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Teachers' Perceptions and Preparedness for an Active Shooter Incident

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Walden University

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Abstract

Teachers' Perceptions and Preparedness for an Active Shooter Incident

by

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MA, Walden University, 2017

BS, Walden University, 2015

Dissertation Submitted in Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Educational Psychology

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Abstract

Schools in the United States need to be prepared for a possible school shooting. However, the types of planning and security measures differ across states and there is not a national policy center or central authority that standardize the quality and feasibility of the safety and security plans. Little research exists on teachers' perceptions of preparedness for active shooter incidents. The purpose of this qualitative generic study was to examine teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. The purpose of this study was to understand teacher's feelings of safety and their perceptions on how their school trained school personnel for a gun related crisis management. The theoretical foundation for this study was influenced by Bandura's theory of self-efficacy. The participants for this study were 10 urban public high school teachers. Data were examined using thematic analysis. Results of this study provided an understanding of teachers' opinions on how adequate they perceived the training received to face potential shooter incidents. Training varied across participants, most participants noted they were trained in lockdown drills procedures, ALICE training, or a color code card procedure. The participants thoughts on school safety varied in range, some participants felt safe, others felt semi safe, or very safe. Therefore, thoughts on school safety were situational dependent. Participants also described their differing thoughts on administration support during crisis management training. Only few teachers felt supported by administration. Results of this study have the potential to be used for positive social change by administrators in the creation and implementation of teachers' training methods in active shooter incidents.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Background.....	2
Problem Statement.....	3
Purpose.....	5
Research Question	5
Theoretical Framework.....	5
Nature of the Study.....	7
Definitions.....	8
Assumptions.....	8
Scope and Delimitations	9
Limitations	9
Significance.....	10
Summary.....	10
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	11
Literature Search Strategy.....	12
Theoretical Framework.....	12
Mastery Experiences.....	13
Vicarious Experiences	14
Verbal Persuasion	14

Physiological Arousal	14
Teachers' Self-Efficacy	15
How the Theory Was Used in Previous Related Research	16
How the Theory Relates to the Study	17
Literature Review Related to Key Concepts.....	18
Firearm Violence Overview.....	18
Characteristics of School Shooters	19
Characteristics of School where Shootings Occurred.....	21
Safety Measures to Prevent School Shootings.....	22
Surveillance.....	23
Training Programs	28
Crisis Planning.....	29
Policy on School Violence.....	31
School and District Roles.....	32
Outcome.....	34
Teachers' Perceptions of Preparedness for an Active Shooter Incident	35
Summary.....	38
Chapter 3: Methodology	40
Research Design and Rationale	40
The Role of the Researcher.....	41
Methodology	42
Population	42

Number of Participants and Rationale.....	42
Recruitment Procedures.....	43
Relationship Between Saturation and Sample Size.....	43
Instrumentation.....	44
Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection.....	45
Data Collection Source.....	46
Data Analysis Plan.....	46
Issues of Trustworthiness.....	48
Credibility.....	49
Transferability.....	49
Dependability.....	50
Confirmability.....	51
Ethical Protection of Participants.....	51
Summary.....	52
Chapter 4.....	53
Study Setting.....	53
Demographic Data.....	54
Data Collection.....	55
Data Analysis.....	56
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	56
Credibility.....	56
Transferability.....	57

Dependability	57
Confirmability.....	58
Results.....	58
Theme 1: Teacher’s Thoughts on School Safety	58
Theme 2: Teachers’ Feeling of Preparedness for an Active Shooter.....	61
Theme 3: Procedures, Preparation, and Training for an Active Shooter	64
Theme 4: Administration Support During Crisis Management Training	67
Theme 5: Challenges with Implementing Crisis Training.....	70
Addressing the Research Question	71
Summary.....	72
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	74
Interpretations of the Findings	75
Theme 1: Teacher’s Thoughts on School Safety	75
Theme 2: Teachers’ Feeling of Preparedness for an Active Shooter.....	76
Theme 3: Procedures, Preparation, and Training for an Active Shooter	77
Theme 4: Administration Support During Crisis Management Training	79
Theme 5: Challenges with Implementing Crisis Training.....	80
Theoretical Framework.....	81
Limitations of the Study.....	82
Recommendations.....	83
Implications.....	84
Conclusion	85

References.....	86
Appendix A: Research Question and Interview Questions.....	93

List of Tables

Table 1 *Description of the Participant Demographics* 55

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Concerns associated with school security in U.S. schools have risen since the fatal school shooting of 1999 at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado (Muschert et al., 2014). Several schools across the United States have been directed to create safety policies in the aftermath of the Columbine high school shooting (The National Association of State Boards of Education, 2013). Care providers may perceive school environments as secure, and the procedures in place to avoid unexpected occurrences such as active shooter incidents are well implemented by school officials (Dixon, 2015). However, the results of research on teacher and staff perceptions of school safety showed there is a need for the development of safety protocols to ensure school environments are more protected (Dixon, 2015; Embry-Martin, 2017; Rider, 2015; Rinaldi, 2016).

In this generic, qualitative research methodology, I investigated public school teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident and their perceptions on safety and training programs on this issue. Results of this study may provide the basis for specific development and implementation of teachers' training methods in active shooter incidents (Doherty, 2016). This chapter includes a description of the problem statement and background information on active shooter incidents and safety in schools. I discuss the purpose and research question that I used to guide, this study theoretical framework that I used as the basis for understanding the phenomenon, the research design and methodology that I used to respond to the research question. Finally, I will describe the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study, as well as the significance of the study.

Background

According to Price et al. (2016), in 2013, U.S. adolescent ability to access firearms resulted in 1,410 firearm deaths. This would be equal to 125 classrooms of 20 students harmed by firearms (Price et al. 2016). In the wake of the school shooting that occurred in 1999 at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, the U. S. Department of Education and U.S. Secret Service generated changes in school safety and security policies (Department of Justice, 2002). These changes prompted school officials to carry out a variety of prevention measures that incorporated employing armed security officers, installing metal detectors, restricting access to campus buildings, holding a zero tolerance for school violence (Jonson, 2017). However, the development of security measures differed across states without a national policy center or central authority to govern the overall quality of security and protection plans (Connolly, 2012, U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007).

Teachers are tasked to be the first to respond during an active shooter incident; nonetheless, schools differ in their crisis management training leaving teachers vulnerable without the proper training to combat an active shooter (Graham, 2009; Kanner, 2015; Rider, 2015). According to Trump (2010), most U. S. schools do not provide adequate training for school personnel on gun related crisis management such active shooter training, which leaves teachers unqualified to act in response of active shooter incidents. Additionally, due to budgetary restrictions, countless school districts were left without proper security measures (Trump, 2010). Proposals that were applied after the Columbine shooting have since been overturned partly to due budget cutbacks

(Trump, 2010). Educators need to develop and ensure that crisis plans are in place to meet the safety needs of their schools and communities.

In this study, I examined topics related to school safety and teachers receiving inadequate education and training in crisis management. The research from this study could be beneficial in establishing or enhancing means to offer protection for students, and faculty. In this study, I explored teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident, with a focus on understand teachers' feelings of safety and their perceptions on how their school trained school personnel for a gun related crisis management.

Problem Statement

The impact of school shootings on society calls for an enhanced understanding of ways to prevent such events from occurring (Lee, 2013). Adolescents having access to firearms in 2013 resulted in 1410 firearm deaths (Price et al. 2016). These numbers would be equal to 125 classrooms of 20 students harmed by firearms (Price et al. 2016). One of the primary factors of death among adolescents in United States stems from firearms (Vaughn et al. 2016). Events such as these been in U.S headlines during the past 17 years. School shootings have altered the U.S. educational system. Due to recurrent school violence, schools are now viewed as unsafe by some, leaving school officials, parents, educators, and students with the knowledge that it may happen at their school (Johnson, 2017). According to Duplechain and Morris (2014), 75% of school shooters expressed they were bullied or threatened by their peers. Many of the shooters are believed to have experienced long-term bullying via peers. Bullying can take on many

forms including physical and verbal abuse, social separation, and cyber-harassment (Walsh et al., 2018). While the term bullying may vary among studies, Hughes et al. (2017) noted bullying rates in the United States were at 22% in 2013. Factors such as accessibility to guns, Gothism, and violent games contributed to students' violent behavior (Mears & Thielo, 2017). In a national study of adolescents, Price et al. (2016) stated that 29% of students claimed to live in a residence that had more than one firearm, while 41% of students reported having access to weapons (Price et al., 2016). Findings from a study conducted by the national Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) found 5% of adolescents in Grades 9-12 had a firearm in their possession at least one day in the past 30 days (Price et al. 2016).

Johnson (2017) noted many reactions to school violence call for improved security measures and surveillance to prevent firearms from coming into schools, including armed police officers, and metal detectors. Similarly, Ford and Frei (2016) found the need for effective school intervention programs designed to reduce firearm violence such as adequate structural defenses and suitable tools mitigate danger, including metal detectors. Warnick et al. (2015) argued that the more tightly school officials try to control schools to make them safe, the less secure they may be. Metal detectors and video surveillance send the message that schools are places of domination and control, amplifying the message that leads to violence. A survey of school safety administrators found metal detectors were effective in reducing violent behavior. Thirty-two percent of the participants found them to be or very useful and 55% established them to be a bit effective (Johnson, 2017). According to Johnson (2017), metal detectors may

send a message to students that their school is unsafe. Warnick et al. (2015) noted that school personnel take on several steps to promote a positive, secure environment, and most schools achieve this end in a range of ways besides turning their school into an armed fortress. Johnson (2017) suggested that when evacuating is not an option during a school shooting, and the shooter is in range of students, they ought to lock down and barricade the classroom. Barricades can be fashioned with items found in classrooms including tables, desks, shelves, and seats. The aim of barricading the classroom is to make it difficult for the shooter to gain entrance and to encourage them to move pass the room. Sixty-nine percent of mass shootings end in a fewer than 5 minutes (Jonson, 2017).

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. It was my goal to understand their feelings of safety and their perceptions on how their school trained school personnel for a gun related crisis management. Considering that fatal shootings occurred more in urban, public schools with larger enrollments (Flores de Apodaca et al., 2012), I used teachers from these school contexts as participants.

Research Question

The research question that I addressed in this study was: What are public school teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation for this study was Albert Bandura's theory of self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their

ability to carry out behaviors required to obtain achievement. Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exercise control over one's own incentive. Therefore, these cognitive self-evaluations play a vital role in human understanding, such as goals put forward for achievement (Bandura, 1997). Individuals rely partially on their physical and emotional condition in judging their self-efficacy (Bandura, 2012). Efficacy beliefs are reinforced by reducing concern and hopelessness, housing inner strength and resilience, and changing the misconception of physical and emotional states. Particularly, person's belief in their efficacy sways their mindset to think negatively or positively, in self-enabling or self-debilitating ways (Bandura, 2012).

Self-efficacy studies focused on teachers started a little over 2 decades ago with RAND researcher's assessment of whether teachers believed they could manage the restive tasks and interpersonal skills both vital factors in teachers' efficiency (Bray-Clark et al. 2003). Several studies have established that teachers with elevated levels of self-efficacy concerning their capability to teach can generate superior student's achievement across a variety of academic subjects. For example, students who take a computer skills class with a teacher who has high self-efficacy in these skills perform better than students with a teacher with low self-efficacy (Bray-Clark et al. 2003). Moreover, teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to generate favorable outcomes because they tend to be more determined in helping students through difficulty. Additionally, research suggests teachers' self-efficacy has significant implications for overall school effectiveness. Not only do teachers with high-self-efficacy tend to be more widespread in higher performing

schools but there is evidence factor between a school's environment and professional culture and its educational efficiency (Bray-Clark et al. 2003).

Therefore, if educators are convinced to believe in themselves via active shooter training, they are more perseverant in the face of emergencies. Hence, educators who embody high self-efficacy because of prior active shooter training can act efficiently to shooter incidents and can be more efficient in defending themselves and pupils.

Educators who believe they have insufficient training to manage an active shooter incident put themselves as well as pupils at risk.

Nature of the Study

I used a qualitative methodology with a generic, qualitative research approach to examine teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. I used generic inquiry to investigate novel perceptions while impending research issues (see Denzin et al.2000). According to Kahlke (2014), a significant strength of the generic inquiry is that researchers can use it to investigate novel research questions and generate new methodologies. I implemented a generic inquiry to explain participants' lived experiences. Researchers using this methodology gather participants' unique voices (Sandelowski, 2000).

In this study, I focused on teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. I asked urban public-school teachers an array of open-ended questions about their perspective of their preparedness for an active shooter incident, their perceptions on safety, and training programs on this issue. School personnel used the data collected from the interview questions to understand safety concerns. My goals for the

were aligned with the overall purpose of the generic qualitative inquiry. I analyzed the information obtained from the narratives of the participants using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I discuss the analysis with more detail in Chapter 3.

Definitions

Active shooter: is a person aggressively involved in killing or trying to kill individuals in a crowded area (U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.).

Educator: one who teaches, particularly in a school. Other terms used to describe educators include teachers, instructor, and professor (Oxford Dictionary, 2019).

Effectiveness: The extent to which something is effective in delivering favorable results (Oxford Dictionary, 2019).

Firearm: Any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive (U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.).

Safety measures: something that one does to avoid something terrible or unsafe from occurring (Oxford Dictionary, 2019).

School personnel: The term involves teachers, principals, administrators, counselors, social workers, and psychologists employed by a school to perform predetermined essential services (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Assumptions

I assumed that urban public high school teachers would be willing to discuss their perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident in detail and would be authentic in their response to the interview questions related with this study. I also assumed that participants would not deliberately invent replies of their encounters. I

assumed that participants may encounter degree of restraint or uneasiness in discussing their experiences. Teachers may feel discomfort while discussing their experiences because, it may result in job loss or bring on memories of prior high school shooters that took places throughout the United States.

Scope and Delimitations

In this study, I gathered data from t teachers about their perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. I limited the study to U.S. urban high school teachers who have taught Grades 9 to 12 and who had at least 3 years of full-time teaching experience. Participants had experience in crisis management training programs. Participants taught at urban, public schools with large enrollment. I excluded teachers in other grade levels, as most active shooter incidents have taken place in urban public high schools' enrollments (Flores de Apodace et al., 2012). I interviewed participants to gather their perceptions of preparedness for active shooter incidents. This information may be used by school districts to enhance practices related to firearm violence prevention.

Limitations

This study had limitations related to participant recruitment and transferability of findings to other educational settings, as training for active shooter incidents can vary across geographical locations. My own biases and views may have impacted the study. I addressed these concerns using the steps I will describe in Chapter 3, such as the use of peer debriefing to obtain second opinions from my committee concerning the study procedure and understandings. I kept a journal with my reactions to reflect on any biases that arose.

Significance

In this study, I filled the gap on teachers' perceptions of preparedness for active shooter incidents. This study is unique because I addressed active shooter incidents from a teacher's viewpoint. The results of this study included much-needed insights into the ways teachers are trained for gun related crisis management. Urban public-school administrators can use the insights from teachers' perceptions of active shooter incidents to become more aware of safety concerns. Additionally, the results of this study included teachers' opinions on how adequate they perceive the training received to face potential shooter incidents. Understanding teachers' perceptions of preparedness for active shooter incidents has implications for social change and the results of this study contribute to knowledge that will have the potential for development and implementation of teachers' training methods in active shooter incidents (Doherty, 2016; Elsass, et al., 2016).

Summary

This chapter included a general description of the phenomenon of interest in this study as well as the theoretical, conceptual, and empirical support for the research questions and purpose of this study. I defined the key terminology for further discussion of these concepts in Chapter 2. Chapter 2 will include a more thorough discussion of school safety measures, security policies, crisis planning, training programs used in schools to address firearm violence at the public high school level, and teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

According to Jonson (2017), events such as school shootings have affected schools around the United States. Schools need to remain prepared for a possible school shooting (Jonson, 2017). Thus, the question that school personnel should ask themselves is not whether an emergency will ever happen in their schools; rather, they should ask how prepared their schools will be to manage the issue (Hull, 2000). Unfortunately, schools differ in their crisis management training, often leaving educators with the responsibility of being the first to react to an active shooter (Connolly, 2012).

It is important to offer training programs to ensure that teachers and pupils respond correctly to an active shooter incident. Moreover, as school shooters frequently plan their strategies in advance, school shooter policies must enhance communication among teachers and pupils (Clark & Boiteaux, 2019). However, little research exists on teachers' perceptions of preparedness for these incidents (Dixon, 2015; Embry-Martin, 2017; Rider, 2015; Rinaldi, 2016). The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of preparedness for such an incident. I gained insight into teachers' feelings of safety and their perceptions about how their school has trained school personnel for gun-related crisis management. Results from this study could give school districts more insight into teachers' perceptions of preparedness for active shooter incidents for practices related to firearm violence prevention.

In this chapter, I present the strategy used to examine the existing literature, followed by a discussion of the conceptual framework and associated theory. I give an overview of the study's topics of interest: safety measures in schools, teachers'

perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident, training programs, crisis planning, and policy on school violence. I close the chapter by highlighting the gaps in literature at the intersection of these topics and affirm the need for this research.

Literature Search Strategy

The purpose of this study was to explore U.S. public school teachers' perceptions and preparedness for an active shooter incident. The terms that I used for this literature review include *firearm violence, safety measures in schools, training programs, teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident, crisis planning, and policies on school violence*. Databases included ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database, EBSCOHOST, PsycNet, PsycInfo, Justice, Journals, and Eric. Information from these databases was searched for the years 2015 to 2020. The Walden University librarian assisted me with finding literature that may be beneficial to my study. I also used a literature review table. This not only aided with keeping all my references in order, but it also helped me to find key terms that were used in various combinations throughout these searches such as *bully, aggression, harassment, emotional abuse, teasing, physical abuse, victimization, intervention, violence prevention, firearms, guns, shootings, schools, education, students, teachers, classroom, safety measures, effectiveness, evaluation, and perceptions*.

Theoretical Framework

In this study I used Albert Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy as the theoretical framework. In Bandura's theory, individual's belief in their ability to carry out the behaviors required to perform a certain task or skill. Self-efficacy refers to people's

beliefs about their talents to activate motivation, cognitive resources, and action to achieve control over the situations they face in their lives (Wood & Bandura, 1989). Self-efficacy implies having confidence in the ability to exercise control over one's own initiative. These cognitive self-evaluations play a vital role in human understanding, such as setting goals for achievement (Bandura, 1997). Additionally, when judging their self-efficacy, individuals are affected in part by their physical and emotional conditions (Bandura, 1997). People's beliefs concerning efficacy are reinforced when they are able to reduce concern and hopelessness, build inner strength and resilience, and change any misconception of physical and emotional states. More specifically, a person's belief in their efficacy influences their mindset to think positively or negatively in self-enabling or self-debilitating ways (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura, there are four main methods to cultivate a powerful sense of efficacy: (a) mastery experiences, (b) vicarious experiences, (c) verbal persuasion, and (d) physiological arousal.

Mastery Experiences

The most valuable method of fostering a sense of efficacy is via mastery experiences. Achievements can develop an individual's belief in their efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Prior successful achievements increase one's expectations of mastery, whereas recurrent disappointments decrease them. However, when individuals only experience empty achievements, then they will easily become deterred by disappointment. The progress of a keen sense of efficacy entails having the knowledge and skill to prevail in the face of a difficulty through perseverance (Bandura, 1997).

Vicarious Experiences

Vicarious experiences, the second stage of Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, are achieved through viewing others engage in activities effectively. Frequently described as demonstrating, onlookers may come to believe that they can enhance their performance after understanding what they have witnessed (Bandura, 1997). Conversely, witnessing the disappointments of others creates a sense of uncertainty concerning one's personal ability to master similar endeavors (Bandura, 1997). Witnessing successful models also creates efficacy by delivering information and developing abilities for coping with environmental challenges.

Verbal Persuasion

Verbal social persuasion is the third method of improving individual's estimation of their own efficacy (Bandura, 1997). When individuals are convinced that they have the skills to thrive, they will make a greater effort than if they have self-doubts and dwell on individual shortcomings. However, efficient social persuaders do more than express belief in individuals' abilities (Bandura, 1997). Individuals who are guided via recommendation into thinking that they can effectively manage their duties are more likely to be effective.

Physiological Arousal

Individuals are greatly influenced by their physical and emotional conditions. According to Bandura (1997), people's physical or emotional condition affect the way they make decisions regarding their responsibilities. A negative emotional state may lead people to undervalue their ability to accomplish their responsibilities, and therefore cause

them to make adverse decisions. For example, anxiety, concern, and despair are all indications of an individual's sense of inadequacy. At times when they need depth and resilience, they read tiredness and discomfort as signs of minimal physical efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

To summarize, Bandura (1997) reported that people's belief in their efficacy results in different outcomes. Self-efficacy is linked to an individual's ability to set targets; individuals who hold an elevated level of self-efficacy will be inclined to set greater, more challenging goals of their own (Bandura 2012).

Teachers' Self-Efficacy

Built on Bandura's self-efficacy concept, teachers' self-efficacy consists of teachers' beliefs about effecting change and coping with students who struggled with learning and motivation to stay on task (Lewandowski, 2005; Yılmaz & Çokluk Bökeoğlu, 2008). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs have been associated with the process of establishing effective schools (Bitto & Butler, 2010; Pajares & Miller, 1994). The theoretical concept of teachers' self-efficacy has been mainly centered on students' educational performance. Teachers with high levels of self-efficacy concerning their capability to teach generated superior student's achievement across a variety of academic subjects (Bray-Clark et al. 2003). Self-efficacy has been linked to matters of self-control, reaction to failure, and trouble resolving skills (Bray-Clark et al. 2003). Nevertheless, the concept of self-efficacy can also be applied to emergency crises in educational settings. Teachers with elevated levels of self-efficacy establish goals involving experience of school security practices and take critically the tasks they need to safeguard themselves

and their pupils. Moreover, when teachers obtain valuable and useful preparation for reacting to active shooter incidents, they are more apt to think that they are ready to react effectively to an incident (Rider, 2015).

How the Theory Was Used in Previous Related Research

Sela-Shayovitz (2009) used the concept of teachers' self-efficacy in her study. Sela-Shayovitz's explored the relationship between training in the prevention of school violence and teachers perceived self-efficacy in managing violent incidents. Three guides were used to analyze teachers' self-efficacy in three key areas: the ability to teach, success in outcome-based learning, and the ability to work well in the context of the school as an organization. Data were gathered using an unidentified questionnaire disseminated among 147 teachers. The findings showed a substantial link between participation in school violence training and teachers' outcome efficacy. A significant association was established between teachers who reported receiving high levels of support from the school and teachers' outcome efficacy in dealing with violence. Sela-Shayovitz (2009) concluded that prevention training could have a considerable encouraging effect on teachers' self-efficacy when managing actual violent incidents. Teachers who participated in a violence prevention training tended to have greater levels of self-efficacy than those who have not completed training.

People who have a greater degree of self-confidence in their abilities and skills are inclined to react more quickly and work much better in stressful situations than their colleagues who have lower levels of self-efficacy. Embry-Martin (2017) conducted a qualitative study to explore how teachers perceive their own self-efficacy levels in

preparing for and responding to an active shooter incident. Results indicated that teachers who received more training had a higher degree of self-efficacy in their abilities to prepare and respond to an active shooter incident. Another significant conclusion showed that teachers perceived themselves as being the first line of defense for students. This indicated how teachers assess their own responsibility in protecting children.

How the Theory Relates to the Study

Bandura's theory of self-efficacy illustrates teachers' decisions concerning their skills when faced with an active shooter incident. These efficacy beliefs are linked to the amount of effort educators are prepared to invest and their persistence to confront obstacles (Bandura, 1997). Additionally, research suggests teacher self-efficacy has significant implications for overall school effectiveness. Not only do teachers with high self-efficacy tend to be more common in higher-performing schools, but direct links may also be found between a school's environment, its professional culture, and its educational efficiency (Bray-Clark et al. 2003). Therefore, if specialized active shooter training results in educators who are convinced to believe in themselves, they will react more effectively to shooter incidents, are more likely to persevere in the face of emergencies and will be more effective in defending themselves and their pupils. Therefore, one may conclude that educators who believe they have insufficient training to manage an active shooter incident are putting both themselves and their pupils at risk.

Educators with strong self-efficacy are more inclined to try out an array of training programs (Bray-Clark et al. 2003). For example, when administrators implement training programs properly, teachers gain valuable skills. This, in turn, improves their

perceptions of efficacy (Bray-Clark et al. 2003). Additionally, teachers with high efficacy are more resistant to obstacles (Bandura, 1997). Those teachers who have a high sense of self-efficacy as a result of taking steps to be prepared for an active shooter incident after engaging in specialized training will feel more confident in their ability to handle such an incident (Bandura, 1997). Their training prepares them to think more clearly and respond more promptly and efficiently than those who have not received training (Rider, 2015).

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts

There are diverse topics of interest that intersect at the focus of this study. Given the network of social issues to be explored, there are various bodies of research from multiple perspectives supporting this literature review. The key terms that are described below explore central areas pertaining to the literature review including the concept of *school and firearm violence, shooter incidents, feelings of safety, crisis management, teachers' training to deal with violence acts, and teachers' responses to violence.*

Firearm Violence Overview

The events that took place in Columbine High School, Virginia Tech, and Sandy Hook Elementary School have triggered a great deal of concern about future school shootings. Curtis (2019) revealed that active shooter incidents have increased since early 2000s' and continue to regularly rise yearly. Between 2000 and 2006 the amount of active shooter incidents averaged 6.4 each year. Additionally, in 2007 and 2013 the standard number of incidents rose to 16.4 per year (Curtis, 2019). These events have left caregivers, teachers, and students alarmed about their safety. As the need to ensure the safety of students and staff has become a prominent worry for administrators, various

schools have responded by employing security officers, limiting free entrance to school buildings, installing metal detectors, and providing training to students and staff on how to respond to an active shooter (Jonson, 2017). Unfortunately, countless security measures have been applied with little to no empirical evidence as to their effectiveness. The failure to carry out evidence-based answers has had repercussions that are just now being revealed (Jonson, 2017). Addington and Muschert (2019) have revealed a range of insights on the policy suggestions that can be traced back to the Columbine shooting.

While there has been a sizable number of news articles about school firearm incidents, little scholarly research has been conducted, particularly on the perceptions of teachers about what is being done to keep the school environment safe. Considering these facts, the ongoing scholarly debate surrounding anti-violence policies in schools suggests the need for continued research. Four examples would include: (a) further examination of the root causes of school violence, (b) continued review of measures taken to prevent school violence, (c) support for evidence-based policies, and (d) a better understanding of how administrators currently select violence prevention programs (Jonson, 2017).

Characteristics of School Shooters

Few shooters have occasionally observed by law enforcement to have one or more of the characteristics that triggered school shootings (Mears et al. 2017). For instance, if peers had bullied a shooter, then bullying may have caused suppressed rage that resulted in a school shooting (Mears et al. 2017) it is not known whether, how or why—these issues are related to school shootings. In some instances, the shooters did not have a history of bullying and a few even were well-known among their peers (Mears et al. 2017). The

challenge; is, the lack of strong evaluations of the empirical relationships among a variety of potential reasons, for school shootings.

However, what is known is, juveniles committed school shootings in the 21st century; the teen shooters varied in age from 14- to 18-years-old (Katsiyannis, et al, 2018) and were White males. The shootings primarily occurred at secondary schools. The school shootings have taken place mostly in the Western and Midwestern districts of the United States (Katsiyannis et al., 2018). Haan and Mays (2013) describe factors that contributed to shootings including bullying, the accessibility of weapons, the role of the shooters' friends, parents and other influential adults, and the power of media reporting. Other associated factors related to school shooters included substance abuse, problems with anger control, lack of empathy, poor coping skills, depression, feelings of entitlement, excessive need for attention (Hong et al., 2011; Ferguson et al., 2011).

Maynen (2013) described the perpetrators of school crimes targeted at students who have called them names or rejected them, or they have retaliated for the seeming biases associated with discipline or educational evaluation. According to Duplechain and Morris (2014), 75% of school shooters expressed their peers bullied or threatened them. In addition, shooters are believed to have experienced long-term bullying via peers. Bullying can take on many forms for instances, physical, verbal, social separation, and cyber harassment (Walsh, et al, 2018). While there are factors that contributed to students' violent behavior— such as, accessibility to guns, Gothism, and violent video games, bullying is the strongest contributing factor that caused these students to go on a shooting rampage (Mears & Thielo, 2017).

Characteristics of School where Shootings Occurred

School related violence, and deadly school shootings, have earned heightened notice in the mass media. The scope of school's admission, metropolitan or suburban areas were linked with deadly school shootings (Flores de Apodaca et al. 2014). Earlier findings suggest, fatal school shooting were three times more common in urban and suburban than rural schools with a larger white enrollment (Livingston et al. 2019). According to O'Donnell (2016), pupils living in urban areas had greater levels of brutal victimizations at school than pupils living in suburban areas. Vicious victimization levels were thirty-two per 1,000 pupils in urban areas compared to 20 per 1,000 in suburban areas. The pupils who take part in these shootings have a propensity to be Caucasian and who have lived in wealthy suburbs or small neighborhoods in the US that were frequently recognized for their fundamentalist values (Haan & Mays, 2013). Moreover, private schools were found to be less prone to encounter fatal school shootings than public schools.

School shooters share, countless characteristics and similarities with mass murderers who have accomplished their acts in various settings. Page (2019) found that the bulk of the plotters were male, Caucasian and of high school age. Several of the plotters had established a “hit list” or a particular plan to murder a particular kind of pupil– for example, athletes. while one school shooter plotted to murder as many individuals as possible. A few of the shooters plotted in detail utilizing maps and plans of the school, creating hit lists, and plotting deceptive strategies, while other shooters did not have a blueprint. A mass murderer is typically limited geographically, as the murders

are all in single area or site. This maintains the crime scene limited. According to Butkus (2020), findings from school shootings between 1996 and 2019 indicate that the bulk of school shooters are male white adolescents, and more than half of the shootings documented for the duration of that time happened in unstructured parts such as passageways and lunchrooms. Moreover, the most school-associated brutal murders happened at transition periods for example, directly prior to or following the school day and at lunch.

Safety Measures to Prevent School Shootings

To prevent school shootings different safety measures were set in place across schools in the last decades. In their review of school security, King and Brady (2019) organized the trends in current school security under three major modalities: the use of school-based law enforcement (SBLE), surveillance methods, and emergency preparedness. SBLE are appointed to guard a school or set of schools and have detention abilities. The most common type of law enforcement are school resource officers, who carry weapons, and are appointed to act during emergency situations in public schools (King & Bracy, 2019). A few SROs are based full-time at a single school while other SROs alternate among several schools in the district. SROs are placed in K-12 schools, and sometimes committees (King et al. 2019). Police officers who are representatives of school district police force are usually hired by a school district, whereas SROs are usually hired by the regional law enforcement organization (King et al. 2019). Additionally, several schools employ paraprofessional team to work in safety situations or have an agreement with private safety firms, though these teams are not deemed law

enforcement, they are frequently grouped with law enforcement in federal figures in schools (King et al. 2019). This blend makes it challenging to understand exactly how many schools have on campus police officers, how many have security guards, and how many have both. In the wake of the Sandy Hook Elementary School mass shooting, President Obama signed “Now is the Time,” giving federal aid for additional law enforcement in schools and to acquire school safety gear. “Now is the Time” also allotted financing to employ school counselors, although most of the funding went to resources to obtain on campus law enforcement. Lastly, “Now is the time” funding enhanced school security from 26% to 45% between 2005-2006 (King et al. 2019).

Surveillance

After each well published school shooting that happened in the United States throughout the past 20 years, the outcome has involved a protracted public investigation of the occurrence and perception techniques that may have been used to avoid such situations. For instance, following the shooting at Virginia Tech, the focus was on undetected or disregarded alerting indications, specifically if just staff or administrators at Virginia Tech had given further notice to Seung Hui Cho’s vehement writings or hostile behavior towards fellow pupils (King et al. 2019). In this environment, it is not astonishing that, energy to distinguish and avoid the following school shooter, the usage of surveillance methods and surveillance technology in public schools has also amplified in the past two decades, with many schools practicing several tactics (Fisher, et al., 2018; Tanner-Smith et al., 2018).

Security cameras are utilized to examine within spots on school grounds involving halls, stairs, lunchrooms, and doorways (Johnson, et al., 2018). Outside the possible disincentive effect, the usage of security cameras is usually reactive, instead of initiative-taking. Security cameras are useful only if staff watched cameras during school hours, which may need substantial funds, recordings from a school's security camera are often seen after an occurrence has occurred to aid with an examination and not utilized to avoid an occurrence (Johnson et. al., 2018). Between 2015-2016 academic year, schools more than before took measures to avoid strangers from gaining access to schools, such as keeping locked establishes (94.1%) only or with outside entrances (49.9%). All (93.5%) schools require guests to sign or check in, frequently utilizing detailed guest ID procedures that check guests' IDs linked to the national sex offender databases. Additionally, through 2015-2016, all public schools enforced staff to use ID badges (67.9%) to differentiate swiftly and clearly who belongs in the building and who does not (Musu-Gillette et al., 2018). Several schools utilize extra forms of surveillance approaches although their usage has flattened or dropped in the years since Columbine. For instance, there has been no difference from 1999-2000 and 2015-2016 in the ratio of public schools that executed indiscriminate checks for illegal drugs or firearms (Musu-Gillette et al., 2018). This decrease might be due to resource matters, involving costly gear and staff who are trained to use it), and schools have opted to distribute their security funds to additional approaches.

Emergency Preparedness

After Columbine and other later public-school firearm violence, schools have implemented entirely different sets of crises strategies on which pupils and school staff are trained. In 2015-2016, 94.6% of schools trained pupils on lockdown practices, 91.5% trained pupils on evacuation practices, and 75.9% percent trained pupils on take shelter in-position practices (Musu-Gillette et al., 2018). Additionally, the ratio of schools that had a strategy in position for the occasion of a shooting rose from 79% in 2003-2004 and 92% in 2015-2016 (Musu-Gillette et al., 2018). Active-shooter exercises in schools include several procedures, the most common is “run, hide, and fight” drills (Magliozzi, 2018). These types of drills advocate for securing and blocking doors, fleeing the site, or fighting back. Several of these drills are performed through computer-generated stimuli, while others are acted out trials with staff portraying an active shooter with firearms firing blanks and pupil actors buried in false blood. Active-shooter exercises are intended to train pupils, teachers, and staff in exactly how to react to an active shooter on school grounds in a manner that decreases the risk of fatalities. They also aid schools in lessening legal responsibility by exhibiting to parents and the community that they are taking the initiative by directing their attention to precautionary procedures (Hamblin, 2018).

Emergency Preparedness in the State of California

Data collection in this study is geared towards teachers working in the state of California. This section covers current recommendations for preparing for an active shooter incident in this state. According to California governor’s office of emergency

services (2018), the safest reaction to an active shooter situation will be for persons to either: Run; Hide or Fight against the active shooter (within a person's capability).

Run (Evacuate). The best response to an active shooter situation will be to evacuate the grounds and get out of the danger situation and into a safe place. Though evacuation may seem like a simple or easy approach to safeguarding personal safety, acting under the threat and confusion of an active shooter condition can be challenging. It is vital to plan to rise the probability that individuals will be able to utilize their safest reasoning. All should comprehend when evacuating in an active shooter situation, persons need to:

- Evacuate irrespective of whether others approve to follow
- Leave Behind all non-lifesaving possessions
- Assist others to flee, (when feasible utilize "buddy system")
- Stop people from come into an area anywhere the active shooter might be
- Keep their hands noticeable
- Follow the directions of any law enforcement or first responders
- Do not try to move injured individuals (California governor's office of

emergency services, 2018, p. 6)

Hide. When leaving the grounds is not feasible, persons in an active shooter situation ought to hide for safety. As active shooter situations usually last between 10 – 15 minutes, hiding from the invader is an extremely useful approach for supporting individual wellbeing. Understanding that, depending on where individuals may be for the

duration of an incident, there might or might not be a lot of areas to hide. All must think about possible areas to take cover:

Hiding areas should be out of the active shooter's view:

- A perfect hiding area will not entrap the person or limit person's possibilities for movement

- The area ought to offer shelter if gunshots are fired in person's path.

To reduce the risks of a person's hiding spot being found:

- Quiet cell phones (turn off vibrate)
- Turn off every cause of sound (i.e., notebooks, and radios)
- Bring down blinds or windowpanes
- Hide behind huge or tough items (i.e., cupboards, school desk)
- Stay silent. To avoid an active shooter from entering the hiding area
- Secure the entrance
- Turn off lights
- Barricade the door with heavy equipment (California governor's office of

emergency services, 2018, p. 9)

Fight. When leaving the grounds is not feasible, hiding is not a choice and a person's life is in impending threat, the last course of action ought to be to disturb and/or injure the active shooter(s). Persons preferring to take action and fight must carry out and act as forcefully as possible against the active shooter(s). This act must be essential, with no hesitancy and incorporate the following:

- Concocting weapons from nearby items (e.g. fire extinguisher)
- Shouting and chucking items

- Fighting as best as possible within skill
- Having a “Not Today” mindset (choosing that moment is not the time to perish)

(California governor’s office of emergency services, 2018, p. 11)

Training Programs

To reduce school firearm violence, training programs have taken diverse forms such as drills and training videos (Neville, et al, 2015). Peterson et al. (2015) revealed public safety departments have been tasked with training staff, faculty, and students to respond to an active shooting event if it were to occur on campus. The training video was designed to prepare students to respond to a shooter on campus, comparing it with a control video about school shootings.

Individuals who watch the training videos increase their knowledge of appropriate active-shooter response behaviors, increase their awareness of safety on campus, and feel more prepared to respond effectively to these events (Ford et al., 20016). However, the impact of these training programs has yet to be evaluated. Rinaldi (2016) found that educators and students benefitted from a comprehensive school safety and security training program. Also, a comprehensive safety and security training plan for staff increases the self-confidence perceptions of the staff when they reflect upon their abilities to respond to school emergencies effectively. However, Payton et al. (2017) revealed that these training programs are nonexistent at some schools. Hence, there is no published evidence to show that a school training program ensures a significant reduction in the risk of firearm violence. According to California Governor’s office of Emergency services (2018), while training staff on active shooter situations, it is vital that administration

emphasizes the significance of thinking productively and being dedicated when taking suit against an active shooter. Also, in training, it is essential for administration to clarify to staff exactly how law enforcement will react to an active shooter incident. As an element of clarification, administration must imply that through a response:

- There could be loud sounds such as explosions, shouting and alarms
- There could be police officers in military-style clothing
- There could be fumes that hinders sight or aggravates the eyes and esophagus
- Persons could be forced to the floor by police officers for their protection

Crisis Planning

Gainey (2009) highlighted the need for crisis planning as a part of effective school district leadership. Olinger, et al. (2017) conducted a study of school crisis plans and perceptions of crisis preparedness among school staff in six public elementary schools. The study revealed that merely half of all respondents had experienced a crisis at their school, and those who had not experienced a crisis in the past might be less aware of how they would actually respond in such a situation. They suggested this could affect the degree and precision to which they report feeling prepared. Connolly (2012) examined crisis readiness on several community college campuses. The results revealed that 56% of the faculty and staff surveyed felt that the school was well prepared for any emergency. However, after additional questioning, Connolly discovered that only 44% knew the whereabouts of the emergency call box near their office or classroom.

According to the National Threat Assessment Center (2018), the first step in creating a crisis plan is, to form an interdisciplinary threat evaluation team of persons who

will oversee and record the treat evaluation procedure. The team will receive reports about pupil circumstances, collect further information, assess the risk presented to the school community, and create intervention and management tactics to alleviate any threat of harm. Some factors for forming a Team include:

- Teams must include recruits from a range of specialties within the school community, including educators, school counselors, coaches, school resource officers, school psychologist and administrators. Cross-disciplinary nature of the Team guarantees that changing points of view will be embodied and that entry to information and resources will be extensive.
- Teams must create procedures and practices that follow for each evaluation, involving who will interview that pupil of interest; who will talk to fellow pupils, educators, or parents; and who will be accountable for recording the Team's endeavors. Established procedures permit for an easier evaluation process as Team members will be mindful of their own roles and obligations, as well as those of their associates.
- Team members must meet when a concerning pupil or condition has been brought to their attention, but they should also meet on a consistent basis to participate in deliberations, role-playing situations, and other Team with chances to work together and learn their specific duties so that when a crisis does occur, the Team will be able to function more easily as a unified unit.

Policy on School Violence

Addington and Muschert (2019) revealed an array of insights concerning policy implications that can be gleaned from the Columbine shootings. Their article highlighted ongoing scholarly debate surrounding anti-violence policies in schools but also suggests the need for continued research. For example, they propose that further research is indicated in the following areas: 1) scholarly clarifications for the causes of school firearm violence, 2) a review of school violence incidents that have been averted, 3) a better understanding of how administrators presently choose violence prevention programs, and 4) support for evidence-based policy. Addington and Muschert (2019) suggest the need for additional research to explore incidents of school violence that have been averted and to identify the lessons to be learned.

Muschert et al. (2014) discuss social constructionist effort on school violence as a socially constructed dilemma and investigate anti-violence policies with an explanation of how political policy analysts may react efficiently to school violence. They argue the notion of school anti-violence policy must be based on rational and sound policy rather than on feelings and panic. Instead of merely critiquing existing school violence policies, the authors argue that before a far-reaching set of policies for prevention can be drawn up, a comprehensive study must be conducted to identify and measure the sources of school violence.

Following the terrible school shooting of 2018 that place at Stoneman Douglas High School, the Trump Administration has devoted considerable time and resources to establish the best practices and policies to avoid potential tragedies and maintain a safe

environment for students (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2018, p.3). Moreover, with the assistance of the Secretaries of Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security and the Attorney General, the Federal Commission on School Safety a guild was created for the best practices and policies. The school guide is used in the state of California and includes information and resources on subjects that may possibly assist districts to help individual schools in their emergency operations plans (EOP). The district and schools create policies and procedures to safeguard each individual participating in creating and enhancing the school EOP with roles and obligations (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2018, p.3).

School and District Roles

The district's creates policies and procedures to allow each of its schools to form a core planning team with a various assortment of members, involving school staff, pupil and parent representatives, individuals and organizations that serve and represent the interests of the whole school community, and community partners (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2018). In addition, each school could request further representatives to partake on the ad-case-by-case development team, as necessary (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2018). The planning team must be small enough to allow close cooperation with first responders and other civic partners, however large enough to be representative of the school, its families, and its community. It must also be large enough as to not place an excessive responsibility on a particular person (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2018, p.6).

The district creates policies and procedures that notify the common framework that the school core planning team utilizes (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2018, p.6). In creating these policies and procedures, the district could consider the degree to which it must offer every school planning team with the following:

- Training on the planning procedure

According to the district's policies and procedures, every school core planning team must determine a common framework that enables efficient team planning. The district creates policies and procedures to safeguard every individual participating in creating and enhancing the school EOP. The district ought to think of the following:

- Who will oversee the school core planning team
- Who from the district will perform on the school core planning team, and who will present specifics concerning roles and responsibilities
- What the vital roles and responsibilities are of a school core planning team
- To what extent the district would train representatives of the school core planning team on their roles and responsibilities in the planning
- How the school core planning team will designate roles and responsibilities
- Who will be responsible for the results of the school core planning team
- Who will be responsible for overseeing the school core planning team's procedures.

According to the district's policies and procedures, every school core planning team must recognize the role of the planning team and its members and be capable to efficiently identify and designate roles and duties.

The district has an essential role in establishing districtwide prospects and conditions for conducting frequent but accommodating planning meetings in every school (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2018, p.7). Routine meetings enable more cooperation, and interaction between school core planning team participants. They also assist to set key connections and safeguard that all school teams throughout the district are effectively dedicated to their individual planning endeavors (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2018, p. 7). According to the district's policies and procedures, every school's core planning team must be capable to establish a routine timetable of team meetings.

Outcome

The district has endorsed the school in, (a) establishing a school planning team, (b) establishing a universal framework, (c) identifying and appointing roles and responsibilities, and (d) establishing a routine schedule of meetings. Establishing such an environment involves cooperation among school officials and their community partners to organize for and to react to a threat such school violence (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2018, p.12). The School Guide advises schools to embark on emergency management planning in the framework of district, local, regional, state, tribal, and federal agency emergency planning (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2018, p.12). The School Guide sets forth planning principles and consecutive steps that schools could take to create an emergency operations plan (EOPs), which are vital to avoiding emergencies from occurring, and reducing the effect, should a tragedy happen (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2018, p.12).

Teachers' Perceptions of Preparedness for an Active Shooter Incident

In this section, I reviewed the studies that reported on teacher's perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. In his article Embrey (2017), discussed teachers perceived self-efficacy in preparing for an active shooter incident. The data was collected via interviews with 12 elementary, middle school, and high school teachers. The study revealed that, for teachers to be prepared for an active shooter incident, they must be trained. Training increases self-efficacy and self-efficacy increases effort and perseverance. The results of this study further support the theory of self-efficacy and how it is applied in the emergency management process.

Rider (2015) examined the adversities associated with high school teachers' perceptions regarding their preparedness for an active shooter incident. A survey instrument was used for the study. Items in these instrument subscales used Likert-type scale format. The statistical program SPSS was used to analyze data from the pilot study. Data were collected from 418 high school teachers varying in teaching experience. The results concluded the more training teachers have in active shooter preparedness response; the more confident they feel in their ability to respond effectively in the event of a live active shooter. Hemphill (2008) sought to report on nine teachers' perception of school violence and the impact it has on their performance. Data were extracted from 9 high school teachers. A qualitative phenomenological approach was used in the study. Hemphill (2008) argues that; the possible threat of victimization on school grounds may possibly cause educators to be concerned about their security and eventually influence their work performance.

Similarly, Roberts et al. (2007) explored teachers' perceptions on school safety exam both individual- and school-level factors that contributed to those perceptions. The study utilized a hierarchical linear regression model (HLMs) of teacher apparent safety. Data were obtained via 1,438 teachers from 54 public high schools in Kentucky. Results concluded, perceptions of safety varied significantly across schools, and school-level attributes accounted for part of the contextual difference. Also, teacher perceptions of school safety were mostly, based on individual experiences.

Doherty (2016) addressed the need for the development and implementation of teachers' training methods in active shooter incidents. He argued the need for more teacher safety training such as, run, hide, or fight approach. Doherty (2016) revealed, every situation is diverse, and the most appropriate courses of action depend on factors such as the urgency of the threat-related conditions, case history, facts known and accessible about the alleged active shooter, and to what degree the parties involved seek out protection, intrusion, and prosecution, amongst several other tactics, strategies, and outcomes.

Perkins Johnson (2018) explored the perceptions of Rhode Island teachers concerning crisis preparedness within their schools. The study used a mixed method explanatory, sequential design. It began with a quantitative online questionnaire and assessed the perceptions of crisis preparedness of 307 Rhode Island teachers. Survey data were enhanced using qualitative data gathered from focus groups. The results indicated the need of teacher training to ensure they feel well equipped for crisis. The study also

noted, the challenges of lack of equipment and training for staff in applying proposed practices.

In his study, Dixon (2016) examined Midwestern city teachers' thoughts and feelings regarding preparedness to handle violent situations in schools, the factors that teachers feel contribute to violence in schools, strengths and weaknesses of their schools regarding dealing with students that are exhibiting possible violent tendencies, what types of training they have received that were most helpful, what trainings that they feel could be beneficial to help them feel safer and more prepared, and how recent school shootings have affected their sense of safety and preparedness in the school setting. Data were collated from 10 teachers K-12 which included 15 open-ended research questions that targeted participants' perceptions of safety and preparedness for school. The study used; a qualitative study approach with semi structured interviews which were recorded and transcribed. This study also utilized a snowball sampling method to recruit teachers for this study. The CAQDAS software was a tool used to help organize the data into thematic analysis. The results of the study indicated that although teachers felt prepared for the unexpected, and generally felt safe in their school environments, they also still felt there were aspects of their situation where things could be improved. One of the primary areas of improvement teachers wanted was for more training specifically designed to address intruder situations to be offered more often throughout the school year.

In his article Kanner (2015); examined teachers; and school counselors'; perceptions on preparedness for confronting violent incidents in school. Data were collected from ten K-12 educators who were selected from a professional non-union

educational website located on the eastern region of the country. Open-ended interviews with school staff participants serving primarily in the teaching profession were conducted over the phone.

Curtis (2019) investigated correlation between the reported degree of planning and practice/drills and how to prepare high school staff to respond to school-based active shooter incidents. This study also evaluated the degree to which staff believed their building administration was trained to resist an active shooter and personal preparedness of trained staff members to respond and protect pupils from such incidents. Data were collected via a Likert Scale survey in SurveyMonkey. The participants were from two public high schools that had a total student population of over 1,200 students each and they were both located in suburban southeastern Pennsylvania. Only 162 staff received the survey with 99 staff members fully completing the questions (61.1% completion rate). The findings conclude that there is a link between the level of planning and drills/training for an active shooter incident and high school staff and their building administrator.

Summary

The chapter discussed the experience of urban public-school teachers on active shooter preparedness. The collection of these studies on teachers' preparedness for an active shooter incident shows that only a handful of studies, mainly dissertation projects, investigated the topic. There is still a lack of research on understanding teacher's feelings of safety and their perceptions on how their school trained school personnel for a gun related crisis management. Understanding the motives for school shootings remains unclear with many overlapping explanations. What is known about school shootings is

that most active shooter incidents occur at K-12 schools and there is a lack of implementing specific training to prepare teachers for such incidents. Therefore, more research is warranted to understand teacher's needs, safety concerns, crisis planning and the challenges that come with a lack of essential tools to train for crises, and perceptions of preparedness to respond to an active shooter event.

In the next chapter, the rationale and research design for this study is described. Within this discussion, the study's sampling strategy is explained, and the population is presented. Methods for data collection are specifically described and an exploration of the generic qualitative approach is introduced to provide a rationale in which meaning will be made to answer the research question. An examination of the trustworthiness of this project is provided; and ethical considerations are presented alongside evidence of the steps that will be taken to uphold optimal ethical integrity in this study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The main purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions on preparedness for an active shooter incident. My aim was to understand teacher's feelings of safety and their perceptions of how their school trained school personnel to manage a gun-related crisis. In this chapter I provide the reasoning for the chosen research design for the study. It also reviews the sampling strategy and data collection, data recording, and the analysis process that will be used in the study. Trustworthiness and ethical procedures are examined.

Research Design and Rationale

Research has indicated that although several preventative measures have been put in practice, deadly gun incidents have continued to occur and remain prolific since the initial Columbine incident (Addington & Muschert, 2019). Schools face the need to continue to prepare for potential school shootings. According to Hull (2000), the question school personnel should ask themselves is not whether an emergency will ever happen in their schools, but how prepared their schools will be to oversee the situation. In this study I addressed issues and strategies to implement training programs for school personnel related to gun crisis management from a teacher's perspective. Teacher's will discuss their perspective and experience with gun crisis management.

The research question for the study is the following: What are public school teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident?

A qualitative research design is appropriate fit for this study. In qualitative researchers enable understanding from the viewpoint of the people familiar with the

occurrence (Creswell, 2014). The researcher permits the voice of the participants to be expressed, and it helps center the study so that the research questions are specifically answered (Creswell, 2014). I will use a generic qualitative inquiry (Merriam, 2009); this design will allow me to investigate U.S. public high school teachers' perceptions and preparedness for active shooter incidents in a real-world setting. The use of in-depth, open-ended questions facilitates the thorough exploration of the topic (Merriam, 2009). The generic qualitative inquiry includes in-depth interviews, fieldwork observations, and manuscript examination to respond to clear-cut questions without framing the inquiry (Patton, 2015). Moreover, in a generic qualitative study, the researcher can pull on the assets of well-known methodologies while maintaining flexibility (Merriam, 2009). Additionally, Creswell (2014) noted that generic inquiry includes an array of sources of data collection to determine ordinary or emerging rising themes. In this study I investigated training of school personnel for gun-related crisis management by gathering data from urban public-school teachers who have had first-hand knowledge of these prevention programs.

The Role of the Researcher

My role in this research was to develop and plan the research process, develop the semistructured interview guide, and conduct interviews within the participants' natural environment. I also transcribed and analyzed the data. I kept the participant's identity confidential. I kept all information and data collected during the study locked away. I explained to participants before the interviews that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any point. Additionally, for participants who agreed to continue with the

study, their information will be disposed of after 5 years. I recruited participants with whom I do not have a personal or professional relationship. This eliminated some of the potential biases. I do not believe biases arose concerning the interworking' of the participants school site as I am unfamiliar with the process. I kept a journal of my feelings and biases during the interview process and during the full research process.

Methodology

In this section, I present the methodology that was used in the study.

Population

The participants for this study were ten urban public high school teachers who had at least 3 years of full-time teaching experience, and work experience in Grades 9 through 12. Criterion sampling was the most suitable approach to make sure that participants met the criteria for this study and to make certain that the research questions are answered (Creswell, 2014).

The detailed criteria for participating in the study are as follows:

- Participants needed to be full time teachers, with at least 3 years of teaching experience preferably within the school under study.
- Participants must have experience working in Grades 9 through 12.
- Participants should have experience in crisis management training programs.

Number of Participants and Rationale.

Generic qualitative inquiry includes in-depth interviews, fieldwork observations, and manuscript examination to respond to clear-cut questions without framing the inquiry (Patton, 2015). The sample size was determined or based on theoretical saturation, which

took place when no new data can be collected (Patton, 2015). I enlisted ten teachers' high school from across the United States. If a participant withdrew or could not partake in the study, I enlisted from a pool of interested participants.

Recruitment Procedures

I placed one flyer for the study on a Facebook teacher's page and another on Walden University's participant pool. Interested teachers either responded to the flyer via Facebook messenger or via email for the participant pool. The bulk of the participants were from the Facebook teacher's page. When potential participants researched out to me which interest, I sent them the consent form via email. Once they gave consent and agreed to participate in the study. I notified teachers via email of the criteria and provided a brief screening questionnaire (see Appendix B) to every teacher who showed interest. This questionnaire consisted of the criteria to participate in the study and a question asking whether the prospective participant would like to partake in the study. When the prospective participants showed interest in partaking in the study, the individual was requested to give their contact information. I contacted the interested participants and thanked them for their interest in participating in my study and set up a time and date for a Zoom interview.

Relationship Between Saturation and Sample Size

In the study I used the criterion sampling, where participants were selected based on predetermined criteria relevant to the research questions (Patton, 2015). I selected ten teachers to participate in semi structured interviews that yielded a rich data for this study. According to Guest et al. (2006), a sample size of twelve participants is appropriate when

using a semi structured interview guide, because most variation in the codes occurs between the first and 12th interviews. Considering these recommendations for sample size, I attempted to recruit twelve participants in my study. It is expected that saturation will be reached with twelve participants. Saturation suggests the point at which no new themes are occurring from a homogenous sample of participant interviews hence determining the number of participants needed to make relevant conclusions related to the research question (Patton, 2015). This target sample size was chosen given the probability of achieving theoretical saturation with this number of homogeneous participants from this group.

Instrumentation

Demographic Questions

All participants were interviewed via Zoom for approximately 45 minutes to an hour to ensure all necessary data has been gathered. Prior to asking participants, the interview questions, I asked a few icebreaker questions to ease any tension and gain some insights into their background, in effort to accomplish rapport that is accessible and simple. See Appendix for projected demographic questions.

Semistructured Interview Guide

I used a Zoom recording option during the semi structured interviews with participant's permission. In addition, I used a backup audio-recording in the event my first recording failed to function. I used a semi structured interview guide to fulfill the research questions. The researchers main aim of interviews was to gain insights into the individuals' lived experiences; to understand how participants make sense of and

construct reality regarding the phenomenon (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Before the initial interview questions, I asked participants a few ice-breaker questions before easing into research questions. Connecting with participants in dialogue in their natural environment using the interview guide permitted me to gain more insights into the phenomenon under study. The researchers approach of interviewing allowed for new topics to emerge (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Moreover, the use of semi structured interviews allowed for more flexibility for creating follow-up questions via the conversation. I based the semi structured interview questions around my literature review and previous related research.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I first obtained consent from Walden University's IRB to proceed with the study. After that, I emailed with a follow-up of the initial contact attempt to schedule an appointment via Zoom to present the nature of my study and to obtain consent from potential participants. These were the steps for recruitment of participants:

- Once the potential participants gave their consent and agreed to participate in the study. I sent them preliminary selection procedure criteria.
- Following the preliminary selection procedure, and after participants indicate their consent via email stating "I consent," I arranged a date and time for an interview via Zoom.
- All participants who took part of the study were rewarded a \$10.00 Starbucks gift card as a token of appreciation for their participation in the study, regardless of their choice to complete the study.

Data Collection Source

Data was collected via high school teachers. The data was collected by means of semi structured Zoom interviews with open-ended questions, and field notes. I interviewed every participant individually; I was the only individual accountable for gathering the field notes and recordings. I created a calendar to keep track of sample interviews. I sent reminders to the participants in advance of the upcoming interview by email. The interviews took place via Zoom. All participants were asked the same questions during the interviews. However, the flexibility of the semi structured interview allowed the researcher to explore follow-up questions as needed. Also, the interviews were taped for later analysis. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes; however, duration depended on the interviewee. I used interviews to establish patterns evolving themes.

Data Analysis Plan

I used thematic analysis for this study. Thematic analysis can be applied in various theoretical frameworks, and it can also be used with various qualitative exploratory research designs as it is not linked to one single theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Additionally, thematic analysis is a valuable approach for analyzing the perceptions of various participants, emphasizing resemblances and differences, and producing original results (Nowell et al., 2017). Thematic analysis includes six stages. In the first stage, the researcher become acquainting with the data by frequently reviewing the interview questions to acquaint themselves with the depth and scope of the subject matter (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Researchers recommend one should

review all data prior to coding to distinguish potential patterns as one reviews the data. Throughout this stage, the investigator ought to write down memos of the patterns as well as coding concepts. The second stages entails creating preliminary codes that show key parts of the data which may answer the study questions. Coding is a component of study as the investigator coordinates the data into crucial categories. In this stage, the coded information varies from the components of analysis, which is the investigator's individual ideas. The examiner's themes, which start to build in stage three, is where the explanatory assessment of the data happens (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Stage three starts once the entire data has been primarily coded, arranged, and a list of the various codes have occurred showed throughout the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Throughout this stage, the investigator examines the codes and contemplates how diverse codes may merge to create an all-encompassing theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In addition, visual aids might assist by categorizing the various codes into themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The investigator ought to brainstorm about the link among codes, themes, and the various stages of themes for example, the key themes and secondary themes in the theme. In the event the codes are not fitting the central themes, it is acceptable to produce an assorted theme stack to store the codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Stage 4 includes examining the themes which consist of two stages of examining and processing the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this stage, two distinct themes could develop into one theme or new themes could be divided into distinct themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). However, there are two parts of analysis in this stage. The first is to review each collected excerpt for every theme and decide if they produce a transparent pattern

(Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the second part, the investigator reviews the full data to decide if the themes correspond with the data set and to code any extra data within themes that were overlooked (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In accomplishment of this part, the various themes, concerning the data must be evident.

Stage five starts when there is a suitable thematic plan of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The investigator will identify and expand on themes introduced by means of identifying the heart of every theme and establishing what fascinating parts of the data every theme encapsulates. Throughout the modification procedure, sub-topics will be recognized (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Additionally, thematic analysis is a useful methodology which investigates studies with various models, as it can summarize ordinary themes. Stage six is the final stage which connects previous stages to display a clear picture of the data analysis plan.

Plan for Discrepancies During Data Analysis

Not all data will match the pattern of the code or theme (Creswell, 2013). In the event difference would occur, I will note adverse data to offer a credible and valid evaluation of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). Reviewing differing data enhances reliability to the research. I explored negative cases within the context of the study and the data collected.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is vital for safeguarding value in qualitative research study. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are deemed the qualitative enquirer's counterparts for internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity

(Creswell, 2009). I adhered to Creswell's (2009) and Rubin et al. (2012) standards and suggestions in safeguarding quality in my research. The matters of trustworthiness and their application to this study are illustrated in the next sections.

Credibility

Credibility suggests the congruency of the results with explaining experience (Creswell, 2009; Shenton, 2004). For instance, credibility can be enhanced when the researcher discloses their methods and explanations of the data to permit various viewpoints and provokes recommendations and questions, identified as peer debriefing (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

a. I over oversaw semi structured interview periods that are anticipated to last 40 minutes to one hour to guarantee all answers are on point. Participants were given sufficiently time to convey themselves.

b. I disclosed my findings to my committee. I believe that this feedback increased my capability to prevent bias by reflecting on the data in a more significant way at various points during the collecting and analysis course. The joint practices of having more than one scholar assessing and offering dialog about the data enhanced credibility and decreases bias, also recognized as investigator triangulation (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

c. I also altered data that is not fitting to the trending designs and attempt to see why it was not good match. Invalidating data will be stated or contained in the analysis.

Transferability

Ravitch and Carl (2016) noted transferability is the way in which qualitative studies can be applicable, or transferable, to broader contexts while still maintaining their

context-specific richness. Moreover, methods for achieving transferability include having detailed descriptions of the data themselves as well as the setting so that readers can make comparisons to other contexts based on much information as possible (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). However, transferability; may or may not occur as there is not enough compelling data in this area to make comparisons to other contexts. To make transferability feasible, the researcher must establish adequate depth and specifics in data explanation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). One of the tactics that I utilized in this study to improve transferability will be the utilization of detail narrative. Demonstrating a deep narrative will assist in creating context and significance of the data and further investigators or users of this research will be able to apply the results to make similarities in related contexts or settings.

Dependability

Dependability involves that one has a logical argument for how they are gathering data, and data are dependable with one's argument (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). To safeguard dependability in my research I explained the design of the study, report the specifics of data collecting, and indicate on the total research procedure. The usage of an audit trail adds to forming rigor in a qualitative study. An audit trail permits the reader to locate the route of the research stage-by-stage through the findings and methods (Shenton, 2004). I employed an audit trail and incorporated field notes, interviews, reflexive journaling, and comprehensive data evaluation. The audit trail permitted me to maintain trace of my research processes.

Confirmability

Confirmability considers the idea that qualitative researchers do not claim to be objective (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). One aim of confirmability is to acknowledge and explore the ways that one's biases and prejudices map onto one's interpretations of data and to fully mediate those possible through structured reflexivity processes (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). To enhance confirmability, I maintained a reflexive journal to write down my choices and reasoning for creating these choices during the study. This journal contributed to increasing consciousness concerning my personal choices and potential biases. Committee members evaluated the interview questions to prevent possible bias from the study.

Ethical Protection of Participants

To conduct my research, I needed to gain consent from Walden's Institutional Review Board (IRB), my committee members, and teachers. Through email, I went over the purpose of my study, and Walden University's policy on research measures, the research procedure with participants. Once the participants reached out to me with interest in my study, I contacted them via email to set-up a date and time to meet. The participants were all accepted to participate irrespective of race, ethnic, and religious faith. Additionally, prior to the start of the interview with each teacher, I went over the possible benefits to the school and community; as well as the ways I aim to ensure confidentiality to protect the identity of participants. Moreover, all electronic files were safely stored at researcher's house with password-protected computer and backed up on a

password-protected hard drive. Also, to protect participants confidentiality, I used pseudonym when referring to participants in my data analysis.

Summary

This chapter presented the selection and implementation of qualitative research design that will be used in the study to address the purposes of the study. Inside the qualitative tradition, IPA was described and presented. The rationale for this methodology was stated, summarizing the essential attributes of IPA that fit with the purposes of this study. The explanation of participants' benchmarks for involvement, the recruitment, data collection, and data analysis methods were introduced. My position in this study and ethical factors were introduced. Measures were taken to safeguard the value of the data and its subsequent outcomes. Giving explanation of the methodological framework for this study, the next chapter will emphasize on the study's findings and results.

Chapter 4

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. The researcher also aimed to understand their feelings of safety and their perceptions on how their school trained school personnel for a gun related crisis management. I also explored the challenges teachers experienced while implementing crisis management training and their perception of preparedness for an active shooter incident. Ten public high school teachers were interviewed to shed light on the main research question: What are public school teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident? Through this study, I gained a deeper understanding of how vital it is to have open communication among staff to ensure proper training for gun related crisis management.

In this chapter, I discuss the setting and demographic information representing the participants of this study. Data collection and analysis are also described along with evidence of the trustworthiness of the study. Finally, the results of this study are presented.

Study Setting

As expressed in the recruitment section of Chapter 3, I recruited participants via a social media platform (Facebook) and Walden's participant pool. I posted a flyer on a Facebook teacher page and Walden's participant pool. Teachers commented on the Facebook thread that they were interested in taking part of the study. I messaged these teachers privately using Messenger asking for their email and verifying they met the search criteria. Other teachers who were reached via Walden's participant pool emailed

me to express interest. Once teachers from the Facebook teacher page and Walden's participant pool were determined to have met the criteria, I sent them the informed consent via email. If they agreed to participate, they sent me an email back stating they consented to the study. Once the participant consented to the study and agreed to participate, I scheduled a one-time interview with them. All interviews were conducted via Zoom. The interviews were scheduled within 2 weeks of the first email exchange with a potential participant who expressed interest and met the search criteria. Once the interview was completed, I emailed a digital \$10 Starbucks gift card to each participant. Interviews were recorded and lasted from 45 to 60 minutes.

Demographic Data

The participants in this study were ten public high school teachers. Their experience ranged from 4 to 24 years of teaching throughout the United States in public schools. The participants ranged in gender; seven were women (see Table 1). All participants held a teaching credential. However, some held a master's degree, while others held a bachelors.

Table 1*Description of the Participant Demographics*

Participants	Gender	Number of years in public high school	Degree/ Professional training	State where participants reside
P1	Female	10 years	Master's degree	Florida
P2	Male	8 years	Master's degree	Florida
P3	Female	12 years	Master's degree	New Jersey and Pennsylvania
P4	Female	5 years	Bachelor's degree	New Mexico
P5	Female	4 years	Bachelor's degree	Arkansas
P6	Male	24 years	Master's degree	Florida
P7	Female	15 years	Master's degree	California
P8	Female	6 years	Bachelor's degree	Texas
P9	Male	16 years	Master's degree	Virginia
P10	Female	6 years	Bachelor's degree	Missouri

Data Collection

I conducted interviews with ten public high school teacher participants. Prior to the interviews, I informed the participants that their identity would be kept confidential by assigning each participant a number, such as P1, P2, etc. The interviews were held via Zoom, and the duration of interviews was between 45 and 60 minutes. During the interview process, I used two audio recording methods and took notes to gain crucial aspects of participants' experiences. I informed the participants that they could ask questions for clarity at any time during the interview or they could contact me via email after the interview. I transcribed all interviews using REV, a transcription service, and

saved the data on a password protected laptop and backed-up on a password protected hard drive.

Data Analysis

I used a thematic analysis for this study. Thematic analysis can be applied in various theoretical frameworks, and it can also be used with various qualitative exploratory research designs, as it is not linked to one single theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I conducted thematic analysis on the comprehensive data obtained via the REV transcriptions of the interviews. I listened to every participant's interview recording and reviewed their transcripts several times. I also took note of every participant's tone of voice and experiences. In the documents, I was able to identify similarities and differences between each participant's experience.

The handwritten notes were applied when I reviewed the interview recordings. I analyzed every participant's transcripts line by line, then created focused codes that were substantial for addressing the research question. In a Microsoft Word document, I created three columns that included the text, line by line, and focused codes. All interview transcripts were analyzed using a table that included a codebook and family of codes. At the conclusion of every table, I wrote a memo that incorporated my ideas concerning the participant's interview.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability are characteristics of determining the validity of research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To verify the credibility

of data, the ten participants were asked to review their transcribed interviews, which were distributed to them via email. All participants agreed the transcripts were accurate, and no corrections were made.

Transferability

Transferability arises when the research results have the possibility to be transferred to similar populations and to broader contexts while still maintaining their context-specific richness (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I established transferability by delivering rich and descriptive data where the participants' words were describing their experiences. This study and data are relevant and should be comparable to other contexts; hence, another researcher may replicate this study.

Dependability

Dependability includes logical argument for how the researcher is gathering dependable data (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). To better identify participants' experiences, I aligned the research purpose, demographics, and analysis to deliver in-depth data and to highlight the research question. I illustrated exactly how the data were collected, interviews were transcribed, and data analysis was performed. The researchers' explanation revealed the process of an audit trail. An audit trail permits the reader to locate the route of the research stage-by-stage through the findings and methods (Shenton, 2004). The audit trail allowed the researcher to maintain trace of my research processes. The triangulation method for assessing data for authentication consisted of participants, zoom interviews, and creating similarities between the transcribed interviews.

Confirmability

Confirmability is achieved when the researcher has shown procedures to relieve their biases in the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I achieved confirmability via a reflexive journal. The reflexive journal was applied to bracket data that might affect the research. Additionally, participants' direct quotes were applied in the themes, which further established confirmability.

Results

The purpose of a generic qualitative research study was to gain an understanding of teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. Ten public high school teacher participants shared their experiences during a Zoom interview. The participants' narrative of their experiences contributed to addressing the research question, and five themes emerged.

Theme 1: Teacher's Thoughts on School Safety

In this study, I primarily focused on public high school teachers' perception and whether they are prepared for an active shooter incident. In the first theme I captured the thoughts of teachers on school safety. In this section, these perspectives and feelings are described and exemplified with participants' vignettes. While each feeling was isolated and described independently, it was common for participants to experience an array of feelings about school safety.

The feelings regarding school safety became immediately apparent in all ten of the participants; they ranged from feeling semi safe, safe, and very safe. Teachers who feel semi safe indicated that not having proper tools in the event of an active shooter led

to feelings of uncertainty. Other participants expressed safety was situationally dependent. For example, if the shooter were to enter via the school front entrance, they would not be able to enter as the building is secure. Additionally, a participant mentioned that at their school of employment, precautions are in place and threats are taken very seriously by staff and administration, making the participant feel decently safe. For example, P3 said,

I feel semi safe. Not having the right things to close and lock up. So, they're very good at telling us what we need to do, but they're not very good giving us the tools that we need. So, they tell us if there is an active shooter, we should have like a broom or we should have a lock thing, a lock pool, and we don't have them.

On this topic, P8 said, "I think that would depend. As far as outside intruders coming into the building, I feel somewhat secure just knowing that they don't really have easy access inside of the school." P10 said,

In my school, I think I feel decently safe. Because I think they take good precautions and they take threats very, very seriously. And even just like a passing threat as a joke is taken very seriously by the staff and the administration.

Teachers who feel safe reported that due to where their school of employment is located and its gun free history, they were not concerned about safety. Other participants expressed the emphasis on prevention such as drills, school IDs, and monitoring points of entry has instilled feelings of safety. P2 said,

I think that the school uniform, school IDs that has helped with recognized, who's supposed to be there, and who's not supposed to be there. I think that having the points of entry monitored throughout the day, I think that's helped a lot. And having the surveillance around the school has helped a lot. So, I feel safe in that sense, and I do think that the drills that they do are logically sound, but I don't know again, when if it's people you know, emotionally how it would play out.

On this topic, P6 said, “Generally, in this County happens to be a pretty safe community. There’s not much in terms of school violence and so teachers feel generally safe. I think I feel safe.” P9 said, “I think it's the history. The school has generally been surviving an environment that has been violence-free. That's reassuring resource officers in most schools, if not all of the schools.” P7 stated,

I think there's a lot of emphasis on prevention, but in terms of how safe teachers feel at school, I think it's probably dependent on the individual. But, yeah, being a teacher is riskier than it used to be, I guess, in terms of this and lots of other things as well. But I feel safe.

Only one of the participants reported feeling very safe at school. P4 feels very safe working at current school, as the school is located in a small community where there is not much crime. P4 stated, “I feel very safe. I live in a really small community.”

Overall, most participants reported feeling safe at school. Nevertheless, some participants experienced worry and uncertainty.

Additionally, teachers described how they thought that safety could be strengthened in their schools. For example, one participant conveyed the need for teachers to know some background information regarding in-coming students to make certain they are not a threat to staff or peers. Another participant voiced the demand for gun control and additional rules in place to ensure school safety. P5 stated,

I just worry that it's such a thing that happens all the time in America. It shouldn't.

My big thing is I feel like there should be some kind of gun control and more rules and things in place, but I don't know if schools can do that kind of thing.

P8 said,

For incoming students, I think it would make me feel safer if we knew a little bit more of the background. There were been many instances where I've had students come into my classroom that I was not aware they had a criminal background history, and I've only found out until later that they've had a history, a criminal background history, and it's not something minor. It's an assault on another student.

Yet another participant suggested that they would feel safer if provided with proper tools (a cabinet with tools to throw at the shooter in event they were to enter the classroom). In this manner, participants expressed ways the school district could support teachers to ensure school safety.

Theme 2: Teachers' Feeling of Preparedness for an Active Shooter

The second theme in the data addressed the participants' overall feelings of preparedness for an active shooter incident at school. In this theme, teachers expressed a

range of emotions from feeling unprepared to feeling prepared. Most participants felt unprepared for an active shooter incident. Only two participants felt their school was prepared for an active shooter incident. Most participants felt their school districts did not supply the proper tools for teachers to defend themselves. Additionally, participants expressed there was lack of security planning. Participant 4 was one of the participants who felt prepared and expressed:

Participant 4: I think they're pretty prepared. We do some mock incidents where we have state police and stuff come, and they don't really shoot a gun, but it's blank. They come and do that sort of stuff. So, I think the students are prepared for it.

Teacher's feelings of unpreparedness for an active shooter are due to the school districts lack of planning, and proper tools. Participants noted they do not have proper tools to defend themselves in case of an active shooter. One participant noted that; the layout of the classroom can be problematic for students to remain safe during a lockdown.

Participant 5: I mean, I don't know that there's really tools. I had to get a lot of the things myself. I got curtains to go over my windows. I had to go get paper and paper over some windows, and doors, and holes in the door. I mean, I don't know what else we really need. I mean, for a protocol, that's everything.

Participant 6: They're not prepared, like if it were... if I were to say on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being unprepared and 10 being completely prepared, I would say a 3 or 4.

Participant 7: It's just the design of the classroom... That's not what classrooms are designed for. Right? If an incident happened, it would be difficult for the kid to be in a safe place in the classroom, because of the way the classroom is designed. But yeah, I'm sure there are other things we could do, but I don't know what they are. Yeah.

Participant 8: No, tools. There's only chairs and tables in the room. There's nothing there that we could use as weapons pretty much to defend ourselves, and that's different from before where we actually had books and things in the room that we could use.

Participant 9: I don't think that at least the school that I teach in, is as prepared and ready for an active shooting situation.

Participant 10: Probably not obviously. I think we could be resourceful. There's things that we could possibly use. Are they meant for that purpose? No. I don't think we have anything really in line specifically for that situation. There's little things like my door to my classroom only opens... How does it open? How does it open? I am trying to think. The way that it opens, I can't even remember which way it opens now. They have just recently actually put on a lock mechanism that would prevent someone from being able to pull open the door, I think. So, to answer your question, sorry, long way around. I think I have what it takes in that situation. But I'd have to be resourceful in using what I have in the classroom.

Theme 3: Procedures, Preparation, and Training for an Active Shooter

This overarching theme explored protocols and procedures the participants were asked to follow in case of an active shooter. Teachers described the training, protocols, and procedures they should follow in case of an active shooter incident. The most common procedure participants described in the event of an active shooter is the lockdown drills. The participants indicated that when a lockdown drill occurs, teachers must lock doors, turn off lights, close blinds, silent all cell phones, and remain quiet in a corner of the classroom until further instructions from administration. Once the lockdown drill begins teachers cannot open any doors, even if a student was waiting outside until the drill has ended.

Participant 1: Well, the procedure at the time was to close all the blinds, put a blank white sheet of paper in between the curtain and the window indicating that everyone in the classroom was okay. We were supposed to be very discreet and just turn the lights off and sound as if there was nobody in the classroom if there was somebody walking around. Whether it was a drill or not, administration would usually be walking around campus and ensuring that everyone's door was locked. So, they'd come in and they would rattle the doorknob, which would inevitably stir up the children, and then the children would start talking, and then the teacher would get in trouble because the students are talking.

Participant 2: So, the procedure that we have always followed is that that if they say a certain code. Code Yellow means that we get everybody in the room and shut the door and we're quiet. Code Red means everybody's in the door, shut the

door, turn the lights off, everybody to the side of the room and nobody talks. And if somebody's banging on the door, telling you to let them in, you do not open the door, you just remain silent.

Participant 3: I think the trainings are amazing. So, we have to decide if the shooters in our zone, we have to lock and stay. If we think we can get out of the building, we have to try and get out of the building and meet up in a central location.

Participant 4: I would definitely get my students ready. Lock the door. Turn off the lights, that sort of thing. Just prepare until I hear otherwise. And find shelter. And to make sure all the children are accounted for and are safe.

Participant 5: Our doors are supposed to always be locked. If they're open, we're supposed to close them. Turn out the lights, get down. If there are windows uncovered, we're supposed to cover them, but they're supposed to be covered already, and just get very quiet with the kids and don't open the door for anybody. That's the rule.

They're going to come over the intercom usually with a... It's locked down and so then doors get closed, the lights turned out, students have to get down and keep quiet, and then just wait. They are supposed to message their parents to reassure them and stuff. That part's okay, but they need to make sure their phones are on silent, the kind of thing.

Participant 7: Well, have a list of things to do. If there are students in my classroom, then the first thing we do is make sure all the doors are closed and

locked. The kids get into position, away from windows and barricading themselves as much as possible. I let students if there are students looking for outside my classroom, then I would let those kids in as fast as I can and lock the door and make sure the blinds are closed and all that stuff. Lights off and then we would sit quietly until we heard an all clear.

Participant 10: The procedure that I've been trained in it's called ALICE. And so, the first thing that we do is lock the door. Then we would use the students to assist in barricading the door with desks or tables, whatever we have. Then we would either try to escape if we can. If there's a clear path that we can escape to do so as quickly as possible. If we cannot escape, if there's no exits available, then we high hide in the corner of the room where the shooter could not see if he were to look into the room. So, we would hide in that corner, and everyone would be silent. And in the meantime, we would also collect items from around the classroom to use as weapons. So, in case he did penetrate the door or the barricade that we would have weapons to throw at them or to injure them or distract them from their mission. So that's kind of the basic procedure that I've been taught.

The level of procedures, preparation, and training for an active shooter varied across participants. It appears participants 2 and 10 received more specific training for an active shooter. For example, participant 10 discussed an active shooter training by the name of ALICE, while participant 2 discussed a color code card procedure. The rest of the participants followed comparable procedures and trainings for an active shooter incident.

Theme 4: Administration Support During Crisis Management Training

The fourth theme explored an array of teacher opinions on the degree in which administration were supportive during crisis training. The data revealed differing thoughts on administration support during crisis management training. Most teachers did not feel supported by administration while a few teachers felt well supported. The teachers who felt unsupported revealed the lack of communication was a major factor for their feelings. In addition, the small number of teachers who felt supported indicated administration was part of the trainings which assisted to instill a sense of administration support within teachers.

Teachers who felt less supported:

Participant 3: The only thing that they did was they gave us the trainer.

Otherwise, we weren't given anything by administration. And they don't follow protocols when there's something going on in the building.

Participant 6: I don't think it was a legitimate support. I can't really say I was supported because it was just something that they did. It was an obligatory training that they were mandated to do so they treated it as such. Not as if it was a critical training. So, I don't feel that the administration took it as seriously as they should have.

Participant 7: I would say that at my school site, there is no support for that and there's no coordination. One of the things that would be helpful, is it to have a team of people who are all trained, and that doesn't exist. There are a couple other are people at my site who are trained, but I only know that, because it came up in

conversation about other things randomly. It's not like I was connected with them. I approached the administration about forming a team and making sure the campus supervisors were trained in crisis intervention. That didn't happen, but that was a while ago. Maybe it's time to ask again, but yeah, I would say none, no support. Yeah. No support.

Teachers who felt more supported mentioned:

Participant 2: I think they listened to what we had to say because one of the factors we mentioned is like, listen, this area of the school is more vulnerable. Depending on the location, the teachers would kind of put their input and say based upon where. One of the things we made suggestions that I think was really good is to put those mirrors up like they use in the stores, those mirrors that you can see distances, we asked them to put them in certain locations in the hallway. So, we could see in certain points to see where we thought were points of vulnerability. And so, they did listen to us, and they put those in because they don't really cost anything, and they allowed us to kind of see in the stairwell or see behind us, because we could look at the window and what's behind us or look and see what's in the stairwell. So, I think they listened to that. They also installed like a separate communication system with cell phones that would, link outside of the Intercom or the school system that was an emergency based one that we suggested, and they listened to that, and I think that that was a well taken. But I think they're pretty open to that, I haven't had any resistance when people made suggestions.

Participant 4: Well, the admin was part of the training. He took place in it, which I feel was helpful because I believe that we need to be on the same page of things. And so, I feel like that helped a lot.

Participant 5: Well, they held the training and had everybody get there. They did buy flyers for us, so we could all have flyers in our room with procedure on it. And of course, the presentation with the officer Ward, he comes to around occasionally too to double check we still got it and we know what to do. He'll be like, do you remember the training and what we're supposed to do? I mean, I guess that's about it.

Participant 8: Very supportive, I would say by admin.

Participant 9: Well, my admin is pretty supportive. They're pretty supportive. But again, crisis management isn't one of those specific trainings that were provided.

Participant 10: Honestly, not much. Other than our initial training. I don't know. We get a call over the intercom and that's about it. We're not even really told if it's a drill or if it's a serious real situation. Again, there's not a lot that's communicated. And it could be because they don't know, or things are still being investigated. There's just a lot that is... We're kind of left in the dark on and I think the admin has a lot more information that they're not willing or able to divulge to us. So, in that term, in that sense, I think admin could be a little more transparent and have a little stronger communication.

Most participants indicated administration was not supportive during crisis management training. However, only participants 2 and 8 thought admin at their school

of employment were supportive, particularly because they were part of the trainings. Additionally, participants noted administration lacked communication and needed to be more transparent with teachers. Participant 10 noted teachers were often left in the dark regarding the details of the crisis management trainings.

Theme 5: Challenges with Implementing Crisis Training

Participants described possible challenges faced while implementing crisis training. Most participants did not express major challenges with implementing crisis training. However, the data suggested three participants experienced some challenges with students who did not take the training seriously and not comply, by turning the training into a game.

Participant 2: I think the only challenge we've ever had is getting the kids to understand the seriousness of it. So, I think that was more of our biggest challenge was just getting the kids to buy into it. The parents of course did, immediately because they understand and the other teachers did, it was just getting the kids to kind of take it seriously because we work in a middle high, so the middle high is like, the kids are younger really don't comprehend that this could be a serious situation.

Participant 5: The one with the fire drill when the kids get up and just run out the door when they're not supposed to is the big one that I think of. And maybe like I don't know that the kids have had the training. I think school-wide, they need to do something where they get everybody with this training. I don't know if it's everybody watches video on whatever day in class, but the kids don't know it.

Participant 9: So far, no. We've never had an active shooter situation, but we've had drills.

Participant 10: Getting kids to take it seriously. Getting students to actually be quiet, to not just joke around or be looking out the window. Just getting them to take it seriously. And just getting the kids, I guess, on the same page as the teachers, because there's a lot of students who don't really know what they're supposed to do or what they're not supposed to do in that situation. The students don't receive the training, we do. And so, every year I have found myself being asked by a student like, "Hey, what do we do in this situation?" And I have to basically take up a class period and teach them. All right. Here's what I was taught. That's the only thing that's been a struggle is just making sure the kids are taking it seriously and making sure that they know what to do.

There was a split decision on whether challenges were faced while implementing crisis training. For example, participants 2, 5 and 10 noted they faced the challenge of having students not take the training seriously. While the rest of the participants indicated there was not any challenges during crisis training.

Addressing the Research Question

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. It also aims to understand their feelings of safety and their perceptions on how their school trained school personnel for a gun related crisis management. There was one foundational research questions to address this phenomenon: What are public school teachers' perceptions of their own preparedness for

an active shooter incident? The first theme that emerged in the results captured the thoughts of teachers on school safety. The perspectives and feelings became immediately apparent in all the participants. The feelings of safety ranged from feeling safe, semi-safe, and very safe. The second theme that emerged answered the research questions by exploring participant's overall feelings of preparedness for an active shooter incident at school. The data indicated; most participants felt unprepared for an active shooter incident. The third theme emerged in the results explored protocols and procedures participants followed in case of an active shooter. The results captured a universal lockdown procedure most participants followed in the event of an active shooter. The fourth theme explored opinions of various teachers on the degree in which admin were supportive during crisis training. The fifth theme addressed possible challenges participants faced while implementing crisis training. Most teachers did not experience challenges during crisis management training.

Summary

This chapter presented the context of the study, the data collection methods, and the data analysis procedures used to develop the themes from the interviews with Public High school teachers. It also provided a description of what steps were taken to ensure quality and trustworthiness and introduced the results of the study. Semi- structured interviews with 10 participants who met the project's criteria were conducted via Zoom. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, proofread, manually coded, and organized into major themes.

Five main themes emerged from the data analysis: Teacher's thoughts on school safety, Teachers feeling of preparedness for an active shooter, Procedures, preparation, and training for an active shooter, Teacher's thoughts on admin support during crisis management training, and Challenges with implementing crisis training. Findings from this study suggested school location impacted teacher preparedness for an active shooter incident. The smaller the city the more teachers felt safer. Additionally, a variety of emotions impacted participants preparedness for an active shooter incident. For example, not all teachers agreed on school safety, preparedness or the support received by school administrators. The data indicated the more support teachers received the from admin the more they felt prepared for an active shooter. In the next chapter, the findings of the study are interpreted, limitations are noted, and implications for future research are described.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

An extensive literature review by the researcher related to teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident revealed the need for further investigation on the unique experiences of public high school teachers' perception on how their school trained school personnel for a gun related crisis management. Public high school teachers are highly underrepresented in literature that addresses their responses to experiences of preparedness for an active shooter incident. Most research on teachers' preparedness for an active shooter incident were dissertation projects. Therefore, research on understanding teachers' feelings of safety and their perceptions on how their school trained school personnel for a gun related crisis management were neglected in past studies. I explored teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. To uncover these experiences, a generic qualitative research methodology design was used. The ten participants of this study provided details of their experiences of preparedness for an active shooter incident. Through the transcripts, I was able to identify five primary themes that emerged from the participants' responses: (a) teacher's thoughts on school safety, (b) teachers' feeling of preparedness for an active shooter, (c) procedures, preparation, and training for an active shooter, (d) administration support during crisis management training, and (e) challenges with implementing crisis training. In this chapter, I interpret these findings as they relate to the existing literature as well as provide limitations and recommendations for future study.

Interpretations of the Findings

The findings of this study both confirmed and extended empirical knowledge related to teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. All themes that derived from this research were supported by findings in the existing literature. By comparing the findings from this study to the foundational understanding of teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident future direction for research and practice can best be informed. In the following sections, I discuss each theme in the context of the recent literature.

Theme 1: Teacher's Thoughts on School Safety

This theme referred to how participants described their thoughts on school safety. When it came to school safety, the participants were divided. For example, participants felt safe, semi safe, or very safe. Therefore, thoughts on school safety were dependent on personal situations. During the 2015–2016 academic year, schools took more precautionary measures than before to avoid strangers gaining access to schools. Nearly all schools (93.5%) required guests to sign or check in, frequently utilizing detailed guest ID procedures that check guests' IDs linked to the national sex offender databases (Musu-Gillette et al., 2018). Additionally, through 2015-2016, all public schools enforced staff to use ID badges (67.9%) to differentiate swiftly and clearly who belonged in the building and who did not (Musu-Gillette et al., 2018). However, there was a decrease in school safety measures due to resource matters, involving costly gear and staff who are trained to use it, and schools have opted to distribute their security funds to additional approaches. Hence, if the participants were employed at a school where safety measures

were implemented their confidence on school safety increased. Roberts et al. (2007) explored teachers' perceptions on school safety examining both individual- and school-level factors that contributed to those perceptions. Data were obtained via 1,438 teachers from fifty-four public high schools. Results concluded that perceptions of safety varied significantly across schools, and school-level attributes accounted for part of the contextual difference. Teacher perceptions of school safety were mostly based on individual experiences. Consistent with the findings of this study, safety is perceived differently based on school training and organized preparation for an active shooter incident.

Theme 2: Teachers' Feeling of Preparedness for an Active Shooter

The second theme that emerged from the researcher's data refers to participant's overall feelings of preparedness at school. Teachers described their feelings of preparedness through tools such as several yearly trainings and mock drills. Embray (2017) noted that for teachers to be prepared for an active shooter incident they must be trained. Training increases self-efficacy and self-efficacy increases effort and perseverance. Rider (2015) collected data from 418 high school teachers varying in teaching experience, the results from the study concluded the more training teachers have in active shooter preparedness response, more confident they feel in their ability to respond effectively in the event of a live active shooter. In his study, Dixon (2016) examined Midwestern city teachers' thoughts and feelings regarding preparedness to handle violent school situations. This included: The factors that teachers feel contribute to violence in schools, strengths, and weaknesses of their schools regarding dealing with

students that are exhibiting possible violent tendencies, what types of training they have received that was most helpful, what trainings that they feel could be beneficial to help them feel safer and more prepared, and how recent school shootings have affected their sense of safety and preparedness in the school setting. Dixon collected data from 10 teachers K-12 which included 15 open-ended interview questions that targeted participants' perceptions of safety and preparedness for school. The results of the study indicated that although teachers felt prepared for the unexpected, and generally felt safe in their school environments, they also still felt there were aspects of their situation where things could be improved.

Dixon's results are consistent with results of this study. One of the main areas of improvement teachers wanted was for more training specifically designed to address intruder situations to be offered more often throughout the school year. In this study, participants noted they do not have proper tools to defend themselves in case of an active shooter. Therefore, feelings of unpreparedness for an active shooter are due to the school districts' lack of training.

Theme 3: Procedures, Preparation, and Training for an Active Shooter

The third theme presented by the researcher explored how participants described procedures, preparation, and training for an active shooter. Training varied across participants; most participants noted they were training in ALLICE training, a color code card procedure, and one universal lockdown drills procedure (Run, Hide or Fight against the active shooter). According to California governor's office of emergency services (2018), the safest reaction to an active shooter situation will be for persons to either: Run,

Hide or Fight against the active shooter (within a person's capability). Doherty (2016) addressed the need for the development and implementation of teachers' training methods in active shooter incidents. He argued the need for more teacher safety training such as, run, hide, or fight approach. Doherty (2016) revealed, every situation is diverse, and the most appropriate courses of action depend on factors such as the urgency of the threat-related conditions, case history, facts known and accessible about the alleged active shooter, and to what degree the parties involved seek out protection, intrusion, and prosecution, amongst several other tactics, strategies, and outcomes. The results in Magliozzi's (2018) study indicated the need of teacher training to ensure they feel well equipped for crisis. The researcher also noted, the challenges of lack of equipment and training for staff in applying proposed practices. Active-shooter exercises in schools include several procedures, the most common is run, hide, and fight drills (Magliozzi, 2018). These types of drills advocate for securing and blocking doors, fleeing the site, or fighting back. Several of these drills are performed through computer-generated stimuli, while others are acted out trials with staff portraying an active shooter with firearms firing blanks and pupil actors buried in false blood. Active-shooter exercises are intended to train pupils, teachers, and staff in exactly how to react to an active shooter on school grounds in a manner that decreases the risk of fatalities. They also aid schools in lessening legal responsibility by exhibiting to parents and the community that they are taking the initiative by directing their attention to precautionary procedures (Hamblin, 2018).

Theme 4: Administration Support During Crisis Management Training

The fourth theme presented by the researcher explored how participants described their differing thoughts on administration support during crisis management training. Only a handful of teachers felt supported by administration. Some teachers expressed their thoughts on issues with lack of administration support during crisis training while others expressed administration's desire to assist with crisis training. Curtis (2019) investigated correlation between the reported degree of planning and practice/drills and how to prepare high school staff to respond to school-based active shooter incidents. The researcher also evaluated the degree to which staff believed their building administration was trained to resist an active shooter and personal preparedness of trained staff members to respond and protect pupils from such incidents. The researcher concludes a connection between the level of planning and drills/training for an active shooter incident and high school staff and their building administrator. According to California Governor's office of Emergency Services (2018), while training staff on active shooter situations, it is vital that administration emphasizes the significance of thinking productively and being dedicated when taking suit against an active shooter. In training, it is also essential for administration to clarify to staff exactly how law enforcement will react to an active shooter incident. As an element of clarification, administration must imply that through a response:

- There could be loud sounds such as explosions, shouting and alarms
- There could be police officers in military-style clothing
- There could be fumes that hinders sight or aggravates the eyes and esophagus

- Persons could be forced to the floor by police officers for their protection

According to Bray-Clark et al. (2003), when administrators implement training programs properly, teachers gain valuable skills. This, in turn, improves their perceptions of efficacy (Bray-Clark et al. 2003). Therefore, the more effectively the administrators implement their training programs, the higher the impact that will have on teacher self-efficacy in an active shooter incident.

Theme 5: Challenges with Implementing Crisis Training

Public school teachers' challenges emerged as prominent in this study and in the literature. Gainey (2009) highlighted the need for crisis planning as a part of effective school district leadership. Olinger et al. (2017) conducted a study of school crisis plans and perceptions of crisis preparedness among school staff in six public elementary schools. The study revealed that merely half of all respondents had experienced a crisis at their school, and those who had not experienced a crisis in the past might be less aware of how they would respond in such a situation. They suggested this could affect the degree and precision to which they report feeling prepared.

Several of the participants in the study expressed facing no challenges in implementing crisis training. However, some teachers shared that their challenges included students not taking the crisis training seriously. Therefore, corresponding with results in this study, researcher recognized that teachers' challenges impact their implementation of crisis training. The findings from the study revealed most participants did not face challenges implementing crisis training.

Theoretical Framework

The researcher's theoretical framework focuses on the origins of self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their ability to carry out behaviors required to obtain achievement. Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exercise control over one's own incentive. Therefore, these cognitive self-evaluations play a vital role in human understanding of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Additionally, research suggests teachers' self-efficacy has significant implications for overall school effectiveness. Not only do teachers with high-self-efficacy tend to be more common in higher performing schools but there is evidence factor between a school's environment and professional culture and its educational efficiency (Bray-Clark et al. 2003).

Consequently, if teachers are convinced to believe in themselves via active shooter training, they are more perseverant in the face of emergencies. Hence, teachers who exemplify high self-efficacy due to prior active shooter training can act efficiently to shooter incidents and can be more efficient in defending themselves and pupils. Therefore, the more procedures, preparation, and training for an active shooter teachers receive, the higher their self-efficacy. When teachers have the proper tools for preparedness, they are less likely to panic to face challenges in the event of an active shooter. It is practical, to note teachers, who believe they have insufficient training to manage an active shooter incident, put themselves as well as students at risk

Limitations of the Study

I made reasonable endeavors to ensure the accuracy and trustworthiness of the study. This study was conducted to explore teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident. The researcher also aimed to understand their feelings of safety and their perceptions on how their school trained school personnel for a gun related crisis management. One of the limitations of this study is related to the switch from in-person face-to-face interviews to Zoom interviews. The initial plan was to conduct face-to-face interviews; however, due to the coronavirus pandemic, and the school district denial for teacher participants the recruitment and data collection has been altered. This may have caused the loss of vital observable data such as, body language or facial expressions. Face-to-face interviews may have assisted the researcher in collection of observable data to synergize in the analysis and clarification of data and to improve trustworthiness. Face-to-face interviews could have been more reassuring to participants because they could have appreciated the empathy I expressed in my interviewer's role from a different perspective. At all times, I tried to convey empathy and foster a connection in listening to the participants' experiences.

Another limitation faced, was coordinating different time zones with participants as they were from across the United States. A few participants were unsure about responding some of the interview questions. At all times, I reassured them that the interview is confidential, and their names would be used in the study. My statement appeared to decrease their concern. Throughout each interview session, I made every effort to build rapport with the participants to make them feel more comfortable

discussing their personal experiences. Most participants engaged in the dialogue and were comfortable to discuss their experiences.

Ultimately, I anticipated that possibility of personal bias may perhaps be a limitation of this study, as I once taught school as children. Nevertheless, I bracketed any biases by using a reflective journal to avoid meddling with participants opinions or experiences. The transcripts and analytical were reviewed carefully with my chair who assisted in the debriefing process.

Recommendations

Future research can be conducted to explore teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident, with the aim to understand their feelings of safety and their perceptions on how their school trained school personnel for a gun related crisis management. The voices of public high school teachers need to be heard to expand existing research for the purpose of reducing the effects of active shooter incidents. I suggest that more procedures, preparation, and training for an active shooter incident. Additionally, teachers' perspective is needed for enhanced procedures and training as they are the first to respond in the event of an active shooter. This presents an opportunity for public high school teachers' voices to be involved in the decision-making process that may perhaps reduce impact of active shooter incidents.

The research findings are qualitative in nature; however, future research can be performed using a quantitative research method with correlation between how often school shootings occur and the effectiveness of crisis management training. A longitudinal survey may perhaps be utilized to examine behaviors over a time. In this

study, face-to-face interviews with participants were conducted during the academic school year. It is recommended that continuous research focus on teachers' perspective on active shooter training and the need for more support from school administrators.

Implications

The findings from this research indicates positive social change as awareness for new procedure, and training for an active shooter incident are developed. Thus, school districts may possibly use the data analysis to implement crisis training. Hearing teachers express their thoughts on school safety may persuade policymakers to pass tougher laws on gun violence. The findings can be used by school districts across the United States to implement or enhance crisis training for an active shooter incident. The study adds to the literature on teachers' perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident, with the aim to understand their feelings of safety and their perceptions on how their school trained school personnel for a gun related crisis management because it explains the need for enhance ways to reduce active shooter occurrences. Additionally, results of this study will provide an understanding of teachers' opinions on how adequate they perceive the training received to face potential shooter incidents. In understanding teachers' perception of preparedness for active shooter incidents has implications for social change by contributing to knowledge that will have the potential for development and implementation of teachers training methods in active shooter incidents (Doherty, 2016; Elsass, et al., 2016).

Conclusion

In conclusion, public high school teachers' perspective is crucial for understanding how to best prepare teachers and staff for active shooter incidents. Their voices provided crucial information that can be used by local school districts to enhance procedures, preparation, and training for an active shooter incident. The data revealed that self-efficacy is vital to understating teachers' response to active shooter incident. Further research is needed to focus on the efficiency of training programs from teacher's perspectives.

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Appendix A: Research Question and Interview Questions

Demographic Questions

1. Gender
2. Degree
3. Professional training
4. Number of years working as a high school teacher
5. Length of time working at chosen high school

RQ1–How do high school teachers experience the phenomenon of implementing gun related crisis management training?

IQ2. What are your perceptions of preparedness for an active shooter incident?

IQ3. What is the process used to for training of these programs?

IQ4. What are experiences in implementing crisis management training?

IQ5. How do these programs prepare teachers for active shooter incidents?

IQ6. Tell me about any challenges you experienced while implementing the crisis management training?

IQ7. In what ways were you supported by administration while implementing crisis management training?