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## Leadership Characteristics and Teacher Self-Efficacy from the Perspective of Teachers

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Leadership Characteristics and Teacher Self-Efficacy from the Perspective of Teachers

by

Carolyn Hayward

A Dissertation submitted to the Department of Leadership,

School Counseling & Sport Management

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

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## DEDICATION

*To the teachers and leaders serving the School District of Clay County, Florida*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my husband, Michael Hayward, Sr., your unwavering support and dedication to my educational and professional journey over the past 29 years have been my anchor and calm to every storm. I could not have started or finished this process without your love, commitment, and encouragement. You are the constant push towards greatness because you see in me what I cannot. To my children, Justin, Gabrielle, Alexandra, and Michael, Jr., you know where my journey started and the challenges I have faced. You have watched me persevere, knowing from whom I draw my strength. I want your take away to be that you can do ALL things through HIM that gives you strength. You come from a heritage of overcomers, and will continue a legacy of prominence.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this explanatory sequential mixed methods study was to investigate how elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate their level of self-efficacy, while examining the specific leadership characteristics influencing self-efficacy from the perspective of teachers. Additionally, this study sought to identify characteristics and actions of principals that teachers consider to be important to their self-efficacy in teaching from home on a virtual platform during the global pandemic. Using the Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey (TSES) and the Principal Rating and Ranking Scale (PRRS), teachers assessed their own self-efficacy and the characteristics of principals that they believe influence their self-efficacy. On the TSES, all of the 287 participating teachers rated their self-efficacy in the high or moderate range. On the PRRS, teachers reported believing that Communication, Inspiring, and Consideration are the most important characteristics of leaders that relate to teacher self-efficacy, with Contingent Rewards ranked the least influential. With respect to leader characteristics that support teaching from home during a global pandemic, the five teachers who were interviewed reported that Communication and Flexibility were the most supportive leadership characteristics during the school shut down, and that areas of opportunity for leaders during this time were more Communication, Situational Awareness, and Modeling. This work will give district leaders a clearer, more precise understanding of practices, strategies, and behaviors they can implement to improve teacher practice that results in improved student achievement.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

As high stakes testing, education legislation, and the new COVID-19 mandates increase demands on educators, teachers' belief in their own ability to improve student achievement (self-efficacy) can be a factor in their effectiveness. Hoy (2000) defined teacher self-efficacy as "teachers' confidence in their ability to promote students' learning" (p. 2). The research on how characteristics of principals relate to teacher self-efficacy is an important factor in improving teacher practice.

Self-efficacy is a significant factor when examining a teacher's potential and effectiveness. It can be a determining factor of one's ability to meet professional goals (Hipp, 1996). School administrators as instructional leaders are responsible for coaching, monitoring, and evaluating teacher practice. Their leadership influence and behaviors have been significantly related to teacher self-efficacy and the collective efficacy of a school (Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2006; Hoy et al., 2002; Protheroe, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). It is important for school leaders to know what specific leadership characteristics they can use that will directly impact teachers' belief in their ability, especially while navigating the uncertain territory of teaching through a pandemic. District leaders would benefit from a clearer, more precise understanding of high impact strategies and behaviors that lead to improving teacher practice and student achievement. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify specific leadership characteristics that teachers believe impact their self-efficacy. Using qualitative and quantitative data, the intent was to investigate differences in perceived self-efficacy linked to differences in demographic descriptors of schools and teachers, as well as the correlation between specific leadership characteristics and teachers' self-efficacy.

## **Problem Statement**

School leaders must be cognizant of their actions and words as they support and build capacity of the teachers in their buildings (Cansoy & Parlar, 2017; Lackey, 2019; Lambersky, 2016). By better understanding the specific leadership actions that directly impact teachers' belief in their ability, especially during the unprecedented educational circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, we must acknowledge areas of opportunity and continue to build collective efficacy one teacher at a time (Cansoy & Parlar, 2017; Goddard & Skrla, 2006). Additionally, district leaders would benefit from a clearer, more precise understanding of which high impact strategies and behaviors lead to improving teacher practice, resulting in raising student achievement and moving schools forward.

This brings us to the problem of practice. From a teacher's perspective, what specifically can school leaders do to build teacher self-efficacy, to empower them to believe that as a classroom teacher they can improve student achievement? Current research examines teacher self-efficacy and how school leaders can impact their belief in their ability to increase student achievement (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Lackey, 2019; Lambersky, 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). However, a gap in the research is the teachers' perspective on what leaders can do to build self-efficacy, especially during "crisis teaching" from home during the pandemic. For the purpose of this study, "crisis teaching" is defined as teachers moving from a face to face platform at school to a virtual platform at home with no preparation. (The time period of the school shutdown when teachers and students were working remotely from home during the COVID-19 pandemic in Florida was from March 13, 2020 to the end of the school year on June 3, 2020.)

## **Purpose Statement**

Characteristics of principals and how they relate to teacher efficacy is an important piece of the puzzle of teacher efficacy (Calik et al., 2012; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Lackey, 2019; Lambersky, 2016; Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016; Nir & Kranot, 2006; Özdemir et al., 2020; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Walker & Slear, 2011). The purpose of this study is to examine the specific leadership characteristics that teachers themselves feel influence teacher self-efficacy by answering the following research questions.

## **Research Questions**

1. How do elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida, rate their level of self-efficacy?
2. How do elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate and rank principals' leadership characteristics?
3. What specific leadership characteristics do teachers identify as important in relation to their self-efficacy?
4. What specific leadership characteristics do teachers identify as supportive while "crisis teaching" during the COVID-19 national school shutdown?

The answers to these research questions will inform principals, other leaders, and the field in general in their understanding of the leadership characteristics that teachers identify as building their sense of self-efficacy. Furthermore, identifying important school leader strategies during the 2020 school shutdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic will provide valuable data for educational researchers and educators in the event of another school shutdown.

## Overview of Theoretical Framework

Self-efficacy theory is an individual's belief that he or she is capable of performing a task (Bandura, 1986, 1997). As people work on tasks, they compare their performances with their goals (Bandura, 1986). Performances offer the best source of information. Success generally raises self-efficacy, and failure can lower it (Bandura, 1997). The most important sources of increasing self-efficacy are enactive mastery (psychological states through which a learner organizes his or her own set of beliefs regarding ability from a variety of sources), vicarious modeling (instruction that occurs when learners see and/or hear a learning situation), verbal persuasion (when other people encourage and convince you to perform a task, you tend to believe that you are more capable of performing the task), and physiological arousal (emotional state) (Bandura, 1986). According to Bandura's definition, self-efficacy is based on the "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to manage prospective situations" (p. 6). In other words, self-efficacy is the teacher's belief that he or she has the ability to teach students and increase their level of achievement.

Based on Bandura's theory, teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy will have students who perform at higher levels (Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2006; Hoy et al., 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). Furthermore, Bandura (1986, 1997) believed self-efficacy is a multi-dimensional trait, meaning it has multiple expectations, including performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal. These expectations are differentiated between outcome and efficacy expectations. A person's belief that certain actions will produce certain results is an outcome expectation. However, if they do not feel as though they are capable, they will not start or persevere. This state is referred to as

efficacy expectation. A concrete result of low efficacy expectation is that many teachers leave the profession within the first five years, making teacher retention a serious problem in education (Talley, 2017).

The research indicates that teachers with a low level of efficacy believed that student success in the classroom was beyond the scope of their ability, especially when students posed behavior problems or had academic difficulties (Lackey, 2019; Talley, 2017; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In contrast, teachers with a high level of efficacy believed they could positively impact students (Lackey, 2019; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). For instance, Woods and Martin (2016), in a narrative case study of a rural high poverty elementary school, found that leadership characteristics focused on vision, change, and providing necessary support and strategies, rather than educational programs, improved and sustained achievement.

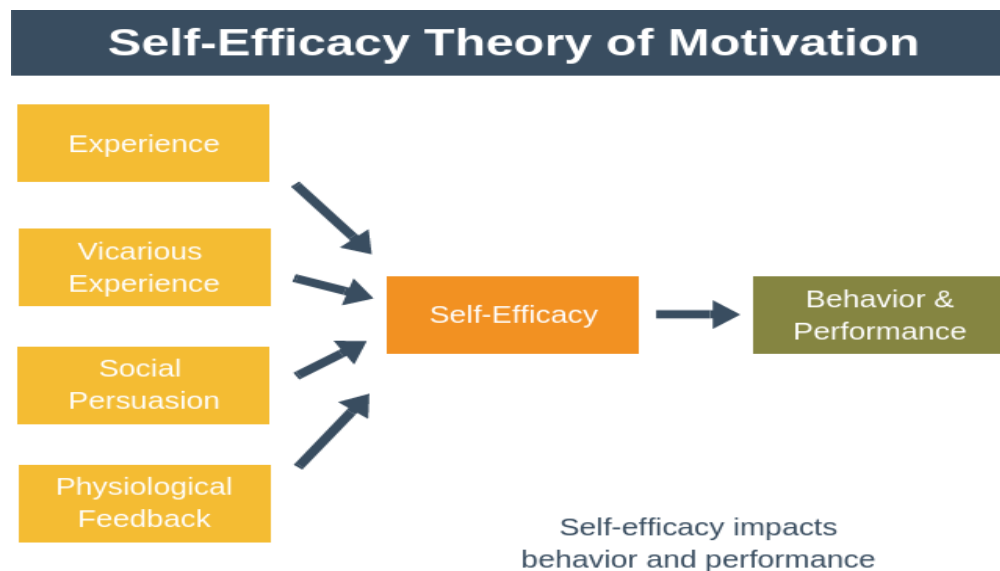
Although this study focuses on individual teacher self-efficacy, it is important to note that collective efficacy, defined by Goddard et al. (2017) as “the sense among group members that they have the capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to achieve their most important goals” (p.220), is a factor when improving student achievement in schools (Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2006; Goddard et al., 2017). The theoretical connection between self- and collective efficacy was made by Bandura (2000), who stated that self-efficacy “extends the conception of agent causality to people’s beliefs in their collective efficacy to produce desired outcomes” (p. 51). The two concepts are not contingent upon each other and are measured differently, with self-efficacy being measured individually and collective efficacy being measured as the performance of a group. However, the group measure encompasses the individual measure and, therefore, has a dependence on the individual measure (Bandura, 2000).



Additionally, collective efficacy has a higher effect size on student achievement than prior achievement, socioeconomic status, home environment, parental involvement, motivation, concentration/persistence/engagement, and homework (Donohoo et al., 2018; Hattie, 2016). The importance of both constructs to student achievement is evident (Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2006; Goddard et al., 2017). Goddard et al. (2017) reported that collective efficacy was more predictive of student achievement in math and reading in elementary grades than gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. Therefore, building teacher self-efficacy and from there increasing collective efficacy in schools should be a priority for leaders.

**Figure 1**

*Self-Efficacy Theory of Motivation*

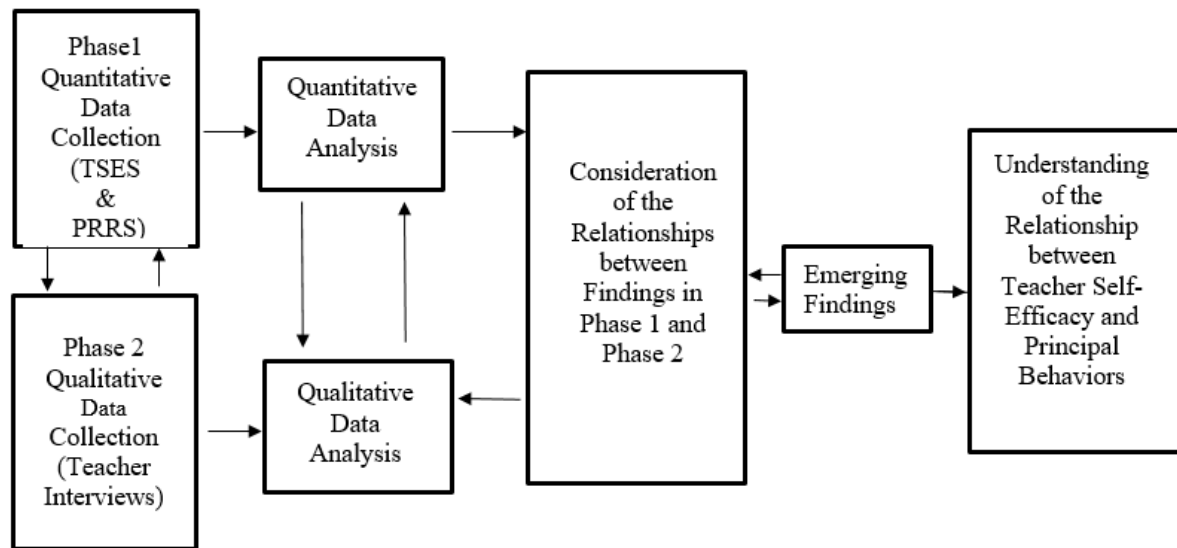


Source: Bandura, 1986

Bandura's self-efficacy theoretical framework (Figure 1) provides the lens for this study. In this study, the focus is on teacher self-efficacy and principal characteristics that teachers believe build their self-efficacy. The viewpoint and voice of the teacher participant will inform school leaders on specific actions that could improve leadership in schools.

### **Overview of Methodology**

To investigate how teachers rate their level of self-efficacy while identifying specific leadership characteristics that they believe impact their self-efficacy, an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design (Figure 2) was employed based on the research questions. Creswell and Creswell (2018) suggested "mixed methods is chosen because of its strength of drawing on both qualitative and quantitative research and minimizing the limitations of both approaches" (p. 216). For this study, it was important to use a mixed-methods design in order to have quantitative data about teacher efficacy and principal characteristics and their importance, while giving teachers the opportunity to share their viewpoint. Quantitative measures included survey responses and demographic and descriptive statistics that ranked leadership behaviors. For research question 1, the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) adapted by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) was used to measure teacher efficacy. For research question 2, principal behaviors were measured using the Principal Rating and Ranking Scale (PRRS) developed by Walker (2009). For research question 3, correlation analyses identified the extent to which the variables were related (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For research question 4, in order to gain a better understanding of the quantitative data, semi-structured virtual face-to-face interviews were conducted, with standardized questions prepared by this researcher.

**Figure 2***Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Research Design*

Demographic information, including age, race, gender, and experience, was collected in order to identify the teachers with the most experience who had worked with the largest number of principals in order to obtain the broadest possible perspective on leadership characteristics. The logic was that if a novice teacher had had only one leader in their career, they could have a very narrow perspective on the importance of specific principal characteristics. For example, if a teacher has never experienced a principal with outstanding communication skills, they may not consider communication an important factor relating to their self-efficacy.

Qualitative data was provided by semi-structured interviews. Standardized questions were prepared by this researcher, and interviews were conducted face to face and virtually. These

interviews provided teachers with an opportunity to share their perspectives regarding their level of self-efficacy and what they believe to be the characteristics of principals that directly affected them. The principal characteristics explored in this study were communication, consideration, discipline, empowering staff, flexibility, influence with supervisors, inspiring group purpose, modeling instructional expectations, monitoring and evaluating instruction, providing contingent rewards, and situational awareness (Walker, 2009). Including qualitative data provided opportunity for the teachers' voice to be heard and left room for unanticipated findings through collegial discourse with the participants. Merriam and Grenier (2019) pointed out that an advantage of conducting face-to-face interviews is the capturing of verbal and non-verbal cues through observations of body language. These informal observations can provide a more robust understanding of the participant and a greater depth of awareness relating to the research questions.

Combining qualitative with quantitative data helped to impart a clearer understanding of the research questions. Creswell and Creswell (2018) pointed out that "all methods have bias and weaknesses, and the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data neutralized the weakness of each form of data" (p. 14).

### **Significance of the Research**

The research on principal characteristics and how they relate to teacher self-efficacy is an important piece of the puzzle for the stated problem of practice, what specifically school leaders can do to build teacher self-efficacy. School leaders know they need highly effective teachers in their buildings. The leadership characteristics employed by principals to support teachers have been linked to school climate and culture, job satisfaction, and also student achievement (DuFour

& Marzano, 2011; Goddard et al., 2004; Hoy et al., 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). The existing literature emphasizes the importance of the relationship between teacher efficacy and principal leadership (Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016; Nir & Kranot, 2006; Özdemir et al., 2020; Walker & Slear, 2011). Calik et al. (2012) found that teachers' belief in their ability to get the job done makes them more effective in the classroom. This work extends the existing research by identifying specifically what characteristics of principals teachers think are the most important.

Data specific to “crisis teaching” during the pandemic and the characteristics of principals deemed by teachers as supportive during the period March 13 through June 3, 2020 is an additional component of this work. This study is part of newly emerging research regarding the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. In a recent survey conducted during “crisis teaching”, 1000 teachers nationwide reported that prior to the pandemic more than 80% were satisfied with their professional accomplishments. However, only 54-55% reported the same regarding their performance during the school shutdown period (Schaffhauser, 2020). This study sheds light on leadership support during this period of crisis and will help school leaders navigate future crisis periods.

### **Organization of the Study**

This study examines several areas relating to teacher self-efficacy: how elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate their self-efficacy, the specific leader characteristics that teachers feel influence their self-efficacy, how teachers rate and rank specific leadership characteristics, and the leadership characteristics or supportive actions deemed important to teacher self-efficacy during the COVID-19 shutdown. Chapter 2 provides a review of the related literature, connecting it to the research questions. Chapter 3 describes detailed methodology for

this mixed methods study, including the rationale for the methodology, selection of participants, and the qualitative and quantitative methods used for data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 reviews the context of this study, details the findings from surveys and interviews, identifies patterns and trends in the data, and discusses their relevance to the research questions. Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes the research findings, summarizes answers to the research questions, shares implications and future research questions, and makes recommendations for further study.

### **Chapter Summary**

Principals influence teacher efficacy and teachers influence student achievement (DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Goddard et al., 2004; Hoy et al., 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). The importance of this research is to answer the question of what specific behaviors or strategies a principal can employ to raise teachers' level of self-efficacy, with an ancillary outcome of improving student achievement. Hattie's research identified collective efficacy as having the highest effect size (1.57) of factors influencing student achievement (Donohoo et al., 2018; Hattie, 2016). Therefore, it makes sense for school leaders to be able to identify the factors contributing to an increased level of self-efficacy for individual teachers. This study informs and adds to the current literature by offering data from a teachers' perspective. The addition of teachers' voice to this important area of research gives principals specific strategies, from the teachers' vantage point, for raising teacher self-efficacy in their building (collective efficacy).

This study employs both quantitative and qualitative data. The qualitative data in this study tells the story behind the numbers, giving teachers the voice that informs leadership for the good of student achievement. Creswell and Creswell (2018) argued that mixing methods gives the reader "more insight and provides a stronger understanding of the problem or questions than

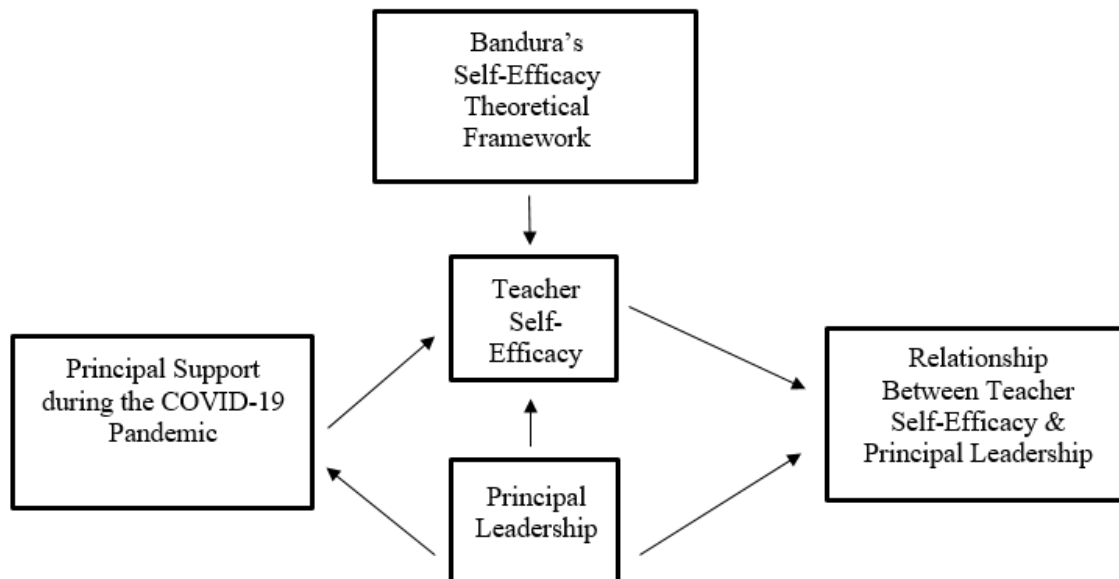
either by itself” (p.213). By examining self-efficacy from the teachers’ perspective and what contributing factors they identify, leaders will be able to pinpoint areas of opportunity. As teachers re-acclimated to the brick and mortar setting since being at home and online during COVID-19 “crisis teaching”, many of the teachers interviewed for this study craved the collegial interaction and support provided by school leaders. Moving forward, data collected regarding leadership support during the pandemic and whether teachers feel their sense of self-efficacy suffered during this time will offer guidance in the event of future such crises.

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this time of uncertainty for teachers, when lawmakers are making important decisions about education and classroom instruction, teachers look to their leaders for reinforcement of their ability to improve student achievement. Leadership behaviors relate to the problem of what specifically school leaders can do to build teacher self-efficacy. Principal leadership has been linked to positive school culture, high teacher morale and satisfaction, and attracting and retaining quality teachers, and perhaps the most important ultimate goal is student achievement (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2012; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Nir & Kranot, 2006). Figure 3 shows the relationship among the topics in this literature review.

**Figure 3**

*Flowchart of the Review of Literature*





### **Teacher Self-Efficacy**

Teacher self-efficacy, collectively, has been regarded by many as a significant indicator of student achievement (Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2007; Hoy et al., 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). The research on teacher self-efficacy and student achievement is rooted in a study by the RAND Corporation evaluating Title III and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Hipp, 1996). As Kang (2017) referenced in her research, a study of 20 elementary schools, Amor et al. (1976) found that statistically significant increases in student reading achievement were correlated with teachers who had higher levels of self-efficacy. Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) and Kelley and Finnigan (2003) reported similar results, providing support to the claim that teachers with higher self-efficacy have students with higher levels of achievement.

Hoy et al. (2002) asserted little or no direct relationship between principal leadership and student achievement. Yet there is an abundance of evidence that teacher efficacy positively affects student achievement (Amor et al., 1976; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Kang, 2017; Kelley & Finnigan, 2003). Additionally, we know that collective teacher efficacy within a school is an indicator of student achievement (Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2007; Hoy et al., 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). Moreover, previous research has established a relationship between principal behaviors, teacher self-efficacy, and collective efficacy in their buildings (Bellibas & Liu, 2017; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Goddard et al., 2004; Hoy et al., 2002;

Mehdinezhad & Mansouri, 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). Hoy et al. (2002) were emphatic in their declaration of no direct relationship, an indirect positive effect is plausible.

Gonzalez et al. (2017) found that teachers reported time restraints, curriculum modifications, testing the Exceptional Student Education population, school leadership, and educational triage as factors impacting their self-efficacy. Since the inception of the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), and the revised version, Every Student Succeeds Act (2015), the expectation of all states is that there must be standardized testing to measure student achievement and teacher performance. This expectation continues to create angst among educators, not necessarily because of the measure, but because the measure is used to grade student achievement, teacher performance and the quality of a school (Haberman, 2005; Hoy et al., 2002; Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008). Bandura (1994) asserted that stress levels in teachers with a high level of self-confidence are minimized and their belief in their ability is maximized. Interestingly enough, Fox and Peters (2013) and Christian (2010) found that standardized testing did not impact self-efficacy for teachers with high self-efficacy,

The research of Walker and Slear (2011) mirrors what Hipp (1996) found in her study. They identified three actionable moves by leaders that significantly related to teacher self-efficacy: modeling instructional expectations, communication, and providing contingent rewards. Interestingly, Walker and Slear also identified important factors that were specific to the amount of experience the teachers had, measured in number of years teaching. For new teachers (1-3 years), modeling instructional expectations had the highest impact on self-efficacy. For experienced teachers (4-7 years), modeling instructional expectations and communication were significant. For very experienced teachers (more than 7 years), communication, consideration,

and modeling instructional expectations, in that order, were significant; and for extensively experienced teachers (more than 15 years), inspiring group purpose was the single most significant leadership move (Walker & Slear, 2011).

Walker and Slear (2011) found a direct correlation between years of experience and level of self-efficacy. As predicted, as experience grew so did teacher self-efficacy. However, as noted above, an interesting outcome of this study was that the principal behaviors identified by teachers as important changed with level of experience. Additionally, Goddard and Skrla (2006) found “that experienced teachers (those with more than 10 years of teaching experience) had significantly higher collective efficacy beliefs than did their less experienced counterparts” (p. 228). They ascertained that teacher experience affecting student achievement is a reasonable outcome. Based on the work of Whitaker (2002), Lackey (2019) identified a relationship between teacher self-efficacy and principal behaviors deemed supportive wherein supportive behaviors were positive, respectful, and edifying of others. Although the idea may seem vague, it is common sense for most leaders.

### **Principal Leadership**

Leadership has been considered a significant factor contributing to performance, job satisfaction and student achievement. Hattie (2016) asserted that schools with effective leadership generally perform better than those where effective leadership is absent. Research on leadership and its relationship to teacher self-efficacy has been identified as an area of importance (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Leadership styles are characterized using a variety of descriptors such as instructional, servant, transformational, collective, and more (Blanchard & Hodges, 2003; Blasé & Blasé, 2000; Brinkerhoff et al., 2015; Bush & Glover, 2014; Dufour &

Marzano, 2011; Hattie, 2016; Hipp, 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). These styles are defined as:

- Instructional leadership - “working to integrate reflection and growth to build a school culture of individual and shared, critical examination for instructional improvement” (Blasé & Blasé, 2000, p. 4)
- Servant leadership – “leading with vision, defining and modeling operating values, structure and behavioral norms, creating a follower environment with partners in the vision, and moving to the bottom of the hierarchy with service in mind” (Blanchard & Hodges, 2003, p. 59)
- Transformational leadership - Models behavior, inspires group purpose, and provides contingent rewards (Hipp & Bredeson, 1995)
- Collective leadership – “a group of people working together toward a shared goal” (Brinkerhoff et al., 2015, p. 51).

Styles of leadership are over-arching descriptors and can provide context for the leadership characters measured in this study. Many leadership measures have been utilized, including the Principal Leadership Questionnaire (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006), the Inventory of Strategies Used by Principals to Influence Classroom Teaching (Hipp, 1996), Leadership Practices Inventory (Kouzes & Posner, 2012), and the PRRS (Walker, 2009). This study utilizes Walker’s PRRS (2009) because the characteristics measured fall into the four leadership styles identified above, thus building connections with characteristics without limiting to one particular style.

Blasé and Blasé (2000) identified the principal characteristic of instructional leadership as “a dialogue that encourages teachers to critically reflect on their learning and professional practice” (p. 2). In a mixed-methods study of 800 teachers, using an open-ended questionnaire, Blasé and Blasé found that principals talking with teachers to promote reflection on practice and promoting professional growth for teachers were important attributes of effective leaders. This body of work mirrors the conclusions of Dufour and Marzano (2011), who affirmed the shift in leadership attributes as principals become instructional leaders.

Blanchard and Hodges (2003) referenced using a coaching style of leadership within the servant leadership context. They reminded us with biblical scripture that Jesus coached his disciples: He did not scold or blast them, but supported them. Blanchard and Hodges broke down servant leadership into four dimensions: the head (assumptions and thinking), the hands (application and leadership behavior), the heart (motives and EGO—Edging God Out or Exalting God Only), and the habits (solitude, prayer, study of scripture, unconditional love, etc.) (Blanchard & Hodges, 2003).

Studies by Hipp and Bredeson (1995) and Hipp (1996) indicated a direct relationship between transformational leadership style and teacher self-efficacy (Nir & Kranot, 2006). Transformational leadership behaviors (i.e. models behavior, inspires group purpose and provides contingent rewards) were found to be significant leadership characteristics that build teacher efficacy (Hipp, 1996). Transformational leadership positively relates to teacher efficacy when principals are consistent in providing motivation and inspiration, garnering more buy-in to the leader’s vision (Leithwood & Slegers, 2006). Transformational leaders who consistently consider each individual in targeting support and providing “intellectual stimulation” have

teachers with higher self-efficacy in their buildings. Transformational leadership, in seeking to change beliefs and attitudes within the culture of the school, can also provide a level of individual support needed for teachers to believe in their ability. In addition, it is plausible that under these conditions collective efficacy and teacher self-efficacy have a mutually influential relationship (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Leithwood & Slegers, 2006; Windlinger, et al., 2020).

Hipp (1996) found that five of Leithwood's seven dimensions of transformational leadership behaviors had varying degrees of influence on teacher efficacy: models behavior, inspires group purpose, provides contingent rewards, holds high performance expectations, and provides support. Hipp's findings specifically linked two leadership behaviors (models behavior and provides contingent rewards) significantly with personal teacher self-efficacy, and three (models behavior, provides contingent rewards, and inspires group purpose) with general or collective teacher efficacy (Hipp, 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

Similarly, collective leadership, defined as "a group of people working together toward a shared goal" (Brinkerhoff et al., 2015, p. 51) shares elements of transformational leadership including trust, shared power, transparent and effective communication, accountability, and shared learning. Collective leadership has many benefits that can positively affect teacher efficacy. Brinkerhoff et al. delineated them as follows: better decisions and increased effectiveness, increased self-direction and motivation, removing barriers, shared responsibility, realizing potential, increased engagement and investment, and sustainability.

Bambrick-Santoyo (2012) answered the question of what makes education effective by stating it is "well-leveraged leadership that ensures great teaching to guarantee great learning" (p. 6). For leaders to ensure great teaching they must know what it looks like and model it for

teachers and provide feedback to assist teachers in their instruction, thus building self-efficacy.

Nir and Kranot (2006) concluded that the relationship between the factors of principal leadership style is “complex and mediated by teachers' satisfaction on the job,” thus principal leadership style is not an exclusive contributor to teacher self-efficacy.

Sun and Xia (2018), in a study on leadership and teacher self-efficacy, concluded that leadership has both direct and indirect impacts on teachers' job satisfaction, with self-efficacy being a mediating factor for the indirect effect. Teachers' preference is a much more collaborative, inclusive method of leading. Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) contended that the practices of shared leadership styles and professional community are more important than trust in leadership when measuring teacher self-efficacy.

Strong instructional leaders model high expectations and communicate their belief system to the teachers and students under their charge. Additionally, they have strong self-efficacy (Hattie, 2016; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Nir & Kranot, 2006). Building-level leadership is evolving away from a focus on management of property, textbooks, and facilities and becoming more knowledge-based in the areas of teacher instruction, facilitation, and academic support (Hallinger et al., 2017; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; McGuigan & Hoy, 2006). Leaders are recognizing that there is a connection between teacher self-efficacy and student achievement, and searching for a formula to build it within their buildings is a priority (Hallinger et al., 2017; Salazer, 2014).

### **Relationship between Principal Leadership and Teacher Efficacy**

In the world of high stakes testing, education being managed by lawmakers, and the constant stream of high impact initiatives, stress can impact teachers' self-efficacy (Gonzalez et

al., 2017). School leaders must work to counter the stressors with behaviors that build self-efficacy in the face of aversive factors.

Gonzalez et al. (2017) found two significant factors contributing to teacher self-efficacy in times of stress: school leadership, and educational triage which “effectively describes the necessity of teachers teaching differently to different cognitive groupings of students in order to meet their needs” (p. 526). Teachers seeking input and administrators validating their efforts were two actionable moves that positively contributed to teacher self-efficacy even under stress. Gonzalez et al. also found that stress increased as self-efficacy decreased. Knowing this allows leaders to make adjustments both in their delivery of information that could cause stress and in offering support during the stress (Lambersky, 2016). Interestingly, Lambersky’s (2016) qualitative study found that principal behaviors shape the emotions of teachers and influence teacher morale, burnout, stress, commitment and self-efficacy. Such behaviors include professional respect shown for teacher capability; providing appropriate acknowledgement for teacher commitment, competence, and sacrifice; protecting teachers from damaging experiences like harassment; maintaining a visible presence in the school; allowing teachers’ voices to be heard; and communicating a satisfying vision for their school. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the personal and professional circumstances it has caused for teachers while they attempt to normalize the situation for their students, administrators should take note of Lambersky’s findings.

Leadership behaviors relate to the problem of practice by identifying general behaviors or characteristics that correlate with teacher self-efficacy. Leaders need to narrow down style to specific leadership characteristics in order to build self-efficacy to promote student achievement.



Why is this important? Because principal leadership has been linked not only to a positive school culture, high teacher morale and satisfaction, and attracting and retaining quality teachers, but also student achievement (DuFour & Marzano, 2011; Goddard et al., 2004; Hoy et al., 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004).

In a mixed-methods study of 104,358 teachers chosen through the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (Kastberg, et al., 2021), Bellibas and Liu (2017) found a significant positive relationship between what principals perceive as their leadership behavior and self-efficacy of teachers in the areas of classroom management, instruction, and student engagement. The researchers found that “principals can influence teachers’ perceptions of self-efficacy by engaging in activities aimed to improve teaching and learning in their schools” (p. 64). The study indicated that the efficacy of the teachers in the building can be attributed to the school’s instructional leadership practices.

Teachers’ belief that what they do is important becomes a valuable predictor of the impact of the teacher on student achievement. In a descriptive and correlational research study of 254 randomly sampled teachers, Mehdinezhad and Mansouri (2016) found a significant relationship between teacher self-efficacy and leadership behaviors. This study and others referenced in their work (Bellibas & Liu, 2017; Hipp & Bredeson, 1995; Hipp, 1996) provide a research base supporting a relationship between principal behaviors and teacher self-efficacy.

### **Principal Support during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Schools in Florida initially closed down on March 13, 2020 for two weeks. On March 17 the closure was extended through April 14. Again, on March 30 the Florida Department of

Education extended the closure until May 1. Finally, on April 18, Governor Ron DeSantis closed all schools in Florida for the remainder of the school year. The total number of students affected was 2,816,791 (Ballotpedia, n.d.). Schools made a rapid transition to remote learning, in which students and teachers worked from home. Teachers provided instruction to students using online platforms such as Google or Zoom. Many teachers had limited knowledge of the technology they were being asked to use to reach their students. The Clay County, Florida school district provided a virtual in-service day to acclimate teachers to their new style of teaching.

Teachers were responsible not only for teaching from home with little to no preparation, they were also navigating their own familial concerns regarding health and safety. During this time teacher morale plummeted. Based on a survey conducted by the EDWeek Research Center, 56% of teachers surveyed nationally reported that their morale decreased after the pandemic began (Decker et al., 2021). While attempting to guide teachers remotely, school leaders were still at school continuing school business and trying to support teachers, students, and families from afar.

Much of the current research on teaching during the pandemic-induced school shutdown is from higher education. Jelińska & Paradowski (2021) surveyed 1500 teachers from 118 countries. Their findings suggest that “teachers were most engaged and coped best with the transition when they had prior experience with remote instruction, worked in the higher education sector, and used real-time synchronous modalities” (p. 303). An area of opportunity for this study is identifying principal supports that teachers believe would have been helpful to their self-efficacy during the pandemic.

## **Chapter Summary**

The research summarized in this chapter that connects principal behaviors with teacher self-efficacy lays the foundation for this study. The research gap and opportunity for this research is identifying specific leadership characteristics from the teachers' perspective. Giving teachers a voice through the qualitative interviews and using their different lens to elaborate on the quantitative data adds to this research a rich perspective and meaningful action steps for school leaders. Adding in the unprecedented factor of the COVID-19 pandemic and how leaders build self-efficacy during crisis learning lays a foundation for future reference.

The literature on educational leadership contains an abundance of research models and literature with respect to school leaders making the shift from "school manager" to instructional leader (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2012; Bush & Glover, 2014; Dufour & Marzano, 2011). As school leaders decide who they are and who they want to become and reflect on areas of opportunity, the amount of professional literature can be overwhelming. This researcher's intent is to articulate clear, bite-size, actionable behaviors that teachers believe build their self-efficacy.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In pursuit of investigating how elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate their level of self-efficacy and identify specific leadership characteristics that impact their self-efficacy, mixed methods were employed. Surveys and interviews were utilized to address the research questions in this study.

### **Research Questions**

1. How do elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate their level of self-efficacy?
2. How do elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate and rank principals' leadership characteristics?
3. What specific leadership characteristics do teachers identify as important in relation to their self-efficacy?
4. What specific leadership behaviors do teachers identify as supportive while "crisis teaching" during the COVID-19 national school shutdown?

### **Research Design**

An explanatory sequential mixed-methods methods design was utilized to measure teacher self-efficacy and the importance of specific principal characteristics to teacher self-efficacy from the teachers' perspective. Additionally, because of the unique circumstance of teaching from home during a global pandemic, teachers also had an opportunity to identify principal characteristics and actions that they consider to be important factors relating to their self-efficacy during the pandemic, offering insight in the event of another national school closure that involves teaching from a virtual platform.

By using a mixed-methods design, the quantitative data collected from teachers was explained more deeply with the quantitative data from the teacher interviews. Creswell and Creswell (2018) considered a mixed-methods study an avenue for the researcher to design the study in such a way as to gain an understanding of why the results from the quantitative data have occurred, explain variations in responses, and examine the data in the context of possible long-term outcomes for leadership.

The design of this explanatory sequential mixed-method study consisted of two phases, in which phase 1 was quantitative and phase 2 was qualitative (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Phase 1 consisted of two teacher surveys: TSES measured how teachers rate their self-efficacy, and PRRS measured how teachers rate and rank the importance of principal characteristics. Phase 2 consisted of individual face-to-face virtual interviews with teachers using a universal interview protocol with open-ended questions, offering more insight into the survey data.

### **Site Selection**

Teachers from all 27 Clay County District elementary schools, the school district in which this researcher is employed, were invited to participate. These schools cover a range of demographics, with 12 being Title 1 schools that serve marginalized populations of students. The 27 schools range in school grade designated by the Florida Department of Education based on the results of standardized tests from A to D. This investigation took place in a high performing school district, with only one low-performing school of the 27 surveyed. The complete demographic picture of each elementary school is listed in Table 1.

**Table 1***Clay County Schools – Demographic Data (2018-19)*

School	Grade 18/19	Title 1	ED <sup>a</sup>	ESE <sup>b</sup>	ELL <sup>c</sup>	White	Black	Hisp.	Multi- racial	Other	Male	Female
AES	A	No	42	20.5	3.7	37.5	27.2	23.2	8.8	2.8	50.4	49.6
CEB	D	Yes	100	24.2	3.8	60.8	19.9	14.2	4.8	0.3	50.7	49.3
CGE	B	Yes	81	20.5	2.4	60.3	14.7	17.7	5	2.3	54.2	45.8
CHE	B	Yes	81	26.6	N/A	93.4	N/A	3.3	N/A	3.3	51.4	48.6
DIS	A	No	66.8	25	3.3	65.5	10.6	14.8	6.1	3	51.4	48.6
DOE	A	No	25.3	15.1	2.8	41.5	33.3	13.9	6.8	4.5	53.9	46.1
FIE	A	No	22.5	29.8	1.7	71.1	6.2	12.9	6	3.8	50.8	49.2
GPE	C	Yes	99.2	16.8	7.8	26.4	48.1	18.3	5.2	0.2	55.6	44.4
KHE	A	Yes	79	27	N/A	89.3	3.1	4.9	2.6	0.1	54.2	45.8
LAE	B	No	37.4	27.4	N/A	75.2	9.3	8.5	5.6	1.4	50.4	49.6
LSE	A	No	64.3	19.4	2.9	59.8	12.1	16.3	9	2.6	52.5	47.5
MBE	A	Yes	77.7	22.5	N/A	86.4	N/A	6.4	3.7	3.5	53.3	46.7
MCE	C	Yes	76.7	21.8	6.3	52.2	17.5	19.6	7.3	3.4	56	44
MRE	A	Yes	83.3	30.6	N/A	89.3	N/A	5.8	3	1.9	52.5	47.5
OPE	A	No	22.7	15.5	N/A	70.7	4.7	14.4	7.6	2.5	51	49
OVE	A	No	32	23.7	4.4	38.3	27.8	20.7	8.1	4.6	51	49
PES	A	No	28.4	19.6	3.2	71.9	7.6	14.8	3.2	2.5	48.5	51.5
POE	B	No	36.1	22	6.8	28.4	38.4	18.6	9	5.6	55.1	44.9
ROE	A	No	37.2	26.4	N/A	67.6	8.8	14.4	8.1	1.1	54.7	45.3
RVE	A	Yes	70.8	27.8	2.3	59.8	14.2	17.3	6	2.5	54.6	45.4
SBJ	B	Yes	87.5	21.1	8.2	36.8	27.1	23	10.8	2.1	50.3	49.7
SLE	A	No	35	24.6	N/A	81.8	4.5	8.8	4.6	0.03	52.8	47.2
SPE	A	No	56.8	20.7	N/A	63.1	12.2	13.6	8.9	2.2	51.3	48.7
TBE	A	No	24.4	23	3.4	67.5	8.7	14.4	5.2	4.2	52.3	47.7
TES	A	No	38.4	24.2	N/A	67.6	13.6	10.1	7.5	1.2	52.4	47.6
WEC	A	Yes	84.2	28.9	2.7	45.1	26.2	17.9	17.9	3.1	53.4	46.6
WES	B	Yes	98.7	30.5	N/A	88.7	1.7	5.3	3.5	0.8	51.7	48.3

<sup>a</sup>ED=Economically Disadvantaged; <sup>b</sup>ESE=Exceptional Student Education; <sup>c</sup>ELL= English Language Learner

Source: Florida Department of Education, n.d.

### Participant Selection

Survey invitations (Appendix A) were sent via email using a school district email list to all 1,825 teachers in the 27 Clay County elementary schools. The survey invitation described the

study, guaranteed confidentiality, outlined the expectations, and invited the teachers to participate. Participation was entirely voluntary; no incentive to participate was offered, nor did participation or lack thereof impact the participants in any way. Anonymous online surveys protected the identity of the participants. It also ensured participation was voluntary. The survey was accessed by 358 teachers, of which 71 were excluded due to an incomplete consent form and/or survey. Thus the final sample consisted of 287 teachers, representing all 27 elementary schools in the district.

### **Data Collection**

As described by Creswell and Creswell (2018), data collection consisted of two phases when utilizing an explanatory sequential design. Phase 1 consisted of a survey (Appendix B) whose link was sent to all elementary teachers in the district. The survey, administered via Survey Monkey, asked demographic information questions; it also contained questions from the original TSES (short form) (Appendix C) and PRRS (Appendix D) surveys. Phase 2 consisted of face-to-face, virtual interviews (Appendix E) with participants selected from among those who indicated in the Phase 1 survey their willingness to participate in an interview, in which case they provided their email address and their identity was no longer hidden.

#### ***Quantitative (Phase 1)***

Demographic data collected using questions developed by the researcher concerned age, gender, years of experience, and number of principals under whom they had worked during their years teaching. For research question 1, the TSES questions adapted by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) (Appendix C) were used to measure teacher efficacy. The TSES uses a Likert scale (1-9) in which teachers identified beliefs about themselves and their perceived importance on a

scale of 1 (“not at all”) to 9 (“a great deal”). The TSES contains 24 “teacher beliefs” (TB) which measure what teachers believe about themselves based on their ability, resources, and opportunities. For research question 2, principal behaviors were measured using the PRRS questions developed by Walker (2009) (Appendix D). The PRRS uses a Likert scale (1-9) in which teachers identify principal characteristics they deem important on a scale of 1 (“very low importance”) to 9 (“very high importance”). The principal characteristics are communication, consideration, discipline, empowering staff, flexibility, influence with supervisors, inspiring group purpose, modeling instructional expectations, monitoring and evaluating instruction, providing contingent rewards, and situational awareness (Walker, 2009). Additionally, teachers are asked to rank the principal characteristics in order of importance to them from 1 (“most important”) to 9 (“least important”).

For research question 3, a correlation analysis of the questions that originated from the demographic questions and the PRRS and TSES surveys was conducted to identify relationships between variables.

### ***Qualitative (Phase 2)***

From the completed surveys, five teachers were randomly selected from different schools for interviews based on their response indicating they would be willing to participate. To answer research question 4, and in order to gain a better understanding of the quantitative data, semi-structured interviews (Appendix E) were conducted face to face and virtually using standardized questions prepared by this researcher. Each interview lasted approximately 10-15 minutes. Verbatim responses from each participant were recorded via Google Meets. The information from interviews was coded using the 6 step framework for thematic analysis (Braun & Clark,



2006, 2013). The coding process started with preliminary grouping of extracts based on the research questions and leadership characteristics. The actual coding was inductive, working through each transcript without preset codes. Not every piece of text was coded, only text that was relevant and captured something interesting about the leadership characteristics identified in the PRRS (Walker, 2009). The codes were identified by themes with some codes fitting into more than one theme. Working backwards from codes, specific themes were first identified, followed by more encompassing themes that espoused the essence of the research questions. The protocol used for teacher interviews was based on research question 4 which provided question prompts, but the interview was not limited to these questions depending on teacher responses.

A researcher's notebook was used for note-taking during each interview as well as video recording with transcription to ensure accuracy. Each virtual interview took place at the location and time of the teacher's choice. Notes were taken on non-verbal cues such as body language, affect, and engagement.

## **Data Analysis**

### ***Quantitative (Phase I)***

Demographic information was collected in order to identify the age of participants, their level of experience, and the number of principals they have worked with in order to obtain the broadest possible perspective on leadership attributes and behaviors. The logic was that if a novice teacher has had only one leader in their career, they could have a very narrow perspective on the importance of specific principal characteristics. For example, if a teacher has never experienced a principal with outstanding communication skills, they may not consider communication an important factor relating to their self-efficacy.

Quantitative data analysis was conducted using Intellectus Statistic (<https://analyze.intellectusstatistics.com/>) to identify common themes throughout both surveys (TSES & PRRS). Descriptive statistics included mean, median and mode as well as the ranking of 11 leadership behaviors. Correlation analyses were used to examine relationships between variables.

A two-tailed independent samples *t*-test was initially considered to examine whether the mean of the TB/Self-Efficacy Total was significantly different between the Title I and Non-Title I categories of school Context. Using this test requires assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance. Shapiro-Wilk tests were conducted to determine whether the TB/Self-Efficacy Total could have been produced by a normal distribution for each category of Context (Razali & Wah, 2011). Because the data were not normally distributed, a two-tailed Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test was conducted to examine whether there were significant differences in TB/Self-Efficacy Totals between the levels of Context. The two-tailed Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test is an alternative to the independent samples *t*-test, but does not share the same assumptions (Conover & Iman, 1981).

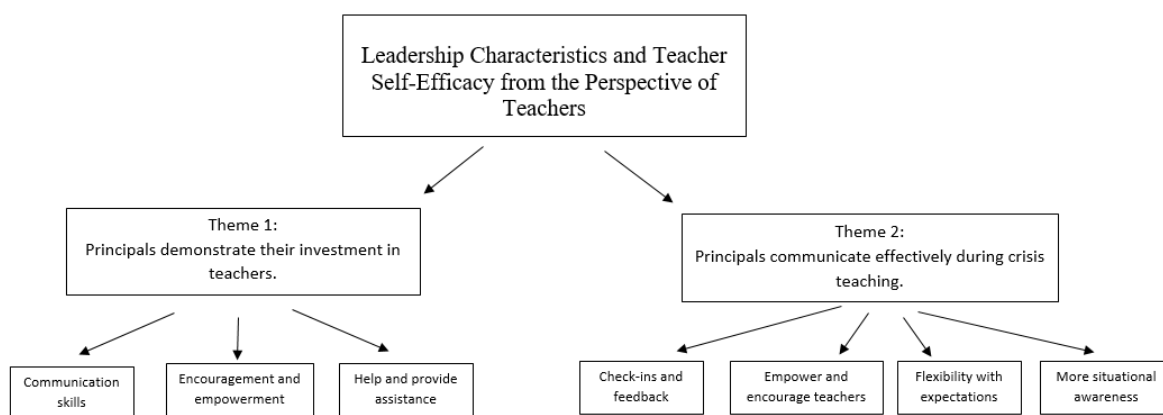
### ***Qualitative (Phase 2)***

Google Meets was used to video record verbatim responses from each participant. Each interview was transcribed. The information from interviews was coded by common leadership characteristics from the PRRS (Walker, 2009). Additionally, using thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2006, 2013), the data was coded to isolate phrases, sentences, and paragraphs that talk about leadership characteristics deemed important and relating to the teachers' self-efficacy. These isolated phrases, sentences, and paragraphs were labeled by theme. Next, codes were

clustered together that have similar meanings or have a relationship to one another. Then, I examined the clusters to see if there were any additional relationships between the clusters themselves. Lastly, the themes were defined according to the content and meaning of the codes. The data from Phase 2 is reported in order to clarify and add depth to teacher self-efficacy levels based on what the teachers believe to be important. Figure 4 and Table 2 represent the thematic map and coding process used to analyze the qualitative data.

**Figure 4**

*Thematic Map of Qualitative Data*



**Table 2***Codes and Themes for Qualitative Analysis*

Topic Leadership Characteristics and Teacher Self-Efficacy						
Theme 1 Principals Demonstrate Their Investment in Teachers			Theme 2 Principals Communicate Effectively During Crisis Teaching			
Communication Skills	Encouragement & Empowerment	Help/Assistance	Check-ins & Feedback	Empower & encourage teachers	Flexibility with expectations	More situational awareness
Helpful critique and feedback	Empowerment	Accountability	More check-ins	Encouraging & inspiring	Greater flexibility	
Listening skills	Encouragement	Flexible	More feedback & suggestions to improve	Everything was done right	Model instructional expectations	
		Inspirational			Provided flexibility	
		Modeling and setting example			Reduce expectations	
		PD Opportunities				
		Show care and concern				
		Team player				

**Researcher Positionality**

As an elementary school leader (5 years) and teacher (21 years), my passion for supporting teachers and empowering them to be teacher leaders is driven by my own experiences as a teacher with many different leaders during my career. My experience has been with a variety of leaders, from those who merely managed from an office to those who were true instructional leaders facilitating learning opportunities. The leaders who inspired me to stretch and grow were the ones who believed in me as a teacher leader, gave me opportunities to strengthen my craft and voice, and supported me in building my self-efficacy. Without those experiences, which resulted in my high level of self-efficacy, I would not have had the confidence or belief that I could be a principal. As a leader, it is my desire to identify specific leadership characteristics that will build self-efficacy of the teachers in my building. It is my desire to use feedback from

teachers to identify specific actionable behaviors for leaders to use in their daily routines that will build teacher self-efficacy.

Researchers have connected teacher efficacy to higher levels of student achievement, positive school climate and culture, and teachers having a positive outlook on their teaching experience (Hoy, 2000; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Additionally, previous research shows a connections between principal leadership characteristics and increased teacher self-efficacy (Calik et al., 2012; Dufour & Marzano, 2011; Hipp, 1996). My job as principal is to ensure that the above listed outcomes occur in my building. Therefore, it is important to me to calibrate my actions with those principal characteristics identified by teachers as important in building teacher self-efficacy. My experience as teacher and leader, along with the life experiences that come with my age ground my position throughout this study.

### **Reliability and Validity**

Tschannan-Moran defined teacher efficacy as “the beliefs (sic) in their capability to make a difference in student learning, to be able to get through even to students who are difficult or unmotivated” (Tschannan-Moran, n.d., paragraph 3). TSES is considered a reliable and valid instrument, ranked from moderately to highly reliable for both the short and long forms. There is no information available on the reliability of the individual subscales (Statistics Solutions, n.d.). The short form was used for this study for convenience. Table 3 shows Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  scores for TSES ranging from 0.87 to 0.94 with the overall score for the TSES being 0.94. The guideline for using Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  measure is that  $\geq .70$  and greater is good,  $\geq .80$  and greater is better, and  $\geq .90$  and greater is best (Statistical Solutions, n.d.). By these measures, the TSES is reliable (Table 3).

**Table 3***Reliability of TSES*

	<b>Long Form</b>			<b>Short Form</b>		
	Mean	SD	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Mean	SD	Cronbach's $\alpha$
TSES	7.1	0.94	.94	7.1	0.98	.90
Engagement	7.3	1.1	.87	7.2	1.2	.81
Instruction	7.3	1.1	.91	7.3	1.2	.86
Management	6.7	1.1	.90	6.7	1.2	.86

Source: Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001

PRRS was field tested by Walker (2009) in a mid-Atlantic middle school with ten teachers (Table 4). Walker (2009) contended, “The field test showed the face validity was present and demonstrated that the survey was clear, understandable, and logical in its flow of information” (p. 61). That is, the PRRS instrument collected the specific information needed to support the conclusions that would be drawn from the field-testing and follow-up interviews conducted by Walker.

**Table 4***Reliability of PRRS*

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Cronbach's <math>\alpha</math></b>
<b>Rating of Principal Characteristics</b>	7.3	1.86	0.89

Source: Walker, 2009

For the semi-structured interview, each participant was presented the same questions prepared by this researcher (Appendix E) and their results were coded by common leadership characteristics drawn from the teachers' individual perspective. The intention of the interviews was to add richness to the description rather than relying on quantitative data, thus making an “attempt to understand and make sense of phenomena from the participant's viewpoint” (Merriam & Grenier, 2019, p. 6).

**Ethical Considerations**

This study was approved by the University of North Florida IRB and by the Clay County Superintendent of Schools (Appendix F). Permission to use the TSES and PRRS was obtained from their authors (Appendices G and H, respectively).

Participants in the study were fully aware of the purpose of the study and their rights as participants in the study. They were provided a written acknowledgment of their agreement to participate as part of the survey response. Confidentiality of the participating teachers was protected in multiple ways, including storage of data on my personal server, anonymous survey responses, and pseudonyms used for interviews. The survey instrument had no identifying components, with the exception of school assignment. However, teachers who volunteered to participate in an interview provided their email addresses. Every teacher at each school was given the opportunity to participate, making the pool of responses large. By having a large pool of responses at each school and not identifying by grade or subject area, the confidentiality of each teacher was protected.

Participants in this study were treated ethically and with respect. Participation in this study in no way impacted the participants' employment. Participants received all benefits to which they are entitled and no undue burdens were imposed upon them. I do recognize the possibility that some subjects might have felt intimidated by the fact that I am a principal in the district, and perhaps even their principal. However, I had no way of identifying the individual

associated with a set of responses unless they chose to identify themselves in responding to the request for interview participation.

### **Limitations**

As this researcher investigated the relation of teacher self-efficacy and principal characteristics and attempted to make meaning of the qualitative and quantitative data, mindfulness of implicit bias based on the researcher's experiences in leadership and teaching were monitored throughout the study. A possible limitation was that the researcher was the data collector, introducing the possibility of bias. Merriam and Grenier (2019) emphasized the importance of identifying and monitoring bias and "how they may shape the collection and interpretation of the data" (p.6)

The PRRS survey questions did not ask about the participants' current principal, although this researcher understands the data could be skewed based on participants' feelings and perceptions about their current principal, especially if they had strong feelings, positive or negative, about that working relationship. The possibility of participant responses not being authentic and that the survey was rushed, viewed as "another thing to do" by teachers, could have posed another possible limitation.

### **Chapter Summary**

The intent of this mixed-methods study was to discover connections between principal characteristics and teacher self-efficacy from the teacher perspective with the anticipated outcome producing tangible action steps for leaders to increase self-efficacy in their building. The surveys utilized identified the level of self-efficacy for each teacher and their rating and ranking of principal characteristics contributing factors to their self-efficacy.



Interviews with randomly selected participants were conducted to further explain the quantitative data. Demographic data of each participant and school was triangulated to find patterns and themes, to include similarities and difference, across all data sources.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The purpose of this explanatory sequential mixed methods study was to investigate how elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate their level of self-efficacy, and to examine the specific leadership characteristics that influence teacher self-efficacy from the perspective of teachers. Additionally, this study investigates teachers' perspectives on principal characteristics and actions that were important to their self-efficacy during the unique circumstance of teaching from home during the global pandemic. First, I report the descriptive data and quantitative results from two surveys employed in this research and completed by the teachers (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Walker, 2009). Next, I describe the findings from the qualitative interviews. Lastly, I integrated the qualitative and quantitative findings.

### **Quantitative Results**

An invitation to participate in a digital survey was sent to every elementary teacher in Clay County, Florida. The survey as administered (Appendix B) included questions from the TSES (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) (original form in Appendix C) and the PRRS (Walker, 2009) (original form in appendix D) as well as demographic questions. Questions 1-12 and 13, 14, and 20 from the TSES were included; 17 was included in a modified form; 15, 16, 18, and 19 were omitted because they were irrelevant to this study; and one question (How many principals have you worked for?) was added. The survey data was collected to answer research questions 1-3:

1. How do elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate their level of self-efficacy?
2. How do elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate and rank principal leadership characteristics?

3. What specific leadership characteristics do teachers identify as important in relation to their self-efficacy?

Teachers rated themselves on a 9 point Likert scale regarding their beliefs about their current ability as a classroom teacher (research question 1). Additionally, they were asked to rate and rank the importance of specific leadership characteristics on a 9 point Likert scale (research questions 2 and 3).

Statistical data analyses were conducted using Intellectus Statistic (<https://analyze.intellectusstatistics.com/>). The analyses included frequency counts, graphical representations of the data, and correlation analyses to identify positive and negative relationships between variables.

### ***Demographics***

Frequencies and percentages were calculated for each nominal variable, indicating the number of responses from each school and the contribution of each school to total survey responses. Of the 1,825 survey invitations sent, 358 teachers accessed it, of which 71 responses were excluded due to an incomplete consent and/or survey. Thus the sample consisted of a total of 287 elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida representing all 27 elementary schools in Clay County. The overall completion rate was 16%. The most frequently observed school was WES ( $n = 22$ , 8%). This is not at all surprising as this is the school that this researcher leads. The most frequently observed gender was female ( $n = 206$ , 72%). The most frequently observed category of race was White, non-Hispanic ( $n = 191$ , 67%). The most frequently observed

category of Context in which the respondents taught was Non-Title I (n = 122, 43%).

Frequencies and percentages are presented in Tables 5 and 6.

**Table 5**

*Frequencies of Nominal Variables*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
School		
AES	5	1.7
CEB	2	0.7
CGE	6	2.1
CHE	5	1.7
DIS	7	2.4
DOE	13	4.5
FIE	6	2.1
GPE	5	1.7
KHE	14	4.9
LAE	11	3.8
LSE	9	3.1
MBE	3	1.1
MCE	6	2.1
MRE	4	1.4
OPE	7	2.4
OVE	7	2.4
PES	10	3.5
POE	8	2.8
ROE	6	2.1
RVE	5	1.7
SBJ	8	2.8
SLE	5	1.7
SPC	4	1.4
TBE	8	2.8
TES	9	3.1
WEC	10	3.5
WES	22	7.7
Missing <sup>a</sup>	82	28.6

Variable	n	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	206	71.8
Male	8	2.8
Missing <sup>a</sup>	73	25.4
<b>Race</b>		
White, Non-Hispanic	191	66.6
Other	12	4.2
African American	10	3.5
Missing <sup>a</sup>	74	25.8
<b>Context</b>		
Title I	94	32.8
Non-Title I	122	42.5
Missing <sup>a</sup>	71	24.7

N=287

<sup>a</sup>Missing = question not answered

Frequencies and percentages were calculated for each nominal variable, including Age, Years Taught, and Number of Principals for each teacher surveyed. The youngest teacher completing the survey was 24 and the oldest was 66. The range of years taught was 1-39 years. The minimum number of principals was 1 and the maximum being 20. Summary statistics were calculated for each interval and ratio variable (Table 6).

**Table 6**

*Interval and Ratio Variables for Age, Years Taught, and Number of Principals*

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
Age	43.4	10.4	24	66
Years Taught	14.9	9.2	1	39
Number of Principals	5.0	2.9	1	20

### ***TSES***

On the TSES questions, teachers rated their beliefs about their ability as teachers using a 9 point Likert scale with 1 being “none at all” and 9 being “a great deal”. The areas rated include

their ability to: Control Disruptive Behavior (TB1), Motivate Students (TB2), Calm Student (TB3), Help Value Learning (TB4), Craft Good Questions (TB5), Follow Rules (TB6), Believe Can Do Well (TB7), Classroom Management (TB8), Variety Assessment Strategies (TB9), Offer Alternative Explanation (TB10), Assist Families (TB11), and Offer Alternative Strategies TB12). The actual TB questions were:

1. How much can you control disruptive behavior in your classroom?
2. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?
3. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?
4. How much can you do to help your students' value learning?
5. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?
6. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?
7. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school?
8. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?
9. To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies?
10. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?
11. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?
12. How well can you implement alternative teaching strategies in your classroom?

Summary statistics for TB 1-12 on the TSES were calculated. Teacher participants rated their ability on Classroom Management (TB8) the highest, with a mean of 7.93, and their ability to Assist Families (TB11) the lowest, with a mean of 6.87. The areas of Classroom

Management (TB8) and Offer Alternative Explanation (TB10) had the smallest standard deviations (1.09), that is, teachers' ratings showed the smallest variability for those areas. The area of Assist Families (TB11) had the largest standard deviation (1.44). The summary statistics can be found in Table 7.

**Table 7**

*Teacher Beliefs*

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
TB1 Control Disruptive Behavior	7.38	1.36	2	9
TB2 Motivate Students	7.05	1.39	3	9
TB3 Calm Student	6.98	1.36	2	9
TB4 Help Value Learning	7.33	1.42	3	9
TB5 Craft Good Questions	7.69	1.22	3	9
TB6 Follow Rules	7.62	1.16	3	9
TB7 Believe Can Do Well	7.61	1.18	4	9
TB8 Classroom Management	7.93	1.09	4	9
TB9 Variety Assessment	7.57	1.34	3	9
TB10 Offer Alternative Explanation	7.92	1.09	4	9
TB11 Assist Families	6.87	1.44	2	9
TB12 Offer Alternative Strategies	7.45	1.30	3	9

Summary statistics were calculated for the aggregated TBs. The average of the TB results from Table 7 was 7.45 ( $SD = 0.89$ , Min = 4.1, Max = 9.0) (Table 8). The TB Total represents the level of teacher self-efficacy on a scale of 1-10. Figure 5 is a visual representation of the variable distribution and frequency values representing TB/Self-Efficacy Total. It is positively skewed with only a few negative outliers.

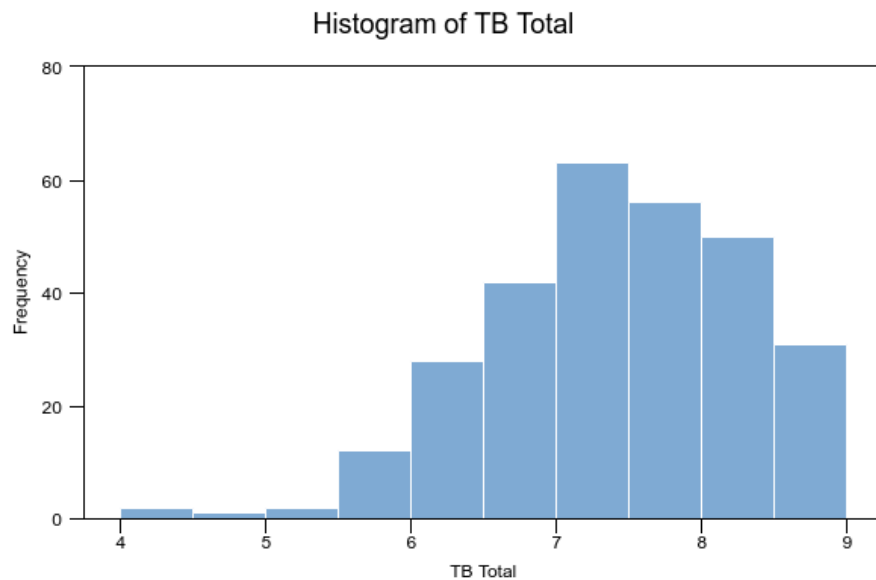
**Table 8**

*TB/Self-Efficacy*

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
TB (Self-Efficacy) Total	7.45	0.89	4.1	9.0

**Figure 5**

*Distribution of TB/Self-Efficacy Total Scores (N=287)*



Each school represented in this study had its own TB/Self-Efficacy interval and ratio variables. GPE had the highest average of individual teacher self-efficacy of 8.47 (SD = 0.44, Min = 7.9, Max = 9.0). CEB had the lowest average of individual teacher self-efficacy of 6.79 (SD = 0.28, Min = 6.58, Max = 7.00). The summary statistics can be found in Table 9. Taking into account the standard deviations, all of the schools had a mean teacher self-efficacy value in or near the high (7-9) range.

**Table 9**

*TB/Self-Efficacy Total by School (in descending order)*

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
TB/Self-Efficacy Total				
GPE	8.47	0.44	7.9	9.0
MRE	8.02	0.67	7.3	8.8
OPE	7.95	0.88	6.2	8.8
SLE	7.88	0.88	7.1	9.0



Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
SBJ	7.82	1.03	5.8	9.0
CHE	7.78	1.03	6.0	8.7
WES	7.65	0.77	6.1	8.8
TES	7.65	0.47	7.1	8.7
MBE	7.64	0.77	6.8	8.2
KHE	7.61	0.90	6.2	9.0
CGE	7.60	0.87	5.8	8.1
SPC	7.50	0.44	6.9	7.9
PES	7.46	0.85	6.1	8.9
WEC	7.45	0.64	6.5	8.3
DIS	7.44	0.29	7.1	7.9
AES	7.38	0.89	6.6	8.8
DOE	7.37	0.60	6.4	8.3
OVE	7.35	0.87	5.7	8.3
MCE	7.32	1.09	6.5	8.9
LSE	7.26	1.22	4.8	8.5
LAE	7.20	1.13	5.4	8.8
TBE	7.17	0.80	5.8	8.3
RVE	7.15	0.54	6.4	7.7
FIE	7.14	0.55	6.3	7.8
ROE	6.94	1.40	4.3	8.1
POE	6.81	0.36	6.4	7.6
CEB	6.79	0.28	6.6	7.0

The observation summary for ordinal variables is based on the individual TB/Self-Efficacy rating using the 9 point Likert scale, with 1-3 considered low, 4-6 considered moderate, and 7-9 considered high. The findings indicate that a large number of teachers surveyed (Group 1) believed they have a high level of self-efficacy (7-9) based on their TB rating (n=209, 72.8%). The rest surveyed (Group 2) fell into the moderate range of self-efficacy (4-6) (n=78, 27.2%),

with none rating themselves in the low range of self-efficacy (1-3). Frequencies and percentages are presented in Table 10.

**Table 10**

*Frequency Table for Ordinal Variables*

Variable	n	%
TB/Self-Efficacy Total		
High (7-9)/Group 1	209	72.8
Moderate (4-6)/Group 2	78	27.2
Low (1-3)	0	0.0

### ***PRRS***

Summary statistics were calculated for the following principal characteristics (PC) ratings from the PRRS (Walker, 2009): Communication, Consideration, Discipline, Empowering (Staff), Flexibility, Influence (with Supervisors), Inspiring (Group Purpose), Modeling (Instructional Expectations), Monitoring (and Evaluating Instruction), (Providing) Contingent Reward(s), and Situational Awareness (Table 11). Teachers were asked to rate each PC as an important factor relating to their self-efficacy on a 9-position Likert scale (Min = 1, Max = 9), and rank the PCs from 1 to 11 with 1 being most important and 11 being least important.

The highest ratings were Communication (8.53), Inspiring (8.27), and Consideration (8.24). Empowering, Situational Awareness, and Discipline were close behind at 8.04, 8.01, and 7.98. Contingent Reward was rated the lowest at 7.31. Although the gap between the highest and lowest ratings is relatively small (1.22), and the standard deviations are relatively high, we can surmise that participants in this study are not as motivated by rewards and accolades as they are other leadership characteristics.

**Table 11***PC Ratings (N=287)*

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
Communication	8.53	1.07	1	9
Consideration	8.24	1.22	3	9
Discipline	7.98	1.38	1	9
Empowering	8.04	1.29	2	9
Flexibility	7.90	1.37	1	9
Influence	7.67	1.46	1	9
Inspiring	8.27	1.20	2	9
Modeling	7.74	1.46	2	9
Monitoring	7.70	1.48	1	9
Contingent Reward	7.31	1.68	2	9
Situational Awareness	8.01	1.35	1	9

Summary statistics were calculated for the rankings of the same PCs (Table 12).

Teachers' ratings of leadership characteristics were consistent with their rankings of leadership characteristics with Communication and Consideration both rated (highest ratings, Table 11) and ranked (lowest ratings, Table 12) as the most important. Communication (2.63), Consideration (4.23), and Empowering (4.25) were ranked as the top 3; Discipline (5.21), Inspiring (5.33), and Flexibility (6.36) were next highest; moderately ranked were Situational Awareness (6.81), Monitoring (7.18), and Modeling (7.30); lastly, Influence (8.10) and Contingent Reward (8.60) were ranked lowest.

**Table 12***PC Rankings*

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
Communication	2.63	2.61	1	11
Consideration	4.23	2.82	1	11
Discipline	5.21	2.64	1	11
Empowering	4.25	2.44	1	11

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
Flexibility	6.36	2.45	1	11
Influence	8.10	2.55	1	11
Inspiring	5.33	2.61	1	11
Modeling	7.30	2.61	1	11
Monitoring	7.18	2.56	1	11
Contingent Reward	8.60	2.65	1	11
Situational Awareness	6.81	3.06	1	11

### ***Relationship between TB/Self-Efficacy and PC Ratings/Rankings***

Summary statistics were calculated for the PC ratings from the PRRS by TB/self-efficacy level (Table 13). Group 1 (high level of self-efficacy) and Group 2 (moderate level of self-efficacy) rated the top 3 characteristics in the same order: Communication, Consideration, and Inspiring. The lowest rated characteristic was the same for both groups: Contingent Reward. Therefore, it appears that the teachers' level of self-efficacy (high or moderate) did not change the highest and lowest rated characteristics. It should be noted that there are slight differences between Groups 1 and 2 in the rankings of the other characteristics.

**Table 13**

*TB/Self-Efficacy Total by PRRS Rating Variables*

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
Communication				
Group 1	8.65	1.05	1	9
Group 2	8.15	1.05	5	9
Consideration				
Group 1	8.32	1.19	3	9
Group 2	7.98	1.30	3	9
Discipline				
Group 1	8.16	1.21	3	9
Group 2	7.41	1.71	1	9

<b>Variable</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
<b>Empowering</b>				
Group 1	8.17	1.26	2	9
Group2	7.63	1.31	4	9
<b>Flexibility</b>				
Group 1	8.06	1.34	1	9
Group 2	7.39	1.35	4	9
<b>Influence</b>				
Group 1	7.82	1.37	1	9
Group 2	7.22	1.64	2	9
<b>Inspiring</b>				
Group 1	8.37	1.15	2	9
Group 2	7.98	1.31	4	9
<b>Modeling</b>				
Group 1	7.89	1.43	2	9
Group 2	7.26	1.47	4	9
<b>Monitoring</b>				
Group 1	7.93	1.36	2	9
Group 2	7.00	1.64	1	9
<b>Contingent Reward</b>				
High (7-9)/Group 1	7.57	1.64	2	9
Moderate (4-6)/Group 2	6.48	1.54	3	9
<b>Situational Awareness</b>				
Group 1	8.18	1.26	1	9
Group 2	7.50	1.50	3	9

Summary statistics were calculated for the PC rankings from the PRRS by TB/self-efficacy level (Table 14). Group 1 (high level of self-efficacy) and Group 2 (moderate level of self-efficacy) gave the same relative rankings to the top 3 characteristics: Communication, Empowering, and Consideration (note that for the PRRS rankings, the lowest numbers denote the highest rankings). Similarly, the lowest ranked characteristics were ranked relatively the same for both groups: Influence and Contingent Reward. Therefore, it appears that the teachers' level

of self-efficacy (high or moderate) did not change their rankings of the highest and lowest ranked characteristics. It should be noted that there are slight differences in the ranking order of the other characteristics.

**Table 14**

*TB/Self-Efficacy Total by PRRS Ranking Variables*

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
Communication				
High (7-9)	2.54	2.68	1	11
Moderate (4-6)	2.89	2.40	1	11
Consideration				
High (7-9)	4.28	2.86	1	11
Moderate (4-6)	4.07	2.71	1	11
Discipline				
High (7-9)	5.19	2.64	1	11
Moderate (4-6)	5.26	2.66	1	11
Empowering				
High (7-9)	4.13	2.40	1	10
Moderate (4-6)	4.63	2.56	1	11
Flexibility				
High (7-9)	6.40	2.30	1	11
Moderate (4-6)	6.26	2.90	1	11
Influence				
High (7-9)	8.04	2.55	1	11
Moderate (4-6)	8.30	2.59	1	11
Inspiring				
High (7-9)	5.32	2.52	1	11
Moderate (4-6)	5.35	2.89	1	11
Modeling				
High (7-9)	7.35	2.57	1	11
Moderate (4-6)	7.15	2.67	1	11
Monitoring				
High (7-9)	7.12	2.53	1	11
Moderate (4-6)	7.15	2.67	1	11

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
Contingent Reward				
High (7-9)	8.60	2.64	1	11
Moderate (4-6)	8.59	2.70	1	11
Situational Awareness				
High (7-9)	7.03	3.10	1	11
Moderate (4-6)	6.13	2.86	1	11

### **Context**

**Two-Tailed Independent Samples *t*-Test.** A two-tailed independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine whether the mean of the TB/Self-Efficacy Total (7.60 and 7.42, respectively) was significantly different between the Title I and Non-Title I categories of school context. Using this test requires assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance.

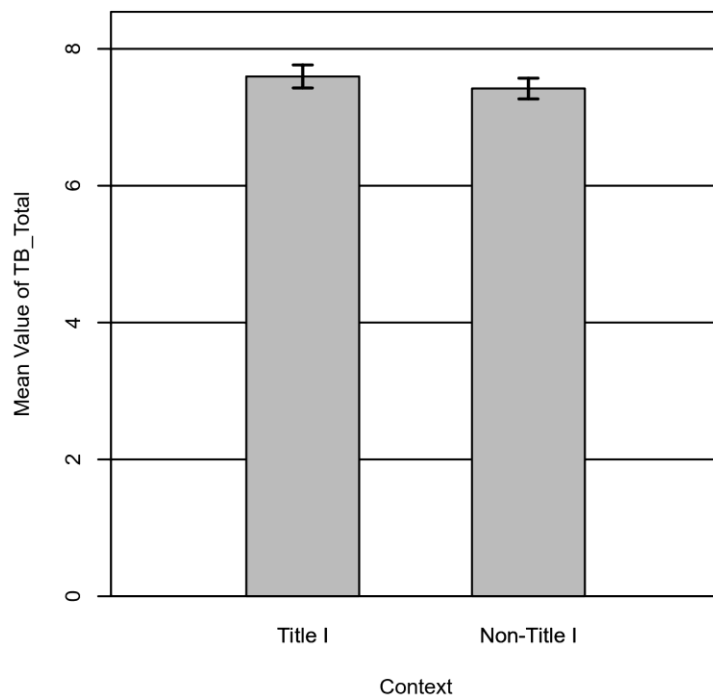
**Normality.** Shapiro-Wilk tests were conducted to determine whether the TB/Self-Efficacy Total could have been produced by a normal distribution for each category of Context (Razali & Wah, 2011). This test was chosen because the independent samples *t*-test assumes that the data are normally distributed (Razali & Wah, 2011). The result of the Shapiro-Wilk test for TB/Self-Efficacy Total in the Title I category was significant based on an alpha value of 0.05,  $W = 0.97$ ,  $p = .033$ . This result suggests that TB/Self-Efficacy Total in the Title I category is unlikely to have been produced by a normal distribution. The result of the Shapiro-Wilk test for TB/Self-Efficacy Total in the Non-Title I category was significant based on an alpha value of 0.05,  $W = 0.97$ ,  $p = .008$ . This result suggests that TB/Self-Efficacy Total in the Non-Title I category is also unlikely to have been produced by a normal distribution based on the *p*-value on the Shapiro-Wilk test being less than .05. The Shapiro-Wilk test was significant for both the Title

I and Non-Title I categories of Context, indicating the normality assumption is violated.

Therefore, the two-tailed independent samples *t*-test is not applicable to this data.

### Figure 6

*The mean of TB/Self-Efficacy Total by levels of Context with 95% CI Error Bars*



**Two-Tailed Mann-Whitney U Test.** A two-tailed Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test was conducted to examine whether there were significant differences in TB/Self-Efficacy Totals between the levels of context. The two-tailed Mann-Whitney two-sample rank-sum test is an alternative to the independent samples *t*-test, but does not share the same assumptions (Conover & Iman, 1981). There were 94 observations in group Title I and 122 observations in group Non-Title I.

The result of the two-tailed Mann-Whitney *U* test was not significant based on an alpha value of 0.05,  $U = 6419$ ,  $z = -1.50$ ,  $p = .132$ . The mean rank for group Title I was 115.79 and the



mean rank for group Non-Title I was 102.89. This suggests that the distribution of TB/Self-Efficacy Total for group Title I ( $Mdn = 7.67$ ) was not significantly different from the distribution of TB Total for the Non-Title I ( $Mdn = 7.42$ ) category. Table 15 presents the result of the two-tailed Mann-Whitney  $U$  test. Figure 7 presents a boxplot of the ranks of TB Total by Context.

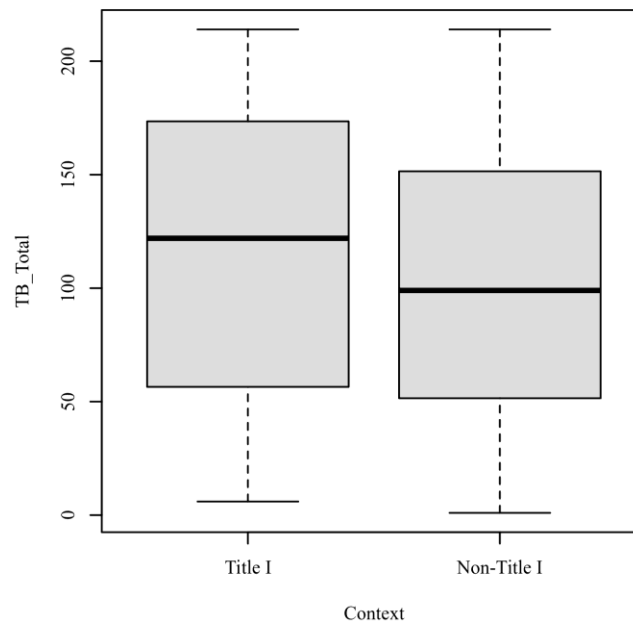
**Table 15**

*Two-Tailed Mann-Whitney Test for Teacher Belief (TB) Total by Context*

Variable	Mean Rank		U	z	p
	Title I	Non-Title I			
TB Total	115.79	102.89	6419.00	-1.50	.132

**Figure 7**

*TB Total by Context*



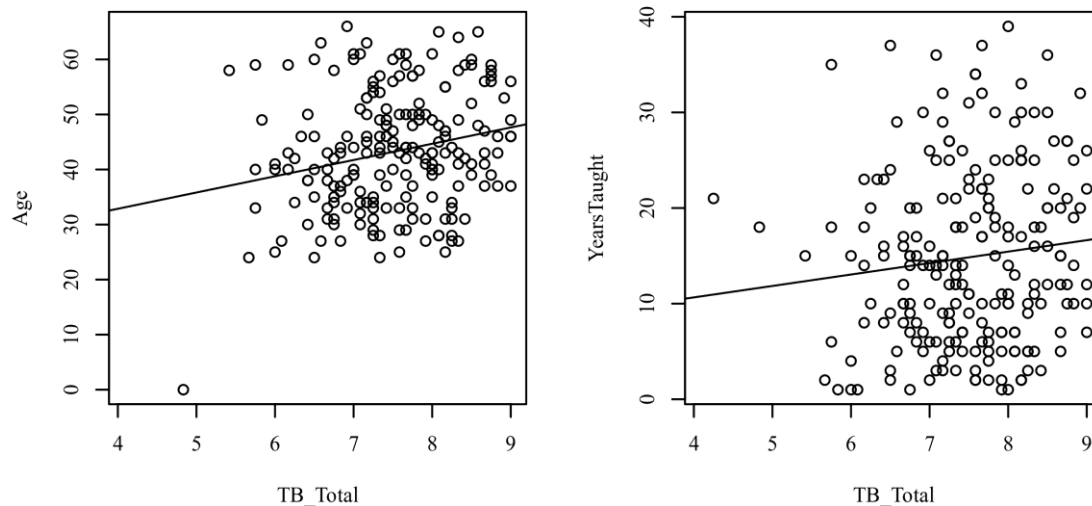
### ***Relationships among Independent Variables***

***Pearson Correlation Analysis.*** A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted among Teacher Belief (TB) Total, Age, Years Taught, and Number of Principals. Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the strength of the relationships, where coefficients between .10 and .29 represent a small effect size, coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a moderate effect size, and coefficients above .50 indicate a large effect size (Cohen, 1988).

***Linearity.*** A Pearson correlation requires that the relationship between each pair of variables is linear (Conover & Iman, 1981). This assumption is violated if there is curvature among the points on the scatterplot between any pair of variables. The lines are straight, therefore, this test is appropriate. Figures 8-10 present the scatterplots of the correlations. A regression line has been added to assist the interpretation.

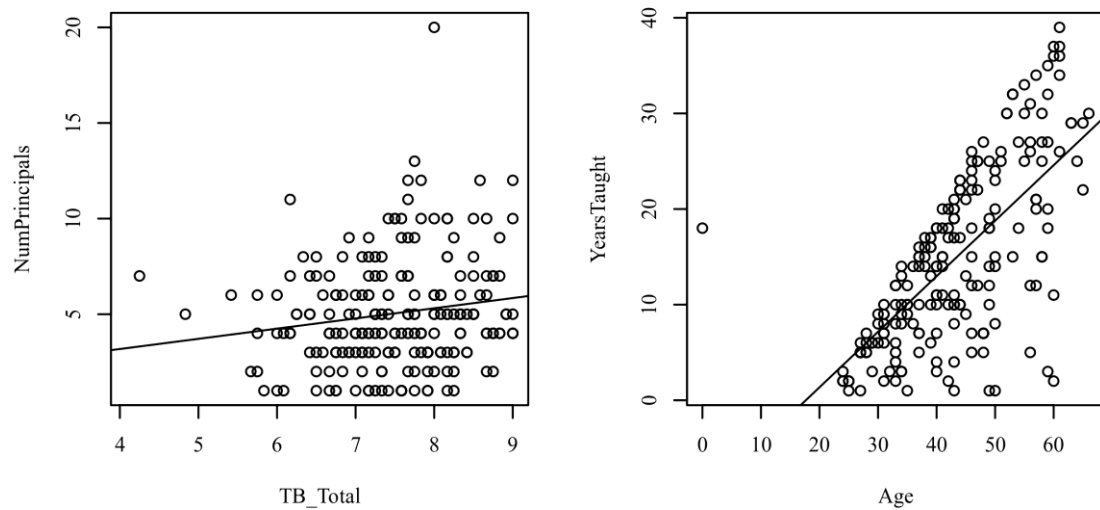
**Figure 8**

*Scatterplots with the regression line added for TB/Self-Efficacy Total and Age (left), TB/Self-Efficacy Total and Years Taught (right)*

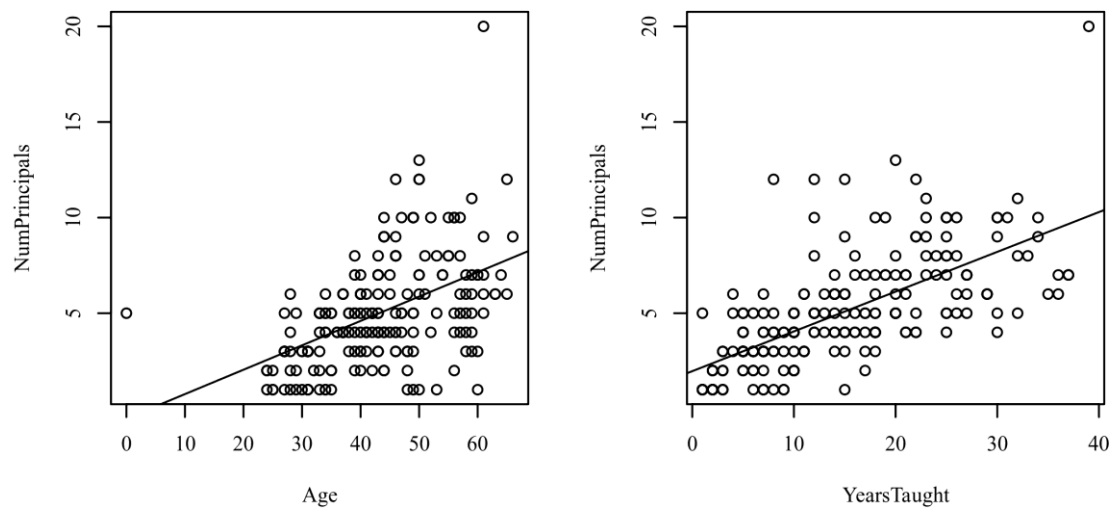


**Figure 9**

*Scatterplots with the regression line added for TB/Self-Efficacy Total and Number of Principals (left), Age and Years Taught (right)*

**Figure 10**

*Scatterplots with the regression line added for Age and Number of Principals (left), Years Taught and Number of Principals (right)*



The result of the correlations was examined based on an alpha value of 0.05. A significant positive correlation was observed between TB/Self-Efficacy Total and Age ( $p = .001$ , 95% CI [0.09, 0.35]), but the effect size was small ( $r_p = 0.22$ ). This correlation indicates that as Age increases, TB/Self-Efficacy Total tends to increase. A significant positive correlation was observed between TB/Self-Efficacy Total and Number of Principals ( $p = .020$ , 95% CI [0.03, 0.29]), but the effect size was small ( $r_p = 0.16$ ). This correlation indicates that as Number of Principals increases, TB/Self-Efficacy Total tends to increase. A significant positive correlation was observed between TB/Self-Efficacy Total and Years Taught ( $p < .106$ , 95% CI [-0.02, 0.24]), but the effect size was small ( $r_p = 0.11$ ). This correlation indicates that as Years Taught increases, tends to TB/Self-Efficacy Total increase slightly, indicating that the number of years taught appears to positively affect TB/Self-Efficacy. In general, these observations suggest that the more experienced teachers had higher levels of self-efficacy.

Other correlations were expected, because they were all indicators of experience. A significant positive correlation was observed between Age and Years Taught ( $r_p = 0.68$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [0.59, 0.74]). The correlation coefficient between Age and Years Taught was 0.68, indicating a large effect size. This correlation indicates that as Age increases, Years Taught tends to increase. A significant positive correlation was observed between Age and Number of Principals ( $r_p = 0.48$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [0.37, 0.58]). The correlation coefficient between Age and Number of Principals was 0.48, indicating a moderate effect size. This correlation indicates that as Age increases, Number of Principals tends to increase. A significant positive correlation was observed between Years Taught and Number of Principals ( $r_p = 0.67$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [0.58, 0.73]). The correlation coefficient between Years Taught and Number of Principals was

0.67, indicating a large effect size. This correlation indicates that as Years Taught increases, Number of Principals tends to increase. No other significant correlations were found. Table 16 presents the results of the correlations.

**Table 16**

*Pearson Correlation Results among TB Total, Age, Years Taught, and Number of Principals*

Combination	$r_p$	95% CI	n	p
TB/Self-Efficacy Total-Age	0.22	[0.09, 0.35]	201	.001
TB/Self-Efficacy Total-Years Taught	0.11	[-0.02, 0.24]	214	.106
TB/Self-Efficacy Total-Number of Principals	0.16	[0.03, 0.29]	216	.020
Age-Years Taught	0.68	[0.59, 0.74]	201	< .001
Age-Number of Principals	0.48	[0.37, 0.58]	201	< .001
Years Taught-Number of Principals	0.67	[0.58, 0.73]	214	< .001

***Spearman Correlation Analysis.*** A Spearman correlation analysis was conducted among TB/Self-Efficacy Total, Age, Years Taught, and Number of Principals. Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the strength of the relationships, where coefficients between .10 and .29 represent a small effect size, coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a moderate effect size, and coefficients above .50 indicate a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). The result of the correlations was examined based on an alpha value of 0.05. A significant positive correlation was observed between TB/Self-Efficacy Total and Age ( $r_s = 0.19$ ,  $p = .007$ , 95% CI [0.05, 0.32]). The correlation coefficient between TB/Self-Efficacy Total and Age was 0.19, indicating a small effect size. This correlation indicates that as TB/Self-Efficacy Total increases, Age tends to increase. A significant positive correlation was observed between TB/Self-Efficacy Total and Number of Principals ( $r_s = 0.15$ ,  $p = .024$ , 95% CI [0.02, 0.28]). The correlation coefficient

between TB/Self-Efficacy Total and Number of Principals was 0.15, indicating a small effect size. This correlation indicates that as TB/Self-Efficacy Total increases, Number of Principals tends to increase.

Other correlations, as before, were expected as rough indicators of experience. A significant positive correlation was observed between Age and Years Taught ( $r_s = 0.68, p < .001$ , 95% CI [0.60, 0.75]). The correlation coefficient between Age and Years Taught was 0.68, indicating a large effect size. This correlation indicates that as Age increases, Years Taught tends to increase. A significant positive correlation was observed between Age and Number of Principals ( $r_s = 0.52, p < .001$ , 95% CI [0.41, 0.61]). The correlation coefficient between Age and Number of Principals was 0.52, indicating a large effect size. This correlation indicates that as Age increases, Number of Principals tends to increase. A significant positive correlation was observed between Years Taught and Number of Principals ( $r_s = 0.73, p < .001$ , 95% CI [0.66, 0.79]). The correlation coefficient between Years Taught and Number of Principals was 0.73, indicating a large effect size. This correlation indicates that as Years Taught increases, Number of Principals tends to increase. No other significant correlations were found. Table 17 presents the results of the correlations.

**Table 17**

*Spearman Correlation Results: TB/Self-Efficacy Total, Age, Years Taught, Number of Principals*

Combination	$r_s$	95% CI	n	p
TB/Self-Efficacy Total-Age	0.19	[0.05, 0.32]	201	.007
TB/Self-Efficacy Total-Years Taught	0.13	[-0.01, 0.26]	214	.066
TB/Self-Efficacy Total-Number of Principals	0.15	[0.02, 0.28]	216	.024
Age-Years Taught	0.68	[0.60, 0.75]	201	< .001

Age-Number of Principals	0.52	[0.41, 0.61]	201	< .001
Years Taught-Number of Principals	0.73	[0.66, 0.79]	214	< .001

## Qualitative Results

Five participants were interviewed about leadership during crisis teaching. Some of the challenges during this time included teaching in isolation from home away from their professional support, and with limited student participation. Many were overwhelmed with the concern for the health and well-being of their own family members, yet still put on a happy face for their students. Many endured financial hardships because of a spouse not working because of the mass shutdown. Analysis of these five interviews led to the creation of two themes, Principals Demonstrate Investment in Teachers and Principals Communicate Effectively during Crisis Teaching.

### *Theme 1. Principals Demonstrate Their Investment in Teachers*

Participants described characteristics of principals who inspired them to feel confident by demonstrating that the principals were invested in their teachers. Four participants described former principals who made them feel confident in their job by instilling a feeling of empowerment. As one participant explained:

Principals that I've had in the past did a great job of letting us know...that they wanted to hear from us, they wanted us to make decisions, they wanted to hear what our decisions were, and they wanted our input.

To this participant, being empowered meant being included in decision-making. This was slightly different from how another participant conceptualized being empowered, which included when principals had "meetings, and just being really positive and having them continue in that

work,” referring to their teachers. Another participant said, “Empowering staff...having those mini sidebar conversations, or the whole group conversations,” was important. In addition to this empowerment, the participant also found it helpful when principals showed genuine consideration and concern for teachers, by check in with them frequently and on a regular schedule , asking about their family, and offering personal and professional assistance, which also served to build self-efficacy.

Two participants described the help and assistance they received from principals, which made them feel their principals were invested in them. One of these participants said, “Early on, I had a principal that was dedicated to training young teachers...He poured into professional development like you have never seen before,” and this participant appreciated the principal’s emphasis on “ongoing learning”. For another teacher, the help came in the form of assistance with discipline. “When they’re able to pull kids out and calm them down after you’ve tried all of your strategies, I feel like, has been super helpful,” said the participant.

Another participant said their principal seemed to understand that teachers were frustrated during crisis teaching and allowed teachers to be flexible with their methods and approach. “I felt like they understood what everybody was going through and that they allowed us the flexibility,” said this participant. Teachers appreciated this flexibility; another participant said, “She let us teach in a way we were comfortable with at this time...So, she kinda let us have that control, as long as we were still doing something and engaging with the kids.” One participant, who had two of their own children at home during the pandemic, said, “I felt as a parent supported by [my principal] as well,” in addition to feeling supported as a teacher.



Another participant said, “When our principals allow us to have that flexibility and then empower us into the flexibility, makes a huge difference, I feel like, in believing [in] ourselves.”

Being a team player was another way principals instilled self-efficacy in teachers. “That willingness to be a team player and to be a part and to be visible definitely keeps them accountable, and it keeps you accountable as a teacher,” one participant explained and compared it to being in the trenches together which demonstrates their investment.

In order to demonstrate investment in teachers, principals also had to communicate effectively, as addressed in the next theme.

### ***Theme 2. Principals Communicate Effectively During Crisis Teaching***

In crisis teaching, principals used many of the same skills they used during normal times to build self-efficacy and confidence in teachers to support teachers. In particular, when principals communicated frequently with teachers, participants felt supported. One participant said the most important characteristic of a principal to develop a sense of confidence in teachers was communication. “I think communication is one of the most important,” the participant said. Another participant appreciated helpful critique from principals. “They were very helpful with critiques and feedback when they came and observed me,” said the participant. Another participant said that principals who communicated effectively helped teachers build self-efficacy. “Communicating clearly what my objective is so that I have that goal (relating to the objective) to reach, that definitely helps me,” said a participant. For another participant, the listening component of communication was important. “Listening to your concerns and providing good feedback and help, instead of just blowing it off,” the participant said. Communications also included home visits the principal made during crisis teaching. One participant said, “I felt like

communication was really high; we could not have done what we did without that communication,” speaking to how important it was during crisis teaching that the principals communicated effectively to show support for teachers.

### ***Suggestions for Improvement***

While most participants believed their principals were supportive and helpful during crisis teaching, this was not always the case. Participants explained that their principals demonstrated consideration and concern for them through communication and other practices, but some participants desired more communication and check-ins from their principals. Participants described what would have helped them to be more effective during the challenges of crisis teaching. Some of the challenges included being isolated from peers, technology deficits, and the many distractions of teaching small children virtually, along with the distress of monitoring their own children’s education simultaneously. There was also the added stressors of dealing with the physical impact on their own families. Though many participants appreciated the level of communication they had with their principals, more communication would have been better. “Touching base more often, as far as maybe as a team, at least once a week,” was one suggestion a participant had for how the principal could have helped better during crisis teaching. Another participant, who appreciated the flexibility their principal provided during crisis teaching, said that lowering expectations of teachers a bit would have helped. “If we have to cut back a little bit, then we cut back. Not expect so much,” said this participant. Yet another participant suggested that principals could model expectations, which would have benefitted teachers. “Modeling instructional expectations, because we were all doing different things, in a

way,” said the other participant, when asked what might have helped improve the experience during crisis teaching.

One participant described the sense that the principal was lacking in situational awareness, which was a frustration when crisis teaching and could have been improved. The participant explained,

I think the biggest one for me would have been that consideration where the principal expressed like a genuine concern for me, personally, for my welfare, making that effort to get to know me personally. That was a principal that I felt didn’t really know me on a personal level at all, and it had been two and a half years.

### **Summary of the Results**

The results can be summarized as follows:

**Research Question 1:** “How do elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate their level of self-efficacy?” Based on the results of the TSES, 72.8% of the participants rated their self-efficacy in the high range (7-9), and the remaining 27.2% rated their self-efficacy in the moderate range (4-6). Of the 27 elementary schools in the district, the highest average teacher self-efficacy rating was 8.5 and the lowest was 6.8. There was no significant difference in teacher self-efficacy at Title 1 and non-Title 1 schools. However, both the highest and lowest average self-efficacy ratings occurred at Title 1 schools.

**Research Question 2:** “How do elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate and rank principals’ leadership characteristics?” Based on the rating results from the PRRS, Communication, Inspiring, and Consideration had the highest mean ratings, with Contingent Reward rating lowest. The ranking results from the PRRS showed that Communication,

Consideration, and Empowering had the highest mean rankings. Contingent Rewards was ranked the least influential. The ratings and rankings of the two groups of teachers (Group 1 [high self-efficacy] and Group 2 [moderate self-efficacy]) were statistically the same.

**Research Question 3:** “What specific leadership characteristics do teachers identify as important in relation to their self-efficacy?” The qualitative data largely supported the findings from the PRRS. The five teachers interviewed identified Communication, Consideration, Empowering, Flexibility, and Discipline as important factors relating to their self-efficacy. Four of these five (Communication, Consideration, Empowering and Discipline) were rated in the top six leadership characteristics on the PRRS, and all five were ranked in the top five leadership characteristics.

**Research Question 4:** “What specific leadership characteristics do teachers identify as supportive while ‘crisis teaching’ during the COVID-19 national school shut down?” The teachers interviewed reported that Communication and Flexibility were the most supportive leadership characteristics while teaching from home. Areas of opportunity for leaders were even more Communication, Situational Awareness, and Modeling.

### **Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Results**

The quantitative phase of this investigation explored the level of self-efficacy for each participant and what they believe to be important leadership characteristics impacting their self-efficacy. The qualitative phase incorporated interviews with five participants, providing insight and a deeper understanding of leadership characteristics they deem important factors in building their self-efficacy, including during remote teaching in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Several commonalities emerged from the analysis of both phases of the investigation. Both sets of data emphasized the importance of five (out of eleven) common leadership characteristics: communication, consideration, flexibility, discipline, and empowerment were rated at the top of the list. Although Inspiring and Situational Awareness were high in the ratings they were not as high in the rankings or mentioned in the qualitative data. The characteristics ranking showed communication ranked first, consideration second, empowering third, discipline fourth, and flexibility fifth. However, from the qualitative interviews Flexibility and Empowering were identified as important leadership characteristics that support teaching from home during the pandemic. Comparing these identified characteristics to the overall ratings from the PRRS, Communication was the highest (8.53), Empowering was fourth highest (8.04), and Flexibility was seventh of 11 characteristics (7.90), so Flexibility was an outlier in the comparison. With the overall rankings from the PRRS, Communication was the highest, Empowering was third, and Flexibility was sixth. The differences indicate that during the pandemic there was a slight shift in what teachers felt they needed from leaders. Table 18 represents the commonalities between the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study.

**Table 18**

*PC Quantitative Rating and Ranking Data Integrated with Teacher Perspective*

<b>PC</b>	<b>Rating<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Ranking<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Teacher Qualitative Perspective</b>
Communication	8.53	2.6	Some participants identified communication as a strength, and some desired more communication and check-ins.
Consideration	8.24	4.2	Participant also found it helpful when principals showed genuine consideration and concern for teachers, which also served to build self-efficacy.
Empowering	8.04	4.4	

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Discipline	8.04	5.2	Being empowered meant being included in the decision making. Empowering showed the leaders' investment in the teachers.
Flexibility	7.98	6.4	Help came in the form of assistance with student discipline.  The leaders allowed for flexibility, especially during the pandemic.

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<sup>a</sup>Rating values are on a scale of 1=lowest and 11=highest

<sup>b</sup>Ranking values are on an inverse scale, where 1=most important and 11=least important

## Chapter Summary

This chapter describes the findings of this explanatory sequential mixed methods investigation of teacher self-efficacy and the principal leadership characteristics that teachers believe build their self-efficacy. The results show that 72.8% of the 287 elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida who completed the surveys have an overall high self-efficacy rating, with all of the others (27.2%) having a moderate self-efficacy rating, and with none rating themselves in the low range of self-efficacy. The investigation concludes that there is no significant difference in teacher self-efficacy based on whether or not they taught at a Title 1 school.

Demographic data collected on participants indicate the average age of teachers surveyed was 43.4, the average number of years taught was 14.9, and the average number of principals worked for was 5. The correlation analyses on the demographic data and teacher self-efficacy indicated that age had a small effect size (0.22), meaning that as teacher self-efficacy increased so did the age of the teacher, which one would expect. Similarly, teacher self-efficacy level and the number of principals had a small effect size (0.16), meaning that as teacher self-efficacy increased so did the number of principals the teacher worked under. This was also true for the

number of years taught and teacher level of self-efficacy, with a small effect size (0.11), indicating that teacher self-efficacy increased as the number of years taught increased.

The data collected for the rating and ranking of PCs by teachers indicate that communication, consideration, flexibility, discipline, empowering and situational awareness have the greatest impact on their self-efficacy, for teachers with both high and moderate levels of efficacy. The qualitative findings support the rating and ranking results of PCs. Chapter 5 will discuss the common themes and explore the outcomes including the implications, limitations, and future research.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

### **Introduction**

Teacher self-efficacy, which is a teacher's belief in their ability to do their job and positively impact student achievement (Hoy, 2000), is an important current topic in education. Research indicates that teacher self-efficacy collectively has positive impact on student achievement in a school (Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2007; Hoy et al., 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). Therefore, how school leaders influence teacher self-efficacy by their behaviors and characteristics is an important factor when considering student achievement in their buildings.

School leadership has been shown to relate to teacher self-efficacy and the collective efficacy of a school (Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2007; Hoy et al., 2002; Protheroe, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the specific leadership characteristics that influence teacher self-efficacy from the perspective of teachers. Additionally, leaders will benefit from this study by learning how they can support teachers and build self-efficacy, especially in unprecedented educational circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic and national school closures. This chapter presents a summary of the results of this study, discussion, implications, limitations, and recommendations for further research.

### **Summary of the Results**

The research questions that guided this study are as follows:

**Research Question 1:** Research question 1 posed the quantitative question, "How do elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate their level of self-efficacy?" Based on the



results of the TSES, 72.8% of the participants in this study rated their self-efficacy in the high range (7-9) on a 9-point Likert scale. The remaining 27.2% of the participants rated their self-efficacy in the moderate range (4-6). No participants rated themselves in the low range (1-3). Of the 27 elementary schools in the district, GPE had the highest average teacher self-efficacy rating (8.5) and CEB had the lowest (6.8, which still fell in the moderate range). There was no significant difference in teacher self-efficacy at Title 1 and non-Title 1 schools as indicated by the results of both the t-Test and U Test in Chapter 4. However, it is interesting to note that both GPE and CEB are both Title 1 schools.

**Research Question 2:** Research question 2 answered the quantitative question, “How do elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida rate and rank principals’ leadership characteristics?” Based on the rating results (on a 9-point Likert scale) from the PRRS, Communication (8.5), Inspiring (8.3), and Consideration (8.2) had the highest mean ratings, with Contingent Reward (7.3) rating lowest. The ranking results on an 11-point scale from the PRRS showed that Communication (2.6), Consideration (4.2), and Empowering (4.3) had the highest mean rankings, where 1 was the most influential and 11 the least influential. Contingent Rewards (8.6) was ranked the least influential by the participants. The ratings and rankings of the two groups of teachers (Group 1 [high self-efficacy] and Group 2 [moderate self-efficacy]) were statistically the same. For both groups, the top-ranked leadership characteristics were Communication, Consideration, and Inspiring. Both groups also rated and ranked Contingent Reward as the lowest or least influential. The ratings and rankings of the other leadership characteristics differed slightly between groups.

**Research Question 3:** Research question 3 answered the quantitative and qualitative question, “What specific leadership characteristics do teachers identify as important in relation to their self-efficacy?” In addition to the quantitative data collected using the PRRS (Communication [8.5], Inspiring [8.3], and Consideration [8.2] having the highest mean ratings, and Communication [2.6], Consideration [4.2], and Empowering [4.3] having the highest mean rankings), the qualitative data supported the findings from the PRRS. The five teachers interviewed identified Communication, Consideration, Empowering, Flexibility, and Discipline as important factors relating to their self-efficacy.

**Research Question 4:** Research question 4 answered the qualitative question, “What specific leadership characteristics do teachers identify as supportive while ‘crisis teaching’ during the COVID-19 national school shut down?” The teachers interviewed reported that Communication and Flexibility were the most supportive leadership characteristics during the school shut down while teaching from home. Areas of opportunity for leaders during this time were more Communication (even though Communication was good, more would have been even better), Situational Awareness, and Modeling.

## **Discussion**

The salient findings in this investigation can be organized into five major conclusions regarding the self-efficacy of elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida and the leadership characteristics believed to impact self-efficacy from the teachers’ perspective:

1. Elementary teachers in Clay County, Florida have an overall high level of self-efficacy based on the TSES.

2. Teachers identify Communication as the most important leadership characteristic relating to their self-efficacy.
3. Teachers' level of self-efficacy (high or moderate) does not have a significant effect on the outcomes of the ratings and rankings of the leadership characteristics.
4. Extenuating factors such as age, years taught, and number of principals have a positive correlation with teacher self-efficacy, whereas context (Title 1 or non-Title 1 school) was not significantly different.
5. Some leadership characteristics were identified as supportive when teaching from home during the pandemic.

Each of these themes is discussed below and connected to the existing literature.

**The elementary teachers surveyed have an overall high level of self-efficacy.** Of the 287 elementary teachers who completed the survey there was an average self-efficacy rating score of 7.5 on a Likert scale of 1-9. The lowest rating was a 4.1 and the maximum rating was a 9.0. The majority of teachers rated themselves between 6.0 and 9.0. The findings indicate the majority of teachers surveyed believed they have a high level of self-efficacy (7-9) based on their TB rating (n=209, 72.8%). The rest surveyed fell into the moderate range of self-efficacy (4-6) (n=78, 27.2%), with none rating themselves in the low range of self-efficacy (1-3). These results are consistent with the study by Horton (2013), who surveyed 87 teachers in high-poverty schools with a self-efficacy range of 4.7 to 9.0 (M=7.3, SD=1.01). In this study, the average teacher self-efficacy by school ranged from 6.8 to 8.5. Therefore, each school's average teacher self-efficacy was rated high or at the high end of the moderate range. This is important because based on the previous literature high teacher self-efficacy is related to higher student

achievement, and the school district represented in this study is a high performing district confirming what other researchers have discovered (Amor et al., 1976; Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2007; Hipp, 1996; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Hoy et al., 2002; Kang, 2017; Kelley & Finnigan, 2003; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004).

**Communication is the most important leadership characteristic.** This investigation revealed that teachers believe Communication is the most important leadership attribute contributing to their self-efficacy. It was rated and ranked the highest characteristic on the PRRS with a rating of 8.5 on a 1-9 Likert scale and 2.6 ranking on a 1-11 ranking scale. Both teacher groups (high and moderate self-efficacy) rated and ranked Communication as the most important leadership characteristic. Additionally, all five participants in the qualitative interviews mentioned Communication as being important to their self-efficacy. They referenced feedback and listening as important attributes of leadership communication. Research by Walker & Slear (2011) and Hipp (1996) affirms communication as one of three actionable moves by school leaders significantly relating to the self-efficacy of teachers. The other two previously mentioned actionable moves were modeling instructional moves and contingent rewards which did not rate or rank in the top three in this study. Dialogue which encourages teacher reflection and coaching are ways of communicating that are important to leadership (Blanchard & Hodges, 2003; Blasé & Blasé, 2000; Dufour & Marzano, 2011). Bambrick-Santoyo (2018) asserts that “by receiving biweekly observations and feedback, a teacher gets as much development in one year as most receive in twenty” (p.131).

**The level of teacher self-efficacy does not have a significant effect on the ratings and rankings of leadership characteristics.** Teachers’ level of self-efficacy fell into 2 groups (high

[7-9] and moderate [4-6]), with no teachers falling into the low range of self-efficacy. The order of importance for each leader characteristic is not significantly different between groups. Both groups identified the same top 5 leadership characteristics (Communication, Inspiring, Consideration, Empowering, and Situational Awareness) as important factors relating to their self-efficacy. This finding contradicts the conclusions of Hipp & Bredeson (1995) and Walker & Slear (2011), who found Models Behavior, Inspires Group Purpose, and Provides Contingent Rewards to be significant. In their studies, the level of self-efficacy of the participants was not measured. Another possible reason is that the previously mentioned studies were of teachers in high poverty schools. However, this study is consistent with the work of Brinkerhoff et al. (2015) in that they identify transparent and effective communication as one leadership characteristic positively affecting teacher self-efficacy.

**Some extenuating factors affect self-efficacy.** Extenuating factors considered in this study were the age of the teacher, years taught, the number of principals they have had in their teaching career, and if they taught at a Title 1 or non-Title 1 school. Correlation analysis revealed that as teacher age increases so does teacher self-efficacy. The same was true for years taught and number of principals, suggesting that teachers with more experience who have worked for more principals had higher levels of self-efficacy. These correlations confirmed those of Walker and Slear (2011), who found a direct correlation between experience and level of self-efficacy. There was no significant difference in the level of teacher self-efficacy based on the context of the school (Title 1 or non-Title 1): the average teacher self-efficacy at a Title 1 school was 7.67 and at a non-Title 1 school was 7.42. Some may believe that since a high poverty or Title 1

School has underperforming students, the teachers may also be underperforming, hence, a low level of self-efficacy. The findings of this study contradict this assumption.

**Some leadership characteristics were identified as supportive when teaching from home during the pandemic.** Being included in decision making, having a voice, and feeling cared for were identified by teachers who were interviewed as important supports by leadership during the pandemic. Communication, including listening and providing feedback, was both hailed as a positive factor relating to self-efficacy during this time, and also identified as an area of opportunity for leaders to improve. Flexibility and Empowering were also identified by interview participants as important leadership characteristics that support teaching from home during the pandemic. Comparing these identified characteristics to the overall ratings from the PRRS, Communication was the highest (8.53), Empowering was fourth highest (8.04), and Flexibility was seventh of 11 characteristics (7.90), so Flexibility was an outlier in the comparison. On the overall rankings from the PRRS, Communication was the highest, Empowering was third, and Flexibility was sixth. These findings indicate that during the pandemic there was a slight shift in what teachers felt they needed from leaders.

### **Implications**

Teacher self-efficacy is an important factor influencing student achievement (Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2007; Hoy et al., 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). Teachers' belief in their ability to teach students can individually and collectively impact the academic success of a school (Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2007; Hoy et al., 2002; Protheroe, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). For this study, the data was obtained from teachers in a high performing district who thought highly of their ability. Therefore, the results of this study

are particularly important to leaders who are committed to supporting teachers using strategies to build teacher self-efficacy in their buildings.

**Implications for school leader preparation.** The findings in this study have important implications for practice. By identifying the leadership characteristics which teachers believe increase their level of self-efficacy, building administrators can be more intentional in their day to day practice, especially in the area of communication. Leaders could survey their teachers to explore the methods of communication that are important to them specifically. Such a strategy is especially meaningful to this researcher who, after the first district climate survey, scored 59% in effective communication by the faculty. After a school wide survey of faculty regarding what they needed specifically in the area of communication, I was able to implement specific methods of communication, including distributing minutes of leadership meetings, including more details in the weekly newsletter, holding team leaders more accountable for communicating to their teams, and being more consistent with my communication through email and staff meetings. After one year the climate survey results increased by 16%, to 75% in effective communication. Additionally, districts can apply the findings from this study when planning and implementing leadership preparation programs. When leaders are made aware of the significance of communication from a teachers' perspective, they can be more deliberate in their methods of communication, as indicated by this researcher's personal experience. Additionally, this study shows that teachers needed more communication during a national school closure when they were teaching in isolation from home.

Although it is clear from this study that communication was the most important leadership characteristic relating to teacher self-efficacy, it was certainly not the only one.

Consideration, Inspiring and Empowering followed Communication in importance. Both of these characteristics are not concrete concepts that are easily taught, but rather more ambiguous attributes that require intentional leadership instruction, including different methods of communication, coaching and feedback, and what to say and how to say it relating to situational awareness. Additionally, leaders should explore the reality of communication as a “double-edge sword,” meaning you can communicate information perfectly, but the listeners’ perception of what was said may not be what the leader intended. It is reasonable to assume that referencing this work would benefit districts in their preparation of leaders.

**Implications for the professional learning of school leaders.** As districts look to develop professional development opportunities for school leaders, the findings from this study can equip leaders to leverage leadership characteristics as a means of building teacher self-efficacy which impacts student achievement. Many districts, including Clay County, Duval County, St. Johns County, and Bradford County, have developed or contracted out aspiring leader programs (PEP <http://www.ncpep.org/>; New Leaders <https://www.newleaders.org/>; and NEFEC <https://www.nefec.org/>) for teacher leaders and assistant principals who are developing their leadership potential in order to be promoted to school and district based administrators,. Findings from this study, including the teacher interviews, offer insight when reflecting on the need for training of specific leadership attributes that are related to building teacher self-efficacy. Aspiring leaders and current school leaders would benefit from understanding how leadership characteristics affect teachers’ self-efficacy.



## **Limitations**

Several limitations of this study require discussion. First, one of the two survey tools is limited in its scope. That is, the PRRS contains only one question relating to each leadership characteristic, which limits the participants' interpretation of what exactly is being asked. In contrast, the TSES asks 12 questions relating to teacher self-efficacy, which results in a mean score for self-efficacy. The advantage of using these instruments is that they are quick and easy surveys which increase the likelihood of a high teacher completion rate, thus garnering a larger sample.

Second, this investigation took place in a high performing school district, with only one low-performing school of the 27 surveyed. One may make the assumption that because the district has a high level of student achievement, the teachers are high-performing as indicated by the average level of self-efficacy. No teachers who participated reported a low level of self-efficacy, which may reflect self-selection on the part of survey respondents. Therefore, the findings and themes can only be generalized to the context of high and moderate self-efficacy teachers in the Clay County School District. Additionally, only elementary teachers were surveyed, excluding any secondary teachers who may have a different perspective.

Lastly, the interview protocol for the qualitative portion was limited in its scope, thus garnering limited data for analysis. In retrospect, I would have asked more questions to gain a clearer understanding and more specifics relating to the connection between leadership characteristics and their own self-efficacy. Additionally, the number of participants in the qualitative interviews was not large enough to disaggregate the data, therefore giving a limited perspective.

## **Future Research**

This study extends the body of research literature with respect to the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and leadership characteristics from the teachers' perspective. The findings from this study support the importance of building teacher capacity by building teacher self-efficacy using leadership characteristics deemed important by teachers. Additionally, by adding the voice of teachers regarding teaching during the pandemic, it frames the discussion for future research in the event there is another extended school closure.

This investigation suggests areas of opportunity for future research. First, limiting the sample to only elementary teachers limited the perspective and possible range of teacher self-efficacy. Therefore, including all levels (elementary, junior high, and high school) and disaggregating the data across levels may offer insight into level-specific needs for leader training and could provide rich detail about leadership characteristics relating to self-efficacy from three different perspectives. Additionally, including teachers from a low-performing district could provide more context to important leadership characteristics relating to teacher self-efficacy. Another area for future research is specific methods of communication that teachers feel would positively impact their self-efficacy in believing that they can do the job and increase student achievement. Comparing perceptions of teachers and leaders with respect to both self-efficacy and specific leadership strategies would also add to the body of research on this topic. Lastly, longitudinal studies of how self-efficacy changes from one circumstance to another or whether it increases with experience regardless of school moves, school closure, etc. would provide additional context to the topic.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this research was to better understand the leadership characteristics that are identified by teachers as having a positive impact on their level of self-efficacy. Additionally, the research was extended to include the voices of teachers who were forced to teach in isolation from home during the pandemic and what leadership characteristics they deemed as important during that time that impacted their self-efficacy. These findings identify Communication as the number one attribute that influences self-efficacy from the teachers' perspective.

The current demands placed upon school leaders to transform schools into high performing institutions with positive school culture, high teacher morale, low attrition rate, and high student achievement begs the question "How?" One factor collectively contributing to this culture of learning is teacher self-efficacy and the leader characteristics that support and build high levels of teacher self-efficacy (Goddard et al., 2004; Goddard & Skrla, 2007; Hoy et al., 2002; Protheroe, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). This study explores the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and leadership characteristics including the extenuating constructs of age, experience, context of school, and number of principals under whom the teachers previously served.

The findings from this study confirm previous research on this topic. The outcomes of this study suggest areas of opportunity to explore larger samples and contexts. This investigation adds to the limited research on teaching during a pandemic and what teachers need from leaders during crisis teaching from home in isolation. Additionally, this research suggests areas in which practitioners and researchers can craft professional development for leaders in building teacher self-efficacy, thus positively impacting student achievement.



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## APPENDIX A: SURVEY INVITATION

Clay County Elementary Teachers,

I hope you are having a restful summer. You certainly deserve it after last year! The purpose of this email is to ask you for about 10-20 minutes of your time to complete a survey on teacher self-efficacy and principal characteristics you deem important with regard to building your self-efficacy. I am in the data collection phase of my dissertation and with the permission of Mr. Broskie hope to gain a better understanding from your perspective to help leaders build teacher self-efficacy in their buildings. Every elementary teacher will receive the survey and participation is optional and anonymous. The only identifying information will be your school, however, this is NOT an assessment of your current principal but your feelings regarding leadership characteristics in general. As a school leader, I believe your input in this very important research can help us to better serve you.

There is an opportunity for you to participate in the interview portion of the data collection which is optional. If you are interested please check that question in the survey and you will be asked for your email address. If you are selected for the interview portion, a pseudonym will be used and your school will not be identified by name. Any data collected from the interview will be destroyed upon coding and analysis.

Please use the following Survey Monkey link to participate in 1 or both portions of the data collection:

XXXXXXXXXXXX (insert link here)

If you have any questions or concerns you may reach out to me at [carolyn.hayward@myoneclay.net](mailto:carolyn.hayward@myoneclay.net) or (904)200-0825 or my UNF advisor, Dr. Matthew Ohlson at [matthew.ohlson@unf.edu](mailto:matthew.ohlson@unf.edu) or 352-474-9602.

I appreciate your participation,

Carolyn

**Carolyn Hayward**

WES PRINCIPAL, ELEMENTARY

WES

**Clay County District Schools**

| **phone** 904-336-4075 | **ext** 64081

| **web** [oneclay.net](http://oneclay.net) | **email** [carolyn.hayward@myoneclay.net](mailto:carolyn.hayward@myoneclay.net)

## APPENDIX B: SURVEY AS ADMINISTERED

### **Informed Consent to Participate in Human Subject Research – Faculty/ Staff Survey (Phase 1)**

Carolyn Hayward, a Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership at the University of North Florida is conducting a study on the principal behaviors that impact teacher efficacy of K-6 public school teachers. Your voluntary participation in this study would be greatly appreciated, as it will potentially inform leadership development and practice for administrators in schools. Choosing not to participate will have no impact on your employment with Clay County Schools.

As part of this study, I will be conducting this survey in regard to how you rate your self-efficacy and rating and ranking of principal behaviors you deem important.

I do not anticipate the study will present any risk to you. This study consists of 2 phases. Phase 1 consists of a brief survey which will be confidentially maintained. The 2 part survey (your self-efficacy rating and rating and ranking principal characteristics) will appear consecutively. The information I gather through the survey will only be shared as an average of all faculty and staff surveys completed. Even though the information collected may be sensitive in nature, since no personal information will be collected, you will not be identified. If you choose to participate in Phase 2 of the data collection (personal interview) you will submit your email address to let me know you are willing to participate and I will contact you directly. Like Phase 1, Phase 2 is completely voluntary. Phase 2 will have its own informed consent outlining the procedural safeguards and protection of your identity which will also be confidential. Due to the sensitivity of the subject matter, there could be a slight risk of a confidentially breach, however, every imaginable safety measure will be employed to negate such a possibility.

While there may be no immediate benefit to you, I anticipate that the results of this study will help leadership development programs improve instruction through appropriate professional development, pre-service training, and in-service training.

Participation in this study is completely optional. The expected duration to complete the survey (phase 1) is approximately 10 minutes for each portion (20 min. total).

If you have any questions, please contact Carolyn Hayward at n00058591@unf.edu or at (904) 200-0825 or Dr. Matthew Ohlson, faculty advisor, at matthew.ohlson@unf.edu or 352-474-9602.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in the study, you may call the staff of the UNF Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at (904) 620-2498 or IRB@unf.edu.

I have received a complete explanation of the study and agree to participate.

Clicking “I agree” shall serve as my voluntary consent to participate in this research study.

- ☐ I agree
- ☐ I do not agree

(continued on next page)



[illegible]

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. How well can you implement alternative teaching strategies in your classroom?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Rating of Principals' Characteristics

#### Directions:

Please indicate your opinion about each of the characteristics below by marking any one of the nine responses, ranging from (1) "Very Low Importance" to (9) "Very High Importance" as each represents a degree on the continuum.

#### Communication

The principal establishes strong lines of communication with and among students and teachers.

- ☐ 1 Very Low Importance
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 Low Importance
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 Some Importance
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Quite a Bit of Importance
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 Very High Importance

### Consideration

The principal expresses genuine concern for the welfare of teachers and makes efforts to get to know each individual.

- ☐ 1 Very Low Importance
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 Low Importance
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 Some Importance
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Quite a Bit of Importance
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 Very High Importance

### Discipline

The principal protects teachers from intrusion into their instructional time. This includes limiting announcements and preventing disruptions to class time.

- ☐ 1 Very Low Importance
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 Low Importance
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 Some Importance
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Quite a Bit of Importance
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 Very High Importance

### Empowering Staff

The principal provides opportunities for teachers to make decisions about their work and to be involved in school-wide decisions.

- ☐ 1 Very Low Importance
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 Low Importance
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 Some Importance
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Quite a Bit of Importance
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 Very High Importance

### Flexibility

The principal utilizes varied leadership behaviors as necessary based on specific situations and circumstances in the school.

- ☐ 1 Very Low Importance
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 Low Importance
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 Some Importance
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Quite a Bit of Importance
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 Very High Importance

### Influence with Supervisors

The principal effectively garners support from supervisors and district level administrative offices to assist in meeting the needs of the school.

- ☐ 1 Very Low Importance
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 Low Importance
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 Some Importance
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Quite a Bit of Importance
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 Very High Importance

### Inspiring Group Purpose

The principal creates an environment where all teachers are part of a team and work together toward shared goals that result in student and teacher success.

- ☐ 1 Very Low Importance
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 Low Importance
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 Some Importance
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Quite a Bit of Importance
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 Very High Importance

### Modeling Instructional Expectations

The principal models his/her belief in the instructional process and emphasizes the importance of the instruction that takes place in each classroom.

- ☐ 1 Very Low Importance
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 Low Importance
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 Some Importance
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Quite a Bit of Importance
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 Very High Importance

### Monitoring and Evaluating Instruction

The principal "keeps an eye" on what is happening in the school and provides feedback to teachers regarding the instructional impact of classroom strategies.

- ☐ 1 Very Low Importance
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 Low Importance
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 Some Importance
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Quite a Bit of Importance
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 Very High Importance

### Providing Contingent Rewards

The principal formally and informally recognizes outstanding work inside and outside of the classroom and shares this recognition in tangible and visible ways.

- ☐ 1 Very Low Importance
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 Low Importance
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 Some Importance
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Quite a Bit of Importance
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 Very High Importance

### Situational Awareness

The principal is aware of the details and concerns regarding the functioning of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems.

- ☐ 1 Very Low Importance
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 Low Importance
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 Some Importance
- ☐ 6
- ☐ 7 Quite a Bit of Importance
- ☐ 8
- ☐ 9 Very High Importance

### Ranking of Principals' Characteristics

#### Directions:

Rank each of the following items in order of importance when considering the significance of each characteristic (1 = most important, 11 = least important).

- ☐ Communication: The principal establishes strong lines of communication with and among students and teachers.
- ☐ Consideration: The principal expresses genuine concern for the welfare of teachers and makes efforts to get to know each individual.
- ☐ Discipline: The principal protects teachers from intrusion into their instructional time. This includes limiting announcements and preventing disruptions to class time.
- ☐ Empowering Staff: The principal provides opportunities for teachers to make decisions about their work and to be involved in schoolwide decisions.
- ☐ Flexibility: The principal utilizes varied leadership behaviors as necessary based on specific situations and circumstances in the school.
- ☐ Influence with Supervisors: The principal effectively garners support from supervisors and district level administrative offices to assist in meeting the needs of the school.

☐ Inspiring Group Purpose: The principal creates an environment where all teachers are part of a team and work together toward shared goals that result in student and teacher success.

☐ Modeling Instructional Expectations: The principal models his/her belief in the instructional process and emphasizes the importance of the instruction that takes place in each classroom.

☐ Monitoring and Evaluating Instruction: The principal "keeps an eye" on what is happening in the school and provides feedback to teachers regarding the instructional impact of classroom strategies.

☐ Providing Contingent Rewards: The principal formally and informally recognizes outstanding work inside and outside of the classroom and shares this recognition in tangible and visible ways.

☐ Situational Awareness: The principal is aware of the details and concerns regarding the functioning of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems.

School:

What is your age (in years)?

What is your gender?

- ☐ Male  
☐ Female

What is your racial identity?

- ☐ African American  
☐ White, Non-Hispanic  
☐ Other

What is the context of your school?

- ☐ Title I  
☐ Non-Title I

How many years have you taught?

How many principals have you worked for during your years teaching?

(continued on next page)



**Informed Consent to Participate in Human  
Subject Research – Interview (Phase 2)**

Carolyn Hayward, a Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership at the University of North Florida is conducting a study on principal behaviors and the impact on teacher efficacy of K-6 public school teachers. Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated, as it will potentially inform leadership development and practice for administrators in schools.

As part of this study, I would like to conduct a single semi-structured interview with elementary teachers regarding their understanding of their own efficacy and the relationship between their self-efficacy level and what leadership behaviors they believe build their efficacy. Interviews will discuss your own ratings of your self-efficacy (from Phase 1 of this study) as well as the principal behavior rating and ranking. Additionally, we will discuss the similarities and differences between your ratings and the de-identified ratings of others. The interview will be audibly recorded and take approximately 1 hour. The data collected from phase 2 will be confidentially maintained without personal identifiers. All interview audio files will be securely stored on a password protected computer until they are transcribed. Following the verification of the transcriptions, the audio files will be permanently destroyed.

I do not anticipate the study will present any risk to you. The information I gather through interview (either in person or Google Meets) will be recorded privately and your name will be replaced with a pseudonym. Even though the information collected may be sensitive in nature, I will not release information on you to any other administrator, district leader, or to anyone else in a way that could identify you.

While there may be no immediate benefit to you, I anticipate that the results of this study will help leadership development programs improve instruction through appropriate professional development, pre-service training, and in-service training.

If you want to withdraw from the study at any time you may do so without penalty. The information on you up to that point would be destroyed.

If you have any questions, please contact Carolyn Hayward at n00058591@unf.edu or at (904) 200-0825 or Dr. Matthew Ohlson, faculty advisor, at matthew.ohlson@unf.edu or (352) 474-9602.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in the study, you may call the staff of the UNF Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at (904) 620-2498 or IRB@unf.edu.

\* I have received a complete explanation of the study and agree to participate. Once you click the “I agree” button you will be asked for your email address or phone number in order for me to contact you

directly to schedule the interview. By clicking “I agree” shall serve as my voluntary consent to participate in this research study.

- ☐ I agree  
☐ I do not agree

Please enter your contact information for the purposes of scheduling the interview.

Email

Phone

## APPENDIX C: TSES SHORT FORM ORIGINAL VERSION

## Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey (Tschannen-Moran &amp; Woolfolk Hoy, 2001)

<b>Teacher Beliefs</b>		This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create challenges for teachers. Your answers are confidential.								
<b>Directions:</b> Please indicate your opinion about each of the questions below by marking any one of the nine responses in the columns on the right side, ranging from (1) "None at all" to (9) "A Great Deal" as each represents a degree on the continuum. Please respond to each of the questions by considering the combination of your current ability, resources, and opportunity to do each of the following in your present position.		None at all	Very Little	Some Degree	Quite A Bit	A Great Deal				
1.	How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
2.	How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
3.	How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
4.	How much can you do to help your students value learning?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
5.	To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
6.	How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
7.	How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
8.	How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
9.	To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
10.	To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
11.	How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
12.	How well can you implement alternative teaching strategies in your classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
13.	What is your gender?	<input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female								
14.	What is your racial identity?	<input type="radio"/> African American <input type="radio"/> White, Non-Hispanic <input type="radio"/> Other								
15.	What subject matter do you teach? (as many as apply)	<input type="radio"/> All (Elementary/ Self-contained) <input type="radio"/> Math <input type="radio"/> Science <input type="radio"/> Language Arts <input type="radio"/> Social Studies								
16.	What level do you teach?	<input type="radio"/> Elementary <input type="radio"/> Middle <input type="radio"/> High								
17.	What is the context of your school?	<input type="radio"/> Urban <input type="radio"/> Suburban <input type="radio"/> Rural								
18.	What is the approximate proportion of students who receive free and reduced lunches at your school?	<input type="radio"/> 0-20% <input type="radio"/> 21-40% <input type="radio"/> 41-60% <input type="radio"/> 61-80% <input type="radio"/> 81-100%								
19.	What grade level(s) do you teach?	<input type="checkbox"/> K <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9								
20.	How many years have you taught?	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9								
		For office use only. <input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9								

## APPENDIX D: PRRS ORIGINAL VERSION

## Principals' Rating and Ranking Scale (Walker, 2009)

<b>Rating and Ranking of Principals' Characteristics</b> <b>Directions:</b> 1. (Right Columns) Please indicate your opinion about each of the characteristics below by marking any one of the nine responses in the columns on the right side, ranging from (1) "Very Low Importance" to (9) "Very High Importance" as each represents a degree on the continuum. 2. (Left Column) Rank each of the following items in order of importance when considering the significance of each characteristic (1=most important, 11=least important).		Use this section to rate each of the characteristics on a scale based upon the importance of each characteristic.								
Rank		Very Low Importance	Low Importance	Some Importance	Quite a Bit of Importance	Very High Importance				
	<b>Communication</b> The principal establishes strong lines of communication with and among students and teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<b>Consideration</b> The principal expresses genuine concern for the welfare of teachers and makes efforts to get to know each individual.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<b>Discipline</b> The principal protects teachers from intrusion into their instructional time. This includes limiting announcements and preventing disruptions to class time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<b>Empowering Staff</b> The principal provides opportunities for teachers to make decisions about their work and to be involved in school-wide decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<b>Flexibility</b> The principal utilizes varied leadership behaviors as necessary based on specific situations and circumstances in the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<b>Influence with Supervisors</b> The principal effectively garners support from supervisors and district level administrative offices to assist in meeting the needs of the school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<b>Inspiring Group Purpose</b> The principal creates an environment where all teachers are part of a team and work together toward shared goals that result in student and teacher success.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<b>Modeling Instructional Expectations</b> The principal models his/her belief in the instructional process and emphasizes the importance of the instruction that takes place in each classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<b>Monitoring and Evaluating Instruction</b> The principal "keeps an eye" on what is happening in the school and provides feedback to teachers regarding the instructional impact of classroom strategies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<b>Providing Contingent Rewards</b> The principal formally and informally recognizes outstanding work inside and outside of the classroom and shares this recognition in tangible and visible ways.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<b>Situational Awareness</b> The principal is aware of the details and concerns regarding the functioning of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

## APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Which specific characteristics did your previous principals possess which contributed to your belief that you can do your job well?
2. Which principal characteristics do you believe builds efficacy in teachers?
3. Thinking about specific challenges of last year's Crisis Teaching (March –April, 2020), did you feel supported by your principal?
4. What specific principal actions do you think would have helped your level of efficacy during Crisis Teaching?

## APPENDIX F: PERMISSION FROM SUPERINTENDENT



## CLAY COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOLS

900 WALNUT STREET, GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FL 32043

P (904) 336-6500 F (904) 336-6536 W oneclay.net

## SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

David S. Broskie

## BOARD MEMBERS:

Janice Kerekes, District 1

Beth Clark, District 2

Tina Bullock, District 3

Mary Bolla, District 4

Ashley Gilhousen, District 5

April 20, 2021

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter to document my support of a research study that Carolyn Hayward is planning to conduct as part of her dissertation. I have met with her and she has explained the rationale and plans for her study. I understand that she is planning to survey elementary teachers about their self-efficacy and principal leadership behaviors using 2 online survey tools. Additionally, she plans to choose 3-5 of the teachers to interview in order to better understand the survey data. Carolyn has provided me with a copy of the survey as well as a copy of the interview protocol. She further explained that all participants will consent to participate in the study voluntarily and that all data will be kept confidential. Results of the study will only be reported using pseudonyms (for the teacher interview data) and the results from the teacher surveys will only be reported as percentages. I fully support this work and can see the value of teachers reflecting on their self-efficacy level and what they believe to be essential leadership behaviors affecting their level of efficacy.

Sincerely,

David Broskie  
Superintendent of Schools

## APPENDIX G: PERMISSION TO USE TSES

**William & Mary  
School of Education**

MEGAN TSCHANNEN-MORAN, PHD  
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Carolyn,

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

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

Please use the following as the proper citation:

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

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

All the best,

Megan Tschannen-Moran  
William & Mary School of Education

## APPENDIX H: PERMISSION TO USE PRRS

4/5/2021

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF CLAY COUNTY Mail - Permission to use PRRS



Hayward, Carolyn &lt;carolyn.hayward@myoneclay.net&gt;

### Permission to use PRRS

Jeff Walker &lt;jawalker@smcps.org&gt;

Mon, Apr 5, 2021 at 8:46 AM

To: "Hayward, Carolyn" &lt;carolyn.hayward@myoneclay.net&gt;

Hi Carolyn. You have my permission to use the scale. I would love to see how your research turns out. If you are able, please share results when you're done. Best wishes on your project.

Jeff

Jeff Walker, Ph.D.  
 Assistant Superintendent of Supporting Services  
 St. Mary's County Public Schools  
 Division of Supporting Services  
 (301) 475-4256 x7  
<http://www.smcps.org/dss>  
 Twitter: @smcps\_dss

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