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Investigating the Possible Effects of State Takeover on Teacher Self-Efficacy in Low-Performing, Low-Ses School Districts in Arkansas

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INVESTIGATING THE POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF STATE TAKEOVER
ON TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY IN LOW-PERFORMING,
LOW-SES SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN ARKANSAS

A Dissertation Submitted
to the Graduate College
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in partial fulfillment of requirements
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of the College of Education

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Title: Investigating the Possible Effects of State Takeover on Teacher Self-Efficacy in Low-Performing, Low-SES School Districts in Arkansas

Program: School Leadership

Degree: Doctor of Education

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Signature

Date

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Dedication

To my Heavenly Father.

To my parents, Isaac C. Willis and Shirley A. Willis.

To my special and beloved grandmother Mrs. Mattie (Kate) Taylor Brown

To my husband Curtis K. Hughey.

To my children, Reggie, Torrey, Deidra, and Jerry.

To my grandchildren, Reggie (RJ), Jessica, Ahmad, and Jayda.

To Vickie Willis Edwards and Marilyn Willis Briggs my beloved heavenly sisters.

To my siblings, Jackie, Jerry, and Gary.

To my best friend, since childhood, Cininni Brown Powell.

To all my family and friends.

Words cannot express how much I love you all.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the differences in teachers' level of self-efficacy based on the state takeover status of a school district. The design of this study was "group comparison research" (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2015). The dependent variable was teachers' level of self-efficacy and the independent variable was state takeover status.

Data gathered for this study were teacher demographics and the level of teacher self-efficacy measured by the TSES instrument (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Three school districts in Arkansas were selected and matched on demographic variables and school academic measures. One district had recently been released from state takeover, one district was under the threat of state takeover and another district was performing at a slightly higher level but was not under the threat of state takeover. A total of 146 teachers across the three districts completed the survey.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data and to answer the research questions. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the differences in the teacher's sense of self-efficacy among the three school districts in three efficacy domains; student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. Results indicated that there were differences in the level of teacher self-efficacy among the three districts, but only in the domains of instructional strategies and classroom management. A Tukey HSD post hoc test was used to determine where the differences existed in the districts. In both domains, the differences were found to be between the district under threat of state takeover and the district that was not under threat of state takeover. The teachers in the district under threat of state takeover had a

higher mean level of self-efficacy. The district that had actually undergone state takeover did not indicate a difference in self-efficacy with the other two districts.

The implications from this particular study were that state takeover status in a district does not have a deleterious effect on the level of teacher self-efficacy. For one district it appears that the threat of state takeover may have actually had a positive effect on the level of teacher self-efficacy.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The goal of public education in the United States (U.S.) is to provide every student the opportunity to receive a quality education. Achieving that goal has been a constant struggle for educators due to many factors such as inequity of resources and a shortage of quality teachers (Peske & Haycock, 2006). While a myriad of state court cases has slowly addressed the issue of equity and adequacy over the past four decades (Springer, Liu, & Guthrie, 2009), with limited success, it is the continuing shortage of quality teachers, for all schools, that is still an impediment to school improvement (Barth, 2000).

Much of the school effectiveness and school improvement research that has been conducted over the past 50 years originated with the publication of the Coleman Report (Coleman et al., 1966). A large-scale evaluation of public education funded by the Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, this study identified variables that related to a student's academic success. Some of these findings indicated that a student's socioeconomic status (SES) had a major effect on a student's ability to achieve academically. For many years, these findings were misconstrued to purport that "schools don't matter" (Summers & Wolfe, 1977). As a result of these misconceptions, researchers set out to disprove the Coleman findings and prove that schools do, indeed, make a difference in a student's ability to achieve academically (e.g., Brookover, Edmonds, & Lezotte 1979; Edmonds, 1982; Teddlie & Stringfield, 1993). After many decades school effects research has demonstrated that social factors and home life still negatively impact a student's chance of academic success, but schools do have the ability to overcome many of those negative factors (Teddlie & Stringfield, 2007).

Lost in the controversy surrounding the Coleman Report was its important finding that teacher quality had a significant effect size in explaining the variance in achievement between students (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2000; Heck, 2009; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2000; Rockoff, 2004). These findings have been supported over the years by teacher effectiveness research (Graham & Heimerer, 1981) and it can now safely be assumed that quality instruction is the most effective means of improving schools (Goe, 2007).

Since teacher quality is recognized as vital to student success, efforts at understanding how to improve teacher quality have been central to school improvement research for many years (e.g., McCaffrey, Lockwood, Koretz, & Hamilton, 2003; Rivkin et al., 2000). Although we now understand a great deal about how to prepare quality teachers, there are still too many low-performing schools that suffer from a lack of quality teachers.

Teacher attrition occurs for many reasons (Borman & Dowling, 2008) and research indicates that a significant number of teachers do not stay in the profession more than three to four years (Gray & Taie, 2015). This lack of retention coupled with the reduction in the number of college students entering teacher preparation programs will lead to a major crisis in education, with more and more schools unable to fill positions with quality teachers (Aragon, 2016).

The inability of many schools to recruit and keep quality teachers is evident throughout the nation (Jacob, 2007) and it exacerbates the problem for low-performing schools. Various attempts have been made to recruit and retain quality teachers to these low-performing schools, including financial benefits such as bonuses, housing

allowances, etc. (Kowal, Hassel, & Hassell, 2008). But these incentives have often met with little success and teacher retention in many geographical areas remains a major problem (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

When the opportunity presents itself, many quality teachers in low-performing, high poverty/high minority schools choose to go to higher performing schools. As quality teachers leave low-performing schools, and there is a limited pool of teacher applicants to fill the positions, it becomes vital that these low-performing, high poverty/high minority schools find ways to develop and improve the teachers that stay and want to be successful (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin 2001).

Professional development plays an important role in the effort to improve the quality of instruction in low-performing schools (Guskey, 2002a). The extrinsic factors of teacher quality have usually been the most often researched aspects of professional development, identifying the weaknesses of the faculty and addressing those weaknesses through training and enrichment (Guskey, 2002b). The intrinsic factors related to teacher quality are often overlooked when trying to help teachers improve the quality of their instruction. Teacher morale, motivation, and optimism are all intrinsic factors that impact a teacher's ability to provide quality instruction (Evans, 2000). While many researchers have investigated these factors, most schools fail to address them in any constructive way.

One intrinsic construct that has been researched in great detail is teacher self-efficacy (Klassen, Tze, Betts, & Gordon, 2011). Self-efficacy is evident when a teacher believes that she/he can personally make a difference in a child's academic success and that belief is translated into action and commitment. Studies have indicated that there is a

correlation between teacher self-efficacy and teacher effectiveness (Bray-Clark & Bates, 2003). Therefore, if there is a relationship between these two variables, then the more that we understand what impacts a teacher's self-efficacy the better the chances of improving a teacher's effectiveness.

State level authority over school districts has increased because of the number of low-performing schools identified (Liebman & Sabel, 2003). Another factor related to the increase in state level authority is the fact that the federal government has given state governments the responsibility for monitoring the spending of federal monies on programs for school improvement (Shen, 2004; Wong, Langevin, & Shen, 2004). As a result, many states have implemented tracking systems that monitor a school's effectiveness, particularly in the area of academic performance. When a school is identified as low-performing, the state usually begins an improvement plan that seeks to enter the school and offer assistance in various areas of academic need. Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act (2001), if the school does not improve over time, then the state can actually "take over" the school or the entire district.

The extent of these takeover plans differs from state-to-state, but in Arkansas, in extreme cases, the state can reconstitute the district. This involves removing the superintendent or principal, restricting the authority of the school board, and making curricular changes (No Child Left Behind Act 2001). State takeover is highly stressful, particularly on teachers who are now under close scrutiny and placed under improvement plans that can be quite restrictive in terms of their teaching strategies. Some research into state takeover indicates that in many ways these improvement measures can actually

exacerbate the situation and negatively impact certain teacher intrinsic factors (Freeman, 2001).

To date, there has been little research into the effect of state takeover on intrinsic factors related to teacher quality. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of state takeover on teacher self-efficacy. The intent was to determine if state takeover improves teacher self-efficacy or actually lessens the level of teacher self-efficacy. The implications for these results may provide an opportunity to address teacher self-efficacy in a way that maintains or increases their level of self-efficacy and as a result, will help to improve the overall quality of those teachers.

Problem Statement

The large number of low-performing schools in the U.S. remains a major problem. Many billions of tax dollars have been invested in school improvement over the years, yet the problem still exists in too many states (Darling-Hammond, 2007). Some of the characteristics of low-performing schools are limited resources, low student scores on standardized tests, high dropout rates, and a scarcity of high-quality teachers (Quality Counts 1999, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 1998). While pockets of success resulting from school improvement efforts can be found, the overall equity of these results is lacking, particularly in high poverty/high minority schools. The inability to consistently attract and keep quality teachers in these schools exacerbates the problem because student success is so closely tied to teacher quality (Peske & Haycock, 2006).

One strategy that states have utilized since the implementation of No Child Left Behind legislation (No Child Left Behind [NCLB] Act, 2001), is state takeover of low-performing schools or districts. The idea behind state takeover is to bring about a drastic

change in governance and personnel that the local districts may not be able to bring about on their own (Wong & Shen, 2009). A review of the literature indicates that state takeover has not met with universal success and in some cases; some districts have been taken over by their state multiple times (Laguarda, 2003).

If state takeover is going to be used as a major strategy for improving low-performing schools and districts, then research should be conducted to determine the effects of state takeover on the quality of the teachers involved. Since teacher self-efficacy is one variable related to teacher effectiveness, then an exploratory study to determine any effects that state takeover status may have on the level of teacher self-efficacy among the faculty of low-performing schools would seem to be warranted.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if teacher self-efficacy is impacted by state takeover either positively or negatively. Research has shown that teacher self-efficacy is an important variable in teacher quality. According to Ashton (1984), the most important teacher characteristics (in terms of predicting how well teachers will perform in the classroom) are the teacher's values and belief or teacher self-efficacy.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) stated that teacher self-efficacy refers to the confidence a teacher displays in his or her ability to put strategies in place to overcome obstacles to student learning. The research of Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2007) indicates that the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) is a valid and reliable tool for the measurement of overall teacher self-efficacy and the three specific domains of student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. By using this instrument to measure the level of teacher self-efficacy among teachers in low-

performing schools before and after state takeover, some inferences may be drawn as to the impact upon teacher quality.

Research Questions

The following are the questions that guided this research study:

1. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy in high poverty/high minority low-performing districts based on state takeover status?
2. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to instructional strategies in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?
3. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to classroom management in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?
4. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to student engagement in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?

Nature of the Study

The present study was a quantitative, non-experimental, group comparisons research design seeking to isolate the effect of state takeover of low-performing, high poverty/high minority school districts on the district teachers' level of self-efficacy. Since the school districts were not randomly selected, the external validity of the results are limited and cause and effect were not established. However, through this exploratory

study, results may determine that further investigation of this topic might be beneficial and revelatory.

The researcher identified three school districts in the state of Arkansas that are similar in terms of demographics. District 1 was identified as being under threat of state takeover due to student performance. District 2 was identified as having recently ended state takeover. District 3 was not under threat of state takeover and is performing at a low-level, but slightly higher than the other two districts.

The researcher administered the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) to teachers in all three school districts and used descriptive and inferential statistical analyses to determine if there were any differences in the levels of teacher self-efficacy between the three schools. The results demonstrated whether or not there may be an impact of state takeover on teachers' self-efficacy.

Significance of the Study

This study may prove beneficial to school administrators, state education department officials, and college and university teacher preparation programs hoping to develop methods that will increase teacher self-efficacy in low-performing schools before and after state takeover. Results of this research study may be used to help school districts that could be in jeopardy of state takeover, or technical assistance to provide their teachers the appropriate professional development and technical support needed to help them increase their self-efficacy.

Theoretical Foundation

This study was based on the theoretical framework of self-efficacy developed by Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). With this theory, Bandura (1977) proposed

that self-efficacy deals with self-perception. He outlined four sources of information that individuals use to judge their efficacy: performance outcomes; vicarious experiences; verbal persuasion; and physiological feedback. Accordingly, performance outcomes or past experiences are the most important source of self-efficacy. As a result, positive and negative experiences can both influence the ability of an individual to perform a given task (Bandura, 1977).

Bandura (1977) specified that self-efficacy was based on the notion that psychological procedures act as a way of creating and strengthening expectations of personal efficacy. Based on this theoretical framework, teacher's self-efficacy refers to a teacher's belief about their capabilities to influence student's success through teaching and instructional behavior. According to the SCT (Bandura 1977), confident individuals anticipate successful outcomes. The opposite is true of those who lack confidence. Therefore, a teacher who is confident in her/his ability to teach is going to create a classroom environment that is conducive to learning where the students are actively engaging in the instructional activity.

Definition of Key Terms

Below is a list of operational definitions of key terms used throughout this study. These definitions are related specifically to this study.

Efficacy in Classroom Management: One of three factors of teacher sense of efficacy determined by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001). This factor relates to a teacher's sense of efficacy in the methods and strategies used to maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. This continuous variable

corresponds to items #3, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, and 21 on the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale.

Efficacy in Instructional Strategies: One of three factors of teacher sense of efficacy determined by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001). This factor relates to a teacher's sense of efficacy in utilizing a variety of best practice teaching strategies to positively influence the learning of students. This continuous variable corresponds to items #7, 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 23, and 24 on the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale.

Efficacy in Student Engagement: One of three factors of teacher sense of efficacy determined by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001). This factor relates to a teacher's sense of efficacy in actively engaging students in the learning process. This variable corresponds to items #1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, and 22 on the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale.

Highly qualified teacher: According to NCLB Act 2001, a highly qualified teacher must have "1) a bachelor's degree, 2) full state certification or licensure, and 3) prove that they know each subject they teach.

No Child Left Behind: a legislative, standards-based reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, enacted on January 8, 2002, designed to improve student achievement and ensure all students standards in math and reading.

Self-efficacy: Bandura (1977) defined this term as an individual's belief and ability in their performance for a certain situation, or how effective that they feel in being able to accomplish a certain situation.

Socioeconomic status (SES): The socioeconomic status (SES) of schools in this study was determined by the percentage of economically disadvantaged students in the

school. This was determined by the number of students eligible to receive free and/or reduced priced lunches. The higher the percentage of students receiving free and/or reduced priced lunches, the higher percentage of economically disadvantaged, and the higher the poverty rate at the school (Sirin, 2005).

State takeover: State takeover was defined as schools that are deemed “chronically failing” and they are removed from the local school district and placed in a statewide district with a separate governance structure (NCLB Act of 2001).

State takeover status: For purposes of this study, the term state takeover status is used to identify the independent variable. The status of the district will be one of three categories; under threat, not under threat, and released from state takeover.

Teacher self-efficacy: Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) defined teacher self-efficacy as a judgment of his or her capability to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated.

Assumptions

Certain assumptions are usually included in most research studies using participant perceptions measured by a survey instrument. These assumptions are made regarding this study as well. For purposes of this study, it is assumed that the teachers who responded to the survey rated themselves honestly on each item. It is also assumed that the teachers who respond to the survey were representative of the teacher population in the school districts identified for the research study, even though no information was available regarding the non-responders. That is, certain demographics related to the population of teachers in these districts could not be acquired. Therefore, there was no

method available to determine whether the respondents were reflective of the population as a whole.

Limitations

Several limitations were identified in this study. Due to the request of one district, the only manner of data collection permitted was by use of an online survey. The other two districts allowed on-site data collection using a paper and pencil survey method. This variation in data collection may have impacted the rate of response across the districts.

The number of participants was unequal in each of the districts, possibly due to this variance in data collection methods. The literature indicates that online surveys usually generate a lower response rate than on-site surveys (Nulty, 2008). However, in this study, the district in which an online survey was administered produced more respondents than one of the districts that used on-site pencil and paper surveys. In the district with the lowest number of respondents, there may have been internal resistance to participating due to the teachers' having recently been released from state takeover. Since no qualitative data was collected from these districts, there is no evidence that would determine the reason for the low number of participants in that district. The result of this, however, was that there was an unequal n across the three districts. All statistical methods to take this into account were utilized.

The researcher did not have entrée to all school districts in the state under academic distress. This limited the eventual list of school districts to invite to participate in the study. Although the three districts that did participate were matched as closely as

possible across demographics and academic performance measures, this was based on a limited pool of potential participants.

Delimitations

This research study was delimited to three K-12 school districts identified as serving high poverty/high minority populations, which was the focus of the study. The choice to delimit the study to only three school districts was due to time limits and limited access to all districts under distress designation in the state.

Summary

This research study was a quantitative, non-experimental, group comparison research design seeking to examine the effect of state takeover of low-performing, high poverty/high minority school districts on the district teachers' level of self-efficacy. While providing every student a quality education is the primary goal of public education, there remains a large number of low-performing schools. Inequity in resources and the shortage of quality teachers in every classroom contributes to this situation. The implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 defined teacher quality and provided a vehicle for improving low-performing schools through state takeover. Even with state takeover as a school improvement model, too many low-performing schools still suffer from the lack of quality teachers. The purpose of this study is to investigate the possible effect of state takeover of school districts on the quality of the teachers as measured by their level of teacher self-efficacy.

In Chapter II, a review of literature is presented covering the body of research on teacher self-efficacy, teacher quality, teacher effectiveness and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, as well as the impact of state takeover.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of the current literature relevant to the present research study. In particular, the topics covered include research related to teacher self-efficacy and background on the effect of state takeover of school districts that serve low-performing, high poverty/high minority student populations. This review of the literature begins by presenting the background of Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) as the theoretical framework for understanding teacher self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977).

Social Cognitive Theory

According to Bandura (1977), the theoretical approach to self-efficacy is SCT, which emphasizes the role of observational learning. That is, the idea that people learn through observing others. Bandura developed this theory from a holistic view of human cognition in relation to social awareness and influence. He specified that self-efficacy was based on the notion that psychological procedures act as a way of creating and strengthening expectations of personal efficacy. Behavior is guided by a combination of drives, cues, responses, and rewards. Bandura (1977) stated that the main concept of SCT is an individual's actions and reactions which are the simple behaviors and cognitive processes that are observed in others. In SCT, (Bandura, 1986,1991) concluded that moral reasoning can best be described in the way people behave based on the moral standards that they have set for themselves.

According to Bandura (1992), when people saw and heard the suffering they caused, they would become vicariously aroused, distressed, and self-censored. This emotion served as self-restrainers. Bandura (2001) described the moral self as the behavior in which individuals self-monitor their desirable behaviors through self-

organizing and self-reflection. He emphasized that people monitored their conduct based on their moral standards.

Observational Learning

According to Bandura's research on Observational Learning Theory (OLT) (1969, 1977, 1986), OLT was based on the concept that a person who was observed by another person was called a model and the person observing the model learned to imitate the behavior from the modeling. Bandura gave some examples where learning takes place through the modeling process such as in peer-to-peer groups and teacher-to-teacher.

Bandura (1986) stated the following components below involved in the process of modeling.

1. The observers will be attentive and imitate the behaviors of the person (model) they feel are most similar to them.
2. The observers will continue to imitate the behaviors of the person (model) that is deemed positive or rewarding by others. This is reinforced behavior.
3. The observers will take into account how other people are being rewarded before copying the behavior that is modeled. This is called vicarious experience. Bandura (1986) stated that when the observers identify with the model; they will adopt the observed behavior.

Meditational Processes

Bandura (1977) believed that humans are processors of information, but they can only process small amounts of information at a time, and he described the following meditational processes below:

1. Attention: This was how much the behavior influenced an individual

2. Retention: This was remembering the behavior.
3. Reproduction: This was copying the behavior.
4. Motivation: This was the reason to act or behave in a certain way.

Reciprocal Determinism

Bandura (1986, 1991) stated that reciprocal determinism theory is a model that explores how behavior, environment, and thoughts influence the behavior itself.

According to Bandura, in reciprocal determinism, the behavior is controlled by the individual based on one's thoughts, emotions, expectations, and goals.

Bandura (1986) described environment to be a person's social surroundings and the environment influences the intensity of the behavior. In addition, Bandura (1986) stated that the behavior could have an impact on the environment. He emphasized that all three forces (environment, behavior, and thoughts) interact with each other in the reciprocal determinism theory.

Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1977) developed the theory of self-efficacy, which he defined as a person's belief in his or her own ability. He explained that when people are confident they are more likely to overcome their fear. Bandura (1986) stated that self-efficacy theory predicted that teachers with a high sense of efficacy worked harder and persevered longer even when students were difficult to teach. When the teachers possessed a high level of self-efficacy, Bandura (1986) believed students' and teachers' overall level of performance was higher.

Tshannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) defined teacher efficacy as teachers' perceptions of how well they utilized the resources they already have in order to bring about high levels of student behavior and academic outcomes.

In the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale Questionnaire (TSES), Tshannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) asked this question: How much can you do to help your students think critically? Instead of asking the question like this: How much can you help your students think critically?

Tshannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) stated that the minor change in wording illustrated a critical issue in teacher efficacy research; that teachers' sense of efficacy reflected the judgments they made about their capabilities given the emotional and instrumental resources they gathered in a specific context.

Tshannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) argued that when measuring teacher self-efficacy, it is important to take into account the context and discipline in order to accurately assess teacher efficacy. In the latest research on effective teachers in the classroom, a study conducted by Guo, Connor, Yang, Roehrig, and Morrison (2012) found that teacher self-efficacy had a greater effect on the reading outcomes of fifth-grade students than teacher experience or teacher education. In addition, the study examined the classroom culture that the teacher exhibited concerning student learning.

The Role of Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1977, 1986, 1992, 2001) explained that the level of an individual's self-efficacy plays a major role in the way goals, tasks, and challenges are approached by the individual. According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy was the belief in one's

capabilities to manage and resolve potential problems, and Bandura described these beliefs as determinants of how people think, behave, and feel.

Bandura (1997) suggested that teachers' self-efficacy is formed through four sources:

1. Mastery experience: this means how well the teacher perceives success or failure.
2. Verbal persuasion: teachers are more likely to put forth more effort when they are told verbally they have the ability to be successful in the classroom.
3. Vicarious experience: when teachers experience the opportunity to see effective, competent classroom modeling.
4. Interpretation of physiological and affective states: acknowledging when teachers are experiencing stress and helping them to overcome the stress in order to build their self-efficacy so they can engage in more challenging tasks.

Bandura (1997) emphasized that in contrast, an efficacy expectation was a person's belief that they could perform the task that produced the outcome.

Almog and Shechtman (2007) examined the relationship between teachers' efficacy beliefs and how they coped with behavioral problems of students with special needs. The results of this study indicated that the higher the level of the teachers' self-efficacy the more confident the teacher became in using various types of strategies in helping the students with special needs.

Bandura (1997) stressed that a person's level of self-efficacy affected their ability to pursue a given task if the person's skill set exceeded their level of coping skills to deal with an uncomfortable situation.

Principal's Impact on Teacher Self-Efficacy

In a study of 809 teachers by Blase and Blase (2001), the results explained how teachers described the impact that a principal's leadership has on teacher's self-efficacy. The study stated the when principals create situations where teachers can reflect on their teaching and learning, it promotes collaboration, focus, reflective discussions, and professional growth.

Teachers in the Blase and Blase (2001) study ascertained that principals who provide teachers with resources, job-embedded professional development, and time to collaborate with peers generate opportunities that build teacher's self-efficacy.

Ross and Gray (2004) reported that when principals provide inspirational messages to the staff that it builds teacher's self-efficacy. According to Ross and Gray (2004), the inspirational messages from principals strengthens teacher's efficacy. In addition, the vicarious experiences are obtained when the principal allows teachers to observe master teachers and peer groups.

Teachers' Influence on Students

Students come to school with numerous issues and challenges that interfere with their learning. Research showed that efficacious teachers generated positive transformations in student behavior, motivation, and learning (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Parsley and Corcoran (2003) stated that policy makers urged school districts to hold teachers to high standards by having them take responsibility for student achievement by examining the ways they impact the learning of all students.

Stronge (2007) determined that of all the factors that affected the academic performance of at-risk low socioeconomic students, it was the teachers' impact on the

student's school experience. According to Ingersoll and Smith (2004), many new teachers were not mentally or emotionally prepared for the profession, and experienced more stress than those who have surpassed the five-year mark in teaching. Brown (2006) and Grant (2006) stated that over 50% of teachers leave the teaching profession within their first five years of teaching and that many teachers who left the profession did so because of a lack of accomplishment in their teaching career due to a low sense of self-efficacy.

According to Ross (1994), student achievement was linked by a teacher's willingness to: learn and implement new teaching strategies; use classroom management approaches that stimulate student autonomy; and attend to the needs of lower ability students more closely.

As a growing body of evidence pointed to the overriding importance of teachers in promoting student achievement, professional development that supported teachers in meaningful ways became a hot topic in policymaking circles at the district, state, and federal levels. Ensuring that teachers received effective professional development with the resources available was a challenge all districts faced.

According to Jennett, Harris, and Mesibov (2003), self-efficacy is the teachers' belief that students can be taught despite factors such as the socioeconomic status and family environment. Peske and Haycock (2006) noted that a teacher's academic skills had a considerable impact on student achievement. A study conducted by Rimm-Kaufman and Sawyer (2004) concluded that teachers with high levels of self-efficacy created positive student attitudes in the classroom.

According to Roberts and Henson (2000), when a teacher felt confident in their subject matter, they were comfortable delivering the instructions to the students in the classroom and their confidence in the students mastering the lesson was high. However, Roberts and Henson (2000) pointed out that some teachers may not have the level of confidence in their teaching ability to ensure that the students achieve mastery when teaching in a subject area in which they are not comfortable delivering.

A study conducted by (Goddard et al., 2000) rationalized the fact that when teachers felt that they were effective instructing curriculum to certain students' regardless of the setting in which they were teaching, that the teachers felt they were effective. In contrast, Goddard et al., (2000), stated that teacher efficacy sometimes diminished with teachers who may have been disgruntled with their job or may have been ready to retire. Teacher efficacy was constantly changing and it improved with time and experience (Ross, 1994).

Teacher Beliefs and Efficacy

Researchers reported that pre-service and in-service teachers' beliefs influenced their teaching behaviors (e.g., Cagle, 1998; George & Aronson, 2003; Gordon, 2001; Henson, 2001; Lin & Tsai, 1999; Maxton, 1996; Scharlach, 2008). According to Lin and Tsai (1999) and Scharlach (2008), beliefs about students who were prone to struggle academically influenced the decisions and practices of new teachers. These new teachers who had not experienced dealing effectively with struggling or difficult students may not have had high expectations or the degree of stamina required to develop the struggling students.

As a result of their beliefs, the teacher's actions and expectations prohibited the students from rising above their expectations. According to Cagle (1998), the students in this study achieved the perceived expectations of the teacher both negatively and positively.

The study, conducted by Hill, Phelps, and Friedland (2007), indicated that the cultural diversity of students in urban schools was the opposite of how the preservice teachers perceived the students to perform. The study revealed that the students were well behaved, knowledgeable and willing to learn, and the students did well because they were studying a topic that was relevant to them. As in this case, students became engaged in meaningful learning, because they saw the relevance of the material to their lives and their surroundings (Fry & DeWit, 2010).

Teachers had to be sensitive to students' culture and learning styles when developing lessons or the signal of boredom given by the students can be misconstrued as being lazy, or the inability to learn (Hill et al., 2007).

James Rhem, executive editor for an online National Teaching and Learning Forum emphasized the importance of making positive connections with students through relationship building to avoid the self-fulfilling prophecy. Rhem (1995) explained that when teachers expected students to do well and show intellectual growth, they generally do. When teachers have no expectations for students, and where performance and growth were not encouraged, students fell into a pattern where they did what was negatively expected of them (Cagle, 1998).

Research has documented the Pygmalion effect in the classroom (e.g., Cagle, 1998; Cooper, 1979; Jacob, 2007; Maxton, 1996; Skiba & Leone, 2002). In these studies,

some teachers were made to believe that certain students in their classrooms were gifted when they really were not. As a result, the students were treated as if they were gifted by their teachers, and the students rose to their teachers' expectations and performed like gifted students.

In this study, the teachers' misconceptions about the students' abilities were based on teacher-formed beliefs rather than on internal efficacy and expectations. Several studies have shown that when teachers made connections with students and dispelled negative opinions about them, those students did well academically (Cagle, 1998; Cooper, 1979; Jacob, 2007).

Cooper, Baturu, Warren, and Doig (2004) cited a study that was conducted in 1982 which involved a group of 22 white teachers from classrooms with Aboriginal students. The teachers' belief about the Aboriginal students was that they were low performing.

In another study that was conducted in 1998, the teachers believed that the Aboriginal students were high functioning. The results of this study showed that the students were successful academically (Cooper et al., 2004; Cronin, 2001). The implication from the study was that the teachers built relationships with the students despite cultural barriers.

The literature supported that (e.g., Henson, 2001; Holley, 2008; Peske & Haycock, 2006; Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004), high expectations from the teacher, supported the outcome of the students. In addition, multiple studies found that when the teachers displayed the confidence that they could effectively teach the students, the students rose to the expectation of the teacher (e.g., Gordon, 2001; Guskey & Passaro,

1994; Henson, 2001; Holley, 2008; Lin & Tasi, 1999; Muijs & Reynolds, 2003; Peske & Haycock, 2006; Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004).

According to Bauman-Knight (2006), trust was another component that built meaningful relationships. Students formed opinions of their teachers by observing how they spoke to and responded to other students in the classroom. Bauman-Knight (2006) explained when the teacher showed an interest in the students through trustworthiness this promoted positive teacher/student relationships and the students grew academically.

Moon (2007) listed the side effects of low teacher efficacy in minority and low-income neighborhoods as harsh and having long-lasting consequences for students. Other researchers indicated that teacher attrition was highest in schools with a high percentage of low-income and minority students and high levels of teacher turnover (Eckert & Petrone, 2013; Taylor & Frankenberg, 2009).

According to one study, 39% of teachers in the United States leave the profession within the first five years of teaching (Ondrich, Pas, & Yinger, 2008). Studies conducted by other researchers show that 50% of teachers leave within the first five years (Brown, 2006; Grant, 2006; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Ondrich et al. (2008) stated that 11% of teachers leave within, or soon after, the first year in the teaching profession.

According to other researchers, teachers who doubted their competency to manage daily classroom challenges were more likely to experience burnout, resulting in a decision to leave the teaching profession (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007, 2010)

Henry, Bastian, and Fortner (2011) study revealed that teachers who leave after three or four years in the teaching profession are less effective in their last year of

teaching than teachers who are in their third or fourth year of teaching. Swackhamer, Koellner, Basile, and Kimbrough (2009) stated that teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy work longer with struggling students; give meaningful feedback to the students, and try new teaching methods in the classroom more than those teachers with lower levels of self-efficacy. Yilmaz (2011) discovered that when teachers make better use of their time; they are able to guide students and impact their learning.

How do Teachers Develop Self-Efficacy?

Tshcannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) developed a model of teacher efficacy identifying the ways in which efficacy judgments result as a function of the interaction between teachers' analysis of teaching tasks in context and their teachers' assessment of their personal teaching capabilities as they relate to the task.

Bandura (1997) stated that there are three sources of efficacy beliefs related to teaching. Bandura (1997) defined one source of efficacy as mastery experiences which is when a student sees success through engagement in a task that produces an understanding of the learning based on the teacher's direct encounter with the student.

Teacher Quality

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 required that states put a highly qualified teacher in every classroom. Teachers matter in the schools. Various research studies reveal that factors such as a teacher's cognitive ability, subject matter knowledge, knowledge of teaching and learning, licensure, and teaching behaviors in the classroom are factors related to teacher quality (Blair, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Hanushek, 1971). Darling-Hammond and Youngs (2002) conducted research studies that indicate teacher education and teacher certification are attributes of teacher quality. Darling-

Hammond (2000) suggested that experienced teachers engage students in the learning. Experienced teachers adjust their teaching style to fit the needs and style of different learners because experienced teachers have a wide repertoire of approaches and strategies to use. Therefore, a teacher's experience is an attribute of teacher quality.

The No Child Left Behind Act (2001) mandated that districts offer teachers professional development to focus on meeting the requirements of teachers being highly qualified (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Education reform initiatives are ineffective if they ignore the role of professional development for teachers (Engstrom & Danielson, 2006; Guskey, 2002a).

Developing Teacher Efficacy through Professional Learning Experiences

Several studies examined links between teacher self-efficacy and professional learning. Palmer (2011) examined sources of teacher efficacy and its effectiveness in professional development for teachers in science education. The results indicated an increase in self-efficacy linked with professional development learning. The most powerful professional learning was cognitive mastery (Palmer, 2011).

According to Palmer (2011), a vicarious experience can occur when teachers have the opportunity to watch other teachers perform a lesson or activity. The study completed by Palmer revealed that the vicarious experience occurred because the teachers were cognitively engaged. Tshannen-Moran and McMaster (2009) designed a study that assessed the relationship between primary and resource teachers' self-efficacy when implementing a new teaching strategy in different learning formats. The study used the following methodology below to train the teachers.

- Group 1: only information

- Group 2: information and modeling
- Group 3: information, modeling, and practice
- Group 4: information, modeling, practice, and coaching

The results showed the greatest gains in self-efficacy occurred for the group of participants receiving information from the professional learning additive approach of using all the sources which were information, modeling, practice, and coaching.

According to research conducted by Tschannen-Moran and McMaster (2009), when evaluating the relationship between professional learning and the implementation of a new learning strategy for a teacher, the training made a difference in the level of self-efficacy.

Overview of State Takeovers of Low Performing Schools

In many districts taken over by the state, leaders and school boards lose their autonomy to govern their school district (NCLB 2001). For instance, Louisiana established the Recovery School District in 2003, which was the first statewide district. The Louisiana Department of Education issued a request for proposals (RFP) asking qualified nonprofit organizations to apply to run the schools.

According to the Louisiana Department of Education (2006), Louisiana passed a law that provided for the mandatory state takeover of schools that were failing in 2004. Twenty-six schools across the state of Louisiana were identified as failing because student test scores had been unacceptable for at least four years. Reports from the Louisiana Department of Education (2006) indicated that one of the non-profit organizations that was selected to run a school in New Orleans was the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP).

Tennessee followed with their Achievement School District in 2010, and Michigan established their Education Achievement Authority in 2013. Later eight states introduced legislation to create similar statewide takeover districts including: Arkansas, Georgia, Nevada, Missouri, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin. Wisconsin and Georgia passed the state takeover legislation in 2015.

There was a body of research (e.g., Anderson & Welsh, 2000; Brady, 2003; Laguarda, 2003; Malen, Croninger, Muncey, & Redmond-Jones, 2002; McRobbie, 1998; Millsap et al., 1992; O'Day, 1999) that examined state capacity of when and if states provided effective help to schools struggling with low student performance. The research conducted stated that only a few states provided technical assistance to the schools that had a positive impact on student achievement because limited resources hampered state officials' ability to provide effective levels of technical assistance and other forms of aid to low-performing schools.

See Table 1 below that gives a list of "state takeover" districts, descriptions of governance change, and school demographic information.

Table 1

State Takeover of Districts

School District	Year of Takeover	Description of Governance Change	School District Demographics
Jersey City, NJ	1989	Governor appoints superintendent and school board. Board is advisory only.	71% Black and Latino
Paterson, NJ	1991	Governor appoints superintendent and school board. Board is advisory only.	90% Black and Latino
Newark, NJ	1995	Governor appoints superintendent and school board. Board is advisory only.	91% Black and Latino
Little Rock, AR	2015	State Board of Education dissolves the locally elected school board and appoints a superintendent.	76% Black and Latino

Source: Alliance to Reclaim Schools, 2015

The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (2015) urged local and state officials to stop the state takeovers. The AROS report stated that school takeovers had not improved academic outcome for students. In August 2015, the AROS report confirmed that thousands of African American and Latino students returned to schools and districts that had been placed under state takeover, with continued high drop-out rates, and increased financial distress.

An Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (2015) report stated that public schools never fully served low-income students in spite of landmark cases such *Brown v Board of Education* in 1954, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The AROS report argued that when African American families migrated

to northern cities looking for manufacturing jobs, they were discriminated against and this led to segregated neighborhoods and segregated schools.

According to State Takeovers of Low Performing Schools Reports (2016) about 60% of New Orleans residents were African American in 2005, the school system was 93% black and most white residents sent their children to private and parochial schools.

State Takeovers of Low Performing Schools Report (2016) conveyed that the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) and central office administration were ineffective and there was constant fighting among the central office administration and school board members.

In the 2004-05 school year, the school population was 94% African American, and 73% of New Orleans public school students qualified for free and reduced lunch. The 2010 state policy change removed the provision of reverting back to local control. Ten years after Hurricane Katrina, RSD schools have been converted into charter schools under the direction of private management (State Takeovers of Low Performing Schools Report, 2016).

Schools in New Orleans had a workforce comprised of veteran teachers prior to Hurricane Katrina. Forty percent of teachers had more than 20 years of experience and half of all teachers had less than 10 years teaching experience. There was 10% of the teachers in the district with one year or less of teaching experience (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

Ziebarth (2002) argued that “state takeover” of schools and districts by state officials did not provide the technical assistance to turn around low-performing schools because state officials did not have the ability or the resources available to make a

difference and influence student achievement. Fuhrman (1999) found that state officials lacked the instructional expertise necessary to make a difference in high-poverty troubled schools.

According to Wong et al. (2004), Kentucky was one state that was known for its successful model for turning around low-performing schools through technical assistance. They described how a Kentucky state official expressed that the Kentucky State Department of Education could not provide a successful model for turning around low-performing schools through technical assistance involving multiple schools due to the limited resources. The resource limitations of the state officials that hampered the technical assistance where the professional expertise to know what should be done to improve curriculum and instruction, appropriate funding, and the leadership capacity to direct the school turnaround was sometimes lacking.

According to Ziebarth (2002), the reason for state district takeover of low-achieving schools was because of continuous low student achievement and fiscal distress. According to the Census Bureau (2004), 13 million children under the age of 18 lived in poverty.

U.S. Department of Education Policy and Accountability

Under the U.S. Department of Education Restructuring Rule (2005), the law did not address what the state should do after takeover, but it suggested that the district might choose to turn the school over to the state. U.S. Department of Education indicated that restructuring involved a major overhaul of the school's governance.

The new Every Student Succeeds Act, (ESSA) signed into law December 10, 2015, re-evaluated education policy on accountability systems with testing, standards,

students in special education, teacher quality, and low-performing schools. A big change from the NCLB Act 2001 to the new ESSA Law will give authority to states to make decisions about local issues. Under the new ESSA Law, states will no longer have to complete teacher evaluations through student outcomes, as they did under the NCLB waivers. The NCLB law's "highly qualified teacher" is no longer a requirement, and an addition to the new ESSA Law for teachers is performance pay.

The new ESSA Law is steered toward additional incentives to improve student outcomes and more opportunities to hire quality teachers and principals in low performing schools.

Phillips and Flashman (2007) studied the effects of the teacher accountability system implemented from NCLB. Some of the positive results for a teacher from the NCLB study was an increase in teacher certification and more teachers with advanced degrees.

The passage of NCLB in 2001 brought new urgency to the turning around of low-performing schools. Under the law, states evaluated schools according to the standard of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). NCLB Act wanted to force districts and states to take more aggressive steps to improve low-performing schools. When a school failed to make AYP for five consecutive years, it developed a restructuring plan. This went into action if the school failed to make AYP for a sixth consecutive year.

The NCLB Act 2001 encouraged quality educational programs for sub-populations by requiring states to disaggregate assessment results by subgroups including SES, race/ethnicity, limited English proficiency, and disability category (U.S. Department of Education, 2001).

The Coleman Report

The Coleman report published in 1966 formed the cornerstone for effective school studies, and it concluded that schools did not matter when it came down to differences in levels of achievement. The central problem in the Coleman report was the inequality of educational opportunity.

Coleman et al. (1966) examined the attributes of effective schools in response to the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The report was written by James Coleman and became known as the Coleman report. The Coleman report suggested that students' family life and socioeconomic status influenced students' academic success, and it reported many findings including policy recommendations related to the desegregation of schools.

Researchers reacted to the Coleman report with mixed reviews. Heckman and Neal (1996) critiqued Coleman et al.'s (1966) research methodology, and built upon and expanded it by using quantitative statistics that identified effective school characteristics that measured student achievement.

Hanushek and Kain (1972), Bowles and Levin (1968), and Cain and Watts (1970) all claimed that Coleman's findings lacked proper statistical modeling to justify his conclusions that family life determined students' academic achievement in school. Brookover et al. (1979) were the primary researchers involved in the Effective School Movement after the release of the Coleman Report. Edmonds (1979b) and Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, and Ouston (1979) reacted to the Coleman Report by conducting their own research using different sets of data and research methods to examine the same question, "What factors positively influence student achievement?"

Edmonds (1979b) and Rutter et al. (1979) established school-level characteristics like a teacher's expectations of students, and principal's leadership traits that influenced student achievement. The methodology used by their studies differed from the Coleman study. Coleman et al. (1966) used data from a national sample of schools in the United States and included test scores and survey data from about 60,000 teachers in over 4,000 schools and over 640,000 students.

Rutter et al. (1979) challenged the Coleman Report and suggested classroom teaching was influenced by the characteristics of the school as an organization, specifically the implementation of common policies, practices, procedures, and resources. Rutter et al. (1979) found that differences in behavior and in school's attainments were associated with school climate and school expectations, and were not related to financial or physical resources available to teachers.

Brookover et al. (1979) used data where matched pairs of 20 inner-city schools in Detroit, Michigan with similar student characteristics and randomized samples of student test scores that showed school behavior increased student achievement; and students' family environment and socioeconomic status was not a factor.

Rutter et al. (1979) evaluated the data from high school students in 12 London high schools over a period of six years. The data collected including student attributes like parental education and reading achievement, as well as data on the schools they attended, and found that management of student behavior and teacher expectations of students had a positive effect on student achievement.

Effective Schools

Edmonds (1979a) reported five characteristics of effective schools after his study of the Detroit schools with a high level of achievement. Those characteristics are:

- principals that are instructional leaders
- focus on instruction
- teachers with high expectations for all students
- safe, orderly climate
- effective teachers

Recent researchers supported Edmonds' (1979b) assertion that students' success began with the school leader. Various researchers argued that a considerable amount of responsibility was on the principal to indirectly if not directly influence instructional practices and student achievement. The researchers identified specific characteristics of the school leaders that enhanced student learning, such as the ability to establish trust with the teachers (e.g., Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Leithwood & Wahlstrom, 2008; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008).

Principal and Teacher Leadership Roles

While NCLB focused on teachers to close achievement gaps, research showed that focusing on principal leadership had a strong impact on turning around low-performing schools. Marzano (2003) stated the one faucet for turning around low performing schools is strong principal leadership. Additionally, Marzano emphasized that other factors such as a focus on curriculum, effective feedback, community involvement, safe and orderly environment are imperative to turning around low performing schools.

Other researchers identified characteristics of teachers and noted the importance of their ability as a group to place trust in each other, in their students' parents, and to work collaboratively and collectively to accomplish the task of getting students to learn (e.g., Goddard, Goddard, & Tschannen-Moran, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007).

Jennings and Greenberg (2008) stated that teachers needed to have high levels of social and emotional competence for handling the stress associated with the job of teaching. The literature expressed that a teacher's ability to establish a positive relationship with students maximized students' potential to learn (e.g., Crossman, 2007; Marlow, 2011; Martin & Dowson, 2009).

Woolfolk Hoy and Hoy (1990) found a connection between teacher efficacy and student achievement and constructed that teachers' beliefs in their own abilities or efficacy, their beliefs in their students and their beliefs about the processes of change. Richards, Gallo & Renandya (2001) reported that when investigating teachers for professional growth and professional development they found the two to be positively correlated with each other.

Schools Achieving with Low SES

Reeves (2003) studied 90/90/90 schools; that is, those schools with 90% of the students receiving free and/or reduced priced lunches, 90% of the students being ethnic minorities, and 90% meeting high standards of achievement found common characteristics among them. All of the 90/90/90 schools demonstrated the characteristics of focus on student achievement, curriculum, and assessing student work.

Reeves (2003) believed that documented strategies, within the control of teachers and leaders were considered more influential on student achievement than poverty.

Summary

When facing a challenge, will teachers feel like they can rise up and accomplish their goal or will they give up in defeat? Self-efficacy, or one's belief in their own abilities to deal with various situations can play a role in not only how one feels about self, but whether or not one can successfully achieve his/her goals in life. The concept of self-efficacy was central to Bandura's social cognitive theory, which emphasized the role of observational learning, social experience, and reciprocal determinism in developing a personality.

According to Bandura (1977), reciprocal determinism was a model composed of three factors that influenced behavior: the environment, the individual, and the behavior itself. Bandura believed that an individual's behavior influenced and was influenced by both the including people who are present (or absent). The Social Learning Theory of Bandura stated the environment influenced the frequency of the behavior, similar to how the behavior itself had an impact on the environment. Personality and cognitive factors played an important part in how a person behaved, including all of the individual's expectations, beliefs, and personality characteristics.

Teachers matter in schools. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 required states to put a highly qualified student in every classroom. Various research studies indicate that teacher's cognitive ability, subject matter knowledge, educational background, and years of teaching experience are characteristics related to teacher quality.

The professional learning experience is one way to develop teacher efficacy. Professional learning experiences for developing teacher self-efficacy occurs for teachers first when information is given, second modeling of the new information, third practicing the new information and finally coaching the new information.

Does state takeover of school district work? As states face more-and-more low-performing school districts, there are challenges such as staffing, curriculum, school day schedules, dissolving the local school board and allocation of funds. There is a body of research that examined states ability to effectively help struggling schools. Legislatures are passing laws that are allowing states to close schools and allowing removal of local control. In spite of the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v Board of Education* in 1954, public schools had never fully served low-income students. We are still dealing with segregated schools.

Chapter III describes the methodology used in this study. It describes the research design used to collect and analyze the data, and it identifies the process for determining the participants for the research study.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology used in the present research study. The purpose of the study was to investigate the potential differences in teachers' level of self-efficacy based on the state takeover status of the school district. The implication being that if state takeover negatively impacts teacher self-efficacy, a state department may be able to mitigate those negative effects and improve the teacher quality in the takeover districts. In the inverse, if state takeover status positively affects teachers' self-efficacy levels, further study would be important to determine the causes of that positive result.

This chapter contains a detailed description of the research design used to answer the guiding research questions, the participants selected, the instrumentation used to gather demographic and self-efficacy data from the respondents, as well as a description of the data analysis used to answer the research questions.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this research study. The researcher chose to use research questions only due to the fact that this study was designed as an exploratory investigation only. Therefore, no attempt was made to test hypotheses. The research literature is nonexistent in relation to evidence of the effect of state takeover status on teachers' level of self-efficacy. The intent was simply to determine if differences in these districts exist and not to accept or reject an identified hypothesis.

1. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy in high poverty/high minority low-performing districts based on state takeover status?

2. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to instructional strategies in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?
3. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to classroom management in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?
4. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to student engagement in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?

Research Design

Non-experimental research designs that seek to investigate causal relationships include causal-comparative designs (Gall et al., 2015). However, the term causal-comparative has been criticized by researchers as implying that it establishes cause-and-effect between variables when it does not (Johnson, 2001). Therefore, the term that is used to describe the research design used in this study is “group comparison research” (Gall et al., 2015). Although it cannot be used to establish cause-and-effect relationships, as in experimental research, it is still a useful design for investigating causal relationships that might benefit from further research (Gall et al., 2015). In this research design, the effect, or the dependent variable, in this case, teachers’ level of self-efficacy is captured in a “snapshot” approach. The cause, or the independent variable, in this case, state takeover status has already been established by the Arkansas Department of Education and was not manipulated, as might be done in an experimental design (Anderson, 2016). Therefore, a cause-and-effect relationship between the variables was not determined.

In the present study, three school districts in the state of Arkansas were matched as closely as possible on demographic variables and level of district academic performance. One district had recently been released from state takeover, one district was under the threat of state takeover, and another district was at a slightly higher level of performance and was not under threat of takeover. All teachers in the three school districts were asked to complete the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) which was used to measure teachers' self-efficacy levels in three domains; efficacy for instructional strategies (IS), efficacy for classroom management (CM), and efficacy for student engagement (SE) (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). It also provided an aggregate score to provide an overall level of self-efficacy. Once the self-efficacy data were collected, it was analyzed using inferential and descriptive statistical analyses to determine if there were any significant differences in self-efficacy levels between the three districts.

Administering the Survey to the Participants

The researcher sent letters to school district administrators in the three school districts identified in the study to explain the nature of the study and to explain the purpose of the TSES instrument and teacher demographic questionnaire, seeking permission to administer the survey to teachers in the districts.

The survey was administered online using Survey Monkey® software with District 1. The link to the survey was shared via email directly with the District 1 school administrator to create a mass email blast to the teachers in the school district. This procedure was the most effective way to ensure that all K-12 teachers in the district were provided the link to the survey and given the opportunity to participate.

The survey was administered by paper and pencil in District 2 and District 3. The researcher collaborated with District 2 and District 3 district administrators and the school building principals to create schedules for administering the surveys at each of the school sites. Creating a schedule to share with the teachers ensured the least amount of interruption to the day-to-day operation of the schools and provided the most efficient method of collecting the surveys in a timely manner by the researcher. It also ensured that all teachers were given the opportunity to take the survey.

Participant Selection

The research study involved collecting data from three school districts. District 1 is located in Northeast Arkansas and includes four schools that provide early childhood, elementary and secondary education to more than 2,200 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The district employs more than 500 faculty and staff at its four schools. District 1 receives 10.4 million dollars in State Foundation Funding, over 1.8 million dollars in NSL State Categorical Funding and slightly over \$58,000 in Professional Development Funds.

District 2 located in the Delta region of the State operates three schools with a configuration of primary school housing pre-kindergarten through grade 3, an elementary school housing grades 4-6 and a high school housing grades 7-12. The district has appropriately 190 employees and a district enrollment of more than 1,500 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. District 2 receives 6.2 million dollars in State Foundation Funding, over 2.1 million dollars in NSL State Categorical Funding and slightly over \$37,000 in Professional Development Funds.

District 3 located in South Central Arkansas has more than 600 employees and a district enrollment of over 2,500 students pre-kindergarten through grade 12. District 3 has a total of five schools which are comprised of three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. District 3 receives 12.3 million dollars in State Foundation Funding, 2.1 million dollars in NSL State Categorical Funding and slightly over \$66,000 in Professional Development Funds.

Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4 outline district comparison data from the three identified school districts for the research study such as district enrollment, percentage free reduced lunch, demographics, ACT scores, percentage Gifted and Talented, percentage students with disabilities, three-year average graduation rate, percentage of students achieving in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics.

Table 2

District Student Enrollment and Ethnicity

	District 1	District 2	District 3
Enrollment	2238	1586	2511
Ethnicity			
African American (Black)	81%	92%	62%
Hispanic/Latino	3%	1%	2%
White	15%	6%	35%

Table 3

District Comparisons: GT, SWD, Homeless, FRL, ACT Scores, and Graduation Rates

Student Category	District 1	District 2	District 3
Gifted & Talented	9%	10%	5%
Students with Disabilities (SWD)	13%	10%	11%
Homeless	12%	0%	2%
Free Reduced Lunch (FRL)	100%	100%	77%
ACT Composite	17	16	19
ACT English	16	15	18
ACT Mathematics	17	16	18
ACT Reading	17	16	20
ACT Science	17	17	19
Three-year Graduation Rates	74.74%	77.85%	85.38%

Table 4

District Comparisons: Achievement Data, ELA, and Mathematics

Student Category	District 1	District 2	District 3
Percentage of Students Achieving English Language Arts (ELA)			
All Students	26%	22%	30%
African American (Black)	21%	22%	22%
Hispanic/Latino	24%	NA	38%
White	49%	31%	46%
Economically Disadvantaged	26%	22%	24%
Percentage of Students Achieving Mathematics			
All Students	20%	18%	27%
African American (Black)	16%	17%	20%
Hispanic/Latino	14%	NA	38%
White	37%	19%	39%
Economically Disadvantaged	20%	18%	21%

The Arkansas Legislature passed ACT 696 in 2013. The law required the state to implement an A-F grading scale for schools. The purpose behind ACT 696 for assigning letter grades to schools was to help parents and the public better understand how well a school is performing. Table 5 shows the letter grade of the primary, elementary, middle school and high school in the three districts.

Table 5

A-F Letter Grade by District School Configuration

School Configuration	District 1	District 2	District 3
Primary	D (Grades K-2)	D (PK-3)	
Elementary	D (Grades 3-5)	F (Grades 4-6)	C (Grades K-1)
Elementary			C (Grades 2-3)
Intermediate			C (Grades 4-5)
Middle School	F (Grades 6-8)		C (Grades 6-8)
High School	D (Grades 9-12)	D (Grades 7-12)	C (Grades 9-12)

Note: Letter grades based on results of Benchmark and End of course math, literacy tests, and graduation rate

The academic distress designation was established in Arkansas Code § 6-15-42. The state law gives the State Board the authority to define the criteria used to classify a district or school as academically distressed. The Arkansas State Board of Education defines academic distress for a school or district when 49.5% or less of its students score at proficient levels on standardized math and literacy tests for a three-year period.

Table 6 includes for the percentage of proficiency level and overall district proficiency level.

Table 6

Percentage of Proficiency Level for Districts by School Configuration, 2015

School Configuration	District 1	District 2	District 3
Primary	47.78%	48.01%	
Elementary	47.78%	46.50%	61.38%
Intermediate			58.99%
Middle School	40.24%		60.69%
High School	48.32	48.33%	55.34%

Note: According to the State Board of Education, 49.5 % or less qualifies a school district for academic distress

A school district that has a proficiency level of 49.5% or less is identified as a school district in academic distress. Table 7 includes three year proficiency data for all three school districts in this study which gives the percentage that qualifies the districts in academic distress.

Table 7

Three-year Data for % Proficiency Level by District Schools in Academic Distress

Years	District 1	District 2	District 3
2011-2013	HS 47.74%	HS 43.6%	
% Proficiency	MS 51.55%		
2012-2014	HS 42.6%	HS 44.6%	
% Proficiency	MS 49.4%		
2013-2015	HS 44.08%	HS 48.5%	
% Proficiency	MS 44.80%		

Note: According to the State Board of Education, 49.5 % or less qualifies a school district for academic distress

Data Collection

This research study used a combination of online and paper and pencil surveys for data collection. The survey took between 10-15 minutes for the teachers to complete. The online survey data were downloaded from Survey Monkey® into a Microsoft Excel® file. The file was then uploaded into an SPSS® file for analysis. During the administration of the paper and pencil survey, the researcher introduced herself and explained the purpose of the survey. The directions and explanation of the study were the same as presented to the online survey participants, for purposes of consistency across the two data collection methods. After completion, the completed paper and pencil surveys were collected by the researcher and the participants were thanked. The paper and pencil surveys were manually entered by the researcher into the same Excel® file that was created from the online survey, then this file was uploaded into the same SPSS® file for analysis.

Instrumentation

The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) survey instrument was used for this research study. The TSES (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) is a measure of teachers' perceptions of their own ability to successfully reach all students and provide them with quality instruction that will help them achieve academic success. Teacher self-efficacy was measured with the TSES 24-item long form (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). The items in the TSES are grouped into three factors or domains: (1) Efficacy for student engagement (SE; 8 items), Efficacy for instructional strategies (IS; 8 items), and Efficacy for classroom management (CM; 8 items). The instrument asked participants to rate their perception of their ability on each item, such as "How much can

you. . .” by indicating their level of ability on the item on a Likert-type anchored scale with 1 = Nothing to 9 = A Great Deal. A copy of the TSES can be found in Appendix B.

Scoring for the TSES is calculated by adding the numerical value of the individual item responses for each teacher completing the survey. Adding these values for specific item numbers provides the raw score for each domain. The specific items related to each domain are as follows:

- 1) Efficacy in student engagement (SE): Items 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 22
- 2) Efficacy in instructional strategies (IS): Items 7, 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24
- 3) Efficacy in classroom management (CM): Items 3, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21

Once the raw scores in each of the domains are calculated a mean score for each domain is computed by dividing the total raw domain scores by the number of participants.

Validity and reliability of the instrument. In developing the instrument, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) utilized a factor analysis to extract factors from an original list of 52 items. The results of their first study reduced the number of items to 32. From there a second study reduced the items to 18 and three factors were extracted; student engagement ($\alpha = 0.82$), instructional strategies ($\alpha = 0.81$), and classroom management ($\alpha = 0.72$). A third study was conducted that eventually resulted in the 24 items that presently make up the TSES Long Form used in the present study.

A confirmatory reliability assessment using Cronbach’s alpha was run on the survey data in this study. The resulting reliability measures for the three factors or domains that are being used for this present study were student engagement ($\alpha = 0.81$), instructional strategies ($\alpha = 0.86$), and classroom management ($\alpha = 0.86$). All three

results demonstrate a strong relationship between the items in each domain and were considered reliable for use in the study.

Construct validity for the three-factor model was established by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001, 2007) through exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis and criterion-related validity was established through correlational analysis with previous self-efficacy instruments such as the RAND teacher self-efficacy scale ($r = .45$, $p < .01$) and the Gibson and Dembo (1984) personal teaching self-efficacy scale ($r = .60$, $p < .01$) (Anderson, 2016).

The instrument developers recommend conducting a factor analysis when using the TSES for further research. The researcher in the present study conducted a factor analysis and confirmed that the TSES three-factor model was applicable to this participant sample, supporting the validity of the instrument for use in this study.

Ethical Procedures

To ensure the protection of all participants in this study, the researcher followed the guidelines as outlined by the Arkansas Tech University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and received approval from that body prior to initiating data collection. A copy of the approval letter can be found in Appendix C.

Two data collection methods were used in this study. Data from District 2 was collected through an online survey administered through Survey Monkey®. For this online survey, the participants were provided all information related to the study, including all their rights related to consent. Informed consent from this district was obtained by indicating to the participants that by entering the survey page and completing the survey they have provided informed consent. Since these participants were all

professional educators, it was assumed by the researcher that they were all capable of reading the information and providing informed consent.

Data from District 1 and District 3 were obtained using paper and pencil surveys administered in person by the researcher during a scheduled faculty meeting. Permission was received from the principal of each school before administering the survey.

Informed consent was obtained by providing a written consent form to each participant along with the survey. The form contained all information regarding the study along with a list of the rights of the participants. The participants were asked to read, sign, and date the informed consent form before completing the survey. Once the consent form was signed and dated, the participants were asked to turn the consent form face down and the researcher picked up the consent forms and placed them in an envelope. Only the participants who signed a consent form were permitted to complete the survey.

The survey took the participants approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. When the participants finished the survey, the researcher collected the surveys and the signed consent forms. Since no identifiers were included in the survey and the consent forms were collected separately from the surveys, complete anonymity of the participants was maintained throughout the data collection process. The consent forms have been retained in a secure location at the researcher's residence. The anonymous survey data were loaded into a computer file for analysis and will be deleted at a future time. The only people with access to the data files are the researcher and the researcher's dissertation chair.

Participation in this study was strictly voluntary with consent. All participants were adult, professional educators capable of understanding the purpose and procedures

of the study and providing informed consent. No minor students were involved directly in the study and no data were collected from them nor did the researcher interact personally with any minor students. Participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Before data collection commenced, permission was obtained from the data collection sites (Appendix A and Appendix D) from the authorizing agents of the schools. The goal was that the information gained from this study would be helpful in learning more about the self-efficacy levels of teachers in high poverty/high minority, low-performing schools and that the findings would be beneficial to the education process of all students.

Data Analysis

The SPSS® Statistic software package was used for statistical analysis of the data collected for this research study. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the differences in the teacher's sense of self-efficacy among the three school districts.

Descriptive statistical analyses in the form of means and standards deviations were obtained for each of the demographic variables collected with the first seven items of the survey. These descriptive results were reported to provide a description of the central tendencies of these variables and to provide an overall description of the makeup of the participants in the study.

The TSES items (24 items in total) were used to establish the teacher self-efficacy levels of the teachers in the three domains; classroom management, instructional practices, and student engagement. The levels for each domain were established by computing a raw score for each domain by combining the participants rating on the

corresponding items to that particular domain. The mean score for each domain was then calculated by dividing the total raw score into the domains by the number of participants. The mean scores for these domains were then used as the basis for the ANOVA statistical analyses to determine if any differences existed between these three school districts which in turn would answer the research questions for the study.

Summary

This chapter described the methodology used in the research study. In addition, the chapter included the research questions, a detailed narrative of the participants selected, the instrumentation used to gather demographic and self-efficacy data from the participants, as well as a description of the data analysis used to answer the research questions.

This chapter provided a detailed district comparison of the three school districts in the study based on district enrollment, percentage of free and reduced lunch, ACT scores, percentage Gifted and Talented, percentage of students with disabilities, three-year graduation rate averages, percent of students achieving in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, and the letter grade of the primary, elementary, middle school and high school.

The protection of human subject's procedures was described by the researcher, including evidence of approval by the Arkansas Tech University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Descriptive statistics analyses for computing and calculating the scores for the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale were described. Chapter IV provides the results of the data analysis described in this chapter.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

By utilizing a group comparison research design, this study involved three school districts in the state of Arkansas. District 1 was under the threat of state takeover receiving technical assistance from the State Department of Education. District 2 was recently released from state takeover. District 3 was not under threat of “state takeover” and performed slightly better than the other two schools in terms of student academic performance. The focus of the study was to determine if state takeover of school districts affects the level of teacher self-efficacy.

The procedures involved in this research study included administering the TSES to teachers in the three school districts identified. The first part of the survey contained seven questions seeking to collect demographic data from the teacher participants. The second part of the survey included 24 Likert-type questions. The TSES, created by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) measures a teacher’s perceived efficacy in three domains: efficacy for instructional strategies, efficacy for classroom management, and efficacy for student engagement. The survey took between 10-15 minutes to complete.

The four research questions that were explored in this study were as follows:

1. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy in high poverty/high minority low-performing districts based on state takeover status?
2. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to instructional strategies in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?

3. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to classroom management in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?
4. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to student engagement in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?

Demographic Data

The first seven survey items were used to collect demographic data to describe the respondents and to match the three districts across as many variables as possible. The results for all respondents and the results by the district are presented in Table 8. A total of 146 teachers completed the survey. There was some variance in the number of respondents by the district with District 2 being the lowest number of respondents at 20 (data collected through an online survey), and District 3 being the highest number of respondents at 81 (data collected on-site).

Of the total percentage of respondents, 84.2% were female ($n = 123$) as compared to 15.8% male ($n = 23$). Each districts' respondents were predominantly female with District 3 having the highest percentage of females at 95.1% ($n = 77$) and District 2 has the lowest percentage of females at 60% ($n = 12$). The ethnic makeup of the respondents overall consisted of 71.9% ($n = 105$) white and 26% ($n = 38$) African American.

While the gender and ethnic composition of the respondents varied both across groups and within groups, it was actually in keeping with demographics in similar high minority/low performing schools across the nation. The lower percentage of African American teachers in these schools is reflective of the shortage of minority teachers

across the nation. This was doubly apparent in that only one respondent self-identified as Hispanic, reflective of the low number of Hispanic teachers across the nation, as well.

Of the total respondents, the highest percentage, 34.9% ($n = 51$) reported that they were teaching in an elementary school, and the lowest percentage 16.4% were teaching in middle schools. These results were slightly skewed by district, with District 1 and District 2 reporting the highest percentage were teaching in high schools.

The demographic description of the respondents regarding age and length of tenure in the district and career revealed some interesting results that also reflects the teacher population in high minority/low performing districts across the nation. For instance, overall, the respondents were equally distributed across the various age ranges, with the highest percentage of respondents 26% ($n = 38$) in the range 40-49 and the lowest percentage at 11% ($n = 16$) in the range 60+. Individual districts were also relatively equally distributed by age.

However, when comparing the age of the respondents with the years of experience in the district and career, these results indicated some differences between the districts. For instance, in terms of teaching in the district for all respondents, the highest percentage, 43.2% ($n = 63$) have taught in the district for 0-5 years. In each of the three districts, the majority of the respondents are relatively new to the district. However, when examining the category of Total Years Teaching Experience, it appears that of the percentage of respondents that have been in the district for 0-5 years, in general, only about half of that number are new to the profession. This was a somewhat surprising finding, demonstrating that while the tendency nationwide is for the least experienced teachers to be found in high minority/low performing schools, (Darling-Hammond,

2000), that did not appear to be the case with these three districts. It appears that there is a relatively large percentage of teachers in these districts who are experienced teachers, with 56.1% ($n = 82$) respondents reporting that they have been teaching for a total of 11+ years.

Finally, in terms of the highest degree obtained among the respondents, 43.8% ($n = 64$) indicated that their highest degree was a Bachelor's degree, with 42% ($n = 60$) reporting that they had earned a Master's degree or higher. Corresponding to the results reported regarding experience in the district and total years' of experience, surprisingly, District 1 and District 2 both reported 50% or more of their teachers holding a Master's degree or above, while District 3, which is not under threat of state takeover only reported 33% ($n = 26$) with a Master's degree or above.

In reviewing the demographic results from the survey, it appears that some of these results are counterintuitive to their takeover status. District 1 is under threat of takeover, and District 2 has recently been released from state takeover, yet in terms of teacher quality variables such as experience and degrees, these two districts would appear to exceed District 3, the district not under threat of takeover. Certainly, these results do not represent all teachers in the district, only those that responded to the survey, but these results are nevertheless informative that perhaps there are other issues beyond teacher quality that may be impacting their takeover status.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics by District and Totals

	District 1 (<i>n</i> = 45)		District 2 (<i>n</i> = 20)		District 3 (<i>n</i> = 81)		Totals (<i>N</i> = 146)	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Gender								
Female	34	75.6	12	60.0	77	95.1	123	84.2
Male	11	24.4	8	40.0	4	4.9	23	15.8
Ethnicity								
White	40	88.9	9	45.0	56	69.1	105	71.9
African American	4	8.9	9	45.0	25	30.9	38	26.0
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	1	5.0	0	0	1	0.7
Multi-racial	0	0	1	5.0	0	0	1	0.7
Missing	1	2.2	0	0	0	0	1	0.7
Grade Level								
Primary	14	31.1	5	25.0	10	12.3	29	19.9
Elementary	7	15.6	3	15.0	41	50.7	51	34.9
Middle	8	17.8	1	5.0	15	18.5	24	16.4
High	16	35.6	11	55.0	15	18.5	42	28.8
Age								
21-29	9	20.0	3	15.0	12	14.8	24	16.4
30-39	10	22.2	4	20.0	17	21.0	31	21.2
40-49	11	24.4	2	10.0	25	30.8	38	26.0
50-59	13	28.9	8	40.0	16	19.8	37	25.4
60+	2	4.5	3	15.0	11	13.6	16	11.0
Years Teaching in District								
0-5	22	48.9	7	35.0	34	42.0	63	43.2
6-10	7	15.6	3	15.0	15	18.5	25	17.1
11-15	3	6.7	1	5.0	9	11.1	13	8.9
16-20	5	11.1	3	15.0	9	11.1	17	11.6
25-30	6	13.3	4	20.0	6	7.4	16	11.0
Over 30	1	2.2	2	10.0	8	9.9	11	7.5
Missing	1	2.2	0	0	0	0	1	0.7

Total Years	11	24.4	5	25.0	19	23.5	35	24.0
Teaching Experience	9	20.0	2	10.0	17	21.0	28	19.2
0-5	6	13.3	0	0	11	13.6	17	11.6
6-10	7	15.6	4	20.0	11	13.6	22	15.1
11-15	7	15.6	6	30.0	10	12.3	23	15.7
16-20	4	8.9	3	15.0	13	16.0	20	13.7
25-30	1	2.2	0	0	0	0	1	0.7
Over 30								
Missing								
Highest Degree	13	28.9	6	30.0	45	55.7	64	43.8
Earned	8	17.8	4	20.0	10	12.3	22	15.1
Bachelor's	18	40.0	5	25.0	13	16	36	24.7
Bachelor's +24	5	11.1	5	25.0	12	14.8	22	15.1
Master's	1	2.2	0	0	1	2.2	2	1.4
Master's +12								
Ed.S.								

Descriptive Analysis of TSES Survey Items

The TSES was designed to measure teachers' self-efficacy in three domains: student engagement, instructional practices, and student engagement. The survey includes a total of 24 items measuring self-efficacy across those three domains. The respondents were to rate themselves on each item using a nine-point Likert scale, with 1 = Nothing to 9 = A Great Deal. To determine the self-efficacy level in each of the three domains, the responses to the domain-related items were added together. That is, items 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, and 22 were added together to find the student engagement score; items 7, 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 23, and 24 were added together to find the instructional strategies score; and items 3, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, and 21 were added together to find the classroom management score. The mean score for each district was computed by dividing the total of all respondent scores in the district, divided by the number of respondents. The means and standard deviations for each district and the overall mean and standard deviation are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Self-Efficacy Mean Scores by District and Overall

District	Student Engagement		Classroom Management		Instructional Strategies	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
District 1	53.56	11.09	58.64	10.58	60.00	7.91
District 2	51.00	10.39	54.88	9.96	57.88	7.24
District 3	51.54	8.13	54.03	9.27	55.47	7.27
Overall	52.11	9.47	55.57	9.93	57.26	7.71

The mean self-efficacy scores overall indicate that the respondents scored higher in instructional strategies ($M = 57.26$, $SD = 7.71$). The second highest mean overall was for classroom management ($M = 55.57$, $SD = 9.93$), and the lowest mean overall was in the domain of student engagement ($M = 52.11$, $SD = 9.47$). When comparing the district level means in the three domain areas, all three districts indicated the same order from highest to lowest, that is, all three ranked instructional strategies the highest and student engagement the lowest. In the domain of student engagement District 1 had the highest mean ($M = 53.56$, $SD = 11.09$), with District 3 second ($M = 51.54$, $SD = 8.13$), and District 2 the lowest mean ($M = 51.00$, $SD = 10.39$).

In the domain of classroom management, District 1 had the highest mean ($M = 58.64$, $SD = 10.58$), District 2 had the second highest mean ($M = 54.88$, $SD = 9.96$), and District 3 had the lowest mean ($M = 54.03$, $SD = 9.27$). In the domain of instructional strategies, District 1 had the highest mean ($M = 60.00$, $SD = 7.91$), District 2 had the

second highest mean ($M = 57.88$, $SD = 7.24$), and District 3 had the lowest mean ($M = 55.47$, $SD = 7.27$).

It is interesting that the district (District 1) that is under threat of state takeover had the highest mean scores on the TSES in all three domains. The district that is not under threat of state takeover (District 3) had the lowest mean scores on the TSES in two of the three domains (classroom management and instructional strategies). While the mean results indicate some direction in terms of how these districts compare in terms of their level of teacher self-efficacy, in order to determine if the differences in mean scores across the districts are statistically significant, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The results of that analysis are presented below.

ANOVA Results

An ANOVA was conducted to determine if there are any statistically significant differences between the three districts in the respondents' level of self-efficacy. The ANOVA used an alpha level of .05 as the basis for determining statistical significance. For any ANOVA results that indicated a significant difference, a Tukey HSD post hoc test was run to determine which of the three groups were statistically different.

The results of a one-way ANOVA for the domain student engagement are presented in Table 10. The results indicate that there is no significant difference between the three districts in terms of student engagement, $F(2,131) = .760$, $p = .470$.

Table 10

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Student Engagement by District

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between groups	2	136.841	68.421	.760	.470
Within groups	131	11798.480	90.065		
Total	133	11935.321			

The results of a one-way ANOVA for instructional strategies are presented in Table 11. The results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the three districts in the domain of instructional strategies, $F(2,125) = 4.868$, $p = .009$. Using a Tukey HSD post hoc test it was revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between District 1 and District 3. The results of the Tukey HSD post hoc test are presented in Table 12.

Table 11

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Instructional Strategies by District

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between groups	2	545.299	272.650	4.868	.009*
Within groups	125	7001.193	56.010		
Total	127	7546.492			

Table 12

Tukey HSD Post Hoc Results for Instructional Strategies

District (I)	District (J)	Mean Difference (I – J)	Standard Error	Sig.	95% Confide Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Dist. 1	Dist. 2	2.125	2.200	.599	-3.090	7.340
	Dist. 3	4.529*	1.461	.007	1.064	7.993
Dist. 2	Dist. 1	-2.125	2.200	.599	-7.340	3.090
	Dist. 3	2.404	2.074	.480	-2.515	7.323
Dist. 3	Dist. 1	-4.529*	1.461	.007	-7.993	-1.064
	Dist. 2	-2.404	2.074	.480	-7.323	2.515

Note: * indicates the mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

The results of a one-way ANOVA for classroom management are presented in Table 13 below. The results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the three districts in the domain of classroom management, $F(2,132) = 3.062$, $p = .050$. Using a Tukey HSD post hoc test it was revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between District 1 and District 3. The results of the Tukey HSD post hoc test are presented in Table 14.

Table 13

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Classroom Management by District

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between groups	2	585.727	292.863	3.062	.050*
Within groups	132	12625.355	95.647		
Total	134	13211.081			

Table 14

Tukey HSD Post Hoc Results for Classroom Management

District (I)	District (J)	Mean Difference (I – J)	Standard Error	Sig.	95% Confide Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Dist. 1	Dist. 2	3.761	2.811	.377	-2.904	10.425
	Dist. 3	4.617*	1.880	.041	.159	9.074
Dist. 2	Dist. 1	-3.761	2.811	.377	-10.425	2.904
	Dist. 3	.856	2.624	.943	-5.364	7.076
Dist. 3	Dist. 1	-4.617*	1.880	.041	-9.074	-.159
	Dist. 2	-.856	2.624	.943	-7.076	5.364

The results of a one-way ANOVA for the overall level of teacher self-efficacy are presented in Table 15. The results indicate that there is no significant difference between the three districts in terms of overall levels of self-efficacy, $F(2,108) = 1.941$, $p = .149$.

Table 15

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Total TSES Score by District

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between groups	2	2353.849	1176.925	1.941	.149
Within groups	108	65497.448	606.458		
Total	110	67851.297			

Research Questions Answered

1. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy in high poverty/high minority low-performing districts based on state takeover status?

In order to answer this question, an ANOVA was run to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the selected districts. The results of that statistical analysis revealed that no significant difference existed between the overall self-efficacy levels of the three districts as reported in Table 15 above.

2. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to instructional strategies in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?

In order to answer this research question, a one-way ANOVA was run to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the three selected districts in the domain of instructional strategies. The results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the three districts in the domain of instructional strategies, $F(2,125) = 4.868$, $p = .009$. Using a Tukey HSD post hoc test it was revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between District 1 and District 3.

District 1 is a district that was under threat of state takeover, and District 3 was a district that was not under threat of state takeover. The level of self-efficacy in District 2, which had recently been released from state takeover was determined to not be different from the other two districts. The fact that the mean for District 1 in the domain of instructional strategies was higher than District 3, would indicate that the threat of state takeover has not affected the teachers' sense of self-efficacy in a negative way in comparison to the district that was not under threat of state takeover.

3. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to classroom management in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?

In order to answer this research question, a one-way ANOVA was run to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the three selected districts in the domain of classroom management. The results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the three districts in the domain of classroom management, $F(2,132) = 3.062, p = .050$. Using a Tukey HSD post hoc test it was revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between District 1 and District 3.

District 1 is a district that was under threat of state takeover, and District 3 was a district that was not under threat of state takeover. The level of self-efficacy in District 2 was determined to not be different from the other two districts. The fact that the mean for District 1 in the domain of instructional strategies was higher than District 3 would indicate that the threat of state takeover has not affected the teachers' sense of self-efficacy in a negative way.

4. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to student engagement in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?

In order to answer this question, an ANOVA was run to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the selected districts in the domain of student engagement. The results of a one-way ANOVA for the domain student engagement are indicated that there was no significant difference between the three districts in terms of student engagement, $F(2,131) = .760, p = .470$.

An ANOVA was conducted to determine if there are any statistically significant differences between the three districts in the respondents' level of self-efficacy. The ANOVA used an alpha level of .05 as the basis for determining statistical significance. For any ANOVA results that indicated a significant difference, a Tukey HSD post hoc test was run to determine which of the three groups were statistically different.

Summary

Based upon a group comparison research design, this study involved three school districts in the state of Arkansas. District 1 was under the threat of state takeover receiving technical assistance from the State Department of Education. District 2 was recently released from state takeover. District 3 was not under threat of state takeover and performed slightly better than the other two schools in terms of student academic performance. The focus of the study was to determine if state takeover of school districts affects the level of teacher self-efficacy.

In order to answer the four research questions in this study, the researcher administered the TSES to teachers in the three districts involved in this study. The first

part of the survey contained seven items that collected demographic data and the second part of the survey included 24 Likert-type items that measured the teachers' perceptions of their level of self-efficacy. The instrument was created by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001).

A total of 146 teachers completed the survey. The respondents from the districts were predominantly female ($n = 123$) and predominately white ($n = 105$). Although the district student populations were high minority, the African American teachers responding to the survey from the three districts indicated a low number ($n = 38$), which is reflective of the shortage of minority teachers across the nation. There was only one Hispanic teacher who self-identified as Hispanic which is another indication of the low number of Hispanic teachers across the nation. A large number of the teachers responding to the survey in the three districts were experienced teachers, with the majority ($n = 82$) indicating they had a total of 11+ years of teaching experience.

In the descriptive analysis of the TSES, three domain areas were measured: classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement. The mean results for the overall mean self-efficacy score indicated that the respondents scored highest in instructional strategies, second highest in classroom management and the lowest mean score overall was student engagement for all three districts.

The ANOVA and the Tukey HSD post hoc test results indicate that there was a statistically significant difference between the three districts in the domain of classroom management, $F(2,132) = 3.062, p = .050$. The difference was between District 1 and District 3. The ANOVA and the Tukey HSD post hoc test results indicate that there was a statistically significant difference between the three districts in the domain of

instructional strategies, $F(2,125) = 4.868, p = .009$. The difference was also between District 1 and District 3. The results of the statistical analysis revealed that no significant difference existed between the self-efficacy levels of the three districts in the domain of student engagement.

Chapter V presents the conclusions and implications of the study and offers recommendations for future research and recommendations for practice in school districts in the state of Arkansas.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY

As stated previously in Chapter I, the goal of public education in the U.S. is to provide every student the opportunity to receive a quality education. To date, that goal has not been fully realized as school districts struggle with factors affecting the quality of education such as lack of adequate resources and a shortage of quality teachers (Barth, 2000; Peske & Haycock, 2006).

Since teacher quality is recognized as vital to student success, efforts at understanding how to improve teacher quality have been central to school improvement research for many years (e.g., McCaffrey et al., 2003; Rivkin et al., 2000). Despite all that has been learned about improving teacher quality there are still too many low-performing schools, particularly in high poverty/high minority districts, where equity in the number of quality teachers is severely lacking. Because these low-performing, high poverty/high minority schools are limited in their pool of applicants and many quality teachers in these schools opt to move to higher-performing schools when presented with that opportunity, it becomes vital for these schools to find ways to develop and improve the teachers that stay and want to be successful (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin 2001).

One area that has been the subject of much research on quality teaching is the impact of intrinsic factors such as teacher morale, motivation, optimism and the subject of the present study teacher self-efficacy (Evans, 2000; Klassen, et al., 2011). Self-efficacy is evident when a teacher believes that she/he can personally make a difference in a child's academic success and that belief is translated into action and commitment. Studies have indicated that there is a correlation between teacher self-efficacy and teacher

effectiveness (Bray-Clark & Bates, 2003). Therefore, if there is a relationship between these two variables, then the more that we understand what impacts a teacher's self-efficacy the better the chances of improving a teacher's effectiveness.

While many correlational and causal-comparative or group comparison studies have been conducted in determining relationships and potential causal effects between teacher self-efficacy and many other variables, little research is evident that investigates the effect of state takeover status on a teachers' self-efficacy. As the number of low-performing schools undergoing state takeover across the country increases, it is important to understand not only the effect of state takeover on student academic performance but also the effect of that takeover on the intrinsic sensibilities of the teachers involved.

The extent of these takeover plans differs from state to state, but in Arkansas, in extreme cases, the state can reconstitute the district by removing the superintendent or principal, restricting the authority of the school board, and making curricular changes (No Child Left Behind Act 2001). State takeover is highly stressful, particularly on teachers who are now under close scrutiny and placed under improvement plans that can be quite restrictive in terms of their teaching strategies. There is some limited research into state takeover that indicates that in many ways these improvement measures can actually exacerbate the situation and negatively impact certain teacher intrinsic factors (Freeman, 2001).

Because there has been a limited number of research studies into the effect of state takeover on intrinsic factors related to teacher quality, the purpose of this present study was to investigate the impact of state takeover status on teacher self-efficacy levels.

The intent was to determine if state takeover improves teacher self-efficacy or actually lessens the level of teacher self-efficacy.

Specifically, the purpose of this study was to determine if there are differences in teachers' level of self-efficacy based on state takeover status of a school district. The research design used in this study was "group comparison research" (Gall et al., 2015). In this research design, the effect, or the dependent variable was teachers' level of self-efficacy which was already established and the cause or the independent variable was the state takeover status of the district. Since the variables in this study could not be manipulated and data collected was limited to a "snapshot" approach, an experimental design was not warranted. Therefore, a cause-and-effect result could not be determined.

This research study matched three school districts in the state of Arkansas as closely as possible on demographic variables and level of school performance. One district had recently been released from state takeover, one district was under the threat of state takeover and another district was performing at a slightly higher level and was not under the threat of takeover.

The procedures for this research study included administering a survey to teachers in the three school districts involved. This instrument created by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001), measured a teacher's perceived efficacy in three domains; efficacy for instructional strategies, efficacy for classroom management, and efficacy for student engagement.

The four questions that were explored in this study were as follows:

1. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy in high poverty/high minority low-performing districts based on state takeover status?
2. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to instructional strategies in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?
3. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to classroom management in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?
4. Is there a difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy related to student engagement in high poverty/high minority, low-performing districts based on state takeover status?

Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis results were obtained and presented in Chapter IV.

Discussion of the Findings

Research Question 1

The first research question sought to determine whether there was a difference in the levels of teacher self-efficacy between the three identified school districts. Based on the ANOVA results there was no statistically significant difference in the overall self-efficacy levels of the three districts as reported in Table 15 above. While there were no statistically significant differences reported a review of the mean levels of teacher self-efficacy indicated that the means for all three districts were relatively high when compared to other studies using the TSES (Anderson, 2016). Since all three districts are

considered low-performing, the relatively high mean results were a bit surprising. In addition, the district with the highest mean level of teacher self-efficacy was District 1 ($M = 172.18$, $SD = 27.79$), the district that is presently under threat of state takeover and the district with the lowest overall mean level of teacher self-efficacy was District 3 ($M = 162.17$, $SD = 22.12$), the district that was not under threat of state takeover.

Research Question 2

The second research question sought to determine if there was a difference in the levels of teacher self-efficacy related to instructional strategies between the three identified districts in the present study. In order to answer this research question, a one-way ANOVA was run to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the three selected districts in the domain of instructional strategies. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the three districts in the domain of instructional strategies, $F(2,125) = 4.868$, $p = .009$. Using a Tukey HSD post hoc test it was revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between District 1 and District 3.

District 1, which was under threat of state takeover, and District 3, which was not under threat of state takeover, was where the differences in instructional strategies were found. Self-efficacy mean scores by district contain the following results: District 1, ($M=60.00$) and District 3, ($M=55.47$). The level of self-efficacy in District 2, ($M=57.88$), which had recently been released from state takeover, was determined to not be statistically different from the other two districts. The fact that the mean for District 1 in the domain of instructional strategies was higher than District 3 would indicate that the

threat of state takeover has not affected the teachers' sense of self-efficacy in a negative way in comparison to the district that was not under threat of state takeover.

Again, when reviewing the mean levels of teacher self-efficacy in the domain of instructional strategies, they were all relatively high when compared to other studies using the TSES. The fact that the district under threat of state takeover had the highest levels of self-efficacy in the domain of instructional strategies, again, would appear to be a bit surprising based on the literature that indicates that there is a positive correlation between the level of teacher self-efficacy and teacher effectiveness (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2001).

District 3, which was not under threat of state takeover had the lowest mean score, and although it was statistically significant in relation to District 1, there was no statistically significant difference between it and District 2, the district that has completed a period of state takeover and was released.

Question 3

The third research question sought to determine whether there was a difference in the levels of teacher self-efficacy in the domain of classroom management between the three identified districts in the present study. In order to answer this research question, a one-way ANOVA was run to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the three selected districts in the domain of classroom management. The results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the three districts in the domain of classroom management, $F(2,132) = 3.062, p = .050$. Using a Tukey HSD post hoc test it was revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between District 1 and District 3.

District 1 is a district that was under threat of state takeover and District 3 was a district that was not under threat of state takeover. The level of self-efficacy in District 2 was determined to not be different from the other two districts. The fact that the mean for District 1 in the domain of classroom management was higher than District 3 would indicate that the threat of state takeover has not affected the teachers' sense of self-efficacy in a negative way.

Question 4

The fourth and final research question sought to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the identified districts in the domain of student engagement. The results of a one-way ANOVA for the domain student engagement indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between the three districts in terms of student engagement, $F(2,131) = .760, p = .470$.

The rankings of the means for this domain mirror the rankings for the other domains and the overall mean levels, in that District 1, the district under threat of state takeover had the highest mean in this domain between the three districts, and District 3, the district not under threat of state takeover had the lowest mean level of the three districts. One interpretation of these results would indicate that the state takeover status is not having a positive nor negative effect on the levels of teacher self-efficacy in the domain of student engagement.

Implications

Now that the results of the study have been presented, what implications can be interpreted from these results? In a sense, the findings could be interpreted to imply that state takeover status may have a positive effect on the levels of teacher self-efficacy in

the domains of instructional strategies and classroom management. This was certainly indicated when comparing District 1, the district under threat of state takeover, and District 3, the district that was not under threat of state takeover, in these domain areas. But, if the threat of state takeover has a positive effect on teacher self-efficacy, then what would explain the fact that the district that has completed state takeover did not indicate any differences in levels of self-efficacy compared to the other two districts?

Perhaps the implications can be explained by the fact that the state assistance that is provided to districts that are under threat of state takeover provided the teachers in that district with a quality of professional development that addressed these two domains. That is because it was stressed by the state department, the teachers may have felt an increased sense of confidence and competence that translated into higher perceptions of self-efficacy. But again, if that is the case, and state department assistance improves self-efficacy under the threat of state takeover, what is being done during the actual state takeover, at least in District 2 that would cause the teachers to lose that sense of confidence and competence. That is a question that should be addressed through further research to determine if the positive effects of pre-takeover assistance can be maintained or increased during the actual takeover of the district.

There is another possible implication of the results of this study. While the researcher assumes that the teachers responded honestly and accurately in gauging their own perception of their level of self-efficacy, it is possible that the responses were inflated on each item. Since these teachers are all in low-performing schools there may have been an unconscious effort on their part to inflate their responses to indicate that they are effective and competent regardless of the performance of the students. In other

words, they want to feel that they have the ability to teach all students, even if the data indicates otherwise.

Along the lines of this implication, although the survey was presented to the teachers in such a method that guaranteed anonymity, there may be a sense among many of the teachers that there is still a possibility that their administrators in the district may be able to identify any teachers who respond with a lowered sense of self-efficacy, and therefore scored themselves higher than their honest perception. This is referred to as social desirability bias (Weisburg, 2005).

An additional factor that could have influenced the difference between the three districts could have been the years teaching experience. The findings in this study results indicated that overall respondents in this study had less than 10 years teaching experience. Researchers, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) found that teachers with 10 or more years of teaching experience reported higher levels of self-efficacy. HQ teachers are committed to students, their learning, and teaching as a career. They view ethical professional judgment as central to their effectiveness as a teacher. HQ teachers feel empowered to take action when they see vulnerable students that need their attention. According to NCLB Act 2001, a highly qualified teacher must have “1) a bachelor's degree, 2) full state certification or licensure, and 3) prove that they know each subject they teach. Staff, administration, and supporting faculty should sustain their current efforts to recruit HQ teachers who are committed to students and to teaching as a career. The results reported regarding experience in the district and total years’ experience that District 1 and District 2 both reported 50% or more of their teachers

holding a Master's degree or above, while District 3, which is not under threat of state takeover only reported 33% ($n = 26$) with a Master's degree or above.

Effective classroom management is correlated with higher student achievement. Beginning teachers sometimes do not feel efficacious in their ability to establish clear and effective routines and procedures. Many new teachers struggle with classroom management. Thus, it is noteworthy that in the domain of classroom management, District 1 had the highest mean ($M = 58.64$, $SD = 10.58$), District 2 had the second highest mean ($M = 54.88$, $SD = 9.96$), and District 3 had the lowest mean ($M = 54.03$, $SD = 9.27$). Could the administration be more responsive to the discipline issues? Could the administration be more supportive of the teachers? These issues were not measured in the study; however, the researchers Ross and Gray (2004) reported that principals influenced teachers' capacity beliefs through the persuasion of inspirational messages by addressing low expectations. The study could dig deeper into how principals influence teachers' self-efficacy and this could mean conducting an interview survey or adding additional questions to the existing survey.

Interaction with colleagues is critical for the success of teachers. Based on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, teachers would feel more efficacious if they had opportunities to observe exemplary teachers. A recommendation is that the school system identifies a collegial process for sharing instructional practices related to learners between new teachers and more experienced teachers at the same grade level. Such a strategy might mirror grade level planning and give release time for beginning teachers to observe exemplary highly qualified teachers. According to Bandura (1977), the theoretical approach to self-efficacy is Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the

role of observational learning which means that people learn through observing others. We do not know if all three districts implemented this strategy in their daily operations because this was not measured in this research study which is all the more reason that further research needs to be conducted.

Organizing instruction for diverse learning needs is a hallmark of effective teachers who know their subjects and know how to teach those subjects to students. A recommendation to address this implication for further research is to develop professional development opportunities for teachers on how to implement selected instructional strategies related to the teaching of students with diverse learning needs or limited English proficiency. In District 1, 13% of the students had been identified as students with disabilities. In District 2, 10% of the students had been identified as students with disabilities. In District 3, 11% of the students had been identified as students with disabilities. More research on how the districts are addressing the specific instructional strategies of diverse learners could have made a difference in the results of teacher self-efficacy in District 3, especially since District 3 had slightly higher academic student performance scores.

The results of the current study can be used to develop future questionnaire items for a future survey study. A future survey study would have the advantage of dramatically increasing sample size, because the number of respondents may not have provided a large enough dataset for relevant statistical analyses. Adding an interview section to the survey study could benefit the dataset and make the results from the findings extremely rich with information especially with the advances in hardware and software capabilities. The use of such technology would reduce the data collection times

and if all the surveys were administered using a web-based questionnaire the program could automatically register each entry and download the results in the appropriate formats. The findings that emerge from the future study could glean a model that the education research community utilizes in school districts as a framework for building teachers' self-efficacy.

Overall Summary of the Study

The aim of this study was to determine if there was a difference in teachers' level of self-efficacy based on a school district's state takeover status. The respondents for District 1 showed higher scores in teachers' self-efficacy than District 2 and District 3. The results indicated that District 1 mean self-efficacy scores were higher than District 3 has many implications for further study. Perhaps the threat of state takeover had a positive effect on District 1 teachers' self-efficacy. The only way to determine if that is true is to do further research. The number of respondents from each district could have influenced the results. The number of respondents District 1 ($n = 45$), District 2 ($n = 20$) and District 3 ($n = 81$) indicated a variance between District 1 and 3. This fact could have influenced the final results of teachers' self-efficacy overall.

One of the themes to emerge from this analysis was that the Arkansas Department of Education School Improvement Technical Assistant Unit could have been a strong influence for high teachers' self-efficacy District 1. The respondents for District 1 showed high teacher self-efficacy. Wong et al. (2004) stated that turning around a low-performing school can be done successfully through state technical assistance. Their study was done in Kentucky. My study verifies the evidence that state technical

assistance in school districts identified as low performing and academic distressed impacts teachers' self-efficacy positively not "state takeover."

When comparing the groups, respondents for District 1 showed higher teacher self-efficacy. The amazing eye catching fact was when comparing all three groups that District 2 and District 3 teachers' self-efficacy scores were in the same range. District 2 had experienced "state takeover" more than once so one would believe that their three-year academic trend data would be higher than 49.5% which by definition of the Arkansas Department of Education defines academic distress. The finding for District 2 proves the fact that "state takeover" does not turn around low-performing schools as corroborated by Ziebarth (2002). However, the fact that respondents ($n = 20$) in District 2 could have been a limitation that impacted the overall results of teachers' self-efficacy so further research needs to be conducted.

District 3 was the highest functioning school district when comparing academic data, but the teacher respondents did not have the highest level of teacher self-efficacy. My interruption of the findings for District 3 is their poverty level was 77% compared to 100% poverty level for District 1 and District 2. The poverty issue is aligned with the notion that students of poverty do not perform well, but the teacher accountability system implemented from No Child Left Behind ACT 2001 signified that the level of teacher certification and advanced degree levels make a difference in student academic performance. When looking at the teacher demographics in the three school districts, District 1 (40%) teacher respondents had obtained a Master's degree or higher, but respondents in District 2 and District 3 highest degrees obtained were Bachelor's degree. The degree level in District 2 and District 3 could bear witness to the fact that the level of

teachers' self-efficacy mean scores were close for research questions on classroom management, District 2 ($M = 6.8$) and District 3 ($M = 6.7$). Although, the mean score results for classroom management findings for the three districts' teacher participant's self-efficacy was high based on the mean score construct validity. The NCLB Act 2001 strengthens the fact that educational level makes a difference when defining quality teachers.

Another factor that could have influenced the difference between the three districts could have been the years teaching experience. The findings in this study results indicated that overall respondents in this study had less than 10 years teaching experience. Researchers, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) found that teachers with 10 or more years of teaching experience reported higher levels of self-efficacy.

One more reason that could have influenced the difference between the three districts on classroom management could have been the implementation of common policies, practices, procedures, school climate, and school expectations. These school characteristics for classroom management are supported by Rutter et al. (1979). However, there is no way to measure what the school climate looked like in the three districts because school climate was not the focus of this research study. The results of this research study indicated that overall more elementary teacher participants responded to this survey. The claim from Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) that elementary teachers have the highest level of self-efficacy does not support the findings in this study.

The research design used in this study was “group comparison research” (Gall et al., 2015). Although it cannot be used to establish cause-and-effect relationships, as in experimental research, it is still a useful design for investigating causal relationships that might benefit from further research (Gall et al., 2015). Possible further research study to measure the impact of the level of teacher self-efficacy among teachers in low-performing schools for creating professional development content for teacher quality is paramount. The idea for providing professional development is in line with researchers such as (Engstrom & Danielson, 2006; Guskey, 2002a) who stated that education reform initiatives are ineffective if they ignore the role of professional development for teachers.

Recommendations for Further Research

One of the limitations of the present study was the lack of access to a larger pool of districts in the state that may have provided a larger *N* for the study. It is recommended that further study include a broader sampling of districts under the threat of state takeover.

The data analysis in this study was limited to ANOVA results and descriptive statistics. While demographic variables were collected in the study, they did not appear to represent covariates to state takeover status and were therefore not utilized in ANCOVA or MANCOVA analysis. It is recommended that in future studies more data be collected that would allow a more detailed and rigorous analysis to determine differences between the districts based on state takeover status.

Additional research needs to be conducted that investigates in more detail the differences that appeared in the results regarding instructional strategies and classroom management. A qualitative component added to the present study might have revealed

specifics as to why the teachers responded in the manner that they did. It would also have helped to tease out any possible social desirability bias.

In order to build a qualitative component to this present study, determine the methods of documentation of data and access to respondents. Consider the issues of confidentiality and sensitivity when interviewing the respondents. Develop a hypothesis and collect further data to address revisions to the present study. Create additional research questions and add relevant literature in order to link the literature to the hypothesis. As qualitative studies become more complex with the IRB documentation requirements, a suggestion for the latest software tools for qualitative data analysis research is NVivo and Atlas. These software tools provide audio and video recordings, data coding, and multiple levels of analysis.

Further research in this area would benefit from detailed research into the state takeover process. Since each district is different, it is possible that the processes used in the state takeover of districts could be prescribed for each district based on their specific needs. It would also help to identify whether the positive effects that appeared in this study are truly accurate or not.

Conclusions

This research study sought to provide a preliminary or cursory investigation of the possible effects of state takeover status upon the levels of teacher self-efficacy in three domains, as identified by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001). Due to the limited pool of districts available and the lack of random selection, cause-and-effect results between the variables were not possible. As a result, external validity, or generalizability to other districts or states is very limited. Internal validity of the results

is also suspect due to the possible inflated scores that were reported, involving a potential social desirability bias.

However, even with the limitations that existed in this study, the results were interesting and revelatory in the sense that there is a possibility that state department assistance in attempts to avoid state takeover of districts may be having a positive impact in the domains of instructional strategies and classroom management. The domain of student engagement did not appear to be affected, and further study should be conducted to determine why this result may have occurred.

Overall, the importance of this study lies in the fact that it began the exploration of the impact of state takeover on teacher self-efficacy. If this issue can be investigated further, the process may help to raise the levels of teacher self-efficacy in all schools and districts, and in turn, improve the quality of all teachers, particularly teachers that are serving high poverty/high minority districts.

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Appendix A

Copy of Permission Letter



ANITA WOOLFOLK HOY, PH.D.

PROFESSOR
PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES IN EDUCATION

Dear

You have my permission to use the *Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale* in your research. A copy the scoring instructions can be found at:

<http://u.osu.edu/hoy.17/research/instruments/>

Best wishes in your work,

Anita Woolfolk Hoy, Ph.D.
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Appendix B

Copy of TSES Survey

Teacher's Sense of Self-Efficacy Survey Scale
Tschannen-Moran, M. Woolfolk Hoy, A & Hoy, W.K.
Ohio State University

Teacher Beliefs

Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below. Your answers are confidential.

1. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?

- ☐ Nothing
- ☐ Very Little
- ☐ Some Influence
- ☐ Quite A Bit
- ☐ A Great Deal

2. How much can you do to help your students think critically?

- ☐ Nothing
- ☐ Very Little
- ☐ Some Influence
- ☐ Quite A Bit
- ☐ A Great Deal

3. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?

- ☐ Nothing
- ☐ Very Little
- ☐ Some Influence
- ☐ Quite A Bit
- ☐ A Great Deal

4. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?

- ☐ Nothing
- ☐ Very Little
- ☐ Some Influence
- ☐ Quite A Bit
- ☐ A Great Deal

5. To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

6. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

7. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

8. How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

9. How much can you do to help students value learning?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

10. How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you taught?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

11. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

12. How much can you do to foster student creativity?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

13. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

14. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

15. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

16. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

17. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

18. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

19. How well can you keep a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

20. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

21. How well can you respond to defiant students?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

22. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

23. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

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

- ☐ a. Nothing
- ☐ b. Very Little
- ☐ c. Some Influence
- ☐ d. Quite A Bit
- ☐ e. A Great Deal

Teacher Demographics**Teacher Demographic Questionnaire**

Directions: This questionnaire is designed to examine the teacher demographic variables in the school district. Please indicate your answers about each of the statements below. Your answers are confidential.

1. What is your gender?

☐ Female

☐ Male

☐ Other (specify)

2. Which category below includes your age?

☐ 21-29

☐ 30-39

☐ 40-49

☐ 50-59

☐ 60 or older

3. What is the highest degree you have received?

☐ Bachelor degree

☐ Bachelor degree +12 hours

☐ Bachelor degree +24

☐ Master degree +12 hours

☐ Educational Specialist degree (Ed.S)

☐ Educational Doctoral degree (Ed.D)

4. Which category below includes your total number of teaching experience?

- ☐ a. 0-5 years
- ☐ b. 6-10 years
- ☐ c. 11-15 years
- ☐ d. 16-20 years
- ☐ e. 25-30 years
- ☐ f. Above 30 years

5. Which best describes your ethnicity?

- ☐ a. American Indian/Alaskan
- ☐ b. Asian
- ☐ c. Black/African American
- ☐ d. Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- ☐ e. Hispanic/Latino
- ☐ f. White
- ☐ g. Two or More Races
- ☐ h. Other

6. Which of the following categories best describes the grade level that you teach? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Elementary
- ☐ Middle School
- ☐ Junior High
- ☐ High School

7. Which category below includes the number of years you have been teaching in the school district?

- ☐ a. 0-5 years
- ☐ b. 6-10 years
- ☐ c. 11-15 years
- ☐ d. 16-20 years
- ☐ e. 25-30 years
- ☐ f. Above 30 years

Appendix C



Academic Affairs
Administration Room 200
1509 North Boulder Avenue
Russellville, Arkansas 72801

Office: 479-968-0319
Fax: 479-968-0644
www.ata.edu/academics

2/13/17

To Whom It May Concern:

Patsy Hughey's IRB application "Dissertation Project for Completion of the Ed.D. Degree in School Leadership" is approved through February 13, 2020. The approval code is Hughey_021317.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jack Tucci".

Jack Tucci, Ph.D.
IRB Chair

Appendix D



HELENA WEST HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT

January 30, 2017

John Hoy
Superintendent

Linda English
Deputy Superintendent

Board of Education

Andrew Bagley
Chair

Sanetta Davis
Vice Chair

Lynn Boone
Secretary

Troy Bobo

Leroy Charles

Earnest Simpson

Daniel Strickland

Institutional Review Board
Department of Leadership and Learning
Arkansas Tech University

To: Institutional Review Board (IRB)

I give Patsy Hughey permission to survey teachers in the Helena West Helena School District. I understand that the reporting of the results will not identify individual participants.

Sincerely,

John Hoy
jhoy@hwhschools.org

305 Valley Drive
Helena-West Helena, AR
72342
Phone
(870) 338-4425
Fax
(870) 338-4434
<http://hwh.gro.ic12.ar.us/>

*An Equal Opportunity
Employer*

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Patsy Hughey <hugheyp61@gmail.com>
 Date: Mon, Feb 6, 2017 at 8:19 AM
 Subject: Re: Doctoral Program
 To: Richard Atwill <ratwill@blythevilleschools.net>

On Mon, Feb 6, 2017 at 8:10 AM Richard Atwill <ratwill@blythevilleschools.net> wrote:
 Great to hear from you!

My teachers wouldn't mind doing the survey if they get to see and use the results. They are very information driven people. Also, they would prefer to do the online thing. I have Cc'd my curriculum director to keep her in the loop.

I am VERY interested in the results of your work. I can foresee useful and pointing strategies that would result in adult behavior change to meet the needs of children in poverty.

On Fri, Feb 3, 2017 at 2:36 PM, Patsy Hughey <hugheyp61@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi Richard,

This is Patsy. Hope all is well in the Blytheville School District. You are still doing great things I am sure and taking care of your students and staff in your district.

I am a go getter and I will always keep pushing regardless of the obstacles that try to block my progress.

I am expected to finish the doctoral program at Arkansas Tech University this Spring. My dissertation proposal is centered around research on teacher self-efficacy in low-performing schools and state takeover. I have compiled a list of schools across the state of Arkansas that are facing challenges with low SES. The primary purpose of the public education system in the U.S. is to provide every student the opportunity to receive a quality education. Since teacher quality is recognized as vital to student success, efforts at understanding how to improve teacher quality have been central to school improvement research for many years.

I would love to talk to you about surveying your staff and of course, the survey would be anonymous...your teachers will not be identified nor your school district.

I know you think outside the box!!!!

The researcher Woolfolk-Hoy created an instrument out of Ohio State University that would measure teacher self-efficacy. The instrument MC questionnaire measures: classroom management, student engagement, and instructional strategies.

Since this study from Woolfolk-Hoy, several studies have examined links between teacher self-efficacy and professional learning (Palmer 2011). It's amazing.

We can survey your staff online or I can come to your district and we can do a paper pencil survey.

Can't wait to hear from you.!!! Please feel free to call me at (870) 807-3990 cell# if you

have questions.

Warmly,
Patsy

Sent from my iPad

--

Richard Atwill
Superintendent
Blytheville Public Schools
870-762-2053

--

Patsy A. Hughey
Ed.S

--

Patsy A. Hughey
Ed.S

Camden-Fairview School District Authorization to Collect Data



Patsy Hughey <hugheyp61@gmail.com>

Doctoral Dissertation-Request for Permission

Sandy Russell <srussell@cfsd.k12.ar.us>
To: Patsy Hughey <hugheyp61@gmail.com>

Fri, Jan 20, 2017 at 2:41 PM

Patsy,

Mr. Keith said it was okay to proceed with your survey.

Sandy



From: Patsy Hughey <hugheyp61@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, January 20, 2017 12:51:16 PM

To: Sandy Russell

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

