. According to Cooper et al. (2020),

"blended courses in higher education continue to increase along with the demands for them, and many researchers consider blended learning to be the emerging default course design" (p. 2). This statement could not be more accurate given the recent events with Covid-19 and its impact on education. Overnight, educators had to take their face-to-face lectures and design them for the online environment. These current events have placed blended learning at the forefront of delivering education. Blended learning "blends" the best of two worlds, that of face-to-face and online learning. This blend would require that educators be competent in using face-to-face teaching strategies and online learning strategies to make the student learning experience a success. This would also require the occupational therapy educator to be confident in their skills and have the self-efficacy to navigate these teaching methods.

Teaching blended courses requires the instructor to have expertise in teaching face-to-face and be able to teach in the online environment. To be successful in the online environment, the instructor must be skilled at creating a community that encourages the learner to be actively engaged in the content and facilitate the learning process. Rose (2018) found that educators teaching online displayed five key attributes: they avoid a didactic approach, vary the use of pedagogy, facilitate learning, provide structure, and use productive failure as an opportunity for meaningful learning. Rose discussed that educators teaching online avoided the traditional lecture format but varied their pedagogy, such as using various technology tools to facilitate learning and productive failure, posing a problem, and asking the students to devise potential solutions. Teaching

online requires the educator to be flexible and open to new ways of teaching, facilitating, and presenting content.

Because teaching face-to-face and online are different, it is important to gain an understanding of how an occupational therapy educator views their self-efficacy and capabilities when teaching in a blended curriculum. Corry and Stella (2018) argue that there are differences in teaching face-to-face versus online and strongly encourage further studies that focus on blended learning and an educator's self-efficacy to teach in this innovative format. One such difference is that the instructor assumes various roles and pedological strategies when teaching in a blended learning environment (Diep et al., 2017). Not only do educators have to build a sense of community when teaching the online portion of a blended course, but they must be competent in using various technologies and learning management systems. Examining the insights of occupational therapy educators regarding their capabilities and skills may inform how one constructs their self-efficacy to teach in a blended format successfully.

Educators teaching in a blended format are not just facilitators of the content. They build a community where all students are active participants in the online portion of the course and the face-to-face portion. To accomplish this, educators use various pedagogies and technology tools to facilitate content and avoid the typical lecture method. Schaber and Candler (2020) stated, "new formats, such as hybrid learning designs, incorporate mastery of online content that prepare the student for active learning in classroom laboratories" (p. 50). Blended learning allows students to access video lectures and learning activities that prepare the students for hands-on learning activities

(Schaber & Candler, 2020). Occupational therapy educators require the ability to take the online content and infuse concepts into the face-to-face environment in which students are engaged in hands-on activities.

This ability to blend these two types of delivery methods requires the occupational therapy educator to possess the skills and capabilities to use appropriate instructional strategies to facilitate student learning. It also requires that the occupational therapy educator be confident in their abilities to adapt to changes and persist when faced with new challenges in the educational setting. This study intended to gather the insights of occupational therapy educators related to their experiences teaching in a blended environment and how the four sources of self-efficacy influence teacher self-efficacy. Results from this study provided insight into identifying ways to support and enhance occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy as it relates to teaching in a blended environment.

Occupational Therapy Education

Occupational therapy education has evolved over time. In the early days of the profession, no formal educational programs existed that trained an individual to become an occupational therapist (Mahoney, 2020). Instead, an individual became an occupational therapist while on the job (Schaber & Candler, 2020). Students who were trained to become occupational therapists were taught to use everyday occupations as a therapeutic modality to assist a patient in their recovery process. The occupational therapy student learned to become an occupational therapist through meaningful hands-on learning experiences.

It was not until after World War I that we began to see formal educational programs in occupational therapy developed and formalized (Mahoney, 2020). The first formal educational program in occupational therapy was 12 months in length (Taft, 2020). As time progressed, the occupational therapy profession aligned itself with the American Medical Association. The American Medical Association and American Occupational Therapy Association partnership provided the opportunity for occupational therapy to develop educational standards. These educational standards would eventually become accreditation standards. Presently, all new and existing occupational therapy programs must meet the accreditation standards set by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education ([ACOTE], 2018) in order for the program to become and maintain accreditation requirements.

At the core of occupational therapy education is the belief that one learns through doing (Schwartz, 1992; Townsend & Friedland, 2016, as cited in Mahoney, 2020). Providing meaningful hands-on learning experiences offer students the opportunity to think and clinically reason through real-world learning experiences critically. Occupational therapy students usually have this hands-on experience during the fieldwork component of their educational program, which is at the end of their didactic work (Schaber & Candler, 2020). Due to the demands of the healthcare environment, it is essential that students be exposed to authentic hands-on learning experiences throughout their educational journey. Blended learning can be the bridge or the conduit that allows students to spend more time engaged in hands-on learning labs that provide authentic experiences.

Through the years, occupational therapy has seen many changes in educational requirements because of the demands of the health care system and education itself, including higher education, which is continuously evolving. Advances in technology have impacted how we teach and deliver content to students. Giles and Janes (2020) stated, "educators must acknowledge that technology is a large component of students' daily occupations and, therefore, consider how to integrate technology into the learning environment" (p. 191). Occupational therapy education is not immune to the changes occurring in higher education. Occupational therapy educators must be aware and attuned to the trends in higher education and their impact on the profession. To be effective instructors, occupational therapy educators must understand both pedagogical and andragogical principles. Gathering insight into an occupational therapy educator's self-efficacy in teaching in a blended learning environment is essential to understanding the teaching and learning process.

Blended Learning and Occupational Therapy Education

As blended learning continues to grow in the higher education sector, occupational therapy programs are embracing online and blended formats for content delivery. Occupational therapy educators have been using online and blended formats consistently since the mid-1990s, with the first online occupational therapy course dating back to 1980 (Belarmino & Bahle-Lampe, 2019). Additionally, Gee et al. (2017) reported that more occupational therapy programs are shifting towards incorporating more online or blended courses within their curriculum. As we continue to see a shift in how content is delivered in occupational therapy programs, it is imperative to examine the views of

occupational therapy educators as it relates to their capabilities and self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum.

As noted in the literature, educators who teach in a blended curriculum assume various roles and use various teaching strategies. The Belarmino and Bahle-Lampe (2019) study revealed that occupational therapy educators experienced a shift in how they taught online content versus face-to-face teaching. One such shift was assuming the role of a facilitator in delivering content versus providing direct instruction, such as in a traditional lecture. The shift from delivering a traditional lecture to assuming the role of facilitator requires the use of different pedagogical strategies such as selecting and using technology tools that will allow the occupational therapy educator to deliver information in a blended learning environment. Gee et al. (2017) emphasized the importance of occupational therapy educators having the knowledge to select and align the appropriate technology tools with the content being delivered. Examining the perceptions of occupational therapy educators regarding their capabilities as it pertains to teaching in a blended environment would provide insight into which of the four major sources of self-efficacy influenced their teaching ability. This study would also provide insight into how to best support the occupational therapy educator's role as an academician.

As previously discussed, occupational therapy educators do not have a formal teaching background, and as such occupational therapy educators acquire their teaching acumen during their academic appointment. In a scoping review, Cabatan et al. (2019) found that adaptability is a key factor that contributes to the success of an occupational therapy educator in the academic environment. Furthermore, one's ability to adapt can be

associated with one's ability to cope with new challenges. According to Bandura (1977),

emotional arousal can influence one's ability to manage stressful and challenging

situations, which can potentially impact an individual's self-efficacy. Occupational

therapy educators who transition from the clinic to the academic setting expressed a lack

of confidence and overall feelings of unpreparedness in the educational environment

(Foy, 2017; Stoykov et al., 2017). Examining the perceptions of occupational therapy

educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum may provide insight into the

four sources of self-efficacy and how to foster these areas for a greater sense of efficacy.

As mentioned previously, 10 occupational therapy articles focusing on teaching

and learning were reviewed; however, the literature is limited regarding blended learning

and self-efficacy among occupational therapy educators. The review of the literature

speaks to occupational therapy educators' lack of preparedness, self-confidence,

difficulty managing various academic roles and responsibilities, and a lack of

instructional methods for teaching (Belarmino & Bahle-Lampe, 2019; Cabatan et al.

2019; and Gee et al., 2017). Occupational therapy educators, however, have found ways

to adapt by becoming involved in opportunities within the academic environment that

provide a sense of self-worth and fulfillment (Cabatan et al., 2020). This is similar to

Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy, in which the person sees oneself having the

capability and confidence in their abilities to overcome challenges. Studies focusing on

occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy, particularly the four sources of efficacy

expectations and their influence on teaching in a blended learning environment, are

needed. Adding to the body of literature will provide further insight into how to best support occupational therapy educators teaching in a blended curriculum.

Gap in the Literature

There is a gap in the occupational therapy literature regarding occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach within the academic environment, particularly in a blended curriculum. As higher education trends lean towards a blended learning format, occupational therapy education programs continue to infuse blended learning within their curriculum. Due to this increase in hybrid/blended learning delivery format in occupational therapy education, we must add to the body of knowledge by studying occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended learning environment. Identifying ways to foster and enhance the sources of self-efficacy can lead occupational therapy educators to have a greater sense of confidence in their capabilities to teach in a blended learning format. Still, it can also help the occupational therapy educator overcome barriers and challenges experienced within the educational setting.

In 2018, ACOTE added standard B.6.6, which focuses on preparing occupational therapy students in the areas of teaching and instructional design in preparation for the academic setting (ACOTE®, 2018). Therefore, this study was timely as it added to the body of knowledge regarding occupational therapy education and narrowed the gap within the literature regarding occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy and blended learning. In addition, this dissertation can inform how universities, administrators, and the professional organizations that oversee occupational therapy education can support clinicians transitioning into the academic setting. Most importantly, the results of this

study yielded potential strategies that can enhance the occupational therapy educators'

capabilities. Ultimately, this can lead to the individual having greater self-efficacy in

teaching in innovative formats such as blended learning.

Summary

As blended learning increases within the higher education landscape, it is vital

that occupational therapy educators possess a sense of self-efficacy to teach within this

challenging and innovative teaching style. Looking at the four sources of self-efficacy

(Bandura, 1977) and the skills required to teach in a blended learning environment shed

light on how universities, administrators, and supervisors can support the success of

occupational therapy educators. In their review of the literature regarding self-efficacy

and teaching, Morris et al. (2017) argued for the need to have studies that focus on

isolating the four sources of self-efficacy and using research designs "that better

contribute to the understandings of the sources" (p. 825). This study explained the four

sources of self-efficacy and how it can be fostered, particularly with occupational therapy

educators who teach in a blended curriculum.

Chapter 2 provided an in-depth discussion on self-efficacy and its importance to

the educational arena with a unique lens on occupational therapy. A historical perspective

and current trends in occupational therapy education provided the context needed to

warrant the need for the study. Finally, chapter 3 will discuss the research methodology

and essential elements to conduct the study. Concepts such as participant selection,

recruitment procedures, instrumentation, and trustworthiness of the study are the focus of

the discussion.

Chapter 3: Research Method

This basic qualitative study aimed to examine the perceptions of occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum. Qualitative methods were used to examine occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy in order to understand how they view their abilities to teach effectively in a blended environment. Chapter 3 discusses and describes the study's design and rationale, the researcher's role, and its methodology. The chapter concludes with a discussion regarding issues of trustworthiness and a summary of the chapter.

Research Design and Rationale

A basic qualitative research design was used to guide this dissertation. A basic qualitative design served as a guide in examining occupational therapy educators' perceived self-efficacy teaching in a blended curriculum. Using a basic qualitative approach, the following research question was examined:

RQ: How do occupational therapy educators view their self-efficacy regarding teaching effectively in a blended curriculum?

This study examined how occupational therapy educators describe their self-efficacy when teaching in a blended curriculum. A basic qualitative approach was appropriate because the study intended to understand occupational therapy educators' views regarding self-efficacy and teaching in a blended curriculum. The intent of a basic qualitative approach is to bring awareness to perspectives regarding a phenomenon (Caelli et al., 2003). Patton (2015) stated the core question of a basic qualitative approach is "what are the practical consequences and useful applications of what we can learn

about the issue or problem" (p. 99). Identifying themes that shed light on fostering self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum helped inform how to best support occupational therapy educators. Using a basic qualitative approach brought awareness to the phenomenon in a practical way that can be useful in everyday practice.

A phenomenological approach was considered; however, the study's intent was not to understand the phenomena of self-efficacy and blended learning. Instead, the purpose of the study was to gather insight to potentially solve a problem or bring awareness to potential solutions regarding self-efficacy and teaching in a blended program (Patton, 2015). Narrative inquiry was not considered, as the intent of the study was not interpreting the personal narratives of the participants about the phenomena, but to identify potential practical solutions to a problem (Patton, 2015). A case study design was not considered due to the potential constraints of time and setting when examining the phenomena (Patton, 2015). Therefore, a basic qualitative approach allowed me to bring attention to the phenomenon and yielded solutions to best foster occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy in teaching in a blended curriculum.

Role of the Researcher

A key distinction of a qualitative study is the researcher's involvement within the study's overall context. The researcher is intimately involved with the participants and the phenomenon being studied (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). My role in the study was as a researcher. The central responsibilities were to recruit, interview participants, analyze the data, and summarize the results. This study was conducted within the university where I am employed; however, we have several campuses across the nation. The plan was to

recruit participants from these other campuses to decrease personal bias. There are no personal relationships that impacted or influenced the study results. It is important to mention that I did not have any supervisory role over the faculty. However, professional associations across the campuses may have interfered with or affected the participants' partaking in the study.

As a researcher, I must become aware of my own biases that I may have about self-efficacy and blended learning. Using reflexivity to explore the different aspects of my thinking decreased my bias and increased my objectivity regarding the phenomenon (Fusch et al., 2018). As a researcher, I was careful not to let my passion and perspectives overshadow others' abilities, values, and beliefs. With this in mind, a strategy that I implemented was the use of a peer debriefer. A peer debriefer is someone who objectively reviews, can help clarify, and bring objectivity to collecting the data, organizing data, and analyzing the data, thus ensuring the findings' credibility by decreasing bias (Spall, 1998). A second strategy that was implemented was member checking. Member checking refers to having participants check the transcript of their interviews. Having participants cross reference and verify their thoughts, ideas, and accurately capture their views decreased bias (Patton, 2015; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Having the participants check their answers confirmed that their perceptions regarding the phenomenon were accurately captured. A final strategy that was applied to ensure that personal bias did not influence the study results was the use of field notes. Using field notes collected at the time of the interviews assisted in reconciling personal biases with

that of the participants' views (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Applying these strategies decreased biases and added to the study's credibility.

Methodology

The following section discusses the methodology used for the study. A detailed discussion regarding participation selection, description of the target population, sampling strategy, the development of the instrumentation used to collect data, data analysis, and issues of trustworthiness will be discussed.

Participation Selection Logic

This study used a basic qualitative design, and as such, the individuals who participated were occupational therapy educators who were currently teaching in a blended curriculum. These individuals provided first-hand experiences regarding their capabilities, skills, and confidence to teach in a blended curriculum. Examining the participants' experiences assisted in identifying ways to foster and enhance an occupational therapy educator's self-efficacy when teaching in a blended curriculum. An in-depth description detailing the selection of the participants and sampling strategy are described in the following sections.

Description of Target Population

The participants included in this study were occupational therapy educators who teach in a blended curriculum. Participants were recent occupational therapy educators who transitioned from the clinic into academia and occupational therapy educators who have been teaching in academia for longer than a year in a blended curriculum. Participants who were excluded from the study were occupational therapy educators who

taught in a traditional face-to-face program or other healthcare educators. Participants were contacted and invited to participate in the study via email.

The study was conducted at the university I am currently teaching. The university has several campuses across the country; the intent was to recruit faculty from those campuses to be part of the study. The university's occupational therapy program updated the curriculum and was designed as a blended learning curriculum approximately four years ago. Many of the faculty are new to higher education and academia, and seasoned faculty have a tremendous amount of teaching experience in a traditional face-to-face curriculum. Recruiting participants within this setting was ideal as the curriculum is fully blended. The faculty's range of expertise provided rich and robust data that gave insight into self-efficacy and teaching in a blended curriculum. Finally, recruiting faculty from other campuses decreased bias and potential conflicts of interest within the campus I worked in.

Sampling Strategy

Due to the study's basic qualitative design, a purposeful sampling strategy was used to recruit participants for this study. To reduce bias and ensure objectivity regarding the phenomenon (Patton, 2015). The sample size consisted of 10 occupational therapy educators who were currently teaching in a blended curriculum. The study aimed to have between 12 to 15 participants. However, only 10 participants volunteered. According to Mason (2010), the sample size of a study can be influenced by the type of qualitative approach selected. Patton (2015) stated, "there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry; sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, and

what is at stake" (p. 311). A study by Cabatan et al. (2020) examined 11 occupational therapy educators' perceptions on how they perceive and fulfill their academic roles and adapt to the greater educational context. This number reflects Guest et al.'s (2006) findings in which six to 12 interviews appear to meet saturation. The number of participants for this study fell within this range.

Instrumentation

Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy provided the conceptual framework for this study. Four main constructs compose self-efficacy: performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal (Bandura, 1977). Based on these constructs, an interview guide was developed to include interview questions to generate data reflecting how a person viewed their self-efficacy when teaching in a blended curriculum. Appendix A provides a detailed description of the interview protocol. The questions were designed to be open-ended with probing questions to clarify the main question and obtain further data (Patton, 2015; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The interview questions aimed to gather a glimpse into how the person views their self-efficacy and who or what has contributed to the person's self-efficacy regarding teaching in a blended curriculum. Having sound interview questions based on evidence strengthens the credibility of the data-gathering instrument (Patton, 2015). Developing interview questions that reflected the conceptual framework added to the validity and credibility of the study.

Designing interview questions using a standardized open-ended interview approach was the best method to collect the data. Having specific pre-determined open-

ended questions provided structure and helped keep the data organized. As a novice

researcher, using standardized open-ended questions helped "compensate for variability

in skills" (Patton, 2015, p. 440). Having structured open-ended questions that reflected

the four main constructs of self-efficacy was the instrument of choice when collecting the

data during the interviews. A second type of interview technique was considered to

gather data were focus groups; however, one may miss the slight variations in the data

using a focus group. Kruger (1994) stated, "the focus group is beneficial for identification

of major themes but not so much for the micro-analysis of subtle differences" (as cited in

Patton, 2015, p. 478). Because the study aimed to bring awareness regarding the

phenomenon, considering the small nuances in experiences led to a greater understanding

of self-efficacy related to occupational therapy educators who teach in a blended

curriculum.

A consideration that was contemplated was Covid-19 and its impact on focus

groups. First, focus groups required all participants and moderators to be in the same

space, which would jeopardize safety measures due to the number of participants. A

second consideration for not using focus groups was that engaging and moderating a

focus group via a teleconferencing platform would be challenging to manage and obtain

data. Given these various considerations, the one-on-one semi-structured interview

format was the best choice for the study.

Interview Questions

The interview questions were created to reflect the four major sources of efficacy

expectations that leads to the formation of self-efficacy, as described by Bandura (1977).

Table 1 depicts the interview questions in accordance with the four major sources of efficacy expectations.

Table 1

Interview Questions Addressing Self-Efficacy Components

Self-Efficacy Components	Interview Questions
Performance Accomplishments	Tell me a little bit about how you came to teach in occupational therapy? • Were you a contributing faculty or adjunct faculty before teaching full-time? • Why were you motivated to teach occupational therapy? Tell me about your teaching experience? • How long have you been teaching? • Have you taught in a blended curriculum? • Have you taught face to face? • What type of classes have you taught? Lecture versus lab or both. What skills do you believe you possess that have helped you to teach within a blended learning environment? • Did you do anything to prepare? If so, what kinds of things did you do to prepare? For example, did you shadow someone? Can you tell me about any barriers that you may have experienced teaching in a blended environment? • Can you give examples of some barriers? • How did you overcome these barriers?
Vicarious Experience	What factors do you feel have contributed to shaping your skills and capabilities to teach in a blended environment? • Have you observed others teach in a blended environment? • Have you observed others teaching face to face? • Does your university provide resources to support your development as an instructor who teaches in a blended curriculum? • Can you give examples of the types of resources provided?
Verbal Persuasion	Can you tell me how effective receiving verbal feedback on your performance has or has not shaped your self-efficacy? • Student feedback • Supervisor feedback
Emotional Arousal	Have you ever felt inadequate or not prepared to teach in a blended environment? • Can you describe or give examples of how you coped when you felt inadequate or not prepared? • How did you overcome these feelings of inadequacy or unpreparedness?

The questions were crafted to obtain information from the participants regarding each of the main sources of efficacy expectations. The intent was to use the interview questions and gather data that provided insight into which of the four main sources led to a greater sense of self-efficacy or if all areas contributed to having a greater sense of self-efficacy. The data provided valuable insight to help foster and support self-efficacy in occupational therapy educators who teach in blended environments.

Piloting the Interview Questions

It is important to emphasize that the interview questions in Table 1 were reviewed by two peer reviewers who currently teach in a blended curriculum. These individuals provided valuable feedback regarding how the questions were formulated. For example, the language used in constructing the interview questions was simple and easy to understand. In addition, the reviewers provided recommendations, such as the addition of probing questions that could potentially enhance the participants' understanding of what is being asked and could give further insight into self-efficacy as it related to teaching in a blended learning curriculum. Piloting the questions and receiving feedback added to the validity of the interview questions.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Using a basic qualitative research design served as a guide when recruiting participants and when collecting data during the interview process. This section provides an in-depth description of how the participants were recruited and asked to participate in the study. In addition, a discussion on how the data was collected and managed during

the study was discussed, including any supplemental data collecting tools that may have been used for the study.

Inviting Participants

Participants were contacted through email and were formally invited to participate in virtual interviews using teleconferencing technology. Email invitations were sent to faculty to participate in the study. The email contained a brief description of the study, the time frame to complete the interviews, and how it would be conducted. If the participants accepted the invitation, an informed consent form was sent, including an outline of the procedures regarding confidentiality, how the data would be stored and used, and an opportunity to review the transcript was be offered to the participant. If the participant accepted the invitation, they were sent the informed consent outlining the scope of the study, including confidentiality and ethical procedures throughout the study.

Due to the participants being from the same university I worked in, I needed to obtain approval from my Associate Dean, the Dean, and the university president. Having this approval in place was a precursor and an initial step to the IRB process for the university and Walden University.

Data Collection

Due to Covid-19 and participants being located across the country, engaging in virtual interviews was the best option to gather the data. Virtual interviews offered the ability to record the interview and then have access to the interview for review at a later time. Jacob and Furgerson (2012) recommend recording interviews so the researcher can focus on the interviewee and what they have to share versus taking in-depth notes during

the interview and appearing distracted. Conducting a virtual interview using a teleconference platform can provide a similar experience as an in-person interview. Rubin and Rubin (2012) discuss the importance of building rapport and trust, enhancing or hindering the participant's quality of information. The virtual interview allowed the researcher and the participant to build rapport and trust.

For this study, email interviews were not used because obtaining information might take longer due to the exchange between the researcher and the participant (Meho, 2006). Another reason for not choosing email as a data-gathering tool was that the researcher runs the risk that the participant might not understand the question, and there is a limited opportunity to explain or probe the individual (Meho, 2006). For these reasons, the best choice was virtual interviews via a teleconference format in which rapport was built, further probing was done, and having access to the interview recording was a great way to debrief and verify the data for accuracy.

The participants were briefed regarding the process and how confidentiality would be maintained. As part of the process, the participants were informed that the interview would be recorded, transcribed, and kept secure. Participants were told that the transcript would be sent back to verify that what was said was reflected in the transcript. The participants had the opportunity to voice any concerns regarding the study and the procedures before starting the interview.

The interviews were held via a video conferencing tool and lasted approximately 60 minutes. The interviews were recorded, and the recordings were used for transcription purposes. The questions from the interview protocol located in Appendix A were asked to

the participants during the interview. During the interview, field notes were taken, and any questions that may arise or any non-verbal communication during the interview were noted. After the interview, participants and the researcher engaged in a debrief of the process. During the debrief, the participants will be reminded that the recording would be transcribed and sent back to them for verification. The participants also were encouraged to contact the researcher if any questions or concerns arose during the study. Finally, the participants were encouraged to meet a final time to review the findings of the study.

Supplemental Data Collecting Tools

Along with interviews, field notes and journal notes were used when collecting and analyzing the data. In addition, field notes and journal notes helped identify any biases that I may have had about the phenomenon. Still, field notes helped clarify any feelings, thoughts, or non-verbal communication during the interview. Lastly, field notes and journal notes allowed me to question my beliefs and my role as the researcher in the overall scheme of the study design. Finally, field notes and journal notes facilitated objective reflexivity, thus strengthening the study's trustworthiness.

Data Analysis

The research design or approach chosen for this study was a basic qualitative approach. A content analysis approach was used to analyze the data gathered from the interviews. According to Patton (2015), content analysis is used to analyze "text" to identify concepts or themes from the data (p. 541). Using a content analysis approach, I compared the participants' data and extrapolated similar patterns and concepts that led to themes regarding self-efficacy and teaching in a blended curriculum (Saldaña, 2016). The

study aimed to uncover any findings that generated new ideas or confirmed what has been studied in the past. The use of deductive and inductive analysis ensured that the data analyzed was supported by past studies and served as the basis for new concepts or explanations (Patton, 2015). Using these various analytical approaches facilitated the analysis of the data and ensured that the data was reliable and objective.

The data analysis plan included transcribing the audio from the interviews and using Dedoose (2018), a software to organize data and assist with identifying first and second cycle coding, categories, and eventually themes. Once the transcriptions were completed, applying the coding process described by Saldaña (2016) to arrive at themes regarding the phenomenon were applied. During this process, a content analysis approach was used to delve deeper into the data by cross-referencing and analyzing the participants' answers (Patton, 2015). Using this approach facilitated extrapolating and integrating the themes identified to conceptualize a new idea, provide insight into the phenomenon leading to potential solutions, and add to the body of evidence within the occupational therapy literature (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Having a data analysis plan saved time and allowed the researcher to be more efficient at managing and analyzing the data.

Issues of Trustworthiness

One of the biggest criticisms of qualitative research is trustworthiness. In part because the researcher analyzes the data and generates new meaning from the experiences of others. Researchers using a qualitative approach bring their ideas and beliefs about the world in general and the phenomenon being studied. As such, they could bring these biases when analyzing the data (Patton, 2015). However, to mitigate issues of

trustworthiness, researchers engage in various practices. These practices are reflexivity throughout the research study, establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Patton, 2015; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Using these constructs ensured the credibility and validity of the study and its findings.

Reflexivity

Ravitch and Carl (2016) define reflexivity as "a systematic assessment of your identity, positionality, and subjectivities (p. 15). Engaging in reflexivity allows the researcher to be mindful of their beliefs so as not to mar the study and ultimately not influence the study results through biases. Field notes and journal notes were used by the researcher to maintain objectivity and engage in ongoing reflexivity by questioning one's point of view regarding the phenomenon being studied.

Credibility

Credibility is essential to qualitative studies. A qualitative researcher uses several strategies to ensure the credibility of a study. For example, explaining and clearly describing the phenomenon using past literature and evidence is essential to establishing the credibility of the study (Patton, 2015). Other strategies used were member check-ins, a peer-debriefer, and providing and obtaining informed consent were essential factors in strengthening the study's credibility (Patton, 2015; Spall, 1998). Using these strategies decreased the researcher's bias and provided an objective lens to view the phenomenon.

Transferability and Dependability

Providing a thick description of the phenomena and the context of the phenomenon were essential for the study's transferability. Thick descriptions allow other

researchers, stakeholders, participants, and leaders to use the information and possibly the results within their settings to improve efficiency (Patton, 2015). The researcher described the participants, how they were recruited, and a clear description of the data collection tool was provided.

Clearly defining and describing the research design and the methodology that was used added to the study's dependability because it provided a basis for the study to be replicated in the future. It is also essential to acknowledge any limitations or difficulties experienced in the study. This provided a basis for further research and improvements if a researcher were to embark on a similar study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Keeping in mind the importance of dependability added to the overall trustworthiness of the study.

Confirmability

Lastly, confirmability adds to a study's trustworthiness because it ensures that the findings reflect the participants' experiences (Toma, 2011). To reflect the participants' views and ideas, charts were used to visually display the participants' answers. Using a chart also added to the research data's transparency, ensuring the participants' experiences take center stage and not the researcher's biases. Using these strategies and techniques confirmed the trustworthiness of the study.

To ensure the study's trustworthiness, various strategies were applied to ensure that the data and data analysis were objective and reliable (Fusch et al., 2018). To overcome bias in the study, it was essential to provide a thick description of the phenomenon, identify a clear interview protocol, and cross-reference the interviewees' responses (Fusch et al., 2018; Roller & Lavrakas, 2018). Ensuring the saturation of the

literature and cross-referencing the data with past results also mitigated bias and increased the study's trustworthiness (Fusch et al., 2018). Applying these strategies ensured the overall trustworthiness of the study.

Ethical Procedures

Ethics in research are important to maintain as they can validate and add to the trustworthiness of the research study. Ravitch and Carl (2016) discuss ethics in gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data and how the subjects of a study are treated throughout the entirety of the study. Once the IRB from Walden University approved my study (approval #01-31-22-060222), ethical considerations were taken into account when recruiting participants, collecting the data, storing the data, and disseminating the results. The following strategies were used throughout the study and were explained to the participants. These strategies included using a filing system that does not include personal identity or personal identification information when organizing, analyzing, and sharing information. Securing the data in a secure filing system and maintaining the person's identity anonymous ensured the participant's identity was secured.

Finally, because participants were from the university I work at, occupational therapy faculty from the other four campuses were invited to participate. Inviting participants from other campuses decreased the likelihood of conflicts of interest or any personal interests which may influence the overall study's results.

Summary

Chapter 3 outlined the research plan for the study. This plan included an in-depth discussion regarding crucial elements of a qualitative study. In addition, an in-depth

analysis regarding the research methodology, the development of the interview

instrument, and how the data was gathered and analyzed was discussed. Chapter 4 will

discuss the demographics and the setting and provide evidence of trustworthiness

throughout the study. Finally, Chapter 4 will conclude with a report of the results and a

final summary.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the perceptions of occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy in teaching in a blended curriculum. The study focused on answering the following research question: How do occupational therapy educators view their self-efficacy regarding teaching effectively in a blended curriculum? Chapter 4 begins with a description of the setting and the participants' demographic information as the backdrop to the study. Next, the chapter focuses on a discussion regarding the data collection process and the data analysis used in the study to identify codes, categories, and themes. Finally, Chapter 4 concludes with a discussion on the evidence of trustworthiness, results, and a chapter summary.

Setting

Participants for this study were recruited from a higher education institution whose occupational therapy curriculum is delivered in a fully blended format. The curriculum consists of a combination of courses being fully online and blended. The university has multiple campuses across the United States, and the curriculum is the same across all the campuses. Participants who volunteered in the study were predominately from four campuses. Campus A was opened in 2007 and is situated on the West Coast. Campus B was opened in 2019 and is the newest of all the campuses. Campus C opened in 2016 and is located on the East Coast. Finally, campus D opened in 2012 and is in the central part of the United States.

An unusual condition to note that may have influenced the results of the study was the shutdown of the university during the pandemic. Due to the pandemic, the

university campus was shut down for all of 2020. Many faculty had to adjust to the demands of solely teaching online, and many voiced concerns and frustrations regarding teaching the subject matter effectively and computer fatigue. In early 2021, the university began a transitional period in which students and faculty would attend class during designated times throughout the year; however, much of the teaching was still occurring virtually. Finally, in the Fall of 2021, the university fully reopened to all students and faculty. These multiple changes and unique circumstances could have impacted and influenced the perceptions and experiences of the faculty regarding teaching in a blended curriculum and, ultimately, influenced the study results.

Demographics

A total of 10 participants volunteered to participate in the study. Table 2 is a visual representation of the participants' demographic information. Table 2 depicts the participants' level of experience as an occupational therapist and educator. Five participants had clinical doctorates in occupational therapy, and three participants had PhDs. Two participants had master's degrees in occupational therapy. Most of the participants had experience teaching in a traditional face-to-face program before teaching in a blended curriculum. Participants 6 and 10 had only taught in a blended program and had no prior teaching experience. Finally, the majority of the participants who volunteered for the study came from campus C.

Table 2

Participant Demographics

Participant Code	Campus	Years as an OT	Total Years Teaching	Highest Level of Education	Rank	Years Teaching in a Face-to-Face Curriculum	Years Teaching in a Blended Curriculum
Participant 1	A	20 years	8 years	PhD	Associate Professor	7 years	4 months
Participant 2	B	11 years	4 years	PP-OTD	Assistant Professor	1 year	3 years
Participant 3	A	33 years	13 years	PhD	Assistant Professor	6 years	7 years
Participant 4	C	31 years	14 years	PP-OTD	Assistant Professor	10 years	4 years
Participant 5	C	29 years	20 years	PP-OTD	Assistant Professor	8 years	12 years
Participant 6	C	5 years	3 and ½ Years	Master's	Instructor	0 years	3 and ½ years
Participant 7	B	11 years	5 Years	PP-OTD	Instructor	3 years	2 years
Participant 8	D	31 years	23 years	PhD	Associate Professor	21 years	2 years
Participant 9	C	23 years	6 years	PP-OTD	Assistant Professor	3 Years	3 years
Participant 10	D	13 years	5 years	Master's	Instructor	0	5 years

Data Collection

Participants

I had hoped to recruit 15 occupational therapy faculty to partake in the study. Eleven participants volunteered to be part of the study; however, one participant was unable to participate in the study due to scheduling conflicts. In total, 10 participants volunteered to be part of the study. As seen in Table 2, the participants had varied years

of experience in both clinical practice and teaching experience. Participants 4 and 5 had a master's in education, and both had taught at the elementary level. Participant 4 was an occupational therapist who left the field, became an elementary teacher, and returned to the field of occupational therapy. Participant 5 was an elementary school teacher before becoming an occupational therapist. All participants began teaching in a traditional face-to-face program except for Participants 6 and 10, whose only experience in teaching had been in a blended curriculum. Participant 6 was currently pursuing her clinical doctorate in occupational therapy with a concentration in education. Finally, at the time of this study, Participant 10, who had a master's degree in occupational therapy, was exploring doctorate degrees.

Data Collection Instrument

The interview questions were developed using Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy, current evidence on self-efficacy reviewed in the literature in Chapter 2, and the research question posed in this study. Eight open-ended questions and probing questions (see Table 1) were used to obtain data during individual interviews (Patton, 2015; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The interview questions were used to gather a glimpse into how the person perceives their self-efficacy and who or what has contributed to enhancing their self-efficacy regarding teaching in a blended curriculum.

Individual virtual interviews were conducted with each of the 10 participants. Zoom, a teleconferencing tool, was used for the interviews. Each interview lasted for approximately 45 to 60 minutes. The interviews were recorded with participant permission, and the recordings were used to transcribe the interviews. Once the

transcripts were completed, they were sent back to the participants to verify their

accuracy.

Variations in Data Collection

A couple of variations occurred during data collection; as mentioned previously,

only 10 participants completed the study. Eleven participants were expected to

participate; however, due to scheduling conflicts, only 10 participants volunteered.

Another variation that occurred was during member checking. Four participants

responded by email confirming that their transcripts were reflected accurately and did not

need revisions. However, the other four participants did not respond regarding the

accuracy of the data. Participants 4 and 5 exchanged emails with this researcher to clarify

the number of years teaching in occupational therapy versus their teaching experience at

the elementary level. No other variations or unusual circumstances occurred during data

collection.

<div align="center">

Data Analysis

</div>

Analysis Overview

As part of the analysis, Dedoose, a software management system, was used to

organize data and assist in coding throughout this phase of the study. It is important to

mention that there was no discrepant data that occurred during data analysis. Content

analysis was used to analyze the data from transcripts, audio recordings, field notes, and

memos generated from the participants' interviews. As Patton (2015) described, content

analysis is the ability to review the data to identify patterns or themes from the data.

During the first coding cycle, I used an inductive analysis approach to identify codes,

patterns, and categories from the data. To help organize the data, I used descriptive and in vivo coding, as described by Saldaña (2016) to capture the essence of the data provided by the participants.

As I moved into the second cycle of coding, I began to transition from using an inductive analytic lens to more of a deductive analytical lens (Patton, 2015). During this cycle, I used the self-efficacy theory as the lens to cross-reference and narrow down the codes by converging similar codes and patterns into categories reflective of the four constructs that comprise self-efficacy. "Splitting," as described by Saldaña (2016), was used to analyze the data further and identify concepts reflective of the self-efficacy theory by Bandura (1977).

After second cycle coding, a review of the data, referring to the self-efficacy theory, and a review of the literature, two broad categories, and five subcategories emerged. These two broad categories were internal and external factors that influence self-efficacy, and the subcategories were personal agency, barriers to teaching, university resources and supports, feedback, and emotional regulation. Finally, circling back to the theory of self-efficacy, the literature review, and the data, themes were derived from the five subcategories. The themes were:

- Personal agency
- University resources support growth as an educator.
- Frustrations when teaching in a blended curriculum.
- Feedback from colleagues and students.

First Cycle Coding

   For the first cycle of coding, I used descriptive and in vivo coding methods to organize and identify any patterns from the data gathered. I used both coding methods to capture the essence of the participants' words and began to identify patterns and similarities among the data (Saldaña, 2016). Table 3 summarizes the codes that emerged during first cycle coding and the total number of responses for each code. The top codes identified during this coding cycle were feedback, skills and capabilities, barriers to teaching, professional development, prior teaching experience, coping strategies, mentorship, and I wanted to teach. Feedback, skills and capabilities, and Barriers to teaching emerged as the top three codes during the first coding cycle.

Table 3

First Cycle Codes and Number of Responses

First Cycle Codes	Total
Feedback	36
Skills/Capabilities	35
Barriers to Teaching	33
Professional Development	28
Prior Experience	28
Coping Strategies	24
Mentorship	22
I wanted to Teach	16
Problem Solving	16
Solutions	16
Limited Support	14
Preparation	12
Feelings of Failure/Inadequacy	11
Team Teaching Support	11
Technology	11
Blended Learning Experience	6
Scheduling	6
Observing Others	6
Began Doctorate Program	4
Unusual Event: COVID	4
Acclimating to University Culture	3
Formal Education Experience	3

Table 4 demonstrates the most salient codes with the supporting passages from the participants. During this coding phase, a noticeable pattern that arose from the data was the use of the words "flexible" and "organized" coded as skills and capabilities. For example, five participants mentioned that being "flexible" and "organized" made them feel that they were effective when teaching in a blended curriculum. In comparison, the other five participants mentioned: "communication," "creativity," and "lifelong learning" as skills and capabilities that have contributed to their success teaching in a blended curriculum.

Table 4

Top First Cycle Codes and Participants' Responses

Interview Questions	Participants' Responses (P)	First Cycle Codes
Tell me a little bit about how you came to teach in occupational therapy?	P4: "So, I started teaching in the public school system and then I wanted to take it to another level. So, since I was already in OT I said, oh, I know what it takes the pedagogy, what it takes to teach so why not try teaching something that always attracted you despite the, the age, or the topic was that just something that always caught my attention."	I wanted to teach
	P6: "I love education number one and for me I think I've always envisioned working in a university setting."	
	P8: "I was going back for my advanced masters, I just realized that I enjoyed teaching and presenting delving into information finding out more about a topic."	
Tell me about your teaching experience?	P1: "I've been teaching for about, about 10 years. I started just doing traditional face to face you know lectures and PowerPoints and that kind of stuff. I've only been doing this kind of like blended teaching for four or five months."	Prior Experience
	P7: "Yes, I was an adjunct professor for LR University, and that was a primary model lecture, regurgitate, repeat, like formal classroom, traditional."	
What skills do you believe you possess that have helped you to teach within a blended learning environment?	P2: "I think a couple of things I'm a very organized person. I am flexible. I'm an over communicator."	Skills/ Capabilities
	P4: "I would say some skills or characteristics would be that I'm flexible. I'm open to new ideas I mean I don't have a problem with being incorrect. I have a drive to I want to impart upon the next generation, generativity, I want to provide a legacy of some type to those OTS coming after me.	

| Interview Questions	Participants' Responses (P)	First Cycle Codes
Can you tell me about any barriers that you may have experienced teaching in a blended environment?	P1: "I think, you know, just one of it is when there's things that you think that they've (student) learned but they quite haven't you know, and you think oh this is online they should have learned that."	Barriers to Teaching
	P6: "Okay, all of the things that I've done to be successful in a blended curriculum, have really negatively impacted with my own occupational balance. So, being accessible, 24/7 and being able to meet the students who are there and that means that I've had to sacrifice a lot of my own personal."	
What factors do you feel have contributed to shaping your skills and capabilities to teach in a blended environment?	P2: "I kind of wish I would have received more mentorship, But I feel like for me. I learned best by just being thrown in the middle of the fire, just learning it. Anytime the university would offer a professional development thing, I was at every single one of those because I just didn't feel like I was very confident as a teacher and understanding of how I best support our students."	Professional Development Mentorship
	P3: "When I came on board full time as OT core faculty, and then it was going to be all my responsibility, and I was like I need to be educated. So, I took a PhD program of learning, instruction, and innovation.	
	P8: "professional development sessions are offered weekly."	
Can you tell me how effective receiving verbal feedback on your performance has or has not shaped your self-efficacy?	P1: "I don't, I don't know if I've gotten that much feedback, I get a little bit more here. For me it's more kind of searching out you know, I'll think of ideas and like talk to people about it. I really do take those student evaluations serious, and I really try to get into them and understand like what it is."	Feedback
	P6: "when I get feedback from my supervisor. I feel like I'm a little kid, you know in a good way, like I get so proud. The feedback is more meaningful from someone who's highly regarded versus someone who might not be."	
Have you ever felt inadequate or not prepared to teach in a blended environment?	P2: "There's a lot of inadequate feelings a lot of discussions with my husband about hey, this isn't the right thing for me. I feel like a lot of it for me is well, first, probably venting to my husband, venting to him about things or issues that have	I feel inadequate/ Coping Strategies

Interview Questions	Participants' Responses (P)	First Cycle Codes
	happened, and my program director has always been very open and very encouraging."	
	P7: "I was part of a teaching group and having that feedback from peers that go you know sometimes that doesn't work and that's okay. I think one of the most valuable things about being an OT is that you have to think on your feet, and you have to be able to pivot when you see something is not graded appropriately for your population."	

Second Cycle Coding

As I moved into second cycle coding, I revisited Bandura's (1977) four sources of efficacy expectations leading to a person's perceived self-efficacy. As mentioned earlier, I used a deductive analysis approach in which I used the four sources of self-efficacy to narrow down the codes from the first cycle of coding. Using the sources of self-efficacy (performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal) as the theoretical lens, I used a "splitting" technique when reviewing the data and the first cycle codes. Saldaña (2016) described splitting as scrutinizing the data at a granular level. The data were split by extrapolating details reflective of the four sources of self-efficacy and comparing any similarities to the participants' data (Bandura, 1977). I split the data to identify any granular details that directly reflected the four sources of self-efficacy. Still, I also used pattern coding to narrow the codes, confirm existing codes, and identify any new codes.

Figure 1 illustrates the process taken to transition from first cycle coding to second cycle coding and depicts when inductive and deductive analyses were used throughout the coding process. Using a deductive analysis approach described by Patton (2015), I referred to the self-efficacy theory and the literature review when collapsing the data and narrowing down the codes during the second coding cycle.

Figure 1

Transitioning from First to Second Cycle Coding
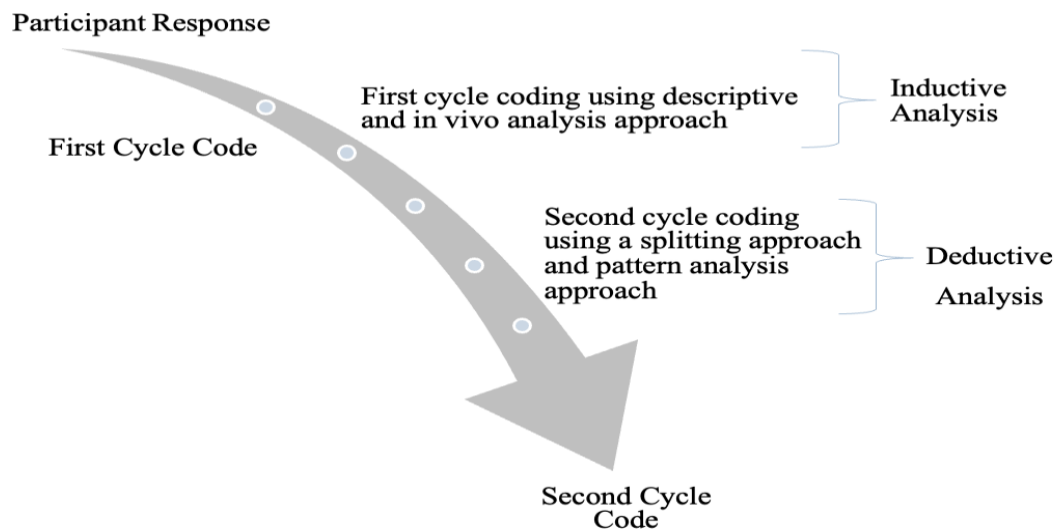
During the second cycle of coding, the following new codes emerged as the participants' responses were analyzed, split, and collapsed to arrive at the new codes: personal agency, university resources, and emotional regulation. Table 5 depicts the sources of self-efficacy as the overarching theory used to analyze the first cycle codes and the participants' data through splitting.

Table 5

Sources of Self-Efficacy and Second Cycle Coding

Sources of Self-Efficacy	First Cycle Coding	Second Cycle Coding
Performance Accomplishments	- I wanted to teach - Prior experience - Skills and Capabilities - Preparation - Began doctorate program - Blended learning experience - Formal Education	Personal Agency - Prior Experience - Blended learning experience - I wanted to teach - Preparation - Skills and Capabilities - Began doctorate - Formal Education
Vicarious Experience	- Professional development - Limited support - Observing others - Mentorship - Technology	University Resources - Professional Development - Technology Mentorship - Observing others - Limited support
Verbal Persuasion	- Feedback - Team teaching support	Feedback - Team teaching support (peer feedback) - Student feedback - Supervisor feedback
Emotional Arousal	- Feelings of inadequacy and failure - Barriers to teaching - Coping strategies - Solutions - Problem-solving	Emotional Regulation - Feelings of inadequacy and failure - Coping strategies Problem-solving - Solutions - Acclimating to university culture - Barriers to teaching - Scheduling - Unusual event: COVID

While analyzing the data during this cycle of coding, an interesting observation was made; most codes can be categorized into two broad categories: internal factors and external factors that may influence self-efficacy. The self-efficacy theory posits that an individual has a drive or agency to want to master tasks within their environment, and external factors can help or hinder one's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Arriving at these two broad categories was an essential step as it facilitated reviewing the data once again and collapsed the codes even further to arrive at these two broad categories and five subcategories.

Table 6 depicts the two broad categories of internal and external factors that may influence an individual's self-efficacy as derived from the participants' responses.

Table 6

Two Broad Categories and Subcategories

Sources of Self-Efficacy	Internal Factors *Subcategories*	External Factors *Subcategories*
Performance Accomplishments	Personal Agency - Prior Experience - Blended learning experience - I wanted to teach - Preparation - Skills and Capabilities - Began doctorate - Formal Education	Barriers to Teaching - Scheduling - Technology
Vicarious Experiences		University Resources and Supports - Professional Development - Mentorship - Observing others - Limited support - Coping strategies - Solutions - Acclimating to university culture
Verbal Persuasion		Feedback - Peer feedback - Student feedback - Supervisor feedback
Emotional Arousal	Emotional Regulation Feelings of inadequacy and failure	

The five subcategories are personal agency, barriers to teaching, university resources and supports, feedback, and emotional regulation. These five subcategories were categorized as internal or external factors influencing an individual's self-efficacy. This was done to organize the subcategories according to factors that reside within the individual (internal factors) or external factors that may influence and shape an individual's self-efficacy.

Themes

According to Harding (2013), commonalities between the participants' data and experience should be present to arrive at a theme. Data saturation was noted during the interviews and review of the transcripts after the fourth participant, meaning that patterns amongst the data were present. These patterns became more and more present throughout the first and second cycle analysis. The following four themes were the result of the data analysis:

- Personal agency

- University resources support growth as an educator

- Feedback from colleagues and students

- Frustrations teaching in a blended curriculum

Figure 2 illustrates the themes according to the four sources of self-efficacy. The figure also demonstrates the interdependency between the sources of self-efficacy and how these components influence one another.

Figure 2

Themes: A Reflection of the Sources of Self-Efficacy
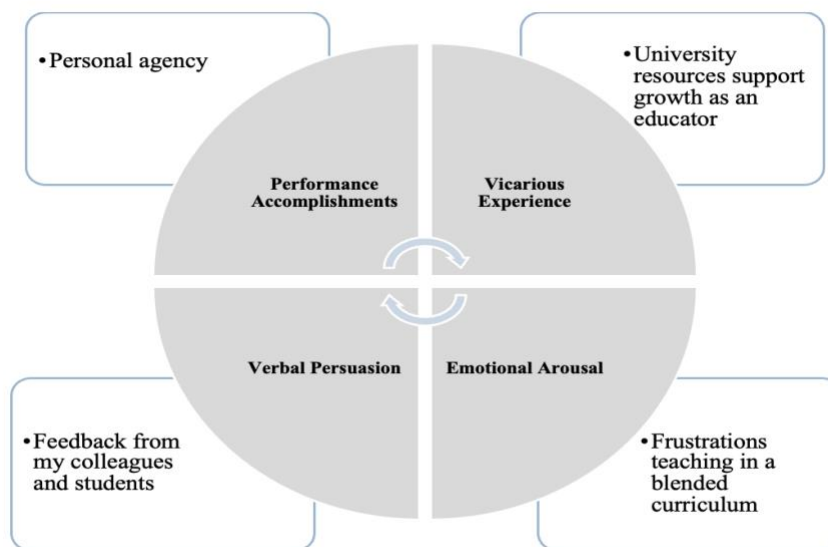
Evidence of Trustworthiness

To mitigate issues of trustworthiness, I engaged in various practices. These

practices were establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability

(Patton, 2015; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Using these constructs ensured the validity and

credibility of the study and its findings.

Credibility

Credibility is essential to qualitative studies. A qualitative researcher uses several

strategies to ensure the credibility of a study. For example, explaining and clearly

describing the phenomenon using past literature and evidence is essential to establishing

the credibility of the study (Patton, 2015). During data analysis, I often referred to the

literature review portion of my research. This helped maintain my focus on the research

question, and I used the literature to guide me when analyzing the data. I also referred to the self-efficacy theory as my lens to view the data throughout the analysis. Another strategy that I used was member checking. Member check-ins, a peer-debriefer, and cross-referencing the data with my memos and field notes provided an objective lens throughout the analysis.

An essential component in maintaining credibility throughout this study was using a peer debriefer. This individual had extensive experience with qualitative methodologies and analysis. I would meet with my peer debriefer weekly to discuss the analysis process. This individual would question my perspective and reasoning during the analysis as well as how I arrived at the codes, categories, and finally themes. This process helped me explore my biases and keep an objective lens during data analysis.

Transferability

Providing a thick description of the phenomena and the context of the phenomenon is essential for the study's transferability. Thick descriptions allow other researchers, stakeholders, participants, and leaders to use the information and possibly the results within their settings to improve efficiency (Patton, 2015). I described the participants by obtaining essential demographics important to the study. For example, a demographic table was created to highlight essential aspects of the participants, such as number of years teaching, number of years as an occupational therapist, and instructor rank. I also described the campuses and their general location to provide the reader an idea of what part of the county the participants were recruited for this study. Lastly, I described how the interviews were conducted, how long they lasted, and used an

interview protocol to conduct the interviews (see Appendix A). Again, providing clear

descriptions of the phenomenon, participants, setting, and data collection tools will

improve the transferability of the study.

Dependability

To ensure the study's dependability, I provided a detailed description of the

research design and the methodology that I used so that it can be replicated in future

studies. I included member check-ins to allow the participants to review their transcripts

and verify if what was captured accurately reflected what they said. I also recorded the

interviews to refer and relisten to the participants and their responses during data

analysis. During data collection and analysis, I kept both field notes and memos of any

initial thoughts or ideas that I may have had to maintain objectivity through an unbiased

lens during data analysis. Lastly, keeping field notes and memos, referring to the study's

conceptual framework, and circling back to the literature allowed me to triangulate the

data across these multiple sources.

Confirmability

Confirmability adds to a study's trustworthiness because it ensures that the

findings reflect the participants' experiences (Toma, 2011). To reflect the participants'

views and ideas, I used charts that visually displayed the participants' answers. Charts

were used to demonstrate the process of data analysis, adding to the data's transparency.

For example, a chart to depict the connection between the interview questions, the

participants' responses, and first cycle codes was used to visually display the data (see

Table 4). Figures were also used to depict the types of analysis employed, and when in

the analysis they were used to analyze the data. For example, inductive analysis was used

during first cycle coding and descriptive and in vivo approaches for coding the data (see

Figure1). Figures were also used to display the themes in relation to the four sources of

self-efficacy and depict the interdependency between the sources. Finally, making the

data visible helped decrease the risk of bias while highlighting the participants'

experiences and responses throughout the study.

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of occupational therapy

educators' self-efficacy in teaching in a blended curriculum. The study focused on

answering the following research question: How do occupational therapy educators view

their self-efficacy regarding teaching effectively in a blended curriculum? Four themes

were derived from the data in an effort to answer the research question. The four themes

were: (a) personal agency, (b) university resources support growth as an educator, (c)

feedback from colleagues and students, and (d) frustrations teaching in a blended

curriculum. Each of the themes is supported by including excerpts of the participants'

responses to highlight and bring awareness of the phenomenon in answering the research

question. There were no discrepant cases or non-confirming data that would impact the

results of the study.

Personal Agency

Many participants discussed that their personal agency allowed them to overcome

barriers to teaching in a blended curriculum. Bandura (1997) defined agency as "acts

done intentionally" (p. 3). A theme that arose from the data was that faculty relied on

their prior experiences to overcome barriers to teaching in a blended curriculum. Many

participants used their prior teaching experience and subject matter knowledge to

overcome their inexperience with blended learning. Seven of the participants discussed

that their previous experience in traditional face to face teaching helped them when

transitioning and teaching in a blended curriculum. Two of the participants had no prior

teaching experience but referred to their experiences as an online student, which helped

them transition to teaching in a blended curriculum. Participant 3 shared that she had no

experience with blended learning and enrolled in a Ph.D. program in education to learn

and effectively teach in a blended curriculum. Participant 1 described his prior

experience:

> Wow, eight years, something like that. I started just doing traditional face
>
> to face you know lectures and PowerPoints and that kind of stuff. I don't
>
> know how it would be like if, you know, this is your first-time teaching in
>
> a blended curriculum.

Similarly, Participant 8 shared her experience:

> I had taken some, some courses, and I took one with other faculty
>
> members that shown interest in this before, and tried to incorporate some
>
> strategies that were asynchronous, you know, so I felt like I had, you
>
> know, tiptoed around this, and kind of got my feet wet when I started here.

Conversely, Participant 6 shared that she had no prior experience but that her experience

as a student helped her teach in a blended curriculum:

I think, having been a student in a blended environment prepared me well,

and I also think the professors that taught me. I used a lot of the same

techniques that they used that I felt were helpful to me.

Another aspect of personal agency that arose from the data was personal attributes

of skills and capabilities. For example, five participants stated that being "flexible" and

"organized" made them feel that they were effective when teaching in a blended

curriculum. In comparison, the other five participants mentioned: "communication,"

"creativity," and "lifelong learning" as skills and capabilities that have contributed to

their success teaching in a blended curriculum. In summary, personal agency helps

overcome barriers to teaching in a blended curriculum. Participants discussed that their

prior experience and knowledge, flexibility and organization, and desire to teach

provided a sense of agency in overcoming barriers when teaching in a blended

curriculum.

University Resources Support Growth as an Educator

The second theme from the data analysis was university resources and support.

Mentorship was mentioned by eight of the participants that were interviewed for this

study. These eight participants expressed wanting to have more time to engage in some

formal mentorship relationships. The participants viewed mentorship as crucial support in

bettering their effectiveness teaching in a blended curriculum. Participant 2 said this of

mentorship "I kind of wish I would have received mentorship because I don't think there

would have been a big learning curve." Participant 9 shared the following "I think we

certainly need a formalized mentorship program," Participant 4 described her experience

with mentorship as the following "There were no mentors when I started, I think I was a mentor to a mentee because I had the educational background, but I didn't have a mentor and I didn't observe anyone."

Regarding professional development, all 10 participants felt that professional development plays an integral aspect in building their confidence to teach in a blended curriculum. For example, Participant 5 described her experience with professional development as "having more trainings on technology, awareness maybe, you know, knowing about technology. This improved my lens to be more successful." Participant 10 said this about professional development:

> These hour-long classes, I find them helpful…my director had me do an
>
> AOTA course about transitioning from clinician to academics, but the
>
> stuff here that they provide it's like specific to this curriculum and so I feel
>
> like that's been helpful.

Conversely, Participant 3 had a different experience from the other participants regarding professional development. This could be attributed to her longevity at the university, and she taught when the curriculum was a traditional face to face model. Participant 3 stated:

> I would have loved training, we lacked training opportunities at the
>
> time…I went and enrolled in a Ph.D. program, and I would use my
>
> professors to vet my information and guide me to make a more interactive,
>
> meaningful learning experience for the students. Now we have
>
> opportunities to observe and model teachers, we are starting to see
>
> mentorship with faculty, and we have training modules.

Of interest was the view participants had regarding technology. Some participants found it to be a barrier, while others found technology essential to teaching in a blended curriculum. For example, Participant 9 shared the following:

> I had used blackboard before as a student but not as faculty, but I really didn't know the depth of it until I started to teach here in this blended curriculum. So that was a bit of a learning curve for me.

Similarly, Participant 10 shared her experience with technology as:

> Just the technology part of it like when we came over to blackboard…I can't reference back, or get documents or anything from any semester, and that has been a challenge for me, but I'm not the most tech-savvy person.

Conversely, Participant 8 shared her experience with technology as follows:

> Now that we have professional development and we were offered weekly workshops, I would go out and learn how to use technology, I would listen, about Go React… and then have the students upload videos performing doing anatomy and manual muscle testing.

Finally, all participants felt that professional development and suitable support sources were important to their growth and their ability to teach in a blended curriculum. Two main resources and supports were identified within this theme: mentorship and professional development. Participants felt that it was important that a formal mentorship program would have helped when teaching in a blended curriculum. Many participants expressed that mentorship would have been ideal when first starting to teach in a blended curriculum. Professional development was also discussed amongst the participants as an

important aspect of their development in teaching in a blended curriculum. Lastly,

Participants expressed interest in sessions that taught them how to use technology such as

the learning management system or educational tools such as GoReact to be better

educators in a blended curriculum.

Feedback from Colleagues and Students

The third theme that arose from the data is that of feedback. According to the self-

efficacy theory, feedback is referred to as verbal persuasion (Bandura, 1977). Verbal

persuasion enhances an individual's self-efficacy regarding their performance with a

particular task. All the participants discussed feedback and how it impacted their ability

to teach in a blended curriculum. Nine participants mentioned receiving feedback from

colleagues and students but not necessarily from their supervisor. Whereas Participant 6

said she received feedback from not only her colleagues and students but also from her

direct supervisor. Participant 6 described her experience with feedback as the following:

So, I really like getting feedback, even when it's negative. But once you

get over the initial feeling it really energizes me to move forward and

make some changes. When I get feedback from my supervisor, I feel like

I'm a little kid, you know in a good way. I've always been able to feel like

she gives it to you in a way that I find very helpful.

Conversely, Participant 5 shared that the person providing feedback matters. She said:

When I have been teaching 10 years longer than the person giving me

feedback, it's kind of funky to get that feedback. Like whoever gets

assigned to you to review you sometimes, you know, I've been reviewed

by people who were getting their own wings and reviewed me they're like

that was good.

Participant 7 described her experience with feedback from colleagues as:

It's always nice to hear if you have positive feedback. But negative

feedback is welcomed. If I need to work on something, it helps me be

more confident to know that my peers are the people I'm working

with…That they do not have a problem with me but if there's areas that I

need improvement on as far as knowledge of content or class, I have to be

confident that they will give me feedback. So, it's helped me, positive or

negative feel more comfortable in class.

Participant 9 described here experience with student feedback as:

When I received specific feedback, I really think about what that means,

what is it that I did, and then I'll change it. I'll either remove it completely

or I'll try to see why is it that they [students] felt that way. Sometimes I

will say in class, I got some feedback that this wasn't good, you didn't

understand anything about this, I want to hear more about what was

unclear and didn't work.

Participant 2 described her experience with feedback as an opportunity for growth. She

says, "I've asked them [students] to give me feedback to see if it makes sense and what

doesn't make sense…I try to not take it to personally and really see it as an opportunity to

grow."

Conversely, Participant 3 described her experience with student feedback as:

if I have to pick yes or no, my answer is no, and the reason why is the way

the questions are designed for student feedback. It's a venting session and

it's because they [students] didn't get an A-plus.

The results revealed that participants found that feedback from colleagues was

valuable in enhancing their teaching. The participants expressed that the person providing

the feedback should be someone they could trust and possess extensive experience

teaching instead of a new faculty giving feedback. Lastly, Student feedback was often

seen as an opportunity to self-reflect regarding the participants' ability to teach and how

to improve upon the types of activities to engage students.

Frustrations Teaching in a Blended Curriculum

The final theme that emerged from the data was focused on frustrations teaching

in a blended curriculum. Emotional arousal refers to how a person can manage, handle,

and overcome challenges and can influence a person's sense of efficacy and impact the

person's ability to persist and overcome challenges (Bandura, 1977). For example, an

anxious or nervous individual teaching in a blended format may feel insecure and may

not have the coping ability to persist and overcome feelings of insecurity. Participant 6

describes her experience as "the time commitment is unbelievable like it is. I mean it's

not too uncommon to work 60 hours a week, that's exhausting you know." Similarly,

Participant 4 stated, "also has to do with faculty not having enough time." Participant 4

also mentioned, "sometimes just technology not working properly can be frustrating."

Participant 5 described her experience as "I guess expectation of commitment and

so if you're not all in if you are not in meetings, and you've seen it with other people;

people get upset. It makes it difficult to individualize your own schedule." Participant 3 added "remember at one point people refused to go blended so we had very heated discussions." Participant 10 described their feelings of frustration with "fluctuating class size and technology can be a challenge."

Finally, participants mentioned that being prepared, communicating with faculty, organization, flexibility, and seeking out help were ways of overcoming their feelings of frustration when teaching in a blended curriculum. Participants discussed that being prepared, relying on their skills such as flexibility and organization, and asking for assistance from colleagues were coping strategies to assist in overcoming feelings of frustration.

Summary

This study revolved around one central research question: How do occupational therapy educators view their self-efficacy regarding teaching effectively in a blended curriculum? The four sources of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) were used as the foundation to analyze the participants' data to answer this question. As a result, four themes arose from the data that answered the research question: (a) personal agency, (b) university resources support growth as an educator, (c) feedback from colleagues and students, and (d) frustrations teaching in a blended curriculum. These themes will be interpreted further in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 begins with an introduction and a more profound discussion regarding the study's findings. Next, the study's limitations, recommendations, and implications are

discussed. Finally, Chapter 5 concludes with a discussion on social change and how this

study can impact occupational therapy education.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This basic qualitative study aimed to examine the perceptions of occupational

therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum. The literature speaks to

occupational therapy educators' lack of preparedness, self-confidence, difficulty

managing various academic roles and responsibilities, and a lack of instructional methods

for teaching (Belarmino & Bahle-Lampe, 2019; Cabatan et al. 2019; Gee et al., 2017).

Therefore, the focus of this study was to gain insight and examine how self-efficacy can

be enhanced and supported in order to teach in a blended curriculum. In addition,

examining occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy led to an understanding of how

occupational therapy faculty viewed their ability to teach effectively in this innovative

format. Because little is known regarding occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to

teach in a blended curriculum, individual interviews were conducted using semistructured

open-ended questions to gain insight into occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy.

This study focused on answering the following research question: How do

occupational therapy educators view their self-efficacy regarding teaching effectively in a

blended curriculum? Four main themes emerged from the data. These themes were (a)

personal agency, (b) university resources support growth as an educator, (c) feedback

from colleagues and students, and (d) frustrations teaching in a blended curriculum. This

study revealed that occupational therapists relied on their past experiences teaching in

traditional face-to-face programs. They also relied on their clinical expertise to overcome

barriers and feelings of frustration. This finding is similar to that of Gabatan et al.'s

(2020) study in which occupational therapy educators found ways to adapt by becoming

involved in opportunities within the academic environment that provide a sense of self-worth and fulfillment.

The results also revealed that university resources and support enhanced the occupational therapy faculty's teaching ability through professional development sessions. In addition, the data showed that many of the participants thought that having a formal mentoring program would be beneficial in enhancing one's self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum. Finally, the participants described feedback as a valued aspect of strengthening self-efficacy. However, the individual providing the feedback should be someone with extensive expertise and a trustworthy source.

Interpretation of the Findings

Analysis of the findings identified four main themes regarding how occupational therapy educators view their self-efficacy regarding teaching effectively in a blended curriculum. These themes were (a) personal agency, (b) university resources support growth as an educator, (c) feedback from colleagues and students, and last (d) frustrations teaching in a blended curriculum. The results of this study showed that the four sources of self-efficacy are interdependent and influence each other. In addition, the analysis of the data confirmed previous studies regarding self-efficacy.

Personal Agency

This theme focused on performance accomplishments as a main source of self-efficacy. The results of this study confirmed past research studies in that occupational therapy faculty reported relying on past and current experiences as an educator and as a clinician in overcoming barriers and failures to effectively teach in a blended curriculum.

Bandura (1977) claimed that self-efficacy is closely linked to external experiences and outcomes. If the person experiences success and is rewarded for their achievement, their self-efficacy will be greater. These positive experiences shape the individual and give the individual a greater sense of their capabilities and reinforce positive self-efficacy. Also, participants discussed the importance of being prepared and relying on their knowledge of the content to overcoming barriers and being successful teaching in a blended curriculum. This finding is similar to that of Pearman et al. (2021) in which "self-efficacious teachers are described as having a strong knowledge base in their content" (p. 85). Participants felt confident in their abilities to teach in a blended curriculum by having a thorough understanding of the content they were teaching. Relying on prior knowledge regarding the content allowed the participants from this study to be effective teaching in a blended curriculum.

Many of the participants attributed their ability to be flexible and organized to their success teaching in a blended curriculum. This finding is similar to that of Cabatan et al. (2019) in which adaptability is a key factor that contributes to the success of an occupational therapy educator in the academic environment. The participants felt that being organized and flexible afforded them the opportunity to address student needs by adapting their teaching and learning activities to enhance the student learning experience. The findings of this study confirm that of the Belarmino and Bahle-Lampe (2019) study which revealed that occupational therapy educators experienced a shift in how they taught online content versus face-to-face teaching. Having the ability to be flexible

allows the occupational therapy educator to shift from different teaching strategies to meet the needs of the students.

University Resources Support Growth as an Educator

The results from this study revealed that vicarious experience and verbal persuasion were important to enhancing the occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum. Mentorship and professional development were cited as important resources and support in influencing self-efficacy to teach effectively in a blended curriculum. Many of the participants discussed wanting a formal mentorship program in which they could shadow and learn from an experienced faculty member when they first starting teaching in a blended curriculum. This is similar to a study by Ismail et al. (2021) in which a mentoring program can enhance a mentee's self-efficacy. The results from this study were also alike to that of the Dickerson (2016) study, in which modeling can be helpful when the individual has had little experience and may lack confidence in their skills.

An important finding from this study was related to the characteristics a mentor should possess. The participants discussed that mentors should possess extensive experience and should be someone that is trustworthy. These results are similar to the arguments by Bandura (1977) that using models who are similar regarding the person and the situation is much more influential than those models who are different. It is important that when establishing a formal mentorship program that individuals who are selected as mentors possess characteristics which are valued by the mentee.

Regarding professional development, all of the participants mentioned it was a valuable resource that enhanced their effectiveness teaching in a blended curriculum. Participants discussed attending workshops regarding educational technology tools and how to use them in the learning environment and varying pedagogy strategies. These findings support those of Giles and Janes (2020) in which, "educators must acknowledge that technology is a large component of students' daily occupations and, therefore, consider how to integrate technology into the learning environment" (p. 191). The participants of this study found that professional development not only helped them become more knowledgeable regarding technology, but they also learned about various pedagogies to facilitate teaching in a blended learning environment. Martin et al. (2019) recommended creating professional development programs that address the needs of faculty teaching online such as course design. Having professional development programs with an emphasis on blended learning would support the needs of occupational therapy faculty teaching in a blended curriculum. Participants in the study also mentioned wanting to have more hands-on opportunities during professional development sessions to assist in their learning. These results are similar to those by Weston (2018) in which participating in a clinical instructor program focused on pedagogy, instructional strategies, and preparing to be a clinical instructor-led to an enhanced sense of self-efficacy.

Feedback from Colleagues and Students

According to Bandura (1977) verbal persuasion alone is not enough to foment and sustain self-efficacy but can contribute to and influence a person's view regarding their

performance. The results from this study demonstrated that occupational therapy

educators relied on the colleagues' feedback as a way to brainstorm and problem solve

issues that would arise when teaching in a blended curriculum. Feedback from colleagues

can be viewed as a catalyst for self-reflection allowing the individual to appraise their

teaching abilities resulting in modification and adaptation to their teaching. Unlike the

Barton and Dexter (2020) study in which verbal persuasion was valuable in the beginning

stages of learning a new task, the results from this study demonstrated the most

participants benefited from ongoing feedback even after they felt comfortable teaching in

a blended environment. Perhaps this can be attributed to the participants wanting to

brainstorm about learning activities versus needing verbal feedback regarding their

teaching performance. Regardless, participants felt that feedback from colleagues was

valuable when teaching in a blended curriculum. However, the results from this study

also revealed that the individual providing the feedback should be someone with

extensive expertise and a trustworthy source. This is similar to Bandura's (1977) research

in which the person providing feedback is regarded as an expert.

Finally, feedback from students also prompted self-reflection which resulted in

modifications to their teaching. Although, feedback from students was not always held in

high regard most participants mentioned that feedback from students allowed them to

reflect on their communication style, the choice of learning activities, and exploring

various pedagogical strategies. Figure 3 illustrates the process of self-reflection

influencing self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum.

Figure 3

Self-Reflection Leading to Enhanced Self-Efficacy
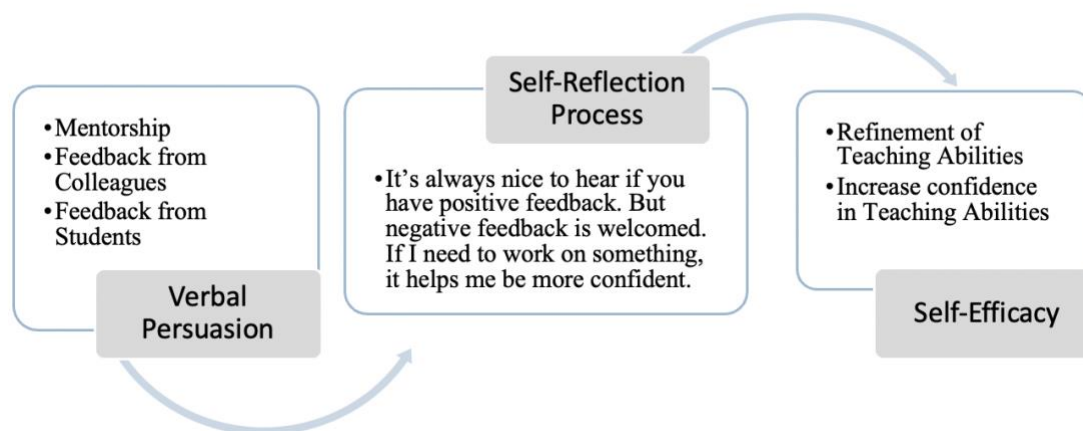
Frustrations Teaching in a Blended Curriculum

Emotional arousal can influence a person's sense of efficacy and impact the person's ability to persist and overcome challenges. Emotional arousal refers to how a person can manage, handle, and overcome challenges (Bandura, 1977). The results from this study revealed that many of the participants experienced frustration when teaching in a blended curriculum. Time commitment and scheduling caused the most frustration amongst the participants when teaching in a blended learning curriculum. In addition, technology not working properly was another source of frustration for the participants. The results of this study did not reveal if feelings of frustration impacted the participants' self-efficacy. This aligns with Yada et al. (2019) who noted that emotional arousal appeared not directly to have an impact on the individuals' self-efficacy but "rather mediates self-efficacy through cognitive processes" (p. 21). This supports the participants responses in which they discussed using strategies such as being prepared,

communicating with faculty, organization, flexibility, and seeking out help as ways of overcoming their feelings of frustration when teaching in a blended curriculum.

The themes from this study demonstrated an interdependence between performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal. This interdependence allows the individual to refine their teaching abilities to be effective when teaching in a blended curriculum. One cannot forget the external factors that may support or limit self-efficacy. The results of this study demonstrated that professional development and mentorship are important resources and support in the higher education environment and should be thoughtfully planned in order to support the faculty. Although verbal persuasion is not as influential as performance accomplishments and vicarious experience, it appears from the results of this study that it can serve as a catalyst for self-reflection that leads to modifying and adapting one's teaching style. This ability to self-reflect and make changes leads to an enhanced self-efficacy when teaching in a blended curriculum.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study were recruiting enough occupational therapy faculty teaching in a blended curriculum. However, 10 participants volunteered to be in the study, and data saturation was noted after the fourth participant. In addition, findings by Guest et al. (2006) discussed that six to 12 interviews appear to meet saturation. Therefore, the number of participants for this study fell within this range. However, the sample size may limit the transferability of the study.

Another limitation of the study was the setting in which the participants were recruited. The participants were recruited from four campuses across the university, except for my home campus, to avoid conflicts of interest between the participants and myself. However, this may have limited participation of faculty who could have offered varying insights into teaching in a blended curriculum.

Recommendations

The results of this study are promising. However, further research on verbal persuasion is recommended to explore its impact as a catalyst for self-reflection and its influence on self-efficacy. In particular, feedback from supervisors and how it can impact a person's perceived self-efficacy in teaching in a blended curriculum would be of interest. Second, further research focusing on vicarious experience and its impact on self-efficacy would be beneficial. For example, participants from this study mentioned that it is essential that the person providing feedback should be someone they could trust and have extensive expertise. Studying the characteristics of those who are exemplars and who can serve as models would extend the literature on this source of self-efficacy.

A third recommendation would be to replicate this study with other universities that have an occupational therapy program with a blended curriculum that have unique characteristics. For example, universities that are private versus public and those that are for profit versus non-profit. It would be interesting to see if universities with these unique characteristics have varying levels of resources and support that may impact self-efficacy of occupational therapy faculty. In addition, examining student outcomes regarding the pass rates on the national occupational therapy certification exam would further the

literature on teacher self-efficacy and best practices on how to support occupational therapy educators teaching in a blended curriculum.

Fourth, further research into the different types of professional development opportunities to enhance and support a person's self-efficacy is warranted. For example, studying the effects of a formalized certification program in online and blended learning and their impact on self-efficacy compared to in-house professional development provided by universities would shed light on how to best structure professional development programs. Finally, this study used a basic qualitative design to gain insight into occupational therapy educators' perceived self-efficacy in teaching in a blended curriculum. Using a different methodology approach, such as mixed methods, could objectively measure self-efficacy complemented by personal experience and provide a more comprehensive understanding of how higher education institutions can enhance and support self-efficacy in faculty.

Implications

The following is a discussion on social change and its implications for occupational therapy education. Next, theoretical implications are discussed as it pertains to the study, and lastly, practice recommendations are addressed.

Social Change

Social change is not just a vision; it makes a difference in the community and society by applying knowledge. Callahan et al. (2012) stated, "advocacy for an issue often takes the form of education that aims to bring about a new understanding and awareness" (p. 5). Providing evidence that supports positive social change is the catalyst

needed to make meaningful change in today's society locally and globally. Walden University (2019) defines social change as the "deliberate process of creating and applying ideas, strategies, and actions to promote the worth, dignity, and development of individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, and societies… that results in the improvement of human and social conditions" (p. 18). Therefore, social change can be as small as making a difference in one person's life or making a difference in many people across the globe.

How does this study answer the call for social change? First, this study can facilitate positive social change by informing administrators and leadership on how to best support faculty whose experience may not necessarily include teaching in a blended curriculum. In addition, universities can support faculty teaching in this innovative curriculum by providing a structured professional development program focusing on pedagogy, andragogy, learning management systems, and educational technology tools. A comparison study by Helms-Lorenz et al. (2018) revealed that educators who received professional development had a higher teacher efficacy in using educational strategies versus those who did not receive professional development. This result supports the findings of this study in which the participants all agreed that professional development helped enhance their teaching abilities in a blended curriculum. Having a robust professional development program that meets the needs of faculty will enhance and strengthen the faculty's self-efficacy resulting in higher student learning outcomes (Yoo, 2016).

Second, the results of this study revealed that having a strong mentorship program for faculty as they transition to teaching in a blended curriculum is beneficial to one's self-efficacy. Ismail et al. (2021) stated that "mentors' capabilities to apply comfortable communication and offer sufficient support formal and/or informal mentoring activities may strongly invoke mentees' self-efficacy" (p. 93). The results from the Ismail et al. (2021) study support the findings of this study. Lastly, this study can lead to a positive social change by informing administrators, directors, professional organizations, and faculty on best practices to prepare and support occupational therapy faculty to teach in a blended curriculum.

Theoretical Implications

The results of this study affirmed prior and current findings regarding the theoretical constructs of the self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977). In addition, the results revealed that performance accomplishment is a foundational building block for self-efficacy. For example, many of the participants described that they relied on prior experience in teaching and as a clinician to overcome barriers to teaching in a blended curriculum. However, based on the study results, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal assisted the individual in further refining the ability to accomplish a task. For example, many participants mentioned at times feeling frustrated teaching in a blended curriculum; however, these feelings of frustration led them to reflect on their prior experience and use new teaching strategies they had learned from attending professional development sessions.

Regarding vicarious experience and verbal persuasion, the study's results confirmed that having models or exemplars to observe or receive guidance would be beneficial. In addition, the study results revealed that verbal persuasion from peers was valuable; however, some participants mentioned that the peer had to be someone with extensive experience and someone they viewed as trustworthy. Conversely, feedback from students was seen as valuable but not held in the same esteem as feedback from their peers. However, the results showed that student feedback was a catalyst for self-reflection and a change agent for improving learning activities, enhancing their teaching ability in a blended curriculum.

Practice Recommendations

The study's findings are significant because it adds to the body of knowledge in the occupational therapy literature. But, most importantly, this study is critical because of its implications for social change. Providing the appropriate resources and support can enhance an occupational therapy educator's perceived self-efficacy. For example, providing a structured professional development program that focuses on pedagogy, andragogy, and technology use would be beneficial to an instructor who is teaching in a blended curriculum. In addition, providing a formal mentorship program that includes peer observation and modeling on how to facilitate a blended course would benefit occupational therapy educators and their perceived self-efficacy.

<div align="center">

Conclusions

</div>

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA, 2018) published the Occupational Therapy Education Research Agenda document. This agenda urged the

occupational therapy profession to add to the body of literature regarding pedagogies, learning theories, innovative instructional methods, and faculty development resources to ensure the quality and future of occupational therapy education. The results from this study provide insight into how occupational therapy educators view their self-efficacy to teach in a blended curriculum. In addition, the study results revealed that professional development and formal mentorship are essential elements in enhancing and supporting occupational therapy educators' self-efficacy in teaching in a blended curriculum. Finally, results of this study have the potential to influence administrators, supervisors, and directors regarding curriculum design and support for faculty in meeting the demands of current educational trends, such as blended learning.

References

Allen, I.E., & Seaman, J. (2017). Digital learning compass: Distance education

enrollment report 2017. *Bason Survey Research Group*.

https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED580868

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education. (2018). 2018 Accreditation

council for occupational therapy education (ACOTE®) Standards and interpretive

guide (effective July 31, 2020). *American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 72*,

7212410005p1–7212410005p83. https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2018.72s217

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education. (2022, July 31). *Distance*

education entry-level occupational therapy (OT) educational programs.

https://acoteonline.org/all-schools/

American Occupational Therapy Association. (2018). Occupational therapy education

research agenda— Revised. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy,*

72(Suppl. 2), 7212420070. https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2018.72S218

American Occupational Therapy Association. (2020). Occupational therapy practice

framework: Domain and process (4th ed.). *American Journal of Occupational*

Therapy, 74 (Suppl. 2). https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.74S2001

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W.H. Freeman and Company.

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral

change. *Psychological Review*, *84*(2), 191–215. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-

295X.84.2.191

Barton, E. A., & Dexter, S. (2020). Sources of teachers' self-efficacy for technology integration from formal, informal, and independent professional learning. *Educational Technology Research & Development*, *68*(1), 89–108. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-019-09671-6

Belarmino, J., & Bahle-Lampe, A. (2019). A preliminary historical report on embracing online education in occupational therapy. *The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy, 7*(3), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.15453/2168-6408.1554

Cabatan, M.C., Grajo, L., & Sana, E.A. (2019). A scoping review of challenges and the adaptation process in academia: Implications for occupational therapy educators. *The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy, 7*(1) 1-36. https://doi.org/10.15453/2168-6408.1523

Cabatan, M.C., Grajo, L., & Sana, E.A. (2020). Occupational adaptation as a lived experience: The case of Filipino occupational therapy academic educators. *The Journal of Occupational Science, 27*(4). https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2020.1741020

Caelli, K., Ray, L., & Mill, J. (2003). "Clear as mud": Toward greater clarity in generic qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *2*(2), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690300200201

Callahan, D., Wilson, E., Birdsall, I., Estabrook-Fishinghawk, B., Carson, G., Ford, S., … Yob, I. (2012). *Expanding our Understanding of Social Change*. Minneapolis, MN: Walden University, LLC.

Christensen Institute (2020). *What is blended learning*?

https://www.christenseninstitute.org/blended-learning/

Cocca, M., Cocca, A., Martínez, E. A., & Bulnes, M. G. R. (2018). Correlation between

Self-Efficacy Perception and Teaching Performance: The Case of Mexican

Preschool and Primary School Teachers. *Arab World English Journal*, *9*(1), 56.

https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no1.4

Cooper, R., Warren, L., Hogan-Chapman, A., & Mills, L. (2020). Pre-service teachers

and their self-efficacy toward Online Teaching. *SRATE Journal*, *29*(2).

Corry, M., & Stella, J. (2018). Teacher self-efficacy in online education: A review of the

literature. *Research in Learning Technology*, *26*(0), 1–12.

https://doi.org/10.25304/rlt.v26.2047

Dedoose Version 8.0.35.(2018). SocioCultural Research Consultants, LLC

www.dedoose.com

Dickenson, P. (2016). The flipped classroom in a hybrid teacher education course:

Teachers' self-efficacy and instructors' practices. *Journal of Research in*

Innovative Teaching, *9*(1), 78–89.

Diep, A-N., Zhu, C., Struyven, K., & Blieck, Y. (2017). Who or what contributes to

student satisfaction in different blended learning modalities? *British Journal of*

Educational Technology, *48*(2), 473–489. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12431

Eichelberger, A., & Leong, P. (2019). Using TPACK as a framework to study the

influence of college faculty's beliefs on online teaching. *Educational Media*

International, 56(2), 116-133. https://doi.org/10.1080/09523987.2019.1614246

Foy, C. (2017). Identifying barriers and pathways to success for new occupational

    therapy faculty members: A pilot survey. *Occupational Therapy in Health*

    Care, *31*(4), 329–340. https://doi.org/10.1080/07380577.2017.1354269

Fusch, P., Fusch, G. E., & Ness, L. R. (2018). Denzin's paradigm shift: Revisiting

    triangulation in qualitative research. *Journal of Social Change*, *10*(1), 19–32.

    https://doi.org/10.5590/JOSC.2018.10.1.02

Gee, B. M., Salazar, L., Porter, J., Clark, C., & Peterson, T. W. (2017). Overview of

    instructional technology used in the education of occupational therapy students: A

    survey study. *Open Journal of Occupational Therapy (OJOT)*, *5*(4), 1–15.

    https://doi.org/10.15453/2168-6408.1352

Giles, K. A., & Janes, W. E. (2020). Educational technologies: Enhancing learning,

    engagement, and global connectedness. In Taff, S., Grajo, L.C., & Hooper, B.R.

    (Eds.), *Perspectives on occupational therapy education: Past, present, future* (pp.

    191-200). SLACK Incorporated.

Gosselin, K. P., Northcote, M., Reynaud, D., Kilgour, P., Anderson, M., & Boddey, C.

    (2016). Development of an evidence-based professional learning program

    informed by online teachers' self-efficacy and threshold concepts. *Online*

    Learning, *20*(3), 178–194. https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v20i3.648

Gurley, L.E. (2018). Educator's preparation to teach, perceived teaching presence, and

    perceived teaching presence behaviors in blended and online learning

    environments. *Online Learning, 22*(2), 197-200.

Harding, J. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis from start to finish*. London: Sage.

Helms-Lorenz, M., van de Grift, W., Canrinus, E., Maulana, R., & van Veen, K. (2018). Evaluation of the behavioral and affective outcomes of novice teachers working in professional development schools versus non-professional development schools. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, *56*, 8–20. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2017.10.006

Howe, D. L., Chen, H., Heitner, K. L., & Morgan, S. A. (2018). Differences in nursing faculty satisfaction teaching online: A comparative descriptive study. *Journal of Nursing Education, 57*(9), 536-543. http://dx.doi.org/10.3928/01484834-20180815-05

Ismail, A., Ibrahim, N., & Keliwon, K. B. (2021). Mentor-mentee interaction and mentees' psychosocial development: The mediating effect of mentees' self-efficacy. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research (EJER)*, *94*, 79–100. https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2021.94.4

Jacob, S. A., & Furgeson, S. P. (2012). Writing interview protocols and conducting interviews: Tips for students new to the field of qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report, 17*(42), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2012.1718

Jonker, H., März, V., & Voogt, J. (2018). Teacher educators' professional identity under construction: The transition from teaching face-to-face to a blended curriculum. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *71*, 120–133. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.12.016

Lockhart-Keene, L., & Potvin, M.-C. (2018). Occupational Therapy Adjunct Faculty

    Self-Perceptions of Readiness to Teach. *Open Journal of Occupational Therapy*

    (OJOT), *6*(2), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.15453/2168-6408.1415

Luongo, N. (2018). An examination of distance learning faculty satisfaction levels and

    self-perceived barriers. *Journal of Educators Online*, *15*(2), 1-13.

Mahoney, W. (2020). Historical overview of occupational therapy education. In Taff, S.,

    Grajo, L.C., & Hooper, B.R. (Eds.), *Perspectives on occupational therapy*

    education: Past, present, future (pp. 13-28). SLACK Incorporated.

Martin, F., Budhrani, K., & Wang, C. (2019). Examining faculty perception of their

    readiness to teach online. *Online Learning. 23*(3), 97-119.

    https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v23i3.1555

Mason, M. (2010). Sample size and saturation in phd studies using qualitative interviews.

    Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research, *11*(3),

    article 8. Retrieved from http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs

Meho, L.I. (2006). Email interviewing in qualitative research: A methodological

    discussion. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and*

    Technology, 57(10):1284–1295. https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.20416

Morris, D., Usher, E., & Chen, J. (2017). Reconceptualizing the sources of teaching self-

    efficacy: A critical review of emerging literature. *Educational Psychology*

    Review, *29*(4), 795–833. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-016-9378-y

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and*

    practice (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Pearman, C., Bowles, F., & Polka, W. (2021). Teacher educator perceptions of

characteristics of self-efficacy. *Critical Questions in Education*, *12*(1), 81–99.

Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2016). *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual,*

theoretical, and methodological. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Reid, P. (2017). Supporting instructors in overcoming self-efficacy and background

barriers to adoption. *Education and Information Technologies, 22*(1), 369-382.

http://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-015-9449-6

Roller, M. R., & Lavrakas, P. J. (2018). A total quality framework approach to sharing

qualitative research data: Comment on Dubois et al. (2018). *Qualitative*

Psychology, *5*(3), 394–401. https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000081

Rose, Sr. M. (2018). What are some key attributes of effective online teachers? *Journal*

of Open, Flexible and Distance Learning, 22(2), 32–48.

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (3rd

ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed). Thousand

Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Schaber, P., & Candler, C. (2020). Signature pedagogies and learning designs in

occupational therapy education. In Taff, S., Grajo, L.C., & Hooper, B.R. (Eds.),

Perspectives on occupational therapy education: Past, present, future (pp. 45-53).

SLACK Incorporated.

Spall, S. (1998). Peer debriefing in qualitative research: Emerging operational models.

Qualitative inquiry, (2), 280. ISSN: 1077-8004.

Stoykov, M. E., Skarupski, K. A., Foucher, K., & Chubinskaya, S. (2017). Junior investigators thinking about quitting research: A survey. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, *71*(2), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2017.019448

Taff, S. (2020). Educational philosophies influencing the development of early occupational therapy curricula. In Taff, S., Grajo, L.C., & Hooper, B.R. (Eds.), *Perspectives on occupational therapy education: Past, present, future* (pp. 3-11). SLACK Incorporated.

Toma, J. D. (2011). *Approaching rigor in applied qualitative research*. In C. F. Conrad & R. C. Serlin (Eds.), The SAGE handbook for research in education: Pursuing ideas as the keystone of exemplary inquiry (2nd ed., p. 263). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Walden University Student Handbook. (2019). *Social change*. Retrieved from https://catalog.waldenu.edu/mime/media/165/5101/2018-2019+Walden+University+Student+Handbook+%28March+2019%29.pdf

Weston, J. (2018). The clinical instructor program: Improving self-efficacy for nurse educators. *Nurse Educator*, *43*(3), 158–161. https://doi.org/10.1097/NNE.0000000000000452

Yada, A., Tolvanen, A., Malinen, O.P., Imai-Matsumura, K., Shimada, H., Koike, R., & Savolainen, H. (2019). Teachers' self-efficacy and the sources of efficacy: A cross-cultural investigation in Japan and Finland. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *81*, 13–24. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.01.014

Yildiz, M., & Erdem, M. (2018). An investigation on instructors' knowledge, belief and

practices towards distance education. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational

Technology*, *6*(2), 1–20. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1174814

Yoo, J. H. (2016). The effect of professional development on teacher efficacy and

teachers' self-analysis of their efficacy change. *Journal of Teacher Education for

Sustainability*, *18*(1), 84–94. https://doi.org/10.1515/jtes-2016-0007

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview Script:

Hello, my name is Inti Marazita, and I am a Ph.D. student at Walden University. Thank you for volunteering your time and allowing me to know more about you and your teaching experience with blended learning. I want to begin by saying that anything you share with me today will be kept confidential. The interview will be recorded and transcribed, and I will send it back to you to confirm that what you shared with me is accurate.

Do you have any questions before we begin? Wonderful.

1. Tell me a little bit about how you teach in occupational therapy?
   - Were you a contributing faculty or adjunct faculty before teaching full-time?
   - Why were you motivated to teach occupational therapy?

2. Tell me about your teaching experience?
   - How long have you been teaching?
   - Have you always taught in a blended curriculum?
   - Have you taught face to face?
   - What type of classes have you taught? Lecture versus lab or both?

3. What skills do you believe you possess that have helped you to teach within a blended learning environment?
   - Did you do anything to prepare? If so, what kinds of things did you do to prepare? For example, did you shadow someone?

4. Can you tell me about any barriers that you may have experienced teaching in a blended learning environment?
   - Can you give examples of some barriers?
   - How did you overcome these barriers?

5. What factors do you feel have contributed to shaping your skills and capabilities to teaching in a blended environment?
   - Have you observed others teach in a blended environment?
   - Have you observed others teaching face to face?
   - Does your university provide resources to support your development as an instructor who teaches in a blended curriculum?
   - Can you give examples of the types of resources provided?

6. Can you tell me how effective receiving verbal feedback on your performance has or has not shaped your self-efficacy?
   - Student feedback

- Supervisor feedback

7. Have you ever felt inadequate or not prepared to teach in a blended environment?
   - Can you describe or give examples of when you felt inadequate or not prepared?
   - How did you overcome these feelings of inadequacy or unpreparedness?

8. Is there anything else about your personal experience with blended learning and your teaching capabilities or skills in this delivery format that you would like to share?

Closing Remarks:

Thank you so much for participating in this study and thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. As I mentioned earlier today, I will be transcribing the interview, and I will email the transcript to you so you can review it and make sure that it reflects what you said.

Peer Debrief Plan:

A peer debriefer will be identified to assist this researcher in cross-referencing the data to ensure that the data's interpretation and analysis are objective and bias-free. This individual will also probe the data further and present views that might not have been identified or thought about when the study began.